

Letter of Intent

The European Union and the Republic of Serbia enjoy a deep and long-standing relationship as partners, sharing common political objectives and fundamental values, while being part of the Free Trade Area through the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA).

Given the urgent need to tackle climate change, and to secure supplies of sustainable energy, materials and technologies instrumental to preserving the competitiveness of their economies, while increasing the resilience of strategic ecosystems, the EU and Serbia share the ambition to strengthen and expand their cooperation on critical raw materials (CRMs) and electric vehicles (EV) value chains, including materials, batteries, manufacturing and recycling.

The Parties agree to work towards creating a strategic partnership in these areas, which will provide a comprehensive framework for further strengthening of political relations and economic ties between the EU and Serbia, and the creation of future-oriented and long-term cooperation engaging public and private actors. Development of sustainable and integrated value chains in these sectors will help address strategic dependencies, and will create long-term green growth and high-quality jobs.

In particular, the Parties agree to explore enhanced cooperation with regard to (a) the integration of their CRMs value chains, in particular with regards to the EV industrial ecosystem, (b) approximation of Serbia's policy and regulatory framework, including environmental, social and governance criteria, (c) research and innovation, (d) financial and investment instruments, and (e) re-skilling and up-skilling of the work force.

The Parties agree to explore the following areas of action in the process of creating the strategic partnership:

- Work for the accelerated integration and “phasing-in” to individual EU policies, as stipulated in the New EU Accession Negotiations Methodology for the Western Balkans, in the e-mobility related policies and Council Working Groups.
- Building strong cooperation on environmental, social and governance criteria between the EU bodies and Serbian public and private entities.
- The participation of Serbia in the ministerial meetings of the European Battery Alliance.
- Serbia intends to participate in and contribute to the European Battery Academy.
- Serbia will consider applying for observer status in the EU's Raw Materials Supply Group.
- Mapping the existing cooperation areas under the EU's Horizon Europe R&I framework programme and other schemes.
- Facilitating - with the support of the European Industrial Alliances and the Serbian Chamber of Commerce - cooperation between industry stakeholders in the EU and Serbia with a view to developing a mutually beneficial investment pipeline of projects throughout the EV and CRMs value chains. This will include a jointly organised business networking event.
- Ensure environmentally sound management of waste throughout the EV value chain, in line with EU waste legislation.

- Ensuring transparency and due-diligence with regards to the origin of raw materials, in line with the EU Acquis.
- Working towards advancing best practices for resource classification and mapping, including mapping mineral potential from waste sources.

The President of the Republic of Serbia, Aleksandar **Vučić**, and European Commission Executive Vice-President Maroš **Šefčovič** will provide political guidance and strategic steer for the work carried out towards and under the partnership. They will meet on a regular basis to monitor progress and decide on next steps.

A working group consisting of senior officials and experts from the EU and Serbia will be created to develop a strategic partnership through a memorandum of understanding and a roadmap, in line with this joint statement.

Industrial actors, business associations and alliances, and other stakeholders will be encouraged to engage in efforts related to the partnership, notably by exploring business opportunities and developing joint industrial projects along the identified value chains.

The partnership on the CRMs and EV value chains could be followed by partnerships in other areas of green industrial policy of mutual interest to both parties.

The strategic partnership will be coherent with the SAA agreement and accession negotiations framework, and will contribute to Serbia's endeavors to joining the EU.

European Commission


Executive Vice-President

Government of the Republic of Serbia


First Deputy Prime Minister,
Minister of Foreign Affairs