

EIB East Building: A building for the future

EIB Group East Building · Groupe BEI – Bâtiment Est



European Investment Bank Group · Groupe Banque européenne d'investissement · European Investment Bank Group · Groupe Banque européenne d'investissement



The European Investment Bank's activities have grown substantially during its fifty years of existence. At the end of 2007, the EIB Group employed 1,590 permanent staff members who handle the ever-increasing demand for funding in the 27 EU Member States and 173 partner countries. The EIB's existing building, where the Bank took up residency in 1980, was designed to accommodate a maximum of 800 people. The building was extended in the early 1990s to make room for 300 additional staff members, but the EIB has continued to grow in line with an expanding EU.

In 2001, an architectural brief was drawn up for a building situated beside the existing EIB headquarters to accommodate the entire EIB Group, including EIB and European Investment Fund staff currently housed separately in rented accommodation in Luxembourg. The EIB's role focuses increasingly on promoting openness in its activities and protecting the environment. So too do the design goals of the Bank's new building. The international tenders for the new building called for innovative architecture which marries two key elements – **transparency** and **ecology**.

EIB through a looking-glass

An elegant glass building proposed by Ingenhoven Architekten began construction by a CFE/VINCI joint venture in 2005 and has now risen to life on the Kirchberg plateau. Passers-by are able to look directly into the EIB through its double-glazed, thermal-insulating façade. The transparency of the new glasshouse complements and completes with the existing low, cruciform building which was designed by the Denys Lasdun Partnership in 1974 as a testament to the EIB's solidity.

The wave-shaped East building, as it is to be known, has a surface area of 72,500m² spread over 10 stories, three of which are above ground on the valley side and underground on the boulevard side. The 11,000m² doubled layer glass façade stands 35m high, 170m long and is suspended from specially designed, curved, steel beams. Offices to accommodate up to 750 staff are laid-out in zigzag wings, accessible by walkways, bridges, stairs and lifts.

Designing an ecological first-in-class

While the transparent and accessible nature of the EIB's East building is noteworthy, it is perhaps the ecological features of the Ingenhoven building that make it stand out as **a building for the future**.

Environmental considerations have been at the forefront of the construction process. The East building boasts natural lighting and ventilation. Thanks to the innovative ecological design concept, the new EIB building in Luxembourg is the first non-UK building in continental Europe **to obtain a Bespoke Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM)¹ certification of "very good"** for its green credentials.

¹ BREEAM Certification is recommended by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

A building that breathes

An outstanding feature of the new building is the use of natural and centrally monitored climatic control zones. Large atria and winter gardens act as the building's lungs and are situated under the building's tubular glass shell which protects against adverse weather conditions. The winter gardens overlook the valley on the north face of the Kirchberg plateau and are neither heated nor cooled. The carefully selected insulated glass maintains the winter gardens at higher temperatures than outside in cold months. In hot summer months a natural ventilation system creates airflow from the gardens' lower areas to upper vents.

The south-oriented boulevard facing atria will be permanently used by staff and visitors. Here, heat and ventilation is controlled more carefully than in the winter gardens. Radiant floor heating, induction unit and solar protection sails ensure constant temperatures.

The office spaces are sandwiched between these central climatic areas. The heating environment in the working spaces needs only to be adjusted relative to temperatures in the public zones, not outside temperatures. Offices remain at 21°C with the possibility of a +/-3°C individual variation provided by floor induction units and the central ventilation system. The East building also benefits from a cooling system which pumps night air around the structure and passes cold water through the concrete floor slabs.

Energy efficiency is a top priority for the EIB's lending activities and the Bank put this policy into practice with lighting which minimises energy consumption. Modern lighting technology reduces brightness in office areas, while staff can use individual desk lamps.

Operations commence in the East building

Ultimately, the EIB's new East building is a work space which should be both functional and enjoyed by staff and visitors alike. A central restaurant and cafeteria serve the whole EIB campus. These spaces will be a meeting point between the East and West buildings.

The move into the new building for EIB staff starts in the coming months and by the end of 2008 the EIB's extended Kirchberg campus will be fully operational.

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