

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	SOFIA METRO PHASE III (FWL 2006 0411)
Project Number:	2013 0102
Country:	Bulgaria
Project Description:	Major allocation under structured programme loan "Bulgaria EU Funds Co-Financing 2007-13", concerning the 3rd phase of Sofia's metro extension. Works comprise the extension of the current metro line 1 from Tsarigradsko schosse to (i) Sofia International Airport through the residential area Drushba (lot 1) and to (ii) Sofia's largest residential area Mladost and its business park (lot 2).
EIA required:	no
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

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

The construction of the metro falls under Annex II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, according to which the need for a full EIA is decided on a case-by-case analysis by the Competent Authority. In this case, based on preliminary environmental assessments the Competent Authorities screened out both sections to carry out formal EIA. No impacts on any Natura 2000 site are expected from the construction of the metro infrastructure.

The overall impact of the project on the environment is positive due to the mode shift away from private car and towards public transport. This reduces emission of noise, pollution and traffic accidents and also contributes to achieving the climate change objectives.

The Sofia Metro Extension Project is strongly linked with the strategic planning for Sofia transport and has been part of the Operational Programme Transport (OPT) under the National Development Plan of the Republic of Bulgaria 2007-2013, for which a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with Directive 2001/42/EC has been completed.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

SEA

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was completed for the OPT in 2006. The Sofia Metro Extension Project had already included in the OPT with reference to improving the intermodality of passengers transportation. After modification of the OPT in December 2010, which among others also included the Sofia Metro Extension Project Stage II, the Ministry of Environment and Waters (MEW), which is the competent authority of the SEA, has issued a decision (№ EO-1/2011) that the modification does not require a new environmental assessment.

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.

On top of that, in June 2012 it was decided to include Lot 2 of Stage III of the Sofia Metro Extension Project in the OPT. This was considered a main change and a new decision was issued by MEW that no update of the SEA required (№ 45-PR/2012) on 14 August 2012.

EIA

The project is classified under Annex II of the EIA Directive. The project is largely realised within existing road corridors and with constructing it by cut and cover method and therefore has little environmental impacts. Accordingly, the EIA procedure was carried out as following:

For Lot 1 the Competent Authority (Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water Sofia - RIEW) decided in September 2006 to screen-out the project on basis of preliminary environmental impact analysis and therefore no full EIA was necessary (Decision no. SO-172-PR/2006). Following the changes in the project (the construction of a railway station together with a metro station MS21 and change in the underground alignment), a preliminary environmental impact analysis was prepared in June 2012 and based on this, the Competent Authority has decided that these were not likely to have significant environmental impact and therefore re-confirmed that no EIA is required (Decision no. SO-130-PR/2012).

For Lot 2 the Ministry of Environment and Waters (MEW) as Competent Authority based on a preliminary environmental impact analysis prepared in July 2012 issued a screening out decision. The Competent Authority stated that the project is not likely to have a significant negative impact on the environment (Decision № 45-PR/2012).

Natura 2000 sites

The MEW, as Competent Authority issued a Natura 2000 declaration for Lot 1 and Lot 2 which stated that the implementation of the project is not expected to have significant negative effects on Natura 2000 sites (Decision no. SO-35-OS/2010).

In the area of the Lot 1, the distance between the project and the nearest Natura 2000 sites is:

- SPA Vitosha (code BG0000113) – more than 6000 m
- SPA Dolni Bogrov – Kazichene (code BG0002004) – more than 3500 m.

In the area of the Lot 2, the distance between the project and the nearest Natura 2000 site is:

- SPA Vitosha (code BG0000113) – more than 2300 m.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement, where required

According to the Environmental Protection Act in Bulgaria and pursuant to Article 4(2) of the law, the citizens of Mladost and Iskar were informed by the municipalities about the investment proposal for the construction of metro sections. Various consultations and relevant expert's meetings were conducted in 2012 and the decisions were exposed publicly at available places for 14 days. No objections were submitted. Based on these procedures the building permits were issued for the approved projects.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

JASPERS did a detail review of all environmental processes followed and concluded that it was done in accordance to EU directives. The project will contribute to environmental sustainability mainly through the decrease of the air pollutants and noise generated by street vehicles as well as through the improving of inhabitants' safety. The project will also contribute to the reduction of CO₂ and a reduction of 3 kton CO₂ per year has been estimated. The project respects the principle of preventive action, this being revealed by the mitigation measures stipulated in the EIA screening out decisions as conditions for project realization.