

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	AVE BURGOS-VITORIA
Project Number:	2023-0991
Country:	Spain
Project Description:	The project consists of construction of a new high-speed railway line between the cities of Burgos and Vitoria (approx. 93 km) as part of the Core TEN-T Atlantic Corridor between Madrid, the Basque Country, and the Spanish/French border, as well as a connection between the existing high-speed lines Madrid - Valladolid and Madrid - Galicia (approx. 8 km).

E&S Risk Categorisation:	High risk
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	Yes

Environmental and Social Assessment

The Project falls within the scope of Annex I of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU).

Environmental Assessment

Environmental Impact Assessment Procedures

The Project is included in the “Indicative Strategy for the development, maintenance, and renewal of railway infrastructure”, which has been subject of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with Directive 2001/42/EC. It was also included in the earlier strategic plans, such as the “Infrastructure, Transport and Housing Master Plan (2012-2024)” and “Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure 2005-2020”, which were also subject of a SEA.

The Project includes two distinct components:

- High-speed line (HSL) Burgos – Vitoria, and
- Connection between HSLs Madrid – Galicia and Madrid – Valladolid.

These two components are situated in different locations, are functionally independent and have been subject of two independent EIA procedures.

For the HSL Burgos – Vitoria, the EIA was initiated in 2017 with the preparation of the EIA report, and its publication and the corresponding public consultation in 2018. Between 2018 and 2021, in response to different requests made by the competent authority, a series of complementary studies were prepared, including a study on the effects arising from the vulnerability of the project to major accident and disaster hazards, a hydrogeological study, an analysis of the impacts associated to quarries and landfills, an avifauna study, an aquatic mammals study, a river fauna study, and a flora study. The environmental consent (*Declaración de Impacto Ambiental, DIA*) was published in the State Official

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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Bulletin (*Boletín Oficial del Estado, BOE*) in June 2021. In July 2024 the validity of the environmental consent was extended till June 2027.

In 2022 an appeal against the approval of the HSL Burgos – Vitoria (including of its EIA) was lodged with the National Court (*Audiencia Nacional*). The plaintiffs allege deficiencies in the Project preparation and request the nullity of the public information procedure and of the subsequent approval of the Project. The hearings took place, and the Court ruling is pending. In the meantime, the Project approval and the environmental consent remain valid and give the Promoter the right to proceed with the Project implementation.

For the connection between HSLs Madrid – Galicia and Madrid – Valladolid, the EIA was initiated in 2002. The EIA was carried out in accordance with the requirements of Directive 85/337/EC applicable at the time and the corresponding public consultation was carried out in 2003. The environmental consent was published in the State Official Bulletin in February 2005. Most of the works subject of this environmental consent were implemented following the issue of the consent and completed by 2015. The connection between the two lines allowing direct itineraries between North and Northwest was not built at the time and is included in the current Project. The Project includes some modifications of the alignment originally considered during the EIA. The Promoter assessed the significance of these modifications and whether they fall within the scope of Annex II (point 13(a)) of the EIA Directive, and concluded that these modifications did not require a new environmental procedure .

The Project crosses or runs in the vicinity of several protected areas. The potential impact on the sites was assessed as part of the EIAs and necessary mitigation measures have been defined. In particular, the following Natura 2000 and other protected sites are located in its area of influence:

Sites	Distance to the project
<i>High-speed line Burgos – Vitoria</i>	
<i>Section 1 Burgos – Piérganas:</i> no Natura 2000 sites in the project vicinity	Not applicable
<i>Section 2 Piérganas – Pancorbo:</i>	
• ES4120073 “Riberas del Río Oca y afluentes”	Crossed by the line
• ES4120030 “Montes Obarenes”	Crossed by the line
<i>Section 3 Pancorbo – Ameyugo:</i>	
• ES4120030 “Montes Obarenes”	Crossed by the line
• ES0000187 “Montes de Miranda de Ebro y Ameyugo”	Crossed by the line
• ES4120095 “Montes de Miranda de Ebro y Ameyugo”	Approx. 445 m
• ES4120059 “Riberas del Río Ebro y afluentes”	Approx. 200 m
• National Park “Montes Obarenes – San Zadornil”	Crossed by the line
<i>Section 4 Ameyugo – Manzanos and connection to Miranda:</i>	
• ES4120059 “Riberas del Río Ebro y afluentes”	Crossed by the line

Sites	Distance to the project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES2110006 "Río Baia" 	Crossed by the line
<i>Section 5 Manzanos – Vitoria (Iruña de Oca):</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES4120051 "Riberas del Zadorra" 	Crossed by the line
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES2110010 "Zadorra ibaia/Río Zadorra" 	Approx. 300 m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventive Protection Status "Montes de Vitoria Occidentales" 	Crossed by the line
Connection of HSLs Madrid – Galicia and Madrid – Valladolid	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES4180081 "Riberas del Río Adaja y afluentes" 	Crossed by the line
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES4180147 "Humedales de Los Arenales" 	Approx. 250 m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES4160062 "Lagunas de Coca y Olmedo" 	Approx. 2.2 km

These sites are home to multiple fauna and flora species, among them several endangered species, such as the European mink (*Mustela lutreola*) and freshwater mussel (*Margaritifera auricularia*), present only in the Burgos – Vitoria area. Some other protected species, such as the Iberian imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*) and the red kite (*Milvus milvus*), are present in the wider project area, beyond the Natura 2000 sites.

The primary mitigation measures set out in the EIAs consist of adopting an alignment and engineering solutions that avoid and/or reduce the environmental impact, such as reducing the need of material from borrow pits and quarries by reusing as much as possible the excavated material, extending the span of the viaducts so that piles and abutments are located outside the riverbank vegetation areas and watertight lining of some tunnels so that aquifers are not affected.

During construction, the impacts are largely temporary and localised. The main potential impacts are the generation of a significant amount of excavated material and its discharge in controlled dumps, significant temporary pollutants emissions and nuisances due to increased noise levels, vibrations, dust, etc., risk of spills of fuel, oil or other substances. The mitigation measures include water collection and treatment to avoid spills, avoidance of construction activities with significant noise levels during breeding seasons, environmental monitoring measures during the project implementation and operation.

During the operation phase, the main potential impacts are those typically associated to major linear infrastructure projects, such as change in land use, severance, visual impact, noise and vibration, risk of collision of trains in movement with humans or animals. The mitigation measures include construction of alternative routes for affected roads and driveways, fauna crossings and appropriate design of culverts for reducing the severance effect, fencing to avoid access to the tracks of humans and terrestrial animals, measures to avoid collision of birds and bats with viaducts and high-voltage lines, measures to mitigate electrical hazards for birds and bats, landscape integration of earthworks and civil engineering structures, noise screens and vibration absorption mats. The mitigation measures for the HSL Burgos – Vitoria also include implementing a plan for improving the habitat of the European mink, which has been prepared by the Promoter in coordination with the competent authorities.

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The environmental consents define further analyses required for specific aspects to be undertaken during the detailed design and prior to the commencement of works. Following the completion of these analyses and design, amongst other, taking into account their specific conservation objectives, the Promoter will, amongst other, request a confirmation from the corresponding competent authority that the Project does not adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. For the section “Pancorbo – Ameyugo” of the HSL Burgos – Vitoria and for the Connection HSLs Madrid – Galicia and Madrid – Valladolid the design and the complementary analyses have been completed and the mitigation measures have been coordinated and confirmed with the competent authority. For these two sections, the corresponding competent authorities stated that the Project will not have significant negative impacts on any Natura 2000 sites. For the remaining sections, the detailed design and the corresponding analyses are ongoing and expected to be completed in Q4 2025/Q1 2026.

Overall, the project will have some positive environmental effects in comparison with the current situation, as it will have a significant contribution to increasing the modal share of rail versus road and air transport in the corridor, with environmentally favourable impact related to energy consumption, noise, pollutants and green-house gas emissions.

Climate Assessment

Climate change adaptation:

The climate risk of the project is assessed as low and, therefore, it is considered to be aligned with the resilience goal.

Paris Alignment of projects:

Vulnerability to the climate change

The project is sensitive to the climate change, in particular to the risk of increase of precipitations and floods, thunderstorms and wildfires. The Promoter carried out an analysis of vulnerability of the Project to the climate change and the identified vulnerabilities are being addressed by structural measures included in the Project, such as appropriate design of earthworks and drainage, lightning protection equipment, or operational measures.

Paris alignment

The project has been assessed by the Bank’s services for Paris alignment in accordance with the policies set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap. The project consists of construction of infrastructure for zero direct emissions transport; therefore, it is considered to be aligned with the low carbon goal. The climate risk of the project is assessed as low and, therefore, it is considered to be aligned with the resilience goal.

EIB Paris Alignment for Counterparties (PATH) Framework

Counterparty in scope but screened out because ADIF AV, being a rail infrastructure manager, has no revenues from high-emitting activities.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

Estimated annual emissions related to the project:

- 4 ktonnes of CO2 equivalent per year for absolute emissions.
- -67 ktonnes of CO2 equivalent per year for relative emissions.

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The above-indicated forecasts correspond to the estimated annual third-party greenhouse gas emissions (vehicular use, from existing and induced demand) from the use of the project in an average year of operation over a 30-year operational period.

The project assessment boundaries are:

- In the absolute case: Train services running along the new HSL Burgos - Vitoria, totalling approximately 94 km of new infrastructure,
- In the baseline case: Train services along the existing railway infrastructure, cars and buses along the road network of approximately the same length, as well as traffic shifted from air.

The forecasts in the baseline and absolute cases are based on Services' project specific assumptions about the demand of rail passenger services and fuel efficiency of rail operations. In the baseline case, emissions from conventional rail, cars, buses and planes are included, reflecting those passenger trips expected to shift from existing rail, road and aviation to high speed rail in the "with project" case. Emission factors are in line with the EIB Carbon Footprint Methodology; in addition, power grid decarbonisation and progressive penetration of electric vehicles in the car fleet have been considered, as well as fuel efficiency improvements for aviation and bus.

For the annual accounting purposes of the EIB Carbon Footprint, the project emissions will be prorated according to the EIB lending amount signed in that year, as a proportion of project cost.

These forecasts may differ from those of the Promoter due to different assumptions, boundaries and baselines.

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Social Assessment

Land acquisition and resettlement

The HSL Burgos – Vitoria requires expropriation, right of way easement or temporary occupation of approximately 1,064 ha, 51 ha and 110 ha, respectively. The Connection of HSLs Madrid – Galicia and Madrid – Valladolid requires approximately 39 ha, 2 ha and 12 ha, respectively. The affected land is mostly agricultural or undeveloped.

The project requires expropriation of one residential property.

Land expropriation process is being followed in accordance with the applicable national legislation.

Cultural Heritage

The Project affects some elements of cultural heritage, in particular some elements of linear cultural heritage, such as Roman roads Italia - Hispania and Hispania - Aquitania, the Way of St. James (Camino de Santiago) - these elements are limited to the HSL Burgos-Vitoria -, and drover' roads. The environmental consents set out the corresponding mitigation measures for minimising the impacts and ensuring the continuity of the affected roads and ways.

The Project includes appropriate procedures for archaeological chance finds during earthworks.

Accessibility

The renewal of the Miranda de Ebro station (the only station included in the project) will include bringing the platforms and other passenger-accessible elements included in the project into conformity with the

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requirements concerning accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility. Thus, the accessibility of the rail services will be improved.

Gender aspects

ADIF AV has in place a Gender Equality Plan, setting out objectives and measures to achieve them.

ADIF AV has identified some aspects of the railway infrastructure, in particular stations that if not designed properly may have disproportionately negative impact on women. ADIF AV will require that the design of the Miranda de Ebro station is analysed and adapted from a gender perspective. Among other aspects, the analysis must consider materiality, signage, visibility and safety, accessibility, ergonomics and walkability of the surroundings.

Gender tag: Significant.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The consultation of the relevant stakeholders and public consultation took place as part of the EIA. Further consultation with the relevant stakeholders on particular aspects of the project is being carried out during the detailed design process in accordance with the conclusions of the EIA.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Promoter, ADIF Alta Velocidad, has an established environmental policy and operates an Environmental Management System in accordance with ISO 14001:2015.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Project is part of an infrastructure programme, which was subject of a SEA.

The EIA procedures, including public consultations, have been carried for the components included in the Project. The environmental consents set out appropriate mitigation measures for environmental impacts during construction and operations.

The potential impact on Natura 2000 sites has been analysed as part of the EIA. Further analyses are being carried out during the detailed design. For section “Pancorbo – Ameyugo” of the HSL Burgos – Vitoria and for the Connection HSLs Madrid – Galicia and Madrid – Valladolid the design and the complementary analyses have been completed and the mitigation measures have been coordinated and confirmed with the competent authority, while for the remaining sections the design and the corresponding analyses are ongoing and expected to be completed in Q4 2025/Q1 2026.

The project is expected to contribute to modal shift from road and air to rail. The project is expected to have positive environmental impact in terms of safety and accessibility of transport, energy savings, air pollution, noise and CO2 emissions.

The project’s residual negative impacts during construction and operation, considering the planned mitigation measures, are acceptable. The impacts during the operation phase are partly offset by the expected modal shift facilitated by the investment.



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Environmental and Social Conditions

Prior to any disbursement of funds for financing works on sections Burgos – Piéñigas, Piéñigas – Pancorbo, Ameyugo – Manzanos and connection to Miranda or Manzanos – Vitoria (Iruña de Oca), the Promoter shall submit to the Bank evidence of completion of the complementary analyses for Natura 2000 sites and of absence of significant impacts on these sites.

The Promoter shall inform the Bank without delay about any developments concerning the outcomes of the court proceedings regarding the Burgos – Vitoria HSL.

If the specific site conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 sites located in the project vicinity are updated, the Promoter will provide evidence that the project is not likely to have any significant impacts on these sites taking into account the updated objectives, and that any relevant mitigation measures have been implemented.

Under the conditions indicated above the project is acceptable for EIB financing in environmental and social terms.