

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	POLISH NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE	
Project Number:	2021-0105	
Country:	Poland	
Project Description:	The project finances R&D projects procured on a competitive basis by the National Science Centre (NSC) in 2021-2023. NSC is headquartered in Krakow and finances excellent, early stage research projects carried out across all regions in Poland.	
EIA required:		no
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :		no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project concerns financing intangible basic and applied research activities and related costs including some research material and equipment. The included R&D activities will be carried out within existing facilities, making use of existing installation and within already authorised scope. Such activities create intangible (new knowledge and scientific discoveries), which do not fall under the Directive 2011/92 as amended by 2014/52/EU on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

Part of NCS's funding is allocated for climate action and environmental sustainability related research including variety of topics concerning both climate adaptation and climate mitigation. Based on the information provided by the Promoter, it is estimated that 4% of the project's funding contribute to the Bank's Climate Action & Environmental Sustainability objective.

Some of the laboratories receiving funds from National Centres handle small amounts of toxic materials as a part of their activities, while others carry out experiments with living animals. The promoter has confirmed that they comply with all relevant legal provisions, notably Directives 2012/18/EU on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances and 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes, where applicable.

The NSC has confirmed that it has auditing practices in place. On yearly basis, it audits a sample of on-going projects receiving their grants, including auditing of environmental and

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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research ethical aspects. Additionally, NSC has confirmed to have existing channels for the public to report on any non-compliance.

The National Science Centre (NSC) focuses on research excellence and, therefore, its funding decisions are based only on the quality of the research proposals. Consequently, the share of projects led by women is decided through a bottom-up approach. However, being aware that women and men are equally able to perform excellent frontier research, the NSC is committed to promoting equal opportunities for both. Against this background the NSC implements the same measures and practices as the European Research Council (ERC) to improve gender balance. Out of them, the most important measure is the extension of female applicants' eligibility window by 18 months per child, so that the lack of scientific results during parental leave does not penalize women's chances to be awarded with grants enabling excellent research careers. With these and other measures in place, NSC has achieved close to gender parity with regard to the share of projects led by women and recommended for funding (47% in 2019 and 46% in 2020). The proportion of grant funding distributed to female researchers was 39% in 2020, up from 36% in 2019 and NSC hopes to further increase this share in the coming years. In order to measure the achievement of these outcomes, the borrower will report on the following:

- The share NSC-funded projects led by women.
- The share of NSC funding received by women.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Project finances investments in intangible assets, i.e. basic research activities that are not expected to have significant negative impact on the environment. Instead, part of the research activities are expected to provide some positive social and environmental benefits.

In light of the above, the Project is acceptable for EIB financing in E&S terms.