

# Austria: EIB and UniCredit Bank Austria finance development of one of Austria's largest wind farms



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- **Wind farm to have capacity of 143 MW, providing around 90 000 households with electricity produced from renewable energy sources**
- **EIB and UniCredit Bank Austria providing total funding of €107,4 million**
- **EIB's share backed by guarantee from European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the financial pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe**

“With this fresh start after the coronavirus crisis, we now have a unique opportunity to join forces and drive the Austrian economy’s transition to a sustainable, climate-friendly system,” said Susanne Wendler, board member of UniCredit Bank Austria’s “Unternehmerbank”. “Banks bear a particular responsibility in this task because the business decisions we make are capable of generating far greater leverage than those of any other sector.”

Austria is aiming to produce its entire electricity supply using renewable energies by 2030. To achieve this goal, major steps have already been taken in the form of wind farm repowering. An example of these repowering projects can be found in the municipalities of Gols and Mönchhof in Burgenland. Construction was launched in autumn 2019 and is expected to reach completion

at the end of 2021. The entire wind farm will have capacity of 143 MW and provide around 90 000 households with electricity produced from renewable sources. With its 26 turbines, the project is one of the largest wind farms in Austria.

The facility will be run by PÜSPÖK Group. This family business based in Burgenland has been developing and operating wind farms in Austria since the late 1990s, currently supplying 160 000 households in the country with electricity.

The volume of equity and borrowed capital for the planned investment in the wind farm totals €143 million. The European Investment Bank provides to the total portion of borrowed capital of €107,4 million a direct loan of €71,6 million and an intermediated loan to UniCredit Bank Austria of €35.8 million. The EIB direct loan is backed by a guarantee from the EFSI, the financial pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe. Under this plan, the EIB and the European Commission are working together as strategic partners to boost the competitiveness of the European economy.

The EIB Vice-President responsible for operations in Austria, Andrew McDowell, said: "Austria is emphatically pursuing its changeover to a sustainable, competitive and secure energy supply. The development of wind power is playing an important role in this energy transition. We are therefore very pleased to welcome the cooperation with the PÜSPÖK Group and the construction of a new wind farm in the state of Burgenland, which has been a trailblazer for wind power in Austria. As the EU climate bank, we have made the transition to renewable sources of energy a key policy objective and a priority sector for our financing."

European Commissioner for the Economy, Paolo Gentiloni, said: "Today the European Union confirms its commitment to supporting renewable energy in Austria and to helping the country to meet its decarbonisation targets. This financing under the Investment Plan for Europe will lead to the construction of a 143 megawatt wind farm, which will bring clean energy to around 90 000 households in the state of Burgenland. Through projects like this, we will reach the goals of the European Green Deal and achieve climate neutrality by 2050".

Lukas Püspök, managing partner of PÜSPÖK Group, added: "This repowering project triples the energy produced over the same surface area, testifying to the technological and economic progress made in the use of wind power in the last 20 years. This marks a milestone in Austria's path towards achieving its climate goals. Further major efforts are needed to address the climate crisis. A long-term positive framework for the development of renewables must finally become a reality."

## **Background information:**

### **About the EIB**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is the long-term lending institution of the European Union, owned by its Member States. It makes long-term finance

available for sound investment in order to contribute towards EU policy goals.

### **About the Investment Plan for Europe**

The Investment Plan for Europe is one of the EU's key actions to boost investment in Europe, thereby creating jobs and fostering growth. To this end, smarter use will be made of new and existing financial resources. The EIB Group plays an integral role in this Plan. Thanks to guarantees from the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the EIB and EIF are able to take on a higher share of project risk. This encourages private investors to participate in the projects. The EIB Group's target was to catalyse additional investments of [€500 billion](#) by the end of 2020. It already reached and exceeded this goal in July. The projects and agreements approved under the EFSI so far have mobilised around €524 billion in investment, benefiting around 1.4 million small and medium-sized enterprises throughout the European Union.

### **About PÜSPÖK Group**

PÜSPÖK Group has been developing, constructing and operating wind farms since 1997. Including the current development, the family business operates wind farms with capacity of approximately 400 MW. This supplies around 260 000 Austrian households with clean energy.

The current repowering projects at the Pannonia-Gols wind farm, and an additional project for the Mönchhof wind farm involving the full dismantling of 25 old turbines and the construction of 30 new ones, are located in the municipalities of Gols and Mönchhof in the north of the state of Burgenland and should reach completion by end-2021.

### **About UniCredit Bank Austria**

UniCredit Bank Austria is part of UniCredit, a simple successful pan-European commercial bank, with fully plugged in corporate and investment banking, delivering a unique Western, Central and Eastern European network to its extensive client franchise. UniCredit offers both local and international expertise to its clients, providing them with unparalleled access to leading banks in its 13 core markets through its European banking network: Italy, Germany, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia. Leveraging on an international network of representative offices and branches, UniCredit serves clients in another 18 countries worldwide.