

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ATHENS RESILIENT CITY AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT
Project Number:	2017-0118
Country:	Greece
Project Description:	The Project includes a Framework Loan (FL) to co-finance selected multi-sector urban schemes aiming at enhancing the resilience of Athens and contributing to its integrated development (ITI Plan).
EIA required:	This is a multiple-scheme FL operation. Therefore, some of the schemes are likely to fall under Annex I or II of the EIA Directive and may be "screened in".
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	No

Environmental and Social Assessment

This operation includes a Framework Loan (FL) to co-finance selected multi-sector urban schemes included in the multi-annual investment plan of the Municipality of Athens for 2017-2020, including urban rehabilitation, sustainable mobility, waste management, economy and tourism, social infrastructure, information technology and services, energy upgrades, culture and public spaces and, public buildings, among other sectors. The FL includes mainly small and medium-sized schemes (below MEUR 50). Some of the schemes under the FL may be linked to inclusion of refugees or/and asylum seekers.

The Project is supporting the overarching Athens Resilient Strategy for 2030, of which the goal is to help the City face challenges such as long-term unemployment, refugee flows and environmental degradation. The Project is also in line with the City's Development Strategy for 2016-2020. Most of the schemes included in the Project are part of the Integrated Territorial Investment Plan of the Municipality of Athens.

The Strategy documents mentioned above are consistent with the higher-level General Urban Plan of Athens and the Athens/Attica Master Plan 2021, which was subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC.

Relevant EU environment Directives have been transposed into national legislation (SEA Directive, EIA Directive, Birds and Habitats Directives). The Environmental Authority (Attica Region) will determine where relevant whether project components may require a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Depending on the size, nature and location of the schemes, this Authority may delegate to the Municipality the assessment on the need for EIA. The majority of investment schemes will take place in developed urban areas and outside protected areas including Natura 2000.

The Project's environmental impact at construction will be short-lived and reversible, at a level which is deemed acceptable. Potential negative effects (e.g. dust and noise during construction) are to be alleviated by implementing effective mitigation measures as identified during the EIA process.

During operation, the investments are expected to bring a number of positive effects in terms of climate adaptation and mitigation, as a result of insulation of walls and roofs, changing of windows and other energy efficiency measures. The Project also includes pedestrian areas and bicycle paths as well as ICT components, which contribute to sustainable mobility and

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.

climate mitigation. Furthermore, through recycling schemes, the Project is expected to contribute to the transition to the circular economy in line with the EC Circular Economy Package.

Climate Action

The City is a member of the Covenant of Mayors and the Mayors Adapt. It is also a member of the Compact of Mayors (UN co-operation). The two initiatives have been merged recently into the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy, in which the Municipality of Athens is also a regular member.

The Athens Municipality actively shows its sensitivity in dealing with climate change and sustainable management of the urban environment. Being an active member of the Network of C40 Cities for Climate Change and Network of 100 Resilient Cities, the Municipality plans significant interventions for the reduction of CO₂ and other pollutant emissions and the optimisation of the use of energy and natural resources.

In line with the above mentioned plans and strategies, Climate Action is at the core of this Project, with measures which consider identified current and future climate change risks: Renewable energy and energy efficiency (e.g. upgrade of public buildings), green and blue infrastructure (e.g. upgrade of open spaces and green areas), sustainable mobility (e.g. cycling infrastructure, pedestrian areas) and waste management (e.g. recycling schemes).

Social Assessment

The schemes covered by this operation mirror the key priorities of the City's Resilient Strategy. The priorities include the creation of new employment, safer transport infrastructures, improved social housing standards, investment in services for vulnerable people, and improving the effectiveness of public services. These initiatives aim to make Athens a working city, creating decent neighbourhoods and tackling inequalities that prevent people from achieving their potential.

The Project does not foresee resettlement of people, since it focuses on the upgrade and/or improvement of existing infrastructure.

A small portion of the schemes to be financed under this EIB operation may come to be dedicated to accommodate or serve refugees and/or asylum seekers. Such investments would contribute, if necessary, to alleviating the situation of the number of refugees/asylum seekers in Athens. The Municipality of Athens will facilitate social integration and the identification and care of vulnerable groups and persons² with special reception needs (e.g. medical) which will be taken in to account in the provision of services.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The proposed schemes are aligned with the Athens Resilience Strategy and the Development Strategy. These documents have undergone public consultation. Particularly, the Resilience Strategy was designed in collaboration with a wide spectrum of Athenian stakeholders from academic institutions, the public and private sectors as well as from civil society.

Meetings with project-affected people and civil society organisations as well as public administrations, including local authorities, will be held as needed to promote harmonious relationships between local communities and asylum seekers/refugees that may be accommodated.

² Vulnerable groups and persons such as minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of human trafficking, persons with serious illnesses, persons with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, such as victims of female genital mutilation.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

Most of the schemes included in this project are still in development stage but it is expected that they fully comply with the EU EIA Directive 2014/52/EU (amending 2011/92/EU). Individual schemes have to obtain building permission from the Municipality, which already takes into account the national environmental legislation. The Municipality will strictly follow the decisions and recommendations to be issued by the Environmental Competent Authority, both before and during implementation of the envisaged investment program.

No archaeological sites are known to be located in the vicinity of the Project however at time of implementation (if needed) surveys will be done in line with relevant procedures and building permits. Athens is also improving its resilience against earthquakes, given its location in a seismic area. This aspect will be particularly relevant for the new and rehabilitated public buildings, which will comply with the latest design codes.

Gender Mainstreaming in Municipal and Regional Policies aims to develop, implement and evaluate equality policies so that both genders benefit equally from all policies and actions at all levels and stages of economic, social and political life. This has a direct and positive impact in the design of the projects implemented by the Municipality, including public participation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Promoter (Municipality of Athens) will be required to act according to the provisions of the relevant EU Directives, including SEA (2001/42/EC), EIA (2014/52/EU amending 2011/92/EU), Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives and Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) as transposed into national law. In projects where applicable, the Promoter will be requested to deliver the NTS of EIAs to the Bank before Bank funds are allocated.

For Schemes having a potential impact on protected areas including Natura 2000 sites, the Promoter has to provide evidence of the compliance (including screening) with the Habitats and Birds Directives (if applicable) before the Bank funds are allocated. For schemes triggering art. 4.7 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the promoter has to provide evidence of the compliance with the WFD before the Bank funds are allocated.

Accommodation centres or public infrastructure specifically made available to asylum seekers or refugees included in this Project, are subject to an individual appraisal and specific conditions before these can be allocated.

Athens is fully committed to Climate Action, including mitigation and adaptation measures as part of its Developing Strategies.

Overall, the net impact on sustainable development is expected to be positive supporting the Bank's involvement. The Project should bring about socio-economic benefits by regenerating affected urban areas, creating new employment and research opportunities, improving social facilities, investing in services for vulnerable people, tackling social inequalities and improving the effectiveness and conditions of public services.

The Promoter is capable to manage the environmental and social issues derived from this Project. Therefore, given the nature of the operation and the procedures concerning EIA and nature protection put in place by the competent authorities in Athens, subject to the conditions mentioned above, the FL is acceptable in environmental and social terms.