



Luxembourg, 18 September 2024

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name:	BULGARIA EU FUNDS CO-FINANCING 2021-2027 (SPL)
Project Number:	2023-0753
Country:	Bulgaria
Project Description:	The operation consists of a Structural Programme Loan (SPL) to co-finance along with EU funds eligible projects in Bulgaria during the EU programming period 2021-2027.
EIA required:	The Project is a multi-scheme Structural Programme Loan (a type of Framework Loan); some individual underlying schemes may require an EIA.
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise <sup>1</sup> :	No

### Environmental and Social Assessment

#### Environmental Assessment

The Project is structured as a multi-sector Structural Programme Loan (SPL, a form of Framework Loan) in support of the following five programmes for the 2021-2027 programming period, under the approved Partnership Agreement between the Republic of Bulgaria and the European Commission:

2021BG16FFPR003 - Development of Regions  
 2021BG16FFPR002 – Environment  
 2021BG16RFPR001 - Competitiveness and Innovation in Enterprises  
 2021BG16RFPR002 - Research, Innovation and Digitalisation for Smart Transformation  
 2021BG16FFPR001 – Transport connectivity

The EIB loan will be dedicated to support the Bulgaria State budget contribution.

The Project is plan-led and contributes to the following policy objectives of the 2021-2027 EU Cohesion policy: smarter Europe, greener Europe, more connected Europe, Europe closer to citizens as well as Just Transition specific objective.

The share of the planned investments is expected to be in the range of 22% in Research, Innovation and Digital, 14% in Water, wastewater and waste management, 14% in Natural resources, 13% in Transport, 12% in Integrated territorial development, 11% in Energy and smaller investment shares in SMEs, Education and Health.

<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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The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of each of the five programmes contain the assessment of the expected environmental effects arising from their implementation, as well as measures envisaged to prevent or reduce any possible negative effects on the environment.

Furthermore, all the underlying schemes must be implemented in compliance with the EU and national environmental legislation and the provisions set out in the relevant SEAs.

In accordance with Article 73 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060<sup>2</sup>, all planned investments falling within the scope of the EIA Directive will be subject to an environmental impact assessment or a screening procedure and due consideration will be given to the assessment of alternative solutions based on the requirements laid down in that Directive.

The Project is considered to be “Paris aligned”, with both low carbon and resilience goals as per the provisions set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap (Annex 2) and/or associated guidance and other relevant documents.

The DNSH (“Do no significant harm”) principle is applied for this Project at the level of the five individual programmes, as set out in the horizontal principles of the Partnership Agreement 2021-2027 with Bulgaria.

The funded activities are consistent with the national development strategic framework, including strategies and other policy documents related to climate, R&I, Education, Employment, transport, environment/biodiversity, public health, inter alia.

The promoter is assisted by a team of experienced experts (Project Implementation Unit) who also served in previous similar operations. The promoter capacity is further strengthened by advisory services provided by the Bank. In light of the above, the capacity of the Promoter/PIU to implement the project in accordance with EU and National environmental and social regulations is deemed adequate.

### **Social Assessment**

The implementation of the programmes shall comply with Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the above-mentioned 2021-27 EU funds, including respecting the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the United Nations Convention on Persons with Disabilities.

In addition, the investment schemes supported under all specific objectives of the programmes shall comply with the principles of gender equality, inclusion and non-discrimination.

### **Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement**

The SEAs of the programmes and the Partnership Agreement as well EIAs of the relevant underlying schemes are subject to the public consultations in line with the SEA Directive and the EIA Directive and relevant national legislation.

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, p. 159–706).



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## Conclusions and Recommendations

The following undertakings will be required for this Project:

- The Promoter is required to act according to the provisions of the relevant EU legislation, mainly SEA Directive (2001/42/EC), EIA Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended by 2014/52/EU), Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) and Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), and national legislation.
- In case a scheme with a budget over EUR 40m requires an EIA or an appropriate assessment or equivalent, the Promoter shall submit, prior to allocation of the Bank's funds, the full EIA report or appropriate assessment to the Bank.
- Schemes, in relation to which a screening or appropriate assessment of impacts on Natura 2000 sites is carried out, shall be assessed in view of site-specific conservation objectives. For schemes subject to screening/appropriate assessment, the promoter will inform the Bank about any changes/updates to the conclusions of the screening/appropriate assessment, in view of the site-specific conservation objectives, as defined by the competent authority and reflected in their decision.

Considering the above undertakings, as well as the capacity of the Promoter and the systems in place to manage environmental and social impacts and risks, the project is acceptable for the Bank's financing in environmental and social terms.