

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	SNCB ROLLING STOCK
Project Number:	2016-0186
Country:	BELGIUM
Project Description:	Acquisition of 445 new M7 double-deck passenger vehicles for services over the Belgian rail network

EIA required: no

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: no

Environmental and Social Assessment

The project consists of the acquisition of new rolling stock for replacement of the existing obsolete rolling stock for passenger services over the Belgian rail network and an increase of capacity of the railway services on the most congested lines.

The manufacturing of rail rolling stock does not fall under Annex I or Annex II of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (2011/92/EU). Therefore, no EIA is required for the project.

The old rolling stock to be replaced does not correspond to current passenger expectations of performance and comfort and is a deterrent for those who would potentially switch from private car to rail. The main benefit of the operation consists in maintaining the attractiveness of the railway service, contributing, at least, to prevent a modal shift towards road transport and, potentially, to some modal shift from road to rail. In the absence of such investments, the rail service quality would deteriorate and encourage the use of private cars with the associated negative impacts in terms of noise, energy consumption and associated emissions.

In addition, the new rolling stock will be equipped with the state-of-art technology and is expected to be more energy efficient than the existing one; despite higher performance of the new rolling stock the energy consumption is not expected to increase and may be even reduced on seat*km basis. The new rolling stock will meet the requirements concerning the noise emissions, so the noise emissions of the railways themselves are expected to be lower.

The new rolling stock will be maintained in existing and new workshops, which will be largely within the existing railway sites. The new workshops are being built in Arlon, Hasselt, Kinkempois and Melle. Another new workshop is planned in Oostende. In the case of Melle, the Competent Authority indicated that, as per the nature and scope of works, the scheme does not fall within the scope of the EIA Directive. In the cases of Arlon, Hasselt and Kinkempois, taking into account, among others, the relevant criteria set out in Annex III of the EIA Directive, the Competent Authorities screened the schemes out. Consequently, no EIA is required for these works. In all the cases, the environmental consents issued by the Competent Authorities require implementation of relevant environmental protection measures, such as for waste treatment and noise abatement. The Promoter will be required to submit to the Bank the environmental consent documentation related to the Oostende workshop. The construction of the workshops is not in the scope of this project.

The replaced old rolling stock will be either scrapped or subject to asbestos removal prior to be sold on the second hand market. In either case, this will be done by entities specifically certified for the corresponding activities.

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.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project does not fall in the scope of the EIA Directive, which is not applicable to manufacturing of rail rolling stock. Therefore, no EIA is required for the project.

The project is expected to prevent a shift from rail to road transport, which is expected to happen if the project is not implemented. In addition, the new rolling stock is expected to be more energy efficient and have lower level of noise emissions. By comparison with the “without project” scenario, as well as, with the current situation, the project is expected to have positive environmental impact in terms of energy savings, air pollution, noise and CO2 emissions.

The new rolling stock will improve the accessibility of the rail services for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility.

The Promoter will be required to submit to the Bank evidence of the relevant environmental approvals for the new Oostende maintenance workshop.

The project is acceptable from an environmental perspective.