

A quick guide to the **EIB's Standard 2**

# Stakeholder Engagement

This factsheet presents the responsibilities that project promoters (the EIB's counterpart in an operation/project) have for transparent and continuous engagement with project stakeholders (persons and communities affected by the project or those who may have an interest in or the ability to influence its outcome). These requirements apply to projects depending on the findings of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment process (EIA/ESIA). For details, refer to the [EIB's Environmental and Social Standards](#).

The EIB has also developed a [Guidance Note for EIB Standard on Stakeholder Engagement in the EIB Operations](#) to help promoters meet the EIB's requirements regarding stakeholder engagement.

## Promoters' responsibilities

- Engage constructively with stakeholders (persons and communities affected or those who may have an interest in or the ability to influence its outcome);
- Ensure timely access to information on the project's environmental, climate and social risks and impacts, in a culturally appropriate and understandable manner;
- Enable the meaningful and free participation and input of stakeholders in project-related decision-making processes that may affect them, thereby seeking to build mutual trust and improving project outcomes;
- Provide rights-holders with effective means to raise grievances and access remedies;
- Collaborate with the responsible authority to seek to achieve outcomes of the stakeholder engagement that are consistent with this standard;
- Engage with stakeholders early on in the decision-making process, when all options are still open, to allow for their meaningful contribution and ensure that their opinions, interests and concerns are taken into account to reach an optimal result;
- Engage in a manner that is free from intimidation, coercion or violence against those who voice their opinion in relation to the projects;
- Ensure gender responsive, inclusive participation and equitable participation, including for groups that are vulnerable, marginalised or discriminated-against, as well as those who are traditionally excluded or in need of special assistance.

## Requirements for projects located in EU or European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries, or in EU candidate and potential candidate countries

- Comply with the applicable national and EU legislation;
- Provide evidence that the relevant information was disclosed in a timely manner, including details about the means of disclosure;
- Provide information about the detailed arrangements of the consultation process, including in a transboundary context;
- Provide a summary of the results of the overall consultation process and how those results have been incorporated or otherwise addressed in the decision(s) of the relevant competent authorities;
- For projects for which the relevant competent authorities have determined that an EIA is not required, provide evidence that this decision has been made available to the public;
- Provide evidence of stakeholder engagement beyond the EIA procedure, if applicable to the project.

## Requirements for projects located in the rest of the world

- **Comply** with national legislation and the provisions of the EIB's Standard 2 based on the core principles and essential procedural elements laid down by EU legislation;
- **Identify analyse and document stakeholders** – prioritise those stakeholders who may require different or separate forms of engagement, including groups at risk of reprisals; take into account any risks of reprisals; in cases of a project's transboundary effects, the identification and analysis should also consider the individuals and groups from other countries likely to be affected;
- Establish a **project-level grievance mechanism** to facilitate redress for the concerns and grievances of stakeholders throughout the EIB project cycle. The promoter must set out a clear step-by-step process with indicative timeframes, outcomes, defined monitoring and performance indicators, and reporting requirements. For details, see Standard 2, points 21-25;
- Prepare a **stakeholder engagement plan** (SEP) for projects with significant environmental, climate or social impacts and risks, or if deemed necessary by the EIB; this is a guiding document describing the stakeholder engagement process, specifying activities and outlining roles, resources and timelines. The draft SEP should be disclosed and consulted as early as possible (Standard 2, points 27-32);
- **Disclose information** in the most accessible way and as soon as possible, in readily understandable and culturally appropriate formats and languages; adapt to people needing special measures or assistance, including those who are illiterate.
- **Scope** of disclosure – the purpose, nature and scale of the project and its duration, description of the project impacts and risks for local communities and those that might disproportionately affect vulnerable, marginalised or discriminated groups; proposed mitigation and compensatory or remedial measures; description of stakeholder engagement process and SEP; the availability of a project-level grievance mechanism and the EIB Group's Complaints Mechanism; benefit-sharing and added value for affected communities.
- Initiate a **meaningful consultation** process as early as possible to allow for effective stakeholder participation in decision-making and the design of project activities or mitigation measures that could potentially affect stakeholders either positively or negatively. Consultation should be sustained throughout the EIB project cycle. For details, see Standard 2, points 36-41;
- Conduct regular **monitoring and reporting** of the stakeholder engagement process and update the SEP if needed. The EIB advises that whenever feasible, the promoter should have in place monitoring by third parties, such as stakeholder representatives, civil society or community-based organisations, affected communities, external experts, local and public authorities or think tanks.