

PRESS RELEASE

2016-185-EN

25th July, 2016**Rwandan companies to benefit from new RWF 48 billion lending programme**

The European Investment Bank has agreed to support a new lending initiative by Bank of Kigali to back private sector investment across Rwanda. The European Investment Bank will provide EUR 28 million (RWF 24 billion) alongside EUR 28 million being provided by Bank of Kigali for the nationwide programme.

This represents the first Rwandan operation under the European Investment Bank's second East and Central Africa Private Finance Facility, a EUR 230 million regional lending scheme that supports private sector investment in Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The European Investment Bank is Europe's long-term lending institution, owned directly by the 28 European Union member states and the world's largest international public bank.

"Rwanda's medium term goal is to build a private sector led economy, support job creation and ultimately transform people's livelihoods. This, to us is a very important transaction that will back Bank of Kigali's efforts of expanding access to finance for private investment; we are looking forward to working closely with the European Investment Bank," said Dr. Diane Karusisi, CEO Bank of Kigali.

"The European Investment Bank supports private sector investment across Africa. We are pleased to build on our strong track record in East Africa through this new initiative that will unlock economic opportunities and create jobs across Rwanda. Bank of Kigali has been recognised for innovation and commitment to financial inclusion and this new partnership reflects our shared desire to support private sector investment essential for economic growth in Rwanda." said Pim van Ballekom, European Investment Bank Vice President responsible for Rwanda.

"The European Union is committed to working with Rwandan partners to strengthen economic development across the country. I am confident that this new partnership between the European Union's long-term lending institution, the European Investment Bank, and the Bank of Kigali will unlock similar economic and social benefits that previous private sector lending programmes have delivered in Rwanda and across East Africa." said Ambassador Michael Ryan, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Rwanda.

Under the new initiative private sector entrepreneurs and companies will be able to use loans in Rwandan francs to invest and expand activities across a range of sectors.

Over the last 5 years the European Investment Bank has provided EUR 22 million to support investment by companies in Rwanda in cooperation with three local banks. This new investment has created more than 4000 new jobs in construction, manufacturing, tourism, agriculture and transport companies.

More than EUR 59 million has been provided for infrastructure and private sector investment in Rwanda by the European Investment Bank since 1977. This includes past support for upgrading Kigali airport and improving energy infrastructure, as well as support for private sector investment.

The European Investment Bank is the only multilateral financial institution lending across Europe and around the world. Over the last decade the European Investment Bank has provided more than EUR 21 billion for investment in Africa.

Background information:

European Investment Bank

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.

Bank of Kigali

Established in 1966, Bank of Kigali is the largest bank in Rwanda by Total Assets, with 33 % market share as of 31 March 2016. The Bank has a wide distribution network that includes self-service channels such as deposit-taking ATMs and Point of Sale terminals as well as channels that are geared towards promoting financial inclusion such as mobile vans. The Bank has a short term credit rating of A1+ and a long term rating of AA-, with a stable outlook, from Global Credit Rating (GCR). In 2011, the Bank became the second domestic company to be listed on the Rwandan Stock Exchange. The Bank was awarded the 2015 African Banker Award for Best Bank in East Africa as well as the 2015 and 2016 *Euromoney* Award for Excellence as the Best Bank in Rwanda. Since 2009, the Bank has been recognized for seven years running as the Best Bank in Rwanda by *Emeafinance* and for six years as Bank of the Year by *The Banker*.

Press contacts:

EIB: Richard Willis, r.willis@eib.org, tel.: +352 43 79 82155 / Mobile: +352 621 55 57 58
Website: www.eib.org/press - Press Office: +352 4379 21000 – press@eib.org
Follow us on Twitter [@eib](https://twitter.com/eib)

Bank of Kigali:

Shivon Byamukama Head of Corporate Affairs: sbyamukama@bk.rw, Tel: +250 252 593 100 /200
Diane Mukunde, Investor Relations Officer: dmukunde@bk.rw Tel: +250 252 593 100 / 200
www.bk.rw