

# Serbia might become a mining leader in this part of Europe

Categories : [Mining](#)

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**With the realization of the mining projects of “Chukaru Peki” and “Jadar” in Serbia, the share of mining in GDP can jump from the current two percent to five percent, said the World Bank spokesman in Serbia Stephen Ndegwa, who estimated that Serbian mining the sector has enormous potential for growth and new jobs in our country.**

When it comes to mining in Serbia, Ndegwa says, the World Bank sees the potential for boosting the economy, but to realize the full potential of the sector, it requires a major reform of the Serbian mining sector and strong private and public sector cooperation.

Ndegwa said at the Ninth International Conference on Mineral Resources in Serbia that, according to World Bank research, our country has a strong chance to be a leader and participate in Europe’s future, but that the key question is whether Serbia is ready to seize the opportunity.

He believes that the Serbian government will take a good step if it accepts the World Bank’s suggestions regarding the potential in the mining sector, assessing that Serbia has the potential to become a major supplier for lithium and copper ores.

He reminded that about 35 companies currently have 130 projects in the mining sector in our country, with the assessment that Serbia is an attractive destination for mining companies.

“We estimate that two research projects, Chukaru Peki and Jadar, will expand two percent to five percent of mining’s share of GDP. To harness this potential, there is a need for governance in the mining sector,” he said.

Ndegwa also recalled that the World Bank has done a study of the mining sector in our country, stating that no major mines have been opened in our country in the last two decades and that there has not been much progress from exploration to exploitation.

He recommended to the Serbian government to develop a national vision for mining in Serbia within the framework in order to encourage mining in our country in light of new discoveries of mineral resources.

“And that will put Serbia in a new position. The opportunity requires co-operation between the private and public sectors. It is important for the government to work closely with the private sector,” Ndegwa said, adding that when it comes to mining it is important to involve

local communities.

Basically, as he noted, where the mines are being opened, local infrastructure has not been developed, so this is an opportunity for private mining companies and the state to come together to fund road construction together.

Fabian Baker, President and Chief Operating Officer of Tethyan Resources Corp., spoke about the prospects for early exploration in Serbia and stated that significant zinc and lead resources exist in Serbia.

In order to realize the full potential of Serbian mining, panel participants looking at the world's best mining practices assessed that it is important to listen to the voice of the local community.

Geraint Bowden, a senior partner at ERM London, said that a huge number of projects were abandoned or delayed, with the most common reason not being technical but of misunderstanding the local community.

He also spoke about the importance of hiring local residents and local subcontractors, but also about creating long-term plans that must answer the question of what will happen to the local community near the mine when, for example, the mine closes in 20 or 50 years.

Source: rtv.rs