

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ORADEA SUSTAINABLE URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE III
Project Number:	(2021-0119)
Country:	Romania
Project Description:	Municipal framework loan for sustainable urban infrastructure investments in the City of Oradea
EIA required:	Some of the schemes under this framework loan operation might fall under Annex I or annex II of the EIA Directive and have to be screened in.
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The operation is a framework loan to the municipality of Oradea supporting the implementation of the City's multi-year investment plan to be implemented in the period 2021-2025, which will result in overall improvements to the urban environment and quality of life for citizens. The operation concerns urban infrastructure investments mainly focusing on energy efficiency, urban transport, including improvement of selected urban road sections, and urban development, including open public spaces and green areas. All schemes are small (below EUR 25m) and some of them are expected to benefit from EU funding.

The investments contribute to several Sustainable Development Goals and to EU and EIB policies objectives in accordance with the provisions of the EU Urban Agenda, the new Leipzig Charter for sustainable urban development and the EU2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Some of the investments support the EU and national energy efficiency targets, and also contribute to CO₂ emissions reduction. The operation is consistent with the West Region Operational Programme 2021-2027 and the City's General Urban Plan, the Integrated Urban Development Strategies (SIDU) and other local sector strategies.

The EU EIA and SEA Directives are transposed into national law via Government Resolution No. 445/2009 concerning EIA, and Government Resolution No. 1076/2004 on SEA. Oradea's Urban Development Strategy and Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan were screened out. Furthermore, the Habitats and Birds Directives are transposed into Romanian law via the provisions of Government Emergency Ordinance No. 57/2007 on nature and landscape. Given that the scope of the project is urban infrastructure investments and the project is

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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located in the City of Oradea, the competent authority for EIA is the Local Office of the National Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The investments will be implemented in an urban area away from protected areas, such as Natura 2000. From the indicative list of investments submitted to the Bank by the Promoter, some of the schemes might fall under Annex I or Annex II (screened in) of the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU). The Bank will require the Promoter to provide updated information for each scheme prior to allocation. Should any scheme under this framework loan fall under Annex II and be “screened in” by the Competent Authority, the Promoter shall deliver the full EIA report to the Bank, if applicable, before the Bank funds are allocated. For schemes falling under Annex II and “screened out” by the Competent Authority based on Annex III criteria, the Promoter shall deliver a copy of the respective decision, upon de Bank’s request before funds are allocated.

Environmental impacts are mainly related to the construction phase, which are expected to be short-lived and reversible, at a level which is deemed acceptable. At construction, the projects might result in increased noise levels, vibrations from heavy traffic to and from the sites, and impacts on air quality. Special mitigation measures will be applied in line with the relevant legislation.

This framework loan includes schemes that are expected to mitigate climate change such as energy efficiency improvements, green open spaces, the development of footpaths and cycle paths, as well as strengthening public transport services and introducing zero-emission buses, which contribute to sustainable mobility. The energy efficiency investments will have a positive impact on the environment by reducing energy consumption, thus reducing pollution and greenhouse gases emissions.

Adaptation measures in green and blue infrastructure will contribute to mitigate the negative effects of climate change, with better water absorption and reduction of the heat island effect. Refurbishments in buildings also include water efficiency measures and re-use of water, which will contribute to environmental sustainability objectives. Investments in pedestrian areas and cycle paths, tram infrastructure and zero-emission buses will contribute to pollution prevention, also meeting environmental sustainability objectives.

The project has been assessed for Paris alignment and is considered to be aligned both against low carbon and resilience goals against the policies set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap. Nevertheless, Paris alignment will be confirmed for the underlying investments prior to allocation of the scheme to the framework loan.

Social Assessment, where applicable

There is no self-standing social assessment for the operation. However, the framework loan’s overall social impact is expected to be positive resulting from the implementation of the individual schemes. Investments in urban development and renewal will improve the quality of public infrastructures and the overall public realm. Also, investments in urban transport are expected to contribute to reducing pressure on public space and promote sustainable mobility. Improvements to public spaces and more energy efficient education and cultural facilities will contribute towards achieving a greater quality of life for residents and users, and will contribute to improving the City’s attractiveness.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The underlying investments are embedded in the Regional Operational Programme, the City’s General Urban Plan, the Integrated Urban Development Strategies (SIDU) and other local

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sector strategies, which require public consultation and stakeholder engagement. Also the schemes that require an EIA will be subject to public consultation.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The building permits for the individual schemes will stipulate the monitoring of environmental requirements prior to, during, and post construction.

The operation is a continuation of three previous framework loans that are close to full disbursement. Overall, the promoter has demonstrated to have the institutional capacity to manage the environmental and social issues.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Promoter 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 as transposed into national law.

In schemes where applicable, the Promoter will be requested to deliver the EIAs to the Bank before Bank funds are allocated. For schemes falling under Annex II and “screened out” by the Competent Authority based on Annex III criteria, the Promoter shall deliver a copy of the respective decision, upon the Bank’s request, before funds are allocated. Schemes will be located outside protected areas including Natura 2000. Nevertheless, the Promoter has to provide evidence of the compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives (if applicable) before the Bank funds are allocated.

The overall negative residual impacts of the schemes are small, whilst the projects will have a positive influence on the living conditions of the City’s inhabitants. Infrastructures and areas in need of improvement will be upgraded, providing a safer environment and opportunities for various activities for the local residents. Furthermore, the project will include the implementation of energy efficiency measures in buildings, green open spaces as well as development of footpaths and cycle paths, which are expected to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation. In relation to the energy efficiency schemes, the Promoter will be required to provide Energy Performance Certificates obtained in line with the EU Directive 2010/31/EU during implementation or after completion of works, upon the Bank’s request. The Promoter undertakes to scrapped or dismantle buses that become obsolete due to this project in accordance with national and European environmental regulations and will inform the Bank on how this was done. Moreover, in case any of the existing diesel buses that may be replaced due to this project are sold in the second hand market, the Promoter will inform the Bank of the purchaser and country of operation.

The EIB support would further the economic development of the City through the successful implementation of projects that are consistent with the EU and EIB public policy goals of improving socio-economic infrastructure, supporting the environment and achieving cohesion objectives supported through EU co-financing.

Therefore, given the nature of the operation and the procedures concerning EIA and nature protection put in place by the competent authorities in Oradea, subject to the conditions mentioned above the framework loan is acceptable to the Bank in environmental and social terms.