

Luxembourg, 5 February 2025

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	INWIT DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT II
Project Number:	2024-0521
Country:	Italy
Project Description:	The Project relates to the expansion and modernisation of a mobile telecommunications tower network. The network infrastructure, which is composed of towers and rooftop sites, will host radio, antennas and transmission equipment of several mobile operators (MNO) and fixed wireless access operators. The expansion through new sites will enable a wider coverage particularly for 5G services, including in more disadvantaged areas. The Project also comprises new network infrastructure for fibre optic backhauling of the tower sites and the installation of small cells and Distributed Antenna Systems (DAS) to extend the mobile network coverage inside facilities such as hospitals, museums, shopping malls, metro underground and highway tunnels. Such investments will support a better network coverage, higher network capacity and allow for better mobile indoor services particularly in the light of strongly raising mobile data traffic.

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 deployment and upgrade of telecommunications infrastructures is not covered by Annexes I or II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU.

The Project relates to the modernisation and expansion of a telecom tower network aiming at hosting active equipment of several mobile and fixed wireless operators. This infrastructure includes power supply, air conditioning, and auxiliary services like physical security and remote monitoring systems to ensure reliable operation. The planned investments cover the construction of new towers, reinforcing existing ones, and installing micro-coverage solutions such as small cells and Distributed Antenna Systems (DAS). These installations enhance network coverage and capacity while promoting infrastructure sharing among operators, which benefits the environment.

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.



Luxembourg, 5 February 2025

The construction of new towers in protected areas (around 1.5% of the new towers will be located in Natura 2000 areas) may require environmental studies as part of the permitting process, depending on the environmental sensitivity of the area where these elements will be deployed. In this case, the study is under the Mobile Network Operator (MNO) responsibility, while the Promoter can support in providing EMF emission design and simulation.

When it comes to installations in protected archaeological and historical areas, the procedure requires that an opinion be issued by the relevant Municipality and includes all parties involved. If the parties involved provide a positive opinion, they may link this with certain conditions.

Mobile telecommunication networks cause radiation emissions with potentially harmful effects to the environment and human health. Therefore, the Promoter is required to obtain for new sites and for changes on existing sites, construction and operational permits from the local competent authorities. Such permits verify structural aspects as well as the compliance with Italian electromagnetic exposure limits. In Europe, radiation emissions are regulated by the EU recommendation (1999/519/EC) based on ICNIRP principles. Italy adopted this guidance in 2003 and further reduced the emission threshold to a level ten times lower than the EU recommendation. A recent amendment increased the EMF limits in Italy from 6 V/m to 15 V/m, still well below European standards.

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.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The rollout of passive telecommunications infrastructure and related activities within the scope of the Project generally do not have significant direct social impacts. However, these infrastructures play a role in expanding the coverage and capacity of mobile broadband networks. This expansion has been shown to generate substantial positive socio-economic returns, including stimulating economic activity and creating new job opportunities. It is expected that more than 40% of the investments will be realised in the transition and less-developed regions of Italy.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Promoter is dedicated to mitigating the potential impacts of its activities and has developed a comprehensive environmental and social strategy. This commitment is demonstrated through the implementation of an integrated management system for quality, safety, energy, and the environment, certified under ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 50001, and ISO 45001. Additionally, the Promoter is committed to enhancing gender inclusion within the workforce, as evidenced by their Gender Equality Management System certified under UNI PdR 125.

In 2023, the Promoter employed a total of 296 people, with women comprising 39% of the workforce, marking a significant improvement (+16%) in gender parity compared to the previous year. This growth reflects the company's commitment in expanding its workforce with a particular focus on increasing the inclusion of women.



Luxembourg, 5 February 2025

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 tower sites, including the few cases located in Natura 2000, in compliance with the relevant regulations in the country. The Promoter will comply with the maximum exposure limits for electromagnetic fields (EMF) as determined by national regulations for the active equipment they own, host and operate. 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.