



## Life in Serbia in the Era of Pandemic

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## FOREWORD

Gonna Be the **End** of the World! Not.ROBERT  
ČOBAN

Director



It's been a month since the Serbian state declared the state of emergency. In these past four weeks, we could hear prophecies like "this is the end of the world as we know it" and "nothing will be the same ever again". Every day, we saw a new Francis Fukuyama emerging from our neck of the woods.

On other, albeit, less intellectual front, new theories are perpetuated on Viber or other social media about how did the virus come about, who made it with an intent to destroy someone, what was the death toll in

different countries and the region in the Q1 of last year relative to this year, who predicted back in 1983 or 2015 that this would happen and "the army transporting migrants on buses to use them for setting up the 5G technology" (a personal favourite).

Truth be told, an average person from Lausanne or Boston did not have to face such a situation in the last 150 year or so. Their great-grandfathers, grandfathers and fathers only remembered good things while the Great War ravaged Europe from 1914 to 1918, while Hitler's boot stomped on the world between 1938 and 1945;

while Osama bin Laden crashed two planes into the Twin Towers in 2001 and while the fall of Lehman Brothers in 2008 crushed the world economy as they lived their lives in a leisurely manner. Everyone is in the same hell today – those people who remember only good things happening in the last 150 years and those who, every 10 years and less, are trained to withstand emergencies, in 1991, 2000, 2003, 2008, 2014, 2020...

So, it's going to be tough. Many industries will suffer major blows, even more severe than in 2008. Many global, regional and national players will not survive this either. When it comes to our market and the media industry we operate in, those who have adopted the "change or die" philosophy on time will find a way to adapt and survive the pandemic, just like they survived all the dramatic events in the past 30 years: the wars in the region (1991-1999); hyperinflation (1992-1993); the UN sanctions (1992-2000); ownership transformation and the advent of foreign competition (2001-2008); changes in consumer habits caused by the launch of the first "smartphone" (2007), the economic crisis (2008)... **D&C**



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# We Try to Solve Most of the Citizens' Problems in a **Faster Way**

We have adapted, we do everything from home and we have all the necessary platforms, so most of our colleagues work from home, and the six colleagues who work in the office, including myself, have carried out all safety measures and in addition to regular procedures, are also answering emergency phone calls

## BRANKICA JANKOVIĆ

Commissioner  
for Protection of  
Equality

In a time of the state of emergency and pandemic, the protection of equality is also important, and with that in mind, we spoke with the Commissioner for Protection of Equality, Brankica Janković, about discriminatory messages and abusive speech. At her initiative, it was suggested that citizens who informally care for others should be exempted in some way from restrictions on movement, as well as several other measures should be implemented so that it senior citizens, who have no immediate family, can make personal documents and live easier during the state of emergency. Last Friday, Commissioner Janković answered phone calls at the local Red Cross office to support the people living in isolation.

"Unfortunately, there are discriminatory messages and abusive speech on social media and women are still targeted more often. This time it's the teachers, who are heroines of the day and are very dedicated to doing their jobs, teaching children online, as are female doctors and female journalists who are so committed to doing their jobs," says Brankica Janković.

### How did you organize your activities?

— We have adapted, we do everything from home and we have all the necessary platforms, so most of our colleagues work from home, and the six colleagues who work in the office, including myself, have carried out all safety measures and in addition to regular procedures, are also answering emergency phone calls. We are working on resolving most of the citizens' problems in an expeditious manner, forwarding



initiatives or recommendations with specific proposals to the Government or other relevant authorities such as, for example, issuing movement permits to informal carers of our oldest citizens or persons

to doing their jobs, teaching children online, as are female doctors and female journalists who are so committed to doing their jobs in providing information about the current situation at any given moment.

**I'M SLOWLY LEARNING TO FUNCTION REMOTELY BECAUSE IT LOOKS LIKE THE TIME WE'RE LIVING IN WILL BE FULL OF UNCERTAINTY. WE NEED TO LEARN THAT AND GET USED TO THESE NEW BUSINESS PATTERNS**

with disabilities, helping single parents with children care, renewing driver's licence for senior citizens who have immediate family members and many other problems facing the most vulnerable groups.

Unfortunately, there are discriminatory messages and abusive speech on social media and women are still targeted more often. This time it's the teachers, who are heroines of the day and are very dedicated

The novelty in this hate speech is that it is directed to the persons who fell ill with the COVID-19 virus and those people who have been in contact with them. These persons have been ousted and oftentimes stigmatized because of it. Also, our senior citizens have been the target of abusive speech as if their lives are less valuable than ours. Then there are people who have returned to our country from abroad who have


also been quite stigmatized, as if they are to blame for the pandemic.

### How you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— My work and my private time are intertwined. I'm slowly learning to function remotely because it looks like the time we're living in will be full of uncertainty. We need to learn that and get used to these new business patterns. I do housework, which was long overdue, you know, I clean in bit more detail. I have found myself in the role of a teacher too. I have to say that I have surprised and that I am doing fine in all these roles. I thought that, as a lawyer, I was the worst at Math, but here I am, I am succeeded in helping my children do Math, at least the one taught up to the fourth grade, and I am enjoying the time spent with them.

### What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?

— The first thing I will do when all this is over is to visit my parents and my sisters because

I miss them so much. Then, I will throw a party with my colleagues; a small celebration to mark the 10 years of the Commissioner's office. We are going to do a little retrospective and look back at everything we've been through during the pandemic, with the faith and hope that we will emerge from the greatest challenge in this century with a better understanding of each other worldwide. 

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# Something Good Will Surely Come as a **Lesson** From This Crisis

We are in contact with all our partners, both in Serbia and in the region, to define how we can best help remedy the effects of this crisis as quickly and efficiently as possible

## DUBRAVKA NEGRE

Head of EIB  
Regional  
Representation  
for the Western  
Balkans



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**D**espite the state of emergency and the epidemic because of which we are self-isolating, we will continue to share stories and news about developments in the political, diplomatic, economic and cultural scene in Serbia and the region. We will interview and record the statements from selected persons from the world of economics and diplomacy, as well as public figures.

To that end, we spoke with

### office?

— We have organized ourselves quite effectively. We have started working remotely really fast and have all the necessary web platforms. We are also communicating regularly with the European Investment Bank headquarters in Luxembourg, as well as with all our partners, both in Serbia and in the region, to determine how we can best help remedy the effects of this crisis as quickly and efficiently as possible.

those who are most affected, and that is precisely the SME sector.

Of course, we are very active in the health care sector too. The EIB has provided over €200 million in investments in the health care system in Serbia, including some 20 hospitals throughout Serbia, as well as the Torlak Institute, which holds special significance at the moment. There is also the Clinical Centre in Niš, which has been modernized thanks to joint efforts of the EIB and the Government of the Republic of Serbia. We are pleased to see that today the Niš Clinical Centre is a large modern hospital, which can help to provide the required recovery measures at these critical moments.

### How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— My private and business responsibilities have now merged because we are all focused on each other both professionally and family-wise. I help my children with school curricu-

lum while schools are out. I think we are now aware of how important and needed is digitization and all these IT platforms, both for the education system and in other spheres of life. The EIB is also active in this segment too. We have been planning to implement a school digitization project for quite some time, which should start very soon. I think we have realized how much we need each other, and how much we need to be connected, both family- and work-wise. Something good will surely come as a lesson from this crisis. If nothing else, it will bring us closer together and we will also learn to function remotely, which I am sure will be useful in some other situations in the future.

### What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— I will return to the work obligations I had to put off because of this whole situation. One is a major conference on ecology and sustainable development. I think it is important that we continue talking about the topics that are vital to the development, both in this region and of course, throughout Europe. The European Investment Bank is the first financial institution in the world to adopt a radical policy regarding stopping the funding all fossil fuel projects from 2021 and to align all its activities with the Paris Climate Agreement. I think those topics will come into focus again, but from a new perspective and that is sustainable development and helping to eliminate the consequences of this crisis that we have to look at from an integrated point of view, which is something that we will surely focus on. I am referring to the assistance and revitalization of the economy in Serbia and this region.

**THE EIB HAS PROVIDED OVER € 200 MILLION IN INVESTMENTS IN THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN SERBIA, INCLUDING SOME 20 HOSPITALS THROUGHOUT SERBIA**

Dubravka Negre, Head of EIB Regional Representation for the Western Balkans, about EIB's activities during the pandemic, the state of emergency, her private activities and things she will do first after the state of emergency is cancelled.

### How did you organize business activities in Belgrade

The EIB is known for helping small and medium-sized enterprises for more than a decade in Serbia. So far, we have invested over €1.8 billion in the real economy sector which led to the creation of more than 320,000 new jobs in Serbia. Our aim is to continue to do so and to help overcome the crisis, especially in the case of



CLICK TO SEE  
THIS ON WEB**H.E. SIAN  
MACLEOD**British Ambassador  
to Serbia  
(for Danas daily)

# The Most Important Thing is That We All Understand the Gravity of the Situation

The global pandemic is a huge challenge for everyone, including our diplomatic network

**M**ost of our work is now focused on the situation here in Serbia, which we are following closely, as well as your government's response to it.

Supporting British citizens residing in Serbia and the region is our priority now. Of course, I have an obligation towards the health and well-being of my staff and their families.

We are completely following the recommendations of the UK health authorities and local institutions, with which we are in constant contact. In light of the new situation, we have recommended that most

of our employees work from home and are considering other formats of "smarter work".

"The team at my embassy, and I am referring to both British diplomats and our Serbian counterparts, is doing a great

Asked what message she had for the Serbian citizens during this pandemic, Ambassador McLeod replied: "In times of crisis, we all need more solidarity and responsibility."

"The most important thing

embassy, we are considering if there is any other way we can get involved and help with the response to the epidemic in Serbia and our local community. This is a really difficult time; some families are separated

**WE ARE CONSIDERING IF THERE IS ANY OTHER WAY WE CAN GET INVOLVED AND HELP WITH THE RESPONSE TO THE EPIDEMIC IN SERBIA AND OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY**

job," Sian MacLeod, the UK ambassador to Serbia, says for the Danas daily when asked what measures had been implemented to protect the employees at the Embassy from the coronavirus outbreak.

is that we all understand the gravity of the situation and follow the recommendations of experts, health and state authorities. This pandemic is a global challenge that we must tackle together. As an

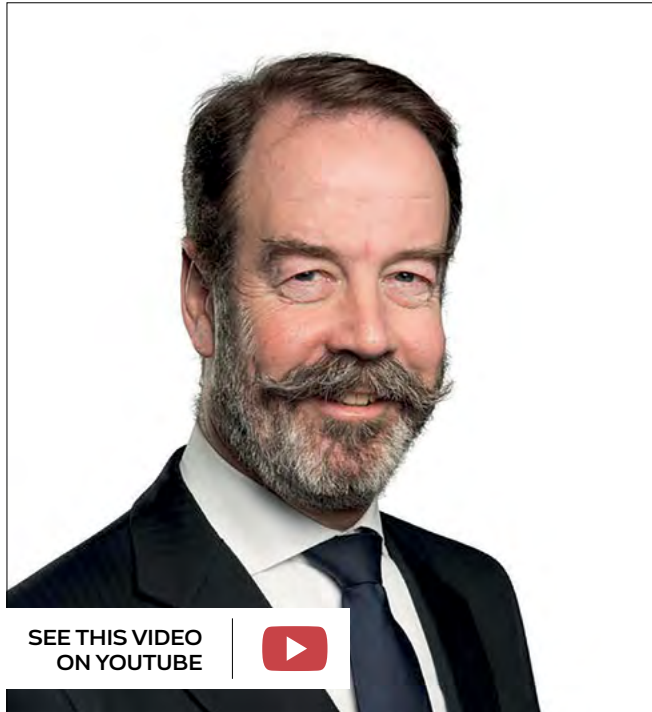
because of this situation. I also know that many people in Serbia are worried about their relatives in the United Kingdom and vice versa. My thoughts are with all of them," the British ambassador says. **D&C**

# There are **Many Things** to be Done in Battling the Coronavirus

We will all be able to work from home, with all members of the staff joining the staff meetings from home

**H. E.  
BESCHOOR  
PLUG**

Ambassador of the  
Netherlands



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**W**e interviewed selected persons from the economic and diplomatic community, as well as public life, and found out how embassies, institutions, companies and public figures have organized diplomatic and business activities and themselves during the state of emergency, how they contribute to the fight against the COVID-19 virus, as

there are two aspects. One is our traditional work of representing the Netherlands in Serbia, and to be honest, that almost came to a standstill because of the measures taken - physical distancing, the curfew - and, obviously as diplomats, many of our activities take place in the evening. To be honest, people think of other things nowadays in the

from Serbia the Balkans. In that respect we have a lot of work to do, but the situation changed very much. The second aspect I would like to mention is the internal organization at the Embassy. There we had a major change because the Embassy is closed and we are all working from home. Here we have to be thankful to our Ministry in The Hague who provided us all with infrastructure, tablets with which we can work at home. The whole staff has a tablet and can continue working at home. It doesn't depend on infrastructure only - one has to have a possibility to work from home, one has to have a separate room, preferably no kids around, so it is a bit difficult for some. I certainly understand this, but in principle we would be able to work from home. Twice a week we have a staff with all members of the staff joining the meeting by video conference. On Mondays that is on business, on Tuesdays we do that on a more social basis in which we check on one another, whether we are still ok. So in that aspect internal organization changed enormously.

are lots of things which I always planned to do, and finally I have got the time to do them. I have to be honest, it is not only fun at home, it is not only free time, we have to continue working from home, so we have to be disciplined. I find that a very important aspect of working at home - you have to have the discipline to rise early, to start working, and to have some free time in-between, obviously. Still, The Hague expects us to report on certain things, and we are busy doing that.

## **What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— I would have to think about that because we are not sure how long all this will take. Probably when we are allowed to go out again it will be nice weather in summer. Who knows, it might be freezing next winter, but we won't hope for that, obviously. I think I would like to celebrate my new won freedom by taking out my motorcycle, riding into the country, meeting people, seeing what Serbia looks like, a lovely country. We would like to see our friends and colleagues, and throw a party maybe. I think my family would like to visit us to see how we are doing, we would like to see how they are. There are lots of things to do and I think it is important to realize that every cloud has a silver lining. This is a crisis, a terrible crisis, but I think there are good opportunities after the crisis as well. I think it will be nice to already think about how to rebuild society, how to make it better, cleaner, more inclusive, greener... Anyway, there are lots of opportunities as well, so I will surely spend my time during the coming weeks in thinking how to do things better in the future after this crisis is over. **D&C**

## **I THINK I WOULD LIKE TO CELEBRATE MY NEW WON FREEDOM BY TAKING OUT MY MOTORCYCLE, RIDING INTO THE COUNTRY, MEETING PEOPLE, SEEING WHAT SERBIA LOOKS LIKE, A LOVELY COUNTRY**

well as, how they spend their free time and what they will do first when the state of emergency is over. Today, we interviewed the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, H. E. Gilles Beschoor Plug.

### **How did you organize your diplomatic activities?**

— Thank you for this question, which a very interesting and relevant question. I would say

crisis. Still, there is work to be done, as an example I would say the accession talks with North Macedonia and Albania, which have been approved now. That was hard work for us as well and that went almost unnoticed in the press here. This was funny to see, but I understand it very well. Obviously there are things to be done regarding combating the corona crisis and repatriating Dutch people

### **How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?**

— We are still discovering what to do and how to do it, but in general I would say that we are finishing our storage. That doesn't only mean eating all the food we had for a long time, but also reading the books that I didn't yet read, or watching movies on DVD's which I didn't yet see, or making music. There

**NEXT ►**



# I Believe We Will Overcome This Hardship Together Soon

When this is all over, I can't wait to further discover this beautiful country of yours!

**H. E. RAÚL  
BARTOLOMÉ  
MOLINA**

Ambassador of the  
Kingdom of Spain

**W**e spoke with H.E. Raúl Bartolomé, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain, about how the embassy has organized diplomatic during the state of emergency, how they contribute to the fight against the COVID-19 virus, as well as, what he will do first when the state of emergency is abolished.

## How did you organize your diplomatic activities?

— In the organization of our diplomatic and consular activities in times of COVID-19, we have prioritized both our devotion to public service and the health of our employees and citizens coming to the Embassy. All of that, of course, with responsibility and due respect to the recommendations and measures adopted by the competent authorities of the Republic of Serbia.

In these difficult times, when citizens need us the most, it is fundamental to purvey 24/7 attention to them and offer them quick and useful answers to their doubts and problems. In this sense, we are permanently in contact with our stranded citizens in Serbia and with Erasmus students, and we constantly update our website and our social media, informing about new measures or recommendations.

The Spanish Foreign Service has proved once again its efficiency and commitment in dire straits such as this one. So far, it has facilitated the return to Spain of 20.000 Spaniards from all over the world (and counting) and it has created a platform called “Aloja” which enables Spanish residents in third countries to offer accommodation to Spanish tourists in need. Citizens are our reason for being and therefore it is



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essential they know they can count on us no matter what!

## How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— I must confess, I do not have much free time left at the end of the day, since we are all working really hard these days in the Embassy. But, whenever

have to put first things first in this crisis and take this emergency situation really seriously, since one man's mistakes can cost others' lives. So, above all, I stay at home! It is a matter of responsibility and solidarity.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

its food and its traditions.

I believe we will overcome this hardship together soon. Serbia has undertaken serious measures to prevent and minimize the spread of the virus, so -with the help of citizens- I hope we manage to hold this epidemic at bay and we can enjoy again the vibrant and dynamic life of Belgrade too.

**IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES, WHEN CITIZENS NEED US THE MOST, IT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO PURVEY 24/7 ATTENTION TO THEM AND OFFER THEM QUICK AND USEFUL ANSWERS TO THEIR DOUBTS AND PROBLEMS**

I have some spare time, I love spending it with my family or reading books and watching movie films, two of my favorite hobbies, which luckily I can enjoy at home.

Social distancing and isolation are hard for people like us, Serbians and Spaniards, but we

— I would say, further discover this beautiful country of yours! I find spring is the most beautiful season of the year, when nature flourishes, weather gets warmer and days are longer. Therefore, it is the perfect time to travel around Serbia and enjoy its landscapes, its people,

Of course, at some point too I would like to travel to Spain and visit my beloved ones and friends who are also struggling with this terrible pandemic which has touched (and will continue to do so) the entire world, sadly with no exception. **D&C**

# We are All Affected, but I Would Say That SMEs are **More Vulnerable** to This Situation

All sectors are more or less hit, but in the end they will be all supported since they are the backbone of the economy

**RONALD SEELIGER**

AHK President,  
CEO of Hemofarm



AHK



HEMOFARM

Every day you are able to read the stories about organising of diplomatic and business activities by the embassies, institutions, companies, culture and public figures. We spoke with dr Ronald Seeliger, President of German-Serbian Chamber of Commerce (AHK Serbia) and CEO of Hemofarm about how they organise their business activities, in both, AHK Serbian and Hemofarm: „We know that we are responsible and we have obligations to the health system, not only in Serbia but all over the world, and we do our best. We are all affected by the current situation, but I would say that SMEs are more vulnerable to this situation“, he said.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— I am a German and I happened to be in Germany when all these measures were announced. So I am stuck here, but I spend daily some 12 hours of the phone and video-calls. This is how we are managing



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## You signed together with other business association a document and sent it to Serbian Finance Minister, Siniša Mali. What do you expect from Serbian Government, which measures should be implemented?

— We are all affected by the

for deferring taxes and social benefits for SMEs, we asked for easier bank loans and further, we asked for the support in form of subsidies and liquidity, even some support for keeping the employees. Because it is something that has to be dealt with on a daily basis. There are some sectors that are more hit, while there are some that are hit less: tourism, hospitality, culture, transport are very much affected, others are medium affected or less affected, but in the end they will be all supported since they are the backbone of the economy. And there is a time after corona when we will all have to go back to business. We want everybody to be able to come back to work.

## How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— Private time during the pandemics is somewhat limited, since I am on the phone all days, including weekends

and this very moment. Even when I am not on the phone everybody's talking about the bloody virus. It is somehow and sometimes going through my nose. But in order to take some balance, we in Germany are still allowed to take a walk outside, or have a stroll, but frankly, I am doing everything to calm down. We have meditations and we are reading books. These things distract you from the current situation and refresh your mind. Once, when the normal times come back, I guess it will be a nice thing. I tried to find some online courses, but I had to put them down on my list, since frankly, I don't have time for this in this very moment.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— I am very much looking forward for this crisis to end and to come back to Serbia, because for me it is a kind of a disaster. Sitting here and not being able to interact with my people directly. Some of us are still in our companies, since they need production, transport, logistics, they are working also on the site, and I would love to see them again. My job is about meeting people. I like meeting people, so I can't wait to go back. I also respect them and cherish them and I would like to show and express my gratitude for all thing they did at this very moment, since it is really really amazing.

We know that we are responsible and we have obligations to the health system, not only in Serbia but all over the world, and we do our best. So thanks to them and I am very much looking forward as soon as possible to go back and enjoy. **D&C**

**I SPEND DAILY SOME 12 HOURS OF THE PHONE AND VIDEO-CALLS. THIS IS HOW WE ARE MANAGING THINGS. THE SAME APPLIES FOR THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE SAME APPLIES TO BUSINESS COMPANIES**

things. The same applies for the Chamber of Commerce and the same applies to business companies. As much as I understand it is the only way to organise things. Somehow it is a very good thing, since we are talking now more than ever before, we stay inside, but let's not get used to it, since at least in Germany, it is very sunny and very warm and I would very much want to change this.

current situation, but I would say that SMEs are more vulnerable to this situation since they have less means, less liquidity than the bigger ones have. So, together with 11 chambers of commerce we have sent the letter to the Ministry of Finance in a form of an open letter, a petition, and pledged the Government to support the SMEs, but also other companies. What did we ask for? We asked



# Time for Reflection on the Power of Nature and Our Own Vulnerability

BSBA staff is working from home and all meetings and planned activities postponed, but stay in contact with our members and colleagues

**HUGO VAN VEGHEL**

President of the Belgian-Serbian Business Association (BSBA)



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Every day you are able to read the stories about organising of diplomatic and business activities by the embassies, institutions, companies, culture and public figures. We spoke with Mr. Hugo van Veghel, President of the Belgian-Serbian Business Association (BSBA) about how BSBA organized the activities during the state of emergency, how they

home and all meetings and planned activities postponed, but stay in contact with our members and colleagues. Together with our Swiss, Hellenic and Croatian colleagues we are trying to set up an @member2member action where companies make special offers for support. We hope that others will join us in this action very soon. The circumstances are testing the resilience of all types

we need you now and later. The measure will have no negative impact on their salaries.

**You signed together with other business association a document and sent it to Serbian Finance Minister, Siniša Mali. What do you expect from Serbian Government, which measures should be implemented?**

— In Serbia there are 97.5% of micro and small companies, medium-sized companies up to 2%, big ones about 0.5%. The Belgian Serbian Business Association is focusing its service on SMEs, mostly suppliers and service providers to the 0.5%.

There are many family businesses where father, mother, children, sometimes neighbours, friends are involved in the business. These micro and small family businesses work from morning till evening, sometimes with people doing multiple jobs at the same time, often on weekends and holidays. They are for us the most vulnerable and a real concern.

I am sure that also the government knows that the private sector is financing the public sector, and that further measures need to be developed and implemented to secure the functioning of the state and save to the maximum its economic structure. The measures related to taxes and social contributions are in their hands, but other support measures could or should include the financial sector. The EU institutions for sure will be involved. If there is no "voluntary" valid move from the private banking sector, then the government could impose measures to activate/support their "corporate social responsibility".

**How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?**

— Now that private and professional responsibilities are

even more merged than before we are spending time with the family, more than ever. Time for reflection on the power of nature and our own vulnerability. Discussing the developments in an open communication with all family members without any panic scenario, making sure that reason prevails. It is the sunny side of the situation. Never people have spent so much time with family than they do now. For those that are physically not reachable for whatever reason we have our phones and social media platforms... All medals have two sides; the good one these days is that one can see that solidarity still exists and is growing. People never called so often family members, friends or colleagues to ask if they are OK, if anything is needed... and together we talk about the "what after?"

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— Business has to go on and professional duties will shift again from home to the office.

Being prepared for a pandemic is hard and never one will be 100% prepared, but what we can do now is to prepare for the day the state of emergency is cancelled. I hope it will be cancelled in steps to give people time to adapt again. You will see that many things will have changed, not only on the economic level, but also on the societal and individual level. We have to be prepared NOT to be euphoric, still to be cautious, minimizing organisation of and participation in large gatherings till the end of the year. The risk is not "ZERO" from one day to another. For many it will be like rebooting their life, their business. Do it carefully. It will be easier and we will get there faster when you stay safe and stay home NOW. **D&C**

**THE RISK IS NOT "ZERO" FROM ONE DAY TO ANOTHER. FOR MANY IT WILL BE LIKE REBOOTING THEIR LIFE, THEIR BUSINESS. DO IT CAREFULLY**

contribute to the fight against COVID-19 virus, as well as how he is spending his free time, and what he will do first when the state of emergency is over.

"We are lucky to be in the position to do this as most of our work and businesses relations can be dealt with on-line. Planned physical meetings were rapidly shifted to Skype, Viber, Zoom, Face time and other video conferencing platforms" said Mr. Veghel.

**How did you organize your business activities?**

— BSBA staff is working from

of organisations; it might become a useful learning exercise.

Privately, as a consulting company, we were able, from the very start to maximise the "work from home" principle. We are lucky to be in the position to do this as most of our work and businesses relations can be dealt with on-line. Planned physical meetings were rapidly shifted to Skype, Viber, Zoom, Face time and other video conferencing platforms. Staffs have received clear recommendations in line with those given by the relevant experts. #staysafe #stayhome,

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**PATRIZIO  
DEI TOS**President of  
Confindustria  
SerbiaCLICK TO SEE  
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# Based on the Experience of Our Colleagues in Italy, We Could Have Made the **Best Decisions**

All the plans and activities of the board members and the association's operating team are focused on providing daily support to the member companies

**W**e spoke with the President of Confindustria Serbia, Patrizio Dei Tos about the situation in both, Italy and Serbia, how to protect employees and business, and quick response to the member's requests.

"We are aware that we need to be as effective as possible in addressing the many problems faced by member companies

Customs Administration, over 11,500 thousand Serbian companies operate with Italy. The members of Confindustria Serbia employ more than 30,000 employees", said Patrizio.

## **How did you organize your business activities?**

— Following the decision of the Italian Government to suspend a large number of economic

activities in Italy and close the company on 12 March.

I think we made the right decision! The health of the people working with me is an essential aspect, and it assures us that it will be more substantial later, once the danger of this pandemic COVID 19 is over.

I became president of the association earlier this year. Still, all the plans and activities of the board members and the association's operating team are focused on providing daily support to the member companies. Working days are very complex. Companies need timely information daily, and there are numerous initiatives with colleagues from Confindustria system Italy, Brussels, with Serbian institutions.

We are aware that we need to be as effective as possible in addressing the many problems faced by member companies in all sectors of the economy, from manufacturing, services,

IT, through financial, transportation and pharmaceutical sectors.

Italy and Serbia are reliable economic partners, and thus the problems that arise are very complex. According to the latest available data from the Serbian Customs Administration, over 11,500 thousand Serbian companies operate with Italy. The members of Confindustria Serbia employ more than 30,000 employees.

Italy is the first western country to be affected by the virus. Based on the experience of our colleagues in Italy, we could have made the best decisions at the right moment. For example, Confindustria in Italy implemented the model of Smart Working, so when the situation in Serbia dramatically changed due to this lethal virus, beyond the worst imagination, we introduced the same model, with only a part of the team in the office.

## **CONFINDUSTRIA MEMBERS IN SERBIA HAVE TAKEN ALL NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT THEIR EMPLOYEES, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME MAINTAINING A FUNCTIONAL BUSINESS AND PRODUCTION PROCESS**

in all sectors of the economy, from manufacturing, services, IT, through financial, transportation and pharmaceutical sectors. Italy and Serbia are reliable economic partners, and thus the problems that arise are very complex. According to the latest available data from the Serbian

activities, to preserve people's lives and health, and due to the difficult humanitarian situation in Italy caused by the dramatic consequences of the expansion of COVID 19, my company made a tough (difficult) decision. We decided to suspend our production



With this regard, Confindustria members in Serbia have taken all necessary precautions to protect their employees, while at the same time maintaining a functional business and production process.

Also, we are facing continuous emergencies to solve economic, logistical, but also personal problems. The journeys of both the Italians and the Serbs, managers and technicians who work for our companies are arduous and, if they return to Italy, they must remain in quarantine for 14 days and therefore cannot return to Serbia. If they return, they must stay in quarantine in Serbia for 28 days (for those who do not have a regulated residence, entry into the country is forbidden).

We have 170 members, and we have to answer their problems!

**Together with other business associations, you have sent a letter to the Finance Minister. What are your expectations? What measures could the Government of Serbia implement to create economic conditions for doing business?**

— Yes, this is just one of the initiatives aimed at joint action of a large number of foreign

Group of experts and members of the Confindustria Serbia executive board created an important document in which we proposed some fiscal measures to the Serbian government, the means to mitigate the negative impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the private sector.

Our message is LET'S FACE THE ECONOMIC EMERGENCY FOR THE PROTECTION OF WORK! The proposals for an immediate reaction!

The instruments, complementary to national fiscal policies, should be aimed at counteracting the negative effects of

This method of intervention would have the advantage and essential importance once the emergency is over, to support the recovery of the growth path.

We need extraordinary measures for the liquidity and financial relief for companies, to support companies affected by the emergency; we need the intervention of the Guarantee Fund for SMEs. It is necessary to introduce additional extraordinary measures both to finance its working capital during the fall in turnover and to improve the financial situation by extending the existing loans.

We know that the health of the citizens is a conditional element, but we also need economic support to keep and maintain our business.

**How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?**

— Of course, I have to stay at home. However, I do not have much free time since I have daily conference calls with Confindustria associations operating under the auspices of Confindustria East Europe, as well as regular communication with our Association board members



## OUR MESSAGE IS: LET'S FACE THE ECONOMIC EMERGENCY FOR THE PROTECTION OF WORK! THE PROPOSALS FOR AN IMMEDIATE REACTION!

investors in Serbia, intending to support the Serbian government in the adoption of necessary and appropriate anti-crisis measures.

It is essential to us that we are part of a working group coordinated by the Serbian Chamber of Commerce. Representatives from the FIC, the AmCham and The Serbian Association of Employers are also included. We exchange information daily, take initiatives and solve problems.

First, there were significant problems with the transportation of goods and movement of people, the treatment of truck drivers, customs procedures, permits and everything related to the implementation of the Serbian, CEFTA and EU government's emergency measures.

COVID-19, stabilizing the country's economy by safeguarding employment, supporting the earnings of employee's families, ensuring liquidity for businesses. An action that must be aimed at providing all companies - small, medium and large - with "bridge" liquidity to overcome the period of freezing of activities and demand and which must be carried out very quickly, with guarantee and facilitated financing instruments extraordinary. In order to support the business activity, the Government should consider temporary tax relief and deferral of tax collection. In addition, we focused on measures related important labor-related measures, tax and accounting measures, transport, border controls.

Businesses have to overcome the critical phase, obtaining new liquidity and diluting the impact of debt over time.

The latest information is that the Government of Serbia has announced the activation of negative impact depreciation measures, allocating a 5.1 billion euro of a state aid package for the economy of the country. These are anti-crisis measures, but the timing of their activation remains a question. They are necessary for us to keep our employees and the volume of economic activity in the situation when the whole world is shutting down production activities, and Europe is hardly receiving our goods.

The Government of Serbia assisted our companies at the beginning of investment cycles life in this country. We believe that with these measures, through a "challenge-response" will now support, and guarantee business continuity.


and Confindustria Serbia office. There are also local authorities, the Italian Embassy in Serbia, or colleagues from my company who manage the company's activities.

The importance of keeping in touch with my co-workers is of paramount importance, too, because people suffer from this long period of stay at home and may face a real personal crisis.

It is important to stay together, use the benefits of all social instruments and remain healthy to overcome these difficulties.

I am happy to spend the time with family!

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— I am sure we have to keep ready physically and psychologically, to come back to our healthy and ordinary life again and I am looking forward to my social habits and to my day-to-day problems! 

# We Continued Communicating With Our Members and Each Other

I am very glad to see that all chambers of commerce and business associations responded so quickly because all of us are at the service of our members

**MARIJA  
RADULOVIĆ**

President of the  
Croatian Business  
Club



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In order to find how Croatian business club has organized their activities, we spoke with Marija Radulović, President of the Croatian Business Club. “The bottom line is that small and medium-sized businesses, of which many of them are our members and are engaged in the service sector, providing marketing services, catering, distribution and retail, are not big enough to survive this state of emergency and the new sudden situation that ensued, nor do they have such accumulation of financial means that they can withstand such situation that we don’t know even how long it will last” she said.

#### How did you organize your business activities?

— Following the Serbian government’s decree about the declaration of the state of emergency and organizing work from home for employees, we started adhering to this decree immediately and implemented it the very next day. We all started working from home

and continued communicating with our members and each other.

Together with other business associations, you have sent a letter to the Minister of Finance. What do you expect to happen after that letter? What measures could the Government of Serbia implement to ensure economically viable conditions for doing business?

**I AM VERY GLAD TO SEE THAT ALL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS RESPONDED SO QUICKLY BECAUSE ALL OF US ARE AT THE SERVICE OF OUR MEMBERS**

I am very glad to see that all chambers of commerce and business associations responded so quickly because all of us are at the service of our members, especially the small and medium-sized enterprises that need the most help at this moment, which is why the chambers have anticipated the moment and sent a written initiative to the Minister of Finance, Mr Siniša Mali.

The bottom line is that small

and medium-sized businesses, of which many of them are our members and are engaged in the service sector, providing marketing services, catering, distribution and retail, are not big enough to survive this state of emergency and the new sudden situation that ensued, nor do they have such accumulation of financial means that they can withstand such situation that

from home and spend more time with their nearest and dearest. I am very happy that my daughter managed to arrive at the very last moment and that all my family members are now together. We enjoy spending time together.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

we don’t know even how long it will last. Hence, they have to be entitled to tax breaks (first of all, deferral of payment of VAT and various other taxes) to the degree that they don’t have to lay off their workers.

#### How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— Probably like most of the working people who have had that luck that they can work

— Well, just like most of the people in the country, I cannot wait for life to go back to normal in every segment. Privately, I would like to go on holiday to the seaside if that is possible. In terms of business, I would like to gather all our members just to see where they are at and what can we do to help them. I also hope that we can properly celebrate the 4th birthday of Diplomacy&Commerce magazine. **D&C**



# We are **Exchanging** Experiences Regarding the Corona Crisis

We are trying to stay in contact with each other, to see if we can help each other during these difficult times, and we are in contact with other business associations to see how they are doing their job

## DJORDJE PETROVIĆ

Executive Director  
of the Dutch-  
Serbian Business  
Association



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**S**ome 10 days ago, together with 11 other business associations and chambers of commerce, we signed the petition and sent it to the Finance Minister and the Government of Serbia, in order to address all the difficulties the SMEs are experiencing during the corona crisis, said Đorđe Petrović, Executive Director of Dutch Serbian Business Association, for our online special edition.

### How did you organize your business activities?

— During this coronavirus crisis, we have not changed the way we do things in comparison with how we did thing before, because we are the youngest association at this moment in Serbia. So, we don't

have officially employed people, we are all volunteers from different companies and we do all of our work in the Board, as well as me as a director, pro bono. Therefore, until now we have been doing all our work

## WE ARE TRYING TO STAY IN CONTACT WITH EACH OTHER, TO SEE IF WE CAN HELP EACH OTHER DURING THESE DIFFICULT TIMES

through emails and different e-platforms. At this moment, we are still in contact with all our members, with each other in the DSBA Board. We are trying to stay in contact with each other, to see if we can help each other during these difficult times, and we are in

contact with other business associations to see how they are doing their job. We exchange experience regarding the corona crisis. As for my company, we are also trying to adjust to the situation we are having at this moment and we do things online, we are trying to stay in contact with our clients. We are trying to provide some online help and trainings. As for work, does not matter if it is DSBA of my company, we are trying to do the job through different platforms, like Zoom, for example.

### You signed together with other business association a document and sent it to Serbian Finance Minister, Sinisa Mali. What do you expect from Serbian Government, which measures to implement?

— Some 10 days ago, together with 11 other business associations and chambers of commerce, we signed the petition and sent it to the Finance Minister and the Government of Serbia, in order to address all the difficulties the SMEs are experiencing during the corona crisis. We suggested some measures that could be taken into account one day the government decides what kind

of measures they will have. So, some of the measures we proposed include deferrals of tax and charges for SMEs, easy access to bank credits, some sort of subsidies etc. So, I think that when we hear the Government measures, I think it will be on Tuesday (I am re-

### How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— I am still trying to keep my focus. In my private time, I am trying to improve myself, to read, to learn more, to come to more information about the things I am interested in, and I am also trying to stay physically fit – I have a big house and a big yard, so I can walk whenever I want, and it helps a lot. Generally speaking, I think most of us are generally working more in these times, compared with pre-corona crisis. There are now lots of things that have to be managed in the beginning. There is time I am spending with my family, and my kids, which I like. We are trying to do all things together during these times.

### What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— My work, most of all, is connected with a lot of travelling. Now, for maybe three weeks, I haven't travelled for more than 1 km, so when this corona crisis is over, I will sit in my car and drive to lots of my clients, that are friends now, to the DBSA Board members, the DSBA members. The personal contact is important. This situation showed us that a great deal of things can be done online, but we are all humans, we all need personal touch. We are all looking forward when this is all over, to sit in my car and hit the road and see some really wonderful people that I haven't had an opportunity to see for a month, almost. **D&C**

NEXT ►

# Our Goal Now is to Protect the **Proper** Functioning of Companies as Best We Can

At the time of the state of emergency in Serbia, the HBA has organized its operations in a manner that is safe and convenient for both the members of the Managing Board and the member companies

## STYLIANOS ZAKOF

Chairman of the  
Managing Board,  
Hellenic Business  
Association



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**A**s part of our special online edition, we talked to Stylianos Zakof, the Chairman of the Managing Board of the Hellenic Business Association (HBA), who says the following: "We are all working from home and will continue to do so as long as we can organize our operations in that way. We are continuing to inform our members of the pandemic situation. Together with other business

### How did you organize your business activities?

— As you already know, the Hellenic Business Association (HBA) in Serbia is a socially responsible organization that supports any initiative and activity that can contribute to boosting the traditionally friendly relations between Greece and Serbia, as well as safe operations of Greek businesses in the country. In this regard, the organization strives to apply

Even at this time, during the state of emergency in Serbia, the HBA has organized its operations in a manner that is safe and convenient for both the members of the Managing Board and the member companies. In this context, we have delayed holding any kind of events that involve a gathering of a lot of people. All of us work from home (as long as the nature of the business allows it), meetings are held online and our goal is now focused on safeguarding the proper functioning of the member companies to the best of our abilities while keeping them informed about the situation of the COVID-19 virus pandemic.

### Together with other business associations, you have sent a letter to the Minister of Finance. What do you expect to happen after that letter? What measures could the Government of Serbia implement to ensure economically viable conditions for doing business?

— In cooperation with other bilateral business organizations, we have decided to send a letter to the Serbian Minister of Finance, at a time that is crucial for many of our members. In the letter, we have requested the implementation of additional measures by the Serbian government, such as deferral of payment of taxes and fees for small and medium-sized enterprises, easier access to bank loans and approving subsidies / grants.

As the pandemic of the new virus threatens to disrupt the work of a large number of companies, we firmly believe that the Serbian government will

provide appropriate assistance to enable companies to survive in the crisis. After all, we are confident that the solidarity of the country's leadership will be reciprocated by various investments in the future, both foreign and Greek, because our nation knows how to value good treatment.

### How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— Although, undoubtedly, the pandemic has had a huge negative impact on the financial and business sectors, it is also a great warning for humanity. All people need to understand the message that has been sent to us, which is to slow down a little, to be grateful for what we have and for the people around us, to protect our fellow citizens and to devote more time to our families.

If we can single out something positive from this difficult period, it would certainly be that we have renewed our relationships with children and spouses. Before the pandemic, we did not have time to indulge in reading good books, playing board games and watching films, but now, we can do that with our nearest and dearest again.

### What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— The first thing we will do after the state of emergency is abolished is to review all the resources and capabilities that we, as an association, can use to further contribute to the reintegration of our member companies back into the usual work routine and, of course, go out with my friends. 

**WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THE SOLIDARITY OF THE COUNTRY'S LEADERSHIP WILL BE RECIPROCATED BY VARIOUS INVESTMENTS IN THE FUTURE, BOTH FOREIGN AND GREEK, BECAUSE OUR NATION KNOWS HOW TO VALUE GOOD TREATMENT**

associations, we have sent a letter to the Minister of Finance, thus requesting the Serbian government implementing certain measures, as we strongly believe that the state will provide assistance to businesses."

ethical principles in its business activities that have a direct and positive impact on the working conditions of its member companies, their employees and the environment, thereby creating a credible and responsible business community.

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# We are Very Active in Supporting Our Members in Facing the Emergency

In Serbia we are not alone: Italian Embassy leads the “sistema Italia” with all Italian public institutions present in Serbia

**GIORGIO MARCHEGIANI**

Italian-Serbian  
Chamber of  
Commerce  
President and  
“DDOR Novi Sad”  
CEO



WEBSITE



WEBSITE

**C** CIS President, and DDOR CEO, Giorgio Marchegiani spoke with us about his fear for his family and friends in Milan, business activities in both, Italian-Serbian Chamber of Commerce and DDOR Novi Sad. “In the first days, I was very absorbed by concerns and worries, for what has been happening in my town in Italy, Milan, to my family, which is scattered in many places, to my friends. It was really bad and everyday worse and worse,” said Giorgio.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— The Italian Chamber is a lean organization, based on networking and information exchange, hence, when the Serbian Government declared the emergency, it was easy to switch to remote working. Some of the activities planned cannot take place, but we have turned some of them in “remote” form, so we will launch a new program in few days. We use the time at best, to replant for the months after May,

were very active in supporting some of our members in facing the emergency. In particular, in managing the workers and in the movement of goods between Serbia and EU, these are being very complex weeks for companies.

Actually, if I can see a positive side of this catastrophe, is that all of us understand the opportunities already available to work productively “without physical presence”. Chambers were born as “physical” meeting places, both globalization and safety turn them into “virtual spaces”. Even though, this situation is teaching us how nice is to work together “in person”.

## You signed together with other business association an document and sent it to Serbian Finance Minister, Sinisa Mali. What do you expect from Serbian Government, which measures to implement?

— In this situation, small and medium enterprises can quickly disappear if not supported by a huge financial effort. My



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in Serbia), because any other player in the system, including banks, will go underwater if they try to bear the burden of saving the small companies and families. The good thing is that in this case, all economies are being affected and there is not “the clever and the bad”. Therefore, the intervention can be defined in a cooperative way among States.

In normal times, the market forces can “adjust” imbalances, but this is not a normal time and not an imbalance, is a global “break down”!

## How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— I am alone here in Serbia. In the first days, I was very absorbed by concerns and worries, for what has been happening in my town in Italy, Milan, to my family, which is scattered in many places, to my friends. It was really bad and everyday worse and worse. After that, I reacted strongly and a new

perspective started prevailing in my mind: to get back in possession of my time. My life so far was planned by the minute, with a lot of travel both within Serbia and outside and with many meetings, events, interactions, some sport etc. During these days instead, is all so “peaceful” and easy to plan home – sometimes I walk 500 m to DDOR office – empty – to sign papers and that is it. This cold shower of the virus put us in a more realistic dimension about life, values, and priorities. Back to basics.

I also spend time in thinking and shaping what will be “after”. I read what happens in China, I can see the changes and the challenges, and as always, both are stimulating.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— I will reach my family, and try to see my parents. In addition, I hope I will find all of them healthy. **D&C**

**IF I CAN SEE A POSITIVE SIDE OF THIS CATASTROPHE, IS THAT ALL OF US UNDERSTAND THE OPPORTUNITIES ALREADY AVAILABLE TO WORK PRODUCTIVELY “WITHOUT PHYSICAL PRESENCE”**

hoping that we will be out of emergency, even though with a new perspective. The Italian Chamber is also part of a system of around 80 Chambers that Italy has around the world: we share practices and solutions, particularly in Europe. Also in Serbia we are not alone: Italian Embassy leads the “sistema Italia” with all Italian public institutions present in Serbia.

During the past weeks, we

view is (1) urgent immediate intervention is needed – already during beginning of April (2) intervention should cover all form of financial support (credit, taxes, welfare contributions, labour incentives, investment funds). To face the drop of revenues caused by the virus is the first priority, avoiding the single entities to stop (3) The intervention must come from the States (not only

# We Have Organized Ourselves to Maintain the Connectivity of Our Members and the Flow of Information

During the first two weeks, our members have been very active in sharing information about how they adjusted their businesses during the state of emergency and have been helping other companies that didn't adapt on time. We can clearly see great solidarity between our members

**DANIJELA FIŠAKOV**

President of  
Slovenian Business  
Club (SPC)



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Immediately after the outbreak of the new crisis, the Slovenian Business Club, together with other economic and business associations, chambers, associations and clubs, addressed the Ministry of Finance on behalf of all businesspeople in the Republic of Serbia with a joint request to facilitate the operations of companies during the state of emergency by reducing certain levies and postponing the payment of others. We expected concrete support from the Government and they have agreed to most of our suggestions," says Ms Fišakov.

physical presence. That activity will have to wait for better times. Even before this crisis, the SPC had already adjusted a lot of its activities to the Industry 4.0 standards. We used to work from home before if the need arose, we were available on our phones for at least 8 hours every day and we used social media and e-mail a lot. Now, just like in the regular times, we monitor all relevant content and information daily and inform the membership promptly.

We will also organize webinars and web conferences covering current topics in order

state of emergency and have been helping other companies that didn't adapt on time. We can clearly see great solidarity between our members.


The Government of Serbia has announced its package of economic measures to overcome the consequences of the current situation. Did the government, and if so, to what extent take on board the suggestions that you, along with other business associations, gave to the Finance Minister?

Immediately after the outbreak of the new crisis, the Slovenian Business Club, together with other economic and business associations, chambers, associations and clubs, addressed the Ministry of Finance on behalf of all businesspeople in the Republic of Serbia with a joint request to facilitate the operations of companies during the state of emergency by reducing certain levies and postponing the payment of others. We expected concrete support from the Government and they have agreed to most of our suggestions. The government classified the economic measures in nine groups and, if implemented consistently as the government has announced, they will significantly facilitate the survival, above all, of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, i.e. those companies which are the most vulnerable in these situations. However, the economic measures are linear and relate to the widest range of businesses. Some of these companies have, however, experienced additional, specific problems resulting from the pandemic. The Slovenian Business Club will continue to help its members overcome these problems and insist on additional measures from the authorities.

**How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?**

— Considering that my entire family is confined all day in the common space, there is, in fact, no boundary between work and private time. To tell you the truth, my days are going by at the speed of light and thank God for that. Just like always, I start my morning with a warm lemonade and ginger. Now, I have coffee at home instead of in the office. Then I sit down, take my laptop and phone and begin my daily activities with the Club. The most significant change is that, in this state of emergency, the time allocated for meetings is now occupied with my children. My son, who is in the second grade, and the daughter, who is a fourth-grader, are slowly adjusting to the new circumstances and aspects of school work. Not being able to spend time with their friends is the hardest thing for them. Online home schooling is good solution in this situation, but children are nonetheless social beings and have a great need with social life. During the day, I cook and do my share of house chores. My husband and I finish with our work in the evening, after which we usually play a board game with the children or watch a movie or read books or, simply, answer countless questions from our children.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?**

— I am confident that this situation will last until the summer. And then when all this ends, hopefully on a good note, and when all curfews are cancelled, I will first stroll through our beautiful Belgrade and then go to Slovenia with my family to see my parents. 

**NOW, JUST LIKE IN THE REGULAR TIMES, WE MONITOR ALL RELEVANT CONTENT AND INFORMATION DAILY AND INFORM THE MEMBERSHIP PROMPTLY**

**How did you organize your business activities during the state of emergency?**

— First of all and the most important thing in this situation is that we all stay healthy. Only a healthy person can work, love, and even fight and grumble. Following the instructions of the medical profession and the orders of the authorities, the SPC's activities have changed somewhat. We have temporarily stopped organizing events and meetings that require the

to stay in touch with each other even in these difficult times and maintain the connection between our members and information flow as much as possible. Our activities relating to networking and establishing contacts, as well as one-on-one work will continue to be fully used thanks to modern technology. During the first two weeks, our members have been very active in sharing information about how they adjusted their businesses during the

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# We Must Learn How to Defend Data Against Malicious Attacks in Times of Pandemic

The SSCC events are now organized in the form of webinars, and the first in a series of webinars was held on March 26, 2020. We expect a second webinar to take place soon

## MAJO MIČOVIĆ

President of the  
Swiss-Serbian  
Chamber of  
Commerce

In a series of interviews with representatives of business and diplomacy, we spoke with the President of the Swiss-Serbian Chamber of Commerce (SSCC) in Serbia, Majo Mićović, about how the Chamber has organized its operations during the state of emergency, hacker attacks on data and the importance of ensuring data protection.

### How did you organize your business activities?

— The Swiss-Serbian Chamber of Commerce has set up online work to support its member firms. Among the first measures we participated in was 12 bilateral chambers of commerce jointly addressing the Republic of Serbia's Ministry of Finance with a proposal of support measures for small and medium-sized enterprises during the state of emergency.

Besides, the SSCC events are now organized in the form of webinars, and the first in a series of webinars was held on March 26, 2020, in collaboration with Adecco. The purpose of these webinars is to outline

the secrecy and security of business data. The webinar participants will have the opportunity to learn about the most important methods of defending their data against malicious attacks.

Of course, we have also been receiving individual inquiries from members regarding the new changes in the way they work, the legislation and the measures that must be adhered to. We are trying to give professional advice to each inquiry. Our members also regularly receive a newsletter with the latest news that is relevant to their business.

### Together with other business associations, you have sent a letter to the Finance Minister. What are your expectations? What measures could the Government of Serbia implement to create economic conditions for doing business?

— The representatives of 12 bilateral chambers of commerce have launched an initiative to urge the Ministry of Finance to start implementing



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payroll tax and contributions), easier access to bank loans and ensuring direct support in the form of subsidies or feedback programmes and liquidity guarantees. The Government of the Republic of Serbia is busy preparing plans and measures for particularly vulnerable companies, as well as for other businesses in order to preserve jobs.

### How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— As a responsible individual, I adhere to the state of emergency measures imposed by the Government of Serbia. Furthermore, I actively run several companies and funds, mostly through teleworking. Whenever I get a chance, I try to support initiatives against this scourge together with my partners. Unfortunately, I have very little time left for my family and social life.

### What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— As the President of the Chamber, together with the Managing Board members, I will try to revive the activities of the Chamber, catch up to at least some of the planned projects, and in particular, in cooperation with the Swiss Embassy and other chambers, reinstate the economic and social life of Serbia to resemble the one that preceded the pandemic as much as possible.

In the companies I run, I will do my best to return to the operational level and business and financial status the level we had planned for 2020. I am confident that this will not be difficult because we had been carefully preparing for this period and also because of the measures that the Serbian government will implement to help the economy to rehabilitate faster.

## WE HAVE ALSO BEEN RECEIVING INDIVIDUAL INQUIRIES FROM MEMBERS REGARDING THE NEW CHANGES IN THE WAY THEY WORK, THE LEGISLATION AND THE MEASURES THAT MUST BE ADHERED TO

the role of HR in crises, explain how to organize work from home and keep employees motivated.

We are expecting a second webinar to take place soon, co-organized with Sky Express on the topic of safe teleworking. Specifically, a large number of hacker groups have begun to use the pandemic, i.e. people working from home, as an opportunity to devalue

additional support measures for small and medium-sized companies which have been experiencing either a decline in their activities or a complete halt due to the coronavirus contagion. We have proposed the following support measures – small and medium-sized enterprises having their tax and social levies deferred (namely, reducing flat-rate tax liabilities and exemption from paying

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# There are Few Things We Can Do, But the Things We Can Do are **Not Small**

Even in regular circumstances, the sense of solidarity should be implied. But it seems that whenever the crisis emerges (and Serbia has had too many of them in my lifetime), we all remember those words. Both individuals and companies

**NIKOLA ŽEŽELJ**

Director of  
Vojvodina  
Development  
Agency



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**W**e need to be aware that this crisis will cause serious damage to the companies and the domestic economy. I must mention solidarity here again and urge all Serbian citizens to buy goods produced in Serbia. By doing so, they would save jobs for their neighbors, provide income to people who will spend their money on some goods or services that they produce themselves", said Nikola Žeželj, Director of Vojvodina Development Agency.

**How did you organize your business activities and communication with your business partners and clients?**

for April, investor visits, our visits to local small and medium-sized enterprises ... Some activities, such as Verona Wine Fair, where we were supposed to present the winemakers from Vojvodina, has been all cancelled.

The key limiting factor for us is not our capacity, but simply the fact that during such crisis whose duration is unknown, or how much it would "cost" the society, country, each individual and company, entrepreneurs have halted their investment projects. They ceased looking for new locations, additional sources of financing for new employment, building facilities and purchasing equip-

has become the only type of communication we have been practicing these days.

**How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and help in these extraordinary circumstances?**

— Even in regular circumstances, the sense of solidarity should be implied. But it seems that whenever the crisis emerges (and Serbia has had too many of them in my lifetime), we all remember those words. Both individuals and companies.

In March, we conducted a survey with companies in the textile sector to check which ones were already sewing the protective masks, which ones showed the interest and the enthusiasm in doing so, which supplies they lacked and, ultimately, whether they would donate a part of the production.

Among the companies that have the technical capabilities were two groups: those who were already sewing masks and those who were ready to start immediately. The only help they needed from us was to provide the fabric, since the materials that they use were not appropriate for such usage.

We need to be aware that this crisis will cause serious damage to the companies and the domestic economy. I must mention solidarity here again and urge all Serbian citizens to buy goods produced in Serbia. By doing so, they would save jobs for their neighbors, provide income to people who will spend their money on some goods or services that they produce themselves. There are few things we can do, but the things we can do are not small.

**How do you spend your free**

**time during pandemic?**

— I have to admit that curfew from 8 pm to 5 am did not represent a problem for me, because at that time I am usually at home watching movies, series or programs about economics, geopolitics or politics, which I missed out, so I watch them on YouTube. Ever since the curfew has been instituted from 5 pm, my measure of escapism involves playing online games with my brother and friends (all men are children, it is only a matter of which period of childhood they have been trapped in).

Until recently, I have made pizzas and bruschetta by buying ready-made phyllo and baguettes. Now, in the evening my fiancée teaches me to knead dough, so I will come out of this crisis with some new skills.

**What are the first steps you will take after a state of emergency has ended?**

— Analysis.

Communication with the entrepreneurs. Status check. Loss overview. Come up with the ideas to overcome problems that have arisen. Numerous after-care visits to small and medium producers in Vojvodina.

Communication with potential investors. Checking the situation. Finding out whether the plans remain unchanged. If changed, have they been canceled or just delayed?

Setting up new dates for delayed promotional activities.

Continuation of activities that have been interrupted or delayed in other sectors. We are preparing the "Development Plan of AP Vojvodina for the period 2021-2027".

This is not the first or the last crisis that has hit us. **D&C**

## AFTER THE PANDEMIC WE WILL CONTINUE WITH PREPARING THE "DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF AP VOJVODINA FOR THE PERIOD 2021-2027"

— Almost all activities of Vojvodina Development Agency involve mostly personal and direct communication with the users of our services. Unfortunately, some of our activities have been postponed: "Suppliers' Day" originally planned

ment, new partners, customers and suppliers. In addition, all of that represent our core business.

Communication via e-mail and telephone, which used to serve as a mere preparation for the meetings and visits,

NEXT ►



# The Longest Ruling Leaders of Europe And Ex-USSR



European (ex-USSR included) leaders in power for longest, Top 10

- 1 **Milo Đukanović** (*Montenegro*) – with stunning 31 years in power, interchanging his functions of Prime Minister, ruling Party Leader and President of Montenegro. In fact, together with Svetozar Marović and Momir Bulatović, Đukanović was still only 26 years old when the trio effectively gained power through full institutional control in Montenegro on 10 January 1989 and in many incarnations his rule still holds.
- 2 **Emomali Rahmon** (*Tajikistan*) - 30 years in power, following the bloody civil war in the Central Asian republic, first as the President of the Supreme Soviet and then 28 years as President.
- 3 **Alexander Lukashenko** (*Belarus*) - 26 years, stepping in as a fierce president of the anti-corruption committee.
- 4 **Vladimir Putin** (*Russia*) - 20 years, interchanging Presidential and PM posts.
- 5 **Recep Tayyip Erdoğan** (*Turkey*) - 17 years (first PM, then President).
- 6 **Ilham Aliyev** (*Azerbaijan*) - 17 years, all of them as President, following the steps of his father Haydar.
- 7 **Angela Merkel** (*Germany*) - 15 years, all of them as PM, or Bundeskanzlerin in German.
- 8 **Viktor Orbán** (*Hungary*) - 14 years as PM,
- 9 **Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow** (*Turkmenistan*) - 13 years, all of them as the President, immediately after legendary Turkmenbashi
- 10 **Aleksandar Vučić** (*Serbia*) - 8 years, going upwards, first serving as a Deputy PM, then PM and finally as the President. **D&C**

## GIANLUCA BORRELLI

New President of the Executive Board of Crédit Agricole Srbija

Mr. Borrelli comes from a challenging Italian market where he has gained 25 years of professional experience, by holding important positions in different business areas. He was born in 1972 in Milan and after obtaining a Master's degree in economic sciences, he built his career in Banca Intesa and Cariparma, which in 2007 became a part of Crédit Agricole Group. Before his engagement in Serbia, he was the General Manager of Crédit Agricole Leasing and Eurofactor Italia and Crédit Agricole Carispezia. As the new President of the Executive Board, Mr. Borrelli will be responsible for the business operations of Crédit Agricole Bank in Serbia, which has 74 branches and employs over 900 people, serving almost 300,000 clients.



## KSENIJA KARIC

New management in Schneider Electric

Ksenija Karić to the helm of Schneider Electric Serbia and Montenegro. Ksenija Karić will bring to the company more than 15 years of experience and expertise at various leadership positions in the energy sector. At the position of the CEO, Karić will replace Dejan Marković, who will assume the position of Energy and Services Director Southeast Europe after four years of managing the company in Serbia and Montenegro. Dragoljub Damljanović, who was Southeast Europe Energy and Services director, has been named to be Smart Grid Sales director Worldwide. "It is a great honour, as well as responsibility to continue Schneider Electric's successful track record in developing a partner network, access to the end-user market and the entire team of the company operating in the market of Serbia and Montenegro." – said Karić upon the appointment.

## NATIONAL DAYS

in April & May

### APRIL



17

**SYRIA**

National Day



27

**NETHERLANDS**

National Day  
(King's Day)

### MAY



03

**POLAND**

National Day  
(Constitution Day)



08

**ICRC, IFRC**

International  
Red Cross Day



09

**EU**

National Day  
(Schuman Day)



12

**ISRAEL**

Independence Day



17

**NORWAY**

Constitution Day



25

**ARGENTINA**

Primera Junta Day

# I am Impressed by the Response and Donations in These Difficult Times

I was particularly moved by an ethical response of the private sector, but also individuals demonstrating solidarity and engaging in crowdfunding

**REGINA DE DOMINICIS**

UNICEF  
Representative for  
Serbia



WEBSITE



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**W**e have interviewed selected persons from the economic and diplomatic community, as well as public life, and found out how embassies, institutions, companies and public figures have organized diplomatic and business activities and themselves during the state of emergency, how they contribute to the fight against the COVID-19 virus, as well as how they spend their free time and what they will do first when the state of emergency is abolished. Today, we are talking to Regina de Dominicis, UNICEF Representative for Serbia.

## How did you organize your activities?

— UNICEF has been active in supporting national efforts at the onset of this crisis. Our response has been threefold - the procurement of the most

needed medical equipment, especially for the most vulnerable groups, risk communication with the view of reaching the broader population, and outreach to the most vulnerable segments of the society. Our team has been working very

closely with the line ministry, like the Ministry of Education, on improving the inclusiveness and quality of the distant learning response, but we also did not forget preschool children and parents. Urgent response is in our DNA, so to speak, since we are an emergency agency, so we were able to move quickly. I was particularly moved by an ethical response of the private

sector, but also individuals demonstrating solidarity. There is also crowdfunding. Although this is a period of social distancing, it is also a period of social solidarity. We need to keep this spirit alive but also believe in hope. This is the message we need to convey to our children so we are all able to overcome these difficult times.

Just like the majority of the people around the world, I am still working, and I am facing new challenges in terms of planning and managing my meetings. But it seems to be working pretty well. I start with my crisis management meeting in the morning which is usually quite short. It is very important to check on each other and to make sure that the entire team feels included in the current response, but also to ensure operational continuity. We have a business continuity plan in place; part of it has been activated so we can use electronic signature and all our transactions are carried out online. We had no problems with reaching out to our partners as it is only the matter of being well-organ-


ized with the goal of achieving the best result possible.

## How you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— In the beginning, it was difficult to define the cutoff point between work, play and family for the 3 of us. We have a 3-year old daughter called Gaia, so we have to be disciplined. Every evening, we devise a small and flexible family plan for the next day. I think that each of us has managed to find a space to be happy and satisfied. In my case, the work is still very intense in this period, and I have to find time for work, on the one hand, and playing with my child, on the other. Also, we are having a lot of fun in the process - we keep discovering things together that have long been forgotten. I also try to find time to read books, not work-related, that had been waiting on my desk for a long time. This time also gives us a unique opportunity for reflection and re-discovering our families, as well as for appreciating the importance of different roles that our family members play.

**ALTHOUGH THIS IS A PERIOD OF SOCIAL DISTANCING, IT IS ALSO A PERIOD OF SOCIAL SOLIDARITY. WE NEED TO KEEP THIS SPIRIT ALIVE BUT ALSO BELIEVE IN HOPE**

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?

— The first thing I would like to do when all this is over is to go for a long, long walk in nature with my family and friends and watch children playing freely outside. That would be really amazing! Immediately after that, I would like to start planning a trip to my beautiful Italy. 



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 **BANCA INTESA**



CLICK TO SEE  
THIS ON WEB**JELENA GALIĆ**Chairman of the  
Executive Board,  
AIK banka

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# We've Organized Business Activities, So Our Clients May **Continue Using** All Our Services Unobtrusively

In this sense, all our services are available to our clients through digital channels and the bank's infrastructure has been capacitated for several years now, so that employees may carry out their business activities by "remote access"

**F**inancial system is one of the pillars of economy and society. To that end we spoke with Mrs. Jelena Galić, Chairman of the Executive Board, AIK banka, about organising their business activities in these condition: Intensive communication with the entire team plays a key role in ensuring smooth functioning of business activities under these conditions, especially

for our clients. As for clients who are unable to use digital channels, our branch network is at their convenience where we apply all preventive health care measures. Our healthcare system is facing a huge challenge and just about everyone, from each individual to large business systems, should help as much as they can" she said.

**How did you organize your**

**business activities? What about communication with clients and what do you think the Government could do to preserve the Serbian economy?**

— Since banks are one of the pillars of economy and society, we've organized our business activities in such a way that our clients may continue using all our services unobtrusively. In this sense, all our services are

available to our clients through digital channels and the bank's infrastructure has been capacitated for several years now, so that employees may carry out their business activities by "remote access". As far as I can see all over the world, people behave similarly and most companies whose nature of business allow them to do so, has sent employees to work from home.

Intensive communication with the entire team plays a key role in ensuring smooth functioning of business activities under these conditions, especially for our clients. Since we've developed

**AIK BANK HAS MADE A CASH DONATION TO STATE INSTITUTIONS A FEW DAYS AGO TO BUY 10 RESPIRATORS, WHICH HOPEFULLY HELPED THE MOST VULNERABLE PATIENTS STRUGGLING FOR THEIR LIVES**



almost all digital services, we now instruct our clients to use them, because all the necessary transactions can be made via mobile phone, computer or ATM. As for clients who are unable to use digital channels, our branch network is at their convenience where we apply all preventive health care measures in accordance with the recommendations of the World Health Organization

similar measures in cooperation with banks, industry and professional associations and some of them are already in place and are accessible to the real sector of economy and citizens as well.

**How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity, to support and donate to the healthcare system?**

— When the world is hit by

a few days ago to buy 10 respirators, which hopefully helped the most vulnerable patients struggling for their lives. Our entire group, MK Group, provides solidarity assistance through competent institutions on a daily basis. We've donated financial support to the Institute of Virology, Vaccines and Sera "Torlak", we've put the hotel accommodation facilities in Novi Sad to use of the Institute of Public Health of Serbia „Dr Milan Jovanović Batut“ and we've made a food donation for retired senior citizens in Belgrade. At the local government level, we are helping on a daily basis by donating for the procurement of necessary medical equipment and humanitarian packages for hospitals, retirees and the most vulnerable. We want to help our healthcare system when it is most needed, and that is why I invite all individuals and companies to do the same.

**How do you spend your free time during the pandemic?**

— Since we responsibly approach to this situation to ensure the continuity of smooth running of the business and the availability of all services, daily communication with the whole team is much more intensive than in regular circumstances, so there is not

much free time left. However, I have to admit that this situation has turned us more to our household and family with only one difference and that is that we are forced to spend more time at home, so we use this time to follow online classes and RTS, play board games, watch interesting animated movies, watch the news and follow recommendations, talk about social responsibility and discipline, because this is really the most important thing for us all at the moment. I think most of us behave similarly and we all have to follow the instructions of the authorities and stay at home so that we can be together again and enjoy the beautiful weather in nature.

**What would be the first you'd do after lifting of the state of emergency?**

— It's hard to talk about it now. Surely, I will first take the opportunity to thank all the employees, together with my management team, for the perseverance and sacrifice they have made during the state of emergency and pandemic. Secondly, we will consider, as a Bank, all the possibilities and options where and how we can help all our clients affected by this crisis and offer them the best solutions to all their problems and needs. **D&C**

**SINCE WE'VE DEVELOPED ALMOST ALL DIGITAL SERVICES, WE NOW INSTRUCT OUR CLIENTS TO USE THEM, BECAUSE ALL THE NECESSARY TRANSACTIONS CAN BE MADE VIA MOBILE PHONE, COMPUTER OR ATM**

and our Ministry of Health and Institute for Public Health.

In order to preserve the entire economy, the first step is to shorten the period of the "health crisis" so that economic flows return to normal and resume regular economic activity as soon as possible. Meanwhile, almost all states have prepared or are preparing economic relief packages for the economy, starting from tax reliefs, temporary moratoriums on financial and/or other obligations through loan guarantee schemes, to measures that will provide additional liquidity throughout the system. Our Government is working on

such a crisis destroying human lives, health systems, the economy and the normal course of life, the least that companies could do is to join together and help. Solidarity and unity are of utmost importance now. Our healthcare system is facing a huge challenge and just about everyone, from each individual to large business systems, should help as much as they can. Only in this way and if we are disciplined enough can we see an end to the state of emergency and solving the pandemic outbreak as soon as possible.

AIK Bank has made a cash donation to state institutions



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# Solidarity and Conducting Responsible Business is Generally **Very Important**

In the first days, our imperative was to enable safe performance of payment operations i.e. of reception of incoming and execution of outgoing payments – and we succeeded

## MILOŠ BRUSIN

Executive Board  
President,  
ALTABanka



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**O**ur Bank regularly suggests clients to use, as much as possible, e-banking and ATMs and informs them on all changes implemented due to this emergency state – from changes in working hours of branches, moratorium i.e. possibility for stoppage of debt repayment, to funds disposal possibility for persons of 65 or more years of age” said Miloš Brusin.

### How did you organize Bank's business activities and communication with business partners and clients?

— From the moment when Serbia declared state of emergency due to coronavirus pandemic disease COVID-19, we gave absolute priority to health preservation of our employees and clients, but also to preservation of operations continuity. For this reason, we promptly introduced first measures for prevention of virus spreading. All employees, whose presence in Bank's premises was not necessary, are operating from their homes, especially ones belonging to the risky category. The hygienic level is maximally raised, providing safe environment to all persons present in the Bank. Following NBS suggestions, we

nologies, we are able to electronically realize almost all communication. We communicate through phone calls, e-mails and video links with all associates, employees and with a large number of clients. Our Bank regularly suggests clients to use, as much as possible, e-banking and ATMs and informs them on all changes implemented due to this emergency state – from changes in working hours of branches, moratorium i.e. possibility for stoppage of debt repayment, to funds disposal possibility for persons of 65 or more years of age. Although the whole country is facing the state of emergency and very modified way of living, we managed to provide continuous, undisturbed and what is the most important - safe operating.

### How important is that companies show their solidarity and give support, under the conditions of state of emergency?

— Solidarity and conducting responsible business is generally very important, even in times not burdened by the serious health crises. Under such extreme and emergency circumstances like this one, solidarity of companies, active



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and materials to hospitals i.e. by giving support to our health care system, we have an opportunity to give our direct aid to life and health preservation of our citizens infected by the COVID-19.

Once this pandemic disease is suppressed and ended, this equipment will remain to be in continual use for the purpose of life saving of our ill citizens. I am very glad that support system in Serbia gives its effects and that many companies and individuals gave their contribution to this aim and I am especially proud to point out that Alta banka was one of the first who provided funds for purchase of respiratory equipment in amount of 3 million dinars and thereby helped the most jeopardized persons.

### How do you spend your free time during these days burdened by the pandemic disease?

— From the moment when state of emergency was declared, I have spent most of the time with my colleagues, focused at Bank's operations. Current situation posed many challenges to the society and financial institutions have the task to enable funds disposal to

their clients without obstacles.

As I have already pointed out, from the beginning of pandemic disease our priority has been to maintain continuity of operations and prompt reactions to our clients' requests. This aim is ambitious even under the normal circumstances, but in times of global pandemic disease its achievement requires full dedication and very flexible working time.

### Which are the first steps you will make after the state of emergency is lifted?

— Once the pandemic disease is suppressed we shall face the significant task of analyzing the consequences to economy and creating adequate response to emerging problems. Alta banka has great experience in rendering expert assistance to legal entities and I believe that in the period to come, owing to this experience, generated through various development phases in the course of the last 40 years, our experts will be able to give adequate consultations and suggestions to clients, helping them thereby to minimize the negative outcomes of the pandemic disease and to continue with conducting profitable business. **D&C**

## SOLIDARITY AND CONDUCTING RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS IS GENERALLY VERY IMPORTANT, EVEN IN TIMES NOT BURDENED BY THE SERIOUS HEALTH CRISES

changed the working hours of our branches, but maintaining at the same time the balance between health preservation of employees and services providing to our clients.

In the first days, our imperative was to enable safe performance of payment operations i.e. of reception of incoming and execution of outgoing payments – and we succeeded.

Owing to accessible tech-

in the local market, can significantly contribute to finding ways for resolving problems and overcoming of consequences which we shall have to face in the period to come.

Health care systems of much bigger and wealthier countries than Serbia, were not able to deal independently with the situation caused by rapid spreading of the coronavirus. By giving financial support and providing medical equipment



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# In These Uncertain Times, We Provide **Timely and Precise** Communication

Digital channels and social media became our main platforms for communication with partners and consumers

## MARKO ZOVKO

Head of Sales at  
Avon Adriatic  
region



WEBSITE

**P**roduct and operations safety are of the paramount importance in the current situation, therefore we upheld high standards of hygiene and implemented additional, strict safety measures, applicable in packing lines and distribution centers, and followed by our partners who deliver our packages safely to their destination, said Marko Zovko, Head of Sales at Avon Adriatic region

### How did you organize your business activities?

— Due to COVID 19 limitations, which are in place for all Adriatic countries, our focus is primarily on our Associates', Representatives and clients' safety. Before the official measures were taken, we encouraged all our employees to work from home, and we provided the adequate solutions, in terms of logistics, for all our employees to have the same opportunity and opt for home office. Product and operations safety are of the paramount importance in the current situation, therefore we upheld high standards of hygiene and implemented ad-



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### with your clients, customers, suppliers etc?

— In these uncertain times, one of the priorities we took upon was to provide timely and precise communication towards all interest groups, in

ward to the inevitable transfer to online tools.

### What is the importance of CSR activities now?

— Social responsibility is necessary in these stormy times

region and thus supported our Representatives over 60 years of age, so that they did not have to leave their homes to provide basic personal care products.

### How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— Work from home has its challenges, as we do not have "classic" cutoffs, (leaving and coming home), sometimes you have the feeling of working 24/7. The rare occasions of my free time I spend with my family, two teenagers make it truly interesting ☺. Early morning hours are still reserved for my long runs.

### What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— Take a road trip with my family. **D&C**

## WORK FROM HOME HAS ITS CHALLENGES, AS WE DO NOT HAVE "CLASSIC" CUTOFFS, (LEAVING AND COMING HOME), SOMETIMES YOU HAVE THE FEELING OF WORKING 24/7

ditional, strict safety measures, applicable in packing lines and distribution centers, and followed by our partners who deliver our packages safely to their destination, with the aim of providing the continuous high-level services for our Representatives and customers.

### How do you communicate

order to align the new processes, confirm our next steps and support our Representatives the best possible way. Digital channels and social media became our main platforms for communication with partners and consumers. As we are deep in process of digitalization of our business, this disruptive situation only pushed us for-

when all categories of society and institutions need support. Avon is famous for nurturing strong sense of community, and this is very important for us now, more than ever. I am proud to say that the company recognized its community first, 30.000 households in the region. We donated over 150.000 products in Pannonia



# Continued Production and Export are of Paramount Importance for Our Company

We have managed to adequately organize and restart the production, while providing full protection for our employees, considering that we export over 50% of our products to overseas markets in more than 15 countries

**MAJA  
ČEČAVAC**

Director General of  
Beohemija d.o.o.



WEBSITE



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**W**e have donated more than 100 tonnes of products from our range (liquid and powder detergent, fabric softeners, dishwashing liquids, etc.). With these donations, our company wants to help and support the effort of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and our health care system in these difficult circumstances for the entire country," says Maja Čečavac, Director General of Beohemija, adding the company's employees will continue to be paid full wages.

## How did you organize your business activities and communication with your business partners and clients?

— Beohemija is one of the leaders in the production of detergents and household cleaners, both in the country and the region. The government's initial measures called for the suspension of exports of all essential food products, however, our effective reaction and obtaining an export

license yielded results. We have managed to adequately organize and restart the production while providing full protection of our employees. Considering that we export over 50% of our products to overseas markets in more than 15 countries, continued production and export are of paramount importance for our business system. All of our employees will continue to be paid full wages, regardless

are carried out daily and the members of our crisis centre meet regularly.

## How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and help in these extraordinary circumstances?

— We would like to use this opportunity to say that, that from the onset of the pandemic to date, we have provided assistance and support in the form of donations to local communities, crisis headquarters and hospitals. We have donated more than 100 tonnes of products from our range (liquid and powder detergent, fabric softeners, dishwashing liquids, etc.).

With these donations, our company wants to help and support the effort of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and our health care system in these difficult circumstances for the entire country. Support and assistance of all those companies and individuals that can provide it is crucial in moments like these. As a socially responsible company, Beohemija respects and has

always followed the principles of solidarity and humanity.

## How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— I adhere to the measures that apply to all our citizens and behave responsibly towards myself and others. Since I spend most of my day communicating with my co-workers, using the benefits of modern technology, I use the downtime to read books that relax me.

## What are the first steps you will make after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— Abolishing the state of emergency and life returning to normal will be a relief for our company, in terms of smooth running of all business processes, from the procurement of raw materials and exporting to foreign markets, as well as resuming the implementation of strategic projects that our company has planned for 2020. The next thing for us is the launch of the new Duel home care line and a luxury series of fabric softeners. **D&C**

**ALL OF OUR EMPLOYEES WILL CONTINUE TO BE PAID FULL WAGES, REGARDLESS OF THEM WORKING ONLINE FROM HOME OR IN THE COMPANY'S PRODUCTION PLANT**

of them working online from home or in the company's production plant.

We have undertaken all measures to protect our employees from the coronavirus and in cooperation with the local utility company in Zrenjanin, where our production facilities are located, we have completely disinfected the factory. Disinfection and checks

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# Good Energy and Spirit Carry Business in Times Like These

Probably just, like many others today, we are adjusting ourselves and we are facing the circumstances quicker and more skilfully than we thought we were able

**ALEKSANDRA DJURDJEVIĆ**

Director of Delta Auto Group



WEBSITE



YOUTUBE



BMW



BMW



MINI



MINI



HONDA



HONDA



HONDA



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We spoke with Aleksandra Djurdjević, Director of Delta Motors, about organization of their business activities during the state of emergency, as well as how she is spending her time during pandemic. "Good organization and fast and thoughtful reactions are now crucial, but in these circumstances the most important thing is to maximally protect the employees, give them security and maintain good level of energy and spirit" said Mrs. Djurdjević.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— Probably just like many others today, we are adjusting ourselves and we are facing the circumstances quicker and more skilfully than we thought we were able.

At places where we are in

contact with customers we have applied the strictest sanitary measures, and in order to be sure that business would not stop, we have divided employ-

ees in showrooms and workshops in two teams without any physical contact with each other. The colleagues from the departments that are not in contact with customers work mainly from home and we have regular online conferences. Also, we have quite intensive and good communication with ino-principals and dealerships, in order to adjust business in the best way possible and

optimize everything that is possible, and to be innovative and proactive as well. There's no bad time for innovations and good ideas.

In all workshops, including the dealerships, we have actions that give, aside from current disinfections of air-conditioning and space, a free of charge service "Pick up and delivery" with necessary disinfection measures before and after work, to which customers react well since they are saving time and they can stay in their homes. We are making video presentations of models, developing new ways of communication with customers through online tools, we are active on social networks, we are talking about our brands, informing and also entertaining them.

We are also using this period for intensive trainings, our team of technical and product coaches is performing video education and working hard on recording materials for our colleagues, so that we can be ready for the upcoming models and technologies.

Good organization and fast and thoughtful reactions are now crucial, but in these circumstances the most im-

Otherwise, I read a lot, I do yoga and watch cartoons. A day or two ago, I watched "Jungle Book" with my six years old son Vuk. "For the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack" is a part where Kipling managed to describe well the basics of a strong community, thus reminding me how they come up front, especially in challenging situations like this one.

For me it is very important, now more than ever, for every colleague to feel how important he or she is to our team, and how much they contribute but also how much the team is important and how much it's always there for every one of us.

## What's the first thing you're going to do after this situation pass?

— I don't feel a special urge to compensate something as soon as this rolls by, nor to satisfy any of my needs as soon as possible. Foremost, I do not feel nervous or frustrated with the situation. A lot of surprising things one can do for oneself and on oneself, and for the others, especially in circumstances like these. But, I do miss the nature and am looking

## GOOD ORGANIZATION AND FAST AND THOUGHTFUL REACTIONS ARE NOW CRUCIAL, BUT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO MAXIMALLY PROTECT THE EMPLOYEES

portant thing is to maximally protect the employees, give them security and maintain good level of energy and spirit.

Good energy and spirit carry business in times like these.

## How do you spend your time?

— Since we have six locations where we are in contact with customers, I am trying to visit colleagues daily and see if they need anything.

forward to getting back to it, because we'll be able to see it recovering itself.

When work is concerned, we shall continue step by step from the place we found ourselves in, we shall learn and build, and that's the best remedy for every recovery.

Someone said it well, "You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to ride them". My plan is to set sails as well.

NEXT ►



**MILENA  
AVRAMOVIĆ  
BJELICA**  
Chapter 4  
Communications  
Consulting



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# I Try to Look Ahead With Optimism

Of course, I can't wait for everyone to come back to the office and hold a real team meeting, as we, in Chapter 4, usually do on Fridays when we all have lunch together

**D**espite the state of emergency and the epidemic because of which we are self-isolating, we will continue to share stories and news about developments in the political, diplomatic, economic and cultural scene in Serbia and the region. We will interview and record the statements from selected persons from the world of economics and diplomacy, as well as public figures.

— The pandemic has turned our lives upside down. I think and pray that people are safe and that this sudden catastrophe, that has afflicted the entire world, would be stopped as soon as possible. I follow the news, I listen to the experiences from other countries and somehow try to look ahead with optimism. Even before the pandemic, my day was too short to do everything I wanted to. I still need more

his use of various platforms for distance learning. I manage to look at a webinar or two and deal with some of the challenges on social media.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— While anticipating where all of this could lead, Tamara and I made a decision on 13th March for all of the Chapter 4 staff to work from home. Our work continued "normally", of course, with the view of this new situation and with a changed dynamic, because certain projects had to be postponed. Our team is available to our clients literally 24/7 because this is a time when our support, advice and analysis are of the utmost importance and when accurate, transparent and timely communication is crucial for business. Every day, we have many meetings on different online platforms with both client and team meetings with co-workers and partners via telephone, Viber, e-mail... Basically, all available technologies and forms of communication are active these days. We try to stick to the plans we devised

earlier, and where that is not possible, we quickly adapt to the given circumstances and conditions by making quick decisions. We strive to fulfil our obligations to our employees, partners, associates and the state regularly.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— I am going to visit my mum, who doesn't live in Belgrade, since I haven't seen her for several months. Now, due to the curfew and her health, I am not able to see her, although we speak to each other several times a day. After that, I can't wait for everyone to come back to the office and hold a real team meeting, as we, in Chapter 4, usually do on Fridays when we all have lunch together. Finally, I cannot wait to continue exploring new destinations around the world with David and Boris that we had planned. Until then, #stayhealthy and #stayhome. Good luck and let's all say 'thank you' to everyone who has to work so that our lives continue as normal.

**OUR WORK CONTINUED "NORMALLY", OF COURSE, WITH THE VIEW OF THIS NEW SITUATION AND WITH A CHANGED DYNAMIC, BECAUSE CERTAIN PROJECTS HAD TO BE POSTPONED**

To that end, we spoke with Milena Avramović Bjelica from Chapter 4 Communications Consulting about the company's activities during the pandemic, the state of emergency, her private activities and things she will do first after the state of emergency is cancelled.

## How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

time despite working for home for the past ten days. The small amount of "private time", as you call it, is reserved for what I have just mentioned, plus for reflecting on past practices and perhaps certain changes we can make to our daily routine after the state of emergency is cancelled. I try to help everyone around me as much as I can with words and actions. I also try to help my son with

NEXT ►

# Initial **Estimates** Say the Losses are Huge in the Movie Industry

We are using this downtime to prepare for the moment when the cinemas will be re-opened, that is, for all those tasks that we did not manage to do while working at a normal pace

**NEBOJŠA  
ČETKOVIĆ**

Director of  
Cineplexx  
Panonija d.o.o.



WEBSITE

Photo: Aleksandar Živaljević



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theatres and welcome the audience back in an even better light. Of course, we will strive to provide a sufficient number of attractive movie titles to mark this return and prepare other interesting campaigns such as, for example, movie revues and a campaign that would reinstate in people the feeling that cinema-going is a special kind of entertainment and that movie theatres are special gathering places.

## What will happen with the economy and film industry after coronavirus?

— The pandemic will generally affect the economy to a very significant extent. As soon as the fight for human lives is over, I am sure that this topic of impact on the world economy and its tectonic movements will continue to be present in the coming years as something that may completely change the economic picture of the world. Of course, the movie industry will be seriously shaken too. Initial estimates

**A**s soon as the fight for human lives is over, I am sure that this topic of impact on the world economy and its tectonic movements will continue to be present in the coming years as something that may completely change the economic picture of the world. Of course, the movie industry will be seriously shaken, too" said Director of Cineplexx Panonija, Nebojša Četković.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— Cinemas closed on March 17. We are using this downtime to prepare for the moment when the cinemas will be re-opened, that is, for all those tasks that we did not manage to do while working at a normal pace. We are trying to use this period as best we can to improve the organizational system in the company, as well as to lead a socially responsible campaign on social media and our

means of communication to urge people to be responsible and in solidarity with one another during this difficult period. The bottom line is that everyone should stay home

other domestic, more recent films, I would also recommend "Taxi Blues," a comedy that always comes in handy as a mood lifter in situations like this. Of foreign films, I would

## AFTER THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IS ABOLISHED, WE WILL ORGANIZE PEOPLE TO, FIRST OF ALL, FULLY PREPARE THE CINEMAS FOR REOPENING, WHICH WE WILL DO AS SOON AS THE RELEVANT CONDITIONS ARE MET

and that we all wait for the moment when we will be able to welcome again movie fans to movie theatres.

## How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— I spend my private time reading books and watching movies I haven't got to watch so far, as well as the ones I've watched more than once. The family movie I would always recommend is "Realna Priča" ("The Real Story"). In terms of

definitely like to recommend Tarantino's new film "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood" as a sort of homage to the film as such.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— After the state of emergency is abolished, we will organize people to, first of all, fully prepare the cinemas for reopening, which we will do as soon as the relevant conditions are met. We will further improve our movie

say the losses are huge. First of all, a significant number of films that were made and were due to be screened in cinemas were not because of the state of emergency, and even worse, the making of the movies that were planned to be screened in the next period was also interrupted. Considering all of this, I'm sure the film industry will be one of the most affected by this pandemic. We have a tough fight ahead to save jobs and recreate the situation similar to that prior to March.

NEXT ►



# This is a Great Test for Humanity But Also an **Opportunity** to Redefine Some Values

We spoke with Radivoje Petrikić, a partner at CMS International Law Firm, the fourth biggest law firm in the world in the number of offices and attorneys, about how his office has organized their business activities, and what measures did the Austrian government implement to help the economy

**RADIVOJE  
PETRIKIĆ**

Partner at CMS  
Law Firm



WEBSITE



Photo: Anđela Grozdanić

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**W**e have a unique way of working, so there are no big differences between Vienna and Belgrade offices. We have a one-of-a-kind approach to providing our services, as well as an integrated system through which we are all connected. There is an emergency situation and restrictions in Vienna, but no curfew and no state of emergency," says Mr Petrikić.

**How did you organize your business activities in Serbia and elsewhere in Europe?**

— Our employees in Belgrade started working from home before all the emergency meas-

**CONSIDERING THAT CERTAIN PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES ARE UNDERWAY, I CAN SEE THAT ENERGY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS ARE CONTINUING TO BE DEVELOPED**

ures came into force, starting on March 13, and since Monday, March 16, the entire CMS office has been working from home, continuing to provide services to all our clients.

At the moment, most of the questions we get are related to labour law. There are many inquiries about commercial force majeure contracts, since there are, given the current situation, ambiguities relating to them because every country has its

own approach to the crisis so we need to very carefully examine each contract in detail and apply provisions that are foreseen in this case.

We are also finalizing the transactions related to buying and selling companies, which began before the pandemic. Considering that certain preparatory activities are underway, I can see that energy and renewable energy projects are continuing to be developed.

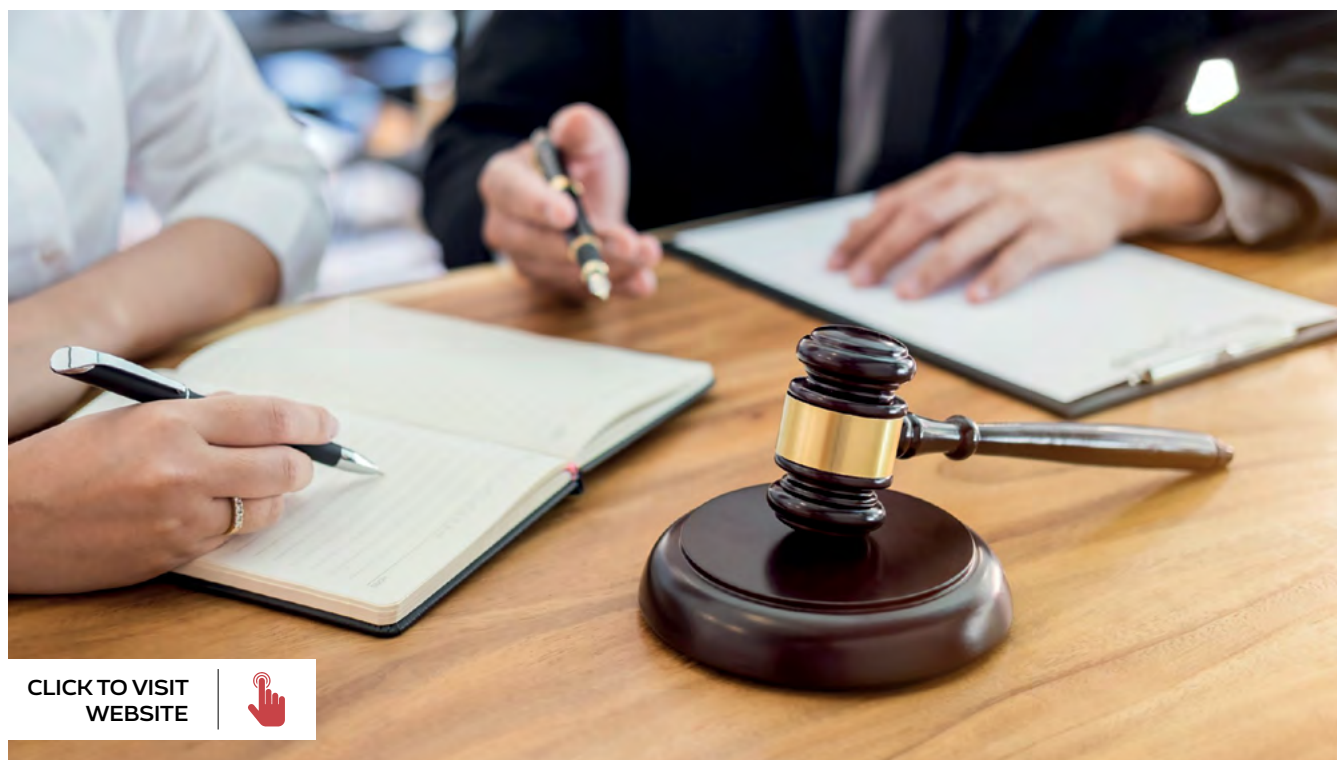
Obviously, there will be a turnaround after the crisis and many countries will reorient themselves to obtaining energy from renewable sources to a greater degree.

**What is the situation with laying off workers in Austria?**

— Yes, that is true. 200,000 people in Austria were made redundant, and we have close to half a million unemployed people, for the first time since

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Second World War, but these are mostly a result of layoffs in the so-called service economy.

Many hotels, restaurants and other catering facilities are temporarily closed. However, the Austrian welfare system really gives substantial help to people who lose their jobs as they immediately receive compensation from the unemployment fund. There is also the possibility of part-time work, as well as working in jobs whereby the Austrian state covers over 90% of the cost to

by the Austrian state totaling 15 billion euro, for which companies that meet certain conditions are eligible. They have different pay grades and different criteria according to which companies receive assistance depending on their turnover and number of employees. The Austrian Chamber of Commerce's servers shut down due to numerous requests they received primarily from small and medium-sized enterprises. Austria is really taking

some are closed, but people are still taking walks and jogging while being mindful of the required physical distance of at least one metre. Strict checks are carried out.

A total of 16,500 charges and fines have already been executed due to the violation of these rules. I think that the Austrian government keeps all of this under control quite well and people are very disciplined. I have to say that the situation here is slowly but surely going back to normal

days, meaning in 7 to 8 days. This means that big shops like "Do It Yourself", which sell building materials, will open, as will restaurants. The plan is to open schools on 1st June and liberalize passenger transport on 1st July but there will likely to be some precautions. This is an approximate timeframe for the normalization of the situation.

#### **What will you do first after the crisis passes over?**

— We are celebrating 20 years of operations this year and we are planning to hold a big concert with the RTS Symphony Orchestra on October 1st, which is something we will probably do first. It will be our first reunion. We will try to define maybe some new concepts related to working and living. I think this is something we should all do and consider as individuals. This is, in my opinion, a great test for humanity but also an opportunity to redefine some values and to live in better harmony with nature and all that surrounds us. We need to change the way we treat each other, which is necessary in our beloved Serbia, because this time of crisis, with all its fierceness, has really shown us how important it is how much we use human resources, as well as how important is education and health because in the battle between economy and life I think life wins after all. **D&C**

**I THINK THAT THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT KEEPS ALL OF THIS UNDER CONTROL QUITE WELL AND PEOPLE ARE VERY DISCIPLINED. I HAVE TO SAY THAT THE SITUATION HERE IS SLOWLY BUT SURELY GOING BACK TO NORMAL AND IS MORE RELAXED**

employers. The social measures implemented here have really helped the economy. A few days ago, the Austrian Parliament again adopted a package of measures worth 15 billion euro, with the state taking over as a guarantor for loans granted to companies that are experiencing difficulties in the current situation.

#### **What kind of measures are those and how will the Austrian state help businesses?**

— As I said earlier, the first package of measures is worth 4 billion euro and the second package 15 billion euro. In principle, the largest part relates to guarantees given

care of its economy and that first package should cushion some of the losses generated during the first three months of the coronavirus pandemic because about 9 to 10% of Austria's GDP is affected.

#### **What does living in Vienna look like currently? Are their movement restrictions or curfews in place?**

— We are still moving around freely. There are certain movement restrictions in place but you can shop for groceries or take a walk but only with a person who lives in the same household as you. A lot of people are walking around here, certain parks are still full while

and is more relaxed. For the first time after three days, we have more people cured of the coronavirus infection than those falling ill. This is really encouraging to hear. Obviously, the Austrian government has managed to cushion the blow of the pandemic quite well for the time being.

#### **What are the projections in Austria as far as the duration of the pandemic and expectations regarding the progress in the suppression of this virus?**

— The first measures towards normalization of the current situation will probably be implemented after Easter holi-

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# Solidarity is **Crucial** in Such Difficult Situations

Since our company operates in four countries of the Region, we have strengthened the infrastructure of communication and information technologies even before the introduction of the Government's measures

**ERICH  
COSSUTTA**

President Dragon  
Maritime Group



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**W**e spoke with Erich Cossutta, the president of Dragon Maritime Group, which business is closely related to cooperation with China. "From the very beginning we were following the situation development and in a way preparing for the scenario of working under more difficult conditions, so the whole situation did not leave us unprepared. At the very first hint of the outbreak of the epidemic in Serbia, we created all the preconditions for smart working" said Mr. Cossutta.

**How did you organize your business activities and communication with the clients and business partners?**

— Our company's business is closely related to cooperation with China, hence from the very beginning we were following the situation development and in a way preparing for the scenario of working under more difficult conditions, so

the whole situation did not leave us unprepared. At the very first hint of the outbreak of the epidemic in Serbia, we created all the preconditions for smart working. Being the socially responsible company, from the very beginning we implemented all the measures recommended by the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Health in order to preserve the safety of

even before the introduction of the Government's measures, enabling our employees to work remotely from home and made a detailed communication plan allowing us to monitor the state of business and employees.

**How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and help in these extraordinary circumstances?**

**I THINK NOW IS THE RIGHT MOMENT TO SPEND MORE MEANINGFUL TIME WITH OUR FAMILIES AND REDISCOVER THE CHARMS OF SMALL FAMILY RITUALS**

our employees, associates and their families, at the same time striving to ensure continuity of contractual obligations and services to our clients. Since our company operates in four countries of the Region, we have strengthened the infrastructure of communication and information technologies

— Solidarity is crucial in such difficult situations, which is the reason why our company has offered to provide within the scope of our capabilities and in coordination with COSCO Shipping Lines Co. as the principal of our company, as much protection equipment and necessary devices

as possible to support health systems of Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia, where our company operates. We are pleased that governments have responded positively to our initiative. We have had excellent communication with the Government of the Republic of Serbia so far and they expressed great appreciation for the assistance we shall provide. This is particularly due to the fact that our assistance comes through China, which Serbia fosters exceptional bilateral relations with. We expect the first donations to be delivered soon.

**How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?**

— Sometimes I get the impression that the volume of work is much bigger working from home, and so do my colleagues. The rest of the time I don't spend at work is reserved for family. I think now is the right moment to spend more meaningful time with our families and rediscover the charms of small family rituals, shared meals on weekdays and other joint activities that we otherwise do not have time for due to the hectic lifestyles our careers demand.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— I will recoup everything I missed during the isolation period, which is primarily a direct contact with people. As soon as this is all over, I will gather my closest friends and colleagues and toast to a fresh start. **D&C**

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# Conventional Customer Communication Channels **Continue** to Function Smoothly

Eurobank's priority in the current circumstances is to be a responsible employer, which primarily means protecting our employees and ensuring business stability

**SLAVICA  
PAVLOVIĆ**

Chairwoman of the  
Executive Board of  
Eurobank Serbia

**W**e talked to Slavica Pavlović, Chairwoman of the Executive Board of Eurobank Serbia, about the bank's operations, the moratorium on repayment of loans and doing business during the coronavirus pandemic. "Almost all our employees are working from home, except for a minimal number of colleagues who are working at the headquarters and whose presence is necessary because of the nature of the jobs they perform. Such work organization made it possible for the bank to react in a timely and adequate manner in this period of increased banking activities during the state of emergency, and considering the implementation of the moratorium and organizing disbursement of pensions to our oldest clients," says Slavica Pavlović.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— In the current circumstances, Eurobank's priority is to be a responsible employer, which primarily means protecting our employees and their families, as well as ensuring business stability by allowing the bank's customers to use all the services and products without interruption. In the current circumstances, banks are also classified as key infrastructure and we have to



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**IN THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES, EUROBANK'S PRIORITY IS TO BE A RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYER, WHICH PRIMARILY MEANS PROTECTING OUR EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES, AS WELL AS ENSURING BUSINESS STABILITY**

ensure smooth operations of the branch network. Before the declaration of the state of emergency, Eurobank had implemented preventive measures to increase hygiene and caution in the office space. We are currently applying all required safeguards in all our

business premises following the official recommendations and instructions of the relevant institutions, including regular disinfection of workspace and ATMs, our employees wearing masks and gloves (especially those working in direct contact with clients in branches),

disinfection of footwear before entering the bank's branches, ban on a higher number of people entering a branch at the same time and other preventive activities.

Regarding our other colleagues, almost all of our employees are now working from

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home, except for a minimal number of colleagues who are working at the headquarters and whose presence is necessary because of the nature of the jobs they perform. Such work organization made it possible for the bank to react in a timely and adequate manner in this period of increased banking activities during the state of emergency and considering the implementation of the moratorium and organizing disbursement of pensions to our oldest clients

economy as it will provide them with the necessary financial liquidity in this difficult situation. There is a significant decrease in all activities and in the amount of money in circulation, which is why it is important to help bank clients to divert money, which they would otherwise use to repay their bank loans, to their activities in their current situation. Although this measure “freezes” a significant portion of the liquidity of the banking sector, we should underline

The banking sector immediately reacted and donated significant funds towards the procurement of medical equipment, both the Association of Serbian Banks and individual banks. Eurobank immediately contacted UNICEF and donated 6 million dinars towards purchasing medical equipment. Also, the bank supports all individual activities of its employees towards promoting responsible behaviour in society, solidarity and assistance to the health care system, and

of increased activity in some areas of business. The only difference is that now I do not have to dress up for work and put on my makeup. Other work activities and obligations have not changed. I spend the rest of the day with my family. When they finish their work- or school-related activities, we try to do everything together, so we cook together, we clean our flat together, we have discovered new books and board games and we talk a lot. I am particularly pleased that we were able to get our daughter interested in some old ways of having fun that did not require a mobile phone or an Internet connection.

## WHEN WE LEAVE THESE DIFFICULT DAYS BEHIND US, I BELIEVE THAT WE WILL ALL BE FAR MORE APPRECIATIVE OF THE THINGS WE PREVIOUSLY TOOK FOR GRANTED, SUCH AS FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND COMPANIONSHIP

### How are you communicating with clients and what do you think about the moratorium?

— The usual channels of communication with clients continue to function smoothly and for the time being, we do not anticipate that this will change in any way. Clients can find all the information about our products and services on the bank's website or inquire with our call centre. We are also using social media a lot to communicate the most important activities and recommendations.

As for the moratorium, I think it's a good measure for our fellow citizens and the

that the banking sector is stable and liquid, and of course, our priority is to assist and support the survival of the economy.

### How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and support and donate to the healthcare system?


— The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a worldwide crisis. In this situation, I believe it is of the utmost importance to show solidarity and support our health system to ensure sufficient facilities for the treatment of all patients and the safety of medical professionals who bear the brunt of the fight against the pandemic.

in the days to come, we will consider other ways through which we can contribute to this common struggle of all people in Serbia.

### How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— A portion of my day is dedicated to working. As I mentioned earlier, most of Eurobank's employees are working from home, so I spend part of my day at work and in meetings we organize remotely via telephone or video conferencing systems. This enables us to fully follow all trends and requirements in this period

### What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?

— When we leave these difficult days behind us, I believe that we will all be far more appreciative of the things we previously took for granted, such as freedom of movement and companionship. Although I speak to my friends and nearest and dearest almost daily, I have to admit that we all lack companionship. So, after the state of emergency is over, I will first visit my extended family members and friends. Also, I cannot wait to return to the office again and say hello to my colleagues and enjoy our fellowship in the workplace again. 



A chalkboard illustration featuring a credit card with 'Eurobank Srbija' and 'veliko' branding. The card is surrounded by various hand-drawn symbols: a sun, a heart, an atom, a paper plane, a lightbulb, a ruler, a magnifying glass, a sailboat, a star, a cloud with rain, a palm tree, a tree, a graduation cap, a question mark, a triangle with an arrow, a coordinate system, a graph, a compass, a pencil, and various mathematical formulas like  $a^2+b^2=c^2$  and  $H_2O$ . The card also displays 'ABC', 'Srbija', 'EXPIRES END', and 'mastercard' logos.

*Jednostavno  
moja!*



# We are Facing Many Challenges That We are Able to Overcome

We monitor and harmonize our work and business processes with the current circumstances on a daily basis so that our business runs as smoothly as possible

**IGOR  
MILENKOVIĆ**

Director,  
Fruit & Vegetables,  
Delta Agrar



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In the previous period, we have increased domestic sales, while in terms of export, and in addition to Russia which is our main export market, the demand for our apples in the EU, the UK and the UAE has been growing recently. Hence, we are doing our utmost to respond to the demands of all our clients," says Igor Milenković, Director of the Fruit & Vegetables Department at Delta Agrar, and adds that the company's sales activities have been going smoothly.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— My colleagues and I at Delta Agrar have been monitoring and harmonizing our work and business processes with the current circumstances on a daily basis so that our business runs as smoothly as possible. We are organized in such a way that any employee that can work from home, does so. As for the production staff, the key emphasis is on

strict adherence to all hygiene and other protection and prevention measures. Our staff works in shifts, measuring body temperature is mandatory for all employees and visitors and we have additional disinfection barriers.

Just like most companies, we are also facing numerous challenges that we are managing to overcome so that our sales activities run smoothly. During this period, we are all taking more care of our health and increasing the intake of vitamins also through consuming fruits and vegetables, which is directly reflected in our work. In the previous period, we have increased domestic sales, while in terms of export, and in addition to Russia which is our main export market, the demand for our apples in the EU, the UK and the UAE has been growing recently. Hence, we are doing our utmost to respond to the demands of all our clients.

## How do you spend your pri-



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## vate time during the pandemic?

— Even though I was a little scared in the beginning of what awaited us all, I am doing well in isolation so far. I spend my free time with my girlfriend and we are both working to make the most out of this situation, and dealing with it in a productive way, by eating healthier and exercising. Besides, I am trying to per-

fect some of my lesser known talents, but also discover new ones. I came to the conclusion that I am actually quite a good cook. Occasionally, I reverse to my childhood and play a game of football on the PlayStation. The evenings are mostly reserved for a classic movie or a good book. I try to spend time in a bright and positive spirit.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?

— Although, I live and work in Belgrade, I was born in Niš, so the first thing I am going to do once the state of emergency is over is visit my hometown. I miss my parents and my mum's cooking, as well as time spent with my childhood friends. Most of them live and work in other towns, so we usually gather in one of the popular cafe bars in Niš several times a year, eat the famous southern specialties, give ourselves a little breather and thus escape our daily routine. **D&C**

I LIVE AND WORK IN BELGRADE, I WAS BORN IN NIŠ, SO THE FIRST THING I AM GOING TO DO ONCE THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IS OVER IS VISIT MY HOMETOWN



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# All Locations Worldwide are Operational, and Our Transport Services **Continue** to Run

We have made our services available for the Government and City authorities to use for the necessary deliveries, and also donated medical necessities

## ROLAND RAI TH

Gebrüder Weiss  
Country Manager  
for Serbia



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**W**e spoke with Roland Raith, Gebrüder Weiss Country Manager for Serbia, who said: "We are in permanent coordination with the relevant authorities and

with the recommendations of the Government and relevant authorities.

On the global level, a situation centre was set up. This centre monitors and announc-

es latest developments in all our affiliates. Also, for all our clients, partners, and wider community we issue [reports](#) about the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on logistics.

All locations worldwide are fully operational, and our transport services continue to run at a high level for our customers. We are in permanent coordination with the relevant authorities and have prepared appropriate emergency and continuity plans. We keep close touch with our clients, employees and partners which is essential at this time more than ever.

**How much is it important for the companies to show solidarity and provide help and donations for the healthcare system?**

— The role of the big companies, in times like these is very important, that goes without saying. We are the ones that path the way of progress in each society and we are the ones that need to step up in the time of crises. We have made our services available for the Government and City author-

ities to use for the necessary deliveries, and also donated medical necessities.

**How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?**

— Like everyone else, I suppose. Staying at home after work and trying to make the best of it. Although the situation is serious and not to be taken lightly, this is also an opportunity to spend quality time with the family. So, my family and I are doing just that, we watch movies together, cook together, do homework together, play together, etc.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— Business wise, the first thing will be to welcome back to office all my colleagues that I have not seen in a while. And then to sit down, group and regroup, and get back to normal as quickly as possible. Privately, we are looking forward to seeing friends and relatives after this is over, and take maybe a trip somewhere, change the scenery and relax. **D&C**

**THE ROLE OF THE BIG COMPANIES, IN TIMES LIKE THESE IS VERY IMPORTANT, THAT GOES WITHOUT SAYING. WE ARE THE ONES THAT PATH THE WAY OF PROGRESS IN EACH SOCIETY**

have prepared appropriate emergency and continuity plans. We keep close touch with our clients, employees and partners which is essential at this time more than ever".

**How did you organize your business activities?**

— We organized home office for all our employees for whom it was possible. There are no business trips and all meetings are done via skype or phone. For those who are not working remotely, we split the working shifts in a manner that is in accordance



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# There is a **Great Solidarity** Between the Employees in Our Company

We adopted a series of preventative measures to reduce the exposure of employees, clients, suppliers and business partners to the spread of the virus

**ALEKSANDRA MITIĆ**

Head of  
Legal sector,  
Galenika AD



WEBSITE



FACEBOOK



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**T**he implementation of the Decision on the State of Emergency was not easy. We had to implement all decisions and recommendations of the Serbian Government, Ministries and Chamber of Commerce of Serbia, which are mostly of a general nature for a legal entity dealing with medicine production, where standards are raised and where our product is critical to the health of the nation. I believe we have been successful in this" said Galenika Head of Legal sector, Aleksandra Mitić.

## How have you organized your business activities?

— I am one of the members of Galenika's Team for managing prevention measures against Corona virus, which has adopted, from the outset and outbreak of epidemics, a series of preventative measures to reduce the exposure of employees, clients, suppliers and business partners to the spread of the virus. After declaring a state of emergency, all employees who could work outside Galenika's premises were sent to work from home, and so most of my associates, lawyers, are on homework assignment.

In our company, we have a documentation associate, our colleague Goca, who, in these conditions, is our eyes and ears, because she delivers to us post-mail, relevant contracts and other documentation. At the same time she is our PR, because she is the only legal sector employee who is physically still in Galenika and she has contacts with other organizational units.

I keep in touch with all team members on a daily basis, and occasionally we have sector

meetings through Microsoft Teams meeting-protocol. They are hardworking, and there is great solidarity between them, so they help each other with their tasks.

The implementation of the Decision on the State of Emergency was not easy. We had to implement all decisions and recommendations of the Serbian Government, Ministries and Chamber of Commerce of Serbia, which are mostly of a general nature for a legal entity dealing with medicine production, where standards are raised and where our product is critical to the health of the nation. I believe we have been successful in this.

## How do you spend time during a pandemic?

— As I returned from abroad in early March, I spent some time in isolation. Therefore, I can say that I got used to being at home, and almost never going out, except when needed. And I have to admit, sometimes it is easier for me not to move, than



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in the house, so we invent games at home - we make pictures a lot, play with plasticine, but we also make an Indian settlement with tents by throwing blankets over chairs, while the terrace is our construction site. When they get tired, they and their Mom watch cartoons a little. We

I'm not someone who is obsessed with treatments, but it's kind of synonymous with regular and everyday life. After that, there is one city I love and I always like to go back to. When I close my eyes I run into its narrow steep streets, I hear the neighbor chat in Italian, the church bells ring,

## SOMETIMES IT IS EASIER FOR ME NOT TO MOVE, THAN TO PREPARE FOR 20 MINUTES FOR BEING OUT FOR 30 MINUTES AND TO SPEND TWICE AS MUCH TIME IN DISINFECTION AND WASHING WHEN I RETURN

to prepare for 20 minutes for being out for 30 minutes and to spend twice as much time in disinfection and washing when I return. This is a time when I am much more with my kids than usual, which is mostly wonderful. However, it is also sometimes challenging to work from home, as kids are still small to take care of themselves. It is difficult for them to spend time primarily

love to applaud into at 20:00h, although they're still not sure what exactly we're doing, but they enjoy it immensely.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency?

— I think I'll go to the hairdresser. A joke is circulating on Facebook saying that when all this goes through, it will be harder to schedule a hairdresser than magnetic resonance.

the sun caresses my face, and the sea hits the cliffs as I hear the laughter of my children. Belgrade is my hometown and I love it immensely, while Rovinj is the city of my choice where only my family and I exist. When all this is over, I'll cross the border, go to Rovinj, have a cappuccino and eat breakfast at the "Batana" cafe while watching my boys run around the fountain. **D&C**

NEXT ►

# We are Proud and **Feel the Duty** to Help the State in Fighting the Coronavirus

We have been investing maximum effort and have joined the initiative to free our capacities so that we can do all of this and to be humane, as well as to adhere to the old proverb that goes – “When the going gets tough, the tough get going

**DANIJELA  
VUJISIĆ**

Marketing Director  
of Healthcare  
Europe



WEBSITE

**M**arketing Director of Healthcare Europe, Danijela Vujisić talks about Healthcare Europe very quickly changing its production activities from manufacturing mattresses and pillows to making surgical masks which they deliver to the State Health Insurance Fund (RFZO) daily. “It gives us great pleasure to join the effort to inform the public about the situation in our company, and by doing so, to contribute to monitoring current economic activities and together predict what awaits us after we defeat the coronavirus epidemic,” says Ms Vujisić.

## How did you organize business activities?

— As far as our business is concerned, the factory has shifted 90% to 95% of its primary production of mattresses, pillows, memory foam covers and other related products to the production of surgical masks.

As you can see, the mask



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**WE ARE A CHINESE-DANISH COMPANY AND WE HAVE MANY COLLEAGUES WHO COME FROM CHINA AND SPEND A LOT OF TIME HERE. OUR PREVENTION ACTIVITIES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL AND WE REACTED PROMPTLY**

that I am wearing now is produced in our company. I am going to take it off now because I am completely alone here. We have been working in strictly controlled conditions for a month, a month and a half, and we have provided protection for all of our 1,000 production workers. Wearing masks is compulsory in the company and we have all agreed in writing to that. We

don't have any meetings and nobody moves around without protective equipment.

We also have hand sanitizers, hygiene notices and everything related to it. We did that a long time ago because we are a Chinese-Danish company and we have many colleagues who come from China and spend a lot of time here. Our prevention activities have always been at the highest level

and we reacted promptly.

As for the production itself, we are now focusing only on surgical masks. I would like to thank all our workers who mastered sewing skills very quickly. Because, you know, if you sew mattresses 2 x 2 metres big, and then you start sewing tiny masks that are as big as the one I was wearing earlier, then that becomes a big deal for us in the sense that workers have

to be trained quickly so that production will continue to be very fast and efficient.

We need efficiency because we deliver masks to RFZO three times a day, and of course, we do this with the approval of the Medicines Agency, and in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia, the Government of Serbia, the State Health Insurance Institute and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia.

**How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and support and donate to the healthcare system?**





— It is very important to us that we do humanitarian work and that we are well-organized to donate. Our parent company sent a donation of several hundred thousand masks and several thousand pieces of protective clothing via Air Serbia's plane. This was the first plane that landed in Serbia after the state of emergency was declared and that also carried our aid.

The second part of the aid is already being prepared – a 200-cubic-metre shipment.

— In communication with our consumers, clients and suppliers we naturally try to maintain all of our regular contacts which we accomplish by working in shifts. Some of our employees work from home, some in the company. We devised plans so that everything runs smoothly under the current circumstances since we are not the only country that is facing this situation; rather, the entire world is in it together. The biggest challenge is to organize transport. We also have



## AS FOR US IN SERBIA, WE ARE CONTINUING TO DONATE AND OUR TRUCKS ARE DELIVERING MATTRESSES TO THE ARMY, POLICE AND HOSPITALS DAILY; BASICALLY, TO THE BIGGEST PRIORITIES

Our parent company is our backbone and the first company to get fully involved in every aspect of this relentless fight against the coronavirus.

As for us in Serbia, we are continuing to donate and our trucks are delivering mattresses to the army, police and hospitals daily; basically, to the biggest priorities. Considering what we do and what is our primary production, we have been investing maximum effort and have joined the initiative to free our capacities so that we can do all of this and to be humane, as well as to adhere to the old proverb that goes – “When the going gets tough, the tough get going”.

**How are you communicating with your clients?**

old orders that we are trying to honour them as much as we can and to the best of our abilities.

### **What are you going to do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— I am definitely going to throw a big party. I have already planned this with my friends. We have agreed on everything, all that is left to do is find a location – maybe somewhere outdoors because we are really looking forward to nice, warm weather or maybe in someone's home.

I would like to thank you once again for this opportunity to join the information pool and to be a part of this entire story and the current situation. I am sending you my warmest regards. Please, stay home and take care of yourself. **D&C**



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# The Real Question is What is the World in General Going to Look Like

The economy is changing, the way we do business is changing and marketing is changing together with them. As an engineer, I don't see marketing as an art, but it does contain artistic elements

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**W**e spoke with Miloje Sekulić, former editor of E-Magazine and one of the co-owners of the Homepage Creative Marketing Agency, about what marketing looks like in the time of isolation and when everything came to a standstill.

**How did you organize your business activities in the agency considering the situation and working with clients who are stuck in their homes?**

remote way of doing business with clients too.

**So, how does that look in practice in terms of your clients? Is online communication now better?**

— I'm an old school guy when it comes to agency work. Prior to this situation, we used to put everything in writing and write a polite email before a meeting. We saved everything in Google Drive Docs so it was pretty easy to adjust. Now, we have flexible working hours.

**NONE OF US HAS PROPHETIC ABILITIES, BUT WE DO HOPE THAT WE WILL GO BACK TO NORMALCY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND WITH AS FEWER VICTIMS AS POSSIBLE**

— We have never used remote work much, except with our suppliers such as developers or colleagues who help us with writing. In our agency, we focus on energy and emotion, which cannot be conveyed unless you are face-to-face. But, these days, we all gather on Zoom from 9:30 to 9:45, have coffee and talk, but not about business. We have slowly started to do the

There is software that shows who is logged in and available for meetings. Some people volunteer. Even in the current situation, when the economy has slowed down, we are still operative and keep sending new offers abroad. The biggest danger these days is the danger of contagion in the virtual space, i.e. from viruses in it.

**What will the world of marketing look like after this?**

— The real question is what is the world in general going to look like because it is definitely changing. The economy is changing, the way we do business is changing and marketing is changing together with them. As an engineer, I don't see marketing as an art, but it does contain artistic elements. It is a supra-business activity that should support business and various human activities. None of us has prophetic abilities, but we do hope that we will go back to normalcy as soon as possible and with as fewer victims as possible. There is a line in the movie „Jurassic Park“ that goes: „Life always finds the way.“

For instance, it is questionable if we should present something like Easter Bunny and eggs in this situation. But, then again, Easter is embedded in the foundation of the Christian civilization and it can communicate quite nicely a positive message, like how many babies are born in Serbia every day. I wrote an article just before this crisis in which I talk about things that were good to communicate at that mo-

with a changed consciousness. In the light of our message 'Stay Home Homepages', we share pictures of us working from home.

**You are also building a team spirit and encouraging your staff. How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?**

— Team spirit is not only being built in companies but in a wider context too. I have a rule now whereby I call every day one person from that group of „I am going to call them soon and I never do“ people. I also went back to yoga and I enjoy the Sun salute the most. I think I have never worked this much. In my micro-world, I try to convey optimism, but not unfounded one, and avoid fake information which is dangerous to the core. In addition, I am getting ready for the time that will come soon.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency and pandemic are over?**

— Since I live in Dorćol, the first thing I am going to do is to go to a local bar, the one where I can sit outdoors, have coffee, play with my dog Andrija and visit my family and friends.

Life, business and [marketing](#) will all change. In the future, the focus will be on results, efficiency, performance marketing and supporting businesses, which will be terribly shaken by all of this, if not brought to their knees. There is a good book, that I am currently reading called „Find Your Why“, written by Simon Sinek. It poses important questions such as - „What's your personal 'why'?“, „What's yours 'why' at work?“ and „What is the 'why' of the team in the organization you work for?“ That's something that each of us should ask ourselves in this situation.

NEXT ►



# We Have Made All Our Facilities Available to Help Combat The Pandemic

The premature end of the winter season has resulted in losses of over EUR 3,000,000 while the activities on new investments have slowed down, which we will have to deal with when all this is over

**DEJAN LJEVNAIĆ**

Director of Jahorina Olympic Centre



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**W**e spoke with the director of the Jahorina Olympic Centre (OC Jahorina), Dejan Ljevnaić, about what awaits the Centre after the COVID-19 pandemic subsides, what problems they are facing and have yet to face, but also about solidarity.

"We have immediately recognized the importance of solidarity in this difficult situation for all of us. We decided to help as much as we could at the given moment. As the director of a socially responsible company, and in consultation with my colleagues, I felt the

**are you communicating with your business partners and clients?**

— We have organized them in such a way that we are working from home, have online meetings and do most of our work in our homes. The things that cannot be done at home will have to wait for another, better time which, I sincerely hope, will come soon. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have closed our skiing season much earlier than planned despite having plenty of snow, even more than in January and February. The premature end of

and help as much as we can; everything else can wait.

**How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and help in these extraordinary circumstances?**

— We have immediately recognized the importance of solidarity in this difficult situation for all of us. We decided to help as much as we could at the given moment. As the director of a socially responsible company, and in consultation with my colleagues, I felt the need to help, so we gave up half our March salaries and paid that money towards helping the Republic of Srpska in the fight against the COVID-19 virus pandemic

We have also launched a rounded-off media campaign to inspire other business people, managers and individuals who can help within their means. In addition to donating funds, we are making all our facilities available to help combat the pandemic.

I would also like to this opportunity to urge all companies not to lay off their workers, but to provide them with security and stability in these difficult

moments. We did our best to do just that and paid March salaries to all our employees ten days early so they can have enough money while being at home. We must stand in solidarity to help our employees both as managers and institutions that are fighting against the coronavirus contagion.

**How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?**

— I relax, walk my pet and strive to enjoy all the ordinary activities that I usually don't have a lot of time for. I try to help people as much as I can to overcome this crisis as quickly and easily as possible.

**What will be the first thing you do after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— I have been working on a strategy together with my team and we are adjusting our plans and goals concomitant to the situation. After the state of emergency is abolished, we are going to make quick and adequate steps towards resolving the ongoing problems and rectifying the damage caused by the pandemic. **D&C**

**WE HAVE IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF SOLIDARITY IN THIS DIFFICULT SITUATION FOR ALL OF US. WE DECIDED TO HELP AS MUCH AS WE COULD AT THE GIVEN MOMENT**

need to help, so we gave up half our March salaries and paid that money towards helping the Republic of Srpska in the fight against the COVID-19 virus pandemic," Mr Ljevnaić said.

**How did you organize your business activities and how**

the winter season has resulted in losses of over EUR 3,000,000 while the activities on new investments have slowed down, which we will have to deal with when all this is over.

The most important thing now is to adhere to all measures, look after our health



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# We Have Activated Our Business Continuity Plan and Established Crisis Management Functions

We have placed emphasis primarily on employee care, then supply chain, liquidity, and communication/coordination with business partners, customers and suppliers until the completion of construction work

**OGNJEN KISIN**  
CEO of  
Konstruktor Grupa



WEBSITE

**W**e are facing a very challenging and uncertain situation, hence, we have implemented all measures in line with the latest decisions of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Safety and health of our employees and partners in all places where we operate are of utmost importance," said Ognjen Kisin, CEO of Konstruktor Grupa.

## How did you organize business activities?

— Just like everyone else, Konstruktor Grupa faces a very challenging and uncertain situation caused by the COVID-19 virus contagion. With this mind, we have implemented all measures in line with the latest decisions of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Safety and health of our employees and partners in all places where we operate are of utmost importance.

The past days and weeks have brought a lot of changes, so we activated our business continuity plan and established crisis management functions.



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professionals. While appreciating their sacrifice in this fight against the coronavirus, the team of Konstruktor Grupa would like to extend to them their support. The donation we made to the State Health Insurance Fund (RFZO) is a small contribution to their great commitment during these difficult times.


This situation will certainly affect all of us and it is important not to forget what our priorities are, as well as to be aware of our abilities we have demonstrated by having successful business operations for years, which we will apply again in these conditions and especially once all of this is over.

## How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— At home, of course. But I have to admit that a good deal of my private time is also devoted to working online.

The rest of my time, like before, is devoted to my family and all other wonderful aspects of it. It seems to me that these moments have brought us closer together and we appreciate more everything we have.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?

— That's still hard to say since we don't know when that's going to happen. But the list, related to work and private life, is pretty long. Hopefully, the state of emergency will be lifted before the outdoor temperature hits 40 degrees and the things I am going to do, once the state of emergency is over, are going to be related to spending time in nature that we all need this spring. 

## SAFETY AND HEALTH OF OUR EMPLOYEES AND PARTNERS IN ALL PLACES WHERE WE OPERATE ARE OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE

We have placed emphasis primarily on employee care, then supply chain, liquidity, and communication/coordination with business partners, customers and suppliers until the completion of construction work.

In the first week since the introduction of the state of emergency, that is from Monday, March 16th, we have put in place emergency measures to protect employee health:

similar measure.

- In all workplaces, we implemented special procedures relating to employee behaviour, like keeping at least 2-metre-distance between employees and measuring body temperature twice a day.
- Groups adhering to strict rules of behaviour were formed, namely, each group has their own toilet, faucet, place of dining and changing room.
- Construction sites, the office

building and the production facility are supplied with sufficient amount of disinfectants, additionally purchased prefabricated toilets and face masks, which, due to the shortage in the market, we made ourselves.

- We engaged additional passenger cars due to the stoppage of public transportation.
- We have communicated with our suppliers, renewed our building material inventory and expedited transport both in the country and abroad, intending to prevent production stoppage.

Our entire company team takes its responsibilities seriously. We will do everything possible to safely preserve all business functions – administration, design, production and construction, as much as the hierarchy of priorities allows.

I would also like to use this opportunity to say special thank you to all medical

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# Our Shared Values are Again Proved to be the **Right Approach**

Shared values of employees and the company, our 5 principles – quality, responsibility, mutuality, efficiency and freedom have again proved to be a model that works also in these circumstances

**PREDRAG  
MILINČIĆ**

Regional Market  
Director for Mars  
Balkan East



WEBSITE



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**W**e spoke with Predrag Milinčić, Regional Market Director for Mars Balkan East about current situation and organizing business activities during the state of emergency. “We are in daily communication with the authorities and health institutions in order to timely adapt to the new circumstances. At the same time, we are trying to estimate the effect of corona virus on our operations, adjust communication and prepare donations”, said Mr. Milinčić.

#### How did you organize your business activities?

— Our priority are the health, safety and wellbeing of our associates and their families. Therefore, we took all necessary preventive measures in accordance with the recommendations of the Government of Serbia, and we are in

daily communication with the authorities and health institutions in order to timely adapt to the new circumstances. At the same time, we are trying to estimate the effect of corona virus on our operations, adjust communication, prepare donations, and we are focused

on key activities to deliver our products to our users.

Work from home or elsewhere has long been present in daily functioning of our company so we haven't had any significant changes in work process so far. Shared values of employees and the company, our 5 principles – quality, responsibility, mutu-

ality, efficiency and freedom have again proved to be the right approach and a model that works also in these circumstances.

#### How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— Probably like everybody else since limited movement significantly reduces number of things you can do. I mostly spend time that I have, when I'm not on various online meetings, reading an interesting book or watching films and series. This distracts me from daily happenings, and at the same time, I keep up with all

topics that interest me, and for which on "regular" days I don't have enough time.

#### What is the first thing you will do once the state of emergency is lifted?

— I'm picturing myself at that moment already, and the first

**WE ARE TRYING TO ESTIMATE THE EFFECT OF CORONA VIRUS ON OUR OPERATIONS, ADJUST COMMUNICATION, PREPARE DONATIONS, AND WE ARE FOCUSED ON KEY ACTIVITIES TO DELIVER OUR PRODUCTS TO OUR USERS**

thing I think I'll do is try to stay outdoors for as long as possible. To gather as much energy in the sun, as we will need it to remedy the damage to our business that will certainly occur after the current situation. And to end with optimism - I believe recovery is possible, it is only a matter of time and resources. **D&C**



# We Share Information and Experiences, Support and Learn From One Another

Of course, human health and safety are paramount, but it is equally important to provide these same people with jobs once the current crisis subsides

## ZORAN DJURIĆ

General Manager  
of Miele Serbia



WEBSITE



FACEBOOK



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**Z**oran Djurić, General Manager of Miele Serbia, told us about Miele Serbia activities during the state of emergency: The current situation, I believe, has stopped us all in carrying out our planned activities, so after the state of emergency is cancelled, we will have a lot to make up for. The biggest project we are currently working on, which has been put on hold due to these circumstances, is the opening of our third outlet in Belgrade.

### How did you organize your business activities?

— We were all hit by a situation that hardly anyone could be prepared for. Almost overnight, we had to reorganize and adapt to the new circumstances, with two key priorities in mind – provide work for our employees and minimize the

possibility of exposure to the virus as a health risk, as well as create a strategy for preserving business and safe overcoming of this new crisis.

Of course, human health and safety are paramount, but it is equally important to provide these same people with jobs once the current crisis subsides. To this end, we have made sure that the majority of our staff can work from home and have implemented all the prescribed and recommended measures for the protection of employees in retail stores. We are also constantly monitoring the situation and adjusting to it on the go. At the same time, we are regularly communicating with the headquarters and our colleagues in other countries. We share information and experiences, support and learn from one another.

### How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— Although most of our employees work from home, I am not one of them. Of course, I postponed all the planned business trips, moved the meetings to the available online platforms and minimized the need for direct contact. Still, I am in

space and it is definitely a very big challenge to keep them entertained in a situation where you have very limited space and very few options. I really try to spend every spare moment in this situation with them. When they finally go to sleep, I mostly read news and prepare for the next day at work.

### What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— The current situation, I believe, has stopped us all in carrying out our planned activities, so after the state of emergency is cancelled, we will have a lot to make up for. The biggest project we are currently working on, which has been put on hold due to these circumstances, is the opening of our third outlet in Belgrade. The continuation of this project will be our first priority as soon as the necessary conditions are met. This situation kind of physically separated us all, or to use the popular phrase, we are socially distancing, so I think the first thing I will do is to assemble my entire team, go somewhere together for dinner, have a nice chat and make up for what we have missed out on. After that, I will arrange a

**HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE PARAMOUNT, BUT IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO PROVIDE THESE SAME PEOPLE WITH JOBS ONCE THE CURRENT CRISIS SUBSIDES**

my office every day. My work continues when I come home when I devote myself to my family. We have three-year-old twins, a girl and a boy. They are currently in the most interesting period of their growing up, but also in the most demanding given the current situation. We live in a flat, kids need a lot of

short trip for myself and my family, definitely somewhere in Serbia. I think that this crisis has not discriminated against anyone and hit us all the same, but it seems that tourism is definitely the most affected industry so I will make my modest contribution to its quick recovery.

# Business in This Circumstances is Challenging

I think organization is extremely important, both in business and in private life. It maintains balance and makes the time passes faster and more useful

**JELENA  
ZLATANOVIĆ**

Corporate  
Communication  
and Marketing  
Expert MOL Serbia



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**D**espite the state of emergency and the epidemic that has isolated us into our homes, Diplomacy & Commerce Magazine will continue to write and report on developments in the political, diplomatic, economic and cultural scene of Serbia and the region.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— MOL Serbia takes care of the safety of its employees and consumers. Since the first case of coronavirus, our team in Serbia has actively worked to bring the best preventative measures and to minimize the possibility of spreading this

communication platforms. I try to talk to colleagues from different sectors during the day, as well as to "see" some of them through some of the applications that make it possible. Due to the nature of the business, it happens that I'm preoccupied with phone calls and emails during the whole day, but it's

useful. It also keeps us from losing our daily routines. What I enjoy the most is spending time with my four-year-old son Pavle. Every day we have different activities such as drawing, chopping, gluing, playing in different scenarios. However, sometimes he has his plans for play, so we make a deal. ☺ I made a grocery shopping schedule so that once a week I would buy whatever I need how could we be at home as much as we can. I respect all preventative protection measures so every time I leave the house, I put on a mask and gloves. I disinfect all doorknobs and flat surfaces and shoes when I return. This is also important to me because of my mom who is a risk group and is currently staying with us.

## What is the first thing you will do after the emergency is lifted?

— I will go for a ice cream and walk with my son on the streets of Smederevo.

**DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE BUSINESS, IT HAPPENS THAT I'M PREOCCUPIED WITH PHONE CALLS AND EMAILS DURING THE WHOLE DAY, BUT IT'S NOT UNCOMMON THAT MY SON ATTENDS ONLINE MEETINGS. HE IS THRILLED TO BE WORKING WITH HIS MOM AND HELPING HER**

We will interview and record selected interviewees from the economics and diplomatic community as well as public life.

To that end, we spoke with Jelena Zlatanović from MOL Serbia, about their activities during pandemic and emergency state, her private activities and as well as what she will do first after cancellation of the state of emergency.

virus among employees. The company has introduced the working from home concept even before the Government of Serbia made a recommendation for self-isolation for prevention. Business in such circumstances is challenging but we have organized our business activities so that everything is completed on time. I start the day with meetings with my colleagues through online

not uncommon that my son attends online meetings. He is thrilled to be working with his mom and helping her ☺.

## How do you spend your private time during this pandemic?

— I think organization is extremely important, both in business and in private life. It maintains balance and makes the time passes faster and more



# No One **Ever Lived** This Situation Before, Neither Government Nor Professional Organizations

What helped us the most was the fact that we took things seriously even before the official announcements, and government decisions. We immediately implemented the strict measures proposed by the government of the Republic of Serbia

**SREĆKO MITROVIĆ**

NDT Project  
Leader at TIM Co.

**W**e spoke with M.Sc. Technology Engineer Srećko Mitrović, NDT Project Leader at TIM Co, about how they have organized their business activities, as well as about his personal time organization. "After two decades of cooperation with private and public medical centers as well as with industrial companies, the TIM Co management, knew that we had to adapt the scope of work to the end users", said Mr. Mitrović.

## How did you organize your business activities and communication with your business partners and clients?

— What helped us the most was the fact that we took things seriously even before the official announcements, and government decisions. We immediately implemented the strict measures proposed

by the government of the Republic of Serbia and made organizational changes that enabled us to work from home without hindrance. After two decades of cooperation with private and public medical centers as well as with industrial companies the TIM Co management knew that we had to adapt the scope of work to the end users. At the same time, the safety of our field engineers was a priority. In terms of communicating these operational changes, we organized immediate availability to all end users, both remotely and directly. This enabled us to provide continuous support to our customers in this state of emergency. All of our product/sales managers are working online and from their home offices. They are in constant communication with our current and prospective



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**IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT WE COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER AND ACCELERATE OUR MOVEMENT UP THE LEARNING CURVE**



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customers. In addition, twice a week, or more, our management has conference to review and resolve all the acute and burning topics.

## How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and help in these extraordinary circumstances?

— No one ever lived through this situation before. Neither government or professional organizations, nor we can foresee how this crisis will evolve. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we communicate with each other and accelerate our movement up the learning curve. That will help us to address every issue and resolve every problem, whether it is a donation or a protection protocol. Obviously, it is our social and national responsibility to follow protocols and recommendations made by the Government.

## How do you spend your private time during a pandemic?

— At times when we live and work under additional pressure, the family is most important shelter and a safe place. In order to keep it safe, we practice serious safety protocols. To keep the spirits up and have all family members engaged, we rediscovered many games, like giant puzzles, cards, even "Don't get angry". Personally, I hardly can wait for the warmer weather.

## What are the first steps you will take after a state of emergency is cancelled?

— The first thing we will try to do, of course, is to get back to the successful track we were on before the emergency. At the moment we are reviewing key aspects of our business that will enable us to continue to work smoothly after this crisis situation is over. **D&C**

# Staff as **Priority** During State of Emergency

It is extremely important that we follow the recommendations of physicians and those in charge in this situation and act responsibly both as companies and as individuals

## DRAGANA PUZOVIĆ

Director of the  
Nova Sloga  
Company

In a series of interviews in with representatives of the economic sector in Serbia, the director of Nova Sloga points out that, given the circumstances, the safety and health of employees are at the forefront because they are an invaluable resource.

"I think it is important to be in solidarity with all the people affected by this situation. Our doctors, medical staff and all employees in the sector are in the front lines. Therefore, we donated 23,000 bottles of Mg Mivela water, which is naturally rich in magnesium, to employees of the clinical centres in Belgrade, Vojvodina, Kragujevac and Niš," says Dragana Puzović.

### **How did you organize your business activities? How is communication with your clients going and what do you think the Government could do to preserve the Serbian economy?**

— Our company's production activities are carried out according to the planned operating regime, we regularly deliver goods to our customers in Serbia and abroad and strive to align our business with the new situation. In that sense, we also have support and assistance from the Fortenova Group, under which we operate and with which we communicate daily. Given the circumstances, the safety and health of our employees are at the forefront, as they are an invaluable resource. Human life is something of the highest value and is, therefore, a priority for our company.

Accordingly, we fully adhere to all government and line ministries' measures

and recommendations. Our production employees have everything they need – gloves and masks – and they work in two shifts between which we disinfect their working space. Considering that this is a food industry, hygiene standards are very high even under regular conditions. We have introduced additional procedures in terms of movement and behaviour of drivers coming to our factory. Our sales and logistics activities in the field are also organized in alignment with the implementation of all required measures prescribed by the competent authorities and recommendations given by the profession. Some of our employees are working from home due to the nature of their work.

In terms of cooperation with the competent institutions, the invaluable support that the production companies have received from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia which supplies us with all the necessary information in real-time, makes it easier for

**THE SAFETY AND HEALTH OF OUR EMPLOYEES ARE AT THE FOREFRONT, AS THEY ARE AN INVALUABLE RESOURCE. HUMAN LIFE IS SOMETHING OF THE HIGHEST VALUE AND IS, THEREFORE, A PRIORITY FOR OUR COMPANY**

us to organize our business. We hope that this support will remain until the end of the current situation.

### **How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and support and donate to the healthcare system?**

— I think it is important to be in solidarity with all the people affected by this situation. Our



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doctors, medical staff and all employees in the sector are in the front lines. That is why we donated 23,000 bottles of Mg Mivela water, which is naturally rich in magnesium, to the staff of the clinical centres in Belgrade, Vojvodina, Kragujevac and Niš.

However, in addition to direct support, through donations, it is extremely important that we follow the recommen-

### **pandemic?**

— Probably like most of our fellow citizens - one part of the day is spent on work, while the rest on my family. I use this situation to devote myself to things that I normally do not have enough time for, namely, I read, cook, watch movies, etc.

### **What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— When it comes to Nova Sloga, we will, first and foremost, continue with the activities that due to this situation had to be temporarily put on hold. We plan is to invest in production capacities. We expect new equipment to arrive that will improve our productivity level. Privately, I plan to replace video calls and messages with real encounters. **D&C**

NEXT ►



# We are Constantly Communicating With All Relevant Partners in Serbia and Abroad

Our company has rather unique business partners and clients, owners and developers of shopping centres, retail parks and business premises, to whom we are at disposal at all times and to whom we give concrete suggestions and tips on how to maintain business operations in this period

**MIA ZEČEVIĆ**

CEO of NOVASTON



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We spoke with the CEO of NOVASTON, Mia Zečević about how she organized her business activities during this crisis, a swift resolution of crises in the real estate segment and about acceptable procrastination. "We have been exchanging experiences and all relevant data with colleagues from Croatia, as well as from other countries in the region which, like Serbia, are affected by the coronavirus contagion. In terms of the state measures, we expect that they will help to preserve the business sector in our country because it is already obvious that the global pandemic will result

in serious problems in many spheres," says Ms Zečević.

**How did you organize your business activities? How is communication with your clients going and what do you think about the moratorium?**

**AS FOR ME PERSONALLY, ISOLATION MADE ME REALIZE THAT IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO BE AVAILABLE 24/7 TO EVERYONE, TO CONTROL EVERYTHING AND TO BE IN THE STATE OF CONSTANT STRESS**

— A few days before the state of emergency was declared, we had organized ourselves in such a way that that most

of the employees of the companies that make up our Novaston platform could work from home. For those who are working in the field, mostly property and facility managers, we have provided the required protective equipment. We have

important to underline that, at no point, did we stop working. We formed a crisis team and introduced on-call duties, as well as established clear lines of communication with clients.

Our company has rather unique business partners and

been constantly adhering to the officially prescribed measures and we are doing our best to keep our employees safe. It is

clients, owners and developers of shopping centres, retail parks and business premises, to whom we are at disposal

at all times so that we can resolve crises in a swift manner considering that the government devised new measures daily in accordance with we had to adjust our business and implement them as quickly as possible. Also, bearing in mind we have partners and associates abroad, we have to constantly communicate with them and inform them promptly about all changes and decision, as well as give them concrete suggestions and tips on how to maintain business operations in this period.

We have been exchanging experiences and all relevant data with colleagues from Croatia, as well as from other countries in the region which, like Serbia, are affected by the coronavirus contagion. In terms of the state measures, we expect that they will help to preserve the business sector in our country because it is already obvious that the global pandemic will result in serious problems in many spheres.

**How do you spend your pri-**

**vate time during the pandemic?**

— I am not idle or bored. Because of the responsibility that I have to our platform and all employees and clients, I cannot be completely relaxed during this period. As I said earlier, I am working from home, preparing different strategies fitting to the current moment, figuring out how to survive, but also getting ready for the

their loved ones. At least not enough time...

Yet, all that has happened to us, gave us a moment to pause on a global level, to reconsider and to start from the beginning, as well as to become aware of everything we have and to find happiness and satisfaction in it. It has also taught us how to appreciate the little things, such as walking your pet, which is now limited to all of us. We

— I am going to meet up with my family, parents and friends. Immediately after that, I am going to meet with my team and clients to figure out what awaits us, to create a new strategy and to expand our range of services. All companies, both small and large, and even multinationals, have been very disturbed by this situation and made us think "as if there is no tomorrow", and that, in addition to

## OUR COMPANY HAS RATHER UNIQUE BUSINESS PARTNERS AND CLIENTS, OWNERS AND DEVELOPERS OF SHOPPING CENTRES, RETAIL PARKS AND BUSINESS PREMISES, TO WHOM WE ARE AT DISPOSAL AT ALL TIMES

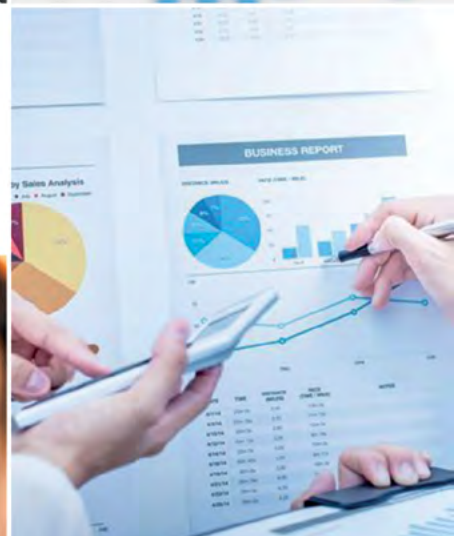
period when the pandemic is over. I am constantly communicating with business partners and associates and I also keep track of what's happening in the world and how it affects our industry. Although people sometimes think that working from home is kind of laid-back, a state of emergency does not leave much time for a person to devote to themselves and

now know who our true friends are and why our family is important to us. That is why I try to find some downtime in all this to clear my mind and fill myself with positive energy and fresh strength for the next day and the next challenge.

**What is the first thing you will do after the state of emergency is abolished?**

plan B, we always have to have plan C and D.

As for me personally, isolation made me realize that it was not necessary to be available 24/7 to everyone, to control everything and to be in the state of constant stress. I learned that it is perfectly okay to leave something for tomorrow, and even say "this does not have to done". **D&C**



  
**NOVASTON**

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# This Pandemic Will Pass and We Must Be Even Stronger for **What is to Come**

The most important thing now is to be careful, to obey the rules and all measures and continue to be responsible to stay healthy

**ALEKSANDRA KOŽUL**

Communication  
Director of  
Novaston  
Marketing  
Consultancy



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**T**he majority of our entire team has been working from home right from the start, except for those who colleagues, who are working in the field and have to be completely protected. We also continued with our corporate social responsibility activities. Although we, as a company, are very affected by the situation, we strive to nonetheless help the community in every way we can by engaging in various charitable campaigns focus on procuring protective equipment for those people who need this type of assistance at the moment," says Aleksandra Kožul from Novaston.

protected following all rules and safeguards. We have online meetings at least once a week and we have immediately formed a crisis team and established clear lines of communication in line with our crisis communication plan, both externally and internally, because, given the situation, that is the most important thing now, i.e. to communicate properly, send a clear message to both employees and clients, and manage yourself in the sea of misinformation. We also need to make certain decisions, calmly and rationally, but quickly enough, based solely on verified information

tion, we strive to nonetheless help the community in every way we can by engaging in various charitable campaigns focus on procuring protective equipment for those people who need this type of assistance at the moment. As the Novaston platform is engaged in providing unique services in various fields, we have decided to concede our networks and the site to several experts with whom we cooperate, so they can answer to various questions in their articles to make it easier for all of us to survive the situation with the coronavirus.

I try not to view everything not only as a problem but also as a challenge. I also want to get the most out of what is now offered to us, both business and private-wise, so that the end effect is not only negative. Now, the most important thing is to be careful, to obey the rules and all measures, to continue to be responsible to stay healthy because the only thing that is certain at this moment is that this pandemic will pass and that we must be even stronger for what is to come.

## How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— I have to admit, I am tired. I believe most people are. Although we work from home, there is work to do daily. We are working hard on the strategy and its implementation, how to survive in the current moment, but also how to proceed when this situation passes. While I am doing that, my four-year-old daughter is putting makeup on me, doing my hair, choosing jewellery and dresses for us to wear so we can play princesses. I'm sure all mothers can relate to this. I often look like an octopus to myself and wonder if I have only two hands. I try to exercise, sometimes I meditate a bit and do my back exercise

programme, but not enough for this isolation period. I wish I had more time for yoga; every morning, I promise myself that today is the day. With a colleague from the team, I prepare various texts for our Novaston site, which relaxes and calms me a lot, because the topics are diverse and intended for everyone to survive this "corona age" together. Reading is something I do regularly, at least a little bit. I am currently reading "Anxious People" by Fredrick Backman and "Cow That Cried" by Buddhist priest Ajahn Brahm, which I wholeheartedly recommend to everyone.

## What is the first thing you are going to do after the state of emergency is abolished?

— I'll take my daughter to Smederevo to see my parents, who are in isolation because of their age and chronic illnesses. Although we argue about various things on a daily basis, and especially these days, when my mum is even more concerned for us all and calls us every hour even though we are practically in similar isolation, we miss my parents greatly. It is very strange that before this happened we sometimes did not see each other for a whole month due to work and various obligations. Now, because we are prevented from seeing them, we have become fully aware of the strong bond between us and how much we need each other. After the state of emergency is abolished, I will take my sister to a great restaurant where we are going to enjoy slightly sweet French wine. And then back to the reality that was before this pandemic. I believe that we are going to return to our normal routine very soon, but I hope, we will be richer for a new experience, more willing to make mistakes and to be one with nature and the people around us. **D&C**

**WE NEED TO MAKE CERTAIN DECISIONS, CALMLY AND RATIONALLY, BUT QUICKLY ENOUGH, BASED SOLELY ON VERIFIED INFORMATION THAT IS VIEWED FROM MULTIPLE ANGLES**

## How did you organize your business activities? How is communication with clients going and what do you think in general about crisis communication?

— The majority of our entire team has been working from home right from the start, except for those who colleagues, who are working in the field and have to be completely

that is viewed from multiple angles. Only in this way, following all the steps foreseen, can the results be positive and can we emerge from the crisis with as little or no consequence as possible.

On the other hand, we have continued with our corporate social responsibility activities. Although we, as a company, are very affected by the situa-

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# We are Trying to Find New Opportunities for Companies and Brands

**MAJA STOJANOVIĆ**

Executive Director,  
Olaf&McAteer



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Communication with clients is more intense than ever, their needs are different, and the agency has an opportunity to compile in one place various information, experience and contacts that could be useful for everyone

**T**he focus is on CSR and donation. We listen carefully to the needs and motivate our clients to engage in different calls. A large number of them were quick to respond and offered assistance," said Maja Stojanović, Executive Director, Olaf&McAteer for our online edition.

**How did you organize regular business activities? How are you communicating with clients, consumers, suppliers and others?**

— A couple of years ago we introduced work from home, so our teams are used to "remote work" and this works

really well for us; among sectors, but also with clients and other associates. In these new circumstances, we can agree that this is a great advantage.

Communication with clients is more intense than ever, their needs are different, and the agency has an opportunity to compile in one place various information, experience and contacts that could be useful for everyone.

We regularly send our clients relevant information for their sector, but also recommendations for internal and external communication. We have adapted the existing communication plans to the new



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circumstances and we are trying to find new opportunities for companies and brands.

The focus is on CSR and donation. We listen carefully

tion with online community and influencers...

Also, we are trying to find adequate speakers for our media colleagues on various current topics, and continue our cooperation in these extraordinary circumstances.

**How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?**

— Probably like everyone else! I follow the news, collect friends' recommendations for books and films, and above all, I'd like to compliment the theatres and museums for their initiative which gave us an opportunity to enjoy great cultural content in times like this. For us "culture addicts", that's a great thing!

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— We have to continue the tradition, and this is joint breakfast with Olaf colleagues! And I hope we'll all gather soon!

**COMMUNICATION WITH CLIENTS IS MORE INTENSE THAN EVER, THEIR NEEDS ARE DIFFERENT, AND THE AGENCY HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMPILER IN ONE PLACE VARIOUS INFORMATION, EXPERIENCE AND CONTACTS THAT COULD BE USEFUL FOR EVERYONE**



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to the needs and motivate our clients to engage in different calls. A large number of them were quick to respond and offered assistance, and among the first were JTI Company in cooperation with the Serbian Philanthropy Forum, Avon Company and many others.

In addition, we are engaged in creating digital content that adds to our everyday lives at home, the so-called DIY (do it yourself) tips and suggestions... so there are online sales campaigns, intense communica-

# These are Awful Times and Hopefully it'll Bring the Best in Us, Make Us All **Work Together**

I am very proud of the response my company has had. We reached out stakeholders in government and in private sector to try to see exactly what kind of response is needed

## IVAN MILETIĆ

Director of  
External Affairs  
of Philip Morris  
International SEE



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**W**e have interviewed Ivan Miletić, Director of External Affairs of Philip Morris International SEE about how PMI has organised business activities during the state of emergency, how they contribute to the fight against the COVID-19 virus, as well as how he is spending his free time and what he will do first when the state of emergency is abolished. "We are very thankful to our colleagues who continued to come to work every day and to do their best, and continued to show very strong results. Again, this is a very tiring time, so we have to arm ourselves with lots of patience. For me personally, my

job is engaging with people, speaking and meeting with people in person every day. That has been very difficult in these times" said Ivan Miletić.

### How did you organize your business activities?

— This is a very challenging time for all of us, and I am afraid it is a very fluid category, and it is going to continue to be like that for a while. For us, in SEE, we have 6 markets, we have about

1000 employees, different geographies, different governments have been implementing different measures, and they are really treating pandemic differently in different times, so, for us, the main obligation is to keep all of our employees and their families safe, to make sure that they continue to do their job, and also to continue to provide our consumers, the users of our products with the best possible experience.

So, we immediately looked at if some people can work remotely, and for those who can work remotely, they have been doing that. Unfortunately all of us cannot work remotely since we have a factory in Niš, we have many colleagues who are frontliners, who work in sales, and work directly with our consumers. So for them we made sure that we have enough protective equipment, masks, gloves, enough disin-

**THIS IS A VERY TIRING TIME, SO WE HAVE TO ARM OURSELVES WITH LOTS OF PATIENCE. FOR ME PERSONALLY, MY JOB IS ENGAGING WITH PEOPLE, SPEAKING AND MEETING WITH PEOPLE IN PERSON EVERY DAY**





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fectants. So, we made sure that we implement certain policies and measures designed in this times to keep them safe from harm as much as possible.

We are very thankful to our colleagues who continued to come to work every day and to do their best, and continued to show very strong results. Again, this is a very tiring time, so we have to arm ourselves with lots of patience. For me personally, my job is engaging with people, speaking and meeting with people in person every day. That has been very difficult in these times. I find that you can replace some of the human contact with apps and technologies available, but for me personally it is not enough. I like meeting with people, I like having conversation with people in person, so I am looking forward to this situation to be over so we could go meeting each other in person and spending time together.

**The Government of Serbia has announced its package of economic measures to overcome the consequences of the current situation and other measures. What do you think about them?**

— As I said, in SEE, different governments have been implementing different measures, and they are really treating pandemic differently in differ-

ent times, and we as a business support all these measures that are reasonable, aiming to keep people safe, science-based, fact-based and reasonable designed to keep people safe in these crazy times, we support them and applaud the Government for them. As of economic measures, we have to be careful not to address only immediate issues but to look at long term business sustainability. I've seen that the measures in our region have done exactly that. This is challenging since there is no blueprint how to manage a pandemic of such proportions. The governments for their part are doing their best and I think that they are all fact-based and reasonable. I think that Chambers of Commerce are doing a great job so the voice of the business can

together. I am very proud of the response my company has had. We reached out stakeholders in government and in private sector to try to see exactly what kind of response is needed. Because we've seen the leadership of the countries in the region has been very active in finding medical equipment and medicals, ensuring there is enough ventilators so what we've done is reaching out our stakeholders to see what supplementary things are needed now, so we don't overlap in certain things and leaving some other things to fall through the cracks. In some markets the aid has been delivered, in some markets it is on its way. But I am sure it will show what we are made of, and I am sure that we show the human side of the business now.

before. For me, the opportunity is working from my kitchen counter or making conference calls in the company of my nine years olds, but one of the nice things I hearing their voices from the other room even if we are not together all day long: arguing with their mum and asking what is the right answer and what they have to do next. The opportunity you should cherish is the time spent with your family and the ones you love.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**


— Just going out with no gloves and no surgical mask and taking a long drive with my family and exploring some of the local things here in Serbia, or other Balkan countries. It

**AS OF ECONOMIC MEASURES, WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO ADDRESS ONLY IMMEDIATE ISSUES BUT TO LOOK AT LONG TERM BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY. I'VE SEEN THAT THE MEASURES IN OUR REGION HAVE DONE EXACTLY THAT**

be heard. I am very encouraged and I think we are on the right path, and hopefully we won't need them for too long. It, however, remains to be seen. You also asked me how important is solidarity. These are awful times and hopefully it'll bring the best in us, make us all work

**How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?**

— Look, I think we are all adjusting, we are all finding that spending curfew and time working from home represents certain challenge, but also it is an opportunity we didn't have

sounds better than Bahamas at this point. There is a post on social networks which says: After this is all over, I will stay home for couple of days and really clear my head. This is definitely what I am not going to do. I am going out and staying out as long as possible. 

# The Need for Transportation has Not Stopped, and its Realization is Now Difficult But **Not Impossible**

Our company has been in business for over 100 years and we survived all the great wars and crises and learned something from each

**MAJA  
SUDJICKI  
TRZIN**

Managing Director  
of Samer & Co.  
Shipping DOO

**O**ur activities in Serbia have allowed this to be implemented, however, our colleagues in Trieste are working full time whilst enacting the highest level of security to ensure that one of the largest ports in the region is fully operational, even in these most difficult times in Italy's recent history" said Maja Sudjicki Trzin Managing Director of Samer & Co. Shipping

## How did you organize your business activities and communication with your business partners and clients?

— From the very first day of the state of emergency, Samer & Co. shipping company has organized for most of its employees to work from home. Our activities in Serbia have allowed this to be implemented, however, our colleagues in Trieste are working full time whilst enacting the highest level of security to ensure that one of the largest ports in the region is fully operational, even in these most difficult times in Italy's recent history. Albeit from home, we are now working even harder and more diligently to provide the supply chain for our clients, and at this time, this is the biggest challenge for the country, in addition to health care of course.



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strictions on the movement of people began, the movement of goods stopped, which slowed down all economic activity. Order cancellations caused by the inability to transport goods reached incredible and unprecedented proportions. The need for transportation has not stopped, and its realization is now difficult but not impossible. As a socially responsible company, we have offered certain capacities to the most affected industries, above all food, and safety equipment, and here we have demonstrated solidarity. We continuously

their needs. Air transport of goods has not been completely halted and right now, this is where the biggest challenge is in securing space on cargo aircraft for the most critical goods. Our company has been in business for over 100 years and we survived all the great wars and crises and learned something from each. What has not changed, and never will, is our care for the employees who are the most important resource in our industry. Crises come and go, while people who know their job stay.

## How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— I spend a lot of time communicating with employees to monitor the market situation, which in these circumstances sometimes goes late into the evening. Private time is somewhat of an unusual category right now, and I can't compare it to any free time from previous times. In moments of lull, I hang out with my son, he does homework, and I work on

preparing my PhD thesis. I read jokes and watch funny clips on the internet like everyone else. This time has given me a lot of freight, but there has never so much fun and so much black humor around as there is now. This, I believe, is a valve for all of us to help us through these difficult times.

## What are the first steps you will take after the state of emergency is lifted?

— I analyze damage estimates for the economy on a day-to-day basis during the state of emergency. When it ends, I will monitor the pace that the recovery is going at, and will try to make a personal contribution. I will thank all the associates who have been with us during these difficult days and weeks. There are many little things I miss now that I previously did not appreciate enough. I will certainly not carry my work home and will also look at avoiding staying in the house. The weather is getting better, so I look forward to the freedom of going to the hairdresser, beautician, and the restaurants. I miss my Belgrade office colleagues and their daily routines and humour. On Saturdays I will go to the green market and on Sundays, as before, to Sremski Karlovci. I am in favor of the theory that economic recovery will come faster compared to earlier economic crises, although it the cost will be a lot higher. This crisis will bring some new business models and opportunities and it has already given me some ideas. This is exactly what I would advise others - however difficult and uncertain the times may be, opportunities will always be there, we just need to recognize them. **D&C**

**OUR COMPANY HAS BEEN IN BUSINESS FOR OVER 100 YEARS AND WE SURVIVED ALL THE GREAT WARS AND CRISES AND LEARNED SOMETHING FROM EACH**

## How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and be of help in these extraordinary circumstances?

— Solidarity is very important in times like these moments, but it also has its limits and possibilities. When the first re-

keep track of the situation on the borders of Serbia, as well as the newly opened borders within the European Union, where long lines are formed due to truck driver controls, so we advise clients and look for solutions to meet some of

NEXT ►

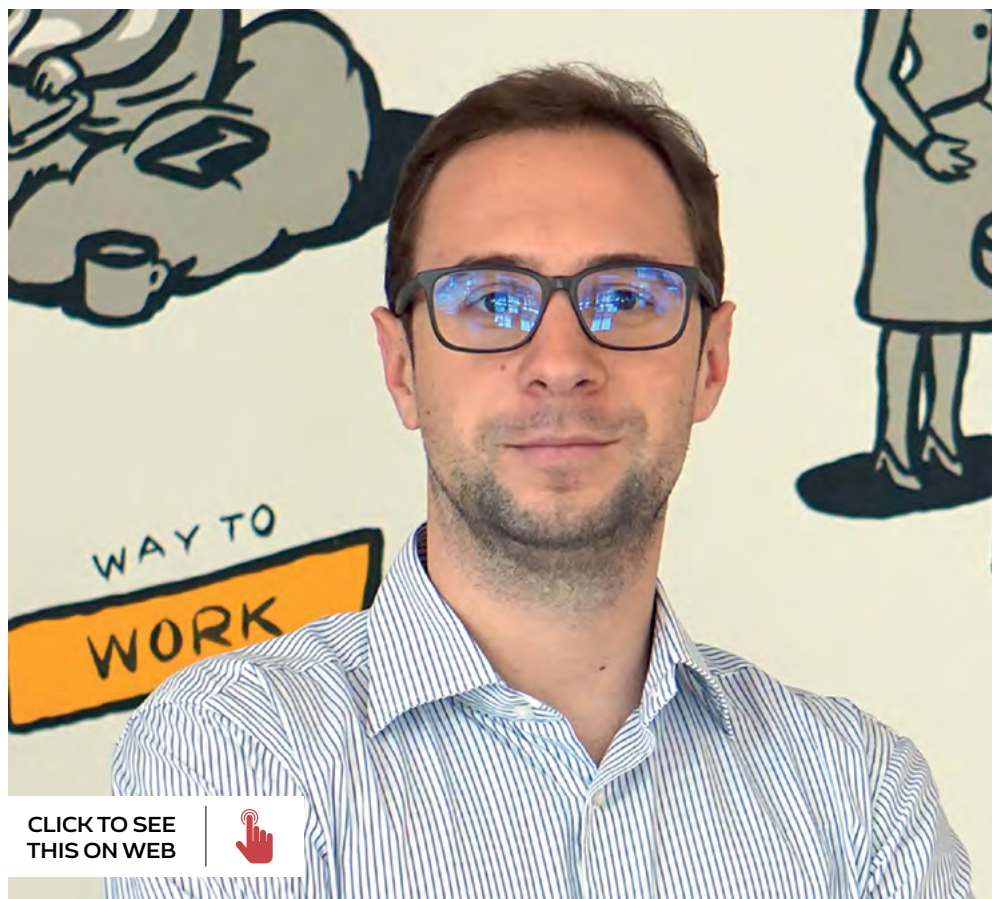


# We are Actively Working on Redefining Priorities in our Work

We are especially pleased that by using online platform our Digital Transformation Academy has continued, dedicated to the best students of the Faculty of Organizational Sciences

**ALEKSANDAR  
VRATONJIĆ  
GLIGORIJEVIĆ**

Marketing Director,  
TeleGroup



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**T**hanks to our strong partner network, we have made it possible for our users in the domain of public companies, healthcare institutions, financial and private sector to use the tools for online business communication and the organization of video meetings for free" said Aleksandar Vratonjić Gligorijević, Marketing Director, TeleGroup.

## How did you organize your business activities and communication with your business partners and clients?

— In order to protect the health of our employees, TeleGroup takes all necessary measures in all our territories in which we operate to prevent the spread of viruses and minimize disruption to our work. The Crisis Staff of the TeleGroup System has been formed, which continuously monitors the de-

velopment of the situation, ensures concrete implementation of state bodies decisions and measures through concrete actions, and is always available for advice and instructions on

We have organized on-call duties, and our engineering, IT operations, financial and administrative department are at customers disposal for any support they might need and

**WE ARE ESPECIALLY PLEASED THAT BY USING ONLINE PLATFORM OUR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ACADEMY HAS CONTINUED, DEDICATED TO THE BEST STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF ORGANIZATIONAL SCIENCES**

how to deal with such circumstances. In all our business premises, we constantly ensure that disinfectants are available. In order to protect the health of our employees, temporary remote work is enabled. We are actively working on redefining priorities in our work, but also motivating and empowering our employees through active communication and affirmative content.

to ensure business continuity.

Thanks to our strong partner network, we have made it possible for our users in the domain of public companies, healthcare institutions, financial and private sector to use the tools for online business communication and the organization of video meetings for free. These tools allow users the flexibility to effectively organize meetings with individuals


or teams of people from any smart device, ensuring business continuity this way. We are especially pleased that by using online platform our Digital Transformation Academy has continued, dedicated to the best students of the Faculty of Organizational Sciences.

## How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and be of help in these extraordinary circumstances?

— At the same time, by joining an action launched by the international organization UNICEF, TeleGroup donated funds for purchasing two respirators for healthcare facilities in Serbia. The goal of this action is to support our health care system in combating the Covid-19 virus pandemic in order to provide the most vulnerable

patients with the necessary medical care.

We are very proud on our employees and TeleGroup volunteers who joined the City of Belgrade's action in transporting and distributing essential life packages for senior citizens living in Belgrade.

TeleGroup will continue to support the Serbian health system and the wider community through similar actions. 

NEXT ►

# The Trucking Industry Must Always Work

Cooperation and solidarity are extremely important, especially within the transportation

**STEVAN  
JOVIČEVIĆ**

General Manager  
of Tahograf BG



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my family, to relax with a good book or movie, to take care of my nutrition and health in general. All those dear, ordinary, and useful little things we often tend to neglect due to the intensity of our work. I recently saw a movie The Irishman and I think this is a convenient occasion to quote the legendary and empowering Jimmy Hoffa, portrayed by Al Pacino: „If you got it, a truck brought it to you.“

**Which steps will you take first after the state of emergency is over?**

— We will return to the office, analyze the losses we had and create an action plan to compensate them. Since the state of emergency has brought us some derogations

**W**e spoke with Stevan Jovičević General Manager of Tahograf BG about their organisation during pandemic and state of emergency. „I’ve always been saying that the future lies in remote work. This situation made Tahograf BG put that claim to the test” said Mr. Jovičević

**How did you organize your business activities and how do you communicate with clients?**

— I’ve always been saying that the future lies in remote work. This situation made Tahograf BG put that claim to the test. As we already have a couple of external associates working remotely, it wasn’t difficult to quickly arrange and install equipment in the homes of all other colleagues. We’ve also forwarded office calls to our cell phones and so far, communication with clients continues to run smoothly.

**How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and help in these extraordinary circumstances?**

— Cooperation and solidarity are extremely important, espe-

**COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY ARE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, ESPECIALLY WITHIN THE TRANSPORTATION, WHICH IS A VITAL PART OF EVERY ECONOMY**

cially within the transportation, which is a vital part of every economy. Despite all the difficulties, the trucking industry must always work. How else would our food reach the retail; how would our medicines reach the pharmacies and therefore the citizens? Medical equipment must find its way to the hospitals, raw materials must get to factories, and all this relies

on supported and well-organized transport of goods.

**How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?**

— However bad it may be, one should try and make the best from each situation in life, and this is not the exception. That’s why I use my free time to spend quality moments with

and exceptions to the Law on Working Hours of the Crew in Road Transport Vehicles and Tachographs, I expect Tahograf BG to enhance its consultant activity towards our clients – the trucking companies. We will try our best to help them put the obligatory records of drivers’ working hours in order, so they don’t suffer any legal consequences. **D&C**



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# It's Our Duty and Obligation to **Act Responsibly** and in Solidarity

In addition to masks, I am proud that we can produce extra quantities of rubber boots that we will donate to healthcare professionals – the heroes of today

**VLADIMIR ILIĆ**

Director General of  
Tigar a.d.



WEBSITE



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In keeping with our aim to continue reporting about economic news, we spoke to Mr Vladimir Ilić, Director General of Tigar a.d., about how the company has organized its business activities during the state of emergency, his private activities and things he will do after the state of emergency is cancelled.

**How did you organize your business activities? What is your communication with consumers, suppliers and others like during this time?**

equipment and we are preparing to start making masks of certified materials for their own use. Our workers have also made many masks for public institutions and organizations that approached us for help.

The company's administrative activities are organized following the Government's decree. We have on-call duty and our staff is working from home wherever possible.

Our factories, with over six hundred production workers, are currently operating at full capacity, in three shifts. We expect to keep up with this pace

stores, changed its sales plan, and announced that it would place new orders only after the pandemic has passed. Our second biggest client, in terms of sales volume, Berner has a problem with the market, and the production for the Finnish Army, a deal worth close to 800,000 euro, is at standstill because the delivery of raw materials is late. Our regular clients from Italy - Battistini, Patrizia, Industrial Starter, Basic Net and Raitex - have all halted orders which resulted in the goods, which had already been manufactured as per orders from 2020, are sitting in Tigar's warehouses, waiting to be delivered. Apart from the stagnating export activities, we have also recorded a drop in our sales in the domestic market.

**How important is it for companies to stand in solidarity and support and donate to the healthcare system?**

— Hard times are a reminder to all of us that it is our duty and obligation to act responsibly and in solidarity, not only to-

wards our companies and our employees, but also towards all those people who turn to us for help at this moment. In addition to masks, I am proud that we can produce extra quantities of rubber boots that we will donate to healthcare professionals – the heroes of today.

**How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?**

— I spend my private time in the best way possible - with my family. Since my family and I have been often separated in the past three years because my work starts early in the morning and ends late at night, I usually saw my children on Viber. Now, strangely, everything is turned upside down. Now, we have time for each other, because just like all responsible citizens in Serbia, I stay at home whenever possible.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— After the state of emergency is over, I will first assemble my team to toast to life. After that, the only thing that we can do is to roll up our sleeves and start solving the problems and consequences of this scourge.

I wish you good health and take care of yourself. **D&C**

**AFTER THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IS OVER, I WILL FIRST ASSEMBLE MY TEAM TO TOAST TO LIFE. AFTER THAT, THE ONLY THING THAT WE CAN DO IS TO ROLL UP OUR SLEEVES AND START SOLVING THE PROBLEMS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THIS SCOURGE**

— During the state of emergency which was declared due to the Covid 19 virus epidemic all three of Tigar's factories - Footwear Factory, Technical Rubber Factory and Chemical Product Factory - are working full steam ahead, in three shifts. In order to protect the health of our employees, we have implemented all proposed measures of staff protection in line with the relevant recommendations and the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Our workers have protective

until the end of the month and we are already fulfilling orders of our major customers such as Decathlon, Berner and the Hong Kong-based, Fire Services Department.

Emergencies in the world, first in China, then in the EU and Serbia, have led to some delays in the supply of raw materials, followed by changes in the procurement plans of our biggest clients, which have already been contracted for 2020. Our biggest client, Decathlon has closed many retail



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# Difficult Times Require Greater Caution but Also Greater Responsibility

Following UNIQA Osiguranje's corporate values, the organization of business activities also includes solidarity. People are in the focus of UNIQA's entire business

**GORDANA  
BUKUMIRIĆ**

Chairwoman of  
Executive Board of  
UNIQA Osiguranje



WEBSITE

We spoke with Gordana Bukumirić, Chairwoman of the Executive Board of UNIQA Osiguranje (UNIQA Insurance), about how the company organized its business activities during the pandemic and the state of emergency.

"In addition to the 350 personal UNIQA insurance agents available to clients over the phone, we have facilitated the use of the Contact Centre, telephone and online services are available 24 hours for purchasing insurance products and claiming damages, there is an option of video damage assessment, a web shop and online payment for insurance coverage. These are services that UNIQA implemented earlier, but in times of social isolation, they gained an added value," Ms Bukumirić said.

## How did you organize business activities?

— UNIQA Osiguranje is part of the UNIQA Group from Austria, which has subordinated its global business operation



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responsibility. To maintain business stability in the new work-from-home mode, we have ensured the smooth running of all processes without direct contact. We redirected internal and external com-

available 24 hours for purchasing insurance products and claiming damages, there is an option of video damage assessment, a web shop and online payment for insurance coverage. These are services that

duced benefits for our clients over the age of 65, as well as our most vulnerable clients.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— First of all, I hope that we will all stay healthy and that we will return to our daily activities in a good mood. Working from home, however difficult at times, has brought us some benefits, such as improved communication via Skype, Viber groups, messages and emails. We have solidified our interconnectedness and will work to preserve that spirit. After the state of emergency is abolished, the first thing I plan to do is to bring our employees together. We miss live meetings and this will certainly be the initial step so we can continue together where we left off as a team; the team I am truly proud of. **D&C**

**TO MAINTAIN BUSINESS STABILITY IN THE NEW WORK-FROM-HOME MODE, WE HAVE ENSURED THE SMOOTH RUNNING OF ALL PROCESSES WITHOUT DIRECT CONTACT. WE REDIRECTED INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION TO OTHER EQUALLY EFFECTIVE CHANNELS**

to the fight against the contagion and consequences of COVID-19. In accordance with the recommendations issued by the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the relevant health institutions, we reacted promptly and in the interest of protecting our employees, clients, partners and, of course, public health. Difficult times require greater caution but also greater

munication to other equally effective channels. By moving from face-to-face contact to phones, Viber, social media and emails, we have preserved, even strengthened communication on all levels.

In addition to the 350 personal UNIQA insurance agents available to clients over the phone, we have facilitated the use of the Contact Centre, telephone and online services are

UNIQA implemented earlier, but in times of social isolation, they gained an added value

Following UNIQA Osiguranje's corporate values, the organization of business activities also includes solidarity. People are in the focus of UNIQA's entire business. As in other difficult times, we reaffirmed our solidarity by donating 5 million dinars to the Serbian healthcare system and intro-



# We Assist Clients to **Make Decisions** in a New Situation as Quickly as Possible

We have developed several intelligent reports and certain other documents as the V+O Group, which can help everyone in this situation to make decisions faster and easier

**NATALIJA  
RACKOVIĆ**

General  
Manager, V+O  
COMMUNICATION



WEBSITE

Photo: Nikola Pazarski



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**I**n our special series dedicated to business and diplomatic activities in Serbia, the region and the world, we spoke with Natalija Racković, General Manager of V+O COMMUNICATION. "Implementing marketing and communication plans in times of pandemic and state of emergency is far more demanding, and communication with clients is far more frequent, but it is important for them to know that we are here and can count the time," Natalija Racković says.

**How did you organize your business activities? How is communication with your clients going?**

— The V+O staff started working from home even before a state of emergency was declared. When the first cases of the coronavirus were registered, it was important for me

to keep all my colleagues as far as possible from the contagion, especially those colleagues who had to change several types of public transport to get to the office. We all have the technical capabilities to work

**WE ARE MONITORING THE SITUATION AND WE ARE HERE FOR WHATEVER CLIENTS NEED. THEY NEED TO KNOW THAT THEY CAN COUNT ON US**

from home, i.e. laptops and access to data, as well as the co-working platform through which we speak with each other and share information and documents. If we already have the technical capacity to organize the work from home, I don't see why we wouldn't use it.

At the same time, I am also communicating with colleagues from other markets

where we do business, sharing experiences, materials, reports and recommendations, so that we are all in line with the new situation and can help our clients as much as possible.

As far as communication

can count on us.

**How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?**

— I am working on perfecting my culinary skills. I'm researching and trying out new recipes. That relaxes me. Also, I renewed and intensified contacts with my university friends who live abroad, but also in Serbia, and we have online calls twice a week. Furthermore, I plan to soon start reading all the books I bought intending to read them someday when I have more time.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?**

— I'm going to visit my mum. I'll barbecue with my friends in nature. I will continue with the "normal" life. I am sending you all a lot of regards and please stay well and healthy. **D&C**

# We Quickly Adapted to New Circumstances and Reorganized our Business

We are now preparing for the time when this danger passes, to be ready to go back to the normal operating mode

## DEJAN TURK

Director General of  
Vip mobile



WEBSITE

**W**e have talked with Dejan Turk, Director General of Vip mobile, about the current situation, the quick adaptation to the given circumstances, how he spends his free time and what he will do when the state of emergency is over.

"Our customers can get in touch with us at any time through our customer service and online communication channels, and as far as our call centres go, only those which are absolutely necessary are working on a part-time basis. Also, we have created a special page on our website where you can find all the relevant information and recommendations regarding our services, network and measures we apply on a daily basis," Mr Turk says.

### How did you organize your business activities?

— There is a saying that goes



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## WE HAVE CREATED A SPECIAL PAGE ON OUR WEBSITE WHERE YOU CAN FIND ALL THE RELEVANT INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING OUR SERVICES, NETWORK AND MEASURES WE APPLY ON A DAILY BASIS

"change is the only constant in life", and the pandemic and state of emergency have definitely brought about a huge change in habits. In order to provide people with what they need the most in this period - communication with friends and family and access to information - we had to quickly adapt to new circumstances and reorganize our business in just a few days.

Even before the state of emergency, we had preven-

tively introduced work from home as well as reduced travel abroad. We have created all the conditions for staff to work from home full time, if that is possible due to the nature of their job. As far as our call centres go, only those which are absolutely necessary are working on a part-time basis.

Also, we have created a special page on our website where you can find all the relevant information and recommendations regarding our servic-


es, network and measures we apply on a daily basis. We are now preparing for the time when this danger passes, to be ready to return to the normal operating mode.

### How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— I have to admit that working from home is quite different from the remote work which is an option we can use within a company. The form is the same,

but in practice, it is quite different. I currently spend my days between working from home, coordinating extraordinary and regular activities of Vip in Serbia and A1 in Slovenia, and home schooling my children. Truth be told, the latter is much more difficult for me. ;-)

### What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?

— I really don't know at this point. From today's perspective and depending how the situation evolves, abolishing the state of emergency still seems a long way off. I will surely, like everyone else, look forward to going out with family and friends, for example, to a river raft, overlooking the Sava. 



## OTP Bank

**DONATION TO TORLAK INSTITUTE AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO HOSPITALS**

In the struggle against coronavirus-es, OTP Bank donated a delivery vehicle worth over 3 million dinars to The Torlak Institute. Knowing what challenges the entire health system of our country faced, the bank additionally donated a total of 2,650,000 dinars to the General Hospital in Sremska Mitrovica, Clinical Center in Niš, Institute of Oncology and Radiology of Serbia - Children's ward, General Hospital in Subotica and the city of Valjevo, which raises funds for local health institutions. Also, OTP Bank has made it easier for its clients to donate funds to an official RFZO account. In such difficult circumstances, the delivery vehicle for the Torlak Institute



will play a significant role in the transport of COVID-19 virus tests, thus directly helping to results deliver faster and more efficiently. The vehicle is fully customized for these needs and has accessories that include built-in thermal insulation, a cooling device and a thermographer which records the temperature. The Bank also provided financial support to the aforementioned institutions.

## Henkel

**VALUABLE DONATION TO THE HOSPITAL IN KRUŠEVAC**

With the aim of supporting the fight against Covid-19, Henkel Serbia donated hygiene and protective equipment to the hospital in Krusevac. The hospital in Kruševac was handed 320 pieces (688 kilograms) of Merix powder detergent, 1,260 pieces (676 kilograms) of Mer liquid dish detergent, as well as 2,000 cotton protective masks in order to provide the best possible conditions for patients and doctors, and in the coming days Henkel will deliver 500 visors to this hospital, which are an integral part of the protective equipment of medical professionals. "As a responsible company, we know that assistance in such a difficult situation is of great importance and we believe that our donation to the General Hospital in Krusevac will be an incentive for others, as every type of assistance is currently very valuable," Henkel Serbia said.

## UNIQA

**INTRODUCES INCENTIVES FOR THE TERM OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY**

abilities due after the state of emergency ends. Such deferment on the payments of insurance premium that falls due during the state of emergency shall not result in the accrual of interest on arrears and shall not in any way affect the exercising of rights stemming from insurance contract during the state of emergency. The insurance premiums that fall due during the state of emergency may be settled at a later point, i.e. within three months after the state of emergency ends. Such incentives do not operate to extend the term of insurance, but simply to postpone the payment of premium dues.

With full understanding of difficulties with payments of liabilities assumed through insurance contracts, in the period of the state of emergency UNIQA Insurance has allowed its clients who are older than 65 and clients who during COVID-19 pandemic, partially or completely, have been left without regular income, to settle their li-

## Marbo Product

**ITS EMPLOYEES DELIVER DONATIONS ACROSS SERBIA**

During the COVID 19 virus pandemic, Marbo Product, part of the multinational PepsiCo company operating in the Balkans for 11 years, focused its socially responsible efforts on helping vulnerable social groups, as well as joining numerous donor campaigns and cooperation with foundations to provide help where it is most needed. Marbo Product responded to the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and delivered the donation of Chipsy, Clipsy, Pardon and Gud products for the needs of a temporary hospital. In cooperation with the Divac Foundation, the products were delivered to the Church's National Kitchen in Belgrade, which has more than 2600 users, as well as to the SOS Children's Village in Sremska Kamenica for more than 100 children within the village. Through the #WakeUpCall campaign conducted by the Marketing Mreža portal, products donation were sent to the most vulnerable families in Belgrade. The goal of the action is to work together with the advertising industry to help the most vulnerable. Through the Fund B92, a financial donation was also given for the Clinical Center of Serbia for the purchase of protective equipment for healthcare professionals. In addition, the company will deliver a donation of its products every week to all medical professionals at Clinical Centers across Serbia. Donation was also given to the local community in Bački Petrovac, where the Marbo Product plant is located, as one of two within the PepsiCo business in the Western Balkans.

## EIB Group

**CONTRIBUTES € 5.2 BILLION TO EU RESPONSE TO COVID-19 OUTSIDE EUROPEAN UNION**

The European Investment Bank Group, the bank of the European Union, today announced details of a comprehensive response to the coronavirus pandemic outside the EU that will provide up to €5.2 billion in the coming months. This financing is part of the Team Europe response and supported by guarantees from the EU budget. It will both strengthen urgent health investment and accelerate long-standing support for private sector investment that reflects financing needs in more than 100 countries around the world. The immediate fast-tracked support will help to sustain jobs and livelihoods in sectors most threatened by the economic and social impact of the coronavirus, and will be followed by additional long-term health and business financing as needed.



Accelerating support for health and business investment and strengthening private sector resilience to the economic and social impact of the coronavirus. The EIB stands ready to accelerate about €1 billion of disbursements on existing approved loans to help the health sector in countries outside of the EU face the coronavirus pandemic, as well as to ensure that business activity can access immediate financing to counter cash flow and liquidity challenges.



Messer

**INCREASED SUPPLY OF MEDICAL OXYGEN TO FIGHT THE CORONAVIRUS**

In these difficult times of the global pandemic, the Messer Tehnogas Company has been able to provide the increased amounts of medical oxygen needed to treat the most serious patients infected with the new coronavirus - Covid 19. In this regard, this company has invested significant resources in the equipment for increasing oxygen consumption capacity, such as additional tanks with the medical oxygen which have been installed at the Clinical Centre of Serbia, the Military Medical Centre in Karaburma and the Military Hospital in Niš, which has been designated as the main regional hospital for the accommodation of corona patients in Southern Serbia. Messer has also expanded the supply capacities and adapted the installations for a central supply of medical oxygen in the Clinical Hospital Centre in Zemun. Additionally, 200 regulators have been adjusted for direct oxygen consumption from the cylinders. Messer Tehnogas, as a company that plays an important role in supplying the Serbian market with vital medical gases, through continuous communication and in mutual agreement with the COVID-19 Infection Disease Crisis Response Team of the Serbian government, provides regular and reliable distribution of medical gases to required health care institutions in our country.

DDOR osiguranje

**WITH ITS DONATION OF 11 MILLION RSD, SUPPORTS THE BRAVE IN FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19**

DDOR osiguranje has donated 11,000,000.00 RSD to national and provincial institutions, as well as to the City of Novi Sad as support in fight against COVID-19. The funds have been paid to special-purpose accounts of the Health Insurance Fund (RFZO), the Provincial Secretariat for Health Care, as well as to the City of Novi Sad, i.e. to the special-purpose account of the Administration for public services, opened with the aim of financing the prevention of spreading of the COVID-19 epidemic and alleviating its consequences. That way, DDOR osiguranje, in addition to showing care for its employees and clients by raising the level of prevention measures in its business operations, has given its contribution to the health system of the Republic of Serbia and the Province of Vojvodina, and to the city institutions fighting against the epidemic.

AIK Bank

**DONATES 28 MILLION DINARS TO BUY RESPIRATORS**

As a socially responsible institution, AIK Banka has made 28 million dinars donation to the National Health Insurance Fund for the purchase of 10 respirators in fight against COVID-19 epidemic outbreak. Last year, AIK Bank allocated more than €200,000 for various CSR activities. As a socially engaged bank it has always been a pillar of society, and it will strive to continue providing help in this way in the forthcoming period too. In accordance with the new circumstances and recommendations of the competent state institutions, AIK Bank has taken and complied with all necessary measures to protect



its clients and employees in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus. Clients are enabled to make transactions through AIK Bank's digital services and ATMs available to them 24/7. Further, Clients may find all relevant information as well as current offer of AIK Banka by visiting the Bank's website.



In a time when our country is facing a crisis situation, what we need most of all is solidarity. With an aim to help overcome the pandemic of the COVID - 19 virus, Sberbank Srbija decided to donate a certain amount of funds to facilitate the procurement of ventilators, essential medical equipment and instruments. First and foremost, with the funds donated to the National Health Insurance Fund (RFZO), we contributed to the procurement of the much needed ventilators. Furthermore,

Sberbank Srbija

**DONATED FUNDS TO RFZO, UNICEF, KIKINDA GENERAL HOSPITAL, AND ANJA STOJANOVIĆ**

with a donation to UNICEF, we made our contribution to the funds being raised for the purchase of protective equipment for medical workers. Also, having in mind that the city of Kikinda was recognized as one of the most at-risk areas during the pandemic, Sberbank donated the necessary medical instruments for patients with severe respiratory conditions to the city's General Hospital. Unfortunately, we are witness to the fact that tragedies come unexpectedly. Anja Stojanović from Belgrade has recently lost her family and home in a fire that broke out in a residential building in Novi Beograd. In an effort to make this extremely difficult time easier for her, Sberbank Srbija made a financial donation to Anja.

Delta Holding

**DELTA BUSINESS INCUBATOR 2020 CONTEST IS OPEN!**

Delta Holding company announced the contest for the program designed to support startup ideas in any field of business. The third Delta Business Incubator contest will be open until May 31st for all the teams that believe to have the idea worth investing in. To apply, one should fill out the application form on the following website: [www.deltabiznisinkubator.rs/prijavi-se/](http://www.deltabiznisinkubator.rs/prijavi-se/)

Delta Business Incubator is a three month program designed to help startups to develop and improve their product or service, and to prepare them for both the investors and the market. During the program selected teams will have Delta's full support, help and resources, and for the first time they will have the opportunity to work with partners from other compa-



nies and external mentors with wide experience in startup development. In the past two years nearly 240 teams applied for the program and 11 teams completed it. All relevant information about last years' contestants, the contest, application and the program in general can be found on Delta Business Incubator website: [www.deltabiznisinkubator.rs](http://www.deltabiznisinkubator.rs)

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## NLB Bank

**DONATION TO THE TORLAK INSTITUTE**

NLB Bank has donated laboratory supplies to the Torlak Institute of Virology, Vaccines and Serums, which has been the only institution to conduct tests for the coronavirus in Serbia so far, with the aim to contributing to preventing the coronavirus contagion.

"In recent days, we saw from the messages from the World Health Organization officials that have been highlighting the great importance of testing in order to slow down and eventually stop the coronavirus contagion. Considering that the President of the Republic of Serbia also announced a change of approach in the



fight against the coronavirus, which involves more testing, we decided to contribute to these efforts and have donated laboratory material that will enable the Torlak Institute to conduct as many tests possible in the coming days," said Branko Greganović, Chairman of the Executive Board of the NLB Banks, on the occasion of the donation to the Torlak Institute.



## Imlek

**WE WILL NOT REDUCE THE PURCHASE PRICE OF MILK**

Imlek, the largest dairy producer in the region, says it will not reduce the purchase price of milk to its subcontractors due to the new situation in the country. Also, there will be no reduction in the purchase quantities of milk, so this company, as before, will continue to collect milk from its farmers on a regular basis. As a reminder, Imlek cooperates with around 4,000 subcontractors in the territory of the Republic of Serbia, and the daily milk purchase is close to one million liters.

## Eurobank

**DONATION OF SIX MILLION DINARS FOR MEDICAL EQUIPMENT PROCUREMENT**

As a socially responsible company, Eurobank provided six million dinars for the purchase of the medical equipment required for curbing the coronavirus epidemic. The donation will be realized via UNICEF, which invited companies and individuals to express solidarity and donate funds for procuring the necessary equipment for saving lives of people in Serbia and supporting our healthcare system. Following the Serbian government's guidelines, Eurobank has undertaken all precautionary meas-



ures aimed at reducing the further Covid-19 spread. Caring for its employees and clients, Eurobank has provided intensified hygiene measures in all its branches and maximum implementation of the coronavirus-related safety guidelines.



Having in mind the state of emergency declared due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the difficulties in making payments under the insurance contracts that stipulate periodical premium payments, we hereby inform the policy holders: who have been banned from leaving their homes throughout the day, who have no regular income,

## Sava Neživotno Osiguranje

**POSSIBILITY TO EXTEND THE PAYMENT DEADLINE FOR DUE INSURANCE PREMIUMS**

and whose regular income has been significantly reduced and are thus unable to settle their obligations, that they can settle their insurance premiums that became due during the state of emergency after the termination of the state of emergency. The deferred payment of due liabilities shall not result in accruing of default interest and shall not affect the rights under the insurance contracts in question.

Please find more information on the possibility of extending the payment deadline for due insurance premiums at: [www.sava-osiguranje.rs/sr-rs/novosti/174738/](http://www.sava-osiguranje.rs/sr-rs/novosti/174738/)

## Dunav Osiguranje and Dunav Auto

**DONATED RSD 11.35 MILLION TO THE RFZO AND THE DR MILAN JOVANOVIĆ BATUT INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

In response to the efforts of our country's health care system to tackle the new coronavirus outbreak, Dunav Osiguranje (the Dunav Insurance Company) has donated RSD 10 million to the State Health Insurance Fund (RFZO) that will go towards the procurement of necessary medication and medical equipment, while the Dunav Auto Company, which operates under Dunav Osiguranje, donated a new Fiat 500L Mirror passenger car worth RSD 1.35 million to the Dr Milan Jovanović Batut Public Health Institute. The vehicle will be used by the Institute's field services to get to wherever their assistance is needed in the fight against the Covid-19 epidemic.

## Telenor Foundation

**50 THOUSAND EUR TO UNICEF FOR THE PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND HYGIENE PACKAGES**

In the struggle against Coronavirus, Telenor Foundation has donated 50 thousand EUR to UNICEF for the procurement of protective equipment necessary for healthcare professionals and hygiene packages for 1,300 most vulnerable families all over the country. Right now there is a need for protective equipment – face masks, clothing, goggles and gloves, so that healthcare workers can perform their duties, which is also one of the priorities of the Ministry of Health. By its donation, Telenor Foundation helped procure equipment for 100 healthcare workers for one month and the delivery is planned for the first half of April. Also, 1,300 packages, containing all the necessary items for personal and home hygiene, will be delivered to the most vulnerable families with children. Apart from donations, Telenor is supporting the community, within its core business. As support to organising online classes, Telenor has enabled free access to content for remote learning and platforms for browsing video contents, such as [rtsplanet.rs](http://rtsplanet.rs), [spectar.tv](http://spectar.tv), etc. The Institute for Mental Health will be secured with phones for the psychological helplines, while 20 mobile phones and numbers will be given to the self-government of the city of Čačak for use in the volunteer centres.



## Mlekara Šabac

## INVESTS 100.000 EUROS IN DONATIONS



Mlekara Šabac invests 100.000 euros in donations instead of promoting new products – fruit yogurts, which are recently launched on the market. “This initiative comes from our employees, at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic and shows our desire to provide some kind of safety and support to those who are the most vulnerable. So far we have donated 8 thousand liters of milk and chocolate milk, 10 tons of ABT yogurt, fruit yogurts, A la Kajmak, Mediteraneo with sea salt and Sirko cheese spread. We have also donated 270 product packages for employees at the Clinic for Infectious and Tropical Diseases of the Clinical Center of Serbia, as well as 100 gift packages for pensioners of Mlekara Šabac”, said Ivana Stevanović, Marketing Director at Mlekara Šabac. Mlekara Šabac has so far cooperated with Food Bank Belgrade, Red Cross of New Belgrade, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia and others. Also, this company with the tradition of 70 years recently donated 10.000 face masks to Serbian Armed Forces.

“Because we act #responsible we have introduced all the recommended protection measures and we follow the recommendations of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, we support the employees, the industry from raw milk producers to production at the factory, through distribution and regular supply of the market”, said in Mlekara Šabac.

## HEINEKEN Srbija

## DONATED 12 MILLION RSD FOR RESPIRATORS



Minister of Labor, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs Zoran Djordjevic met with HEINEKEN Serbia director Nikos Zois, who turned to the ministry with the intention to donate 12 million dinars for respirator supplies which are in deficiency because of the current epidemiological situation caused by the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Minister Djordjevic said that the country is doing everything to protect its citizens by providing them with the necessary care and saving their lives. He also said that the state will continue to do so in the coming period but that any donation and assistance is of great importance for the whole country. “I am very proud that we have socially responsible companies in Serbia that do good business and care for the people and the community. With this help, I'm sure we will be able to get out of this crisis much easier and faster. I am grateful on behalf of the entire Government for this donation and I hope that other companies will follow this example as well, helping our Serbia and all its citizens,” the Minister said. Heineken Serbia CEO Nikos Zois said that they sympathize with everyone affected by this virus and that it is a reason why they've decided to donate funds for additional respirators in hospitals. “We look forward to future gatherings that will surely come, but they will come much faster if we are all responsible and in solidarity,” he said.

## Generali Osiguranje Srbija

## EXPANDS COVERAGE FOR LIFE INSURANCE FOR SME OWNERS AND ENTREPRENEURS TO INCLUDE COVID-19 – FREE OF CHARGE

Generali Osiguranje Srbija wishes to offer more protection to its customers in these extraordinary circumstances and has decided to expand coverage for the customers with small and medium-sized enterprise insurance policy and life insurance customers to include free coverage in case of illness caused by COVID-19. In order to offer additional protection to its life insurance customers and more financial security to their families, the company has decided to take special measures and to expand the coverage. To all of our life insurance customers who have a stipulated daily hospital benefit in case of an accident, we are expanding coverage free of charge in the event of hospitalization due to COVID-19 infection. Insured persons will receive payment for days spent in a hospital and all other designated medical treatment centers. Since we are aware of the



important part small and medium-sized enterprises play in our country's economy and the challenges they are facing at this time, the company has decided to help them overcome the consequences of business interruption caused by COVID-19 by providing additional coverage free of charge. We will give all our customers who hold small and medium-sized enterprise insurance policies which include business interruption insurance an expansion of coverage to illness caused by COVID-19. The free coverage provides daily benefit to owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs in case of hospitalization or admission to any designated COVID-19 treatment centers.



By joining an action launched by the international organization UNICEF, TeleGroup donated funds for purchasing two respirators for healthcare facilities in Serbia. The goal of this action is to support our health care system in combating the Covid-19 virus pandemic in order to provide the most

## TeleGroup

## DONATED FUNDS FOR RESPIRATORS

vulnerable patients with the necessary medical care. TeleGroup also joined the City of Belgrade's action in transporting and distributing essential life packages for senior citizens living in Belgrade. “In addition to the respirators supply, we support the City of Belgrade in the transportation and distribution of essential life packages for pensioners living in Belgrade with minimum incomes. We provided vehicles and our volunteers have already started delivery of packages during the weekend.”, emphasized Žarko Filipović, General Manager at TeleGroup d.o.o. Beograd.

## UniCredit Bank Serbia

## DONATES 50.000 EUR TO NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE FUND FOR SUPPORT IN FIGHT AGAINST COVID -19

In the light of the national state of emergency generated by COVID-19 pandemic, UniCredit Bank Serbia donated 50.000 euros, in dinar countervalue, to National Health Insurance Fund as a support in fight against epidemic disease COVID-19. This will enable NHIF to purchase part of the medical equipment and materials urgently needed for hospitals that will be used for preventing and spreading the Coronovirus. This donation made by UniCredit Bank Serbia follows regional efforts already made during last few weeks in the numerous countries where UniCred-



it Group operates in fight against coronavirus. The health and wellbeing of the employees and clients is a key priority for UniCredit Bank. The bank will continue to monitor the situation closely and act in everyone's best interest.





**ARENA**  
CINEPLEX

# PREPORUČUJE

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# The Art of Managing Available Resources

**TAMARA  
OGNJEVIĆ**

Director of Artis  
Centre



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**W**e spoke with Tamara Ognjević, Director of Artis Centre, about doing business during the coronavirus pandemic and how did she organize her activities during the state of emergency and pandemic. "At this point, we have intensified our online activities - we are very present on social media and our magazine, Artis is slowly and surely developing into a website. Our audience has literally tripled since the state of emergency was declared, and we are constantly receiving calls for collaboration from a wide variety of organizations and media, artists and entrepreneurs," says Ms Ognjević, who is the author and leader of numerous, award-winning projects in the segment of museology and cultural heritage, curator of many exhibitions, lecturer and coordinator of various educational programmes focused on heritage and its potential.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— Unlike many similar organizations, since its establishment, some ten years ago, Artis Centre has realized the benefits of online business, as well as of independently securing revenue beyond the traditional, always uncertain domestic and international competitions that most NGOs and culture institutions rely on.

By doing so, we have secured for ourselves a financial base that allows us to pause in those segments of our operations that require immediate contact with the audience which is, for us and any public institution, exceptionally important. If you operate in the private sector, whether you like it or not, you need to constantly deal with potential crises and always intently listen to the audience, i.e. the market. At this point we have intensified our online activities - we are very present on social media and our magazine, Artis is slowly and surely developing into a website ([www.artiscenter.com](http://www.artiscenter.com)). Our audience has literally tripled since the

**IF YOU OPERATE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT, YOU NEED TO CONSTANTLY DEAL WITH POTENTIAL CRISES AND ALWAYS INTENTLY LISTEN TO THE AUDIENCE, I.E. THE MARKET**

state of emergency was declared, and we are constantly receiving calls for collaboration from a wide variety of organizations and media, artists and entrepreneurs

In this way, we are shaping a platform on which some new forms of business will take place in the future. Of course, art and cultural heritage are still our primary interests; the 'subject' and 'products' of what we do, and we view the

We view the pandemic as one type of accumulation that leads us into an expansion of those commercial spaces that we were much less concerned with before the pandemic began. And we are grateful to discover these potentials, although we would really like this global quarantine not to have ever happened

pandemic as one type of accumulation that leads us into an expansion of those commercial spaces that we were much less concerned with before the pandemic began. And we are grateful to discover these potentials, although we would really like this global quarantine not to have ever happened. However, the key skill of good management lies in the art of managing what you have, not what you would like to have.


## How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— I mostly read and write. I am discovering the pandemic dimension of art history, completing a new, supplemented edition of the monograph "Ostrog", published by Vukotić Medija. I am preparing a monograph on the collection/legacy of Princess Jelisaveta Karadjordjević, presented by Artis in

days to my colleagues from the International Committee for Museum Marketing and Public Relations - ICOM MPR, to which Board of Directors I was elected for the second consecutive time last autumn. We want to be properly involved in the post-pandemic recovery of museums and related institutions, which is a global challenge. By the way, I keep wondering what all this would look like if there were no Internet ?!

And I cook. As the Italian writer Francesca Melandri notes in her brilliant letter a few days ago, she sent from her quarantine in Rome to her European fellow citizens, as published by the Guardian: "First of all, you'll eat. Not just because it will be one of the few last things that you can still do." I would add that the fact that we are constantly eating is a sign that we are instinctively supporting life; that we are not giving up.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?

— I will go out into nature, breathe in deeply and hug the first tree I see. Then I will apologize to it for all the years I spent for not noticing small things, nature, animals, the sky and the sun because I took it all for granted. I will ask this tree for forgiveness for the personal and collective arrogance we have all exhibited. 



# We Have Several **Exceptional** Projects That We Would Like to Implement

As soon as we get the opportunity, we will return to rehearsals and realize our plans, which, principally, are centered around the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the SNP Ballet

**ZORAN DJERIĆ, PhD**

Director of the Serbian National Theatre (SNP), Novi Sad

**D**espite the state of emergency and the epidemic because of which we are self-isolating, we will continue to share stories and news about developments in the political, diplomatic, economic and cultural scene in Serbia and the region. We will interview and record the statements from selected persons from the world of economics and diplomacy, as well as public figures.

Zoran Djerić, Director of the Serbian National Theatre (SNP) from Novi Sad, is one of the first interlocutors. In this interview, he states that the Theatre's activities are not completely subdued. On the contrary, the video clip of the SNP Orchestra playing the song „Bella Ciao“, conducted by the Italian conductor, Andrea Solinas, had over 2 million views and 50,000 comments. The video clip was aired on the Radio and Television of Serbia (RTS), as well as the media in Germany and Italy, where it received an outstanding reception.

instructions of the Provincial Secretariat for Culture, Public Information and Relations with Religious Communities. We formed a crisis headquarters and two teams - a security & emergencies team and a team to monitor and implement security measures in art and work units.

All rehearsals and activities of our Ballet, Opera and Drama departments were discontinued and other activities were gradually reduced. Due to the fact that, in the meantime, a state of emergency was introduced, we left only on-duty staff (security and maintenance), who are strictly adhering to the introduced measures.

But the Theatre's work did not die down. Online and phone communication with and between the theatre staff, who are now confined to their homes, did not stop. We started broadcasting recordings of our plays, as well as videos that were especially made for the current situation in our world and in our theatre com-



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and Italy, where it received an outstanding reception.

We will continue to work in a similar spirit. In addition to plays, we will also broadcast recordings of repertoire that has been realized in the previous period at the SNP, and we will make special feature stories about our activities.

## How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— I am constantly communicating with my closest associates, family and friends. I keep track of what's going on and preparing to return to the Theatre.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is cancelled?

— We planned to do a lot and we set many things in mo-

tion. As soon as we get the opportunity, we will return to rehearsals and realize our plans, which, principally, are centered around the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the SNP Ballet. We have an important premiere coming up – Stevan Hristić's ballet „Ohridska Legenda“ (The Legend of Ohrid), choreographed by Vladimir Logunov. In terms of our Drama Department, and if everything goes according to plan, we have a few big plays to stage (Dostoevsky's „Crime and Punishment“ and Shakespeare's „The Tempest“ and „The Two Gentlemen of Verona“). The Opera Department plans to stage a premiere of Mozart's „Don Giovanni“. If possible, we are finally going to fully implement the Creative Europe project called „Cross Opera“. **D&C**

## WE STARTED BROADCASTING RECORDINGS OF OUR PLAYS, AS WELL AS VIDEOS THAT WERE ESPECIALLY MADE FOR THE CURRENT SITUATION

### How did you organize the SNP's activities during the current period?

— The administration of the Serbian National Theatre, which the largest national cultural institution in Vojvodina with the highest number of employees, immediately started to adhere to the Serbian Government's decree and the

pany. I would particularly like to mention the video clip in which our Orchestra performs their version of "Bella Ciao", conducted by Andrea Solinas, a guest conductor from Italy. So far, the clip has had 2 million views and 50,000 comments. It was also aired on the Radio and Television of Serbia (RTS), as well as the media in Germany

**BELLA CIAO FOR  
THE ENTIRE WORLD**  
SNP Novi Sad

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## PROJECTS

Festival performances also lie ahead of us as we have been invited to participate in almost all national festivals here. They are now postponed but we do hope they will take place at a later date. Of course, we will participate in the 2021 European Capital of Culture programmes. Furthermore, we have several exceptional projects that we would like to implement next year.

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# Virtual Tour of Our Standing and Earlier Exhibitions

We have moved from the gallery space to the virtual museum space, and we transferred all our activities to this virtual world, that is, to various social media where we have been otherwise active

**TIJANA  
PALKOVLJEVIĆ  
BUGARSKI**

Director of the  
Matica Srpska  
Gallery



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**W**e talked with the director the Matica Srpska Gallery about the current situation and how it affects the art galleries as well as the art itself worldwide. "The authenticity that the museum has and which no technology can make up for, namely direct contact and direct enjoyment of the work of art, will have added value, and I believe that visits to museums will go up more than ever before and that moments of enjoying the original artwork will actually be amplified after this period," says Tijana Palkovljević Bugarski.

## How did you organize your business activities, i.e. the operations of the Matica Srpska Gallery?

— After a state of emergency was declared due to the pandemic that hit us all, the employees of the Matica Srpska Gallery, like employees of many other institutions,

started working from home, so we have moved from the gallery space to the virtual museum space, and we transferred all our activities to this virtual world, that is, to various social media where we have been otherwise active. We launched a series of campaigns - first of all, we offered the public, not only in our country but worldwide, a

Gallery's collection or the exhibition about Đura Jakšić. We have also launched a series of activations. One of the most attractive currently going on is the global campaign of the world museums, launched by the J. Paul Getty Museum in the US, which inspires people to take photos of themselves depicting the well-known works

ing exhibition on the Gallery's website, select a painting and then react to it in some way. On the other hand, we have turned our programmes, for instance for children and young people, into regular ones. On Saturdays, the Matica Srpska Gallery usually held creative workshops for children. We have continued doing so by

**WE HAVE MOVED FROM THE GALLERY SPACE TO THE VIRTUAL MUSEUM SPACE, AND WE TRANSFERRED ALL OUR ACTIVITIES TO THIS VIRTUAL WORLD, THAT IS, TO VARIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA WHERE WE HAVE BEEN OTHERWISE ACTIVE**

virtual tour of the Matica Srpska Gallery's standing exhibitions, namely, some exhibitions that have been staged before, which they may have missed or have seen but now are given the opportunity to reminisce about them. These are the exhibitions like "The European Phenomena" from the Matica Srpska

of art and in some way reinterpret them and offer their own version of a painting or their own variant of the renowned work of art.

This campaign is currently taking place on our social media whereby people can peruse through the artwork from the Matica Srpska Gallery's stand-

providing a full description of a project and then sending the relevant material to parents, who regularly participated in our workshops, to do it at home with their children. In this way, we tried to preserve this lovely custom for them whereby Saturday is a gallery day. In any case, all our employees are



working from home and are still engaged in transferring the Matica Srpska Gallery space and their activities into the virtual world, be accessible in some way and offer the public a whole range of attractive content that they can enjoy during this homebound period.

**How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?**

— I spend my private time in a way that is completely unlike me because otherwise, I spend very little time at home anyway. Now, I use this period, first and foremost, to be with my children, to do with them everything that I normally do not get to do on usual days, meaning that we cook a lot together, we are cleaning our flat and we try to spend as much quality time as possible together, at home. Working from home just means you have to worry about everything you don't usually worry about when

the entrance to the Gallery in the following seven days is free for everyone because I think that people won't be only eager for virtual tours of the museum but also to see art in person.

**What do you think about the impact of the COVID-19 virus on the world's galleries in the future? Can we expect to see some changes and novelties after the pandemic has ended?**

— In the museum world, there is already a serious debate among museum thinkers about how this pandemic, that is, all that has happened to the whole world, will affect the future work of museums. The fact is that many museums in the world have already closed, not only because of the pandemic but because the people who were temporarily employed and who were under a temporary job contract were fired, so the question is what the future of museums will look like.

There are two schools of thought. One, of course, is pessimistic and the other is optimistic. I believe in the latter optimistic version because I think that after these many days and many virtual opportunities to 'walk' through all world and European museums, which you maybe had only imagined in the past and now you got the opportunity to virtually see them, this virtual world will actually encourage people to visit all those places in the real world that they have seen only online, once the situation normalizes and people start travelling again. I believe that the authenticity that museums have and which no technology can make up for, namely direct contact and direct enjoyment of the works of art, will have added value, and I believe that visits to museums will go up more than ever before and that moments of enjoying the original artwork will actually be amplified after this period. I think that certain

changes could take place in the sense that those museums that are not funded by the state and those institutions that depend on some other financial resources other than the state's will not be able to survive a two, three- or four-month-long closure. I also believe that, in the future, the authenticity of the works of art and the enjoyment of art will move people to visit museums even more and that it will only contribute to the better future of museums.

On the other hand, many people will turn to virtual technology much more, because people who have not been using it much so far and did not have virtual capabilities have been completely invisible in these last few months. In some way, the audience will be much more internationalized because of this and will simply get used to going to LA or Seoul or Japan or Paris to visit museums. They will keep the habit of visiting the places they used to visit which is why we all need to work harder on content virtualization and multilingualism, that is, to present all that we have to the public in world languages and make it accessible to a wider circle of social media users. **D&C**

**IN THE MUSEUM WORLD, THERE IS ALREADY A SERIOUS DEBATE AMONG MUSEUM THINKERS ABOUT HOW THIS PANDEMIC, THAT IS, ALL THAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE WHOLE WORLD, WILL AFFECT THE FUTURE WORK OF MUSEUMS**

you're at work. So, I'm somewhere in-between my computer, the kitchen and the kids 24 hours a day, which doesn't leave much free time. However, I still manage to finish all those things that I usually do not manage to finish, which is a big spring cleaning, which also includes all the drawers, cabinets and other places in which I have managed to store, in some miraculous way, all sorts of unnecessary things over the years.

**What will you do first after the stage of emergency is abolished?**

— After the state of emergency is over, I will first visit my mum, hug her, kiss her, have coffee with her, and make up for all this time that I couldn't see her and couldn't spend as much time with her as I wanted. I think she really needs the company. I will also stroll down the Danube quay to get some fresh air, enjoy the spring that has arrived and finally go to the gallery, open all the doors and windows and announce that



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# The International Olympic Committee Made the **Right Decision** by Postponing the Olympic Games

The health of athletes must come first and this showed that the IOC is a responsible and serious organization that hears and respects the voice of athletes and national Olympic committees

**BOŽIDAR MALJKOVIĆ**  
President of the  
Serbian Olympic  
Committee

**W**e spoke with the legendary Božidar Maljković, the President of the Serbian Olympic Committee, about how the Committee has organized its activities during the state of emergency and the pandemic and how he spends his private time during the crisis. "It certainly wasn't easy for the International Olympic Committee and Japan to make such decision (to postpone the Olympic games), but what this shows is the idea of Olympism goes beyond sport and always works for the benefit of man and humanity," says Mr Maljković.

## How did you organize your business activities?

— I have organized my work activities in accordance with the new situation and the measures of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, which have been prescribed for all of us. The isolation that I responsibly adhere to does not prevent me from performing my duties because we live in a fast time and in the age of the Internet, so we replaced face-to-face meetings with video calls and adapted to the new circum-

stances. The Serbian Olympic Committee continues to work hard, and so far we have had no problems working from home and fulfilling our work commitments.

## How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?

— Considering that I am a coach and now the President of the Serbian Olympic Committee, my home used to be just a quick pit stop. But today, I feel like a Formula 1 driver who has stopped driving all of a sudden and found a good side in all of this. I finally have time to read the books I bought earlier and could not commit to reading,

**MY HOME USED TO BE JUST A QUICK PIT STOP. BUT TODAY, I FEEL LIKE A FORMULA 1 DRIVER WHO HAS STOPPED DRIVING ALL OF A SUDDEN AND FOUND A GOOD SIDE IN ALL OF THIS**

I am rearranging my home library and getting acquainted with the things I forgot to have.

## What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?

— I'm going to have a barbecue and eat a spicy burger.



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## In your opinion, what are the consequences of postponing the Summer Olympics in Tokyo?

— The Tokyo Olympics have been officially postponed. The International Olympic Committee made the right decision by postponing the Olympic

Games. As I always say, the health of athletes must come first and this showed that the IOC is a responsible and serious organization that hears and respects the voice of athletes and national Olympic committees.

It certainly wasn't easy for the International Olympic Committee and Japan to make such a decision, but what this shows is the idea of Olympism goes beyond sport and always works for the benefit of man and humanity

A serious undertaking awaits all of us, that is to combat this insidious virus first, and then afterwards to adapt our plans and activities to a new unprecedented situation for everyone. I'm sure that athletes and all other people in sport will be able to prepare themselves in the best way possible for the biggest sporting event on our planet once all of this has passed. **D&C**



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ANA IVANOVIĆ

Tennis player



# Save Children, Be Responsible!

The coronavirus pandemic has brought about a complete change in the lives of people around the world

**A**s the number of COVID-19 cases continues to increase dramatically, preventive and emergency measures are being introduced in many countries, while families need to adjust to the new reality. Healthcare professionals and healthcare systems in many countries face many challenges like lack of adequate protective equipment, medical equipment and enough beds to take in all patients.

cial care services, and children's education.

UNICEF is an international organization with abundant experience in emergency response. It annually provides support to around 300 emergencies worldwide. With the largest humanitarian warehouse in the world and long-term cooperation with around 1,000 suppliers globally, UNICEF is able to provide the required products and

children and the realization of children's rights are particularly important in promoting solidarity and launch of philanthropic campaigns.

Ana Ivanović, UNICEF's national ambassador for Serbia, responded immediately to this crisis. She made a personal donation and mobilized her business partners and friends to provide as many respirators as possible to Serbia via UNICEF.

"Ana is a truly dedicated UNICEF ambassador to Serbia. She is always ready to get involved and help our activities for the benefit of children and families. Her power to move her co-workers and friends is invaluable, especially at times when we face an unprecedented health crisis.

UNICEF fully supports national efforts to protect the population, notably through the procurement of critically needed equipment for the health care system, as well as through disseminating information on how to protect

against the virus and how to maintain services and provide assistance to the most vulnerable families with children. We greatly appreciate Ana's contribution to our operations - both to regular programmes for children and emergencies like the one we are all facing right now," said Regina De Dominicis, Director of UNICEF in Serbia.

Ana thanked her friends and partners on social media:

"I would like to extend my endless gratitude to my friends and partners who responded to my call to help UNICEF in acquiring the necessary medical equipment for the prevention of the coronavirus pandemic that will help with saving lives in these difficult times.

Thank you so much EXLRT, Execom, the Serbian Association of Recyclers, Execom, Kalemegdan Development and Petite Geneve Petrović. Your support is priceless because the current state of emergency puts children and their families in an even bigger danger." **D&C**

**UNICEF IS AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION WITH ABUNDANT EXPERIENCE IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE. IT ANNUALLY PROVIDES SUPPORT TO AROUND 300 EMERGENCIES WORLDWIDE**

Since the onset of the crisis, UNICEF has been working closely with the World Health Organization, governments and other partners to help prevent and stop the virus contagion, to save the lives of the population and to mitigate the adverse effects of the pandemic on the health care system, so-

equipment that can help save lives. Government assistance and support from the business sector and philanthropists is therefore essential for rapid and effective intervention.

The UNICEF ambassadors, celebrities who, through their actions and influence, mobilize support and assistance for

# We Cure Adrenaline Addiction and Nostalgia by **Making New** Songs

Novi Sad-based Gift is a music band, led by its frontman, the charismatic Jovan Joca Matić, who has set the Belgrade club scene on fire in the last few years with one-of-a-kind remakes of the best indie hit songs but also with their own songs

**JOVAN MATIĆ**  
Gift

**T**he ongoing pandemic has hit the club scene and club cover bands the hardest, while everything has been put on hold until further notice. We have talked with Joca about the band and the pandemic.

## How did you organize your activities during the pandemic?

— We really miss performing in concerts and our audience. Our heavy addiction to live performances now makes us all perhaps a little darker and more withdrawn, but by looking inward we have been maturing and learning during these past few weeks of the imposed abstinence from concerts. New feelings are emerging, and the old ones are refreshed. We are used to our fans often telling us that our music is healing; that it combats stress and makes days and nights more beautiful. Now, we need to creatively outsmart the situation and reach our already eager audience in a new way. So, the other day, we were checking a couple of applications to see whether performing in an online concert was possible in these circumstances, because we,



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blesome events, which we are going to release after all this chaos is over.

## How are you spending your private time during the pandemic?

— Our daily rituals have not changed much since the pandemic's outbreak, so my wife Dragana (Gaga) and I wake up with ease, indulge in a cup of coffee and laze about a little bit, waiting for the daylight to enter the bedroom. That's

we immediately shop for fresh food for lunch, maybe pop up to a pharmacy, in an effort to find rubbing alcohol for disinfection. Every third day we bring groceries to my mother, right outside the entrance to Petrovaradin, since Gaga and I are pedestrians (we do not have a car by choice). In this situation, walking has healing properties for us. When we get back home, we first sterilize everything like pros. Once we do that, a big chunk of our day already went by.

After a short break and having one more cup of coffee, we generally do an online fitness class with our wonderful instructor Maja. Then we have a nice lunch and then everyone uses their part of the day for creative endeavours. While I do music, Gaga is painting or reading a book. Sometimes we do an online yoga class with our favourite yogini Mima. Evenings are mostly reserved for watching series and movies. Honestly, our day goes by fast! I feel like there is less time now than when we are living the regular life, travelling and playing music. One thing that I

think is quite beautiful in this situation is that I talked to dear people whom I have not seen in a long time via Skype. I would like to mention my friend John from London, with whom I had conversations about various current topics that lasted well into the night. We also touched upon the wonderful time he had when he came to visit us. John told me that London was not the way we remember it and that it has changed for worse. I would also like to mention my friend and a fellow musician Zlatomir Gajić (who played the bass guitar in GIFT for a while) from Novi Sad. Even though we live in the same city, we just didn't get to hang out as much as we wanted to.

## What are you going to do first after the state of emergency is lifted?

— The first thing that comes to my mind is recording a video. I picture the following – I am leaving my flat, and as I go down the stairs, I take my clothes off until I am completely naked when I get to the ground floor. I open the exit door of the building naked, only wearing a sock on my hand, so as not to touch the door, and run barefoot down the street. I see police car lights in the distance, in a haze, and as they are approaching me from behind, I begin to frantically run. I move out of the way, and the cars passing me by are rushing to get to the end of the street where there is an old man with a walker and bags in one hand. The cops jump out and arrest the poor old man who is wearing nothing by a coat and a pair of socks. The last scene... The old man and I exchange glances as he sits in the back seat of a police car. I'm not sure a film crew will say 'yes' to this scenario, but in these times, one can imagine. **D&C**

**OUR DAY GOES BY FAST! I FEEL LIKE THERE IS LESS TIME NOW THAN WHEN WE ARE LIVING THE REGULAR LIFE, TRAVELLING AND PLAYING MUSIC**

the band members, live in two different cities. But unfortunately, no application has a fast enough signal, i.e. comes with no sound delay, to make the music accurate. That is why we have decided to devote our time to working on new ideas created during this virus crisis. Another idea is to make videos for the two new songs ("Mon Amour" and "A Step Ahead") as soon as possible, as a kind of victory over the current trou-

a sacred moment for us that will never change, regardless of the situation – a pandemic or a perfectly normal day. Then we make breakfast which is a staple before we leave our home. Gaga generally likes a stronger savoury breakfast, while I opt for cereal with fruit. What may have changed compared to earlier times is the timing of everything we do. Now, we do everything earlier than usual, so after breakfast,

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# Cool Head, Strong Spirit and Optimism!

Sana Garić is one of the most significant musicians on the electronic and underground music scene in Belgrade and Serbia

**SANA GARIĆ**  
Musician

**A**fter having a breakthrough with her band Xanax, Sana began performing under her own name. She has made several notable albums and has performed at the most famous festivals, especially those in the region. We have talked to Sana about the pandemic, self-isolation and her activities once the state of emergency is cancelled.

**How did you organize your business activities?**

— The future is uncertain for artists, especially for musicians. The previously difficult position of artists and generally people in culture is now reduced to bare survival. A large number of people have been left without a source of income, and I hope that this situation will pass quickly and that adequate measures will be implemented to help people who are unable to earn money during the state of emergency. Being cool-headed and having a strong spirit and optimism is essential.



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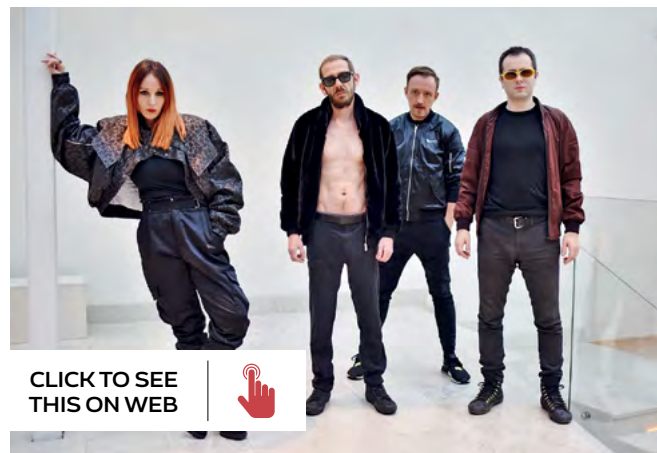
**How do you spend your private time during the pandemic?**

— I use this period to play keyboards, make new music, write songs for the new album "Glasses for the Heart", and, of course, clean my home

and watch good series and movies.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is lifted?**

— I hope I will perform in a really good concert. **D&C**



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**ROMANA SLAČALA**  
Vocals

**BOJAN SLAČALA**

The guitar and vocals

**W**e are talking to Bojan and Romana Slačala from the Belgrade based band Artan Lili, who have been one of the leaders on the indie pop-rock scene in the last 6 years.

**ROMANA SLAČALA**

**How did you organize your activities?**

— As far as work and our concert activities are concerned, everything has stopped, as you know. But given that we have the privilege of engaging in wonderful creative work that can function outside the realm of business, we do not expect

anyone to hire us, but we hire ourselves as creators of something – in this case of music and songs. We will certainly use this period to create something that, at some point, we will give our fans and we are not going to let them down.

**How you spend your private time during the pandemic?**

— In the beginning, all the activity was related to the kitchen, housework and keeping fit. I guess it's easier that way while the brain is trying to process everything that is happening to us. Now that I've got used to it, I can focus on something

## We Can't Wait to Aimlessly **Run Free** and Eat Ice Cream

creative and smart. These circumstances are brand new to all of us and will not be easy, but with personal discipline and routine, it is possible to overcome it all.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?**

— I think I will go out and walk aimlessly until my feet hurt.

**BOJAN SLAČALA**

**How did you organize your activities?**

— It all basically boils down to media-related obligations – from the Internet to radio and television. I have been giving a lot of interviews these days. Episode 3 of "The Colour of the Sound" ("Boja Zvuka") is com-

ing out on Friday, in which we performed with Bjesovi and Dr Karajlić and I can't wait to see it. There is always something to do for people who want to work.

**How you spend your private time during the pandemic?**

— I guess just like everybody else. I cook and consume different cultural content, I play Fortnite and write a little bit. I am getting used to this lasting forever so I make it easier for myself.

**What will you do first after the state of emergency is abolished?**

— I am going to put on my shorts and slippers and go out for an ice-cream with my family. **D&C**



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# Ballet Must Work in **Order** to Live!

It is quite obvious that we are eagerly waiting for this situation with the Covid-19 virus pandemic to end and we hope that it will end painlessly for all of us so that we can continue with our work. We have planned two premieres, one in Novi Sad and the other in St. Polten and then, we will go on a big world tour

## TONI RANDJELOVIĆ

Ballet Manager  
of the Serbian  
National Theatre  
(SNT)

## ANADJURIĆ

Prima Ballerina  
of the Serbian  
National Theatre



**D**espite the state of emergency and the epidemic because of which we are self-isolating, we will continue to share stories and news about developments in the political, diplomatic, economic and cultural scene in Serbia and the region. We will interview and record the statements from selected persons from the world of economics and diplomacy, as well as public figures. We talked to Toni Randelović, Ballet Manager of the Serbian National Theatre (SNT), and Ana Djurić, Prima Ballerina of the SNT. They told us about their plans after the pandemic and the projects they are working on right now.

### TONI RANDJELOVIĆ

**This year, the Ballet of the Serbian National Theatre celebrates the 70th anniversary of its foundation. Several jubilee events have been planned. What have you managed to do so far and**

### **what remains to be done in that respect?**

— This year, we are going to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the SNT Ballet. This is a big jubilee and for such a big jubilee, we have also planned great events. Namely, a major event took place on the very day when

to take place on 28th March 2020, which is the day of the Serbian National Theatre, accompanied by a ceremonial academy, awards to all our members employed in the SNT and the premiere of the ballet “The Legend of Ohrid” by Stevan Hristić, our most famous composer. Unfortunately, we

**tion. In addition, the SNT’s Annual Award is given to three dancers and to the scenographer. What has marked this ballet season in addition to the ballet “The Wayward Daughter”?**

— “The Wayward Daughter” is our latest ballet performance and I can say that it is at the

**“THE WAYWARD DAUGHTER” IS OUR LATEST BALLET PERFORMANCE AND I CAN SAY THAT IT IS AT THE VERY TOP OF BALLET PERFORMANCES THAT WE HAVE IN OUR REPERTOIRE REGARDING THE QUALITY**

the Ballet was founded on 7th March 2020. On that occasion, we opened an exhibition of ballet photographs of our artists from all our performances during the last 20 years. After that nice celebratory exhibition, the Ballet played its performance that premiered last season. This was Ferdinand Herold’s “The Wayward Daughter” (La Fille Mal Gardée). The central event was intended

were not able to realise this magnificent event because we were prevented by a well-known situation of a universal pandemic and the Theatre had to suspend all activities until further notice.

**The ensemble of the comic ballet “The Wayward Daughter” by Louis Joseph Ferdinand Herold has won the SNT’s Annual Commenda-**

very top of ballet performances that we have in our repertoire regarding the quality. Beautiful choreography, decor, costumes, light effects and, above all, divine artists. We have a very good cast, both for the premiere and for the replay (second cast). The performance has received the award for the best show of the season, which it absolutely deserves. Also, for the scenography, Sasa Senkovic (sce-

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**ALTHOUGH EVERY MEMBER OF THE ENSEMBLE IS RESPONSIBLE, PRINCIPAL DANCERS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT IN THE PERFORMANCE AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITY IS THE HIGHEST**

nographer) has created a very unique set design so far unseen in performances around the world, when it comes to any other performance of "The Wayward Daughter". This could not be unnoticed, as well as, the bravura dancing of ballet artists themselves: Ana Djurić (Lise), Milan Ivan (Colas), Samuel Bishop (Widow Simone) who received the SNT's Annual Awards for Best Performed Role, as well as the SNT's Annual Commendation to Igor Tauber for the role of Alain. There are no doubts that our ongoing repertoire that is taking place in parallel has marked the season along with the premiere of "The Wayward Daughter". This is confirmed by sold out tickets and satisfied audience.

#### **What are future plans of the SNT Ballet?**

— It is quite obvious that we are eagerly waiting for this situation with the Covid-19 virus pandemic to end and we hope that it will end painlessly for all of us so that we can continue with our work. Ballet must work in order to live! First of all, we have to perform our already finished premiere of "The Legend of Ohrid" by Stevan Hristić and then, we go to the next premiere that has also been planned as the part of the jubilee. This is the "Coppelia" by Leo Delibes. And then, we will enter into the year 2021 when Novi Sad is proudly going to be the European Capital of Culture. The SNT Ballet will have a very prominent place with reference to that because a

co-production with the "Europe Ballet" from St. Polten (Austria) will be implemented. The ballet "Madame Butterfly" will be the first performance in the world in the choreography by the famous choreographer Peter Breuer. We have planned two premieres, one in Novi Sad and the other in St. Polten and then, we will go on a big world tour.

#### **ANA DJURIĆ**

**In the Ballet of the Serbian National Theatre and as the Prima Ballerina of the Ballet you play almost all main roles. How demanding is that and how much responsibility is that for you?**

— You cannot become a prima ballerina without hard work and sacrifice and for that reason, it is very demanding. Although every member of the ensemble is responsible, principal dancers are the most important in the performance and their responsibility is the highest. Principal dancers have to be role models to other members of the ensemble not only by their work but also by their behaviour and treatment of other dancers, particularly young ones.

**Although rehearsals for the Stevan Hristić's Ballet "The Legend of Ohrid" are suspended at present due to the state of emergency, we can say that this is now a performance you are working on. The choreography is set by Vladimir Logunov and you interpret the role of Biljana. To what extent does the choreography affect the formation of the character and**

**do you have the opportunity to somehow develop the character of Biljana in new circumstances?**

— It is a great challenge to do the performance of "The Legend of Ohrid" because so far this wonderful legend has not come to life on our stages. Vladimir Logunov is a top choreographer of exceptional musicality who is comfortable to work with because he understands dancers and gives them freedom of expression. In "The Legend of Ohrid" I have two roles, Biljana and Biserka. Both are demanding in their own way. It is not easy to move from one character to another. Yes ... and now that we are in the state of emergency, I am working on these roles to the extent allowed by the situation. I am trying to imagine these two characters and to find adequate emotions. I hope that when all this is over, we are going to have another successful premiere.

**Your career is full of progress and you have the sympathy of both the audience and the critics. Would you accept an offer from abroad if you receive it?**

— I will accept to perform as a guest dancer but I will never accept a permanent engagement. The reason is simple, at the SNT I feel comfortable, I constantly move forward, I have good working conditions and understanding and the pedagogue Oksana Storozhuk is my supporter, helper and the wind in my back. When you have all that, you are fulfilled, satisfied and you do not need to go abroad. **D&C**





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