

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: PROJECT ODYSSEY NETWORK EXPANSION
Project Number: 2021-0132
Country: Ireland
Project Description: The project relates to the design and deployment of a FTTH fixed very high capacity (VHC) network throughout Ireland to provide fibre connectivity to around 320 k premises. The promoter will act as a pure wholesale operator and will sell its services to the retail telecommunication operators.

EIA required: No

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: No

(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The construction and installation of fixed telecommunications projects (including civil works for fibre roll-out and transmission systems) do not fall under Annex I or II of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amending the Directive 2011/92/EU.

The project relates mainly to deployment of the access part of the network. This will be rolled out to existing premises (residential and commercial) using the national electricity provider's (ESB) network to do so. For the deployment of its cabinet's the promoter will also make extensive re-use of ESB's infrastructure as cabinets and PoP's will be located in existing ESB Substations or adjacent to existing housing estates in each town.

The project's GHG emissions have been calculated and are well below the thresholds. Yearly absolute emissions are set to 0.4 kT CO₂ and - as the promoter is using state of the art technology - relative emissions are zero. When compared with VDSL (copper) networks, fibre networks show significant capacity increases and energy efficiency improvements.

Digitalisation and ICT infrastructure play an important role in the transition of several sectors to a low carbon and climate resilient economy. They are the essential infrastructure that enables the deployment of low carbon and decarbonisation scenarios leading to significant sustainability benefits across the whole economy and fulfil the Paris Alignment criteria set out in the EIB's CBR (Climate Bank Roadmap).

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 CO₂/year absolute (gross) or 20 000 tonnes CO₂/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

Luxembourg, 22 July 2021

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The promoter's Environmental, Health and Safety, Principals are enforced through its accredited ISO 45001 & ISO 14001 EHSMS Management Systems. Furthermore, the company is certified by the national electricity provider ESB as a contractor to work on or near the Electrical Network.

In February 2021, the promoter signed up to the UN Global Compact Initiative to aligning its strategies and operations with Ten Principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption and to take strategic actions to advance broader societal goals, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Broadband networks have a positive social impact. With the increase of connectivity, accessibility and reliability of the telecommunications network they enable communities to enjoy higher speed broadband, internet with the ability for increased economic activity in areas covered by the project and access to a whole array of e-service (such as e-health or e-government).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The related environmental issues seem well taken care of through the relevant legislation and contractual requirements.

Considering the above, the project is considered acceptable for EIB financing from an environmental and social point of view.