

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	Berlin Forschung II
Project Number:	2015-0492
Country:	Germany
Project Description:	The purpose of the project is to co-finance the city of Berlin's eligible investments in research performed by academic staff and scientists at three universities, three universities of applied sciences as well as 13 public non-university research institutes in the period 2016-2017.
EIA required:	No
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise:	No

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project includes salaries of R&D staff and purchases of R&D equipment. The included R&D activities will be carried out within existing facilities, making use of existing installation. Such activities create intangible (new knowledge and scientific discoveries), which do not fall under the Directive 2011/92/EC as amended by 2014/52/EU on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

Some of the laboratories included in the project handle toxic materials and toxic waste as part of their activities. The promoter has indicated that only one of the laboratories handles such large quantities of dangerous substances that it falls under Directive 2012/18/EU and has the related measures implemented. Its compliance is checked by the local competent authorities through regular onsite visits.

Three institutes carry out experiments with living animals. The promoter has confirmed that these institutes comply with all relevant legal provisions; notably Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes; and the German animal welfare act (TierSchG) as implemented by the Federal States. In Berlin, the competent authority enforcing the law and controlling compliance is the State office for health and social affairs (Landesamtes für Gesundheit und Soziales). In particular, the institutes are highly committed to applying the "3R" principle that consists in replacing animal use by alternative methods when possible, reducing the number of animals used as much as possible and refining the testing methods to reduce animals' pain and distress. To credibly implement the 3R principle, each institute has an animal protection delegate appointed by the City of Berlin who examines and validates the animal use plans for each individual research project in line with the EU Directive as implemented in TierSchG. The delegate's opinions are subject to an ex post control by the competent authority. The animal protection delegate also chairs an animal protection committee whose mandate consists in making continuous improvements to the enforcement of the 3R principle. Moreover, in 2000, Forschungsverbund approved rules of good scientific practice, which are relevant for all researchers and which are regularly refreshed through trainings.

The social institutes are more and more faced with ethical questions related to the protection of personal data. The current practice is to seek clearance from ethic committees on a case-by-case basis when there is a legal obligation or when particularly sensitive data are collected. For example, SOEP sought advice from the medical ethics committee of the University hospital (Charité) in the preparation of data collection and use for the Berlin Ageing

Study ("BASE II"). The SOEP has not established its own ethics committee to date since it does not collect genetically sensitive data yet. Nonetheless, the set-up of this will become avoidable as more and more sensitive person-related information comes into existence, raising issues in areas such as personality rights and the principle of damage avoidance. The German Data Forum recently prepared three recommendations for its members (among which SOEP) concerning (i) the use of declarations of consent for qualitative interviews; (ii) data protection issues in order to influence the legislative procedure on an EU level; and (iii) pseudonymisation and anonymization.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As the project does not cover any major construction works and the handling of dangerous substances and activities involving live animals for experimental and scientific purposes are in compliance with the Directive 2010/63/EU and checked and controlled by competent authorities, no significant impact is expected on the environment. The funded activities are expected to bring about positive environmental and societal outcomes in a number of research fields. The project is acceptable for the Bank's financing with neutral residual impact.