

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	CITY BY-PASS ZWETTL
Project Number:	20130439
Country:	AUSTRIA
Project Description:	Design, Built, Finance, Operation and Maintenance a by-pass road around the city of Zwettl, district capital in the Lower Austria, within a PPP Availability Scheme.
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 city bypass Zwettl was identified in the 1997 Lower Austria Transport Concept (NÖ Landesverkehrskonzept), predating the application of SEA Directive (2001/92/EU) and thereby excluded from the scope of the Directive.

The project includes the construction of 10.6km of a new bypass of less than 4 lanes and the realignment of about 1km of the existing road B36 and therefore it falls under Annex II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU where the competent authority decides on the requirement for a full EIA, including public consultation. According to the Austrian Environmental Law (Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2000 - UVP-G 2000), this project is subject to EIA. The EIA procedure was carried out in accordance with the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Birds Directives (79/409/EEC) and the EIS was issued on the 22.05.2012 by the Government of the Lower Austria (AMT Der Niederösterreichischen Landesregierung).

During the EIA procedure, all potentially affected Natura 2000 sites, habitats and species have been analyzed. The project crosses several protected areas including three Natura 2000 sites, however the EIS provides compensating, mitigation and protection measures which will have to be observed and included in the final designs guaranteeing no major impact of the project on the protected sites.

The project crosses roads B36 and L71 and is located in a sparsely populated rural area with numerous local chapels and parish churches, including a Cistercian monastery. All the heritage sites will be preserved and protected and the project's impact at the construction stage will be short-lived and reversible, at a level which is deemed acceptable. At operation stage the major impacts will be connected to noise, pollution, use of land, groundwater for agricultural use and road use generated waste however the final designs should include adequate environmental measures and the project's overall residual impacts are not high. On the other hand, the project should have a positive effect on the environment, decreasing local traffic-related emissions in and around the existing streets currently used to cross the city.

It is not expected that protected archaeological sites are located in the vicinity of the project however at time of appraisal surveys were still undergoing. The promoter will present the final results of the surveys prior to any disbursement guaranteeing that the final designs will not have any impact on archaeological sites, if existing.

The institutional capacity of the public promoter to manage the environmental issues is deemed high and the one from the private promoter is expected to be appropriate, considering the consortia that already showed interest in the tender process. Therefore, subject to conditions mentioned above, the project is acceptable for the Bank in environmental and social terms.

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 city bypass Zwettl was identified in the 1997 Lower Austria Transport Concept (NÖ Landesverkehrskonzept), predating the application of SEA Directive (2001/92/EU) and thereby excluded from the scope of the Directive.

The project includes the construction of 10.6km of a new bypass and the realignment of about 1km of the existing national road B36. According to the Austrian Environmental Law (Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2000 - UVP-G 2000), this projects fall under its appendix 1 where the EIA is required for the construction of roads with a continuous length of at least 10 km, when the new road is expected to have an average daily traffic of at least 2,000 vehicles in a forecast period of five years. The project alignment, preliminary design and the project approval process have been defined and carried out in line with applicable environmental legislation, in line with the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. EIS was issued on the 22.05.2012 by the Government of the Lower Austria.

During the EIA procedure, all potentially affected Natura 2000 sites, habitats and species have been analyzed. The EIS has been issued in line with the NE Nature Conservation Act 2000 (NE NSchG 2000), the Regulation on the European Protected Areas and the Regulation on the Landscape areas providing evidence of compliance with the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Birds Directives (79/409/EEC).

The project crosses three NATURA 2000 areas and five small rivers (Zwettl, Strahlbach Waldbach, Gradnitz and Kamptal); however adequate compensatory, mitigation and protecting measures have been considered in the designs guaranteeing no major impact of the project on the protected sites and species (mainly birds and bats).

Natura 2000 areas	Code	Type
WALDVIERTEL	AT1201000	Birds Directive Site (SPA)
WALDVIERTLER TEICH-, HEIDE –UND MOORLANDSCHAFT	AT1201A00	Habitats Directive Site (SCI)
TRUPPENÜBURGSPLATZ ALLENTSTEIG	AT1221V00	Birds Directive Site (SPA)

The project is located in a rural area sparsely populated with numerous local chapels and parish churches, including a Cistercian monastery. At construction stage, the project will increase noise and vibration levels, and will impact groundwater, habitat connectivity and air quality. Adequate measures will be considered in the designs such as drainage systems, management of earthworks, waste, and landfills and reparation of the vegetation damaged with local species. Trees will be protected in appropriate manner and tree clearance will be conducted outside the nesting season. Construction of bridges over the existing small rivers will include protection measures to conserve habitat connectivity features. In addition, the heritage sites will be preserved and protected. The project's impact at the construction stage will be short-lived and reversible, at a level which is deemed acceptable.

At operation stage the major impacts will be connected to noise, pollution, use of agricultural land, groundwater for agricultural use and road use generated waste however the final designs should include adequate compensation, protection and mitigation measures as crossings for animals, native species for plantings, retention basins and adequate drainage systems to prevent the direct run-off from road surface to surface water areas. Designs include significant parts of cuttings contributing to mitigate noise and visual impact. In addition, noise barriers are required in the area of Rudmanns (km 0+4000 to 1+862). Furthermore, the project should bring about environmental benefits as it should decrease local traffic-related emissions in and around the existing streets currently used to cross the city. According to the authority a substantial reduction of the noise pollution of up to 6.8 dB is predicted in the city streets currently used to cross the city.

The above-mentioned measures are considered sufficient.

Social Assessment, where applicable

Expropriations are carried out in line with the Austrian Law. It is expected that before the start of the construction all the land will be available for the project.

The project will not entail involuntary resettlement of people and up to date, no major complains regarding land acquisitions were raised.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement, where required

Public Consultation was embedded in the EIA process. According to the information gathered during the mission and provided by the promoter, the probability of raising any protest or making any complaint about the investment by non-governmental institutions (e.g. ecological, the protection of cultural heritage, protection of consumer rights etc.) shall be considered as minor.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

According to the EIS, the final Contractor shall appoint an environmental supervisor to guarantee the implementation of all the environmental measures included in the EIA decision (EIS). During the operation phase, an evaluation of the environmental impact of the project should be performed in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2000 - UVP-G 2000. The evaluation will focus on potential effects of the project and possible additional mitigation or compensating measures. The period over which the evaluation extends starts from the moment which construction starts until ten years after operation of the road.

Road Safety is expected to improve as it should decrease traffic and therefore interferences with pedestrians in and around the existing streets currently used to cross the city.