

General Eligibility Criteria

The General Eligibility Criteria define the general characteristics, restrictions and special features that apply to lending for projects/clients under the loan programmes: **Youth, Female, Start-Up and Other Special Segments Entrepreneurship; Private Sector Investment; Public Sector Investment; EU Projects; Investments in Digital Transition under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP); Investments in Green Transition under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP); Investments in Defence and Security under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP); Investments by SMEs in RDI and AI under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan; Working Capital; Pre-Export Finance; Financial Restructuring.**

The General Eligibility Criteria apply to all other HBOR's loan programmes and products in all their parts as applicable, unless otherwise defined by an individual programme and/or product.

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1. Borrowers

1.1. Eligible Borrowers

Eligible beneficiaries of HBOR's loans or placements are (subject to other conditions defined in these General Eligibility Criteria, programmes and products of HBOR and/or other applicable documents of HBOR) **private sector business entities and public sector entities**, where:

- The term "borrower" or "final borrower" relates to a natural person or a legal entity that is financed directly or in cooperation with a commercial bank or a leasing company, including a principal in the case of guarantee issuance;
- The term "loan" or "placement" relates to all lending activities, both direct and indirect, including guarantee issuance, and all banking products or financing through leasing companies.

Private sector business entities

Companies, crafts businesses, sole traders, family farms, cooperatives and institutions in private or majority private ownership classified in accordance with their size as follows:

Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises

Private sector business entities which employ fewer than 250 employees and which have an annual turnover below EUR 50 million and/or an annual balance sheet total below EUR 43 million according to the latest available annual financial statements, in accordance with the Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (OJ L 124, 20.5.2003) (hereinafter: Recommendation of the European Commission).

Mid-caps

Private sector business entities which employ from 250 to 2,999 employees according to the latest available annual financial statements and which in accordance with their size, ownership, employee number and other conditions do not enter the category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises pursuant to the Recommendation of the European Commission.

Large business entities

Private sector business entities which employ 3,000 and more employees according to the latest available annual financial statements and which in accordance with their size, ownership, employee number and other conditions do not enter the category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises pursuant to the Recommendation of the European Commission.

Public sector entities

Units of local or regional government (municipalities, cities and counties) and companies, institutions and agencies owned or majority owned by them and/or owned or majority owned by the Republic of Croatia.

1.2. Special Target Groups

Young entrepreneurs

Business entities in which one or several young persons together hold more than 50% of ownership, whereby a young person is considered to be the one who has not yet reached the age of 41 on the date of application submission¹.

Female entrepreneurs

Business entities in which at least one or several women together hold more than 50% of ownership and are also managed by a woman. In the case of an enterprise that is not a micro or small enterprise,

¹ The date of application submission is the date when the loan (placement) application is submitted or sent by post to HBOR, a commercial bank or a leasing company.

a woman or women together may hold less than 50% of ownership, provided that at least one woman is in one of the key management positions related to finance and/or operational business and/or strategy.

Start-up entrepreneurs

Business entities that are micro, small or medium-sized enterprises and that have just been established or have been operating for less than 3 (three) years on the date of application submission¹. Beneficial owners (natural persons) holding a majority share in a business entity have not previously been and are currently not the owners or co-owners of another business entity holding a share of more than 30%.

1.3. Ineligible Borrowers and Restrictions

Entrepreneurs in difficulties

Borrowers cannot be entities that belong to the category of companies in difficulties in accordance with the provisions of Article 2, paragraph 18 of the Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (OJ L 187, 26 June 2014, hereinafter: the Regulation: 651/2014), i.e. with the provisions of the regulation in force at the moment of loan or interest subsidy approval, except in the case referred to under 5.2 of these General Eligibility Criteria (Financial restructuring).

For more details, follow the link: <https://www.hbor.hr/naslovnica/hbor/poduzetnici-u-teskocama/>

Business entities in which ownership interests are held by entities subject to the Act on Preventing Conflict of Interest and their family members

In accordance with the Act on Preventing Conflict of Interest (Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia, No. 143/2021) and all its subsequent amendments, there are restrictions in effect on lending to business entities in which ownership interests are held by entities subject to the Act on Preventing Conflict of Interest and their family members.

For more details, follow the link: <https://www.hbor.hr/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Ogranicenje-u-kreditiranju-drzavnih-duznosnika.pdf>

Exclusion criteria in accordance with the Reputational Risk Management Ordinance

In accordance with HBOR's Reputational Risk Management Ordinance, risk categories and exclusion criteria as well as their impact on the execution, continuation or termination of a business relationship with a client are determined.

For more details, follow the link: <https://www.hbor.hr/pravilnik-o-upravljanju-reputacijskim-rizikom-hbor-a-koji-proizlazi-iz-poslovnog-odnosa-s-klijentom/>

2. Criteria for Determining Investment Types

Special areas of the Republic of Croatia

Economically underdeveloped areas (supported areas), the islands and hill/mountain areas in the Republic of Croatia as follows:

- **Supported areas**

Units of local government classified into groups I, II, III or IV in accordance with the Regional Development Act of the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia No. 45/2026) and the Decision on the Classification of Units of Local and Regional Government According to the Level of Development in effect.

- **Hill or mountain areas**

Areas in accordance with the Act on Hill or Mountain Areas (Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia No. 118/2018) and the Decision on the Coverage and Classification of Local Government Units Acquiring the Status of Hill or Mountain Area (Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia No. 24/2019) and all their amendments.

- **The islands**

In accordance with the Islands Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia No.13/2026) and all its amendments.

Agricultural activity

National Classification of Activities, Division 01: Agriculture, hunting and related service activities, from 01.11.0 to 01.50.0. (except for 01.15.0 Growing of tobacco).

Social infrastructure

Private and public sector projects aimed at upgrading social, educational, health, sports or municipal infrastructure and transport connections in urban and rural areas that contribute to improving the quality of life and business in local communities and/or reducing negative demographic trends.

Green project

Green sectors and activities, green project categories, criteria and indicators of green results are contained in **Schedule 2** to these General Eligibility Criteria (Green Eligibility Table).

Digitalisation

Development and/or introduction of digital technologies (for example, digitalisation of production, procurement and sales) in certain areas of business and their full integration and education of employees and users including the following investments:

- Digital infrastructure;
- Digital transformation of companies, research in the field of digital technologies;
- ICT (investments in information and communication technologies), digital marketing, digitalisation and automation of business processes, digital procurement, digitalisation of sales representatives, changes in all forms of businesses and processes in which employees of the organisation interact with its customers, and similar;
- Industry 4.0 - production processes based on the latest technology and covered by devices for mutual autonomous communication; machines controlled by artificial intelligence that can independently exchange information; application of smart factory models in which robotic machines control and monitor physical processes; production system that can independently exchange information during the production process and knows at any time at what stage the output product is;
- Investments in fixed assets (e.g. business premises, equipment, intangible assets, etc.) and working capital of entities engaged in the development of the aforementioned digital technologies.

Research, development and innovation - RDI²

Projects based on research, development and innovation or investment in research, development and innovation in the field of products, processes, business organisation and marketing (customer relations) in a company. They include projects based on industrial and experimental research; products/services/processes and methodologies protected by intellectual property regulations but also other projects based on the application of a new or substantially modified product (goods or services), processes, new organisational methods, business practices or new marketing methods and their

² RDI - Research, Development and Innovation

introduction into practical use, that is, the commercialisation or expansion of existing production/service capacities for RDI-based operations.

It is possible to finance investments in fixed assets (e.g. business premises, equipment, intangible assets, etc.) and working capital of entities engaged in RDI.

Defence activities

Defence activities include:

- Development and/or production of defence products, technologies and services, products and systems intended for military-security services and the police, including, among others:
 - technologies, machines and equipment for the production of firearms, ammunition and missiles,
 - vessels, vehicles, aircraft and other military equipment,
 - related technologies, maintenance services and equipment and services for training and education of military and security personnel,
 - ICT technologies for the needs of the defence sector,
 - autonomous systems and robotics,
 - advanced sensors and communication systems,
 - solutions based on artificial intelligence,
 - drones for surveillance and other military and security purposes,
 - radar and optical systems,
 - aircraft and missile systems,
 - traffic management systems,
 - cybersecurity and satellite communications;
- Construction and modernisation of dual purpose infrastructure;
- Development and/or production of dual-use products, such as industrial machines, aircraft parts and communication equipment components;
- Research, development and innovation in the field of military-security industry, including software, mechanical, electrical, electronic and aircraft technologies;
- Construction, modernisation, purchase, renovation and maintenance of facilities, equipment and infrastructure of strategic importance for military-security operations and activities, such as military bases, logistics centres, transport infrastructure, medical facilities, barracks and facilities for training and education of military personnel and
- Construction of protective facilities and civil protection infrastructure
- Modernisation of enterprises
- All other goods and services for military purposes, defence products and non-military ordnance in accordance with the Regulation of the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

It is possible to finance investments in fixed assets (e.g. business premises, equipment, intangible assets, etc.) and working capital of entities engaged in defence activities.

Exporters

Private sector business entities that, based on the latest available annual financial statements and/or other appropriate documentation, meet at least one of the following criteria:

- **direct export:** at least 10% of income/revenues from sales abroad in operating income/revenues (or at least EUR 1,000,000.00 of income from sales abroad), or
- **export on consolidated basis:** at least 10% of income from sales abroad on a consolidated basis in the total realised operating income of group (or at least EUR 1,000,000.00 of income from sales abroad on a consolidated basis), or
- **overnight stays of non-residents:** more than 50% of income/revenues from overnight stays in operating income/revenues, where the share of realised overnight stays by non-residents of the Republic of Croatia in the total number of overnight stays is at least 10% in the same period, or

- **indirect export**³: at least 10% of income/revenues from sales to one or more exporters in operating income/revenues (or at least EUR 1,000,000.00 of income from sales to one or more exporters), or
- **contracted export transactions**: contracted export transactions for the future period at least 10% of operating income/revenues of the previous period (or at least EUR 1,000,000.00),

or it is about loan for the purchase of business shares in a foreign company or capital investment in a foreign company.

Affordable housing

Financing the projects of purchase, reconstruction, construction or renovation of residential buildings and the conversion of buildings into housing units in accordance with the criteria of social/affordable housing defined by national legislation.

(Artificial Intelligence – AI)

Investments in artificial intelligence (AI) include investments in fixed assets and working capital for the development, acquisition, implementation, integration and commercial application of AI systems in business processes.

AI systems, for the purposes of this definition, represent computer systems that, based on data and models, autonomously or partially autonomously generate predictions, recommendations, decisions or contents that can affect physical or virtual environments, in accordance with the relevant regulatory framework, including the EU AI Act, with the aim of increasing the efficiency, productivity, quality or innovativeness of the business.

AI investments differ from standard IT investments in that they involve systems that draw conclusions from data, and not just deterministic processing of predefined rules.

Investments may include, but are not limited to:

- Development and adaptation of AI models and applications,
- Procurement and implementation of ready-made AI solutions,
- Investments in data infrastructure, data management and computing capacity required for AI,
- Integration of AI systems into existing information and production processes,
- Employee training necessary for the introduction and use of AI technologies,
- Activities related to testing, validation, security and compliance of AI systems with applicable regulations,
- Investments in tangible and intangible assets, including business premises, research and development capacities, data centres and similar infrastructure and equipment intended for the performance of activities in the field of development, implementation or provision of AI products and services,
- Investments in working capital (e.g. costs of labour, services, licenses, computing resources, data and other operating costs), related to the development, implementation or use of AI systems.

3. Ineligible Activities and Restrictions

Ineligible activities include the activities, businesses and purposes that are not eligible for financing and the corresponding exemptions, if any.

The list of ineligible activities can be found in **Schedule 1** to these General Eligibility Criteria.

³ Indirect export means the sale of finished goods to one or more exporters who deliver the respective goods to a foreign market in an unaltered form.

Funding restrictions on financing with HBOR's direct loans

HBOR's direct loans of up to and including EUR 400,000.00 cannot be used to finance the following investments, unless they account for up to 20% of total investment value:

- holiday homes, villas, apartments, rooms for rent
- all types of vehicles (cars, trucks, trailers, buses, etc.)
- all types of agricultural machines and equipment (tractors, combine harvesters, sowing machines, etc.)
- all types of construction machines and attachments (excavators, cranes, etc. unless they are electrically powered)
- speedboats, yachts, sailboats and other smaller vessels.

4. Alignment with the Paris Agreement

The projects that relate to:

- Energy production and related activities,
- Construction of new or renovation of existing buildings (energy efficiency of buildings), and/or
- Procurement of means of transport (limitations of CO2 emissions for means of transport)

and that are financed from the funds of the European Investment Bank must be aligned with the criteria of the Paris Agreement. The criteria of project alignment with the Paris Agreement are contained in **Schedule 1.2.** to these General Eligibility Criteria.⁴

5. Promotional Interest Rates and Aid Regulations

Pursuant to its loan programmes (other loan products included, if applicable), HBOR approves loans to borrowers at a **promotional interest rate** or at a **general interest rate** if the loan cannot be approved at a promotional interest rate.

In the case of lending through financial institutions (commercial banks or leasing companies) and if so prescribed by loan programme, HBOR's loan product and/or contractual documentation with financial institutions, the interest rate charged to the final borrower is determined by the financial institution.

If a loan is contracted at a promotional interest rate, HBOR awards aid to the borrower. If it is not possible to award aid to the borrower, the loan is approved and contracted at a general interest rate.

Promotional interest rate

The interest rate on the loan that contains aid, i.e. the loan is approved/contracted at an effective interest rate that is lower than the reference interest rate for the borrower⁵.

General interest rate

The interest rate on the loan that does not contain aid, i.e. the loan is approved/contracted at an effective interest rate that is equal to or higher than the reference interest rate for the borrower.

Effective interest rate (EIR) is the interest rate presenting the total loan costs in accordance with the Croatian National Bank's Decision on Effective Interest Rates in force and is determined in accordance with the provisions of HBOR's internal documents (the current Ordinance on Manner and Deadlines for Interest Calculation or another substitute document).

⁴ In case of non-alignment with the Paris Agreement, HBOR may still consider financing the relevant projects from HBOR's funds (except for the projects related to the construction or renovation of buildings that must be aligned with the Paris Agreement in order to be eligible for financing from HBOR's funds as well).

⁵ Promotional interest rate can also be an interest rate that contains an interest rate reduction for the borrower or an interest rate, market interest rate included, that is reduced by an interest rate subsidy.

Reference interest rate is the base rate (calculated and published by the European Commission) increased by a certain number of basis points (margin) that depend on the assessment of the client (credit rating) and the assessment of collateral in accordance with the Communication from the European Commission. HBOR's rules on determining reference and discount rates are harmonised with the current rules of the European Commission, i.e. the Communication from the Commission on the revision of the method for setting the reference and discount rates (OJ C 14, 19.1.2008).

Aid

Aid in the loan that is approved/contracted at a promotional interest rate can be a discounted⁶ amount of:

- (a) Interest calculated at an interest rate that represents a difference between the reference interest rate calculated for the borrower and the effective interest rate that is lower than the reference interest rate, or
- (b) Interest calculated at an interest rate that represents a reduction of the interest rate for the borrower, or
- (c) Nominal amount of the interest rate subsidy granted.

The possibility of awarding aid depends on:

- Specific loan programme or another loan product of HBOR,
- Level of the reference interest rate for the borrower,
- Level of the interest rate under the loan programme, i.e. level of the interest rate that HBOR determines specifically for the borrower or level of the interest rate that is determined for the borrower by the financial institution,
- Subsidy rate, if applicable,
- Possible interest rate reductions, and
- Possibilities of the borrower to exercise the right to the award of aid in accordance with the applicable rules on state aid and de minimis aid (including the type of investment and the activity of the borrower as well as the aid used by the borrower so far).

Type of investment and aid

Investments in fixed assets (tangible and/or intangible assets) are generally financed in accordance with the state aid rules⁷, and financing is possible also in accordance with de minimis aid rules, whereas investments in working capital can be financed in accordance with de minimis aid rules only⁸.

5.1. State Aid and Promotional Effect⁹

Lending under the state aid regime is possible in cases where aid has a promotional effect, which means that the borrower (the aid beneficiary) has to submit to HBOR a **written request for aid** contained in HBOR's loan prior to the start of works¹⁰ on the project.

⁶ The interest rate that is applied when discounting is a discount interest rate. The **discount interest rate** is the base rate (calculated and published by the European Commission) increased by 100 basis points. HBOR's rules on determining reference and discount rates are harmonised with the current rules of the European Commission, i.e. the Communication from the Commission on the revision of the method for setting the reference and discount rates (OJ C 14, 19.1.2008).

⁷ For industry and services as well as for processing and placing of agricultural products on the market, aid is awarded on the basis of HBOR's State Aid Scheme; whereas for activities of primary agricultural production, aid is awarded on the basis of HBOR's State Aid Scheme for the Agricultural Sector).

⁸ HBOR's De Minimis Aid Scheme and HBOR's De Minimis Aid Scheme in Favour of Primary Agricultural Production.

⁹ State aid and promotional effect are applied on the programmes that enable investments in fixed assets.

¹⁰ Start of works means either the start of construction works relating to the investment or the first legally binding commitment to order equipment or any other commitment that makes the investment irreversible, whichever occurs

Only the costs arising after the submission of a written request for aid can be recognised as justified costs of a planned project.

The following is considered to constitute a written request for aid:

- Investment Announcement submitted to HBOR (both in the case of direct loans and loans on-lent through financial institutions) on the prescribed template, or
- Loan Application submitted to HBOR (for direct loans) or to a financial institution (for loans on-lent through financial institutions), if an Investment Announcement has not been previously submitted.

The written request for aid must contain at least:

- Name and size of the borrower (the aid beneficiary) in accordance with the Recommendation of the EC,
- Project description, including its start and completion dates,
- Project location,
- List of project costs,
- Amount of finance needed for the project.

5.2. Special Programmes in Terms of the Application of Aid Rules

EU projects

In the case of candidate projects for co-financing out of the proceeds of the budget of the European Union, i.e. the proceeds of the EU Funds and/or the national sources of funding and the other foreign public sources of funding (hereinafter: non-recurring grants) on the basis of an invitation for the submission of project proposals (hereinafter: tender), HBOR's loan is generally granted at a general interest rate (interest rate that does not contain aid), since the award of a non-recurring grant to a borrower (aid beneficiary) generally means that the maximum permitted intensity of aid has been granted to the borrower.

As an exception to the above, HBOR can grant such a loan at a promotional interest rate (interest rate that contains aid) or with another form of aid (e.g. fee subsidy) if the aid beneficiary has not been awarded the maximum permitted intensity of aid through the award of non-recurring grant on the basis of a tender, and if a tender does not prohibit adding or cumulating the aid that is awarded on the basis of a tender with aid from other sources in connection with the same justified (eligible) costs.

Public sector investments

In the case of financing infrastructure that is not intended for commercial use, the state aid rules generally do not apply, i.e. it is allowed to approve a loan at a promotional interest rate, regardless of whether the conditions from the relevant state aid rules have been met. This relates, for example, to general infrastructure such as public roads, bridges or canals that are made available to the public without receipt of tolls as well as to the infrastructure intended for activities usually performed by the state in the execution of its public authority.

In the case of borrowers that can be classified as entrepreneurs in terms of the state aid rules¹¹, a loan can be approved at a promotional interest rate, i.e. under the state aid and/or de minimis aid regime, depending on the purpose of infrastructure/project to be financed, i.e. whether and to what extent the

first, excluding preparatory works (buying land and preparatory works such as obtaining permits and conducting feasibility studies are not considered to be the start of works). In case of take-overs, start of works means the moment of acquiring the assets directly linked to the acquired establishment.

¹¹ Entrepreneur is any entity active in an economic activity, regardless of its legal form. This includes, particularly, self-employed persons and family entrepreneurs that are active in crafts businesses or other business activities, partnerships or associations regularly engaged in an economic activity.

project is intended for economic exploitation or not, which has to be evaluated with regard to all the circumstances of an individual investment.

If the purpose of an investment is an economic activity (entrepreneur in terms of aid rules), and if the borrower does not qualify for the award of state aid and/or de minimis aid, the loan can be approved at a general interest rate.

Financial restructuring

Financing at a promotional interest rate is possible exclusively pursuant to the criteria contained in the Guidelines on State Aid for Rescuing and Restructuring Non-Financial Undertakings in Difficulty (OJ C 249, 31.7.2014) and de minimis aid regulations.

Financing of companies in difficulties in terms of item 20 of the mentioned Guidelines is implemented exclusively in accordance with the provisions of the State Aid Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia, Nos. 47/14, 69/17) and its subsequent amendments, i.e. with obligatory prior notification of the aid for rehabilitation and/or aid for restructuring for the assessment of the European Commission/the Ministry of Finance and respecting of all the criteria of the mentioned Guidelines.

In the case of a direct lending to borrowers secured by a guarantee of the Republic of Croatia or a guarantee of a commercial bank acceptable for HBOR, generally in the amount of at least 80% of unrepaid amount of the principal, interest and other expenses relating to the loan, HBOR can finance business entities even when they are in difficulties, i.e. fulfil one of the criteria mentioned in item 20 of the Guidelines on State Aid for Rescuing and Restructuring Non-Financial Undertakings in Difficulty (OJ C 249, 31.7.2014)

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/HR/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2014:249:FULL&from=HR>

5.3. Exemptions from Financing at Promotional Interest Rate

Financing at a promotional interest rate is not possible:

- (i) In the case of programmes for export financing (Pre-Export Finance, Buyer Credit, Supplier Credit) since the state aid rules explicitly exclude the possibility of awarding aid for export-oriented activities to third countries or member countries, or the aid connected directly with exported quantities, with the establishment and functioning of distribution network or with other current expenses related to the export activity;
- (ii) In the fisheries and aquaculture sector, including the activities of producing, processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products.

6. Others

Applicants are not automatically entitled to obtain a loan. HBOR makes a decision on each individual application.

Schedule 1 – Ineligible activities

- (1) Activities which limit individual rights and freedoms or that violate human rights;
- (2) In the area of defence activities: the use, development, or production of products and technologies that are prohibited by applicable international law;
- (3) Tobacco-related products and activities (cultivation and production, distribution, processing and trade);
- (4) Activities excluded from financing pursuant to the relevant provisions of the Horizon Europe Regulation: research on human cloning for reproductive purposes; activities intended to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable; and activities to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT);
- (5) Gambling (production-, construction-, distribution-, processing-, trade- or software-related activities);
- (6) Sex trade and related infrastructure (including the media related to sex trade);
- (7) Activities involving live animals for experimental and scientific purposes insofar as compliance with the European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals for Experimental and other Scientific Purposes cannot be guaranteed;
- (8) - Activities connected with immovable properties (National Classification of Activities section M) if they relate to the predominant final borrower activity and/or investment activity (investments in energy efficiency projects are not excluded¹²⁾¹³⁾
 - Development of immovable properties, such as activities whose sole purpose is the renovation and re-leasing or re-sale of existing buildings as well as the construction of new buildings intended for sale (investments in energy efficiency projects are not excluded¹²⁾;¹⁴⁾
- (9) Financial activities (e.g. purchasing or trading in securities, financial instruments or other financial products) including change of ownership (e.g. mergers and acquisitions)¹⁵⁾, except in the case of issuing bonds with the aim of purchasing shares in other companies (domestic or foreign). In particular, interventions targeting buy-out intended for asset stripping or

¹² Investments in energy efficiency projects include only costs related to raising the level of energy efficiency of the immovable property, and do not include the costs of acquiring or building of the immovable property.

¹³ As an exception, it is acceptable if a company established for the purpose of immovable property management within a group of affiliated companies invests in immovable properties that will be given for use (rent) exclusively to affiliated companies, where the activity of affiliated companies is not on the list of ineligible activities

¹⁴ HBOR can consider financing the construction of and equipment for industrial facilities (halls, warehouses, production facilities, logistics centres, etc.) that will be given for use (lease) to third parties exclusively for the performance of economic activities (not including the construction of shopping centres)

¹⁵ As an exception, HBOR may consider:

- financing the purchase of business shares in a domestic company in cooperation with another bank/banks,
- financing the purchase of business shares in case of a transaction in which an exporter registered in the Republic of Croatia purchases shares of a foreign company in order to expand and internationalise business in the domain of its predominant activity, whereby the assessment of eligibility in direct lending is primarily based on the creditworthiness of the exporter.

It is not eligible to buy a business share from an ownership-related person, nor to buy a business share in a company whose headquarters are located in:

- A country or territory against which or against whose government the sanctions programmes carried out by the relevant competent authorities are directed;
- A country that is considered an offshore financial centre.

The above includes, but is not limited to:

- Countries that finance or support terrorist activities or within which terrorist organisations operate;
- Countries that are on the EU's list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes.

replacement capital intended for asset stripping shall be excluded;

- (10) Activities forbidden by applicable national legislation;
- (11) Activities and assets where long-term waste disposal may harm the environment;
- (12) All activities that are not allowed to be financed by aid under the relevant state aid regulations such as GBER, ABER, de minimis and other regulations applicable to a particular loan;
- (13) All prohibitions and restrictions in accordance with the contracts between HBOR and financial institutions and/or in accordance with the programmes and/or other documents applicable to a particular loan;¹⁶
- (14) Investments or part of investments that serve for personal purposes;
- (15) Purchase of immovable or movable property from connected clients;
- (16) Investment in immovable property not owned by the borrower¹⁷;
- (17) Liabilities to financial institutions cannot be refunded from investment loans (save in exceptional cases (e.g. in case of a placement that forms part of a larger investment, a bridge loan used for the investment in question, etc.) with prior consent from HBOR);
- (18) Financing of working capital for commercial activities¹⁸;

¹⁶ A project financed from the funds of the European Investment Bank must be aligned with the Paris Agreement, if applicable. The criteria of project alignment with the Paris Agreement are contained in **Schedule 1.2.** to these General Eligibility Criteria.

¹⁷ As an exception, investments in immovable properties that are not owned by the borrower are acceptable in the case of diffuse and integral hotels and/or in the case of land or building that is used on the basis of a concession contract or the right to build, lease or rent, provided that the concession, lease or rent period cannot be shorter than the loan repayment period.

Furthermore, HBOR may consider financing investments in immovable property not owned by the borrower in the case of a transaction in which an exporter registered in the Republic of Croatia plans to invest in a foreign company (purchase of machinery and equipment and/or adaptation/reconstruction of business premises) for the purpose of expanding and internationalising business in the domain of its predominant activity, whereby the exporter registered in the Republic of Croatia has a majority share in the foreign company.

Capital investment is not eligible in a company whose headquarters are located in:

- A country or territory against which or against whose government the sanctions programmes carried out by the relevant competent authorities are directed;
- A country that is considered an offshore financial centre.

The above includes, but is not limited to:

- Countries that finance or support terrorist activities or within which terrorist organisations operate;
- Countries that are on the EU's list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes.

¹⁸ As an exception, it is acceptable to finance working capital for commercial activities of:

- (i) Business entities engaged in purchasing of agricultural production and/or supplying agricultural producers with production materials, seeds etc.;
- (ii) Wholesale trade when it is an important part of the supply chain in the processing industry, fisheries and tourism industry;
- (iii) Business entities where a significant part of the business also relates to the production, processing, finishing of products etc. and/or to the services of processing, finishing of products etc. (at least 30% of income/revenues relate to the aforementioned activities, which can be established based on the breakdown of income/revenues of the business entity according to the activities for the previous business year);
- (iv) In the case of a loan through a commercial bank or a loan from the funds under the framework loan agreement with a commercial bank or a leasing company.

- (19) Investment in apartments, rooms or summer houses to let¹⁹;
- (20) Notary public activities;
- (21) Publishing of newspapers and other periodicals, production and broadcasting of radio and television programmes, news agency activities, advertising and public relations agency activities;
- (22) National Classification of Activities (NKD) 56.30.0 – Beverage serving activities;
- (23) Family-run residential care homes in accordance with the Social Welfare Act²⁰.

¹⁹ The restriction applies to apartments, rooms and summer houses to let pursuant to the Ordinance on Classification and Categorisation of Catering Facilities in the group Other Accommodation Facilities.

As an exception, for financing through commercial banks and financing with direct HBOR's loans in amounts exceeding EUR 400,000.00, investments in apartments, rooms for rent and holiday homes are eligible:

- (i) In supported areas – units of local government classified into groups I, II, III or IV, or hill or mountain areas;
- (ii) In the case of traditional buildings (individual buildings that are protected as cultural heritage, buildings located in settlement zones that are protected as cultural heritage or are located in contact zones of protected zones, and all other individual buildings that are built/reconstructed in accordance with the special conditions of conservator in terms of traditional construction, where the term conservator is considered to be the Conservation Department of the Ministry of Culture or another public legal body responsible for the protection of cultural heritage).

For tourist apartments in accordance with the Ordinance on Classification and Categorisation and the special standards for catering facilities in the group Hotels, there are no restrictions on lending.

²⁰ As an exception, eligible are capital investments of family-run residential care homes that have been operating for at least one year for the purpose of adaptation and reorganisation into an institution in accordance with the Social Welfare Act.