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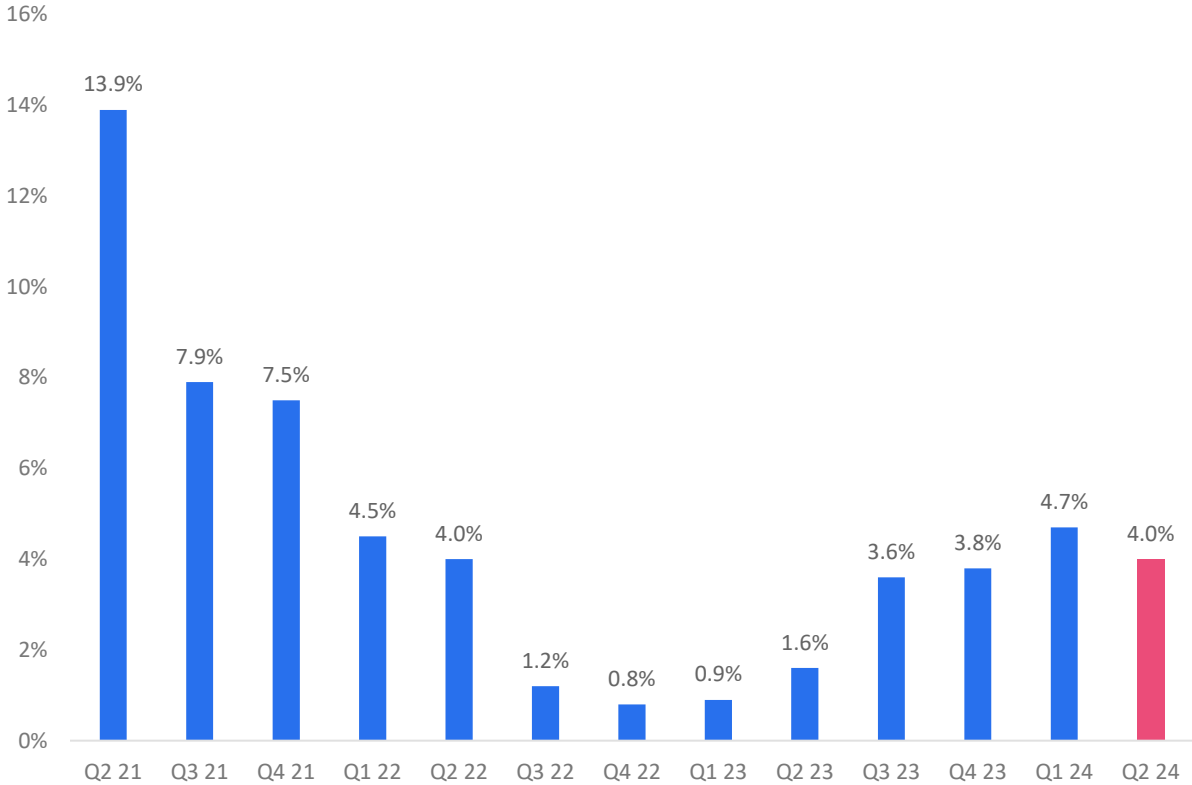
GDP growth lands at 4% y/y in 2Q

GDP (y/y)

Actual, 2Q24:	4.0%	Previous:	4.2%	Erste:	4.2%	Consensus:	4.2%
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The Statistical Office has slightly cut its preliminary estimate, showing that the real GDP in the second quarter of 2024 rose by 4% year-on-year. The economy expanded by 0.8% quarter-on-quarter seasonally adjusted, indicating strong dynamics continued throughout the 1H24. The economy demonstrated a continuation of strong domestic performance, with private consumption accelerating by 4.8% year-on-year, the highest pace since early 2022, confirming improving real wage dynamics. Public spending continued to grow steadily, rising by 4.5% year-on-year. Combined, they added a total of 4 percentage points to the headline figure. Investments recorded another strong print, rising 8.5% year-on-year, largely reflecting strong construction momentum, and allowing for a 2 percentage point positive contribution. Inventories build-up also had a positive impact, adding another 1.6 percentage points to the headline figure. However, external performance again weighed on overall GDP, with exports of goods and services growth showing 4.4% year-on-year growth and being out shadowed by imports rise of 8.5% year-on-year. Overall, net exports chopped 3.6 percentage points of growth.

The pattern from 1H24 is likely to continue in the medium term. Consumption is expected to remain the main driver of GDP growth in 2024, with disinflation and double-digit nominal wage growth boosting real disposable income, while credit conditions are set to improve throughout the year as interest rates decline gradually. The government is focusing on the implementation of the "Leap into the Future—Serbia EXPO 2027" development plan, which will increase public investment spending over the period 2024-2027. The plan envisages an investment plan of hefty EUR 17.8bn over the coming years, equivalent to around 23% of estimated 2024 GDP. The program aims to raise public investment to about 7.5% of GDP by 2027 from 7% in 2023 with a significant portion allocated to transportation infrastructure. Net exports will be a drag on growth this year, as both consumption and investments are driving imports higher. Meanwhile, exports are still exposed to rather sluggish EU performance. Another drag could also come from agricultural output as long period of drought and extremely high temperatures weighed on the final crop output. Nevertheless, **based on the robust early-year growth and expected acceleration of investment activity, our FY24 and FY25 GDP forecast has been upgraded by 0.2pp and 0.5pp to 4% year-on-year and 4.5% year-on-year, respectively. Overall, the risks to our forecasts seem balanced.**



Analyst:
Mate Jelic
+385 72 37 1443
mjelic1@erstebank.com

Group Research

Head of Group Research Friedrich Mostböck, CEFA®, CESGA®	+43 (0)5 0100 11902	GM Retail Products & Business Development Head: Martin Langer	+43 (0)50100 11313
CEE Macro/Fixed Income Research Head: Juraj Kotian (Macro/FI) Katarzyna Rzentarzewska (Fixed income) Jakub Cery (Fixed income)	+43 (0)5 0100 17357 +43 (0)5 0100 17356 +43 (0)5 0100 17384	Corporate Treasury Product Distribution AT Head: Martina Kranzl-Carvell	+43 (0)5 0100 84147
Croatia/Serbia Alen Kovac (Head) Mate Jelić Ivana Rogic	+385 72 37 1383 +385 72 37 1443 +385 72 37 2419	Group Securities Markets Head: Thomas Einramhof	+43 (0)50100 84432
Czech Republic David Navratil (Head) Jiri Polansky Michal Skorepa	+420 956 765 439 +420 956 765 192 +420 956 765 172	Institutional Distribution Core Head: Jürgen Niemeier	+49 (0)30 8105800 5503
Hungary Orsolya Nyeste János Nagy	+361 268 4428 +361 272 5115	Institutional Distribution DACH+ Head: Marc Frieberthäuser Bernd Bollhof Andreas Goll Mathias Gindele Ulrich Inhofner Sven Kienzle Rene Klasen Christopher Lampe-Traupe Danijel Popovic Michael Schmotz Christoph Ungerböck Klaus Vosseler Slovakia Šarlota Šipulová Monika Sméliková	+49 (0)711 810400 5540 +49 (0)30 8105800 5525 +49 (0)711 810400 5561 +49 (0)711 810400 5562 +43 (0)5 0100 85544 +49 (0)711 810400 5541 +49 (0)30 8105800 5521 +49 (0)30 8105800 5523 +49 1704144713 +43 (0)5 0100 85542 +43 (0)5 0100 85558 +49 (0)711 810400 5560 +421 2 4862 5619 +421 2 4862 5629
Romania Ciprian Dascalu (Head) Eugen Sinca Dorina Ilasco Vlad Nicolae Ionita	+40 3735 10108 +40 3735 10435 +40 3735 10436 +40 7867 15618	Institutional Distribution CEE & Insti AM CZ Head: Antun Burić Jaromir Malak	+385 (0)7237 2439 +43 (0)5 0100 84254
Slovakia Maria Valachyova (Head) Matej Hornak Marian Kocis	+421 2 4862 4185 +421 902 213 591 +421 904 677 274	Czech Republic Head: Ondrej Čech Milan Bartoš Jan Povich Pavel Zdichynec	+420 2 2499 5577 +420 2 2499 5562 +420 2 2499 5566 +420 2 2499 5590
Major Markets & Credit Research Head: Gudrun Egger, CEFA® Ralf Burchert, CEFA®, CESGA® (Sub-Sovereigns & Agencies) Hans Engel (Global Equities) Peter Kaufmann, CFA® (Corporate Bonds) Heiko Langer (Financials & Covered Bonds) Stephan Lingnau (Global Equities) Maximilian Mostl (Credit Analyst Austria) Carmen Riefler-Kowarsch (Financials & Covered Bonds) Rainer Singer (Euro, US) Bernadett Povaszai-Römhild, CEFA®, CESGA® (Corporate Bonds) Elena Statelov, CIIA® (Corporate Bonds) Gerald Walek, CFA® (Euro, CHF)	+43 (0)5 0100 11909 +43 (0)5 0100 16314 +43 (0)5 0100 19835 +43 (0)5 0100 11183 +43 (0)5 0100 85509 +43 (0)5 0100 16574 +43 (0)5 0100 17211 +43 (0)5 0100 19632 +43 (0)5 0100 17331 +43 (0)5 0100 17203 +43 (0)5 0100 19641 +43 (0)5 0100 16360	Institutional Asset Management Czech Republic Head: Petr Holeček Petra Maděrová Martin Peřina David Petráček Blanka Weinerová Petr Valenta Croatia Head: Antun Burić Zvonimir Tukač Ana Tunjić Natalija Zujic Hungary Head: Peter Cszizmadia Balazs Papay Gábor Bálint Gergő Szabo Romania Head: Octavian Florin Munteanu	+420 956 765 453 +420 956 765 178 +420 956 765 106 +420 956 765 809 +420 956 765 317 +420 956 765 140 +385 (0)7237 2439 +385 (0)7237 1787 +385 (0)7237 2225 +385 (0)7237 1638 +36 1 237 8211 +36 1 237 8213 +36 1 237 8205 +36 1 237 8209 +40 746128914
CEE Equity Research Head: Henning Eßkuchen Daniel Lion, CIIA® (Technology, Ind. Goods & Services) Michael Marschallinger, CFA® Nora Nagy (Telecom) Christoph Schultes, MBA, CIIA® (Real Estate) Thomas Unger, CFA® (Banks, Insurance) Vladimira Urbankova, MBA (Pharma) Martina Valenta, MBA	+43 (0)5 0100 19634 +43 (0)5 0100 17420 +43 (0)5 0100 17906 +43 (0)5 0100 17416 +43 (0)5 0100 11523 +43 (0)5 0100 17344 +43 (0)5 0100 17343 +43 (0)5 0100 11913	Group Institutional Equity Sales Head: Michal Rízek Werner Fürst Viktoria Kubalcova Thomas Schneidhofer Oliver Schuster Czech Republic Head: Michal Rízek Jiri Fereš Martin Havlan Pavel Krabička Poland Head: Jacek Jakub Langer Tomasz Galanciak Wojciech Wysocki Przemyslaw Nowosad Maciej Senderek Croatia Matija Kralicanac Hungary Nandori Levente Krisztian Kandik Balazs Zankay Romania Valerian Ionescu	+420 224 995 537 +43 (0)50100 83121 +43 (0)5 0100 83124 +43 (0)5 0100 83120 +43 (0)5 0100 83119 +420 224 995 537 +420 224 995 554 +420 224 995 551 +420 224 995 411 +48 22 257 5711 +48 22 257 5715 +48 22 257 5714 +48 22 257 5712 +48 22 257 5713 +385 72 37 21 14 +36 1 23 55 141 +36 1 23 55 162 +36 1 23 55 156 +40 3735 16541
Croatia/Serbia Mladen Dodig (Head) Boris Pevalek, CFA® Marko Plastic Matej Pretkovic Bruno Barbic Davor Spoljar, CFA® Magdalena Basic	+381 11 22 09178 +385 99 237 2201 +385 99 237 5191 +385 99 237 7519 +385 99 237 1041 +385 72 37 2825 +385 99 237 1407	Group Fixed Income Securities Markets Head: Goran Hobljaj	+43 (0)50100 84403
Czech Republic Petr Bartek (Head, Utilities) Jan Bystrický	+420 956 765 227 +420 956 765 218	Fixed Income Flow Sales Head: Gorjan Hobljaj Margit Hraschek Christian Kienesberger Ciprian Mitu Bernd Thaler Zsuzsanna Toth Poland Pawel Kielek Michal Jarmakowicz	+43 (0)5 0100 84403 +43 (0)5 0100 84403 +43 (0)5 0100 84117 +43 (0)5 0100 84323 +43 (0)5 0100 85612 +43 (0)5 0100 84119 +36 1 237 8209 +48 22 538 6223 +43 50100 85611
Hungary József Miró (Head) András Nagy Tamás Pletser, CFA® (Oil & Gas)	+361 235 5131 +361 235 5132 +361 235 5135	Fixed Income Flow Trading Head: Gorjan Hobljaj	+43 (0)5 0100 84403
Poland Cezary Bernatek (Head) Piotr Bogusz Łukasz Jańczak Krzysztof Kawa, CIIA® Jakub Szkopek	+48 22 257 5751 +48 22 257 5755 +48 22 257 5754 +48 22 257 5752 +48 22 257 5753	Group Fixed Income Securities Trading Head: Goran Hobljaj	+43 (0)50100 84403
Romania Caius Rapanu	+40 3735 10441	Group Equity Trading & Structuring Head: Ronald Nemeč	+43 (0)50100 83011
Group Markets		Business Support Bettina Mahoric	+43 (0)50100 86441
Head of Group Markets Oswald Huber	+43 (0)5 0100 84901		
Group Markets Retail and Agency Business Head: Christian Reiss	+43 (0)5 0100 84012		
Markets Retail Sales AT Head: Markus Kaller	+43 (0)5 0100 84239		
Group Markets Execution Head: Kurt Gerhold	+43 (0)5 0100 84232		
Retail & Sparkassen Sales Head: Uwe Kolar	+43 (0)5 0100 83214		
Markets Retail Sales CZ Head: Roman Choc	+420 956 765 374		
Markets Retail Sales HUN Head: Peter Kishazi	+36 1 23 55 853		

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Group Research
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