02.03.2012

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	BUDAPEST-SZEKESFEHERVAR RAILWAY
Project Number:	20100635
Country:	Hungary
Project Description:	The project concerns the design, rehabilitation and upgrade of the existing railway infrastructure between Budapest-Kelenföld and Székesfehérvár in Hungary - in total 63 km, with the addition of a second track between Budapest-Kelenföld and Tárnok (19 km). The line speed will be increased to 120 to 160 km/h, the supporting capacity of the tracks upgraded to 225kN (22.5 t) per axle. This project is part of the framework loan operation co-financing priority investments under the Transport and the Energy & Environment Operational Programmes in the current EU programming period (2007-2013).

EIA: Required ■ Not required ☐

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

The project is part of the TEN-T priority project No. 6 (rail axis Lyon-Ljubljana-Budapest-Ukrainian border) and connects Budapest with important cities in western Hungary and the popular resort area of Lake Balaton. It is an important suburban rail link around Budapest and an essential route to Slovenia and the western Mediterranean region in particular for domestic and transit freight transport from EU to Ukraine.

The 2007-2013 Transport Operational Programme (TOP) for Hungary, under which the project was presented, underwent a **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** procedure and the environmental effects were assessed.

The project falls under **Annex II of Directive 85/337/EC** as amended and was therefore subject to screening. A preliminary environmental impact assessment was performed in 2005. On the basis of the findings of this assessment, the Competent Authority decided, in practice, to screen out the project from completing a full EIA procedure by subsequently issuing three environmental permits without further assessment or consultation. These permits cover the whole project. Nevertheless, some public consultation did occur during the preliminary assessment. Moreover, no complaints have been received from interested stakeholders The European Commission has approved the related application for funding from the Cohesion Fund.

On this basis, the EIA process is acceptable for the Bank. A non-technical summary of the preliminary Environmental Impact Study has been provided and published on the EIB webpage.

The project is partly situated directly next to the NATURA 2000 sites “Lake Velence” and “Dinnyési-fertö”. In relation with the “appropriate assessment” of effects on sites included or intended to be included in the **NATURA 2000** network, the opinions of the competent authority related to specific sections of construction were issued on 9 April 2008, 13 May 2008 and 29 June 2009 respectively. These confirmed that there are no significant negative impacts on these zones (Forms A).

The Project will contribute to **sustainable objectives** by making rail transport more attractive and better placed to face modal competition from road. The project will also enhance railway and also road safety as some level crossings will be replaced by underpasses.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Impact and Mitigation

The EIA process was executed in accordance with the applicable legislation, notably the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and the EIA Directive 85/337/EC as amended, transposed in the Republic of Hungary into the Act on the Environmental Impact Assessment. In Hungary,

the implementation of the EIA process is prescribed by the national Act No. 53/1995 on the general rules of environmental protection and was regulated by the 20/2001. (II.14.) Gov. Decree on EIA at the time of initiation of project. This order was valid till December 31, 2005. Since the authority procedure has started earlier, the prescription of this order is to be followed.[1]

The project is considered to be Annex II of the EIA directive. After a detailed screening of the project on the basis of the preliminary environmental impact study and public consultations, the competent authorities decided to screen out the project and that the respective environmental permits can be issued. The environmental permits issued by the Central Transdanubian Environmental, Nature Conservation and Water Management Inspectorate of 20 March 2006 and 10 July 2006 cover the project from Tárnok to Székesfehérvár. The section Budapest-Kelenföld and Tárnok is covered by the respective environmental permit issued on 18 December 2006 by the Middle Danube Valley Environmental, Nature Conservation and Water Management Inspectorate.

The project is partly situated directly next to the NATURA 2000 sites “Lake Velence” and “Dinnyési-fertö”. The impact on both NATURA 2000 sites has been assessed during the environmental permitting procedure on the basis of the preliminary environmental impact study. Respective requirements have been stipulated in the environmental permit issued on 10 July 2006 by the Central Transdanubian Environmental, Nature Conservation and Water Management Inspectorate. According to the assessment and the requirements stipulated in the respective environmental permit, the competent authority (Central Transdanubian Environmental, Nature Conservation and Water Management Inspectorate, under the supervision of the Ministry of Environment, which is the authority for monitoring the NATURA 2000 sites) stated that no negative impact on the identified NATURA 2000 sites is expected and the appropriate Forms A were provided to the Bank.

Environmental Impacts
The main environmental impacts are generated from noise emission of the increased train traffic and speed. Other impacts are not expected to change significantly compared to the present condition. Therefore, the basic conditions of air quality, soil, surface and ground water were not needed to be determined during the impact assessment.
In order to mitigate the impact of the project (primarily increase of noise between 2 to 2.5 dB during the day due to traffic increase), a number of noise barriers is foreseen in order to keep the noise limits to 65 dBA equivalent for daytime and 55 dBA equivalent during night hours. Those limits are already currently exceeded at various sections of the line. In the area of Gardony City, a specific built-in noise protection (SODIFON system) has been requested as the construction of noise barriers is not allowed.

The potential adverse identified effects will occur mainly during the construction phase, including air & light pollution, noise & vibration, exposure of land surfaces to contamination and compaction. These and other impacts have been assessed as minor and temporary. Compliance with recommendations made within the framework of the permitting process is expected to appropriately mitigate against these the negative effects.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Project will contribute to sustainable objectives by making rail transport more attractive and better placed to face modal competition from road. The project will also enhance railway safety with reducing the number of the level crossings by underpasses and improving the signalling system. Other favourable project impacts include higher train speeds leading to improved services with shorter journey times, both for transit traffic and commuter traffic using the railway.

[1] The valid regulation is the Gov. Decree No. 314/2005. (XII.25.) on EIA and Unified Environment Use Permit Procedure having been in force since January 1, 2006.