

Education is the Most Valuable Capital: Serbian Students Among Europe's Best with the Support of UniCredit Foundation

The seven international awards and recognitions won **by Moneta Works, a student company from the "Mileva Marić Ajnštajn" Technical School in Novi Sad**, at Gen-E 2026, Europe's largest entrepreneurship festival held in Riga, represent far more than the success of a single team or school. They demonstrate that Serbia is home to a new generation of talented young people whose knowledge, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit enable them to stand alongside Europe's very best.

For UniCredit Foundation and UniCredit Bank Serbia, this achievement also reaffirms that investing in education, talent development and entrepreneurial skills is not only a matter of corporate responsibility but a strategic investment in the future of society and the economy. **Together, the Bank and the Foundation have invested in Serbia more than EUR 1 million in educational initiatives through a wide range of programmes and partnerships.**

In a world where change is accelerating at an unprecedented pace, knowledge has become one of the most important drivers of competitiveness. Societies that continuously invest in education and skills development build lasting competitive advantages and create the foundations for sustainable growth. Investing in education and human capital must once again become one of society's highest strategic priorities.

For many years, the UniCredit Foundation and UniCredit Bank Serbia have supported programmes that help young people develop entrepreneurial mindset, confidence and practical experience while strengthening connections with the business community. One such initiative is the Student Company Programme, implemented by Junior Achievement Serbia, which year after year empowers students to transform innovative ideas into sustainable and socially responsible business ventures.

This year's success of Moneta Works is one of the strongest confirmations of the impact these programmes can achieve.

The team, **Anđela Božić, Mijat Radovanović, Maša Koprenović and Natalija Kundačina**, won **seven European awards and recognitions at Gen-E 2026**, competing against the best student companies from 38 European countries.

Among these recognitions, particular significance belongs to the **"Re-Power Your Future" Award, presented by the UniCredit Foundation** to projects demonstrating outstanding social impact and the potential to create meaningful change within their communities. Their educational board game, Budget Boss, designed to improve financial literacy through interactive learning for parents and children, impressed the international jury by combining innovation with a strong sense of social responsibility and by offering practical solutions to real societal challenges.

In addition, **the Serbian team received awards for Best Stage Presentation and Best Short Pitch**, while **Natalija Kundačina received the prestigious Alumni Leadership Award**, becoming one of only six students honoured individually among nearly 200 participants from across Europe.

Serbia celebrated another important success at this year's Gen-E Festival, with **Žitorada Secondary School being recognised as one of Europe's Most Entrepreneurial Schools**, further confirming the growing strength of entrepreneurial education in the country.

For UniCredit Bank Serbia, these achievements represent both a source of pride and an additional motivation to continue supporting educational programmes, mentorship initiatives and projects that enable young people to unlock their full potential.

Nikola Vuletić, CEO of UniCredit Bank Serbia, said: *"The success of these young people from Serbia on the European stage demonstrates that talent, knowledge and entrepreneurial spirit know no boundaries when they are given the right opportunities and support. In a time of rapid technological transformation and the rise of artificial intelligence, people's ability to learn, innovate and continuously adapt will become the defining factor of every economy's competitiveness. At UniCredit, we believe that investing in education, skills development and young talent is not simply a matter of corporate responsibility, it is one of the most important investments in the future of our economy and society. We are especially proud that, through the UniCredit Foundation, we have been able to support initiatives that enable young people to develop, test and showcase their ideas on the international stage. Societies that invest in knowledge and people build the foundations for sustainable growth and long-term competitiveness. This is why we will continue supporting programmes that create new opportunities for young people and empower them to become the leaders of tomorrow."*

Silvia Cappellini, General Manager of the UniCredit Foundation, added: *"At the UniCredit Foundation, we believe that education is the most powerful driver of social progress and that every young person deserves the opportunity to fulfil their potential, regardless of their background. This is why we invest in initiatives that help young people develop practical skills, entrepreneurial thinking and the capabilities they will need to shape the future. We are particularly proud that this year's 'Re-Power Your Future' Award was presented to a team from Serbia. Moneta Works has shown that innovation creates its greatest value when it responds to real societal needs and contributes to positive change within communities. Their achievement demonstrates that investing in education and young talent generates an impact that extends well beyond national borders and inspires young people across Europe."*

The role of teachers and mentors is equally important in this journey. They do far more than transfer knowledge, they shape the way young people think, solve problems and understand the world around them. Teachers are often the first to recognise talent, encourage students to be courageous and give them the confidence to turn ideas into reality. At UniCredit Bank Serbia, we believe that societies must continue investing in and empowering those who educate and inspire future generations of innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders.

Through strategic partnerships, mentoring programmes and knowledge-sharing initiatives, the Bank remains committed to supporting the development of young people's skills while strengthening the connection between education and the business community.

UniCredit Foundation and the UniCredit Bank Serbia would like to extend their sincere appreciation to all partners who contribute to empowering young people and advancing entrepreneurial education, including Junior Achievement Serbia, the Nordeus Foundation, the NCR Voyix Foundation, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia, the BOOST Balkans initiative, implemented by ALDA with the support of the French Development Agency (AFD), as well as the many mentors, teachers, companies



and business leaders who generously invest their knowledge, experience and time in helping young people realise their full potential.

About UniCredit Bank:

UniCredit is a pan-European Commercial Bank with a unique service offering in Italy, Germany, Central and Eastern Europe. Our purpose is to empower communities to progress, delivering the best-in-class for all stakeholders, unlocking the potential of our clients and our people across Europe. We serve over 15 million customers worldwide. They are at the heart of what we do in all our markets. UniCredit is organized in four core regions and two product factories, Corporate and Individual Solutions. This allows us to be close to our clients and use the scale of the entire Group for developing and offering the best products across all our markets. Digitalisation and our commitment to ESG principles are key enablers for our service. They help us deliver excellence to our stakeholders and creating a sustainable future for our clients, our communities and our people.

About UniCredit Foundation:

UniCredit Foundation is the corporate foundation of UniCredit Group whose purpose is to unlock the potential of Europe's next generation. Its mission is to empower young people across Europe by creating equal opportunities in education and to support them in making their way in life and the professional world. The Foundation's initiatives aim at combating school drop-out, enhancing employability, encouraging university attainment and promoting study and research. The Foundation is committed to supporting communities in all countries where UniCredit Group operates.

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