

Romania: Investment Plan for Europe – EIB supports rehabilitation and extension of regional water supply and sanitation services in Alba County

- EU support will improve drinking water supply and sanitation services in Alba County
- Positive impact on the environment and public health of some 332,000 citizens in Romania
- For the first time a Romanian public sector project receives EFSI backing

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is lending EUR 12m to the Alba County Regional Water Company to finance, in conjunction with Cohesion Policy funds, upgrades in drinking water supply and sanitation services for some 332,000 people in Romania's Alba County. This transaction is backed by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the heart of the Investment Plan for Europe, or "Juncker Plan".

EIB Vice-President Andrew McDowell commented: "I am pleased to announce our support for this project which will greatly improve the quality of water services in Alba County and is the first public sector operation in Romania to be backed by the Juncker Plan. Not only will the works have a sizable impact on the public health of people, they will also render the local water infrastructure more cost efficient and environmentally friendly."

European Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina Crețu said: "Quality drinking water should never be a luxury and should be available everywhere in Europe. This agreement under the Juncker Plan shows the real added value of the EU, investing to protect the environment and improve the health and everyday lives of our citizens."

The General Director of Alba County Water Company Cornel Stefan Bardan stated: *"The EUR 12m loan granted by the EIB to the regional water operator in Alba County – the first loan to the Romanian public service with EFSI guarantees under the Juncker Plan – will help us to co-finance, at reasonable cost, the major EUR 114m project through which Alba County will comply with the EU water and wastewater directives."*

This project, which is expected to cost EUR 114m in total, includes the rehabilitation of a water intake, the expansion of the water network by 55 km, as well as the extension and rehabilitation of 115 km of water mains and two water treatment plants. In addition, the sewerage network in the region will be extended by 100 km. Finally, the investment will help renovate 49 pumping stations and build two new wastewater treatment plants.

The rehabilitation of the principal water pipes and sewers will reduce leaks

and infiltrations and increase the energy efficiency of the systems, thus contributing to climate change mitigation.