

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	MALTA SOCIAL HOUSING
Project Number:	2015 0802
Country:	Malta
Project Description:	Construction of social housing units to be implemented in the years 2017-2021 as part the current programme of social housing development in in Malta
EIA required:	Multiple scheme operation, some schemes may require an EIA
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The proposed Framework Loan will concern the financing of investments in social housing in the years 2017 - 2021 by Malita Investments, a state-owned investment holding company appointed by the Government of Malta to finance the country's social housing programme that will be co-implemented by the national Housing Authority, an agency falling under the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity and the Housing Project Management Unit (HPMU), a new fully public company that will be set up ad hoc by the Maltese government. EIB funding will contribute to the delivery of 621 new social housing units and 200 associated parking garages. The Housing Authority will be responsible for managing the new units as well as the waiting lists to allocate the housing units to eligible tenants.

Schemes will be located in urbanised areas and included in the local spatial and development plans for which the relevant Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) have been performed in line with the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC.

Relevant environment EU Directives were transposed into national legislation (SEA Directive, EIA Directive, Birds and Habitats Directive, Energy Performance of Buildings Directive). Individual schemes have to obtain building permission which already takes into account the national environmental legislation. Building permits are issued by the relevant local building authorities.

The environmental impact of the project is expected to be minimal. Moreover, the investments are expected to bring a number of positive effects, including energy savings in buildings as a result of insulation of walls and roofs, changing of windows and other energy efficiency measures.

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, 19 April 2017

Given the scope of this operation and sector included (housing), it is likely that most of the schemes will not be subject to full EIA. It is expected that most of them will fall under the Annex II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, requiring the Competent Authority to screen them. In addition, most of the schemes will be located outside protected areas, including Natura 2000.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The project supports the construction of social housing, which aims to provide affordable housing for low-income households. According to the information provided by Malita Investments PLC, in principle, the project will not entail any resettlements and the probability of raising any protest or making any complaint about the investment by non-governmental institutions (e.g. ecological, the protection of cultural heritage, protection of consumer rights etc.) may be considered minor.

The social housing is operated, regulated and monitored by Malta's Housing Authority contributing to guaranteeing adequate technical standards for the accommodation units included in this operation.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

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 new social housing areas when established. Moreover, with reference to the social housing component, the need for and suitability of social housing (in a given area), will be assessed by Malta's Housing Authority.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project's environmental impact at the construction stage will be short-lived and reversible, at a level which is deemed acceptable. The project should bring about environmental benefits and it should contribute to climate change mitigation by reducing the energy consumption through energy efficiency measures implemented in new and retrofitted buildings (e.g. insulation of structures, new heating systems, etc.). The project has no particular residual impacts apart from those expected from construction and retrofitting of buildings.

It is expected that the project will result in a significant number of positive social externalities (e.g. provision of affordable accommodation for low income households, etc.), justifying the Bank's involvement. Positive social benefits are also foreseen through the improvement in quality of housing for households with below average income, as well as the provision of space for associated infrastructure facilities.

The Promoter will be required to act according to the provisions of the relevant EU Directives, including SEA (2001/42/EC), EIA (2011/92/EU) and subsequent amendments (e.g.: 2014/52/EU), Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives as transposed into national law. The Promoter will be requested to deliver the NTS of EIAs (if applicable) to the Bank before the Bank funds are allocated. In addition, the Promoter has to provide evidence of the compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives (if applicable) before the Bank funds are allocated.

The institutional capacity of the Malita Investment PLC and Malta's Housing Authority to manage the environmental and social issues is deemed satisfactory and therefore, subject to the conditions described above, the project is acceptable for the Bank in environmental and social terms.

PJ/ECSO