



Luxembourg, 21 November 2024

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet¹

Overview

Project Name:	UNIVERSITY OF CRETE - STUDENT ACCOMMODATION PPP
Project Number:	2023-0788
Country:	Greece
Project Description:	The project concerns the design, construction, financing and operation of student accommodation and other facilities for the University of Crete using the public-private partnership (PPP), design-build-finance-operate-maintain (DBFOM) procurement method.
EIA required:	Yes
Invest EU sustainability proofing required:	Yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ² :	No

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project comprises the construction of student accommodation for the University of Crete in two campuses located in Rethymnon and Heraklion, with a total capacity of 2 833 units and various configurations. It also includes the delivery of a new 800-seat amphitheatre in the Rethymnon campus.

Construction of buildings is not specifically listed in the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, though the project is covered by Annex II - Item 10(b) urban development projects. As per national legislation, the project is subject to the EIA procedure due to the size of each plot, each exceeding 7,5 ha (classified as Category A2, which includes projects that can potentially have significant environmental impacts). Therefore, EIA procedures were executed, resulting in the preparation of an EIA report for each campus. The scope of the reports encompasses broader developments within the university campuses, including the student accommodations and the amphitheatre to be financed under this operation.

The campuses are located in plots scheduled for educational purposes according to the local zoning plans which underwent a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Prefecture of Crete. None of the sites are located within areas belonging to the Natura 2000 network, and/or other protected or key biodiversity areas. The two EIA reports for both campuses conclude that the university developments will not have significant environmental effects. A positive impact is expected on the human population and other socio-economic factors, including employment.

¹ The information contained in the document reflects the requirement related to the environmental, social and climate information to be provided to Investment Committee as required by the Invest EU Regulation and it represents the equivalent of the information required in the template of the InvestEU sustainability proofing summary.

² 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.



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The Competent Authorities have issued positive opinions for both campuses. The two EIA Decisions issued require mitigation measures, as well of preventive nature, establish the legal permissible limits for noise and pollutants both during construction and operation phases, and require that periodic monitoring is performed. The measures include construction practices to suppress noise and dust, limit water consumption, avoid land pollution and implement proper hazardous waste management. The operational requirements include parameters for the on-site sewage treatment, collection and storage of recyclable materials, leakage checks for the refrigerants, and the safe use of the equipment. The EIA Decisions also cover general requirements such as the application of bioclimatic design principles, compliance with the Greek energy performance code, use of water management systems that will reduce potable water demand, and the realization of physically-accessible spaces.

Climate Assessment

The new buildings will achieve higher energy performance compared to the minimum energy performance requirements set in the national measures implementing Directive 2010/31/EU, and their primary energy demand will be at least 10 % lower than the threshold set for the nearly zero-energy building (nZEB). The expected operational GHG emissions will be substantially lower compared to the EIB Carbon Footprint Methodology threshold of 20,000 tonnes CO_{2e}/year. A building electrification strategy is pursued, meaning that the building systems will use electricity rather than fossil fuels, with the exemption of gas cylinders for a limited number of appliances in the central kitchens. Electrification is an important strategy for reducing carbon emissions from buildings and allows full decarbonization during operation, as electricity generation is planned to shift to low-carbon sources and renewables. Within this context, charging stations for electric vehicles will be installed in the parking areas.

Furthermore, the Private Partner confirmed that the final project design will take into consideration the climate change projections of the Regional Adaptation Plan of Crete. The preliminary design includes adaptation measures addressing water- and temperature-related climate risks, including rainwater collection for toilet flushing and irrigation use, external thermal insulation to reduce heat transfer, shading devices to reduce solar gain, and materials with high reflectivity to alleviate the urban heat island effect.

The project has been assessed for the Paris Agreement and is considered to be aligned against both the low-carbon and climate-resilient development goals, in accordance with the policies set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap. Finally, the project is expected to contribute to the Bank's objectives of Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability by supporting investments in climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, and the sustainable use and protection of water resources.

EIB Paris Alignment for Counterparties (PATH) Framework

The Private Partner, Talala Estia SA, is in scope of the PATH framework. The Borrower is not active in incompatible activities and is screened out, since it is not operating in a high-emitting sector or in a context of high vulnerability to physical climate risks.

Social Assessment

The project is located in a less-developed region as defined by the EU cohesion policy and a most affected territory according to the Territorial Just Transition Plan of North and South Aegean Islands and Crete. The project is expected to support the strengthening of the EU's economic, social and territorial cohesion. It concerns investments in the accessibility and quality of the University of Crete which is located outside Greece's economic, population and educational hubs of Attica and Central Macedonia, thereby contributing to better-balanced territorial development, counteracting excessive concentration, strengthening secondary growth poles and reducing inequalities between people and between places. Furthermore, the additional student accommodation is expected to provide increased amounts of lower-cost



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accommodation enabling students from lower-income families to access higher education and decreasing living costs for some students in these locations.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Publicity and public consultation procedures took place as per the national law requirements relevant to EIA procedures. The concerned ministerial, regional and local authorities with environmental responsibilities were consulted as well.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The contractors that will implement and operate the project are certified according to the ISO 14 001 management system, which provides a framework for identifying, monitoring, and complying with environmental requirements. Furthermore, the Private Partner will develop a project-specific Environmental Management System during the construction and operational phases that complies with ISO 14 001 or equivalent standard, and will employ an Environmental Management Officer during the work and service period. In addition, the environmental monitoring program will ensure continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Partnership Agreement's environmental obligations and adherence to the Approved Environmental Conditions, as may be amended over time.

The project has been structured to align with the EU Taxonomy Climate Delegated Act technical screening criteria for determining the conditions under which an economic activity (Construction of New Buildings) qualifies as contributing substantially to climate change mitigation. If required, the Partnership Agreement allows some flexibility in compliance with specific do-no-significant-harm (DNSH) criteria for justified technical reasons.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project is enabling the University of Crete to create additional student accommodation and teaching facilities, alleviating pressure on local housing markets. The project's teaching component forms part of a strategic effort to modernise the higher education facilities, enabling them to expand and attract more students and high-calibre staff.

The Private Partner and the main contractors possess the appropriate experience, governance and management systems to deliver the project in accordance with national and European legislation and the requirements of the Approved Environmental Conditions. The relevant obligations are outlined in the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) which will be implemented by the project participants. The Borrower will be responsible for monitoring the ESAP and shall provide the deliverables for each action.

The project will deliver buildings with high energy performance standards and will include systems reducing water consumption for indoor use and irrigation. During project implementation, the Private Partner undertakes to provide the final design energy study of the facilities, and the Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) for each project component upon construction completion. For buildings with gross floor area larger than 5,000 m², the Private Partner is required to provide copies of air-tightness tests, thermal integrity tests or evidence that robust and traceable quality control processes during the construction process were implemented, as well as and the lifecycle Global Warming Potential calculations. Additionally, the final design climate risk assessments and evidence of the final design submission to the Competent Authority as prescribed in the Environmental Conditions shall also be provided.

The project is carried out in compliance with applicable national and EU environmental and social legislation. Under the proposed conditions, and based on the environment, climate and social (ECS) information made available by the promoter, and the review of the likely significant



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ECS risks and impacts, the mitigation measures and the management systems in place, the project is deemed to be acceptable in terms of ECS risks and impacts. No further sustainability proofing is required.