

Luxembourg, 12th July 2023

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	MOBILE NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION
Project Number:	2023-0012
Country:	FRANCE POLAND ITALY SPAIN PORTUGAL
Project Description:	The project relates to investments in new mobile network towers and rooftop sites to host mobile broadband base stations, site upgrades to host more than one mobile operator, very high capacity links to connect the towers to the operators' core networks, distributed antenna systems (DAS) to massively increase network capacity in traffic hotspots and energy efficiency / renewable energy components to save costs and reduce GHG emissions of the network.
EIA required:	no
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no
(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")	

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

Some of the project components might fall under the Annex II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU.

The construction of new towers and fibre optic links in rural areas requires environmental studies as part of the permitting process, depending on the country and the environmental sensitivity of the area where these elements will be deployed. The project includes this kind of components in France, Italy and Poland. It is estimated that around 7% of the new towers included in the project will be located in Natura 2000 areas of these countries. To manage the complexity of the diverse regulation across its 12-country footprint, the promoter uses an environmental regulation webtool. With it, the promoter identifies all the requirements and conducts the necessary studies to assess the impact and plan appropriate mitigation measures according to well-known industry standard practices.

Potential impacts during operation of the project are limited to the effects of electromagnetic field (EMF) emissions of radio equipment. The project relates mainly to passive infrastructures,

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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but it also includes a few active elements, such as distributed antenna systems (DAS), microwave links and mobile base stations in Poland, where the promoter owns and operates this part of the network. Studies continue to be conducted to further assess the potential long-term effects of exposure to EMF emissions on human health. The ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection) has issued guidelines to determine the thresholds, with the corresponding margin of safety, under which exposure to EMF does not represent a risk for human health, according to the relevant studies conducted since more than 20 years ago. These guidelines were adopted in the EU recommendation 1999/519/EC, which is applicable in most EU countries in the scope of the project, except Italy and Poland, which have stricter limits. The promoter will comply with the specific regulation for each country with respect to EMF.

Deployment of mobile broadband networks is considered aligned with the Paris Agreement as defined in the EIB Climate Bank Roadmap Annex 2 Table H.

As a corporate, the counterpart is in scope but screened out of the PATH Framework because it is neither a high emitting nor a highly vulnerable entity.

The project includes two components that contribute to climate change mitigation, namely installation of PV solar panels in various sites in Spain and migration of indoor sites to outdoor configurations in various sites in Italy, which in total are expected to generate savings of around 7,000 MWh per year.

Social Assessment

The deployment of passive telecommunications infrastructure and the other related activities in the scope of the project do not typically have significant social impacts. However, these infrastructures enable the coverage and capacity expansion of mobile broadband networks that have been shown to generate positive socio-economic impacts in terms of stimulation of economic activity and new job creation.

The project is expected to have a significant impact on gender equality. The promoter has adopted an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and has set specific measures and targets to promote gender equality at all levels, including through a gender equality accelerator programme and a gender equality target that affects the remuneration of the senior management. As a result of the promoter's measures in this area, in 2022, women accounted for 55% of the promoter's board of directors, 36% of senior leadership positions, 20% of STEM positions and 31% of the overall workforce, up from 46%, 26%, 9% and 15% respectively in 2021.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The promoter is fully committed to mitigating the possible impacts of its activities and has developed a well-structured environmental and social policy. This is reflected by the implementation of an integrated quality, safety and environment management system certified according to ISO 14001, ISO 9001 and ISO 45001, and the supplier code of conduct, which ensures the promoter's policies, including those related to labour aspects, are applicable to the supply chain. The promoter is a signatory of the UN Global Compact since 2015, and includes in its integrated annual report ESG metrics according to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) sustainability reporting guidelines.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The promoter is a well-established company with a sound environmental and social policy. The promoter will conduct the required environmental assessments for the construction of new cell



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sites and fibre optic links in rural areas, including the few cases located in Natura 2000, in compliance with the corresponding regulations in each country covered by the project. The other activities included in the project are not expected to require any environmental studies. The promoter will respect the maximum limits of exposure to EMF determined by the corresponding country's regulation for the active equipment it owns and operates. The project is expected to have positive indirect socio-economic impacts in the covered areas.

Considering the above, the project is deemed acceptable for the Bank's financing under environmental and social terms.