

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	RZESZÓW MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE II
Project Number:	2015-148
Country:	Poland
Project Description:	Co-financing of investments included in the investment plan of the City of Rzeszów primarily focussed on urban roads, urban public transport and urban renewal and regeneration projects (public buildings, open spaces, green areas, education, health, energy efficiency, water, sport facilities)
EIA required:	This is a multiple-scheme operation. Some of the schemes are likely to fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive and may be screened in.
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

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

The investments selected for the EIB operation will contribute to enhancing the attractiveness of the city and the quality of life, improving accessibility within the city, increasing access to sustainable public transport, and improvement in the quality of sports, recreational and cultural facilities. Energy efficiency in public buildings will also be enhanced.

The Project is a multi-sector framework loan. Given the relative small size of the individual schemes and the nature of the sectors concerned, most of the schemes are deemed not to have significant environmental impacts.

It is likely that some infrastructure schemes will fall under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, under Annex II. Should any scheme under this framework loan fall under Annex II and be “screened in” by the Competent Authority, the Promoter shall deliver the NTS of EIAs to the Bank, if applicable, before the Bank funds are allocated.

Rzeszów has two Natura 2000 sites (one reserve) and some cultural heritage sites. It is expected that at least one of the foreseen road schemes will be located in the vicinity of a Natura 2000 site. The Competent Authority will be required to provide evidence of compliance with the Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (79/409/EEC) Directives (Form A/B or equivalent) before the Bank funds are allocated.

The overall environmental and social impact of the framework loan is positive, with improved environment and quality of life for the citizens, especially in matter of improvement of the urban road network and energy efficiency in buildings. Furthermore the Project is expected to contribute to climate change adaptation.

The institutional capacity of the Promoter to manage the environmental and social issues is deemed good and therefore, subject to the conditions described 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 Polish EIA law, which is fully compliant with EU Directives, entered into force in November 2008 (Act on Providing Information on the Environment and Environmental Protection, Public Participation in Environmental Protection and on Environmental Impact Assessment). According to the Act, the Competent Authority issuing environmental permits for urban roads of national significance is the Regional Director for Environmental Protection (RDEP) after consultation with the Regional Sanitary Inspectorate. For other urban projects (i.e. other urban roads, urban renewal, etc.) the Competent Authority is the Mayor of the City.

The competent authority for Natura 2000 areas is the corresponding “Voivodship’s” Regional Director for Environmental Protection.

The Project will have an impact on the environment both during construction and operation. At construction stage, it will increase noise levels, and will impact water and air quality. Adequate mitigating measures have been considered in the designs such as drainage systems, management of earthworks, waste, and landfills, reparation of the vegetation damaged with local species and wildlife protection with underpasses or rehabilitation of existing structures. Felling of trees is required in some road schemes, trees will be protected in appropriate manner and tree clearance will be conducted outside the nesting season.

Investments in social, culture and education facilities primarily comprise rehabilitation and modernisation, rather than new construction, thus not falling under the EIA Directive. Improvements in this infrastructure should lead to improvements in energy efficiency. The Project’s impact at the construction stage will be short-lived and reversible, at a level which is deemed acceptable.

At operation stage, significant impacts will be related to noise and emissions from motor vehicle traffic linked to road projects. Special mitigation measures have been proposed according to legal emission thresholds which include the construction of noise barriers or fences where needed. Some of the road schemes include cycle tracks which contribute to sustainable mobility.

Institutional Capacity of the Promoter

The experience from the previous programming period 2007-2013 showed that all projects falling under the EU EIA Directive and “screened in” for EIA were managed in line with the requirements of the EIA Directive and the national legislative framework. The Bank received all necessary documents relating to the EIA process and concerned protected areas under Natura 2000. The Promoter’s institutional capacity to manage social and environmental risks within the framework of this operation is therefore considered to be good.

Social Assessment

No separate social impact assessment has been carried out; however, it is generally deemed that the overall social impacts of the framework loan are positive, with improved quality of life for the inhabitants of Rzeszów.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The City has not carried out any specific climate resilience analyses, however climate change is taken into account in the City’s land-use planning through flood risk management to minimise flood risk in the urbanised area, through planning measures to maintain or increase the proportion of green spaces in the built up area, through the City’s mobility policy favouring public transport, and through the City’s energy efficiency policy.

The individual project building permits will stipulate monitoring of environmental requirements prior to, during and post construction. In addition, road safety is expected to improve, contributing to upgrade the road network and public transport infrastructure to current safety standards.