



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# FASTFACTS

ON USAID'S ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

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# Stopping the Brain-Drain

**BELGRADE**– On October 26th, media representatives, University Rectors, heads of University Career Centers and Serbian government officials gathered at Belgrade's Royal Palace for a brunch to discuss the important role of Career Centers in fostering linkages between education and the private sector. The USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project joined forces with the Prince Alexander II Foundation for Education to organize the event.



Marilynn Schmidt, USAID Deputy Mission Director (center) with Ivana Kovačević, State Secretary in the Ministry of Youth and Sports (left), and William Seas, Director of USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project (right), representatives of Universities, Career Centers, and media.

Participants included State Secretary for Ministry of Youth and Sports Ivana Kovačević, USAID Deputy Mission Director Marilynn Schmidt, Prince Alexander II Foundation for Education representative and Professor Ljiljana Marković, University of Kragujevac Rector and Professor Slobodan Arsenijević, and Director of Kragujevac's Center for Career Development Marko Banković.

**In the past three years**, the Prince Alexander Foundation for Education has supported the establishment of Career Development Centers at universities in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš and Kragujevac. The University of Singidunum, the Faculty of Economics, Finance and Administration (FEFA) and the Belgrade Open School (BOŠ) have each created their own Career Centers.

The USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project works with **Career Centers** at eight universities across Serbia to improve internship and other opportunities for students to gain experience that will advance their future careers. They include universities in Belgrade, Kragujevac, Novi Sad and Niš, Singidunum University, Valjevo's Business Faculty, FEFA and BOŠ. USAID project support has comprised training Career Center staff to create partnerships with businesses and the nuances of the recruitment and selection process; providing software that streamlines student employment and internship procedures; and direct financial assistance to purchase technical equipment, professional literature, and membership to international organizations that focus on human resources development.

**"According to the World Economic Forum report, Serbia ranks second to last (132nd) on the list of countries with regard to the problem of the brain drain. To keep young, talented people here, Serbia needs to establish strong cooperation between the education and marketplace", said Marilynn Schmidt, USAID Deputy Mission Director.**

# Serbian Companies Make New Inroads at Regional Trade Fairs

**PRIŠTINA, SKOPJE** – The international trade fairs in Priština and Skopje this past fall resulted in eleven South Serbia and Sandžak companies booking a total of \$395,000 in immediate after fair sales. With the support of USAID's Economic Security program and in cooperation with Preševo and Bujanovac Development Agency (PBDA), eight agriculture and food processing companies participated at the 9th International Agriculture and Drinks Fair "AGROKOS&DRINKS" in Priština, from 21-24 October, while seven agriculture and food and beverage producers from South Serbia attended the 59th International Trade Fair of Food, Beverages and Consumer Goods in Skopje, from 10-14 November.



59th International Trade Fair of Food, Beverages and Consumer Goods in Skopje

"Our home market, Leskovac, is not a strong economic area, yet, we enjoyed great success by attending both Fairs," said **Miodrag Petković**, Deputy General Manager of the food processing company, Moravka. "We have been operating the past two years under new leadership and a major part of our business plans included expansion into the regional markets of Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania. Geographically, Moravka is well positioned to succeed in those markets.

**USAID helped us achieve this goal**, much earlier than we could imagine", Mr. Petković continued: "Our success in Priština was a real breakthrough. Moravka established new contacts with buyers and distribution partners. Also, we had the opportunity to meet with relevant authorities to discuss procedures to make export/import for Serbian goods easier to manage." Moravka shipped goods valued at \$60,000 to the Kosovo market within days after the close of the Fair and new

orders are still coming.

**USAID support to companies** included updating marketing materials as well as assistance with arranging meetings with potential buyers. In addition to the direct support for fair attendance, USAID trained the key management staff of these companies in marketing, sales and presentation techniques, as well as in financial management, giving them the skills needed to better promote the quality of their products and their attention to customer service.

**USAID's Economic Security program** supports the development and growth of businesses in South Serbia and Sandžak, providing them with opportunities to expand into new markets by connecting them with new buyers and distribution partners.

The Economic Security program has helped Serbian businesses achieve more than \$6 million in new sales over the past two years. Through the program's sponsorship more than 150 businesses have had the opportunity to attend about a dozen business trade fairs both in Serbia and throughout the region.

## Enough Waiting! Start with the Enforcement of Court Judgments

Slow enforcement is an obstacle to investment. It takes, on average, 500 days to enforce a court judgment in Serbia. Collection rate for these enforcement proceedings is a mere five percent.



**At the beginning of November**, the USAID Bankruptcy and Enforcement Strengthening Activity launched Phase 1 of the Media Campaign in support of judgment enforcement reform in Serbia - "**Dosta čekanja! S presude na dela.**" This phase emphasizes the urgent need for enforcement reform, and introduces the elements of a professional enforcement system. It is scheduled to last the duration of the adoption process for the proposed enforcement amendments.

**Official Working Group** for drafting amendments to the Law on Enforcement Procedure finalized its work and is in process of completing the technical revision of the text. In the next few days the draft will be submitted to the Ministry of Justice for public discussion to start. Public discussion involves posting the draft on the Ministry of Justice web site and organizing numerous conferences, roundtables and similar experts'

meetings where the draft may be elaborated further. It is expected that the draft – or Bill, once adopted by the Government – will enter parliamentary procedure in spring 2010.



#### OLD CASES, NEW IDEA:

Campaign introduced creative solutions of placing “real files” into the city lights boxes.

For more information, please visit [www.spresudenadela.rs](http://www.spresudenadela.rs) or [www.dostacekanja.rs](http://www.dostacekanja.rs)

## Pinoles Ready to Conquer New International Markets

**BELGRADE** –On November 16th, SGS Serbia awarded Pinoles the Forest Stewardship Council’s Chain of Custody (FSC COC) certification, which will allow the Serbian wood chip panel distributor to label its products with the FSC trademark, participate in the supply chain of other certified companies, and have improved market access in an increasingly environmentally aware sector. The ceremony was held at the Belgrade Furniture Fair and brought together a number of industry and media representatives.



Pinoles Director Aleksandar Đorđević with FSC COC certificate

“We set out to acquire this certification because we wanted to participate in the supply chain of companies who produce environmentally conscious products. We could not have achieved this goal without the help of USAID,” noted Pinoles Director **Aleksandar Đorđević**.

Deputy Director of the USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project **Sharon Valentine** explained that the Project set out to provide grants, training and technical assistance to firms that were interested in obtaining the certificate. “We were particularly interested in identifying firms that, through support to them, would have a very broad impact on the supply chain in Serbia. Pinoles is one of the leading distributors of wood chip panels in Serbia, covering about a third of the market and 500 customers. By supporting Pinoles in obtaining the certificate, our project can therefore facilitate a broader impact in the supply chain in Serbia in this industry,” she said.

**At the beginning of 2009**, only two firms in Serbia were COC certified. There are currently nine certified firms, with 15 more to be certified by the end of this year and an additional 30 by the end of 2010. As there is increasing demand from companies to obtain the certificate, the USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project identified a need to expand the number of local consulting firms that are capable of supporting firms in the industry to prepare them to obtain the certificate. The Project subsequently offered training in August and September of this year to several firms that were involved in quality management processes. As a result, there are now six firms, up from two, in Serbia that can facilitate the COC certificate. This will greatly reduce the time required for other Serbian firms to acquire the COC certificate.

**The FSC COC certification** complements another activity that the USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project is undertaking to promote awareness of green buildings in Serbia. “A building can be rated green and also receive an international certificate for its use of energy and water as well as its use of materials, including wood products and furniture. Therefore, companies in Serbia that have a COC certificate, by supplying buildings that want to be rated green, will also have increased local demand for their products,” said Sharon Valentine, USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project Deputy Director.

**SGS Serbia General Manager Marinko Ukropina** congratulated Pinales on earning the FSC COC certification. "On behalf of the management team at SGS Serbia, I would like to present this certificate to one of Serbia's most prominent companies. Our assessment team has concluded that Pinales meets all of the criteria for FSC COC certification. Pinales has played an important role in advocating the importance of COC certification to companies in the supply chain. I am convinced that Pinales will continue to secure this certification in the years ahead," he said. SGS is an FSC accredited certification body and a world leader in inspection, verification, testing and certification services.

**FSC is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests. Established in 1993 as a response to concerns over global deforestation, FSC is widely regarded as one of the most important initiatives of the last decade to promote responsible forest management worldwide. The FSC COC process tracks and records the transfer of wood and wood fiber from the forest of origin through the different stages of production, primary manufacturing, secondary manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing to the end user. Acquiring and maintaining a current COC certificate allows the manufacturer to market forest products using the certified logo. By doing so, the manufacturer is able to access a wider array of markets and customers. The certification is becoming increasingly important in today's market, where consumers seek assurance that their products are harvested and manufactured with sustainability and responsible management in mind. A COC certificate indicates that the certificate holder has responsibly addressed the social and environmental aspects for each step of the manufacturing process.**

## International Certification Pays Off

*Buyers in western markets such as the EU and the USA are placing a greater emphasis on international quality standards, such as GlobalGAP and ISO, and they are now requiring these standards from their suppliers as a pre-condition for the purchase of products. Companies in Serbia that export to these markets are under great pressure from their foreign customers to obtain these standards for their products, or they will no longer be able to export to these markets.*

Recognizing this as a key constraint to growing, or even maintaining Serbia's agricultural exports, the USAID Agribusiness Project launched a grant program to support private agribusiness firms that wished to adopt these standards for their production and processing activities. The grant program supports 50% of the cost of preparation and 70% of the cost of certification, up to a limit of \$5,000 per company. In 2009 the Project awarded 28 grants for the adoption of international standards.

**ABD Prom**, a private fruit processing and exporting company from Šabac was the first company to receive GlobalGAP certification as a result of Project assistance. For ABD Prom, this was a critical achievement as their French customer had just informed them that they would stop purchasing their sour cherries due to the absence of the GlobalGAP certification. The award of this certification played a key role in their exports of sour cherries in 2009, as immediately following certification ABD Prom reinstated exports of certified frozen fruit to their customer, and as of the end of September 2009 these exports were worth \$1.4 million.

**"Initially, the process looked complicated. However, once we realized what the requirements were, we established that this was a requirement we could easily meet. I would advise others to use the USAID Agribusiness Project grant program and obtain certification. This certification provides a guarantee that products can be exported to international markets." – Aleksandar Jakovljević, ABD Prom**



Aleksandar Jakovljević, ABD Prom

**Besides applying the GlobalGAP standards** to their own orchards, ABD Prom will be working with their small farmer suppliers and assisting them to adopt the procedures and techniques that are part of the GlobalGAP package. Their goal is to have not only their own orchards, but the orchards of all their individual farmer suppliers, GlobalGAP certified. In this way ABD Prom is a role model for the farmers in the region, and it is spreading an awareness of the need for higher quality standards for the production and processing of the fruit crop.

# Lazar Dairy Expands National Distribution

Lazar Dairy is a small family owned company founded in 1999 which produces and markets specialty dairy products in the area around Kopaonik Mountain in southern Serbia. They are well known in the region for their Blace Kačkavalj, Feta and cream cheeses, and their peppers in cream. The company has a strong presence in Southern Serbia through a network of retail shops in Niš. While the company is highly regarded by consumers in this part of the country, they have had only a modest level of national distribution, until now.



With USAID Agribusiness Project assistance, Lazar Dairy now sells to Metro's supermarket network

As part of its efforts to expand the sales and distribution of specialty dairy products, the Agribusiness Project linked Lazar Dairy with the managers of Metro Cash & Carry, one of the largest supermarket operators in Serbia. Based on Metro's assessment of the quality and uniqueness of Lazar's products they have agreed to contract with them as one of their main Serbian suppliers of dairy products. Through September of 2009 Lazar Dairy has supplied Metro with more than \$200,000 worth of dairy products, and these products are now sold in all of the Metro stores around Serbia.

**Metro has also agreed** to have Lazar provide them with "private label" dairy products with the Metro name on the label. The final arrangements for the packaging and label design are now being made, and it is expected that these products will hit the Metro shelves **in early 2010**. This new development has the potential to triple Lazar's sales through the Metro network, and should this happen it will greatly increase the capacity utilization of the Lazar dairy plant. They have an installed capacity of 80,000 L/day, but are only using about 50,000 L/day presently.

This market expansion has also provided Lazar with the resources to expand their own milk production. The company recently imported 300 Simmental cows and has plans to import another 300 cows in the near future. **An important part of Agribusiness Project assistance** to the dairy industry is improvement in the quality of the raw milk provided to the dairy plants. This new herd expansion on the part of Lazar will greatly improve their milk quality, and the quality of their creams and cheeses.

The USAID Agribusiness Project will continue to support Lazar Dairy in its expansion efforts, particularly in the area of milk quality improvement, which is a prerequisite for licensing the dairy for exports to the EU market.

## 8th Belgrade Stock Exchange Conference

**BELGRADE** – USAID, Serbia Economic Growth Activity (SEGA) was the main sponsor of the 8th Belgrade Stock Exchange Conference. The Conference was held in the Hotel Continental Beograd, on November, 19 and 20.



The Belgrade Stock Exchange organized its traditional annual gathering of the capital market representatives – Eighth International Conference to discuss key topics in well developed stock exchange operations that are not sufficiently present in the region. This year the focus was placed on the following topics: Macroeconomic Prospects for 2010; Corporate IR – Investor Relations; Manipulation - Market Abuse; Special Lecture: Climate Change and Markets; Energy markets Possibilities and Experiences; Some Liquidity Improvement Techniques; IFC Presentation: „Scorecard – Improving the Corporate Governance Practice“ Workshop: "Practical Insights in the Structured Derivatives Business". At the opening of the 8th

international conference, Belgrade Stock Exchange (BES) Director **Gordana Dostanić** said that BSE continued to be an insufficiently liquid market, and authorities should steer the country's further privatization efforts in a direction that would also further the capital market's development. According to Jim Stein, Economic Growth Office Director of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in Serbia, the market's further development will require strengthening the Securities Commission's capacities, improving the offer of debt securities, reducing transaction costs, and bolstering the fund industry.

The **two-day international conference** attracted around 200 stock exchange and financial experts, bankers, brokers, fund managers, economists, businesspeople, and analysts. USAID/ SEGA was the general sponsor and also arranged a guest speaker - Senior Director of Education and Training for FINRA's International Affairs and Services Department, John Hennessey, in addition to two SEGA advisors (**Robert Singletary** and **Aleksandar Zavišić**) who also presented at the conference.

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## New Private Sector Partners Support Junior Achievement Serbia

*Junior Achievement Serbia (JAS) is making significant progress towards its goal of becoming a private sector-driven organization. The very skills that JAS teaches (entrepreneurship, financial literacy, management, and economics) are those that the private sector demands. As the Serbian economy matures and firms define their responsibilities beyond the bottom line, the private sector is seeing the value in supporting JAS. For the 2009-2010 school year, a broad range of Serbian and multinational firms have become involved, including Nitea, Droga Kolinska, and the members of the Serbian Business Leaders Forum (through JAS's partnership with Smart Kolektiv). Microsoft Europe has committed \$25,000 towards an event in the spring that will bring students from over 20 countries to Serbia to compete in entrepreneurship events. Firms recognize that support in the form of business volunteers and mentors is as important as financial support.*



ORACLE manager delivers lectures to Junior Achievement participants at a Belgrade high-school, November 2009

**ERSTE Bank and ORACLE** have formed particularly important partnerships with JAS. ERSTE Bank is sponsoring the "Banks in Action" program in high schools throughout Serbia, which teaches the fundamentals of the banking industry and the challenges of operating a bank in a competitive environment. As a culminating event, ERSTE will sponsor, in March 2010 in Niš, a **Skills@Work Challenge** with the **British Council**. The Challenge is a day-long event during which students are presented with a business problem. Working with business mentors, the students must articulate their own solution and present it to the jury.

**ORACLE** also sees the value in JAS for both students and its own employees. They are underwriting the Skills@Work Challenge on 9 December in Belgrade. ORACLE does not merely support financially; they have committed hundreds

of volunteer hours. ORACLE managers have taught a series of sessions for more than 200 students. The capstone was a two-day lecture to students by ORACLE's Serbia and Montenegro CEO, Mr. Klod Kolaro on 25-26 November in Belgrade City Assembly.

Preferring to solve problems, rather than manage their consequences, ORACLE and its employees focus on bringing about positive change in four key areas: education, giving, community partnerships, and volunteerism. In addition to helping students through JAS, ORACLE management made time to connect with more than 140 teachers in the annual **JAS Teacher's Conference in Sokobanja on November 17-19**. ORACLE has nominated their partnership with JAS for the **Corporate Social Responsibility award** given annually by **Ekonomist Magazine** in Belgrade.

JAS has been recognized by the Ministry of Education and the Institute for the Advancement of Education as a "Program of National Importance" for the 2009-2010 school year. The Ministry recognizes the value by allowing JAS teachers to apply 36 hours of JAS Teacher Training towards their annual professional development requirement.

To date, JAS programs have been implemented in 200 schools in over 60 municipalities throughout Serbia with the participation of more than 25,000 students. Plans are underway to expand the program into elementary schools, consistent with the European Union's Lisbon Agenda which aims to foster entrepreneurial mindsets in Europe. This year JA will offer entrepreneurship programming in **150 high schools** across the country with the **participation of 4,000** students and will include **over 200 certified mentors/teachers**.

# SERBIA COVERAGE IN INTERNATIONAL MEDIA:

## “Gerard Butler off to war in "Coriolanus"”, Reuters

November 4, 2009, by Stuart Kemp



**LOS ANGELES** (Hollywood Reporter) – **Gerard Butler**, currently in theaters with the surprise hit "Law Abiding Citizen," will join **Ralph Fiennes** in a contemporary version of Shakespeare's political and family drama "Coriolanus."

The project marks Fiennes' directing debut.

Butler will play **Tullus Aufidius**, commander of the Volscian army from Shakespeare's play. He joins a cast that also includes **William Hurt**, **Eddie Marsan**, **Jessica Chastain** and **Vanessa Redgrave**. Shooting is set to begin in **Serbia in March**.

The violent vengeance drama "Law Abiding Citizen," co-starring Jamie Foxx, has earned about \$52 million after three weekends.

## STAY CONNECTED

Sitting Green  
Konkurs za dizajn eko stolice

### “Serbian Corner” Opening, NITEA showroom Belgrade, December 3, 2009

The USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project has worked with the three designers, winners of the "Sitting Green" competition on producing prototypes of winning designs. The Project invested \$5,000 for the production of each of the three winning designs, with the aim to promote commercialization of these designs to international clients. The prototypes will be exhibited in the "Serbian Corner" of the prestigious show room of the Serbian retailer NITEA.



### Skills@Work Challenge for 100 top JA student participants, National Parliament, Belgrade, December 9, 2009

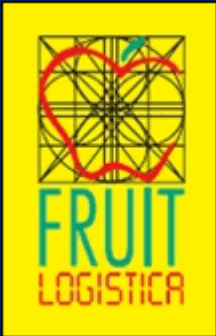
The Skills@Work competition is a joint project of British Council and Junior Achievement. In Serbia it is held with the official partnership of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and USAID PPES Program. It is based on the model of innovation camps of Junior Achievement where students gather to think over a business challenge and propose ideas for solutions.

## Skills@Work Challenge, Novi Pazar, December 15, 2009

Following the competition in Belgrade, the Skills@Work Challenge will be held in Novi Pazar.

## Promotion of Local Youth Offices, Belgrade, January 2010

In cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sport, USAID PPES Program will organize a conference to promote local Youth Offices' results in implementation of youth entrepreneurship programs.



## Fruit Logistica, Berlin, Germany, February 3-5th, 2010

Twelve Serbian companies and the Fruits of Serbia Association will present their fresh produce in Berlin at the annual Fruit Logistica Trade Show in February 2010. This trade fair is the most important business and communication arena of the international fresh produce trade. The industry's key decision makers are there as exhibitors and trade visitors and have the opportunity of approaching potential business partners with their services/products. The trade visitors are growers, importers and exporters, wholesale markets, wholesalers and retailers, packaging, transport, institutions and organizations from more than 125 countries.

# PEOPLE

## DRAGAN OBRENOVIĆ

Senior IT Manager, USAID Bankruptcy and Enforcement Strengthening Activity (BES)



**Dragan Obrenović is Senior IT Manager on the USAID-funded Bankruptcy and Enforcement Strengthening Activity (BES)**, where he manages and supervises custom software development and other IT-related project activities, including the Electronic Reporting System (ERS) for bankruptcy administrators and the Risk-Based Management System (RBMS) that red-flags potentially fraudulent activities in bankruptcy that may warrant further investigation.

He has **more than 15 years of ICT industry experience** in software development, systems integration, operation and maintenance, project management, personnel management and consulting. He is the author, or co-author, of several successful freeware and commercial systems ranging from desktop applications to embedded systems and client-server informational systems deployed in top-rank companies in Serbia and world-wide. As a computer journalist he has written more than 50 articles for leading computer magazines in Serbia.

Dragan Obrenović holds a Diploma degree in electrical engineering, department for software engineering (ETF, University of Belgrade), and is currently undergoing post-graduate Master studies in Management and Economics (Hautes Études Commerciales, Paris).

# LINK TO WEBSITES

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USAID Mission to Serbia: [serbia-montenegro.usaid.gov](http://serbia-montenegro.usaid.gov)

Booz Allen Hamilton: [www.boozallen.com](http://www.boozallen.com)

Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI): [www.dai.com](http://www.dai.com)

Serbia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SIEPA): [www.siepa.gov.rs](http://www.siepa.gov.rs)

USAID Competitiveness Project: [www.compete.rs](http://www.compete.rs)

USAID Agribusiness Project: [www.agrobiznis.net](http://www.agrobiznis.net)

USAID Preparedness, Planning and Economic Security Program: [www.scopes-serbia.org](http://www.scopes-serbia.org)

USAID Serbia Economic Growth Activity: [www.bep.org.rs](http://www.bep.org.rs)

National Alliance for Local Economic Development: [www.naled-serbia.org/](http://www.naled-serbia.org/)

FIDIC: [www.fidic.rs](http://www.fidic.rs) and [www.aces.rs](http://www.aces.rs) (FIDIC)

BIRN (Balkan Investigative Reporting Network): [www.birn.eu.com](http://www.birn.eu.com)

Infostud's brochure on HR: <http://mojtim.infostud.com/?language=sr>

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