

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	CONNECTED SCHOOLS IN SERBIA
Project Number:	2017-0979
Country:	Serbia
Project Description:	The operation concerns selected investments in the nation-wide digital education investment programme (Connected Schools) in Serbia. The Project will finance the continuous professional development (training) of teachers in digital skills, the provision of new digital equipment and digital content, the upgrade of the academic network and central locations, and the rollout of Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN).
EIA required:	no
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 scope of the project includes deployment of wireless local area network (WLAN) composed of installation of equipment (passive and active) and cabling within existing school premises, provision of digital teaching equipment, provision of digital content and capacity building of teachers and school leaders. The project will be carried out in existing facilities already authorised that will not change their scope due to the project. If located within the EU, none of the activities included in the project would be included in any of the Annexes of the EIA Directive.

The installation of the WLAN system implies that children and teenagers are exposed to pulsed microwave radiation. Thus, active components of the systems should be carefully selected in order to minimise this exposure. Furthermore, measurements according to the resolution 1815 (2011) adopted by the European Council, are recommended to be implemented in order to reduce potential negative effects of electromagnetic fields (EMFs). The promoter has confirmed that the Serbian thresholds for radiation in the context of WLAN systems are more stringent than the EU standards.

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Carbon Footprint Exercise, as defined in the EIB Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: 20,000 tonnes CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

Luxembourg, 8 April 2020

Social Assessment, where applicable

The promoter has confirmed that Serbia complies with the EU's GDPR (regulation (EU) 2016/679) on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

The WLAN deployment requires installation of the equipment outside the school operating hours in order to ensure continuation of education activities undisturbed. Serbia has been member of International Labour Organisation (ILO) since 2000 and has ratified the ILO core labour standards. The EIB requires the promoter to include the standard EIB environmental and social covenant as a part of all the EIB financed contracts. Hence, the EIB requires the promoter and their sub-contractors to respect the Core Labour standards of the ILO and to promote the relevant rights under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in order to ensure the fundamental rights of workers to be respected.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project finances activities that are not expected to have significant impact on environment. Instead, taking the step towards digital teaching methods is expected to provide some positive social and environmental benefits.

In order to comply with the Bank's requirements, the following conditions and undertakings relating to environmental and social matters will be inserted in the Finance Contract and applied to the Project:

- The Promoter shall ensure that international labour standards are respected in all phases of the project. Appropriate conditions shall be included in bidding document and contracts, including reporting and monitoring requirements.
- The Promoter shall report to the Bank within 2 working days any accident with fatalities or severe environmental damage, or one that may generate widespread media interest.

In light of the above, the project is acceptable for EIB financing.

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