

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	SOFIA INTEGRATED URBAN TRANSPORT (FWL 20060411)
Project Number:	2014-0139
Country:	Bulgaria
Project Description:	Integrated urban transport project promoted by Sofia municipality and co-financed with EU structural funds under the Bulgarian OP Regional Development.
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 project is part of the Bulgaria Operational Programme Regional Development (OPRD) 2007-2013 and the General Master Plan of Sofia Municipality for which Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) were concluded, in compliance with EU SEA Directive 2001/42.

From an environmental perspective, the acquisition of trolleybuses does not fall under either Annex I or Annex II of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive 2011/92/EU, which is not applicable to manufacturing of rolling stock. In addition the tramline infrastructure works, which falls under Annex II of the Directive, has been screened out from a full EIA.

The overall impact of the project on the environment is expected to be positive due to modal shift away from private car towards public transport. This reduces negative impacts and contributes to climate change objectives. No impacts are expected on any Natura 2000 site from the construction of the tramline. The project is acceptable from an environmental perspective.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment

The project is an important part of the Bulgaria Operational Programme Regional Development (OPRD) 2007-2013. The *New Tram Line (no. 2) Seminary to Darvenitsa*, has been additionally included in the General Master Plan of Sofia Municipality, which was updated in 2009 and approved by the Council of Ministers. Both the Operation Programme and the General Master Plan due to their nature were subject to EC Directive 2001/42/EC, which requires Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) to be carried out. SEAs have been completed and the required internet links were provided to public.

Environmental Assessment

The project consists of five components including: two Information Technology (IT) developments; two infrastructure components for rehabilitation of existing tram lines and construction of new ones; and the acquisition of new trolleybuses.

The IT developments and the acquisition of trolleybuses do not fall under Annex I or II of Directive 2011/92/EU. The new trolleybuses will mainly replace older obsolete units and will conform to modern environmental standards. Manufacturing of these trolleybuses is expected to take place in existing plants. The Promoter requires that the vehicles be manufactured in accordance with the applicable EU environmental regulations, and design of the trolleybuses has also been assessed

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.

against the requirements of Directive 2001/85/EC relating to special provisions for vehicles used for the carriage of passengers, as transposed in Bulgaria.

The Promoter plans to scrap the existing fleet according to its standard scrapping and sale procedures, ensuring a consistent handling of scrapping and sale of vehicles in line with their technical conditions, safeguarding operating safety and optimising fleet structure. The vehicles will be separated into their constituent parts and handed over to authorised entities dealing with recycling and recovery of waste type/disposal of waste according to national Bulgarian legislation. Overall, the project complies with relevant EU and national environmental legislation.

The new fleet has the potential to generate significant energy savings, emission reductions and safety improvements compared to the older fleet. Therefore, the project is expected to include some positive environmental impacts by helping public transport to maintain its attractiveness in an urban environment. Without it, public transport service quality would degrade with a consequent modal shift towards private car use.

The tram infrastructure investment falls under Annex II of Directive 2011/92/EU, according to which the need for an EIA is decided on a case-by-case basis by the Competent Authority (in this particular case the Regional Inspectorate of the Ministry of Environment and Water (RIEW)). The schemes underwent a screening process in accordance with EU and Bulgarian regulations and concluded that the construction and operation of the proposed project is unlikely to produce significant negative impacts on the environment. Thus screening-out decisions were issued as follows:

The extension of the tram network (Component 4) was screened out for preparing formal EIA in line with criteria provided in Annex III of the EIA Directive by the Competent Authority on 2 July 2010 (Sofia RIEW - Decision Number: SO-82-PR/2010). The refurbishment of the existing tram line (Component 5) was also screened out since this project was not subjected for screening on the grounds that the concerned activity is neither in Annex 1 nor in Annex 2. This fact was communicated to the Sofia Municipality by the Competent Authority (Sofia RIEW - Letter No. 26-00-903/16.03.2010). For the complete project a preliminary environment assessment was submitted to the authority on 14 June 2011. This assessment additionally included an amendment to the original Component 5 of the project, which didn't include refurbishment and upgrades of tram stops. A decision (CO-27-EO/2011) stating that no EIA was required for entire "Sofia Public Transport Integrated Project" was issued by the Competent Authority on 24 June 2011.

The schemes are not likely to have any significant effects on the species and habitats of Natura 2000 sites. The corresponding certificates by the Competent Authority have been received. The Competent Authority stated in its letters on 26 July 2011 that there will be no impact on the natural habitats and species of plants and animals which have been assigned for the protection of Natura 2000 sites (the closest area are "Vitosha" (BG0000H3) and "Vitosha" (BG 0000113) are located more than 4 km away from the place of the project).

A number of mitigation measures have been identified and follow to be detailed in the construction environmental management plan (CEMP) which further address the need for environmental safeguard during the construction of the project and facilitate the adoption of environmentally sensitive work practices.

The Project forms part of a package of measures which together will provide a more sustainable and balanced transport system. A number of benefits and enhancements of quality of the existing environment have been identified as resulting from the implementation of the project including reduction of the gaseous pollutant emissions as well as reduction in noise levels and vibration.

Public consultation

Information relating to Component 4 and 5 has been provided to the public in the form of announcements in local newspapers in 2010. Where relevant, consultation was held with the general public and other interested parties, including districts through which the schemes pass. Consultation with the districts of Lozents, Izgrev and Studentski was undertaken. Through the consultation process no objections to the schemes were received.