

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	<i>PRESOV REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE III</i>
Project Number:	<i>2020-0861</i>
Country:	<i>Slovakia</i>
Project Description:	<i>The Project comprises the multi-sector schemes implemented under the investment programme of the Prešov Region that will improve the regional infrastructure, in particular in the sectors of transport, education, culture, social care, public administration and environmental protection/preservation of natural resources.</i>
EIA required:	This is a multi-scheme operation. None of the schemes will require an EIA under Annex II of the EIA Directive.
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

For the proposed operation, the Promoter has presented a tentative pipeline of schemes, assessed on a preliminary basis as eligible and Paris Aligned, sufficient to absorb the entire loan amount with total estimated costs of approximately 70m EUR. The schemes are in transport (roads and bridges modernisation), social care (homes for elderly people), education (schools), culture (cultural centres), public administration (regional authority building) and environmental protection (national park eco-infrastructure) sectors. The share of planned investments by sector should approximately reach, 37% in transport, 25% in education, 7% in social care, 15% in culture, 14% in environmental protection and the remaining 2% in public administration.

The investment programme is expected to bring economic benefits to the Region in terms of delivery of public services, mainly in education, social care and culture, due to construction or rehabilitation of public buildings with an impact on the quality of life and life expectancy. Further improvements are expected in intra-regional connectivity with an impact on road safety and reduced traffic congestion. Additional environmental (e.g. drainage and greening, biodiversity protection or climate change adaptation and socioeconomic benefits (ecotourism/leisure/well-being/ employment) are anticipated with the provision of eco-infrastructure in the Region's national parks.

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Carbon Footprint Exercise, as defined in the EIB Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: 20,000 tonnes CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

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The current regional development strategy, called "Programme of Economic and Social Development of the Prešov Self-Governing Region for the period 2014 - 2020" (PHSR PSK 2014 - 2020)², sets the following objectives and priorities:

- Principal objective: Create conditions for balanced territorial development of a region and increase the quality of life of its inhabitants
- Priority 1 An innovative and competitive regional economy
- Priority 2 Living conditions of the inhabitants of the region
- Priority 3 Developed infrastructure and energy in a favourable environment
- Priority 4 Strategic territorial management and territorially balanced development.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) statement was issued on 25 April 2016. All SEA process documents are published online³.

Apart from the general development strategy, there are also mid-term sector plans particularly in the area of transport, education, social care and culture, which describe in detail plans and intentions in terms of development (investments), as well as maintenance needed.

In view of the nature of the projects involved in the operation, the application of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures^{4,5} may be relevant for one of the tentatively proposed schemes (Poloniny trail).

The Region's territory has protected areas defined as European Natura 2000 sites⁶ and may be affected by one scheme (Poloniny trail).

In general, the proposed schemes are expected to have a limited temporary impact to the environment during the construction phase, usually through increased local traffic, as well as construction and demolition waste generated. These impacts could be mitigated by adhering to a good practice and by following the recommendations of the competent authority. In the case of road safety and modernisation schemes, the intervention shall be limited to the existing lanes of the roads, as well as other existing transport structures, which reduces potential impacts to a minimum. However, the road schemes are expected to have limited residual impact in the operational phase. Small infrastructure schemes are not expected to have negative environmental impacts.

As far as public buildings are concerned, there are a number of positive effects expected, including energy savings in the buildings as a result of the Region's Low carbon Strategy⁷. Energy efficiency measures within the construction of new public buildings will contribute partially to the Climate Action (mitigation).

Slovakia's regions are impacted by climate change through increasing frequency and intensity of natural hazards, e.g. floods and excessive precipitation.

² <https://www.po-kraj.sk/sk/samosprava/kompetencie-psk/regionalny-rozvoj/phsr-psk-2014-2020/>

³ https://www.po-kraj.sk/files/dokumenty/Rozvojove-dokumenty-PSK/PHSR_PSK_2014-2020/phsr_psk_2014-2020_v1_zaverecne-stanovisko.pdf

⁴ <https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2006/24/20200721>

⁵ <https://www.po-kraj.sk/sk/samosprava/urad/odbor-sr/dokumenty-oddelenia-up-zp/stanoviska-eia-sea/>

⁶ <http://www.sopsr.sk/natura/index1.php?p=4&lang=sk.&sec=20&do=search>

⁷ <https://www.uvo.gov.sk/vestnik/oznamenie/detail/428879> (under development).

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Social Assessment, where applicable

The project will contribute to strengthening secondary growth poles and reducing inequalities between people and between places. This will be achieved primarily by the upgrading of social infrastructure/public facilities to match demographic needs and meet or exceed national standards – including the building of social infrastructure and eco-infrastructure. It will therefore improve living conditions in the region as well as strengthening socio-economic prosperity.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The Programme of Economic and Social Development of the Prešov Self-Governing Region for the period 2014 - 2020" (PHSR PSK 2014 - 2020) was subject to comprehensive and extensive public consultations. Individual schemes may also be subject to public consultation in line with the EIA law.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Promoter (Prešov Region) will be required to act according to the provisions of the relevant EU Directives, including SEA (2001/42/EC), EIA (2014/52/EU amending 2011/92/EU), Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives and Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) as transposed into national law. In cases where projects valued above EUR 25m require an EIA to be carried out, the Promoter shall submit to the Bank the EIA and Non-Technical Summary (NTS) for review and publication on its website before funds are allocated. In all other projects requiring an EIA, the Promoter shall keep the EIA and NTS on record, which shall be provided to the Bank upon request.

For Schemes that may have a potential impact on protected areas including Natura 2000 sites, the Promoter has to submit to the Bank the screening, Nature/Biodiversity Assessments or equivalent documents supporting the compliance with the EU Habitats and Birds Directives – Form A/B or equivalents before the Bank funds are allocated. For schemes triggering Art. 4.7 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Promoter has to provide evidence of the compliance with the WFD before the Bank funds are allocated.

The overall institutional capacity of the Promoter to manage the environmental and social issues is deemed satisfactory. Given the nature of the operation and the procedures concerning EIA and nature protection put in place by the competent authorities in the Slovakia, subject to the conditions mentioned above, the loan is acceptable in environmental and social terms.