

## UniCredit empowering the future

**Beograd, December, 2024** - For UniCredit Bank in Serbia the education is considered an essential lever for the growth of our society. UniCredit Bank's support is based on the empowerment of educational institutions and educators implementing a unique scientific approach to drive a fundamental change of the education system of Serbia.

The rapid development of technology and increased global competitiveness have made knowledge a key success factor for both individuals and countries. Throughout Europe, the importance of a qualified workforce is recognized, but so is the danger of early school leaving, which rural areas face. Therefore, UniCredit Foundation across Europe jointly UniCredit Bank in Serbia are focused on the goal of education becoming the main postulate of the social influence of companies.

The Bank contributes to building a more sustainable education system so that no child is held back by their socio-economic background and that equal education opportunities are available to all. Connecting the economy and formal education, UniCredit Bank motivates students to apply practical knowledge already during schooling, unlocking their talents and continuously developing their skills.

**President of the Management Board of UniCredit Bank, Nikola Vuletić** points out: *"Investing in education is an investment in the future of our community. It is not only socially responsible, but a decision to support further economic growth. By investing in education, we ensure that future generations have the skills needed for a demanding labour market. This is why we actively cooperate with numerous institutions in order to harmonise educational programs with the strategic goals of our country's progress. We believe that in this way we are creating a synergy that will make a positive, long-lasting impact on our communities."*

**Silvia Cappellini, General Manager UniCredit Foundation** said: *"In our Foundation, we advocate for inclusive education that embraces diversity and creates an environment where every child feels safe and valuable. Through our programs, we support all students, primarily those from vulnerable poor and rural areas, those with special needs, children from migrant families and other marginalized groups. We believe that education is the key to creating a fairer and more tolerant society. Only by working together can we ensure that every child unlock its full potential."*

Through various projects, the Bank encourages young people to "unlock their potential" and develop skills and capabilities for the future. Bank's support to the education system begins with the empowerment of teachers, equipping them with the tools they need to be the best possible educators, so that they always provide added value to their work with students. The Bank's aspiration is to significantly strengthen the efforts and results of the projects it supports together with **UniCredit Foundation**, and in partnership with local organisations, such as Junior Achievement Serbia, as well as the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade, in order to further empower the local community and support building a more inclusive school environment that offers quality education for all children.

### UniCredit Foundation



UniCredit Foundation, with the support of UniCredit Bank, aims to further strengthen the local community and build a more inclusive school environment that offers quality education for all children in Serbia, through projects implemented in partnership with various organizations.

In just one year, through the project "RePower Your Future" supported by **UniCredit Foundation** in cooperation with the organisation Junior Achievement Serbia, we involved **190** secondary schools with participation of **3,481** students through different programs: Innovation Camp, Student Company program, Special Challenge competition, Business Ethics program.

Furthermore, through the three-year project "*I am a teacher: Learning communities in support of teacher identity*", supported by UniCredit Foundation and implemented by a team of teachers and researchers from the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade, we will strive to contribute to solving numerous challenges in the education system in Serbia, with special focus on strengthening professional identity, autonomy and well-being of teachers. This project will include more than 600 teachers and 15,000 of their students in 60 elementary schools across Serbia. Out of these, more than 300 teachers will be directly involved in a one-year support program for developing relevant competencies, with the aim of improving their well-being, the quality of teaching and the functioning of the school as a proactive learning community.

Through a partnership with the "Education Group" consisting of the Nordeus Foundation, the Center for the Promotion of Science, the Digital Serbia Initiative and Junior Achievements in Serbia, UniCredit employees were engaged as mentors in the Financial Literacy program, which last year included more than **1,500** students from **47** secondary schools in Serbia.

In the period from 2023 to 2026, the UniCredit Foundation is investing close to 850,000 euros in the mentioned projects in Serbia.

## UniCredit Bank in Serbia

As a key partner of the Galaxy Cup program, in partnership with the Nordeus Foundation, UniCredit Bank will open an opportunity for school communities to become part of a comprehensive educational movement that supports innovation and creativity among young people through the competition and concrete technological innovation projects. Namely, this program allows teachers and students of electrical engineering schools from all over the country to connect with peers, experts and industry leaders, providing them with invaluable experience that will motivate them to continue their professional development and contribute to society through innovation.

The bank awarded scholarships to the "Veljko Petrović" high school foundation from Sombor for the best high school students from Sombor, while it also supported the organization of student participation in international competitions (Physics Olympiad) of the Mathematics High School in Belgrade.

The bank's financial support is also focused on the activities of the Youth Forum with Disabilities through activities to contribute to the social inclusion of persons with disabilities, representation and promotion of human rights, through the establishment of cross-sector partnerships, building and strengthening the necessary human and other resources and capacities.



Through the "Happy Cash Loan" contest, the Music School in Niš was enriched with new instruments. At the same time, UniCredit Bank has been renovating the interior and improving the working environment in primary and secondary schools throughout Serbia for years.

Additionally, in cooperation with AFA (Association for the Affirmation of Women's Potential), the MOGIS Program was implemented to empower girls to engage in science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics. One of the goals of the project is to gather and connect a greater number of girls and women, as well as to reduce the gender gap in technological occupations and promote positive role models through a network of mentors from institutions and companies.

In Serbia, the problem of lack of manpower in education is widespread, which affects the distribution of quality teaching staff. Because of this situation, rural schools are often closed, and children go to city and suburban schools. UniCredit Bank, in cooperation with UniCredit Group, supported the establishment of the organization Teach for All in Serbia, as well as their joining the global network Teach for All, in order to influence changes in the education system in the country through the empowerment of teachers and enable access to quality education for all children.

UniCredit Bank and UniCredit Group are investing more than 200,000 euros in the listed projects in the period from 2023 to 2026.

As we continue to empower our communities to progress, we strive to provide the necessary support to further strengthen the local education system and unlock the potential of Serbia's next generation.

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