



EIB supports mobile telecoms infrastructure development in Spain and Italy with a EUR 100m loan to Cellnex under the Juncker Plan guarantee

Barcelona, 7 december 2017.- The European Investment Bank (EIB) and Cellnex Telecom have signed an agreement for the development of new investment making it possible to improve and expand the capacity of mobile broadband telecoms infrastructure in Spain and Italy. The EIB support – provided via financing of EUR 100m – will help the construction of new telecoms towers as well as fibre optic and radio link connections to mobile operator networks. The agreement is supported by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the central pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe (commonly known as the Juncker Plan).

In concrete terms, Cellnex plans to roll out new telecoms locations in rural and urban settings, and install distributed antenna system (DAS) nodes in areas of high demand for mobile broadband communications. This new infrastructure will enable operators to improve the coverage and capacity of their networks.

The EIB financing will also contribute to adapting existing locations to expand their capacity and enable them to be shared by several operators. This infrastructure use optimization will prevent phone tower duplication.

The EIB-financed investments will also be vital for preparing the mobile phone networks for the arrival of 5G, given that this technology needs far more (but smaller) sites than 4G. This means that the agreement will help achieve the Digital Agenda for Europe, whose objectives include at least one city per EU Member State being able to offer 5G services by 2020.

The support of the Investment Plan for Europe has enabled the EIB to provide Cellnex with the long-term financing needed to ensure that the project is implemented within the deadlines set. The Juncker Plan guarantee makes it possible for the EIB to provide funds to support investments that have a higher risk profile, owing to their structure or nature, but contribute to boosting economic growth and employment.

“Promoting investment in innovation is one of the EIB's priorities. The agreement we are signing today will help ensure that telecoms infrastructure in Spain and Italy is modernised. These are vital investments for the future development of mobile telephony in Europe,” said **EIB Vice-President Román Escolano** when discussing this agreement. “The project will also have a direct and positive impact on people's lives, as they will be able to benefit from wider and better quality mobile phone coverage.”

Vice-President Jyrki Katainen, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, said: “In our ever-increasing digital age, we need infrastructure that supports our objective of widely-available and competitively-priced high-speed internet access for all Europeans. I am particularly pleased to welcome this cross-border project with Cellnex under the Investment Plan which will have a tangible effect on the professional and personal lives of many people in Spain and Italy.”

“The EIB loan combines three key elements,” according to **Cellnex Telecom CFO José Manuel Aisa**. “Long-term financing at a very competitive cost, continuing to support our customers in making their networks denser, and making the EIB a new long-term partner to continue promoting the improvement of Europe’s telecoms networks. To this end, we are also happy that this joint EIB-Cellnex project is being supported by the European Fund for Strategic Investments, under the Juncker Plan, which promotes investments aiming to drive competitiveness and growth in the European Union.”

About the EIB and the Investment Plan for Europe

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.

The Investment Plan for Europe, known as the “Juncker Plan”, is one of the European Commission’s top priorities. It focuses on boosting investment to generate jobs and growth by making smarter use of new and existing financial resources, removing obstacles to investment, and providing visibility and technical assistance to investment projects.

The European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) is the main pillar of the “Juncker Plan” and provides first loss guarantees, enabling the EIB to invest in more projects that often come with greater risks. EFSI has already yielded tangible results. The projects and agreements approved for financing under EFSI are expected to mobilise more than EUR 250bn in investment and support some 528 000 SMEs in the 28 Member States.

About Cellnex Telecom

Cellnex Telecom is the main services and infrastructure operator for wireless telecoms in Europe, with a total of more than 21 000 sites. It operates in Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Its activities are structured around four main areas: telecoms infrastructure services, audio-visual content distribution networks, security and emergency services networks, and smart infrastructure and urban services management solutions (smart cities and the internet of things – IOT).

The company is listed on the continuous market of the Spanish stock exchange and is part of the selective IBEX 35 and EuroStoxx 600 indices. It is also part of the FTSE4GOOD, CDP (Carbon Disclosure Project) and Standard Ethics sustainability indices.

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