

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	RTBF MEDIA SQUARE
Project Number:	2018-0267
Country:	Belgium
Project Description:	The project consists in the construction of media (production, studios, ICT) and office facilities by the Radio-Television Belge de la Communauté Française de Belgique (RTBF), a public sector organism in charge of public TV and radio broadcasting for the French-speaking community of Belgium (around 4m people). The new infrastructure, called "Media Square", will also be a key component of a wider urban regeneration plan for the Reyers area of Brussels. The project will be implemented over the 2019-2022 period.
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The new building called "Media Square" will develop the necessary infrastructure to cope with the changes in the media industry and will also express the promoter's corporate values: transparency, creativity and innovation. The building offers 40,000 m² gross on 7 floors and 550 underground parking spaces on 3 levels. The project includes as well the deployment of new technologies to foster cost efficient transmedia productions and the ability to distribute content quickly across multiple platforms and formats. This is achieved by an unconditional usage of digital technologies.

The construction of the new building for public Media production falls under the Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as the project is covered by Annex II of the Directive in relation to urban development. The EIA document is not available yet at the time of appraisal, but will be requested as a disbursement condition.

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, 21 June 2019

A soil study was requested by the authority Bruxelles Environnement, as per the regulation. Traces of heavy metal pollution (Cu, Pb, Ni) were detected, the area being an old national military shooting field. A specialized company has been mandated to perform an exhaustive study and to determine what kind of treatment is necessary prior to the construction of the new building. This process is under the scrutiny of Bruxelles Environnement, the control authority.

Except this traces of pollution, no unusual risks have been identified. However the usual impacts during construction (noise, dust and disruption) will be managed during the implementation period by the contractors. The new building will be built partly on the existing outdoor parking for employees. This will cause a deficit of 289 parking places. To avoid any pressure on parking places in neighbouring streets, a temporary parking at the back of the site will be made available to the employees during the construction phase. The promoter studies also other complementary solutions.

Although compliant with the EU Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings - recast 2010/31/EU, the new building doesn't fully fulfil all requirements for a Nearly Zero Energy Building. It is allowed due to the fact that the permit request was filled prior to 31 December 2018. However, the new construction that will replace the existing one is expected to consume half less energy than the existing one and will therefore help mitigate climate change.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The Project is part of a wider urban regeneration programme called "Media Park", which aims to foster innovative employment by creating an important Media pole in the Brussels Capital Region. The programme also de-compartmentalizes the neighbourhood and will offer in addition to the local population housing and public services, schools, retail, leisure and green spaces.

The site shelters a classified monument, protected by a decree of classification: "L'Enclos des Fusillés". During the two World Wars, a total of 296 resistance fighters were shot by the occupants. The meadow where they had been buried was transformed into a place of memory. This classified site will be preserved.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The construction of the new building follows the EU Directives and the national laws, specifically the code Bruxellois de l'Aménagement du Territoire (CoBAT) and the Code Bruxellois de l'Air, du Climat et de la maîtrise de l'Energie (COBRACE). Public consultations are part of the obligatory process and will be conducted for the RTBF MEDIA SQUARE project itself, as well as for the wider urban regeneration programme called "MEDIA PARK".

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The promoter has a clear corporate governance structure and practices corporate social responsibility. The various enterprises that have formed a temporary company, which make up the team of architects and engineers in charge of the design and control of the execution of works, are certified ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 for the engineering part, and ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 for the Security and Health control.

Regarding the implementation of the project, it is estimated that the conception of the building, the related civil works and the implementation of the new digital infrastructure will generate about 310 person-years on total, mainly provided by subcontractors and third parties.

Luxembourg, 21 June 2019

Conclusions and Recommendations

The construction of the new Media Square building falls under Annex II of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as the project is in relation to urban development. The EIA document is not available yet at the time of appraisal, but is requested as a disbursement condition.

During the implementation period, there will be limited temporary impacts (noise, dust and disruption) caused by construction works of the new building. Appropriate mitigations will be put in place, as for instance a temporary parking for employees in order to lower the pressure on parking places in the neighbouring streets.

Considering the above, the project is acceptable for Bank financing.

Condition for disbursement:

The promoter shall send to the bank prior to any disbursement a copy of the final environmental permit. In addition, as an undertaking, the Bank will also request a copy of the Energy Performance Certificate or equivalent.

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