

Today, the Minister of Finance, Sinisa Mali, received in a farewell visit the permanent representative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Serbia, Sebastian Sosa. Sinisa Mali thanked Sosa for the excellent cooperation and added that in the previous period, the Republic of Serbia and the IMF had a really good and constructive relationship, and that a new advisory arrangement between our country and that international financial institution was confirmed in June.

Minister Mali reminded that the Board of Directors of the IMF, on June 18, confirmed the new advisory arrangement with Serbia, which will last for 30 months, and which represents another successful confirmation of Serbia's economic policy, the ministry announced.

"What is especially important for us and what I always want to emphasize is that this arrangement is exclusively of an advisory nature, which means that we do not need money from the IMF, even in times of global economic crisis caused by the corona virus pandemic," said the Minister of Finance.

According to Mali, the new arrangement with the IMF is support for the continuation of reform processes in Serbia and is primarily aimed at maintaining macroeconomic and financial stability.

"The emphasis will be on further structural and institutional reforms, including further reform of public companies and continued modernization of the Tax Administration. A special focus is on the so-called green agenda and the plan is to develop a comprehensive plan for green growth," Sinisa Mali said.

He stressed the importance of improving the business environment, as well as implementing decisive measures to combat the gray economy.

Cooperation with the IMF, he added, gives us additional credibility in the international financial public and their help and advice are important for us, especially in these difficult times for the whole world, because we want to maintain and improve the level of economic activity that further leads to the improvement of the living standard of the citizens of Serbia. Minister Mali also pointed out the good economic results of Serbia in the previous period, despite the corona virus pandemic.

He stated that Serbia achieved a GDP growth of 1.7 percent in the first quarter, and that a growth of between 12 and 15 percent is expected in the second quarter.

"Given the current trends, we can expect growth of as much as seven percent this year and again one of the best results in Europe. A particularly encouraging figure is that in the first six months of this year we had 1.72 billion euros in foreign direct investment which is 19 percent more than last year," said Minister Mali.

The new Policy Coordination Instrument (PCI) cooperation program will run from June 2021 to the end of 2023, Kurir reports.