

Belgium: EIB grants financing to Media Square, an iconic project for Brussels



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

The EIB is providing €60 million in financing to RTBF for the Media Square development set to host the public-service broadcaster for the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. The EU bank is signing this operation under its innovation and climate action priorities.

For the European Investment Bank (EIB), the financing of RTBF's Media Square real estate project falls under its **priority objective to support innovation**, technological development and a knowledge-driven economy in Europe. This investment will provide RTBF with cutting-edge audio-visual production infrastructure in a highly modular and sustainable building that meets the future development requirements of the audio-visual market. The loan is taken from the EIB's own resources and has a maturity of 25 years, with the Media Square works set to last until 2022.

From the EIB's perspective, the Media Square operation is the logical continuation of the support it provided for RTBF's digital transformation 10 years ago in the form of a €60 million loan for the digitisation of the public-service broadcaster's production, broadcasting and audio-visual service distribution activities.

Media Square is also covered by the **EIB's climate action** priority. This is because RTBF's new building will not only be on the cutting edge of technology, but will also be highly energy efficient, using less than half the energy of the current building thanks to innovative construction techniques and the installation of geothermal wells and solar panels. This is a major operation for the EIB, which has support for a low-carbon economy at the very top of its list of priorities. For the last decade, the EU climate bank has been strongly promoting the energy transition and the fight against climate change in all its forms, and supporting the promoters of projects contributing to this. To this end, the EIB will be making a huge contribution to the European Commission's European Green Deal.

EIB Director General Jean-Christophe Laloux said: *"This financial partnership with RTBF once again shows the EIB's extensive presence in Belgium, whether it be with innovative companies or public sector project promoters. This building is exemplary from an energy standpoint, will strengthen RTBF's technical capacity for audio-visual production and is also a key component of the vast Reyers urban regeneration project. It fits perfectly with the Bank's operational strategy."*

RTBF Administrator General Jean-Paul Philippot added: *"Media Square will be an iconic building in Media Park, one of the Brussels Region's most important urban regeneration projects and a future innovation hub. It will provide RTBF with an ideal environment to mix with other audio-visual sector players and media partners, as well as to innovate and exchange with research and educational institutes and start-ups. These surroundings are vital for a modern broadcaster."*

Agnès Monfret, acting director at the European Commission, DG REGIO commented: *"We are pleased with the Media Square energy efficient building initiative. The project is perfectly in line with the ambitions of the European Green Deal, the European Commission's number one priority. We need everyone for this challenge – individuals, national, regional and local authorities, civil society and businesses."*

For Budget Minister Frédéric Daerden: *"The Wallonia-Brussels Federation needs a pioneering public-service broadcaster ensuring access to high-quality information for all. RTBF's infrastructure must enable it to meet the technology challenges of the future, to reach audiences and to keep up with changing media production methods. This is the logic behind the Government's actions and the guarantee provided by the Wallonia-Brussels Federation – continuing to develop a strong and independent public-service broadcaster."*

Note to editors

The **European Investment Bank (EIB)** is the long-term lending institution of the European Union (EU) owned by its Member States. It provides long-term finance in support of quality projects to contribute to the achievement of the EU's key objectives. Its priorities are climate action and the environment, innovation, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and infrastructure. In 2019, the Bank dedicated [€1.8 billion](#) to supporting projects in Belgium across a number of sectors, including projects related to

energy (renewable energies and energy efficiency), the environment (water and waste management), research, development and innovation (RDI), hospital and university infrastructure, smart and sustainable cities, SMEs, and mid-caps.

RTBF is a publicly owned cultural enterprise. Active in television, radio and on the web and social media, it positions itself as the universal public-service broadcaster of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. Its aim is to guarantee the provision of pluralist and independent information, to spread culture, heritage and talent promotion, and to ensure collective memory is passed on. It endeavours to entertain, educate and contribute to social cohesion and the development of local economies. To embody public-service values in an increasingly digital society, the company is based around two main focuses – “Media” and “Content” – supported by Technology and other departments. Audiences are at the very heart of its production and creations, and it aspires to create social connections for all.

The **European Commission** is a key EU institution. It alone has the right to draw up proposals for new EU legislation, which it then sends to the Council and Parliament for discussion and adoption.

Its members are appointed for a 5-year term by agreement between the Member States, subject to approval by the European Parliament. The Commission is answerable to the Parliament, and the entire Commission has to resign if the Parliament passes a motion of censure against it. The Commission helps to shape the EU’s overall strategy, proposes new EU laws and policies, monitors their implementation and manages the EU budget. It also plays a significant role in supporting international development and delivering aid.

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