

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: Expressway R1 Zarnovica - Sasovske Podhradie
 Project Number: 2011-0395
 Country: Slovak Republic
 Project Description: The project consists of the construction of a new four-lane section of the expressway R1 between the cities of Zarnovica and Sasovske Podhradie for a total length of 18.047 km in the Central Slovakia region. The project will improve international, inter-regional and regional accessibility in the area of Banska Bystrica increasing the level of service and road safety generating time and cost savings

EIA: Required Not required

Carbon Footprint: are the project emission estimated to exceed the absolute (gross) or relative (net) emissions thresholds (100,000 or 20,000 tons CO₂e/year respectively) of the EIB Carbon Footprint Pilot exercise? Scope, boundary, baseline and thresholds are defined in the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies. Details are provided in section: "Carbon Footprint"

Yes No

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

The project consists of the construction of a new four-lane section of the expressway R1 from Zarnovica to Sasovske Podhradie for a total length of 18.047 km with cross section of 22.5 m and design speed of 100 km/h (i.e. category R22.5/100). The expressway R1 runs from Trnava, through Nitra and Zvolen to Banská Bystrica in Central Slovakia and forms part of the European route E 571 of the European road network; it supplements the Motorway D1 which is the backbone of the Slovak road network.

The current project falls under **Annex I of the EIA Directive 85/337/EEC** as amended by Directives 97/11/EC and 2003/35/EC, being subject to an assessment in accordance with Articles 5 to 10 of EIA Directive. The environmental procedures for the project started in 1997 with a first EIA carried out in the period 1997-1999 in accordance with the legislation in place at that time. In September 2005, as a result of a legal action filed by an NGO and challenging the proposed construction location, the Slovak Supreme Court determined to repeat the whole EIA process with emphasis on existing ways of informing the public. A new EIA started in 2006 and the project was divided into two stages pertaining to two segments of the proposed expressway. The whole process for developing the project (EIA, studies, public consultations, planning and building permits) was completed in September 2008 and its compliance with EIA directives is documented in a form acceptable for the Bank.

The road alignment does not cross any location included in the **NATURA 2000** network. The screening reports issued by the relevant Authority responsible for monitoring the Natura 2000 sites states that the project will have no significant impact on the closest NATURA 2000 locations (SKUEV 0264-Klokoc and SKUEV 0265-Sut). Nevertheless, investments amounting to some EUR 35 million have been made for minimizing or compensating negative environmental impacts of the project. Said measure includes anti-noise protections, biologic revitalization, fauna migration structures, water protection, flood protection and monitoring measures including traffic monitoring. The project is expected to generate some 3 Kton of CO₂ emissions per year mainly as a result of the induced traffic along the corridor.

The project is eligible for EIB bank financing.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

Compliance with applicable Environmental Legislation

The project falls under Annex I of the EIA Directive 85/337/EEC as amended by Directives 97/11/EC and 2003/35/EC, being subject to an assessment in accordance with Articles 5 to 10 of EIA Directive.

The Slovak Republic has transposed the EU environmental directives into national legislation. The environmental requirements are covered by Act no. 24/2006 on the environmental impact assessment requirements which came into effect on the 1st February 2006 and includes Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requirements. The EU Nature Directive has been transposed into national legislation through act 543/2002 on Nature and Landscape protection and successive amendments.

The project is part of the Operating Program Transport for years 2007-2013 of the Ministry of Transport, Post and Telecommunications of the Slovak Republic which was subject to strategic assessment. The SEA decision was issued by the Slovak Ministry of Environment on the 28/02/2007 under No. 7721/2006-3.5/ml.

An EIA for the whole section Zarnovica – Sasovske Podhradie was performed in 1998-2001 pursuant to the SR National Council Act No. 127/1994 Coll., the Slovak legislation in place at that time. As a result of this EIA process the SR Ministry of Transport, Post and Telecommunication recommended the construction of the proposed road section on the 20/09/2001. The Territorial decision became legally binding on the 30/07/2003; however, in July 2004, the inhabitants of Ziar nad Hronom, took a legal action through a NGO to the Slovak Supreme Court by which they challenged the decision about the construction location.

In September 2005 the Supreme Court reached a decision that there was a misinterpretation of results for evaluation of impacts on the environment and it determined to repeat the whole EIA process with emphasis on existing ways of informing the public.

The second EIA process started in 2006 and was divided into two stages pertaining to two segments of the proposed road: Stage I (km 0.000 – km 9.675) and Stage II (km 9.675 – km 18.400). The public was consulted on the basis of the full Environmental Impact Study (EIS) with public hearings that took place in each of the municipalities involved. The Final EIA decisions by the SR Ministry of Environment were issued under number 62/06-7,3/ml on the 20/04/2006 for Stage I and under number 1727/06-3,5/ml on the 28/02/2007 for Stage II. Both The Final EIA decisions were then published and delivered to the concerned authorities and municipalities. No appeals were filed against the final EIA decisions and the territorial permits were issued on 24/10/2006 for stage I and on the 30/09/2008 for stage II.

Following the accomplishment of these procedures, the EIA process can be considered completed. Construction phases started in March 2008; the project is expected to be completed by end of 2011; however the section has been put into partial operation since November 2010.

Environmental Impacts and their mitigation

Overall, favourable impacts prevail over negative ones. The potential adverse effects consist mainly of air pollution and visual impact. Positive environmental effects deriving from the new expressway include reduced consumption of fuels and emissions as well as decrease of noise and lighting in the area of town Ziar nad Hronom. The project will also improve overall traffic safety along the corridor.

A number of technical and organizational measures aiming at minimising the impacts of the project have been taken in the course of construction and envisaged for the operation phase. They represent a relatively high proportion of the investment (i.e.: some Euro 35 milion) and include noise barriers, biologic revitalization, fauna migration structures, flood protection and monitoring measures.

Natura 2000

The road alignment does not cross any location included in the NATURA 2000 network. The closest protected areas of European importance are SKUEV 0264-Klokoc and SKUEV 0265-Sut. The competent authority responsible for monitoring the Natura 2000 sites (i.e.: the Regional centre for the conservation of the Štiavnické Vrchy Protected Landscape Area) has confirmed with its opinion dated 28/10/2008 that the project for the proposed sections of the expressway R1 does not extend beyond any existing borders of the Special Area of Conservation or the Special Protection Area for birds and has no significant impact on these sites.

Land use and building permit process

The territorial decisions (TD) and the building permits (BP) for the two stages of the project have been issued as follows:

Stage I (from km 0.000 to km 9.675)

TD issued by the city of Hliník nad Hronom on the 26.05.2006;

BP issued by Ministry of Transport, Post and Telecommunication on the 24.10.2006;

Stage II (from km 9.675 to km 18.400)

TD issued by the city of Žiar nad Hronom on the 15.08.2007

BP issued by Ministry of Transport, Post and Telecommunication on the 30.09.2008

Carbon Footprint

The project is expected to generate some 3 Kton of CO₂ emissions per year mainly as a result of the induced traffic along the corridor.

The project is not included in the EIB Carbon Footprint exercise. The EIB Carbon Footprint exercise currently only includes emissions from Direct Investment Loans or large allocations under Framework Loans above the methodology thresholds.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

All the legal prescriptions regarding public consultation for the construction's assessment were met for both the EIAs pertaining to the two stages in which the project was divided.

Public hearings took place in each of the municipalities involved. The time and place of such public hearing was communicated to the public in the locally customary ways. The hearings regarding the Stage I of the project took place at Municipal Offices in Revištské Podzámčie, Bzenec and Dolná Ždaň on the 15/03/2006 and at Municipal Offices in Hliník na Hronom and Lehôtka pod Brehmi on the 16/03/2006. The hearings regarding the Stage II of the project took place at Municipal Office Žiar nad Hronom (joint for Šášovské Podhradie and Horné Opatovce) and in culture house Lehôtka pod Brehmi on the 15/08/2006 and in culture house in Lovča and at Municipal Office in Ladomerská Vieska on the 16/08/2006.

Citizens of all concerned municipalities, who participated in the public hearings, voiced their opinions in favour of the immediate project implementation and operation of the given section as fast as possible. Participants of the territorial management did not voice any objections against the location of the project. The objections regarding higher noise resulted in changes in the project documentation to increase the length of noise barriers compared to the original documentation.

The minutes of the public hearing were recorded along with the opinion of NGO SOS Žiar nad Hronom, and were delivered to the Slovak Ministry of Environment as a document for issuing of a final opinion.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The expressway R1 will take over a substantial part of transportation intensity from the road I/65 on the section Zarnovica – Sasovke Podhradie, which will substantially improve the noise and dispersion conditions in the above-mentioned municipalities.

Quality road technical parameters also contribute to traffic fluency flow generating savings in journey time, and accident costs as well as reduced fuel consumption and emissions.