



PRESS RELEASE

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Serbian businesses to get financing boost of €56 million under EIB- UniCredit Serbia initiative to expand inclusive employment

- UniCredit Bank and UniCredit Leasing Serbia to channel a €50 million loan and €5.6 million grant from the EIB to Serbian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and mid-caps.
- Operation aims to expand career opportunities for women, young people and others facing labour-market barriers in Serbia.
- Initiative advances the EU's "Growth Plan for the Western Balkans".

Companies across Serbia will be eligible for €56.5 million in favourable financing, as a result of a new agreement between UniCredit Bank and UniCredit Leasing Serbia and the European Investment Bank (EIB).

The financing aims to support Serbian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and mid-caps that are committed to the long-term employment and career advancement of women, young people, persons with disabilities and other groups facing barriers to labour market participation. Under the programme, UniCredit Bank Serbia will provide a €20 million loan complemented by a €2.6 million grant, while UniCredit Leasing will channel a €30 million loan and a €3.9 million grant.

The loan is part of specialised EIB financing schemes called "social impact-incentive credit lines" focusing on social inclusion, gender equality and vulnerable groups. The grant is being provided through an EIB Economic Resilience Initiative, which promotes job creation by SMEs, and aims to reward businesses that achieve measurable inclusion goals. Technical assistance will also be provided to help businesses develop and implement such inclusive employment strategies.

"This operation will support private-sector-led growth and social inclusion by reducing inequalities and expanding economic opportunities for underserved groups, particularly women and young people," said **EIB Director for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Richard Amor**. "Promoting inclusive growth is essential for strengthening Serbia's economic resilience and advancing its integration into the EU market."

This new agreement will leverage UniCredit Bank Serbia's unique experience and strong implementation track record as the pioneer of this particular EIB initiative in Serbia, while expanding its reach to leasing clients across the country.

"Our long-standing partnership with the European Investment Bank demonstrates that financing can go far beyond supporting business growth, a powerful driver of positive change in society", said **Nikola**

Vuletić, CEO and Chairman of the Management Board of UniCredit Bank Serbia. “We are particularly proud that, following the successful implementation of the previous programme, we are continuing and further expanding this initiative with UniCredit Leasing, providing companies in Serbia not only with favourable access to finance, but also with tangible support to create better and more inclusive employment opportunities. We believe that a competitive economy and a society of equal opportunities go hand in hand. This is why we want to support companies that recognise the potential of women, young people, people with disabilities and other groups facing barriers in the labour market, and that are ready to invest in their long-term professional development. In this way, together with our clients and partners, we are creating long-term value for both the Serbian economy and society.”

By contributing to private-sector development and the improvement of the business environment in Serbia, the operation advances the EU's [“Growth Plan for the Western Balkans”](#).

“This EU-backed loan facility will help Serbian businesses create more opportunities for people who are too often left behind in the labour market, including women, young people and persons with disabilities,” said **Deputy Head of the European Union Delegation to Serbia Julian Vassallo**. “It is a practical example of how EU support can promote inclusive and sustainable growth in Serbia.”

The new operation marks the fourth financing agreement to date between the EIB and the UniCredit group in Serbia, resulting in the distribution of €240 million to more than 1,000 companies in the country.

Background information

EIB Group

The European Investment Bank ([EIB](#)) Group is the financing arm of the European Union, owned by the 27 Member States, and one of the largest multilateral development banks in the world. In 2025, the EIB Group signed €100 billion in new financing and advisory services for over 870 [high-impact projects](#) under [eight core priorities](#) that support [EU policy objectives](#): climate action and the environment, digitalisation and technological innovation, security and defence, territorial cohesion, agriculture and the bioeconomy, social infrastructure, strong global partnerships and the savings and investments union. Beyond long-term loans for large infrastructure, the EIB Group crowds in private investment for high-risk innovative projects and businesses, with a growing role in Europe's markets for venture debt, venture capital, guarantees and securitisations.

The European Investment Fund ([EIF](#)) is the subsidiary of the EIB Group specialised in providing guarantees, securitisation and equity to improve access to finance for small and medium-sized businesses and startups across Europe. Acting as an anchor investor, through its extensive network of partnering banks and investment funds, the EIF mobilises private investment and nurtures the ecosystem of venture capital funds to support innovative European entrepreneurs.

In 2023, the EIF together with six Member States (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands) launched the European Tech Champions Initiative, a fund-of-funds to scale up innovative startups. To date, this initiative has already enabled the creation of 15 European venture capital mega-funds and scaled up 45 companies, including 12 unicorns (with more than €1 billion in capital). Photos of the EIB Group's representatives and headquarters, logo files and video B-roll for media use are available [here](#).

About UniCredit

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 create a sustainable future for our clients, our communities and our people.

About the EIB in Serbia

The EIB has been active in Serbia since 1977, providing finance to support key infrastructure projects as well as SMEs, industry, services and local authorities. Since the start of its activities in the country, it has enabled €8.7 billion of investment in SMEs and the revitalisation of transportation, education, healthcare and utility infrastructure. [Serbia and the EIB](#).

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