

Luxembourg, 31 January 2018

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ATHENS METRO D
Project Number:	20130656
Country:	Greece
Project Description:	Design and construction of phase A of the new metro line 4 of the Athens metro system connecting Alsos Veikou and Goudi, and including acquisition of rolling stock.
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

Compliance with applicable Environmental Legislation

The project consists of a new 12.3 km long metro line in Athens, starting at Alsos Veikou and ending in Goudi, following an U-shaped trajectory. The project is part of the updated Metro Development Study (MDS), which is the transport planning study for the Attika region and is also included in the Athens Metro Lines Development Plan of the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks. The project is also included in the Athens Master Plan (Law 4277/2014) as an essential element for efficient transport in Athens. The Athens Master Plan has been the subject of a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The project falls under Annex II of Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) and has been screened in by the Competent Authority. An Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken and was originally submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Energy (the competent authority) for approval. Following public consultation in 2017, which resulted in two significant changes to the project scope, (change in the location of one metro station and inclusion of an additional metro station - Elikonas) amendments were made to the EIA and this was resubmitted to the competent authority for approval in October 2017.

Obtaining approval will be a signature condition for the Bank.

Environmental Impacts during construction and operation

During construction, the project is expected to have impacts on the movements of residents and businesses, as the works will generate heavy traffic which will use the urban road network. A number of access points to the stations are proposed to be located close to public squares and these will have to be closed off for the public during construction, though upon completion of construction, it is planned to return the spaces to public use and they will be enhanced as part of the project. Furthermore the project is expected to have the usual impacts during construction, in particular dust, vibration and noise. These impacts are well mitigated by remedial measures included in the EIA. To ensure that noise impacts remains below the specified limit a monthly program for monitoring before and during operation of each work site will be established.

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.

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There is a risk that during construction the project may encounter archaeological artefacts. Greece has well defined procedures for such events. As part of the project the Promoter is undertaking exploratory surveys to assess the risks of finding archaeological artefacts. Further, the Promoter is well versed in working in environments rich in archaeological artefacts.

During operation, the metro line will have a net positive impact on the environment (air quality) as it will enable the City of Athens to reduce bus services. Further, it is expected that there will be a reduction in the noise levels as a result of reduction in traffic (both buses and private vehicles) in comparison with without project scenario. Finally, the urban streetscape should also improve with the reduction of vehicles on the road network. Although the public spaces will be “returned to public use” after construction, replacement trees will take time to replace the existing mature trees in terms of ambiance.

Natura 2000 and Biodiversity

The project is located 1.62 km (at the closest point) from the nearest Natura 2000 site (Ymittos-Kaisariani GR3000006). Given the distance and the nature of the works, impacts on this Natura 2000 site are unlikely and the Promoter has applied to the competent authority for a confirmation of this. The Bank will require this confirmation prior to disbursement. The project will disturb during construction a number of urban green areas along the alignment, such as Veikou park, Court House Park, Stefi Hill and Evangelismos Park. These impacts are however deemed to be of limited scale and are characterized as not important, temporary and partially reversible in the EIA.

Residual Risks

The residual environmental compliance risk is deemed to be low as the EIA process is almost completed and the Promoter complies with relevant EU Directives. Further, the final environmental approval is expected to be obtained prior to signing of the finance contract.

Social Assessment

Due to the nature of the project (metro), most of the construction activity shall take place underground. There will however be surface works at all proposed station locations and these will have an impact on local residents and businesses during construction. The Promoter has engaged the affected communities and will to minimise the disruption during construction.

The Promoter will monitor the buildings along the project for movement and vibration during construction, though this is not expected to be a problem.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

There has been public consultation as part of the preparation of the EIA by the Promoter, and two key consequences of this consultation have been the relocation of a station and the addition of an extra station in the project.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The construction of Athens Metro Line 4 is a key objective to improve public transport in Athens, providing sustainable transport and improving the urban environment.

The project falls under Annex II of the EIA Directive. An EIA has been carried out on the project. The EIA report was re-submitted to the competent authority in October 2017 and at appraisal, the Promoter was still awaiting final approval.



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Financing for the project will be conditional on the Promoter obtaining all requisite environmental approvals. The Promoter shall complete the EIA procedures for the project and submit to the Bank the relevant environmental consent decision to the satisfaction of the Bank before contract signing. Further, the Promoter shall also submit to the Bank a declaration of the Competent Authority concerning absence of significant impact in relation to the Natura 2000 site prior to disbursement.

The long term environmental and social impact of the project is positive and will improve both access for citizens and also the urban environment.

Subject to the conditions above, the project is acceptable to the Bank in environmental and social terms.