

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ELISA 4G
Project Number:	2012-0042
Country:	Finland
Project Description:	The project concerns the nationwide roll-out of new 4G / LTE mobile networks in Finland and Estonia including also the further expansion of the 3G / HSPA network to cover most rural areas in both countries. The objective is to reach finally more than 97 % population coverage for 4G services in Finland and Estonia by 2016.
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 activities do not fall under Annexes I and II of the EU Directive 2011/92/EC, and are therefore not subject to mandatory Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA). Generally, mobile networks based on UMTS/LTE technology have limited environmental effects.

The impact during implementation will be limited as the majority of new equipment will be put on existing sites. The main impact during operation, such as the radiation emissions or the visual detraction, will be mitigated by appropriate construction and operation measures within the national regulations.

Potential health risks from electromagnetic radiation are still being studied at an international level. Therefore, more research on the link between cell phones and the cancer risk is done and users are asked to handle the cell phone more carefully particularly in the case of high usage. Still, the ICNIRP thresholds, which are implemented in Finland and Estonia as binding national legislation, are considered appropriate.

Therefore the project is classified as acceptable and it is consequently eligible for the Bank's financing.

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

In Finland and Estonia the radiation exposure limits stipulated by the EU recommendation (1999/519/EC / based on the ICNIRP principles) have been implemented as binding national legislation for the frequency bands used by mobile Telecommunication networks. In Finland, the safety of mobile phone networks is monitored by STUK (Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority). It carried out during 2010 – 2012 a measurement campaign on general public's exposure to RF fields from mobile phone base stations. The measured RF fields were very low compared to the national regulations.

In both countries, mobile networks exist already for quite a number of years. Therefore the project concerns mainly the installation of new and additional equipment at existing sites. The number of new sites is very limited and in Finland, only about 2% and in Estonia about 12% of new sites will be added to the existing networks. Consequently the impact during implementation as well as the additional residual impact during operation (radiation emissions, visual impact) will be limited.

The increased number of network equipment drives CO2 emissions, however this project is also about replacement of outdated equipment by more efficient and less power consuming ones. The new 4G nodes are supposed to be 24% more efficient than the previous generation of equipment. Also through the replacement of 3G equipment about 10 000 MWh will be saved in 2014.

In 2014 the promoter published the second verified corporate social responsibility report in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standard. The report coverage and the data reported are determined on the basis of GRI 3.1 and the pilot version of the Telecommunications Sector Supplement.