

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: SLOVENIA EU FUNDS 2014-2020
 Project Number: 2015-0092
 Country: Slovenia

Project Description: The project, structured as a Structural Programme Loan, will support the Slovenian Partnership Agreement (PA) and selected investments for one Operational Programme, the Operational Programme for the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy in the Period 2014-2020 (OP ECP). The interventions financed by the Bank will focus on the following sectors: transport, energy, environment, health, R&D infrastructure, nature protection, social infrastructure, ICT, urban regeneration, water and waste.

EIA required: Yes

This is multi-scheme multi-sector Structural Programme Loan operation which falls under the SEA Directive. An SEA is required. Some of the schemes may fall under Annex I or Annex II of the EIA Directive and have to be screened by the Competent Authority. Should any scheme fall under Annex I or be "screened in" under Annex II, the Promoter shall deliver the NTS of EIAs to the Bank, if applicable, before the Bank funds are allocated.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: No

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

The operation, structured as a multi-sectoral Structural Programme Loan (SPL), will support the implementation of the Slovenian Partnership Agreement (PA) and the Operational Programme for the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy in the Period 2014-2020 (OP ECP). The interventions financed by the Bank will focus on the following sectors: transport, energy, environment, health, R&D infrastructure, nature protection, social infrastructure, improvement of training and access to employment, ICT, urban regeneration, water and waste. The OP ECP may include 3 major projects based on the indicative list of major projects in the OP ECP.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been carried out for the OP ECP in compliance with the EU SEA Directive 2001/142. The SEA contains appropriate conditions for each axis and/or measure of the OP ECP.

Some infrastructure schemes under this Structural Programme Loan are expected to fall under the EIA Directive, either under Annex I or Annex II. Should any scheme under this Structural Program Loan (SPL) fall under Annex II and be "screened in" by the Competent Authority, or fall under Annex I, the Promoter shall deliver the NTS of EIAs to the Bank, if applicable, before the Bank funds are allocated. The Competent Authority will in addition have to provide evidence of the compliance with the Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EEC) Directives (Form A/B or equivalent).

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.

Overall, the environmental and social impact is expected to be positive. It's expected that the investments under the present SPL will contribute to:

- (i) increase competitiveness,
- (ii) enhance research and innovation,
- (iii) develop a high quality broadband infrastructure and enhance its access,
- (iv) increase energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources (RES),
- (v) increase sustainable mobility measures
- (vi) support climate change adaptation measures to reduce the risk of flooding in areas with significant flood risks,
- (vii) develop environmental infrastructure and ensure sustainable use of natural resources,
- (viii) complete TEN-T,
- (ix) job creation, particularly for the long-term unemployed, the young and older people, as well as of the persons with low education levels,
- (x) reduce social exclusion and risk of poverty,
- (xi) improve education to correspond to labour market,
- (xii) increase institutional and administrative capacity.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Legal Framework

Slovenia, as an EU Member State, has harmonised its environmental legislation in line with the relevant EU Directives, the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and the Habitats and Birds Directives 2009/147/EC. Projects that will receive environmental permits after the enactment of the new Directive on EIA in 2017, will fall under the new EU Directive.

Environmental Assessment

The intervention financed by the Bank will focus on the following sectors: transport, energy, environment, health, R&D infrastructure, nature protection, social infrastructure, improvement of training and access to employment, ICT, urban regeneration, water and waste. The OP-ECP content aims to achieve environmentally responsible development, both horizontally by inclusion of environmental aspects in all measures/programme, as well as vertically by custom designed programmes/measures, which will positively contribute to Slovenia's transition to a low-carbon, resource-efficient society. Therefore, the implementation of the OP-ECP generally has a positive impact on the environment, while for any negative effects mitigation measures are proposed. For instance;

- Investments under Priority axis 3 "A dynamic and competitive entrepreneurship for green economic growth" is expected to have positive impact on natural resources and climate factors.
- Investments under priority axis 4: "Sustainable utilisation and generation of energy and smart grids" will have positive impact, while in some cases no impact is expected, e.g. in geothermal energy utilisation. Furthermore, the impact on natural resources is positive since it entails a reduction in the consumption of natural resources, given that smart distribution systems operating at low and medium voltage levels contribute to a more effective utilisation of renewable energy.
- Investments under Priority axis 7: "Construction of infrastructure and measures to promote sustainable mobility" may have significant impact on natural resources, given that the development of rail and road infrastructure entails the permanent occupation of land sometime at the expense of agricultural and/or forested land. The introduction of the suburban rail may increase the pressure on agricultural and forest land in sub and peri-urban areas. However, the decrease in the number of passengers transported by personal vehicles also reduces the consumption of fossil fuels - non-renewable energy sources. The impact on air is expected to be positive due to re-

routing transit flows to rail transport, especially if mitigation measures are implemented.

Overall, the OP implementation is expected to generate net positive environmental and social impact.

Institutional Capacity of the Promoter

The experience from the previous programming period 2007-2013 showed that all projects financed by the EIB and falling under the EU EIA Directive and “screened in” for EIA were managed in line with the requirements under the Directive and the national legislative framework. In previous operations, the institutional capacity to manage environmental and social issues has been deemed to be positive at the highest state level. The capacity in different line ministries and national implementing bodies has been varying, but overall acceptable. The capacity in municipal and regional bodies is deemed to be somewhat weaker. In previous operations the Bank received all necessary documents relating to the EIA process and concerned protected areas under Natura 2000.

The Promoter’s overall institutional capacity to manage social and environmental risks within the framework of this operation is therefore considered to be satisfactory.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement, where required

The public consultation for the SEA of the OP ECP lasted a month; between 7 March and 11 April 2014. At that stage, the SEA had not identified any tangible effect on the environment of other countries, given that the measures that will be financed under the OP-ECP are not defined in time or space. In fact, the cross-border impact will be assessed during subsequent stages, i.e. the implementation of the OP ECP.