

**Notification to an affected Party of a proposed activity**  
**"Modernization of the railway line Radomir - Gueshevo - border**  
**with the Republic of Northern Macedonia"**  
**under article 3 of the Convention**

<b>1. INFORMATION ON THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY</b>	
<b>(i) Information on the nature of the proposed activity</b>	
Type of activity proposed	Modernization (construction, rehabilitation and operation of railway track and structures, electrification, signalling and telecommunications) of the railway line between Radomir and Gyueshevo.
Is the proposed activity listed in appendix I to the Convention?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Scope of proposed activity (e.g. main activity and any/all peripheral activities requiring assessment)	<p>The investment proposal envisages the construction of a new single-track high-speed railway line from the city of Radomir to the border with the Republic of Northern Macedonia, with a design speed of 160 km/h. The railway line <i>Radomir - Gueshevo - border with the Republic of Northern Macedonia</i> is part of the Trans-European Transport Network.</p> <p>The proposed variants/alternatives of the railway track are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Section 1 Radomir - Kyustendil (Bistritsa): Project scenario E2 - Variant 1 (light blue) and Project scenario E2 - Variant 2 (red) with sub-variant 2.1 (green) and sub-variant 2.2 (green);</li> <li>- Section 2 Kyustendil (Bistritsa) - Gyueshevo: Project scenario A1 - Variant 1 (blue), Project scenario A1 - Variant 2 (red) and Project scenario E1 - Variant 3 (light blue).</li> </ul> <p>The main activities are: construction of a new single-track railway line and facilities, catenary construction, implementation of telecommunications and signalling systems for the construction of Radomir – Gyueshevo railway line. Construction of temporary roads for access to the site. Implementation of earth works for the construction of the subgrade.</p>
Scale of proposed activity	The design variants are developed as a single-track electrified high-speed railway line with a design

(e.g. size, production capacity)	<p>speed of 160/130 km/h, and in some sections of the individual variants the speed is 140/100 km/h.</p> <p>The total used area by sections and variants are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Section 1 Radomir - Kyustendil (Bistritsa): Project scenario E2 - Variant 1 (light blue) - about 1,165,425 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>- Section 1 Radomir - Kyustendil (Bistritsa): Project scenario E2 - Variant 2 (red) - about 1,934 decares.</li> <li>- Section 1 Radomir - Kyustendil (Bistritsa): Project scenario E2 - Variant 2 (red) - sub-variant 2.1 (green) - about 1,660 decares.</li> <li>- Section 1 Radomir - Kyustendsh (Bistritsa): Project scenario E2 - Variant 2 (red) - sub-variant 2.2 (green) - about 1,934 decares.</li> <li>- Section 2 Kyustendil (Bistritsa) - Gyueshevo: Project scenario A1 - Variant 1 (blue) - about 1,488 000 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>- Section 2 Kyustendil (Bistritsa) - Gyueshevo: Project scenario A1 - Variant 2 (red) - about 2,046 000 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>- Section 2 Kyustendsh (Bistritsa) - Gyueshevo: Project scenario E1 - Variant 3 (light blue) - about 1,326,000 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul>
Description of proposed activity (e.g. technology used)	<p>Construction activities such as earthworks that will make the subgrade, installation of a rail-and-sleeper grid, ballasting, installation of catenary poles and contact conductor, construction of drainage system and lying of cable for signalling system.</p> <p>Detail description of the proposed activity is presented in <b>Annex I</b> to the Notification.</p> <p><b>Annex II</b> to the Notification presents schemes and maps of the different variants/alternatives.</p>
Description of purpose of proposed activity	<p>The activity aims to develop and improve the existing Bulgarian railway infrastructure and its connection to the neighbouring countries.</p> <p>The investment proposal is related to measure 2006/BG/16/P/PA/002 “Technical assistance for modernization of the Trans-European Railway Network in Bulgaria”, part of which is modernization of the railway line Sofia - Pernik - Radomir and modernization of the railway line Radomir - Gueshevo.</p> <p>The investment proposal is part of the Operational Program "Transport and Transport Infrastructure 2014-2020" and is funded under Priority Axis 1 “Development of railway infrastructure under the core Trans-European Transport Network” of the operational program.</p>

<p>Rationale for proposed activity (e.g. socio-economic basis, physical geographic basis)</p>	<p>From an economic perspective, the construction of the new modernized railway line Radomir-Gyueshevo, as part of the Trans-European Network, will lead to a better access to the EU countries. Thus, the mobility of people and goods will be improved, which in turn will make a significant contribution to the development of the Single European Market and sustainable mobility. Corridor VIII is also a multimodal transport system, which passes through the East-West axle, and consists of sea and river ports, multimodal ports, roads and railway lines.</p> <p>The development of Bulgarian railway infrastructure is of great importance for ensuring the transport communication between the countries from the Balkan Peninsula and other parts of Europa.</p> <p>Within the meaning of the State Property Act railroads and sites of the railway infrastructure are “National sites”.</p>
<p>Additional information/comments</p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>(ii) Information on the spatial and temporal boundaries of the proposed activity</b></p>	
<p>Location</p>	<p>The investment proposal is divided into <b>two Sections</b> with several variants/alternatives. Section 1 with its variants is located in the Municipalities of Radomir and Kyustendil. Section 2 with its variants is located in the Municipality of Kyustendil.</p>
<p>Description of the location (e.g. physical-geographic characteristics, socio-economic characteristics)</p>	<p>The railway line is constructed in the South-West part of the country, with typical mountainous terrain, cut by a few valleys of rivers, the largest of which is the Struma. The mountains alternate with depressions, which are separated between each other by hardly passable gorges.</p> <p>The railway track also passes through larger settlements like Radomir and Kustendil.</p> <p>The project route of Section 1 starts from the existing railway station Radomir, passes through tunnels, gullies, crosses roads and Struma River and ends at the newly designed railway station Bistrica.</p> <p>The connection of the new railway route from Radomir station to Gyueshevo station (border with the Republic of Northern Macedonia) with the existing Kyustendil railway station is a bypass of the main route and is divided into three sub-sections.</p> <p>The project route of Section 2 starts from the newly designed railway station Bistrica, passes through the gorge of Bistritca River, crosses the river several times by bridges and tunnels. A new railway stop is</p>

	<p>envisaged for the Ranentsi village. The route ends at railway station Gueshevo – the border with the Republic of Northern Macedonia.</p> <p>The exact location can be seen in Annex II to the Notification.</p>
<p>Rationale for location of proposed activity (e.g. socio-economic basis, physical-geographic basis)</p>	<p>The variants of the route are based on nature, relief, and geological possibilities and take into account the existing limitations like sanitary protection zones for drinking water sources, Natura 2000 areas, protected territories, existing mineral deposit sites, existing cultural heritage, etc.</p> <p>The railway line is part of the Trans-European Transport Corridor VIII and TINA network. The current route changes are necessary in order to avoid protected areas and territories, landslide areas and steep mountain slopes as much as possible.</p> <p>The preferred railway route variant will allow the construction of convenient and accessible infrastructure, connecting the large settlements in the area, as well as providing opportunity for fast connection between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia, and hence a connection with the Adriatic-Yonion sea region towards Turkey for transit of goods and passengers.</p>
<p>Time frame for proposed activity (e.g. start and duration of construction and operation)</p>	<p>Construction will be completed in seven years and the operational period is not limited by time.</p>
<p>Maps and other pictorial documents connected with the information on the proposed activity</p>	<p>Maps are attached. See Annex II.</p>
<p>Additional information/comments</p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>(iii) Information on expected environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures</b></p>	
<p>Scope of assessment (e.g. consideration of: cumulative impacts, evaluation of alternatives, sustainable development issues, impact of peripheral activities)</p>	<p>The EIA will be undertaken in line with the Bulgarian Environment Protection Act (State Gazette /SG/, issue 91/2002, last amended SG issue 54/2020), the Ordinance on the terms and conditions for making EIA, as well as guidance issued by the European Commission: EIA guidance – scoping, EIA guidance – EIA report, Guidelines on the Assessment of Indirect and Cumulative Impacts as well as Impact</p>

	<p>interactions, Espoo Convention (in case of necessity), etc.</p> <p>When performing scoping of the assessment, the content and the extent of the assessment shall be identified, as well as the information to be included in the EIA Report. Scoping also establishes and specifies the key issues and impacts that have to be considered. This preliminary information shall be submitted to the competent authority to obtain scoping opinion.</p> <p>The assessment will focus on those issues that are important for decision-making regarding the Project and will address baseline conditions, potential impacts, proposed mitigation measures and conditions for post-design control.</p>
<p>Expected environmental impacts of proposed activity (e.g. types, locations, magnitudes)</p>	<p><b>Impacts on air:</b> The significant air emissions are limited to the construction phase, as the railway will be electrified. The construction works will give rise to generation of dust and emission from vehicles locally, with minor impact, mitigated by proper measures. During the operation phase of the railway line, no emission of pollutants to the ambient air is foreseen. The project will not give rise to any significant impact that would affect community health.</p> <p><b>Impacts on water:</b> Waters will not be affected by the development of the project, as there will be no water use (except some small quantities during the construction works) and process waste water discharge.</p> <p>In the area of the railway stations, some waste water will be generated by the staff of the railway company and by the passengers but it will be treated by the existing sewage systems or watertight pits.</p> <p>No significant impacts on surface and groundwater resources are foreseen.</p> <p>For bridges construction over rivers, permits will be issued under the Water Act, with mandatory conditions and measures to ensure minimal impact on water bodies.</p> <p><b>Impacts on soil and land use:</b> The main impact on land use and soil will be during the construction of the railway, as certain territories will be changed from their existing status to a new one. During the operation phase, the impact will be limited to the width of the line and its obligatory buffer zone. The impacts will be local and mitigation measures will be provided.</p>

	<p>Environmental management of the Project is designed to minimize potential impacts on the soil and land use to a minimum extent.</p> <p><b>Impacts on flora and fauna:</b> Biodiversity will be affected during both phases – construction and operation as the existing natural conditions will be changed. The impacts will be local, round the route, and its buffer zone. Mitigation measures will be provided.</p> <p><b>Impacts from noise and vibrations:</b> Railway is a source of noise and vibration during both phases – construction and operation. The impacts will be local and mitigation measures will be provided.</p> <p><b>Impacts on population:</b> The scale of the expected impacts indicates that there will be no significant impact with regard to community health. Impact mitigation includes measures to minimize nuisance impacts, such as noise and vibrations.</p>
<p>Inputs (e.g. raw material, power sources)</p>	<p>The <i>natural resources, raw materials and other materials</i> that will be used in the construction and operation phases of the investment proposal are: earth and rock masses, aggregates, crushed stone, drainage material, sand, timber, water, as well as processed metal raw materials, reinforced concrete products, steel structures, diesel fuel and electricity. The earth masses generated during the formation of the earth bed along the route and the drainage systems are used for the backfills and reclamation of the affected land. If additional construction materials are needed, they will be delivered as a commodity product from the market, by type and quantity in accordance with the project.</p> <p><i>Power supply:</i> During the construction phase, fuels will be used for the construction mechanization, mainly diesel fuel. The necessary electricity for welding and other installation works along the route will be provided by diesel generators, and at the main warehouses by the national electric network.</p> <p>During the operation of the new railway line and the facilities to the line, electricity will be used for the movement of the rolling stock, for the direction of the railway line, station units, control and measuring devices, signalling and other elements related to the reliability and safety of technological processes. Traction electricity will be provided by substations supplied by the national electricity network.</p> <p><i>Water supply:</i> During the construction phase, water will be used for: preparation of concrete mixtures and other construction solutions, for compaction of embankments, for wetting of temporary roads and</p>

	<p>construction sites for prevention of dust emissions into the air, for household needs of the staff.</p> <p>During the operation phase, the main technological processes are not related to water consumption. Water will be used for: domestic needs of the staff of the railway company and passengers. The water for the indicated needs will be supplied from the network of the water supply companies within the area of the railway line.</p>
<p>Outputs (e.g. amounts and types of: emissions into the atmosphere, discharges into the water system, solid waste)</p>	<p><i>Emissions to the air:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal combustion gases (CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, etc);</li> <li>• Particulate matter - dust (PM10).</li> </ul> <p><i>Waste water:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic wastewater discharged into the existing sewerage systems. No industrial wastewater streams will be generated during the construction works and such effluent discharges into surface water bodies are unexpected.</li> </ul> <p><i>Waste:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction waste;</li> <li>• Solid domestic waste;</li> <li>• Scrap metals, wood, packages, etc;</li> <li>• Waste oil;</li> <li>• Waste from electrical and electronic equipment.</li> </ul> <p>Emissions to the air, domestic waste water and different types of waste are expected to result mainly from the construction works.</p>
<p>Transboundary impacts (e.g. types, locations, magnitudes)</p>	<p>The EIA report will include investigation into transboundary impact. At this stage no significant impacts are identified on the Bulgarian environment (at a local, regional or national level) that have any relevance with regard to potential transboundary issues, e.g., in regard to impact on air and water quality, and biodiversity. No significant transboundary impacts are expected.</p>
<p>Proposed mitigation measures (e.g. if known, mitigation measures to prevent, eliminate, minimize, compensate for environmental effects)</p>	<p>The mitigation measures will be detailed in the EIA report, however, they will cover the following principal elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigation against the emission of harmful gases and dust to the air;</li> <li>• Design of a comprehensive water management scheme to avoid any impact on water quality and resources;</li> <li>• Provision for proper management of land use and soil reclamation;</li> <li>• Management of ongoing construction and operation works to minimize affecting of the flora and disturbance of the fauna;</li> <li>• Prescription of appropriate technical measures for minimizing the impact of noise and vibrations;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limitation of some activities in order to minimize the impacts on population.</li> </ul> <p>A plan for implementation of measures to prevent, reduce or eliminate significant negative impacts on the environment and human health shall be prepared as a part of the EIA study and will be addressed to each stage of the project realization, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for the design stage;</li> <li>• during construction works;</li> <li>• during operation.</li> </ul>
Additional information/comments	None
<b>(iv) Proponent/developer</b>	
Name, address, telephone and fax numbers	<p><b>National Railway Infrastructure Company,</b>  Headquarters,  110 “Mariya Luiza” Blvd.  Sofia, 1233, Bulgaria,  Tel: + 359 2 932 60 02  Fax: +359 2 932 6444  E-mail: office@rail-infra.bg</p>

<b>(v) EIA documentation</b>	
Is the EIA documentation (e.g. EIA report or EIS) included in the notification?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/>
If the answer to the above is no or partially, description of additional documentation to be forwarded and (approximate) date(s) when documentation will be available	Additional information may be sent upon request after receiving the written response to the present notification (Reply to a notification of a proposed activity under Article 3 of the Espoo convention), and at the second stage of the national EIA procedure, which will be the scoping stage.
Additional information/comments	The language of the EIA documentation will be English in case of a positive answer from the affected party and expressing a will to participate in the EIA procedure.
<b>2. POINTS OF CONTACT</b>	



<b>(i) Points of contact for the possible affected Party or Parties</b>	
Authority responsible for coordinating activities relating to the EIA (refer to decision I/3, appendix) - Name, address, telephone and fax numbers	<b>Ministry for Environment and Physical Planning</b> St. Goce Delcev b.b., MTV Building - 10th floor 1000 SKOPJE, Republic of North Macedonia Telephone: + 389 2 3251 400 Fax: + 389 2 3220 165 E-mail: infoeko@moepp.gov.mk, cc. d.rendevska@moepp.gov.mk
List of affected Parties to which notification is being sent	<b>Republic of North Macedonia</b>
<b>(ii) Points of contact for the Party of origin</b>	
Authority responsible for coordinating activities relating to the EIA (refer to decision I/3, appendix) - Name, address, telephone and fax numbers	<b>Ministry of Environment and Water</b> 22 Maria-Luisa Blvd., 1000 SOFIA Telephone: + 359 2 988 25 77 Fax: + 359 2 986 25 33 E-mails: minister@moew.government.bg; sdimitrova@moew.government.bg edno_gishe@moew.government.bg kpetrova@moew.government.bg
Decision-making authority if different than authority responsible for coordinating activities relating to the EIA - Name, address, telephone and fax numbers	N/A
<b>3. INFORMATION ON THE EIA PROCESS IN THE COUNTRY WHERE THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY IS LOCATED</b>	
<b>(i) Information on the EIA process that will be applied to the proposed activity</b>	
Time schedule	The expected duration of the national EIA procedure is about eighteen months.
Opportunities for the affected Party or Parties to be involved in the EIA process	Yes

Opportunities for the affected Party or Parties to review and comment on the notification and the EIA documentation	Yes
Nature and timing of the possible decision	At this stage, it is not possible to predict the nature of the EIA decision, as it fully depends on the EIA documentation to be elaborated and on public participation in the procedure. Expected timing – within eighteen months.
Process for approval of the proposed activity	In compliance with Bulgarian environmental legislation (Environmental Protection Act), the Ministry of Environment and Water of Republic of Bulgaria is the competent authority for issuing the EIA decision. The following steps shall be followed as per the requirements of the Bulgarian legal framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submission of the EIA Report to the Ministry;</li> <li>- Quality assessment of EIA Report by the Ministry</li> <li>- Public consultations in the affected municipalities;</li> <li>- Issuance of final decision by the Ministry.</li> </ul> A favourable EIA decision is required for issuing a construction permit under the Spatial Development Act.
Additional information/comments	None
<b>4. INFORMATION ON THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN</b>	
Public participation procedures	In accordance with the Bulgarian legislation, the public is entitled to access to the EIA documentation for a period of 30 days prior to holding the public hearing. The public is entitled to prepare written comments and statements and propose those for discussion during the public hearing or to submit them in writing. Minutes shall be prepared during the public discussions, which will be attached to the EIA Report.
Expected start and duration of public consultation	The public will be given access to the EIA documentation after a positive assessment of the EIA report quality and prior to the public hearing. At this stage, it is not possible to

	make a forecast for the possible dates for the public consultations and hearings. Taking into account the legal requirements, it might be within eight to ten months after the beginning of the procedure.
Additional information/comments	If the affected party express a will to participate in the EIA procedure, a public hearing may be organized at its territory. A translation from and to English will be needed.
<b>5. DEADLINE FOR RESPONSE</b>	
Date	Four weeks from the date of receiving the notification.

**Annexes to the Notification:**

- *Annex I* Detail description of the proposed activity;
- *Annex II* Schemes of the different variants/alternatives: one for Section 1 and one for Section 2.