

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	PLK E20 Siedlce to Biala Podlaska
Project Number:	20120408
Country:	Poland
Project Description:	The project concerns track improvements in three stations between Warsaw and the Belorussian border as well as installation of signalling improvements on 78 km of double track mainline.
EIA required:	Yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	No

Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment, including key issues and overall conclusion and recommendation

The project falls under Annex II of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 2011/92/EU. In accordance with Polish legislation, the project was automatically screened in and therefore subject to a full EIA procedure. The project spans two regions, Masovian and Lubelski, and therefore two Competent Authorities responsible for the Environment and Nature Conservation. Furthermore, in Masovian region, a separate EIA was performed for a road tunnel under the tracks in Siedlce station included as part of the project. Therefore, the project required three EIA procedures. Environmental assessments were performed in 2007-2008 and the Competent Authorities gave their positive Environmental Decisions (ED) during 2009.

With respect to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC, the project forms part of the Polish Railway Master Plan to 2030 as well as the Infrastructure & Environment Operational Program. Both of these have been subject to the strategic level environmental assessment.

The project runs within a few kilometres of four Natura 2000 sites and the line crosses known animal migration routes; so the provisions of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) apply. The EIA reports did not identify any specific risks to these areas and migration routes from the proposed investments. In their EDs, the Competent Authorities concluded that the project is not likely to have a significant effect on protected areas. They reconfirmed this opinion by issuing separate standalone Nature Conservation Forms in late 2012.

The project forms part of a broader program of investment on the corridor that is expected to improve rail services and thereby promote modal shift. The project's residual negative impacts during construction and operation are limited and offset by the expected modal shift facilitated by the investment. Overall, the project is acceptable from an environmental perspective.

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Pilot Exercise, as defined in the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: above 100,000 tons CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tons CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project comprises two components (i) modernisation of track and platforms in three railway stations (Siedlce, Lukow and Miedzyrzec Podlaski); and (ii) the installation of signalling improvements on 78 km of double track mainline in the section between Siedlce and Biala Podlaska. In the three stations, the project entails replacing the track bed, track, structures and catenary, together with improvements to local access roads, the power supply, signalling, telecoms and platforms. The project also includes the construction, in an urban environment, of a new road tunnel at Siedlce station and road overpass at Lukow.

The main residual impacts of the project are conversion of less than 1 ha of urban disused land; damage to the view for a limited number of receptors; as well as some additional noise/vibration, again for a limited number of receptors. The works' designs include measures to mitigate impacts including, drainage and runoff treatment/storage facilities, acoustic barriers and anti-vibration mats, landscaping, restrictions on construction as well as long term monitoring. All these measures should result in an improvement to the environmental situation in comparison to the "without project case". The project will also result in the removal of two and improvements to 33 level crossings; these measures should improve the safety of the line.

The project runs within a few kilometres of four Natura 2000 sites: two Special Protection Areas, Lasy Lukowskie (PLB060010) and Dolina Liwca (PLB140002) plus two Sites of Community Importance, Ostoja Nadliwiecka (PLH140032) and Goloborz (PLH140028). The environmental reports and EDs do not identify any particular risks and therefore no mitigating measures to protect these sites. However, at two locations where the line crosses known migration corridors, used in part by protected species, the ED requires the use of wildlife scare devices.

Section 88 of the October 2008 Polish Act on "providing access to information concerning the environment and environmental protection, participation of the public in environmental protection and on the assessment of environmental impact" allows for a "supplemental EIA" procedure to be performed at the building permit stage. In his 2009 ED, the Competent Authority in Masovia has specifically ruled out the need to perform such supplemental EIA for the proposed road tunnel in Siedlce. The other two EDs do not mention whether such additional procedure will be required. The Bank shall obtain confirmation from the promoter as to whether such supplemental EIAs are to be performed for the other elements of the project.

During the three environmental procedures, disclosure of environmental documentation was undertaken at prescribed times. The EDs state that no comments or applications to challenge were registered within the prescribed period.

The project requires the acquisition of about 1 ha (298 plots) of disused urban land. No residential properties are affected. Siedlce station has some historic buildings on the platform which have protected status; these are to be conserved during the renovations.