

# Why Serbia?



Specialised Expo 2027/28  
Candidate



66 million people  
within the 6 hours  
driving distance



330 million people  
within the 2 hours  
flight distance

Positioned in the heart of Europe,  
Serbia enjoys proximity to a  
vast market of almost  
**400 million** people

# Growing Economy



## Major Shifts toward Building Stable Economy

Serbia is a financially consolidated country with stable public finances, controlled public debt below the Maastricht levels, and stable and sustainable economic growth. As of 2017, signs of macroeconomic stability are shown with a steady increase.

## Transformation of the Economy in figures

- **Real GDP Growth** – from -2,7% in 2009 to 7,4% in 2021
- **GDP in absolute numbers** – from 33,6 billion of euros in 2012 to 53,5 billion in 2021
- **Public Debt** – from 70% of GDP in 2015 to 54,8% of GDP in September 2022
- **Unemployment Rate** – from 25,9% in 2012 to 8,9% in Q2 2022
- **Foreign Direct Investments** – from 0,8 billion of euros in 2012 to 3,6 billion in 2021

## Confirmation of Achieved Results

- The **fastest growing economy in Europe** during the two years of the pandemic – real GDP growth 6,4% cumulatively
- Three aid packages for the economy and citizens worth 8,8 billion euros (17,3% GDP)
- Stable labor market
- Constant growth of pensions, salaries, and minimum wage
- Continuous growth of public investments – **not a single abandoned infrastructure project**
- Maintained the Credit Rating with all major agencies throughout the crisis
- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) continuously confirms good results.





## From Raspberries to Metaverse

- **Tech is the largest net exporting industry and the fastest growing sector in Serbia**
- **Companies with R&D centers in Serbia:** Microsoft, IBM, Cisco, Continental, NCR, Rivian, Epic Games, Seven Bridges Genomics, Polygon, Toyota, Bosch, Ubisoft, ZF, AbSci, Nutanix, Schneider Electric and many more.
- **Tech education** is integrated into formal education and starts as early as the age of 7. Every year, around 70.000 students finish their primary school with coding skills, as Python, Scratch, Pygame and Jupiter are part of the mandatory curricula.
- Serbia has a thriving **Artificial Intelligence ecosystem**. AI is part of the education curricula even in the primary and secondary schools. In fact, Serbia was among the first countries to adopt **AI Strategy** and the **National AI Institute** is becoming a regional factory of AI leaders by providing both infrastructural and mentorship support.
- Majority of the most frequent **public services are digital**. Technology led to massive drop in paper use and so far saved almost 50.000 adult trees, 19 million kWh of electricity and 220 million liters of water.

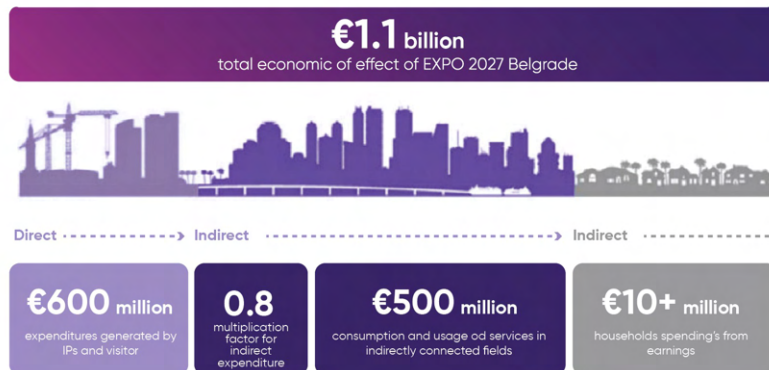
**World Bank GovTech Maturity Index: #4 in Europe, #11 in the world**

**UN E-Government Development Index:**

**In top 10 countries in the world with the highest jump 2020-2022**

# Strong Economic Impact on Serbia

All planned activities are not seen as „cost“ but as „investment“ needed to develop a smart city and create a better and more supportive environment. The project will have positive and long-lasting effects on the Serbian economy.



## EXPO 2027 in numbers (estimations)

- 2.59 million visitors
- 4 million single visits
- 120 participants
  - 97 countries
  - 7-10 international organizations
  - 5-10 corporate pavillions



# Theme: "Play for Humanity - Sport and Music for All"

**EXPO 2027 will be an opportunity for Serbia to present itself to the world as a global hub for creativity and innovation.** The future-oriented theme „Play for Humanity – Sport and Music for All“ emphasizes the importance of investing in new generations and their well-being, while also hoping to kickstart a new era of “play” to build regional and global cooperation when it is most needed.

**PLAY IS A HUMAN SUPERPOWER.** Through play, we ignite curiosity, learn, build life skills, develop imagination, become aware of the different consequences of our actions, engage in various activities, and develop and learn from outcomes. In other words, **play is one of the pillars of building the resilience of humanity, enabling us to face new challenges, stay open to new possibilities, and flourish in times of constant change.**

“Play for Humanity – Sport and Music for All” addresses the importance of play, sport, and music in human evolution and development and will empower both the participants and visitors to explore how these ancient “tools” of humanity can help resolve some of the most complex global challenges.

Changes are constant and certain; therefore, every participating country of Specialized EXPO 2027 in Belgrade would search for the answer to the following question: **How to prepare human body, mind, and logic for technology-led world full of insecurities and make them more resilient for the coming decades?**

EXPO 2027 Belgrade is dedicated to implementing an entirely new approach to solving some of the most complex issues the world is facing at present.

Let people create and innovate through play. Motivate people to play sports and music. To listen and socialize. To achieve this, we will speak about innovation, play, and sport for all.



# Expo Site and Venue Concept

## Vast Impact on the Urbanism of the City of Belgrade

The Venue Concept is part of a **more expansive Urban Masterplan Complex, including a new National Stadium** with 52,000 people capacity, the **Retail Complex**, and the **EXPO venue itself**.

All three elements are unified with a central urban landscaped promenade which, in the future, could extend to the Sava River as part of a wider urban regeneration masterplan.

The EXPO Venue's design concept is based around providing an **"Urban Oasis"** which, together with the National Stadium and Retail Complex, can become a **key urban destination for tourists, EXPO Visitors, and city dwellers** not just during the EXPO event, but as **an everlasting legacy for an ever-growing and dynamic area of the city called New Belgrade**.

A series of permanent Exhibition Halls are arranged along the central, covered, and naturally ventilated Urban Street, culminating in a vast and dramatic circular plaza, housing the main Themed Pavilions and the National Serbian Pavilion – the focal points and architectural icons within the overall complex and the EXPO Event. The overriding idea is to create a free-flowing and luscious landscaped public realm between the EXPO Halls and Pavilions, providing a more human scale and abundance of activities, amenities, different experiences, and even "surprises" for the thousands of EXPO visitors in tune with the EXPO Theme of "Play for Humanity – Sport and Music for All".





 EXPO  
2027  
BELGRADE  
SERBIA

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## Regional Story / Open Balkan

### First-ever EXPO in the Western Balkans

Hosting EXPO 2027 would allow Serbia to bring much-deserved attention to Southeast Europe. The organisation of EXPO puts both the organizing country and the broader region on the world map, thus also bringing benefits to the surrounding countries and economies.

The bordering countries of Serbia are Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Albania. Most of the neighbouring countries are EU Member States, while others are in different stages of accession to the EU.

A great geographic location makes Serbia a **logical choice** for thousands of international and regional companies. They operate in Serbia to most efficiently serve their **EU, SEE or Middle Eastern** customers.

Specialised EXPO 2027 in Belgrade would be the **first-ever EXPO hosted in the region of Western Balkans**, and highly expected in the region of Southeast Europe for over three decades.

In these challenging global times, Serbia's hope is that EXPO 2027 would commence a **new bright chapter** of history marked by harmony, friendship and celebration.

### Open Balkan

In 2019, the initiative for more intensive cooperation in the Western Balkans was launched by three leaders – President of the Republic of Serbia and Prime Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia, with the aim of free movement of goods, services, people and capital according to the EU model. The Open Balkan is a support to the current regional initiatives, their implementation, and a response to the requirements of the economy, companies and real life.



OPEN  
BALKAN



## Summary: Why Serbia?

- 1.** Our candidacy is seen as a **supranational project of the utmost importance** and, unlike other candidate cities, enjoys the **full backing of the Serbian and Open Balkan governments**.
- 2.** Belgrade is the **only capital city competing**, which means **exceptional logistics**. Neighbouring countries are few hours drive from Serbia.
- 3.** Serbia has allocated the **biggest budget to support participation of developing countries** (€50 million) which shows to what extent Serbia **embodies the EXPO spirit**.

**4.** It will be the **first time that EXPO is held in the Western Balkans**. The EXPO in Belgrade will greatly aid in the **positive rebranding** of the historically conflicted region and offer a **fantastic economic opportunity** for both local and regional growth and global exposure.

**5.** Serbia has transformed notably in the past decade. It is a perfect opportunity for a **world to witness the rapid progress of the country**.

**6.** Belgrade's bid theme, **Play for Humanity: Sport and Music for All**, is fresh, looks to the future, and places an emphasis on mental health and welfare.

**Welcome to Belgrade!**



[www.expobelgrade2027.org](http://www.expobelgrade2027.org)

