

# Austria: Investment Plan for Europe – EIB finances wind farms of Windkraft Simonsfeld



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- **EU climate bank advances €63 million**
- **Bulk of financing backed by Juncker Plan guarantee**
- **Erste Bank financing new windparks with an amount of €22 million**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is providing €63 million of finance for the construction and operation of two new wind farms in Austria (Prinzendorf III and Powi V) of Windkraft Simonsfeld with a total capacity of approximately 43.6 MW. The facilities will be operated by a project company belonging to Windkraft Simonsfeld AG, which has been successfully running wind farms in Austria and Bulgaria since the end of the 1990s. The overall capacity of the wind farms operated by Windkraft Simonsfeld currently amounts to 202.5 MW.

The bulk of the EIB financing (€40.9 million) will go directly to Windkraft Simonsfeld. These funds are backed by a guarantee from the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the central pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe (the Juncker Plan). Under this plan, the EIB and the European Commission are working together as strategic partners to boost the competitiveness of the European economy. The remaining loan amount of €22.1 million will be provided by Erste Bank and guaranteed by the EIB. Windkraft Simonsfeld will put €21 million of its own funds into financing the wind farms.

This is the second time that the company benefits from the Investment Plan for Europe's support. In January 2018, a [€48 million financial agreement](#) to build three new wind farms with Windkraft Simonsfeld in Austria was made possible under EFSI.

The EIB Vice-President responsible for operations in Austria, Andrew McDowell, said: "The promotion of sustainable, competitive and secure sources of energy is a key policy objective and, as the EU climate bank, a priority sector for EIB financing. We are therefore very pleased to be able to promote the development of renewable energies in Austria in close cooperation with our trusted partner, Windkraft Simonsfeld. The Prinzendorf III and Powi V wind farms are testament to Austria's commitment to the renewable energy transition."

Paolo Gentiloni, European Commissioner for the Economy, said: "Investing in renewable energies is crucial to meet the goals of the European Green Deal and to reach climate neutrality by 2050. This new EU support for Windkraft Simonsfeld will help to make two new wind farms a reality, bringing clean energy to thousands more households in Austria."

"As the EU climate bank, the EIB is firmly committed to the Paris climate targets and the continued development of renewable and sustainable energy sources. When selecting our partners, we also take environmental and ethical considerations into account under the principle of green financing, which is why we have once again opted for EIB financing, as we did two years ago. We are pleased to have a partner that shares our commitment to the renewable energy transition and to the fight against catastrophic climate change," said Alexander Hochauer, Commercial Manager of Windkraft Simonsfeld AG.

Willi Cernko, Member of the Management Board Erste Bank: "Financing renewable energy sources is definitely one of our strategic core areas. This is particularly important to us because in the next few years sustainable energy generation in Europe will be one of the biggest issues where we are happy to be available as a financing partner to help push this effort forward."

## **Background information**

### **Windkraft Simonsfeld AG**

Windkraft Simonsfeld AG operates 84 wind turbines in Austria and two in Bulgaria (as at 31/12/2019). With its headquarters in Lower Austria, Windkraft Simonsfeld generated approximately 577 million kWh of electricity in 2019, which is equivalent to the consumption of 144 400 households. In 2021, Windkraft Simonsfeld will build 14 new wind turbines at the Prinzendorf III und Powi V wind farms. The over-the-counter joint stock company is owned by over 2 000 shareholders.

**Erste Bank und Sparkassen** is the largest provider of financial services in Austria. Around 15.500 staff attend to more than 3.8 million customers at over 1,100 branches and banking service points. In 2019, Erste Bank und Sparkassen helped 28.700 people to fulfill their dream of owning their own home, paid out EUR 292 million in interest to domestic savers, and helped

22.100 young entrepreneurs to implement their business ideas.