

Environmental and Social Due  
Diligence, Impact Assessment and  
Road Safety Audit for the Moldova  
TEN-T Road Network Rehabilitation  
Project (DTM 55768)

Project No. 12002-106

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## Non-Technical Summary R7



**European Bank**  
for Reconstruction and Development

## Content

|                                                                                                          |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Content .....                                                                                            | 2  |
| List of Figures .....                                                                                    | 3  |
| List of Tables .....                                                                                     | 3  |
| Project sheet .....                                                                                      | 4  |
| Abbreviations .....                                                                                      | 5  |
| Important Notice/Disclaimer .....                                                                        | 6  |
| 1. Executive Summary .....                                                                               | 7  |
| 2. Project Description .....                                                                             | 7  |
| 2.1. A concise and comprehensive description of the Project .....                                        | 7  |
| 2.2. Proposed construction works and subsequent maintenance/operation .....                              | 8  |
| 2.3. Site Location Map .....                                                                             | 9  |
| 3. Background .....                                                                                      | 11 |
| 3.1. Rationale of the Project .....                                                                      | 11 |
| 3.2. Legal aspects and compliance with relevant environmental and social laws .....                      | 11 |
| 3.3. Current environmental and social situation and considerations .....                                 | 13 |
| 3.4. History of the Project development and planning .....                                               | 14 |
| 4. Process .....                                                                                         | 15 |
| 4.1. ESA process carried out and integration with design .....                                           | 15 |
| 4.2. Public consultations and disclosure and dealing with objections .....                               | 16 |
| 5. Summary of Environmental Benefits, Potential Adverse Impacts, Mitigation and Management Measures .... | 17 |
| 5.1. Air quality .....                                                                                   | 17 |
| 5.2. Soil .....                                                                                          | 18 |
| 5.3. Water resources .....                                                                               | 19 |
| 5.4. Biodiversity and nature conservation .....                                                          | 20 |
| 5.5. Cumulative impacts .....                                                                            | 21 |
| 5.6. Induced (indirectly consequential) impacts .....                                                    | 22 |
| 5.7. Landscape and visual impacts .....                                                                  | 23 |
| 5.8. Raw material sourcing and transportation, including borrow pits .....                               | 24 |
| 5.9. Road safety .....                                                                                   | 25 |

|            |                                                                                                                |    |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 5.10.      | Traffic, noise and vibration .....                                                                             | 26 |
| 5.11.      | Waste management .....                                                                                         | 27 |
| 6.         | Summary of Social Benefits, Potential Adverse Impacts, Mitigation and Management Measures .....                | 29 |
| 6.1.       | Community impacts.....                                                                                         | 29 |
| 6.2.       | Contractor management, including the siting and management of worker camps .....                               | 30 |
| 6.3.       | Cultural heritage .....                                                                                        | 31 |
| 6.4.       | Disruption and public health and safety during construction .....                                              | 32 |
| 6.5.       | Impacts on businesses and employment.....                                                                      | 33 |
| 6.6.       | Impacts to existing infrastructure and public services.....                                                    | 33 |
| 6.7.       | Labour issues and standards .....                                                                              | 33 |
| 6.8.       | Land acquisition and resettlement (cross reference any resettlement report that is being developed) .....      | 33 |
| 6.9.       | Local traffic and access impacts .....                                                                         | 35 |
| 6.10.      | Occupational and public health and safety issues .....                                                         | 36 |
| 6.11.      | Socio-economic impacts; including vulnerable groups (taking into account gender specificities and needs)<br>37 |    |
| 7.         | Communications .....                                                                                           | 38 |
| 7.1.       | Contact details.....                                                                                           | 38 |
| 7.2.       | Process for addressing any issues arising.....                                                                 | 39 |
| 7.3.       | Link to Stakeholder Engagement Plan.....                                                                       | 39 |
| Annex..... |                                                                                                                | 41 |
|            | Feedback from the Scoping Phase Consultations (R7) .....                                                       | 41 |
|            | Summary of the R7 Public Consultations (19 March – 1 April 2026) .....                                         | 42 |

## List of Figures

|                                  |    |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Figure 2-1: Overview of R7 ..... | 10 |
|----------------------------------|----|

## List of Tables

|                                  |    |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Table 2-1: Alignment of R7 ..... | 10 |
|----------------------------------|----|

## Project sheet

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                              |                             |
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## Abbreviations

| Abbreviation   | Description                                           |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>C-ESMP</b>  | Construction Environmental and Social Management Plan |
| <b>DD</b>      | Detailed Design                                       |
| <b>E&amp;S</b> | Environmental and Social                              |
| <b>EBRD</b>    | European Bank for Reconstruction and Development      |
| <b>EA</b>      | Environmental Agency                                  |
| <b>EPI</b>     | Environmental Protection Inspectorate                 |
| <b>ESDD</b>    | Environmental and Social Due Diligence                |
| <b>ESA</b>     | Environmental and Social Assessment                   |
| <b>ESAP</b>    | Environmental and Social Action Plan                  |
| <b>ESP</b>     | Environmental and Social Policy                       |
| <b>ESIA</b>    | Environmental and Social Impact Assessment            |
| <b>EU</b>      | European Union                                        |
| <b>EUR</b>     | Euro                                                  |
| <b>GD</b>      | Gouvernement Decision                                 |
| <b>GDP</b>     | Gross Domestic Product                                |
| <b>GRM</b>     | Grievance Redress Mechanism                           |
| <b>IUCN</b>    | International Union for Conservation of Nature        |
| <b>INSP</b>    | National Inspectorate for Public Security             |
| <b>LPA</b>     | Local Public Authority                                |
| <b>NCM</b>     | Normative in Constructions from Moldova               |
| <b>NGO</b>     | Non-Governmental Organization                         |
| <b>NPA</b>     | Natural Protected Areas                               |
| <b>NRA</b>     | National Road Administration J.S.C.                   |
| <b>NTS</b>     | Non-technical Summary                                 |
| <b>OHS</b>     | Occupational Health and Safety                        |
| <b>RAP</b>     | Resettlement Action Plan                              |
| <b>RDA</b>     | Regional Development Agency                           |
| <b>RM</b>      | Republic of Moldova                                   |
| <b>RoW</b>     | Right of Way                                          |
| <b>RPF</b>     | Resettlement Policy Framework                         |
| <b>RSA</b>     | Road Safety Audit                                     |
| <b>PR</b>      | Performance Requirement                               |
| <b>PAP</b>     | Project-Affected People                               |
| <b>SE</b>      | Supervision Engineer                                  |
| <b>SEP</b>     | Stakeholder Engagement Plan                           |
| <b>TEN-T</b>   | Trans-European Transport Network                      |
| <b>TOR</b>     | Terms of Reference                                    |

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## 1. Executive Summary

This Non-Technical Summary provides essential information about the Project in a clear and accessible way. Its purpose is to help stakeholders understand what the Project involves, the potential environmental and social impacts, and how these impacts will be managed. It summarises the following key aspects:

- The purpose, nature, and scope of the Project;
- Potential environmental and social impacts on stakeholders, including any that may affect vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, and the measures proposed to avoid or minimise these impacts;
- Opportunities for stakeholder engagement throughout the Project lifecycle; Information on public consultation activities;
- How concerns or complaints can be submitted and addressed through the Project's grievance mechanism.

All information will be disclosed in the local language (Romanian), using formats accessible to all stakeholder groups, including those who may be differently or disproportionately affected. Broschures and Leaflets will be available in Romanian and Russian languages.

All consultation and disclosure activities will follow EBRD Performance Requirement 10: Information Disclosure and Stakeholder Engagement.

## 2. Project Description

### 2.1. A concise and comprehensive description of the Project

The R7 Road Rehabilitation and Modernisation Project is a strategic initiative aimed at upgrading the road infrastructure in the northern part of the Republic of Moldova, crossing the administrative territories of the Soroca, Drochia, and Rîșcani districts. The R7 corridor is a key component of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), serving as a vital transport link for the movement of goods and passengers between the borders of Romania (EU) and Ukraine, thereby facilitating international trade and regional socio-economic integration.

At this stage, the Project comprises Lots 1–4, with a total length of approximately 92.4–96.8 km, and is organised into four distinct lots:

- Lot 1 (29 km): Rehabilitation of the existing road section between the junction with the national road R14 (Soroca) and the town of Drochia, passing through the settlements of Șolcani, Zgurița, and Chetrosu.
- Lot 2 (27.4 km): Rehabilitation of the existing road section between Drochia and Rîșcani, passing through the rural areas of the villages of Țarigrad, Nicoreni, Rămăzan, and Nihoreni.
- Lot 3 (30 km): Rehabilitation of the existing road from Rîșcani to the Costești–Stânca Border Crossing Point (Romanian border).
- Lot 4 (approximately 6–7.3 km): Construction of the Drochia Bypass, combining the rehabilitation of a section of the existing R12 road with a new greenfield alignment to divert heavy transit traffic away from the urban centre.

The overall objective of the Project is to develop a modern, efficient, and safe transport network that supports economic growth and strengthens regional connectivity. The principal anticipated benefits include:

- Improved road safety through the installation of modern road signage, reflective road markings, safety barriers, street lighting in settlements, and the rehabilitation of existing bridges.

- Enhanced transport efficiency by reducing travel times and vehicle operating costs for local residents and transport operators.
- Improved urban living conditions, particularly in the town of Drochia, where the bypass will significantly reduce air pollution, noise, vibration, and the risk of traffic accidents in residential areas and around sensitive receptors such as schools and hospitals.
- Support for local economic development through employment opportunities during the construction phase and improved market access for agricultural producers and processing facilities.

The Project is being implemented by the National Road Administration (NRA) under the supervision of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development (MIDR), with financial support from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Union (EU). As a Category B project under the EBRD Environmental and Social Policy, the Project includes a comprehensive Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) designed to prevent, minimise, and mitigate potential adverse impacts on people and the environment.

## 2.2. Proposed construction works and subsequent maintenance/operation

The Project (covering Lots 1–4) comprises a combination of rehabilitation of the existing road infrastructure and construction of new road sections, as follows:

Main construction activities:

- Pavement rehabilitation and strengthening: Works on Lots 1, 2 and 3 cover approximately 86.4 km and involve the reconstruction of the existing road within the current road footprint, including local alignment improvements to enhance road safety. For Lots 1–3, the existing asphalt pavement will be rehabilitated using the cold recycling method with hydraulic binders, an efficient and environmentally sustainable solution.
- Modern pavement structure: Multiple asphalt concrete layers will be applied, including BAD 22.4 for the base course and MAS 11.2/MAS 16 for the wearing course, using modified bitumen to ensure long-term durability under Moldova's climatic conditions.
- Construction of the Drochia Bypass (Lot 4): This 7.3 km section includes the rehabilitation of 4.2 km of the existing R12 road and the construction of a 3.1 km greenfield section. The Project also includes the construction of roundabout intersections to improve traffic flow.
- Engineering structures (bridges and culverts): The Project includes the rehabilitation, replacement, or reconstruction of numerous engineering structures. Major bridges (e.g. over the Cubolta, Răut, and Camenca Rivers) will be rehabilitated or reconstructed in reinforced concrete and designed to accommodate modern traffic loading standards (A11 and HK-80). Smaller culverts will be cleaned, repaired, or extended to accommodate the increased embankment width.
- Road safety infrastructure and ancillary facilities: The road will be equipped with new vertical traffic signs, reflective road markings, steel safety barriers (including pedestrian barriers), and delineator posts. Within settlements, new sidewalks will be constructed, bus stops will be rehabilitated, and modern street lighting will be installed.

Key technical parameters: In accordance with the applicable national technical standard (NCM D.02.01:2015), the road has been designed as a Technical Category II road in terms of horizontal alignment and cross-section and Technical Category III in terms of longitudinal profile, with a 13 m platform width and a 7 m carriageway width.

#### Operation and maintenance:

- **Responsibility:** Following completion of the construction works and formal acceptance of the Project, responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the road will be transferred to the National Road Administration (NRA).
- **Routine and periodic maintenance:** This will include activities such as:
  - Periodic cleaning of drainage systems (ditches and culverts) to prevent erosion.
  - Routine pavement maintenance (pothole repairs and renewal of road markings).
  - Roadside vegetation management and maintenance of protective shelterbelts.
  - Maintenance of road safety and environmental protection equipment (oil separators, safety barriers, and traffic signs).
- **Post-construction monitoring:** Periodic noise measurements, together with monitoring of water and air quality in sensitive areas, will be carried out for a minimum period of two years to assess the actual environmental impacts associated with the operation of the road.

### 2.3. Site Location Map

The map illustrates the strategic alignment of the R7 Road corridor, a key transport artery in the northern part of the Republic of Moldova, extending from the junction with the R14 Road (Soroca) to the Costești–Stânca Border Crossing Point on the Romanian border. The corridor forms an integral part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), facilitating international traffic and supporting regional socio-economic integration.

The map presents the layout of Tranche 1 of the Project, which has a total length of approximately 96.8 km and is divided into four main construction lots.

It identifies both the road sections that will undergo rehabilitation and pavement strengthening works (Lots 1–3) and the new greenfield alignment forming the Drochia Bypass (Lot 4). The Project will contribute to improved road safety, reduced travel times, and enhanced transport efficiency, while supporting local economic development in the Soroca, Drochia, and Rîșcani districts.

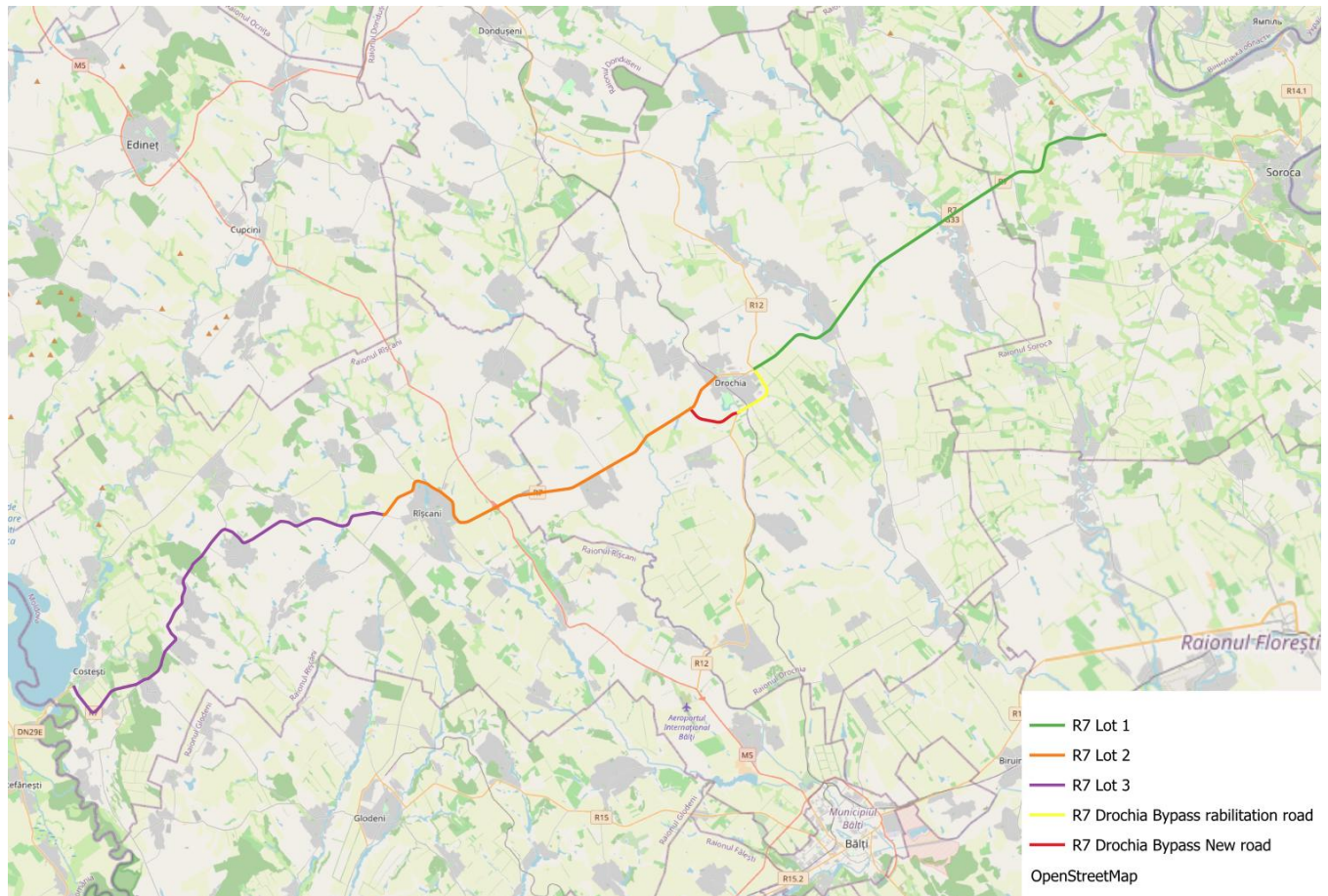


**Figure 2-1: Overview of R7**

The road plays a key role in the socio-economic development of the northern part of the Republic of Moldova and passes through the administrative territories of the following settlements:

- Soroca
- Rublenița
- Solcani
- Zgurița
- Chetrosu
- Drochia
- Nicoreni
- Rîșcani
- Pîrjota
- Hiliuți
- Șaptebani
- Gălășeni
- Petrușeni
- Păscăuți
- Costești

Along its alignment, the R7 Road intersects the following national and regional roads:

| No. | Intersecting Road Code | Road Name                                                                         | Intersection position (km) |
|-----|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1   | R14                    | R6 – Codrul Nou – Soroca – Unguri – Frontiera cu Ucraina                          | 0+000                      |
| 2   | G13                    | G12 – Bădiceni – Băxani – Scăieni – Văncina – G35                                 | 7+450                      |
| 3   | G33                    | R12 – Mîndic – Zgurița – Mărculești – R13                                         | 11+950; 12+750             |
| 4   | G27                    | R7 – Chetrosu – Moara de Piatră – Cubolta – R13                                   | 23+190                     |
| 5   | R12                    | R8 – Dondușeni – Drochia – Pelinia – M5                                           | 29+520                     |
| 6   | G20                    | G17 – Fîntînița – Țarigrad – Drochia – R7                                         | 32+160                     |
| 7   | E583 (M5)              | Frontiera cu Ucraina – Criva – Bălți – Chișinău – Tiraspol – Frontiera cu Ucraina | 49+440                     |
| 8   | G17                    | G16 – Tîrnova – Mihăileni – Rîșcani – R7                                          | 54+490                     |
| 9   | G18                    | R7 – Rîșcani – Vasileuți – Moșeni                                                 | 56+410                     |
| 10  | G26                    | R7 – Rîșcani – Lupăria – Glodeni – R15                                            | 59+570                     |
| 11  | G23                    | G22 – Zăicani – Pîrjota – R7                                                      | 65+390                     |
| 12  | G23.1                  | Zăicani – R7                                                                      | 71+250                     |
| 13  | G24                    | R7 – Petrușeni – Camenca – G25                                                    | 83+640                     |
| 14  | G58                    | R7 – Păscăuți – Călinești – Fălești – R16                                         | 84+110                     |

**Table 2-1: Alignment of R7**

### 3. Background

#### 3.1. Rationale of the Project

The rehabilitation and modernization of the R7 road is a strategic priority for the transport infrastructure of the Republic of Moldova, supported by clear technical, economic, and social needs:

- **Strategic importance and TEN-T integration:** The R7 road is an essential republican artery connecting the Soroca, Drochia, and Rîșcani districts, serving as the shortest northern transit corridor between Ukraine and Romania (EU). The project is an integral part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), a strategic objective established by the 2030 Mobility Strategy to facilitate international trade and regional connectivity.
- **Critical state of current infrastructure:** Currently, numerous sections of the R7 road show advanced degradation, characterized by cracking, uneven pavement, shoulder erosion, and reduced load-bearing capacity. These conditions limit travel speeds, increase fuel consumption and vehicle wear, making the road difficult to operate safely.
- **Road safety and community protection:** The current infrastructure is deficient in safety elements (signage, lighting, protective barriers), contributing to a high risk of accidents. The project will implement modern road safety standards, including sidewalks, secure pedestrian crossings, and street lighting in settlements, contributing to a reduction in collisions and fatalities.
- **Stimulating economic development:** The road traverses some of Moldova's most productive agricultural zones. Its modernization will optimize agricultural logistics, reducing transport costs for producers accessing processing units (such as the sugar factory in Drochia) and export points. Additionally, the construction phase will generate jobs for the local workforce, targeting 30–40% unskilled positions from local communities.
- **Urban revitalization through the Drochia Bypass:** Lot 4 of the project is crucial for Drochia city as it will divert heavy transit traffic from the urban center. This intervention will significantly reduce congestion, air pollution, noise, and vibrations affecting residential areas and sensitive institutions, such as hospitals and schools.
- **Access to essential services:** The R7 road is a "lifeline" for rural residents, ensuring rapid access to district hospitals, educational institutions, and markets in Soroca, Drochia, and Rîșcani.

Analysis of the "do-nothing" scenario indicates long-term economic losses, increasing emergency maintenance costs, and decreased competitiveness for freight transport. Rehabilitation is considered the optimal solution for supporting regional cohesion and European integration.

#### 3.2. Legal aspects and compliance with relevant environmental and social laws

The rehabilitation project of the R7 road (Lots 1-4) is governed by a complex legal framework that integrates the national legislation of the Republic of Moldova with the international performance standards of the involved financial institutions.

##### **International Regulatory Framework (EBRD)**

The project is financed with the support of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and is consequently classified as Category B according to the bank's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP 2019). This classification mandates compliance with EBRD's 10 Performance Requirements (PRs), the most relevant for this project being:

- PR 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Impacts and Issues.
- PR 2: Labour and Working Conditions.
- PR 4: Health, Safety, and Security.
- PR 5: Land Acquisition, Involuntary Resettlement, and Economic Displacement.
- PR 6: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources.
- PR 10: Information Disclosure and Stakeholder Engagement.

### **National Legal Framework**

Project implementation must comply with a series of fundamental national laws and regulations:

- Environment and Biodiversity: Law No. 1515/1993 on environmental protection and Law No. 86/2014 on Environmental Impact Assessment (which transposes EU Directive 2011/92/EU). Also relevant are Law No. 1538/1998 on the fund of state-protected natural areas and Law No. 239/2007 on the vegetal kingdom.
- Social and Labour: The Labour Code No. 154/2003 and Law No. 186/2008 on occupational safety and health. Law No. 5/2006 ensures equal opportunities between women and men.
- Land Acquisition: Law No. 488/1999 on expropriation for public utility and the new Land Code No. 22/2024. The R7 road project was declared of public utility of national interest through Law No. 204/2024.
- Transparency: Law No. 148/2023 on access to information of public interest and Law No. 239/2008 on transparency in decision-making.

### **International Conventions and EU Directives**

The Republic of Moldova is a party to several international treaties that directly influence project management:

- Aarhus Convention (1998): Guarantees access to environmental information, public participation in decision-making, and access to justice.
- Espoo Convention (1991): Regarding environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context, specifically relevant for Lot 3 due to its proximity to the Romanian border (Costești-Stânca area).
- Emerald Network (Bern Convention): Protects habitats and species of European interest identified along the R7 corridor.

### **Standards Compliance and Gap Analysis**

The project is based on the principle of applying the most stringent standard. Because national legislation does not fully cover the requirements of PR 10 (particularly regarding the identification of vulnerable groups and project-level grievance mechanisms) or PR 5 (regarding compensation at full replacement cost and livelihood restoration), specific instruments have been developed, such as the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and the Land Acquisition and Resettlement Framework (LARF), to close these gaps.

Currently, Lot 4 holds Environmental Permit No. 18/1025/2024, while for Lots 1, 2, and 3, it is necessary to update the environmental permits at this stage. All construction works will be rigorously monitored to ensure continuous compliance with the issued permits and EBRD standards.

### 3.3. Current environmental and social situation and considerations

The evaluation of the current environmental status and social context along the R7 corridor highlights a series of critical factors that justify the project's necessity and guide the proposed mitigation measures.

#### Physical Environment and Quality of Environmental Factors

- **Air Quality:** Baseline monitoring conducted in May 2026 indicates good ambient air quality, with all measured parameters (NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>) being below regulated limits. The current impact is low due to the absence of major industrial sources, with pollution strictly concentrated in high-traffic areas.
- **Noise and Vibrations:** Current daytime noise levels are compliant with national standards, remaining below the limit of 55 dB(A) for residential areas. The primary source of background noise is the existing traffic on the R7 road.
- **Water Resources (Critical Consideration):** Water quality is a major concern. Laboratory analyses revealed severe bacteriological contamination (*E. coli*, enterococci) in nearly all investigated wells, as well as nitrate concentrations exceeding the permissible limit by 4–5 times in settlements such as Nicoreni and Pîrjota. Furthermore, surface watercourses (Copăceanca, Camenca) are classified as Class V (very poor quality).
- **Soils:** The region is dominated by fertile chernozems with high fertility scores, and no significant historical contamination has been identified.

#### Biodiversity and Protected Areas

The route traverses areas of high ecological value, including:

- **Emerald Network:** The project intercepts the "Middle Prut" (Prutul de Mijloc) and "Nistru Cliffs" (Stâncile Nistrene) sites.
- **Natural Reserves:** The Șaptebani and Lucăceni forest reserves (Lot 3) are critical habitats for protected bird and mammal species, such as the European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*).
- **Fauna:** Approximately 190 bird species have been recorded, including protected raptors such as the Lesser Spotted Eagle and the Common Buzzard.

#### Socio-Economic Context

- **Demography:** The Soroca, Drochia, and Rîșcani districts face a pronounced phenomenon of population aging and outmigration of the young workforce. The majority of inhabitants are long-term residents (over 20 years) and are highly sensitive to changes in mobility.
- **Economic Activities:** The economy is predominantly agrarian (maize, sunflower, sugar beet), with the R7 road serving as the backbone for product logistics to processing units (e.g., the Drochia sugar factory) and international markets. Remittances remains a vital secondary source of income.
- **Infrastructure and Services:** The R7 road is a social "lifeline," ensuring access to district hospitals, schools, and markets. The current degraded state of the pavement increases intervention times for emergency services.

#### Road Safety and Vulnerable Groups

- **Current Risks:** The most frequent accidents are vehicle reversals and rear-end/side collisions, caused by deficient infrastructure such as the lack of acceleration/deceleration lanes and poor lighting.
- **Vulnerabilities:** The elderly, children, and users of agricultural machinery are most exposed to collision risks due to high transit speeds through settlements and the lack of sidewalks.

#### Cultural Heritage

Numerous archaeological sites have been identified (particularly on Lot 1, dating back to the Bronze Age and Eneolithic), along with architectural monuments such as the churches in Șolcani, Nicoreni, and Zgurița. While these are not directly affected by the road footprint, they are sensitive to dust, noise, and vibrations during the construction phase.

### 3.4. History of the Project development and planning

The planning process for the R7 road rehabilitation has evolved from initial technical studies into an integrated modernization strategy aligned with European standards:

- **Initial Planning for Lots 1–3:** Technical execution projects for the first three lots (km 0–89) were prepared between 2020 and 2022 by FPC Universinș SRL and Simbo-Proiect SRL. These documents established the foundation for rehabilitating the existing pavement, but stakeholder engagement during that phase was restricted to specialized agencies and local public authorities, without extensive public consultations.
- **Strategic Technical Decisions (2021):** During the Technical Committee meeting on March 18, 2021, it was decided to adjust the road's alignment and cross-section parameters to Technical Category II. This is a fundamental requirement for integrating the R7 route into the international transport corridor connecting Ukraine, Moldova, and Romania.
- **Development of the Drochia Bypass (Lot 4):** The Feasibility Study and technical project for Lot 4 were developed in 2024. During the same period, on October 21, 2024, the Environmental Agency issued Environmental Permit No. 18/1025/2024 for this specific segment.
- **International Recognition (2023–2024):** At the end of 2023, segments of the R7 road were officially integrated into the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), facilitating the attraction of European investment. Subsequently, through Law No. 204 of July 25, 2024, modernization works on the R7 corridor were declared of public utility of national interest, simplifying legal procedures for implementation.
- **Current Evaluation Stage (2025–2026):** In June 2025, an international consortium of consultants (led by MC Mobility Consultants GmbH) was contracted to perform technical project reviews, the Road Safety Audit (RSA), and the Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA).
- **Consultations and Field Studies:** Under the supervision of the National Road Administration (AND/NRA), early stakeholder engagement activities and field documentation visits were conducted between August and October 2025. Following this, from March 19 to April 1, 2026, a comprehensive campaign of public consultations and baseline socio-economic surveys was carried out in all localities within the area of influence, ensuring the project's compliance with EBRD Performance Requirement 10 (PR10).

Currently, the project is in the final phase of updating documentation and obtaining updated environmental permits for Lots 1–3 in order to initiate bidding procedures for the execution of works.

## 4. Process

### 4.1. ESA process carried out and integration with design

The Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA) process, equivalent to the national EIMS standard, was designed as an iterative planning tool integrated directly into the R7 project development cycle to ensure its long-term sustainability.

#### ESA Process Methodology

The process combined documentary research, field investigations, and stakeholder engagement to evaluate current conditions and potential changes generated by the project. Key stages included:

- Analysis of existing information: Review of technical studies, design documentation, and planning reports provided by the National Road Administration (NRA).
- Structured field verifications: Seven assessment visits were conducted between August 2025 and March 2026 across the entire R7 route to confirm baseline data, identify sensitive receptors, and collect primary environmental and social data.
- Stakeholder engagement: Extensive consultations with project-affected people (PAPs), community representatives, and local authorities were conducted, particularly between March 19 and April 1, 2026, to validate preliminary findings and capture local concerns.
- GIS Analysis: Geographic Information Systems were used to overlay spatial data and locate potential conflict zones or cumulative sensitivities.

#### Integration into Design and Decision-Making

The ESA process directly influenced technical solutions through several mechanisms:

- Analysis of alternatives: For new segments, the ESA guided the selection of options with the lowest impact. For the Drochia Bypass (Lot 4), Option 3 was selected as it offered the best balance between technical performance and the protection of soil and natural resources. For Lot 6, route selection aimed to minimize interference with sensitive areas near the Dniester.
- Road Safety Audit (RSA): Recommendations from the RSA were integrated to correct design deficiencies at intersections, plan acceleration/deceleration lanes, and ensure safe pedestrian infrastructure, adapting the road environment to real human behavior.
- Mitigation Hierarchy: The design prioritized the avoidance and prevention of impacts over minimization or compensation, in accordance with EBRD Performance Requirements.
- Mandatory Management Measures: ESA results were translated into an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and an Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP), which are mandatory components of construction contracts, ensuring contractors adhere to established performance standards.

#### Compliance Framework

The entire process was conducted to ensure simultaneous compliance with:

1. National legislation of the Republic of Moldova (notably Law No. 86/2014 on Environmental Impact Assessment).
2. Performance Requirements (PR 1-10) of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). European Union Directives (EIA, Habitats, Birds), applying the most stringent standard in case of

discrepancies.

Through this integrated process, feedback collected from communities and institutions regarding land access, school safety, and water resource protection was utilized for the continuous optimization of the final design.

## 4.2. Public consultations and disclosure and dealing with objections

The stakeholder engagement process for the R7 road project was designed as a continuous and inclusive process, aimed at ensuring that the views of affected communities are integrated into the project's design and implementation. This process complies with both the national legislation of the Republic of Moldova and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Performance Requirement 10 (PR10).

- Consultation and Information Campaigns

Consultation activities were carried out in several key stages:

- Early Stage (August – October 2025): Stakeholders were identified, and initial meetings were organized with local authorities and specialized agencies to capture location-specific concerns.
- ESA Public Consultation and Survey Campaign (19 March – 1 April 2026): Representatives from the National Road Administration (AND/NRA) and environmental consultants conducted an extensive campaign across all settlements within the Area of Influence, including Șolcani, Zgurița, Chetrosu, Drochia, Rîșcani, and Costești.
- Participation: Over 280 individuals attended these meetings, and more than 220 socio-economic baseline questionnaires were completed to establish reference conditions for the communities.

Information methods were diverse to ensure maximum coverage:

- Digital Channels: Announcements were posted on the websites of the NRA, district councils, and mayoralities, as well as on social media platforms such as Facebook and Viber groups.
- Physical Channels: Information boards were placed at mayoralities, informative leaflets were distributed in Romanian and Russian, and posters were displayed at work sites.
- Discussion Groups: Specific Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with local entrepreneurs, landowners, and vulnerable groups, including women and the elderly.
- Primary Public Concerns

The feedback collected highlighted the following community priorities:

- Road Safety: The need for street lighting, sidewalks, secure pedestrian crossings, and speed calming measures, particularly near schools like the gymnasium in Chetrosu.
- Accessibility: Maintaining access to properties, businesses, and agricultural fields during construction, alongside the proper planning of alternative routes.
- Environmental Impact: Concerns regarding dust generated during works, noise, vibrations, and waste management.
- Land Acquisition: Especially for Lot 4 (Drochia Bypass), owners requested transparency in the valuation process and fair compensation.
- Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)

To handle objections and suggestions transparently and efficiently, the NRA established a three-level **Grievance Redress Mechanism**:

1. Level 1 (Local/Site): Grievances are submitted to the NRA's Environmental and Social Officer or the local

mayorality. Receipt is acknowledged within 7 working days.

2. Level 2 (NRA): If not resolved locally, the case is reviewed by the NRA, which proposes solutions and aims to close the case within 30 days.
3. Level 3 (Appeal/Recourse): Applicants may appeal to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development (MIRD) or the courts as provided by law.

#### **Channels for submitting grievances:**

- In Writing: Forms available at mayoralties and construction sites.
- Online/Email: Via the NRA website ([www.andsa.md/petitii-online/](http://www.andsa.md/petitii-online/)) or email: [cancelaria@andsa.md](mailto:cancelaria@andsa.md).
- Telephone: Dedicated hotlines: +373 78 337 744 or +373 60 477 117.
- Verbal: Directly during public meetings.

The mechanism accepts anonymous submissions and is free of charge, ensuring confidentiality and protection against retaliation for all users, including site workers. All grievances are recorded in a centralized register to monitor trends and continuously improve project performance.

## **5. Summary of Environmental Benefits, Potential Adverse Impacts, Mitigation and Management Measures**

### **5.1. Air quality**

Monitoring conducted in May 2026 confirmed good ambient air quality along the R7 corridor, with all measured parameters (SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, NO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) being significantly below the legal limits established by Law No. 98/2022. Particulate matter concentrations were particularly low (below 1 µg/m<sup>3</sup>), indicating a minimal impact of current anthropogenic sources on the rural areas traversed.

#### **Potential Adverse Impacts:**

- Construction Phase: The primary source of pollution will be mechanically generated dust during earthworks, excavations, and material transport on unpaved roads. Additionally, heavy machinery and trucks will generate exhaust emissions (NO<sub>2</sub>, CO), and the laying of asphalt layers will release volatile organic compounds (VOCs). A significant cumulative impact was identified in the settlements of Şaptebani, Gălăşeni, and Petruşeni, due to intensive truck traffic transporting aggregates from local quarries on unmaintained communal roads.
- Operational Phase: While traffic fluidization reduces emissions per vehicle, the long-term increase in total traffic volume along this TEN-T corridor could lead to an increase in total pollutant loads (NO<sub>x</sub>, PM, CO<sub>2</sub>) in areas adjacent to the road.

#### **Environmental Benefits:**

- Emissions Reduction through Fluidization: The rehabilitated road will ensure constant travel speeds, eliminating the "stop-and-go" conditions specific to degraded roads, which will reduce local CO<sub>2</sub> and dust emissions.
- Urban Revitalization in Drochia: The construction of the bypass (Lot 4) will divert heavy transit traffic from the town center, significantly improving air quality in residential areas and in the proximity of sensitive institutions, such as hospitals and schools.
- Material Recycling: The use of the cold in-place recycling method (Lots 1–3) reduces the need for transporting new materials, thereby decreasing atmospheric emissions associated with site logistics.

**Mitigation and Management Measures:**

- **Dust Control:** Implementation of regular water spraying systems for exposed surfaces and access roads, particularly during dry periods. Trucks transporting bulk materials must be covered with tarpaulins.
- **Operational Restrictions:** Enforcement of a speed limit of maximum 40 km/h for construction vehicles in settlements (e.g., Șolcani, Zgurița, Chetrosu, Pîrjota).
- **Machinery Management:** Regular maintenance of equipment, use of low-sulfur fuels, and prohibition of engine idling when not in use.
- **Quarry Transport Management:** Installation of wheel-washing systems at the exits of the Duruitoarea, Șaptebani, and Cosăuți quarries and periodic cleaning of local roads used for transport.
- **Natural Barriers:** Planting and maintenance of protective forest belts along the road to capture dust and reduce wind impact.
- **Continuous Monitoring:** Carrying out periodic air quality measurements (PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, CO) at representative points in settlements (e.g., near the Chetrosu Gymnasium) during construction and in the first years of operation.

## 5.2. Soil

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The R7 project corridor traverses regions dominated by fertile chernozems (typical, leached, and grey forest-steppe types), characteristic of northern Moldova. Baseline monitoring conducted in May 2026 confirmed good soil quality, with no significant historical contamination; all monitored pollutants (heavy metals and petroleum products) were below the Maximum Permissible Concentrations (MPCs). The measured pH values (7.8–7.9) indicate slightly alkaline conditions, specific to these productive soils.

**Potential Adverse Impacts:**

- **Construction Phase:**
  - Risk of accidental contamination through spills of fuels and lubricants from heavy machinery.
  - Loss of soil fertility and structure due to improper stripping, construction site organization, and the construction of temporary access roads.
  - Increased vulnerability to erosion, particularly in hilly terrain (Soroca Hills and Middle Prut Hills), resulting from excavations and the creation of foundation pits.
  - Impact of borrow pits, involving the temporary loss of topsoil and the alteration of local landforms.
- **Operational Phase:**
  - Erosion caused by uncontrolled stormwater runoff from the road surface if drainage systems are not properly maintained.
  - Reduced risk of accidental pollution associated with transit traffic or maintenance equipment.

**Environmental Benefits:**

- **Material Recycling:** The use of the cold in-place recycling method (Lots 1–3) minimizes soil impact by reducing the need for new materials extracted from quarries.
- **Long-term Stability:** Modernization of drainage systems and slope stabilization through bioengineering and vegetation planting will reduce erosion and ensure the protection of adjacent agricultural lands.
- **Land Restoration:** All temporarily occupied surfaces will be returned to their original productive state.

**Mitigation and Management Measures:**

- **Pollution Prevention:** Prohibition of washing machinery on site and performing maintenance only in impermeable areas equipped with spill kits.
- **Topsoil Management:** Selective stripping of fertile soil and separate storage in protected stockpiles; exclusive use of this soil for the recultivation of temporary zones and slope stabilization.
- **Erosion Control:** Installation of sediment barriers (silt fences) and rapid stabilization of exposed soils through re-vegetation.
- **Borrow Pit Management:** Limiting final slopes to a maximum gradient of 1:3 to ensure stability and protecting them with drainage ditches.
- **Monitoring:** Conducting laboratory analyses to determine potential hydrocarbon contamination prior to the commencement of works and upon their completion.

### 5.3. Water resources

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The R7 road corridor traverses the Nistru and Prut river basins, intersecting several important watercourses including the Căinari, Cubolta, Răut, Copăceanca, and Camenca rivers. Baseline monitoring conducted in June 2026 indicates a critical state of local water resources: the Copăceanca and Camenca rivers are classified as Class V (very poor quality), characterized by severe oxygen depletion and high organic loads. Regarding groundwater, massive bacteriological contamination (*E. coli* and intestinal enterococci) was identified in nearly all investigated dug wells, and nitrate concentrations exceed the legal limit of 50 mg/l by 4–5 times in settlements such as Nicoreni (193.1 mg/l) and Pîrjota (271.0 mg/l).

**Potential Adverse Impacts**

- **Construction Phase:** The highest risks (assessed as High significance) involve increased turbidity and sedimentation of watercourses during the rehabilitation of bridges over the Cubolta, Răut, and Camenca rivers. Other risks include accidental hydrocarbon leaks from machinery, improper wastewater management at construction sites, and the alteration of local drainage patterns due to excavations and temporary material stockpiles.
- **Operational Phase:** The primary impact stems from stormwater runoff from the road surface, which may transport suspended solids, heavy metals, and petroleum residues into receiving soils and water bodies. There is also a moderate risk of acute pollution from traffic accidents involving vehicles carrying hazardous substances.

**Environmental Benefits**

- **Improved Runoff Control:** Modernizing the collection systems (ditches, gutters, culverts) will reduce embankment erosion and prevent water accumulation on the roadway.
- **Reduction of Diffuse Pollution:** Smoother traffic flow on the rehabilitated road will minimize "stop-and-go" conditions, reducing the amount of residual pollutants deposited on the road that could be washed into river basins.
- **Treatment Protection:** The project includes the installation of hydrocarbon separators in sensitive areas (notably Lot 6) to ensure primary treatment of stormwater before discharge.

**Mitigation and Management Measures**

- **Mandatory River Crossing Measures:** It is mandatory to install silt fences and temporary settling basins at the bridge works for the Cubolta (PC 241+45), Răut (PC 384+26), and Camenca (PC 624+95) rivers to protect degraded aquatic ecosystems.
- **Worker Health Protection:** Due to the contamination of local wells, site personnel are strictly prohibited from using local water for drinking or hygiene; the contractor must provide exclusively certified bottled water.
- **Equipment and Material Management:** Machinery maintenance must be conducted only in impermeable areas equipped with oil separators, and material storage sites must be located at least 50 m away from watercourses.
- **Accidental Pollution Prevention:** Implementation of a Pollution Prevention and Emergency Response Plan is required, including equipping every work point with spill kits.
- **Monitoring and Maintenance:** Water quality analyses (pH, suspended solids, BOD5, COD, hydrocarbons) will be performed before, during, and after works. During operation, drainage systems and separators must be inspected and cleaned at least twice per year.

## 5.4. Biodiversity and nature conservation

The R7 road corridor traverses diverse forest-steppe landscapes in northern Moldova, intersecting areas of high ecological value. Within Lot 3, the route borders the "Middle Prut" (Prutul de Mijloc) Emerald Site and crosses the Șaptebani and Lucăceni forest nature reserves. These ecosystems harbor rich biodiversity, including approximately 190 bird species (some protected, such as the Lesser Spotted Eagle) and mammals of conservation interest, such as the European wildcat (*Felis silvestris*). Lots 1, 2, and 4 primarily cross agricultural lands and modified habitats; the "Lunca Baraboi" Emerald Site (associated with Lot 2) is located at a safe distance of 6.5 km from the road.

### Potential Adverse Impacts

- **Construction Phase:** The most significant impact is related to vegetation clearing, with an estimated removal of approximately 1,628 trees for Lots 1–4. Works may generate temporary disturbances to fauna through noise, vibration, and dust, affecting bird nesting and mammal reproduction periods. There is also a risk of habitat fragmentation and disruption of local migration routes.
- **Operational Phase:** Residual risks include vehicle-animal collisions (particularly in the forested areas of Lot 3) and diffuse pollution (dust, exhaust gases) that may affect the quality of habitats in the immediate vicinity of the road.

### Environmental Benefits

- **Restoring Connectivity:** The project provides for the use of 12 existing structures (bridges and culverts in Lots 1–4) as ecological passages (ecoducts) to facilitate the safe movement of small and medium fauna under the roadway, reducing collision risks.
- **Reduction of Local Pollution:** Improved traffic flow will ensure constant speeds, eliminating frequent stops and thus reducing exhaust emissions and dust deposition on adjacent vegetation.

### Mitigation and Management Measures

- **Seasonal Restrictions:** To protect nesting periods, tree felling in forested areas is strictly prohibited between mid-March and August, being permitted only from September to mid-March.
- **Specialized Supervision:** The Contractor is required to hire a biodiversity expert to monitor sensitive areas and identify any raptor nests or bat colonies in bridge structures before starting works.

- **Vegetation Protection:** Protection zones of at least 1.5 meters will be established around preserved trees, with the storage of materials prohibited within this perimeter.
- **Reforestation and Signage:** Compensatory planting will be carried out exclusively with native species (oak, ash, linden), in coordination with the “Moldsilva” Agency. Road warning signs regarding the presence of wild animals will be installed in forested areas (Lot 3).
- **Monitoring:** Continuous monitoring of habitats and animal mortality will be conducted during construction and the first years of operation to evaluate the effectiveness of protection measures.

## 5.5. Cumulative impacts

The cumulative impact assessment analyzes the effects resulting from the combination of the R7 road rehabilitation project's impacts with those of other existing or planned projects in the region that overlap in time or space. This analysis is essential for understanding the total pressure on the environment and local communities.

### Interaction with Major Technical and Utility Infrastructure Projects

- **Prut Cluster (Rîșcani District):** The R7 project overlaps with strategic investments in water supply and wastewater infrastructure, specifically a World Bank-financed project (2024) aimed at expanding services in localities such as Păscăuți, Gălășeni, and Hiliuți. The reconstruction of the R7 road must be synchronized with the installation of water intake pipelines from the Prut River to ensure the road platform's compatibility with the new networks.
- **Utilities Management:** Technical documentation includes specific chapters dedicated to the redesign and relocation of existing utility networks (water, gas, electricity, communications) located within the road's influence zone to avoid execution conflicts and service interruptions to the population.

### Impact of Extractive Activities (Stone Quarries)

The interaction between the transport of construction materials and the operations of local quarries (e.g., Duruitoarea, Șaptebani) generates a cumulative impact on air quality.

- **Dust Pollution:** Heavy-duty trucks traveling on unpaved or poorly maintained local roads to connect with the R7 route generate significant dust emissions.
- **Health Effects:** This situation leads to reduced visibility and adverse health effects for the population in the villages of Șaptebani, Gălășeni, and Petrușeni.

### Economic Development and Transboundary Traffic Pressure

- **Urban and Economic Expansion:** Improved connectivity through the TEN-T corridor is expected to attract new logistics and commercial investments along the R7 road. This may lead to a permanent change in land use patterns (from agricultural to industrial or service zones) and increased pressure on local water resources and waste management systems.
- **Border Traffic Pressure:** In the Costești area, the concentration of heavy traffic flows can lead to severe congestion and increased emissions if there is no integrated planning for parking and waiting areas.

### Specific Context of Drochia City

- **Overlap of Works:** There are concerns regarding cumulative impacts during the construction phase due to the expected overlap of works on the Bypass (Lot 4) with the rehabilitation of Lots 1 and 2.
- **Cumulative Operational Benefits:** The combined implementation of these segments will substantially reduce

environmental impacts within the city by diverting transit traffic, thereby diminishing noise, vibrations, and dust in residential areas.

### **Management of Cumulative Impacts**

Effective management requires close inter-institutional coordination between the National Road Administration, local public authorities (LPA), utility operators, and the Environment Agency. It is mandatory that mitigation measures be synchronized at the regional level, rather than only at the level of each individual contract lot.

## **5.6. Induced (indirectly consequential) impacts**

Induced impacts represent predictable but unplanned developments stimulated by the implementation of the R7 Project, which may occur later or in locations beyond the immediate road footprint. These indirect consequences affect economic development, land use, and pressure on natural resources.

### **Regional Economic Development and Urban Expansion**

- **Attracting Investment:** Modernizing the R7 corridor and its integration into the TEN-T network will increase the region's attractiveness to investors, stimulating the emergence of new logistics units, warehouses, and commercial services along the route.
- **Land Use Change:** This economic development may lead to a gradual transformation of land from agricultural categories to industrial or service zones, while also increasing pressure on local water supply and waste management systems.
- **Strengthening Value Chains:** Infrastructure improvement will indirectly support agricultural producers by optimizing transport to processing units and export points, increasing the competitiveness of the agrarian sector in the Soroca, Drochia, and Rîșcani districts.

### **Social Accessibility and Tourism**

- **Access to Essential Services:** Beyond direct time benefits, road rehabilitation will facilitate faster and more reliable access for the rural population to district hospitals, educational centers, and urban markets, improving social welfare indicators.
- **Tourism Potential:** Improved road conditions can increase the flow of visitors to cultural heritage sites (e.g., Soroca Fortress) and natural reserves in the region (e.g., "Suta de Movile"), offering opportunities for the development of rural tourism.

### **Anthropogenic Pressure on Biodiversity**

- **Increased Visitation of Natural Areas:** Facilitating access to sensitive forest areas (particularly in Lot 3 – Șaptebani, Lucăceni) may lead to an increase in spontaneous visitors, camping, and recreational activities. This phenomenon requires more intense monitoring by forestry entities to prevent habitat degradation, fire risk, or uncontrolled waste disposal.

### **Traffic Dynamics and Emissions**

- **Attracting Transit Traffic:** Modernization may induce a redistribution of transport flows from other national routes toward the R7. Although improved traffic flow reduces emissions per vehicle by eliminating "stop-and-go" conditions, the total volume of traffic attracted in the long term could maintain or increase total atmospheric pollutant loads (NO<sub>2</sub>, PM) in adjacent communities.

### **Management of Induced Impacts**

These consequences will be managed by coordinating road planning with the urban and regional development strategies of Local Public Authorities (LPA). The National Road Administration will monitor safety and environmental indicators during the operation phase to adapt traffic control measures and protect sensitive areas according to the new dynamics induced by the Project.

## 5.7. Landscape and visual impacts

The R7 road corridor traverses a typical Moldovan rural landscape, characterized by the predominance of agricultural lands, discontinuous residential areas, fragments of natural vegetation, and built-up surfaces. The landscape varies from gently undulating plains to moderately hilly areas, with an open character dedicated to agricultural production across most lots. The most visually and ecologically sensitive areas are the forested zones (Șaptebani and Lucăcenii reserves) and the riparian zones along the Prut and Nistru rivers.

### Potential Adverse Impacts

- Construction Phase:
  - Temporary modification of the visual characteristics of the area due to site organizations, material stockpiles, heavy machinery, and temporary access roads.
  - Roadside vegetation clearing: It is estimated that approximately 1,628 trees will be removed for Lots 1–4, altering the appearance of the existing green corridor.
  - Impact of borrow pits: Aggregate extraction activities will cause a temporary alteration of local relief and the natural landscape through stripping and excavation.
  - Dust pollution: Dust deposits on adjacent vegetation and buildings may temporarily affect the aesthetics of the traversed areas, particularly in settlements like Șolcani, Zgurița, or Chetrosu.
- Operational Phase:
  - Presence of modern infrastructure: The installation of safety barriers, reflective signage, street lighting, and the construction of roundabouts will permanently modify the traditional rural character of the route, giving it a more industrialized appearance.
  - Landscape fragmentation: Particularly within the Drochia Bypass (Lot 4), the new greenfield alignment will divide open agricultural lands, modifying the visual structure of the peri-urban landscape.

### Mitigation and Management Measures

- Restoration of affected sites: Upon completion of the works, all temporarily occupied surfaces (work camps, access roads) will be restored to their original condition or better.
- Borrow pit management: After extraction ends, sites will be leveled and shaped with maximum gradients of 1:3 to blend harmoniously into the surrounding landscape.
- Reforestation and compensatory planting: Tree and shrub planting will be carried out using exclusively native species adapted to local conditions (oak, ash, linden), in coordination with the “Moldsilva” Agency.
- Natural barriers: Priority will be given to creating protective forest belts and green buffer zones, which will serve as natural visual screens and barriers against noise and dust.
- Protection of existing trees: Establishment of protection zones of at least 1.5 meters around preserved trees to prevent damage to roots or trunks during works.
- Dust control: Use of regular water spraying systems on exposed surfaces, especially in inhabited areas, to

maintain the clean appearance of facades and vegetation.

The rehabilitation of the roadway will eliminate the current degraded appearance (potholes, uneven pavement, and shoulder erosion), providing a neat and modern infrastructure to the entire R7 corridor. Additionally, in Drochia, the diversion of heavy traffic will contribute significantly to the revitalization of the urban landscape, reducing visual pollution, noise, and the degradation of infrastructure in the city center.

## 5.8. Raw material sourcing and transportation, including borrow pits

Construction materials required for the R7 road rehabilitation will be sourced from several licensed quarries and production plants located in the central and northern regions of the Republic of Moldova. Supplier selection is based on production capacity, material quality (compliance with European EN standards implemented as of 2021), and relative proximity to the work site to ensure cost-efficiency and technical reliability.

The primary identified sources include: Duruitoarea Quarry: Crushed stone (LA50), Șaptebani Quarry: Limestone gravel, Cosăuți Quarry: Broken granite stone, Vasilcău Quarry: Ballast and sand, Beleavinți Quarry: Crushed stone (LA30),

Production units in Bălți and Chișinău (UBA/UBC): Asphalt concrete, cement concrete, and reinforced concrete prefabricates.

**Transport and Extraction Impacts:** The transportation of these aggregates involves the intensive use of heavy-duty trucks, generating several risks for local communities:

- **Dust Pollution:** This is a major concern in the villages of Șaptebani, Gălășeni, and Petrușeni, where heavy trucks transporting materials from local quarries on unpaved or poorly maintained local roads raise significant amounts of dust, affecting visibility and the health of residents.
- **Noise and Vibrations:** The operation of heavy machinery and truck traffic through settlements will increase noise levels, particularly in areas where residential buildings are located within 10–25 meters of the road.
- **Wear and Safety:** Material transport may damage local roads and increase the risk of traffic accidents at intersections with the R7 road.

**Mitigation and Management Measures:** To minimize these impacts, the project mandates strict rules for contractors and suppliers:

- **Transport Management:** All trucks transporting bulk materials must be covered with tarpaulins to prevent dust dispersion.
- **Dust Control and Cleanliness:** The Contractor must install wheel-washing systems at quarry exits and ensure regular cleaning or water spraying of the access roads used.
- **Speed and Schedule Restrictions:** Construction vehicles will have a maximum speed limit of 40 km/h in settlements. Transport and works will be scheduled to avoid peak hours and community rest periods.
- **Recycling (Major Benefit):** On Lots 1, 2, and 3, the cold in-place recycling method of existing asphalt will be used, which significantly reduces the volume of new raw materials required and, consequently, the number of truck trips, thereby decreasing emissions and pressure on natural resources.
- **Quarry Rehabilitation:** Any borrow pit or new quarry (if applicable) will be operated according to a management plan that requires the selective storage of fertile topsoil and full landscape restoration after extraction is completed, with final slopes limited to a 1:3 gradient.

## 5.9. Road safety

Road safety is a central pillar of the R7 Road Rehabilitation Project, given that the Republic of Moldova remains among the countries with the highest road fatality rates in Europe, with a mortality rate on national roads (8.3 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants) nearly twice the European Union average. Although accidents along the R7 corridor account for only a small proportion of the national total, the share of fatalities in these incidents is disproportionately high.

### Existing Situation and Identified Deficiencies

The existing conditions assessment and the Road Safety Audit (RSA) identified several risks associated with inadequate road infrastructure:

- Incomplete infrastructure: Lack of safety barriers in hazardous locations, absence of road markings and delineator posts, and insufficient street lighting within settlements.
- Mixed traffic conflicts: The road serves a dual function as both a regional transit route and a local access road, resulting in hazardous interactions between high-speed through traffic and slow-moving agricultural machinery, which often has no alternative routes.
- Accident patterns: The most common accident types on the R7 are vehicle rollovers and side or rear-end collisions, indicating deficiencies in road geometry, limited visibility, and unsafe manoeuvres at property access points.

### Construction Phase Impacts

Road safety during construction has been assessed as having high impact significance. The main risks include:

- Interaction between heavy construction machinery and local or through traffic, particularly in the peri-urban areas of Drochia and Rîșcani.
- Increased risk to vulnerable road users (pedestrians, children, and elderly people) in settlements such as Chetrosu, where the secondary school is located only 20 metres from the road.
- Reduced visibility due to dust generation and temporary traffic arrangements, including lane narrowing and road diversions.

### Operational Phase Impacts and Benefits

The rehabilitation works will deliver substantial long-term road safety benefits while also creating residual risks that require continued management:

- Major benefit: The implementation of modern road safety standards—including high-performance reflective road signage, new safety barriers, and upgraded street lighting—will significantly reduce the likelihood and severity of serious road traffic accidents.
- Drochia Bypass (Lot 4): The bypass will divert heavy transit traffic away from the town centre, substantially reducing the risk of urban traffic accidents.
- Speed-related risk: Improved pavement quality may encourage higher vehicle speeds through settlements, increasing the potential severity of collisions unless speed limits are effectively enforced.

### Mitigation Measures and Technical Recommendations

The Project incorporates the recommendations of the Road Safety Audit (RSA) to establish a forgiving road environment that minimises the consequences of human error. Key measures include:

- Within settlements: Construction of continuous sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, protected pedestrian

crossings, and installation of speed enforcement cameras at village entrances.

- Intersection improvements: Upgrading critical intersections through the construction of roundabouts, including turbo roundabouts for Lots 1–3, together with acceleration and deceleration lanes where appropriate.
- Safety barriers: All terminal ends of steel safety barriers will be properly anchored into the ground and curved away from the carriageway to prevent fatal head-on impacts.
- Visibility enhancement: Installation of intelligent street lighting systems (potentially powered by solar energy) and rumble strips to alert drivers when approaching hazardous curves or settlement entrances.
- Agricultural traffic: Provision of dedicated measures for agricultural vehicles, including specific warning signage and, where feasible, additional overtaking space through the construction of partial auxiliary lanes to facilitate safe overtaking.

The Project is aligned with the National Road Safety Programme 2025–2030, which aims to substantially reduce road fatalities and serious injuries through the development of safer road infrastructure and enhanced road user awareness and education.

## 5.10. Traffic, noise and vibration

Road traffic is currently the primary source of ambient noise and vibration along the R7 corridor. Baseline monitoring undertaken in May 2026 in the settlements of Şolcani, Zgurița, Chetrosu, and Nicoreni recorded daytime noise levels ranging from 49.00 to 51.55 dB(A). These values are below the legal limit of 55 dB(A) established for residential areas, confirming that the existing acoustic environment complies with national standards. No previous noise-related complaints have been reported, and current vibration levels are generated solely by the interaction between vehicle tyres and the deteriorated pavement.

### Potential Adverse Impacts

- Construction Phase

The rehabilitation works will result in a temporary but significant increase in noise and vibration levels, with the overall impact assessed as Moderate. The principal sources will include heavy construction equipment, such as asphalt milling machines, compactors, excavators, and trucks transporting construction materials. Vibrations generated by compaction activities may cause structural fatigue or minor damage (e.g. cracking) to vulnerable buildings located within approximately 10–25 m of the road centreline in settlements such as Şaptebani, Petrușeni, Zgurița, and Chetrosu.

- Operational Phase

Following rehabilitation, the integration of the R7 into the TEN-T network is expected to attract higher traffic volumes, including heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), which may lead to increased long-term noise levels, particularly during the night-time period.

### Anticipated Benefits

- Reduced rolling noise through improved pavement quality: A smooth pavement surface will eliminate much of the rolling noise and vibration currently caused by potholes, surface irregularities, and frequent braking and acceleration manoeuvres.
- Urban environmental improvements in Drochia (Lot 4): Construction of the Drochia Bypass will deliver significant positive social and environmental benefits by diverting heavy transit traffic away from the town

centre. This will substantially reduce noise and vibration levels in sensitive areas, including hospitals, schools, and central residential neighbourhoods.

### **Mitigation and Management Measures**

The following mitigation measures will be implemented to minimise construction and operational impacts:

- **Restricted working hours:** All noisy construction activities will be undertaken exclusively during daytime hours. No noisy works will be permitted during weekends or public holidays.
- **Source control:** Contractors will use low-noise equipment wherever practicable, maintain machinery regularly, and prohibit unnecessary engine idling ("no idling" policy).
- **Speed restrictions:** Construction vehicles will be limited to a maximum speed of 40 km/h when travelling through settlements.
- **Protection of adjacent buildings:** Prior to the commencement of works, photographic records and visual structural inspections will be carried out for all buildings located close to the construction corridor in order to establish baseline conditions and facilitate verification of any vibration-related damage.
- **Natural noise barriers:** Existing roadside shelterbelts will be preserved wherever possible, and additional vegetation will be planted to provide natural noise attenuation while also reducing dust dispersion.
- **Permanent noise barriers:** At present, permanent acoustic barriers are not proposed, as existing noise levels remain below the applicable regulatory limits and local communities did not identify noise barriers as a priority during public consultations, instead emphasising road safety improvements and dust control measures.

### **Monitoring**

During the construction phase, periodic noise measurements will be undertaken at sensitive receptors, including locations such as the school in Chetrosu. During the operational phase, the National Roads Administration (NRA) will monitor noise levels at representative receptors every six months for a period of two years following project completion to determine whether additional mitigation measures are required in response to future traffic growth.

## **5.11. Waste management**

Proper waste management is a fundamental component of environmental protection within the R7 Road Rehabilitation Project and is governed by Law No. 209/2016 on Waste and the EBRD Performance Requirement 3 (PR3) – Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Control.

### **Main Waste Streams Identified**

The Project is expected to generate the following principal waste streams during construction:

- **Construction and demolition (inert) waste**
  - **Milled asphalt:** A significant proportion will be reused through cold recycling techniques for pavement base stabilisation, particularly on Lots 1, 2 and 3, thereby reducing the demand for virgin materials and minimising the quantity of waste requiring disposal.
  - **Broken concrete and kerbstones:** Generated from culvert demolition and the reconstruction of major bridges.
  - **Excavated soil:** Surplus material will be reused, where feasible, for filling local erosion areas or transported to authorised disposal facilities.
- **Vegetation waste**

- Generated from roadside clearance and the removal of approximately 1,628 trees across Lots 1–4. Timber and woody biomass will be managed in accordance with felling permits and transferred to the relevant forestry authorities or local authorities.
  - **Hazardous waste**
    - Including used lubricating oils, oil and fuel filters, petroleum-contaminated absorbents and rags, paints, adhesives, and other hazardous materials. These wastes require strict handling procedures to prevent contamination of soil and water resources.
  - **Municipal and domestic waste**
    - Generated primarily from workers' camps and site facilities.
  - **Metal and timber waste**
    - Including recovered steel reinforcement from bridge demolition and waste timber from worn formwork and damaged pallets.
- Construction Phase Waste Management Measures**

Waste management during construction will be based on the waste hierarchy (Reduce – Reuse – Recycle), with priority given to maximising on-site reuse of construction materials in order to minimise the consumption of natural resources and reduce waste generation.

The Contractor will implement the following measures:

- Establish clearly designated temporary waste storage areas equipped with separate containers for the collection of recyclable materials (plastic, metal, paper, glass) and municipal waste.
- Ensure that hazardous waste is collected in sealed containers, stored on impermeable surfaces with secondary containment where appropriate, and transferred exclusively to licensed waste management operators.
- Strictly prohibit the dumping, burial, or open burning of waste within construction sites or adjacent areas, including forests, agricultural land, and watercourses.
- Provide portable sanitary facilities (chemical toilets) for construction personnel, with regular servicing undertaken by authorised contractors.

### **Operational Phase Waste Management**

During the operational phase, the National Roads Administration (NRA) will be responsible for maintaining appropriate waste management practices along the road corridor, including:

- Routine collection of litter and municipal waste from bus stops, parking areas, and roadside rest areas.
- Maintenance of stormwater treatment facilities (Lot 6), including the annual removal of accumulated sediments and hydrocarbon residues from oil separators and associated drainage infrastructure.

### **Monitoring and Responsibilities**

The Contractor will prepare and implement a Waste Management Plan (WMP) as an integral component of the Construction Environmental and Social Management Plan (C-ESMP).

The Contractor will:

- Maintain comprehensive records of all waste generated, reused, recycled, transported, and disposed of.
- Submit monthly waste management reports to the Supervising Engineer and the National Roads Administration (NRA).
- Carry out weekly visual inspections of site housekeeping and waste storage areas.
- Maintain documentation demonstrating that all waste, particularly hazardous waste, has been transferred to

licensed and authorised waste management operators in accordance with national legislation.

These measures will ensure compliance with Moldovan waste management legislation, EBRD PR3 requirements, and international good practice for sustainable construction projects.

## **6. Summary of Social Benefits, Potential Adverse Impacts, Mitigation and Management Measures**

### **6.1. Community impacts**

The Project is expected to generate substantial long-term social benefits for communities along the R7 corridor, including:

- Improved road safety: Upgraded intersections, modern street lighting, continuous sidewalks, and protected pedestrian crossings will significantly reduce the risk of serious road traffic accidents within settlements.
- Urban revitalisation in Drochia (Lot 4): Construction of the Drochia Bypass will divert heavy transit traffic away from the town centre, substantially reducing noise, dust, and vibration in sensitive areas, including hospitals, schools, and residential neighbourhoods.
- Improved access to essential services: The rehabilitation of the R7 will provide faster, safer, and more reliable access for more than 200,000 residents of the Soroca, Drochia, and Rîșcani districts to district hospitals, educational institutions, markets, and other public services.
- Economic opportunities: The Project will create temporary employment during the construction phase while supporting local businesses through improved logistics, enhanced regional connectivity, and strengthened integration into the TEN-T transport network.

#### **Potential Adverse Impacts**

- Construction Phase (Temporary Impacts)
- Temporary disturbance caused by dust, noise, and vibration, particularly affecting residential properties located within approximately 20 m of the road, including in settlements such as Șolcani, Chetrosu, and Rîșcani.
- Temporary restrictions on access to residential properties, businesses, and agricultural land during construction activities.
- Increased safety risks associated with the interaction between local traffic—including children, elderly people, and other vulnerable road users—and heavy construction machinery.
- Land Acquisition (Lot 4)
- A significant social impact will result from the permanent acquisition of approximately 19.71 ha of agricultural land required for the construction of the Drochia Bypass. This will affect landowners and agricultural livelihoods in the villages of Țarigrad and Miciurin, potentially resulting in economic displacement.

#### **Mitigation and Management Measures**

To minimise adverse social impacts, the Project will implement the following measures:

- Traffic Management Plan (TMP): Safe alternative routes will be provided where necessary, and access to residential properties, businesses, and agricultural land will be maintained throughout the construction period wherever practicable.
- Fair compensation (LARF/PR5): Project Affected Persons (PAPs) will receive compensation at full replacement cost, together with livelihood restoration assistance for those experiencing economic displacement, in

accordance with the Land Acquisition and Resettlement Framework (LARF) and EBRD Performance Requirement 5 (PR5).

- Dust, emissions, and noise control: Construction roads will be watered regularly, trucks transporting loose materials will be covered, vehicle speeds within settlements will be limited to 40 km/h, and noisy construction activities will be restricted to daytime working hours.
- Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM): Accessible, bilingual grievance channels, including the possibility of anonymous submissions, will be available to enable communities to report concerns. Complaints will be managed and resolved promptly by the National Roads Administration (NRA).
- Workers' Code of Conduct: All construction personnel will be required to comply with a strict Code of Conduct aimed at preventing social conflicts, inappropriate behaviour, harassment, discrimination, and other adverse interactions with local communities.

These measures are intended to ensure that the Project delivers its long-term social benefits while effectively managing temporary construction-related impacts and complying with national legislation and the EBRD Environmental and Social Requirements.

## 6.2. Contractor management, including the siting and management of worker camps

The management of Contractors and workers' accommodation camps is governed by the EBRD Performance Requirements, particularly PR2 (Labour and Working Conditions) and PR4 (Community Health, Safety and Security), together with applicable national legislation. The objective is to ensure full environmental and social compliance throughout the construction period.

### A. Contractor Management Framework

The National Roads Administration (NRA), as the Project Implementation Unit, delegates the implementation of environmental and social mitigation measures to the Contractor while retaining overall responsibility for compliance and oversight.

Key requirements include:

- Contractual obligations: The Project ESMP forms part of the bidding documents and is a mandatory requirement under the FIDIC-based contract.
- Contractor's ESMP (C-ESMP): Before mobilisation, the Contractor shall prepare a site-specific C-ESMP covering key aspects such as OHS, waste and traffic management, pollution prevention, emergency response, and stakeholder engagement.
- Qualified personnel: The Contractor shall appoint environmental, social, and OHS specialists responsible for implementing the C-ESMP.
- Oversight and reporting: The Supervising Engineer will monitor compliance, verify implementation of the C-ESMP, and report regularly to the NRA.

### B. Siting and Management of Workers' Camps

As the precise locations of workers' camps are not known during the design stage, they will be selected by the Contractor in close consultation with the relevant local authorities and will require approval by both the National Roads Administration (NRA) and the Supervising Engineer.

## Siting Criteria

Workers' camps shall be located in accordance with the following principles:

- Avoidance of environmentally and socially sensitive areas: Camps shall not be located within protected areas (including Emerald Network sites and forest reserves), flood-prone areas, or within at least 500 m of sensitive receptors such as schools, hospitals, and densely populated residential areas.
- Preference for previously disturbed land: Priority will be given to existing industrial sites, brownfield land, or publicly owned land in order to minimise impacts on private property and agricultural land.
- Operational Standards

Workers' camps shall comply with the IFC/EBRD Workers' Accommodation: Processes and Standards guidance and include the following requirements:

- Accommodation standards: Living facilities shall provide adequate personal space, natural ventilation, lighting, fire protection systems, and separate sanitary facilities for male and female workers.
- Essential services: The Contractor shall provide bottled drinking water (due to concerns regarding the quality of local well water), sealed wastewater collection systems (such as septic tanks or portable sanitary facilities), and segregated waste collection and disposal systems.
- Workers' Code of Conduct: All workers shall comply with a mandatory Code of Conduct promoting respectful behaviour towards local communities, zero tolerance for gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH), non-discrimination, and restrictions on unauthorised visitors to workers' camps.
- Environmental risk management: Equipment maintenance areas and fuel storage facilities within the camp shall be constructed on impermeable surfaces and equipped with oil separators, secondary containment systems, and spill response kits to prevent soil and groundwater contamination.

## C. Demobilisation and Site Restoration

Upon completion of the construction works, the Contractor shall remove all temporary facilities, buildings, equipment, and waste materials from the site.

The Contractor shall restore all temporary work areas to their original condition, or to an improved condition where practicable, including:

- reinstatement of preserved topsoil;
- land grading and stabilisation;
- revegetation using appropriate native species where required; and
- removal of all construction debris and contaminated materials.

Completion of site restoration works will be subject to formal inspection and acceptance by the National Roads Administration (NRA), the Supervising Engineer, and the relevant local authorities, confirming that all temporary facilities have been properly decommissioned and environmental restoration objectives have been achieved.

## 6.3. Cultural heritage

The R7 Road Rehabilitation Project is not expected to result in any direct physical impacts, demolition, or structural encroachment on registered historical or religious monuments, as these assets and their legally protected buffer zones (100–500 m) are located at safe distances from the proposed works. Nevertheless, several sensitive cultural heritage receptors are situated in close proximity to the carriageway, including the Church in Şolcani (approximately

14 m from the road), the War Memorial in Petruşeni (approximately 15 m), and the Golgota Church in Nicoreni (approximately 40 m). During the construction phase, these sites may experience temporary disturbance from dust, noise, and vibration.

Although the likelihood of encountering previously unknown archaeological remains is considered low along the rehabilitation sections of the existing road, the risk is assessed as moderate within areas involving new alignments (Lots 4, 5, and 6). Consequently, a Chance Find Procedure will be implemented as a mandatory requirement. If archaeological artefacts, human remains, or other items of cultural heritage significance are discovered during construction, all works in the affected area will cease immediately, the site will be secured, and the relevant cultural heritage authorities will be notified before any activities resume.

Following completion, the Project is expected to deliver a net positive social benefit by improving accessibility to important cultural heritage and tourism destinations in northern Moldova, including the Soroca Fortress and the "Suta de Movile" Nature Reserve, thereby supporting regional tourism, cultural appreciation, and local economic development.

## 6.4. Disruption and public health and safety during construction

During the construction phase, local communities along the R7 corridor will experience temporary but significant disruptions, including increased levels of dust, noise, and vibration, together with temporary restrictions on access to residential properties, businesses, and public institutions.

Risks to community health and safety are assessed as high, primarily due to the interaction between local traffic and heavy construction equipment, the presence of open excavations, and temporary traffic arrangements. These conditions increase the vulnerability of pedestrians, particularly school children in sensitive locations such as the Chetrosu Gymnasium, as well as elderly residents and other vulnerable road users.

To minimise these impacts, Contractors will be required to prepare and implement comprehensive Traffic Management Plans (TMPs) and Community Health and Safety Plans (CHSPs). These plans will include, at a minimum, the following measures:

- Regular water spraying of construction areas and haul roads to suppress dust generation.
- Enforcement of a maximum speed limit of 40 km/h for construction vehicles within settlements.
- Securing all work areas with appropriate barriers, fencing, warning signs, and traffic control devices.
- Provision of adequate lighting around construction zones where required to ensure safe movement during low-light conditions.
- Maintenance of safe alternative routes for pedestrians, cyclists, local traffic, and emergency vehicles throughout the construction period.
- Continuous communication with local communities regarding construction schedules, temporary traffic arrangements, and access restrictions to minimise inconvenience and ensure public safety.

Implementation of these measures will help reduce construction-related risks while maintaining safe access and protecting the health, safety, and well-being of communities throughout the execution of the Project.

## 6.5. Impacts on businesses and employment

The R7 Road Rehabilitation Project will generate significant positive socio-economic impacts by supporting regional economic development, creating employment opportunities, and improving connectivity. During construction, approximately 30–40% of unskilled positions will be targeted for local workers, supporting income generation in affected communities. Temporary impacts on roadside businesses may occur due to access restrictions, reduced visibility, and lower customer activity; however, these effects are expected to be short-term and reversible.

In the long term, the modernised road will reduce transport costs, improve agricultural and commercial links, and strengthen regional competitiveness through integration into the TEN-T network. Contractors will maintain access to businesses during construction, while affected persons and businesses will receive livelihood restoration support and compensation for verified losses in accordance with EBRD PR5 and national legislation.

## 6.6. Impacts to existing infrastructure and public services

The R7 Road Rehabilitation Project requires the relocation, protection, or adjustment of existing utilities, including gas, water supply, sewerage, electricity, and telecommunications networks, to prevent damage and service interruptions.

Particular coordination is required at locations where the road intersects the Prut Cluster Water Supply Project and the Soroca–Bălți Water Supply Pipeline (Acva-Nord, Lot 6) to ensure compatibility between road works and newly installed infrastructure.

Construction may temporarily affect access to public services and increase travel times, including for emergency vehicles. To minimise these impacts, the Contractor will prepare and implement a Utility Management Plan, including coordination with utility operators, protection and timely restoration of services, advance public notification of planned interruptions, and maintenance of emergency access throughout construction.

## 6.7. Labour issues and standards

The R7 Road Rehabilitation Project complies with EBRD Performance Requirement 2 (PR2) and the labour legislation of the Republic of Moldova, ensuring fair employment conditions, written contracts, fair remuneration, and the prohibition of forced and child labour.

Contractors are required to implement a Workers' Grievance Mechanism, measures to prevent GBV/harassment and discrimination, and monitor key suppliers to address labour rights risks. They must also prioritise local recruitment where feasible, provide OHS training, ensure the use of appropriate PPE, and maintain safe working conditions.

Where workers' accommodation is provided, it shall comply with IFC/EBRD Workers' Accommodation: Processes and Standards. Compliance with labour requirements will be monitored throughout construction by the National Roads Administration (NRA) and the Supervising Engineer through inspections, audits, and corrective actions.

## 6.8. Land acquisition and resettlement (cross reference any resettlement report that is being developed)

The R7 Corridor Rehabilitation Project (Lots 1–4) has been designed to maximise the use of the existing road

corridor, minimising the need for land acquisition. No physical displacement is anticipated; the main impact will be limited to economic displacement due to the permanent acquisition of productive land for the bypass section and road alignment improvements. Land acquisition requirements vary significantly between the project sections and are primarily concentrated in areas involving new alignments:

- Lot 1 (Soroca–Drochia): Approximately 7.0 ha of land will be required (77 parcels, including 59 privately owned and 18 publicly owned parcels). The impact is considered limited and is mainly associated with road rehabilitation works and safety improvements.
- Lot 2 (Drochia–Rîșcani): Approximately 2.56 ha of land will be required (126 parcels, including private, public, and parcels with undetermined ownership status). Public consultations confirmed that local communities do not have major concerns regarding land acquisition in this section.
- Lot 3 (Rîșcani–Costești): Approximately 3.62 ha of land will be required (58 parcels, predominantly privately owned agricultural land and gardens). The impact is assessed as moderate and mainly affects roadside businesses and agricultural land users.
- Lot 4 (Drochia Bypass): This represents the most significant land acquisition impact among the first four lots, requiring approximately 19.71 ha of land (83 parcels, including 67 privately owned and 16 publicly owned parcels). As a new road section, the bypass will result in significant economic displacement for agricultural landowners in Țarigrad and Miciurin.

The Project will be implemented in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Moldova (Law No. 488/1999) and EBRD Performance Requirement 5 (PR5) – Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement. Where differences exist between national legislation and EBRD requirements, the more stringent standard will apply.

The National Roads Administration (NRA) is committed to applying the following key principles:

- Full Replacement Cost (FRC): All affected assets (including land, structures, crops, and other improvements) will be compensated at full replacement cost, including market value and transaction costs, without deductions for depreciation.
- Livelihood Restoration: Affected persons experiencing economic displacement will receive assistance to restore their livelihoods and living standards. This support will also apply to informal users (persons without formal legal documentation) who have cultivated crops or operated businesses on affected land, in accordance with EBRD PR5 requirements.
- Negotiated Settlement: The Project will prioritise obtaining land rights through voluntary negotiated agreements with affected owners before initiating formal expropriation procedures.

Special attention will be provided to vulnerable persons, including elderly people living alone, low-income households, and persons with disabilities. Such individuals will receive tailored assistance, including support with property documentation, transportation to consultation meetings, and priority processing of compensation payments.

A dedicated Land Acquisition Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) has been established to address concerns related to land valuation, compensation, and rights. The mechanism provides accessible bilingual reporting channels and the possibility of independent mediation before resorting to court proceedings.

Through these measures, the Project aims to ensure that land acquisition impacts are managed fairly, transparently,

and in compliance with both national legislation and international good practice standards.

## 6.9. Local traffic and access impacts

The R7 road performs a dual function, serving both as a regional/national transit route and as a local access corridor for settlements, farms, and businesses. As the road is not designed as a controlled-access highway, access management will focus on improving safety, organisation, and formalisation of access points, rather than systematically closing existing entrances.

### Potential Adverse Impacts

- Construction Phase (Moderate to High Significance)
- Temporary access restrictions to residential properties, businesses, and agricultural land due to pavement works, culvert rehabilitation, and drainage system construction.
- Increased travel times and disruption of normal traffic flows caused by temporary diversions, lane closures, and modified traffic arrangements.
- Temporary disruption of public transport services, including relocation of bus stops and reduced pedestrian accessibility to these facilities.
- Delays to agricultural activities, particularly during critical periods such as sowing and harvesting seasons.
- Operational Phase (Moderate to Low Significance)
- Speed-related risks: Improved pavement conditions may encourage higher vehicle speeds, increasing the risk associated with left-turn manoeuvres and access from secondary roads if intersection geometry and access arrangements are not adequately improved.
- Mixed traffic conflicts: Slow-moving agricultural machinery may continue to use the main carriageway due to the absence of parallel collector roads in certain sections, creating potential conflicts with faster-moving traffic.

### Anticipated Benefits

- Improved traffic efficiency: Reduced travel times and lower vehicle operating costs due to improved pavement conditions and enhanced road capacity.
- Enhanced safety: Reconstruction of intersections, installation of acceleration/deceleration lanes, and construction of roundabouts will significantly improve the safety of local access points.
- Drochia urban revitalisation: The construction of the bypass will remove heavy transit traffic from the town centre, improving local accessibility, mobility, and the quality of the urban environment.

### Mitigation and Management Measures

- Traffic Management Plan (TMP): Development of detailed traffic management schemes ensuring that at least one safe access route to properties, businesses, and agricultural land remains available at all times during construction.
- Temporary infrastructure: Construction of temporary gravel ramps and weather-resistant access roads suitable for agricultural machinery and local traffic where permanent access is temporarily affected.
- Proactive communication: Local communities will be notified in advance (7–14 days before implementation) of planned road closures, diversions, or major traffic restrictions through local authorities and official communication channels, including social media platforms.
- Construction planning: Works will be phased to avoid simultaneous blockage of critical access points and to

minimise major restrictions during peak agricultural periods.

- Optimised road design: Integration of recommendations from the Road Safety Audit (RSA), including strengthened road shoulders, improved intersection lighting, and installation of pedestrian refuge islands to enhance safety for vulnerable road users.

These measures will ensure that the R7 rehabilitation project maintains essential connectivity throughout construction while delivering safer and more efficient access conditions during operation.

## 6.10. Occupational and public health and safety issues

The R7 Road Rehabilitation Project is classified as Category B under EBRD policies, requiring strict compliance with Performance Requirement 2 (Labour and Working Conditions) and Performance Requirement 4 (Health, Safety and Security).

Construction workers will be exposed to a high-risk working environment due to activities carried out in proximity to active high-speed traffic, the operation of heavy machinery, and exposure to extreme weather conditions, including heat stress during summer and hypothermia risks during winter.

The main occupational hazards identified include:

- Excessive noise exposure: Prolonged exposure to equipment such as asphalt milling machines and compactors may result in hearing impairment and chronic fatigue.
- Vibration exposure: Operation of hand-held vibrating tools may lead to Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS).
- Working at height: Significant fall risks, including potentially fatal accidents, may occur during the rehabilitation of the seven major bridges located along the project corridor.

Contractors shall provide workers with PPE, daily safety briefings, and first aid facilities at all active work sites. Construction activities may increase safety risks for nearby communities, particularly near schools, and temporary traffic restrictions could affect emergency response times.

Dust and vehicle emissions may impact vulnerable residents living along the corridor. In addition, laboratory investigations identified widespread bacteriological contamination of local wells and excessive nitrate concentrations in some locations. Therefore, the use of local water sources for drinking is prohibited, and the Contractor shall provide certified bottled drinking water for all workers.

The Contractor shall implement a comprehensive set of management plans as part of the Construction Environmental and Social Management Plan (C-ESMP), including:

- Occupational Health and Safety Plan (OHSP): Developed in accordance with ISO 45001 standards and relevant EU occupational health and safety requirements.
- Community Health and Safety Plan (CHSP): Including worksite fencing, adequate night-time lighting, public safety measures, and prevention and control of communicable diseases.
- Traffic Management Plan (TMP): Ensuring safe pedestrian routes, maintaining access for local communities, and limiting construction vehicle speeds to 40 km/h within settlements.
- Gender-Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH) Action Plan: Establishing a strict Workers' Code of Conduct and preventive measures against harassment, exploitation, and gender-based violence affecting workers and local communities.

In the long term, the Project is expected to generate a major positive impact on public health and safety by reducing

the number of road fatalities and serious injuries through the implementation of modern, safer, and more forgiving road infrastructure designed to reduce the consequences of human error.

### 6.11. Socio-economic impacts; including vulnerable groups (taking into account gender specificities and needs)

The rehabilitation and modernisation of the R7 road represents a strategically important project for the northern region of the Republic of Moldova, with the potential to stimulate regional economic development and improve the quality of life of local communities through the integration of the corridor into the TEN-T transport network.

#### Major Socio-Economic Benefits

- Regional development and trade: The upgraded road will facilitate international transport connections between Ukraine and Romania, reducing travel times and vehicle operating costs. It will support agricultural value chains (e.g. the sugar production industry in Drochia) and encourage new logistics and commercial investments.
- Urban revitalisation in Drochia (Lot 4): Construction of the Drochia Bypass will divert heavy transit traffic away from the town centre, reducing noise and air pollution in sensitive areas such as hospitals and schools, while improving pedestrian safety and overall urban mobility.
- Employment creation: The Project will generate direct and indirect employment opportunities during construction. Contractors will be required to prioritise local recruitment, with a target of employing 30–40% of unskilled workers from communities within the Project area of influence.

#### Adverse Impacts and Risks

- Economic displacement: Although no physical displacement (such as demolition of houses or relocation of residents) is anticipated, the permanent acquisition of agricultural land—particularly for Lot 4 (Drochia Bypass)—may affect landowners' incomes. This impact is particularly relevant for elderly landowners who depend on rental income from agricultural plots.
- Temporary construction disturbances: During the construction phase, roadside businesses and farmers may experience temporary access restrictions, increased dust, and noise impacts, potentially resulting in short-term losses of income or reduced business activity.
- Critical health risks: Significant contamination of local groundwater sources has been identified, including nitrate concentrations exceeding permissible limits by four to five times in Nicoreni and Pârlota. This situation requires strict measures to protect workers and ensure adequate information is provided to affected communities.

#### Impacts on Vulnerable Groups

Vulnerability in the context of the R7 Project is determined by the reduced ability of certain individuals or groups to cope with adverse impacts, including noise, dust, reduced mobility, and temporary access restrictions. The identified vulnerable groups include:

- Elderly people: Particularly sensitive to vibration impacts due to the proximity of residential buildings to the road (approximately 10–25 m) and potentially affected by restricted access to district healthcare services.
- Children and students: Exposed to increased road safety risks in areas near schools, particularly at the Chetrosu Gymnasium, located only approximately 20 m from the road.

- Low-income households and women: May face barriers in accessing employment opportunities or participating effectively in public consultations if inclusive communication methods are not applied.

### **Mitigation Measures and Targeted Assistance**

- Tailored consultations: Public consultations will be organised in accessible locations, including home visits for persons with reduced mobility, and communication materials will be provided in both Romanian and Russian where appropriate.
- Compensation and livelihood restoration: The Project will apply EBRD Performance Requirement 5 (PR5) principles, ensuring compensation at full replacement cost and providing additional support for vulnerable persons, including assistance with property documentation and priority processing of compensation payments.
- Inclusive employment opportunities: Simplified recruitment procedures and information campaigns through local social assistance services will be implemented to improve access to employment opportunities for women, young people, and disadvantaged groups.
- Improved safety conditions: The Project will provide continuous sidewalks, protected pedestrian crossings, and speed restrictions of 40 km/h within settlements during construction activities to enhance safety for local communities.

Through these measures, the Project aims to maximise long-term socio-economic benefits while ensuring that potential adverse impacts are effectively managed and vulnerable groups receive appropriate protection and support.

## **7. Communications**

### **7.1. Contact details**

The National Roads Administration (NRA), acting as the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), will serve as the primary point of contact for project-related information, enquiries, and concerns. Contact details and communication channels are publicly available on the NRA website ([www.andsa.md](http://www.andsa.md)).

The designated contact person is: **Ludmila Virlan**, Environmental and Social Specialist – Head of the Sustainable Development and Environment Department, mail: [ludmila.virlan@andsa.md](mailto:ludmila.virlan@andsa.md)

The NRA website provides publicly available contact information and an online form for submitting enquiries, comments, or grievances. A dedicated Project Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), as described in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), is available for all affected and interested stakeholders. Key project documents, including the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), Non-Technical Summary (NTS), Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), and subsequent updates, will be disclosed on the NRA website and, where applicable, on the EBRD website. Printed copies of these documents will also be made available at local public administration offices located along the project corridor. Information boards will be installed in affected settlements to provide updates on construction progress, planned activities, and relevant contact information. The Contractor will appoint a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) responsible for maintaining regular communication with affected communities throughout the construction period. The CLO's contact details will be publicly disclosed prior to the commencement of construction works. Continuous stakeholder engagement will be maintained throughout both the construction and operational phases in accordance with the SEP. Particular attention will be given to ensuring that vulnerable

groups receive project information in an accessible and appropriate manner, including through adapted communication methods where required. Residents will also have the opportunity to submit enquiries or grievances through their respective local public administrations, which will provide printed grievance forms and information materials related to the Project.

## 7.2. Process for addressing any issues arising

A multi-level, accessible, and transparent Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) will be available to all affected communities, businesses, and land users throughout the construction phase and the initial operational phase of the Project. The GRM is designed in accordance with the requirements of EBRD Performance Requirement 10 (PR10) – Information Disclosure and Stakeholder Engagement. The GRM will enable any community member, business, land user, or organisation to submit concerns or complaints either verbally or in writing, personally or anonymously, without any cost to the complainant. The National Roads Administration (NRA) and its Contractor(s) will be responsible for implementing and managing the GRM, ensuring that all grievances are properly recorded, assessed, investigated, and responded to within the timeframes established by national legislation and the procedures described in the Project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). All grievances will be registered and monitored through the NRA's grievance management system. Complaint forms will be available in both Romanian and Russian on the NRA website. Printed copies will also be distributed through local public administration offices, Contractor offices (both on-site and off-site), and the Supervising Engineer's office to ensure convenient access for affected communities. Complaints may also be submitted by telephone, email, or post using the contact details published in the SEP. Community members may submit grievances directly to their local public administration authorities regarding issues related to Contractor activities. Such complaints will be forwarded to the Construction Supervision Company (representing the NRA) for review and resolution. If the issue is not resolved within one week, the complainant may escalate the matter to the management of the NRA. The NRA recognises that concerns may arise at different stages of the Project lifecycle. Therefore, the Contractor's contact details will be publicly disclosed once the EPC Contractor has been appointed. In addition to the community GRM, the Contractor will establish a separate Workers' Grievance Mechanism to address employment-related concerns. This mechanism will ensure confidentiality, protection against retaliation, and fair treatment of all workers in accordance with EBRD PR2 – Labour and Working Conditions.

## 7.3. Link to Stakeholder Engagement Plan

A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been developed as part of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process, and a dedicated Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) has been established in accordance with national requirements and EBRD Performance Requirement 10 (PR10) – Information Disclosure and Stakeholder Engagement. This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) is intended to complement and provide reference to the SEP.

The SEP describes:

- Identification of all stakeholder groups;
- Stakeholder engagement activities undertaken during the ESIA scoping phase, preparation, and disclosure process;

- The future consultation programme for the Project lots;
- Engagement methods tailored to vulnerable groups;
- Information disclosure materials and communication channels;
- Grievance Redress Mechanism procedures;
- Stakeholder engagement monitoring indicators; and
- Reporting commitments and requirements.

The SEP ensures:

- Regular, timely, and understandable communication with stakeholders;
- Meaningful two-way engagement throughout the Project lifecycle;
- Recording, reviewing, and responding to stakeholder feedback;
- Adaptation of engagement activities during construction, including increased consultation frequency when changes occur, such as modifications to access arrangements.

The SEP and GRM have been approved by the National Roads Administration (NRA) to ensure continuous, transparent, and inclusive stakeholder engagement throughout all stages of the Project lifecycle. Stakeholder engagement will continue during the detailed design and construction phases to ensure that all affected and interested groups remain informed, consulted, and able to provide feedback.

Implementation of the SEP and GRM will be carried out jointly by the NRA/Project Implementation Unit (PIU) and the Contractor(s), under the supervision of the NRA's Environmental and Social (E&S) Team, which will coordinate, monitor, and report on stakeholder engagement activities.

The outcomes of stakeholder engagement activities, together with grievance statistics and resolution status, will be summarised in semi-annual Environmental and Social Monitoring Reports submitted to the EBRD.

The SEP will remain a living document, subject to periodic updates as the Project evolves, including changes to the construction schedule, project activities, or stakeholder priorities. This approach will ensure continued compliance with EBRD PR10 requirements and the applicable EBRD Terms of Reference (ToR). The updated SEP will remain publicly available until the Project reaches full operational status.

## Annex

### Feedback from the Scoping Phase Consultations (R7)

| Date       | Stakeholder / Location Involved                                                                                                                 | Feedback / Concerns / Issues Identified                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14.08.2025 | Rîșcani District Council (Roads Department)                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duruitoarea Quarry: A significant negative impact was reported due to stone transport trucks using unrehabilitated local roads, generating substantial dust pollution.</li> <li>• Utility coordination: The need for close coordination with the World Bank-funded water and sanitation project in the settlements of Păscăuți, Damașcani, Proscureni, Gălășeni, Mălăiești, and Hiliuți was highlighted.</li> <li>• Biodiversity: A request was made for a detailed assessment of protected areas and biodiversity impacts.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 14.08.2025 | Drochia District Council (District President)                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drochia Bypass (Lot 4): Identified as having a major positive social impact by removing heavy transit traffic (including traffic associated with the Sudzucker sugar factory) from the town centre, reducing noise levels and pedestrian safety risks.</li> <li>• Safety: The need to install warning signs identifying rivers and lakes along the route was highlighted.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 14.08.2025 | Soroca District Council                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water access (Cosăuți): Previous opposition from local residents was noted regarding road alignments that restricted access to water sources. The planned connection to the Soroca–Nord water supply system within one year was mentioned.</li> <li>• Cross-border impacts: Positive expectations were expressed regarding improved connectivity with Ukraine (Yampil), while ensuring appropriate environmental impact monitoring.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 20.10.2025 | Representatives of settlements in Drochia District (Mayors of Zgurița, Chetrosu, Nicoreni, Drochia, Țarigrad, Miciurin, Police representatives) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land acquisition (Lot 4): The main concern raised was related to expropriation of small agricultural plots that represent important sources of income for local residents, particularly pensioners.</li> <li>• Road safety: Concerns were raised regarding pedestrian safety in settlements and the need to adapt the road design to accommodate agricultural machinery.</li> <li>• Construction traffic: The risk of damage to local roads caused by heavy construction vehicles was highlighted, together with the need for safe alternative routes.</li> <li>• Resources: Potential difficulties for Contractors were identified regarding water supply and waste management due to limited local infrastructure capacity.</li> </ul> |
| 21.10.2025 | National Roads Administration (NRA)                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional capacity: The need for a more integrated Environmental, Social, Health and Safety (ESHS) management system aligned with ISO and EU standards was identified.</li> <li>• Grievance Management: The existing grievance management system was considered functional but largely informal and decentralised at the local level.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 21.10.2025 | Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development (MIDR) and National Road Transport Agency (ANTA)                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions were held regarding the legal framework for road safety and the transfer of road inspection responsibilities from the NRA to ANTA.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

#### Feedback from Scoping Phase R7

- Identification of affected settlements: Consultations confirmed that the settlements of Țarigrad and Miciurin fall within the Project's direct area of influence due to the new alignment of the Drochia Bypass.
- Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM): During these meetings, local authorities were informed about the Project's new GRM, which will include bilingual communication channels and the possibility of submitting anonymous complaints.

## Summary of the R7 Public Consultations (19 March – 1 April 2026)

| Lot          | Location / Stakeholders Involved                                  | Date                    | Type of Engagement and Activities                                                                                                                                              | Participants / Surveys                                        |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| All Lots     | National Roads Administration (NRA)                               | 19 March – 2 April 2026 | Collection of primary data and community engagement activities. Public disclosure of project announcements online.                                                             | Online publication of announcements.                          |
| Lots 2, 3    | Villages in Rîșcani District (community representatives / mayors) | 19 March 2026           | Meeting with community representatives; presentation of project brochure and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM); focus group discussions (FGDs) with landowners and businesses. | 19 participants (including mayors); 71 businesses identified. |
| Lots 2, 3    | Rîșcani Town (including Balanul Nou and Râmăzan)                  | 19 March 2026           | Community meeting; FGDs with businesses and vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                                                | 16 participants; 16 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lots 1, 2, 4 | Drochia Town                                                      | 24 March 2026           | Community meeting; FGDs with businesses and vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                                                | 19 participants; 17 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lots 2, 4    | Țarigrad Village                                                  | 24 March 2026           | Community meeting; FGD with agricultural landowners affected by the Drochia Bypass; meeting with social assistant.                                                             | 18 participants; 16 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 4        | Miciurin Village                                                  | 24 March 2026           | Community meeting; FGD with agricultural landowners; FGD with vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                              | 18 participants; 16 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 2        | Nicoreni Village                                                  | 24 March 2026           | FGD with women; consultations with elderly households located near the road; baseline survey.                                                                                  | 15 participants; 12 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 1        | Chetrosu Village                                                  | 27 March 2026           | Community meeting; FGD with businesses located along R7; FGD with vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                          | 23 participants; 25 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 1        | Zgurița Village                                                   | 27 March 2026           | Community meeting; interview with social assistant; FGD with vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                               | 17 participants; 11 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 1        | Șolcani Village (including Cureșnița Nouă)                        | 27 March 2026           | Community meeting; FGD with businesses and landowners; baseline survey.                                                                                                        | 19 participants; 17 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 6        | Cosăuți Village                                                   | 27 March 2026           | Community meeting; FGD with farmers and landowners affected by the new alignment; baseline survey.                                                                             | 21 participants; 15 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lots 3, 5    | Costești Commune (including associated villages)                  | 1 April 2026            | Community meeting; FGD with businesses and landowners; FGD with vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                            | 15 participants; 15 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 3        | Petrușeni Village                                                 | 1 April 2026            | Community meeting; FGD with businesses; FGD with vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                                           | 9 participants; 12 residents surveyed.                        |
| Lot 3        | Gălășeni Commune (including Mălăiești)                            | 1 April 2026            | Community meeting; FGD with businesses; FGD with vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                                           | 19 participants; 16 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 3        | Șaptebani Village                                                 | 1 April 2026            | Community meeting; FGD with businesses; FGD with vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                                           | 11 participants; 14 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 3        | Hiliuți Village                                                   | 1 April 2026            | Community meeting; FGD with businesses; FGD with vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                                           | 27 participants; 15 residents surveyed.                       |
| Lot 3        | Pîrjota Village                                                   | 1 April 2026            | Community meeting; FGD with businesses; FGD with vulnerable groups; baseline survey.                                                                                           | 15 participants; 12 residents surveyed.                       |

### Overview of public consultations R7

**Methods Used:** Information disclosure through public notice boards, focus group discussions (FGDs), presentation of grievance redress mechanism (GRM) leaflets, household-level surveys, and individual consultations/interviews.