

## Greece: New EUR 100 million EIB and Piraeus Bank initiative to cut energy bills

Energy bills for companies across Greece will be reduced by new energy efficiency investment backed by a new EUR 100 million initiative by the European Investment Bank and Piraeus Bank. Under the scheme dedicated financing for new investment to reduce energy consumption by small-scale energy users will be provided across the country. Technical and financial expertise gained from energy efficiency investment programmes elsewhere will be used to strengthen new projects in Greece.

This operation is the first initiative in Greece under Private Finance for Energy Efficiency programme and represents the largest engagement in any European country so far.

“New investment to improve energy efficiency reduces energy bills, cuts carbon emissions and creates jobs. The European Investment Bank is committed to supporting transformational investment in Greece and pleased to launch the largest energy efficiency financing initiative to date in any European country under the Private Finance for Energy Efficiency programme. The scale of this new scheme clearly demonstrates the impressive potential for cutting energy bills in the country. This initiative will be strengthened by the local knowledge and professional expertise of colleagues at Piraeus Bank.” said Jonathan Taylor, European Investment Bank Vice President.

“This agreement underlines the longstanding commitment of Piraeus Bank, the largest bank in Greece, to the financing of investments with a positive environmental and social impact, and a focus on sustainable development and financial viability. Expanding our long-standing cooperation with the European Investment Bank Group, we have signed a new EUR 100 million agreement to finance energy efficiency projects in Greece, through the dedicated energy efficiency lending scheme, Private Finance for Energy Efficiency (PF4EE). This agreement, the only one in Greece and the largest provided by European Investment Bank under PF4EE in Europe, re-enforces our support for green entrepreneurship and expands our considerable know-how. Piraeus Bank is ideally positioned in the Greek market to take advantage of this particular innovative financing instrument.” said Mr. Christos Megalou, Chief Executive Officer of Piraeus Bank.

The European Investment Bank and Piraeus Bank have signed an agreement worth EUR 100 million under the Private Finance for Energy Efficiency initiative. This is a pilot scheme currently being rolled out across Europe intended to increase the availability of debt financing to eligible energy efficiency investment.

The EUR 100 million EIB loan will be used by Piraeus Bank for the financing of new investment improving the energy efficiency in existing buildings,

outdoor lighting and water pumping stations across Greece.

The PF4EE instrument combines three elements. The first consists of an EIB loan to improve the funding conditions of the energy efficiency investments financed by Piraeus Bank. The second element provides partial risk protection on Piraeus Bank's loans. The third element will strengthen Piraeus Bank's lending capacity specifically targeted at energy efficiency investments, by passing on technical and financial expertise gained from similar schemes elsewhere in the European Union.

"The Private Finance for Energy Efficiency financial instrument, deployed under the LIFE programme, will deliver new finance for Greek companies willing to invest in their sustainability." said Miguel Arias Cañete, European Commissioner responsible for Climate Action and Energy.

The risk protection will cover 80% of Piraeus Bank's potential losses under these loans up to a maximum agreed amount. Piraeus Bank will also benefit from the technical and financial expertise of the EIB during the start of the operation for assistance in the identification and appraisal of energy efficiency investments and capacity building support.

The new cooperation with Piraeus Bank in Greece represents the eighth partnership with a European bank to support energy efficiency investments under the Private Finance for Energy Efficiency financial instrument. The European Investment Bank engagement is supported by the European Commission, under the LIFE programme.

In 2017, the European Investment Bank provided more than EUR 4.1 billion for new energy efficiency investment worldwide.