

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	JOKERI LIGHT RAIL LINE
Project Number:	2016-0838
Country:	Finland
Project Description:	The project concerns the construction of the Jokeri light rail line in the cities of Helsinki and Espoo in Finland and the acquisition of related rolling stock.
EIA required:	no
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

Compliance with applicable Environmental Legislation:

The project is included in the Helsinki Region Transport System Plan (HLJ 2015), approved in March 2015, and the Helsinki City Master Plan. Both have gone through a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process, in compliance with EU SEA Directive 2001/42.

The project, a tramway line, falls under the scope of the annex II of the EIA directive. The project has been screened out by the competent authority (Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment - ELY Centre Uusimaa) on May 22, 2014 as the impacts during construction and operation, as well as the mitigation measures have been sufficiently assessed during EIA procedures for related zonal land-use plans and the project is not considered to have significant adverse impacts on the environment. Nevertheless, an environmental study has been prepared as part of the planning process and has been made public on the Cities' website.

Natura 2000 and Biodiversity:

The line mainly runs through a consolidated urban environment on existing road corridors having no major impacts on biodiversity. At some sections, the project is situated on the border of the protective green zones of Natura 2000 areas, like at Laajalahden lintuvesi (FI0100028) and at Vanhankaupunginlahti (FI0100062). An environmental study highlighting the effects on the Natura area at Laajalahti, as well as an assessment of the combined effects with other projects in the area, has been conducted in January 2014. As a consequence of the report, the competent authority confirmed in its decision, that the project is not likely to have significant impacts on this Natura 2000 area and proper mitigation and compensation actions will be implemented to prevent negative effects.

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.

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According to the EU Habitats Directive and the Finnish Nature Conservation Act, the flying squirrel (*Pteromys volans*) is a species in need of strict protection, whose breeding and resting areas are not to be destroyed or weakened. Occurrence of the Siberian flying squirrel in Helsinki has been studied in 2016. In some sections, the project will have an impact on flying squirrels listed in annex IV of the Habitats Directive. Derogation from the competent authority has been granted on 10 August 2016 (UUDELY/8132/2016) to impact upon the flying squirrel's areas of rest and reproduction, subject to the implementation of compensatory measures. The competent authority confirms that this derogation will not weaken the protection of the flying squirrel regionally or nationally.

At Vanhankaupunginlahti area (FI0100062) the screening stages of the Natura 2000 assessment is in progress. In addition, a tram bridge for the project will be built across the Vantaanjoki river, which is part of the Natura 2000 corridor (FI0100104). Nature directive species *Unio crassus* (thick shelled river mussel) lives in the Vantaanjoki river. The bridge pillars will be built on the dry land and the turbidity of the water will be minimized. At the Natura 2000 areas the construction work will be carried out outside the bird nesting season.

Impacts during construction:

The main impacts will be temporary (dust, noise and emissions). In particular, the works at the depots will be a substantial source of noise during the construction. Those impacts will be fully mitigated through good construction practice. This is reinforced by the fact that the Alliance Group, in charge of the implementation of the project, shall have certified management systems for environmental and safety issues.

During the operational phase:

The impacts of the tramline on the overall noise level of traffic have been evaluated with noise modelling on the basis of the traffic prognoses. In most areas, the overall changes in noise levels are minor. The noise levels will increase in areas where no bus lines were running in the do-nothing scenario. The noise barrier shown in the road plan decreases the noise level compared to the current noise level of the Natura area in Laajalahti also in the case of increasing traffic volumes. In general, the vicinity of the tramline does not contain substantial vibration risk areas. Nevertheless, in some specific cases mitigation measures will be put in place.

Other Environmental and social Impacts:

The project does not require major land acquisitions as the line will mainly run through existing road corridors. The depots will be built on land owned by the cities.

Climate change mitigation:

The project is enhancing the public transport system in Helsinki and Espoo, improving the quality of public transport service in terms of speed, comfort and reliability and thus increasing its attractiveness to users in the urban area, contributing to the reduction of reliance on private cars and the related negative impact on environment, and consequently to tackling climate change.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Public consultation has been carried out within the EIA procedures for the urban land-use plans. The screening-out decision for the project itself has been published on the competent authority website.

In order to keep residents informed of the planning and construction process, the cities have a dedicated web page for the project. Detailed schedules will be notified to residents before

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work starts at each worksite. The environmental impact studies for the project and all its annexes have also been published on the project's website. These measures are considered suitable for the Bank.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project will mainly run through a consolidated urban environment and therefore social and environmental impacts will be limited and minimized during construction and operation through a comprehensive environmental management plan. Nevertheless, derogation was required to impact locally upon the flying squirrel's areas of rest and reproduction. The competent authority has granted the derogation subject to the implementation of compensatory measures based on the fact that this will not weaken the protection of the flying squirrel regionally or nationally.

The Promoter shall provide a written confirmation from the competent authority that the project will have no impact on Natura 2000 sites at Vanhankaupunginlahti area (FI0100062) and Vantaanjoki river (FI0100104), before the first disbursement.

Under these circumstances and once conditions are met, the project is considered to be acceptable for Bank financing from an environmental and social perspective.