

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	PLK Railway Modernization E59, Phase 2
Project Number:	20120032
Country:	Poland
Project Description:	The project consists of the modernization of 32 km of an existing dual electrified railway line between Czempin (km 131.08) and Poznan (km 163.4). The project lies on the Polish TEN-T network as well as the main international railway line number E59, Malmö-Ystad-Swinoujście-Szczecin-Poznan-Wroclaw-Opole-Chalupki.
EIA required?	Yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	No

Summary of Assessment

The project falls under Annex II of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 2011/92/EU. In accordance with Polish legislation, the project was automatically screened in and therefore subject to a full EIA procedure. In 2008-2009, an EIA was undertaken and in November 2009 the Competent Authority gave his positive Environmental Decision (ED). Due to subsequent minor design changes, a further EIA report was prepared in 2011 and in June 2011 the promoter submitted a request to amend the 2009 ED. An amended positive ED was issued in December 2011. The Competent Authority also required that a further round of environmental assessment be conducted at the building permit stage, an activity that is ongoing during 2012. The final approval of the Competent Authority will be obtained prior to any disbursement of the loan.

With respect to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC, the project forms part of the Polish Railway Master Plan to 2030 as well as the Infrastructure & Environment Operational Program. Both of these have been subject to the strategic level environmental assessment.

The project is crossing/running nearby five Natura 2000 sites, so the provisions of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) apply. The EIA report concluded that with a number of mitigation measures assigned, which shall be more precisely specified during the second stage EIA at the building permit stage, the project is not likely to have a significant negative effect on protected sites or species; prior to any disbursement of the loan a confirmation of this opinion will be obtained from the Competent Authority for Nature Conservation. In his 2009 and 2011 Decisions, the Competent Authority has detailed conditions which must be implemented to mitigate any possible adverse impacts to these sites including the construction of animal passages, improved drainage and treatment systems, restrictions on tree/shrub clearance and altering watercourses plus further monitoring.

The project's residual negative impacts during construction and operation are limited and partly offset by the expected modal shift facilitated by the investment. Overall, the project is acceptable from an environmental perspective.

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

The project concerns replacing the track bed, track, structures and catenary, mostly along the existing alignment, together with improvements to local access roads, the power supply, signalling, telecoms and stations/halts.

The main residual impacts of the project are conversion of about 17 ha of mostly arable land, as well as habitat disturbance. The works' designs include significant measures to mitigate impacts including large and small animal passages, drainage and runoff treatment/storage facilities, acoustic barriers and anti vibration mats, restrictions on construction (taking into account, among the others, the bird breeding season for clearing trees and bushes), fencing in places as well as long term monitoring. All these measures should result in an improvement to the environmental situation in comparison to the "without project case". The project also will result in the closure of 12 level crossings replacing them with either grade separated facilities or access roads to adjacent crossings; such closures should improve the safety of the line.

The project is crossing/running nearby five Natura 2000 sites: the railway crosses for 4.8 km the north-east corner of the Natura 2000 area Wielkopolska National Park, Site of Community Importance (SCI, PLH300010) and runs adjacent to it for a distance of further several km. This site occupies 8,400 ha and hosts 18 protected species - mammals, amphibians/reptiles, fish, invertebrates and plants (Annex II of Habitats Directive) - as well as incorporates 17 priority habitats (Annex I of Habitats Directive). The 2009 and 2011 EDs specify certain particular measures for the enhanced protection of this site including restrictions on the location of construction activities (well away from priority habitats), restrictions on tree clearance, the construction of an animal underpass and further monitoring.

Additionally, it runs in close proximity to Ostoja Rogalinska Special Protection Area (SPA, PLB 300017), Rogalinska Dolina Warty SCI (PLH300012) and Poznan Fort SCI (PLH300005). The project also runs within 1.5 km of Bedlewo Bieczyny SCI (PLH300039). Outside these areas, known animal migration corridors (including the Obra River valley forming part of an international migration corridor) also cross the railway.

The motivation for performing a second EIA during 2011 was driven by the subsequent finalisation of designs which changed/specified the location of access roads and structures. In consultation with the Competent Authority, it was determined that the nature/scale of the changes meant that the promoter should resubmit a revised proposal with a view to seeking an amendment to the 2009 ED. The 2011 ED amendment imposes additional obligations on the promoter, in particular: (i) the monitoring of the use of the animal underpass at km 152.9 within the Wielkopolska National Park; (ii) construction of additional noise barriers; and (iii) minor amendments to the location and specification of several structures.

Section 88 of the October 2008 Polish Act on "providing access to information concerning the environment and environmental protection, participation of the public in environmental protection and on the assessment of environmental impact" allows for a "supplemental EIA" procedure to be performed at the building permit stage. In his 2009 ED, and reconfirmed in the 2011 ED amendment, the Competent Authority has specifically required that such additional EIA procedure be performed due to the fact that the data in the initial EIA report does not allow for sufficient assessment of the project's impacts. The final approval of the Competent Authority will be obtained prior to any disbursement of the loan.

In August 2009, disclosure of environmental documentation was undertaken and no comments or applications to challenge were registered within the prescribed period. In August 2011, a second disclosure took place as part of the procedure to amend the 2009 ED. During this second round, written comments were received from the Wielkopolska National Park as well as an individual residing close to the line raising, respectively, concerns on the functionality of animal crossings and noise/vibration. Their comments were addressed in the 2011 ED. Another round of disclosure/public consultation is expected as part of the "supplemental EIA" during the building permit stage.

The project requires the acquisition of about 17 ha (298 plots) of largely arable and forest land. No residential properties are affected. Puszczykowo passenger halt has some historic buildings on the platform which have protected status; these are to be conserved during the renovations.