



Luxembourg, 19.12.24

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name:	Cyprus National Museum
Project Number:	2022-0207
Country:	Cyprus
Project Description:	The project will finance new National Cyprus Museum, an important cultural landmark, which forms part of the urban regeneration of Nicosia.
EIA required:	No
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise <sup>1</sup> :	No

### Environmental and Social Assessment

The Project supports the construction of the new National Cyprus Museum (NCM) and surrounding open spaces in Nicosia, which will constitute a state-of-the-art cultural facility benefitting local visitors, tourists, educators, researchers, archaeologists, and staff who work there. The new museum complex is specifically conceived to cater to and valorise Cypriot archaeological heritage, incorporating universal accessibility and sustainability criteria in the design and construction requirements.

The NCM complex will provide

- new efficient museum spaces and
- a surrounding open-air public square with green landscaped areas,

which are expected to significantly impact the location in the centre of the capital city, as the new cultural facility is going to complement the restructuring of the urban fabric in the area.

Additionally, the NCM complex comprises an integrated urban development project. The NCM is included in the 'Nicosia Centre Plan', i.e. the urban development plan of the city, which was approved in 2017. The NCM site is part of the Western Commercial Area outside the Venetian Walls, in the Section for Public Services and Cultural Facilities that is situated on the axis of the Pedieos river.

The loan will be granted to the Republic of Cyprus, the Borrower, which will channel the funds to the Promoter, i.e. the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works, to build the financed assets, which are then going to be handed over to and operated by the Deputy Ministry of Culture and the Department of Antiquities.

### Environmental Assessment

The planning permit was issued by the competent authority and based on the applicable national legislation the Project did not require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under the EU Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU.

<sup>1</sup> 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 CO<sub>2</sub>e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.



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As per the national legislation, the competent Environmental Authority, i.e. the Department of Environment, examined a project information report and specified the applicable environmental and climate conditions for the project lifecycle. Thereafter, the Department of Environment issued a Reasoned Finding, which was published on the dedicated platform. Its Annex includes the required conditions to be met during construction and operation, which mainly relate to the protection of the Pedieos river and the climate resilience of the NCM against the risk of flooding.

Given the urban context of the NCM, the Project is not located in or in the vicinity of a Natura 2000 protected site. The building is situated on previously developed land, resulting in minimal environmental impact on site.

The NCM building is in line with the applicable national and EU legislation on the energy performance of buildings. In addition, it is designed to have an energy efficiency performance going at least 10% beyond the Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) targets as established in the national Building Codes. The energy-efficient design is expected to reduce operational energy demand and subsequent running costs, with commendable annual primary energy savings and a minimal CO2 footprint.

The NCM design also incorporates climate adaptation measures, such as flood-preventing structures, the use of sun-shading structures and other bioclimatic solutions that facilitate natural ventilation, as well as green landscaped spaces to tackle the urban heat island effect.

Therefore, the Project is deemed aligned with a low carbon and resilient pathway, consistent with the Paris Agreement goals and principles as defined in the EIB's Climate Bank Roadmap.

Nevertheless, at construction stage, it is expected that noise levels as well as traffic on the site will increase. Also, air quality changes and dust due to construction are expected. However, they will last a relatively short period and adequate mitigating measures will be applied to reduce the impact. With regards to the traffic and earthworks organisation, noise reduction barriers and other measures for construction site management will be applied. Overall, the project's impact at the construction stage will be time-limited and reversible, and at a level which is deemed acceptable.

### **Social Assessment**

The Project is not expected to have any significant negative social impacts. The Promoter is expected to carry out the implementation in compliance with applicable national labour and social legislation. The NCM premises are designed to be accessible to all. Interior and exterior spaces are enhanced with cross-through transparency and adequate lighting to provide clear visibility that ensures safe public spaces, prioritising easier access for people with reduced mobility and other disabilities, as per the most recent national legislation and museum best practices.

Moreover, the construction will create temporary jobs, and it is envisaged that the NCM's operation will create new permanent employment posts with a positive impact on both the construction and labour markets, which have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent crises.

Another important positive social impact will be the increased social interaction and cohesion created by the public square and the enhanced urban fabric, which will help to restore urban continuity in a city that is negatively impacted by discontinuity of public space and segregation of urban zones due to historical reasons.

Finally, the NCM will provide additional spaces, facilities, and equipment for the Department of Antiquities to host its impactful educational and research programmes that serve communities across the entire country and beyond. This is expected to foster increased educational and research activity, thereby promoting the development of human capital.



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## **Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement**

Public consultation and stakeholder engagement have been carried out as part of the planning and permitting process, where applicable, as per national legislation. The concerned public authorities with environmental responsibilities have also been consulted.

## **Other Environmental and Social Aspects**

The institutional capacity of the Promoter to manage environmental, climate and social issues is deemed good.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Project will have an overall positive impact. It will be a year-round, high-quality tourist attraction and a new landmark for Cyprus, enhancing the built environment through an excellent demonstration of efficient, appropriate, and well-integrated architectural design. In addition, the NCM will contribute to urban regeneration of the city.

The Project is neither subject to an EIA nor located in or in the vicinity of a Natura 2000 protected site. The construction of the new infrastructure is not expected to generate significant environmental effects, and the Promoter possesses the appropriate experience and governance methods to deliver the Project in accordance with the relevant applicable legislative requirements.

The NCM building is expected to exceed national energy performance standards and incorporate climate adaptation measures.

The Promoter undertakes to provide to the Bank the Energy Performance Certificates upon construction completion, and the air tightness and thermal integrity tests.

Therefore, subject to the conditions described above, the Project is acceptable for the Bank in environmental and social terms.