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## Foreword by Ambassador Sem Fabrizi, Head of the EU Delegation to Serbia

### EU and Serbia - # EU for You

With the choice to join the European Union, Serbia started a fascinating once-in-a-generation modernisation process, with the objective to ultimately bring its citizens into the world's largest area of democracy, prosperity and security.

Since 2014 - when the accession process formally started - Serbia has embraced an all-encompassing set of reforms, that touch many aspects of the daily life of ordinary citizens: job creation, education opportunities, fairer justice, freedom of expression, preservation of cultural heritage, protection of the environment, to name just a few.

The accession process is complex, because it is associated with reforms which can be difficult. This sometimes takes the spotlight away from the substantial progress that Serbia and the EU have already achieved and their many tangible results.

Over these years, you have heard many times about chapters to be opened, benchmarks to be achieved, criteria to be respected, reports to be adopted.

The plain and simple fact is that the EU is Serbia's main political supporter, biggest investor, largest trade partner and principal aid donor. This fact needs to be spelled out more clearly.

## EU is Serbia's most important political partner



With the entry into force of the visa liberalisation agreement (2009), the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (2013) and, most importantly, the opening of the Accession negotiations (2014), Serbia has entered into the most exclusive and coveted relationship with the EU, unparalleled by any other non-EU country. Serbia has also been recognised (2017) - by the European Commission - as the "front runner" in the Western Balkans region in the accession process.

## EU is Serbia's number 1 investor

In the past 15 years, companies from the EU accounted for 75% of the Foreign Direct Investment inflows into Serbia. These companies bring efficiency, modern technology and know-how into the Serbian economy. This has in turn significantly increased productivity and competitiveness, boosting Serbia's export potential, increasing budget revenues, generating economic growth and jobs. EU companies have created an estimated 200.000 jobs in Serbia.



**75%**



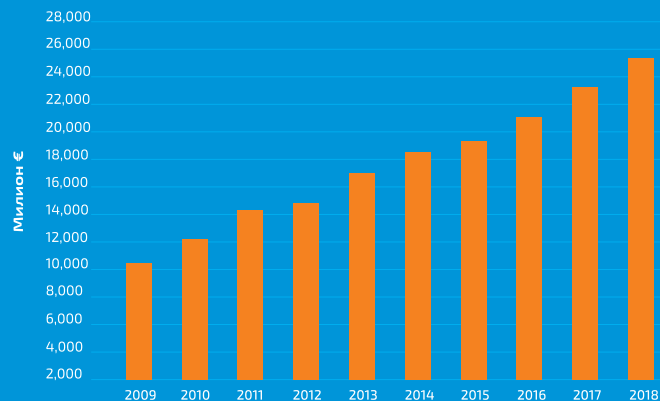
**200.000**

EU companies have created an estimated  
200.000 jobs in Serbia

## Европска унија, Трговинска размена са Србијом

Укупно роба: ЕУ трговина, годишњи подаци 2009 - 2018

Извор Eurostat Comext - Statistical regime 4



## EU is Serbia's number 1 trading partner

65% of Serbia's trade is done with the EU. In 2018 exchanges amounted to 25 billion euros, and are growing by 10% annually. Serbian exports to the EU are growing faster and have tripled in the past ten years. That means thousands of new jobs created every year in Serbia. In particular, the significance of the EU market as an export destination for Serbian agricultural products is considerable, as around half of Serbia's agricultural exports are shipped to the EU. In fact, Serbia's agricultural exports to the EU more than doubled over the past decade.

## EU is Serbia's number 1 provider of financial support

In the past twelve years, Serbia has received over 8 billion Euros from the EU budget alone. Around 5 billion Euros were loans with most favourable rates from the European Investment Bank (EIB), while 3.3 billion Euros came as grants from the European Commission and will never have to be repaid.

This makes Serbia the largest recipient of EU donations and loans in the Western Balkans and one of the largest in the world. This long-standing financial assistance is programmed jointly between Serbia and the EU and is spent on programmes and projects which make concrete positive change for citizens, businesses, and for the society as a whole.



If all of the above still sounds abstract, have a look at this catalogue, which will give you - sector by sector - some of the results of the EU partnership to make Serbia a better and safer place to live.

Because we want Serbia to succeed: # EUzaTebe

*Semi Fabrizi*  
Ambassador





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## Culture



*#EuzaTebe makes sure history does not fade into oblivion and preserves our heritage for the future. Serbia is part of Europe, because it shares common past and culture with European nations.*

Strengthening of cooperation among cultural and creative industry organisations from different countries, with a special focus on cultural heritage protection, is part of the EU's mission in Serbia. As part of the cultural heritage protection efforts the EU makes in Serbia, it has funded the reconstruction of the 14th century Golubac Fortress and the complex around; the Franciscan monastery in Bac; as well as the reconstruction of 1902 Subotica synagogue, one of the most valuable gems of religious architecture built in the style of Hungarian secession in Central Europe.

Through Creative Europe, the EU supports cultural and audio-visual sectors through cooperation with various institutions, publishing houses and companies, via Creative Europe's sub-programmes Culture and MEDIA.





The synagogue in Subotica was restaured with combined efforts from the European Union, governments of Serbia and Hungary and the town of Subotica after four decades of neglecting. The European funds were also used in the restauration of the Golubac Fortress and Franciscan Monastery in Bac.





## Connectivity, Transport and Energy



*#EUzaTebe invests in construction of new roads and reconstruction of old ones in order to improve Serbia's connectivity within its borders and with other countries.*

In cooperation with the Serbian government, the EU has secured a steady and regular supply of electricity, through green technologies which preserve the environment and increase energy efficiency using renewables. The goal is to create a self-sustainable market-based sector, regulated by a strong and independent regulatory agency.

The EU is supporting Serbia in improving transport system competitiveness and connectivity by investing in infrastructure and supporting relevant reform processes. Some of the projects include reconstruction of the Orient-East-Med Corridor, modernization of the Nis-Dimitrovgrad and Nis-Brestovac railway line, and construction of a terminal in Batajnica, Nis-Merdare highway and infrastructure along Danube River.



The EU has funded the construction of a Corridor X section, ensuring safer and faster transport of people and goods. The EU is investing in road infrastructure in Serbia as its roads connect major European routes.





## Digital Agenda



*Thanks to the EU, our phone bills will be lower. #EUzaTebe for lower roaming charges in the region #RoamLikeAtHome.*

In 2018, the EU adopted the flagship initiative “a Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans” helping the region's transition to a digitalised economy. All parties committed for stronger cooperation in the areas of broadband connectivity, cybersecurity and trust, digital economy and society, research and innovation, and roaming.

With strong support from the European Commission, regional digital cooperation brought the Regional Roaming Agreement which will be lowering roaming tariffs across the region. The Agreement is an important milestone in the European path of the Western Balkan partners and is a strong political signal for the European Commission to make further progress in reducing roaming tariffs, between the EU and the Western Balkans.



During the Western Balkans Digital Summit, held in April 2019 in Belgrade, a regional agreement was signed aimed at reducing roaming charges and bringing citizens in the region closer together.



## Agriculture and Food



*In order to be certain of the quality of our food, the EU helps Serbia to meet standards of EU Member States when it comes to agriculture and food production.*

Since 2000, the EU has financed the sector which covers both projects aimed at rural development and animal and plant protection with a view to meeting EU standards and improving competition. The support is focused on entering agricultural land in relevant registries, administrative control for financial assistance disbursement, introduction of IT systems, eradication of animal diseases, traceability of animal products, plant and animal health control as well as animal waste management.

In the years ahead, the EU intends to substantially increase support for farmers through fresh programmes of support for rural development and non-refundable aid that will be put at farmers' disposal to co-fund investments in agriculture.





With IPARD, the EU co-funds the purchase of agricultural machinery. This way, the EU contributes to the modernisation of machinery which will in turn lead to higher yields and a more efficient approach to farming. As of 2019 the EU will be financing almost 500 tractors for farmers in Serbia.



## Local Development



*#EuzaTebe encourages a more balanced development of all parts of Serbia and empowers local communities by investing in projects that will improve the lives of citizens.*

EU supports Local Development to improve the competitiveness and social cohesion at the local level in Serbia and improves the environment for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) by providing assistance for the implementation of more efficient services for land management, issuing permits and support small scale infrastructure interventions that have a positive impact on local economy and quality of life.

The EU Municipal Development – EU PRO programme aims to increase municipal capacities for attracting investments, improve competitiveness and business development, create new jobs and contribute to social cohesion at local level. It also focuses on funding infrastructure interventions that will improve citizens lives.





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The fresh market in the village of Pukovac near Doljevac, one of the biggest fresh markets in southeast Serbia, was revamped thanks to the funding provided by the EU. The EU has already funded hundreds of such local developments projects, and is currently engaging another 25 million euros across Serbia to support local communities and businesses. That leads to better services, economic development and more jobs at local level .



## Environmental protection



*Thanks to #EUzaTebe, waste water no longer ends up in rivers. Much work remains ahead, but fighting for clean water, blue skies and green parks matters to us all.*

Since 2000, through various projects aimed at environmental protection, the EU has provided cleaner water, improved waste management and secured cleaner air and safer management of hazardous substances for over a million citizens. Also, it has improved the overall regulation in this area, laying foundation for the improvement of ecological licences and inspection and more thorough monitoring of the quality of air and water, and raised awareness about these issues among citizens.

Among the biggest achievements in this area are the construction of wastewater treatment facilities in Subotica, Sabac, Leskovac, Kula and Vrbas; construction of a new water supply system in Veliko Gradiste; and installation of ash disposal system at thermal power plant Nikola Tesla as well as the installation of filtration systems at thermal power plant Nikola Tesla A and B in Obrenovac.





Waste water treatment facility in Leskovac is among the many environmental projects funded by the EU. Thanks to the facility, the quality of life of over 80000 local residents will be improved by protecting the surface and underground water sources.



## Rule of Law



*In order to make justice timely and secure for all, #EUzaTebe funds the judiciary reform.*

Fighting organised crime, tackling corruption, protecting the rights of the citizens and ensuring a good functioning of the court system – these are just some of the tasks Serbia has in order to fulfil the criteria of the European Union in the area of rule of law. Ensuring the rule of law is both about the rights and freedoms of the individual person as well as the development of the whole country. Investors can feel safer in an environment where the rule of law is guaranteed and corruption is being fought.

The two negotiating chapters that cover the rule of law, chapters 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (justice, freedom and security) are at the heartbeat of the EU negotiation process. The EU seriously invests into improving the rule of law as for instance in the modernisation and digitization of the judiciary and the refurbishment and provision of electronic equipment of the judicial academy in which the country's lawyers are being trained helping improve the efficiency and the professionalism of Serbia's judiciary.





The clerk's office of the Court of General Jurisdiction in Uzice has been digitized thanks to the EU project "Improving Judicial Efficiency." All in all, the project led to solving a backlog of over 700.000 legal cases which were pending on Serbian citizens and entities.





## Migration Management



*The migrant crisis poses a challenge to all of Europe, which is why the EU and Serbia work together to respond to it in an efficient and humane manner.*

The EU supports Serbia substantially in managing migration. This entails humanitarian aid and protection to migrants, in particular the protection of children, conditions for reception and care in the reception and asylum centres, including food, health care and education, assisting Serbia in border protection and combating smuggling of migrants. The EU works together with national authorities in improving migration management capacities to establish the system for managing accommodation capacities in line with EU standards. Since 2015, the EU has granted Serbia over EUR100 million for migration management.



The children at the migrant reception centre develop new skills and have a creative pastime through educational activities. With the EU, managing migration means protecting our societies and in the same time ensuring that those who need have their rights respected and are able to live in dignity.



## Healthcare and consumer protection



*#EuzaTebe donates vehicles and equipment to healthcare centres, in order to make quality healthcare service, appropriate treatment and good prevention available to all.*

The EU has invested substantial funding in the health sector – by purchasing medicines, new ambulance cars, equipping hospitals and community health centres, laboratories, institutes of public health, blood transfusion institutes, purchasing of equipment for safe medical waste management and other aspects relevant to this sector.

The EU works on protecting consumers from serious risks and threats imposed by dangerous products and unsafe services. Consumer protection legislation of the EU which is being introduced in Serbia aims further at protecting the safety, health, economic and legal interests of consumers.



Through a donation of brand new ambulance cars to the University Children's Clinic, the EU has secured better access to healthcare services for children and their parents. The EU has so far donated 252 ambulance cars to towns across Serbia.



## Democracy and Human Rights



*Equal human rights for all are one of the EU's pillars. #EUzaTebe thus empowers the society to respect them in all areas, from politics to economy.*

The EU actively promotes and supports Serbian civil society through more than 300 projects such as the ones aimed at democracy development, good governance, rule of law, fight against discrimination, social inclusion, economic development and culture. The support also focuses on the dialogue between the public and civil sector, awareness raising among the public and government institutions regarding the importance of engaging the civil society in decision-making processes at all levels.

In the era of internet, the EU pays great attention to education of young people by engaging them in programmes tackling media illiteracy, but it also helps citizens protect their right to information. The support comes to the fore in the areas of research journalism, trainings for journalists and modernisation of media.





As part of its efforts to help build democratic institutions and to support human rights in Serbia the EU works with both state institutions and non governmental organisation who fight for fundamental rights and freedoms. One example is the NGO "Civil Rights Defenders" which advocates for fundamental rights issues and runs an EU-funded project called "Who defends the defenders?". It deals with the protection of human rights organisations' safety.



## Education



*Quality education is the key to success of each and every individual and the society as a whole.  
#ErasmusPlus offers the young a chance to receive good education with their peers across Europe.*

Since 2003, the European Union has donated substantial funds for education sector reform, with a view to strengthening the social and economic development. From pre-school, to primary and secondary education, to vocational, higher and adult education, the EU remains Serbia's biggest partner when it comes to introduction of new standards, development of curricula, professional training of teachers and purchase of school equipment.

EU funding is focused on institutional development, introduction of standards and alignment of national systems with the EU. Serbia is the leading Western Balkans partner in Erasmus+. Since 2014, some 8,000 Serbian students and teachers have participated in mobility schemes, while the programme has brought over 3,300 people to Serbia. The EU also invests into student empowerment and making schools open to democratic values.





Thanks to EU funding, the elementary school in the village of Zapadni Mojstir near Tutin is now housed in a new building. Quality education is a basic precondition for the progress of a society and the EU has been investing heavily in this area in order to help Serbia lay a solid foundation for the future.





## Science and innovation



*If you have an innovative idea, the EU can support you to put it into action. #EUzaTebe, because innovation and entrepreneurship form the basis for the development of Serbian economy.*

Horizon 2020 is an EU programme offering funding for scientific and research papers in universities, institutes, small and medium-sized enterprises and large companies. It is the single largest scheme of European investment in science, supporting research and innovative projects, strategic and applied research programmes and as well as market-related activities, with a view to improving competition at the global level.

As part of cooperation with the Innovation Fund, the EU fosters innovation in Serbia and works to strengthen the ties between the research community and private sector. The EU thus helps to advance science, research and innovation for the sake of economic development as one of the government's priorities.



Remote controlled digital farming: a robotic system is able to analyse soil quality and the condition of plants. Farmers can thus better react and improve their agricultural production. A joint effort worth 28 Million euros between the European Union and Serbia, is turning the Novi Sad BioSense Institute into the European Centre of Excellence for advanced technology in sustainable agriculture.



## Youth and sports



*The young are not only our future, but our present, too. #EUzaTebe thus encourages them to achieve the best results possible, whether in sports or social activism.*

Support for youth policies is crucial for the development of a common European identity. The EU offers equal education and labour market opportunities to the young and encourages more active participation of the youth in society in order to tackle the issues of high youth unemployment and inactivity, and the problem of mismatch between skills supply and demand in the labour market.

Through Erasmus+, young people acquire new experience and have a chance to learn more about the richness of cultures and languages in Europe, which in turn makes it easier for them to find jobs and master new skills and competences. Through the sports component of the programme, the EU supports partnerships aimed at fighting intolerance and discrimination in sports, good governance and equal access to sports for all.





The Bac Fortress hosted the European Week of Sports under the auspices of the EU Delegation to Serbia. Through its youth programmes, the EU allows young people to develop new skills that will improve their performance in the job market later in life.



## Socio-Economic Development - jobs and growth



*#EUzaTebe helps medium-sized enterprises across Serbia to increase their productivity and the number of employees.*

The EU, together with the Government of Republic of Serbia, is committed to boosting local competitiveness through both the improvement of infrastructure and fostering an environment conducive to business creation as well as through support of small and medium sized business ultimately generating economic growth and creating new job opportunities.

Local self-governments are key actors to change for the better conditions for citizens and businesses to flourish and develop. Local self-governments are also key actors to lead, shape and implement reforms for EU accession. This is the reason why the EU provides continued support for local development in order to reduce regional disparities, attract investment and generate jobs and growth at local level.





Kran Komerc Company from Knjazevac has purchased a new machine thanks to EU funding. Through different EU funds and programmes, numerous small-sized enterprises were offered a chance and money to develop their business.





## Public Administration



*#EUzaTebe invests in digitization of administration because efficiency is the key to exercising civil rights and achieving economic development.*

EU assistance to Public Administration covers six core areas, such as, strategic framework for public administration reform, policy development and coordination, public service and human resources management, accountability, service delivery and public financial management.

The most comprehensive assistance EU provides through the Sector Budget Support aiming to pursue and underpin effective and timely implementation of the public administration reform embedded in the strategy and aligned with the EU principles. The sector activities will focus on strengthening the institutional and human resource capacities of the Serbian Government, to drive, coordinate, implement and monitor the public administration and public finance management reform agenda.



The well-functioning of the public administration, including the public finance, is essential for the progress of a country and wellbeing of its citizens. The EU supports and encourages government agencies to make the administration more citizen-oriented. Investments into e- government services and digitization are meant to make the public service easier to us.



## Civil Protection



*Did you know that the EU was the biggest donor to Serbia in the aftermath of 2014 flood, donating EUR172 million? #EUzaTebe, because solidarity should be shown in the hardest of times.*

During the devastating floods of 2014, the EU helped Serbia by conducting the largest ever operation through its Civil Protection Mechanism. It offered support in the form of life boats, helicopters, water pumps and humanitarian aid kits, and 32,000 people were evacuated, while EU organised the donors' conference where significant funds were raised in the aftermath of floods.

Serbia was granted access to the Mechanism and a chance to take part in responding to emergency situations, preparation and prevention together with 33 participating members. Participating members pool their resources and make them available to countries hit by disasters across the world. The Emergency Response Coordination Centre of the Mechanism monitors the risk of disasters around the world round the clock, while in the event of an emergency situation serves as an information and coordination hub.





EU's assistance to Obrenovac has helped to reconstruct over 1,300 homes and construct and furnish 41 houses.



## Social Inclusion



*Equal opportunities for all are the foundation of a happy society. In order to make sure no one is left behind, #EUzaTebe invests in inclusion and the right to decent living, regardless of social background, age, ethnicity...*

Social policy, as well as social cohesion and in particular social protection and social inclusion, are among the major foundations of the EU and one of the basic principles in the enlargement process. Values promoted include equality, solidarity, tolerance and fundamental socio-economic human rights, the right to decent living and work conditions, the right to adequate social protection and proper education and the right to live in a healthy and safe environment.

The EU has financed many projects on social protection and inclusion of all vulnerable population in Serbia, such as children, people with disabilities, refugees and IDPs, Roma, elderly citizens, returnees and migrants facilitating their activation in the labour market and social inclusion.





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Participants in the project "Roma Education Incubator" in the village of Prekodolce, the municipality of Vladicin Han. The EU has so far invested over EUR11.4 million in the areas of housing and employment of vulnerable groups.





## Peace, reconciliation and good neighbourly relations



*#EUzaTebe provides roof over the heads of the most vulnerable groups following the conflicts in former Yugoslavia, because the EU is a peace project.*

*The European Union is the most important peace project on the territory of Europe that has made possible lasting peace and economic prosperity to a huge number of people. Serbia is a part of Europe, not only geographically, but also economically and culturally. Reconciliation, good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation are important principles of Serbia's accession process to the EU. The involvement and commitment of the youngest generation is very important in this respect.*

*Building bridges and connecting territories will make a profound contribution to developing good neighbourly relations and further promoting peace and reconciliation, in addition to bringing big economic benefits such as improving the investment climate.*



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The wars in former Yugoslavia have left many without homes. The EU funds over 80% of the Regional Housing Programme through which it provides new homes to refugees and IDPs from ex-Yugoslavia. At the end of 2018, the RHP had already provided housing to close to 2 500 most vulnerable refugee families in Serbia.

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\* Front page Golubac fortress , Ivica Veselinov



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