

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	Tram de Liège
Project Number:	2017-0040
Country:	Belgium
Project Description:	The project consists of the construction of a 12.5 km tramway line in the city of Liège, with 21 stations and two park-and-rides. It also includes the construction of a new depot-maintenance centre and the acquisition of 20 trams.
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

Formal Aspects

The project falls within the scope of Annex II of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU. For this project the Competent Authority required an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Extensive Environmental Impact Studies have been carried out and the Non-Technical Summary was reviewed by the Bank in 2012, at the time of the appraisal of the same project under operation 2011-0580. The approval of the full EIA process was obtained on 2nd February 2015 as part of the so-called *Permis Unique* in Belgium. These documents are valid until 2022.

The tramway line of Liège is part of the municipal Mobility Plan approved in 2004 before the SEA Directive entered into force. It is also part of the Mobility Urban Plan promoted at regional level, which covers the whole urban area (24 municipalities). These two plans are not required by law. The only legally binding planning document is the *Plan De Secteur* that is developed at regional level and was approved before the SEA Directive entered into force.

Impacts

Impacts during construction will be important, given that the project is situated in an urban milieu along its entire length. Relevant impacts will include road traffic constraints and access to homes, shops and businesses. The envisaged sequence of works has been designed to minimize this impact. The Promoter has also defined constraints for site arrangements to ensure appropriate local access conditions during the works. To minimize these impacts all conducted street works along the tram corridor since 2013 integrate advance works for utility network diversions.

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.

Luxembourg, 18 July 2017

The operation of the tram line will have a significant impact, deemed positive, on the public transport system. TEC Liège-Verviers, the entity responsible for the operation of the bus network and in the future for the operation of the tram, will restructure the bus network in order to achieve an appropriate integration with the future tram.

Designed to encourage modal shift from private vehicles to public transport, the project will result in a net loss of on-street parking spaces. The parking impact will be partly mitigated by the creation of some new on-street spaces and the construction of two Park+Ride facilities, in particular 2 multi-storey car parks at the termini of Standard and Bressoux.

Although the future acoustic ambience will be largely dependent on road traffic, the project will have some impact on noise and vibration. Mitigation measures, established as part of the EIA process, include vibration attenuation, for example through the provision of floating slab track for certain sections.

Consideration of Options

Several alignment alternatives were proposed in the context of the Environmental Studies and the public consultation. Four of these alternatives were accepted for evaluation. One of the alternatives, the so-called *Variante 7: Avroy – Passage par l'avenue Rogier*, has been adopted by the Promoter.

Nature Conservation

Construction and operation of the Project are not expected to have any significant impact on nature conservation area and on protected species. This was confirmed in the certificate issued by the Competent Authority.

Climate Change Aspects

On the alluvial plain of the Meuse in Liège, where the tram line will be located, a flood protection system was installed from 1928 onwards, comprising a system of drains and pumping stations.

Changes in the rainfall regime relevant to the design of this system were detected at the time of issuing of the rainfall intensity-duration-frequency contours for the Walloon region (*Courbes IDF, intensité-durée-fréquence*) in 2006. The drainage/flood protection design criteria, based on these contours, have since been changed accordingly. The new criteria will apply to the rehabilitation of the flood protection system (including where this may be required by the works of the tram project) and to any new works. In the long term, this approach should contribute to reducing the flood vulnerability of the city and its tram system.

Concerning the tram project itself, the car park area to be provided at *Modeleurs* has been designed at a level sufficiently high for its runoff to be evacuated directly, without the need to use the flood protection system.

Soil decontamination

The Promoter has carried out soil decontamination works within the tramway corridor. The only location to be depolluted was the depot and garage in Bressoux, a former railways storage facility area. Specifically, the Promoter applied three types of soil detoxification depending on use: for office, detoxification has been carried out up to 5m underground; for the workshop detoxification was performed at some meters depth; for garaging depots minimal required detoxification was carried out.

Luxembourg, 18 July 2017

Social Assessment, where applicable

Expropriations

Some expropriations have taken place and some others are still pending. None of them imply involuntary resettlement of individuals.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

An information meeting was held on 29 May 2012 at the *Palais des Congrès* of Liège, during which members of the public could discuss their questions, comments and proposals. Prior to the delivery of the *permis unique*, which took place in 2013 (subsequently a modification was asked and approved in February 2015), a public enquiry was held, announced by press and post to local people living within 50 m from the project.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- Construction and operation of the project is not expected to have any significant effect on any nature conservation area, and a certificate to that effect was issued by the Competent Authority, the *Département Nature et Forêts* of the *Direction Générale Opérationnelle de l'Agriculture, des Ressources Naturelles et de l'Environnement* of the Walloon Region.
- The acquisition of rolling stock is excluded from the EIA Directive.

Recommendations

Considering the above, the project is acceptable for EIB financing in E&S terms.

The Promoter is likely to undertake an update of its urban mobility plans. When updated, the Promoter will be required to provide a copy of the updated documents including a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) as per the SEA directive.