

Head of small businesses' umbrella organisation: We will fight hard for Development Bank to become reality

SME Invest is the most important business-support program of last year, president of the National Council of Small and Medium-sized Private Enterprises in Romania (CNIPMMR) Florin Jianu said on Thursday, pointing out that the program has helped tens of thousands of businesses to get access to working capital and weather the difficult period of 2020.

"Our plans for 2021, together with our colleagues from the National Credit Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (FNGCIMM) envisage some extremely important elements under the National Recovery and Resilience Program. We will fight very, very hard - and this goes for both the National Council of SMEs, and for FNGCIMM - for our goal of many years, the Development Bank, to become reality, for the economic support to be directed towards new categories, such as the hospitality industry. For keeping support for small and medium-sized enterprises at the same high level," Florin Jianu told the online event "vorbIMM despre IMM Invest 2021/Talking SME Invest 2021".

In Jianu's opinion, the SME Invest program has helped tens of thousands of businesses access working capital and stay afloat during the difficult period of last year, and will help a similar number of companies this year as well.

The sectors that received support through this program include construction, freight transport, agriculture, trade, restaurants.

"For us, as representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises, it is gratifying to see that micro-enterprises accounted for about 52 percent of the beneficiaries of the SME Invest program, 35-38 percent were small enterprises and only 10 percent of the beneficiaries were in the 'large' category," Florin Jianu said, emphasizing that the program has achieved its goal.

"I wish there had been more measures on offer from the Ministry of Economy. The SME Invest program did the hard work for the business community last year and, together with the furlough scheme turned later into *kurzarbeit*, has offered a breath of oxygen for many small and medium-sized enterprises. The times were and still are difficult for the business milieu and the economy, but with this program we managed to increase the number of bankable SMEs against all odds," added the CNIPMMR president.