



**USAID**  
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# FASTFACTS

ON USAID'S ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

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# PHOTO OF THE MONTH: U.S. Ambassador to Serbia Mary Warlick in Novi Pazar



***U.S. Ambassador to Serbia Mary Warlick and Novi Pazar Mayor Meho Mahmutovic*** officially opened the city's renovated pedestrian zone. "Our aim with this initiative was to make this central street more attractive and pleasant for citizens. From where I'm standing, it looks like we've succeeded," said Ambassador Warlick during her two day visit to Novi Pazar.

# Serbia: A Regional Leader in Film Location Promotion



*Serbia is the only country in Southeast Europe with a comprehensive strategy to promote itself as a destination for film and TV production. This was the conclusion reached at the Cinelink Regional Forum during the July 23-30, 2010 Sarajevo Film Festival. Serbia has made great strides to establish itself as the leading film destination in the region.*

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina – For the first time, the Serbia Film Commission (SFC), participated in the Cinelink Regional Forum held at the Sarajevo Film Festival. The festival is considered to be a prominent international film industry gathering. The commission's inaugural attendance at the festival coincided with its first year anniversary. The SFC enjoys the support of the USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project and actively

promotes Serbia for the production of films, TV content and advertising.

The Cinelink Regional Forum is a joint effort between the Sarajevo Film Festival and Screen International, one of the leading international magazines in the industry. The event brought together institutions, funds, and professionals from Southeast Europe to discuss new trends in legislation, funding sources, distribution, and practice in the film and TV production field. SFC consultant Martin Cuff, a seasoned professional with 25 years of experience in the film industry emphasized the economic impact of the film industry for Serbia. During a roundtable discussion on raising the competitiveness of film production via the work of film commissions, Cuff noted that the SFC was a great example for setting an industry standard. Founding members of the SFC, who established the commission based on examples of more than 300 film commissions from around the world, shared their experience with producers from Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Discussants concluded that none of these countries, along with others in the region, had film commissions capable of attracting international productions or strategies for promoting film locations. The fact that the Serbia Film Commission was founded as an independent association of film industry companies and individuals sparked even greater interest from film professionals from neighboring countries. These individuals have sought advice and support to set up similar organizations and become partners with the SFC.

The SFC celebrated its first anniversary as part of the festival's official program on July 28. More than three hundred guests, including producers, film fund and festival representatives and Variety and Hollywood Reporter journalists attended the event. Trainspotting star Ewen Bremner, who was promoting a new Woody Allen film in Sarajevo, was also in attendance.



Actor Ewen Bremner visited Sarajevo Film Festival to promote his new movie directed by Woody Allen

"The event in Sarajevo was a special occasion to celebrate one year since the founding of the SFC, the creation of campaigns and the Film in Serbia website. The presence of many dear friends and colleagues from around the world and region, including many of our members, contributed greatly to the success of this event. We have had an intense year in which we were able to significantly improve both the image of Serbia and the production services we offer. We were surprised, but also very proud to learn that the Serbia Film Commission was a pioneer in the region. There is definitely a great interest in Serbia as a film location and the commission itself, which is a good strategy to attract international production," commented Serbian Film Commission Executive Director Ana Ilic.

Sixteen film industry companies and individuals founded the 60-member Serbia Film Commission in July 2009. In addition to creating advertising campaigns and maintaining the [www.filminserbia.com](http://www.filminserbia.com) website, the SFC works to attract international producers to scout locations, regularly responds to international inquiries and organizes training for students and

professionals for work on high profile projects. The commission also liaises with state institutions to standardize procedures for obtaining permits for filming and providing general support, and most importantly, works closely with relevant government agencies to introduce incentives in order to attract international film productions to Serbia.

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## Ambassador Mary Warlick Inaugurates Novi Pazar Pedestrian Zone

Novi Pazar, Serbia - U.S. Ambassador to Serbia Mary Warlick and Novi Pazar Mayor Meho Mahmutovic officially opened the city's renovated pedestrian zone. "Our aim with this initiative was to make this central street more attractive and pleasant for citizens. From where I'm standing, it looks like we've succeeded," said Ambassador Warlick during her two-day visit to Novi Pazar. She added that the city should experience a revitalization of its downtown area and that both citizens and new businesses would be able to enjoy the benefits of the renovated pedestrian zone as a result of the support provided by USAID's Municipal Economic Growth Activity.

"Given the fact that your city represents the cultural and economic center of the entire Sandzak region, with a growing business sector that emphasizes entrepreneurship and trade, you have all the elements in place to ensure continued growth," said Ambassador Warlick. Following a ribbon-cutting ceremony that attracted hundreds of citizens, Ambassador Warlick and Mayor Mahmutovic strolled down the newly renovated street.

The USAID Municipal Economic Growth Activity funded this project with a \$83,000 grant to revitalize Novi Pazar's city center and ultimately attract more tourism and business to the city. As part of this effort, USAID also recently provided a second grant of \$53,000 for the reconstruction of a heavily-used pedestrian passageway located close to this central zone.

"USAID and the American people are proud to support the city of Novi Pazar and we expect to continue our successful cooperation in the future," concluded Ambassador Warlick.



U.S. Ambassador to Serbia  
Mary Warlick and Novi Pazar  
Mayor Meho Mahmutovic

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## Serbia Exports Blueberries!

USAID first began supporting the establishment of blueberry production in Serbia in 2006. Prior to this, no commercial blueberry production existed, and most Serbs confused blueberries with bilberries. When USAID launched the Agribusiness Project in late 2008, the berry sector was selected as one of the focus areas and the new project continued to provide assistance for the newly emerging blueberry industry. Initial assistance from the Project focused on technical issues, but as blueberry production grew, the focus shifted to marketing.

In late 2009, blueberry growers realized they needed to be better organized and gather enough blueberries to justify international sales. As a result, the largest blueberry growers joined efforts and formed the National Association of Serbian Blueberries (NASB).

Association members control approximately 45 ha of production, which comprises 60% of total production in Serbia. The association immediately focused on marketing efforts, the main challenge facing growers in late 2009.



Working with Agros Trade, one of the largest members of the association, the NASB has successfully reached sales agreements with buyers from Austria and Russia. The association has already shipped more than 30 tons of fresh blueberries to these customers.

To date, the sales value of these shipments has been \$195,000, with additional sales are in the pipeline. Moreover, the NASB hosted German buyers visiting Serbia earlier this year, and it anticipates reaching an agreement to export to Germany by the end of the year. The German buyers were also interested in other berry products. This is a positive development for Serbia, which is a new entrant to the international market for blueberries.

Beyond marketing efforts, the NASB will assist members to achieve international certification. This year, the association (via Agro KMK) will receive GlobalGAP certification, which will further enhance its ability to market and sell blueberries. The NASB is also planning a national promotional campaign to educate Serbian consumers about the nutritional value of blueberries.

## Moody's Awards International Credit Rating to Kraljevo, Novi Sad and Valjevo



On June 29, three cities in Serbia became the first to receive credit ratings. Moody's Investors Service, the international rating agency, awarded Novi Sad a Ba3 rating and Kraljevo and Valjevo B1 ratings. These ratings are a sign of financial stability and are expected to help these cities enter the international capital market. USAID Economic Growth Office Director Jim Stein, Ministry of Finance State Secretary Slobodan Ilic, and Moody's representatives Petr Vins and Massimo Visconti spoke at the official ceremony to announce Moody's credit analysis results.

"These ratings are underpinned by the cities' sound overall budgetary performances and limited direct-debt exposure," said Massimo Visconti, Vice-President

and Senior Credit Officer at Moody's. These three cities were selected to receive credit ratings at the Municipal Credit Rating Competition organized by USAID's Municipal Economic Growth Activity Program for 16 local governments in February. Jim Stein explained that credit ratings were an important step toward the issuance of municipal bonds, which are necessary for capital markets to develop.

Slobodan Ilic added that the issuance of credit ratings made the economy less risky, more transparent, and therefore increasingly attractive to investors. Novi Sad, Kraljevo and Valjevo will now be on the map as capital investment destinations. Citizens will also benefit from the issuance of credit ratings because they will have access to information about the quality of public finance management in their communities and how funds they contribute to the budget are spent. The process will also lead to an increase in the number of private investment and employment opportunities, and will spur economic development.

## MIHAS Fair Exposes Serbian Companies to the Halal Market

*The Halal Agency of Serbia joined forces with USAID to organize the Serbian food display in Malaysia.*



The Serbian delegation at the MIHAS trade show. Companies displayed their products under "Halal Serbia" banner.

Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA - The international Halal market was valued at \$600M in 2009, two thirds of which was in Asia. In order to assist Serbian firms to capture some of this market, the Agribusiness Project has supported selected firms that produce halal foods to present their products, and to enter these markets. The Project brought an international halal marketing consultant to Serbia to advise client firms and the Halal Agency of Serbia on market prospects. It also provided a grant to support the agency's participation at the June 2010 MIHAS Trade Show in Malaysia. The show is considered to be the most prominent halal show in the world.

The Halal Agency of Serbia received a matching grant that allowed the entry of selected Serbian firms into the Asian halal market. This activity enabled Serbian firms to display their products at the MIHAS

show. Prior to the event, the Project assisted the agency to select appropriate firms, and the halal consultant and Project staff trained firms as they prepared for the show. Malaysian Embassy representatives in Belgrade also assisted in the training, and the Halal Agency of Serbia prepared a catalogue of companies displaying at the show that was handed out to show attendees.

Participating companies were pleased with the positive results from the show, particularly since Serbian halal food products are virtually unknown in the Asian region. The companies signed contracts for the supply of \$70,000 worth of halal products with new customers and are negotiating the supply of an additional \$1.1M of future sales. The companies also reported they now have more confidence in their ability to sell to the Asian market, based on the positive reception they received and their impressions of Serbian products relative to the other products on display.

The CEO of the Halal Agency of Serbia, Mustafa Jusufspahic had the opportunity to meet the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib, who visited the Serbian booth. They discussed potential future cooperation and collaboration between Malaysia and Serbia.

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# Serbia Convention Bureau and its Partners to generate \$17 million in Coming Years



Frankfurt, IMEX 2010

Frankfurt, GERMANY – Following this year's successful participation at IMEX, the Serbia Convention Bureau (SCB) and its partners, with support from the USAID Competitiveness Project, continue to promote Serbia as a highly appealing convention destination in Europe.

IMEX is the leading annual worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings and events.

The SCB's mission, along with its 58 partners, is to turn Serbia into a highly competitive convention industry widely recognized for its quality products, services and value for money. This year, the SCB and its 11 co-exhibitors, including the Astakos, Vekol, Eurojet, Bon Voyage and Business Travel Partner agencies, the Mona, Zlatibor and Galleria and Subotica hotels, the Sava Center, Best Solutions and the Belgrade Convention Bureau represented Serbia at the 2010 IMEX Fair in Frankfurt, Germany from May 25-27.

Participation in the fair has resulted in contracts with an estimated value of \$17 million for conferences and conventions booked through 2014. These include several major conferences to take place at the Sava Center, including The

13th European AIDS Conference, the EACS in October 2011 (with 3,500 visitors expected), the Heart Failure Congress of the European Society of Cardiology in May 2012 (with 3,500 visitors expected), and the European Congress of Menopause in March 2014 (with 2,000 visitors expected).

The process of bidding for these large-scale international events is time intensive and requires a large pool of stakeholders. To complement this effort, the SCB launched its Ambassador program in May 2010. The event gathered eminent representatives in the Serbian scientific, medical, and engineering fields to introduce joint venture opportunities between public and private stakeholders and the meeting industry in order to increase the number of international events in Serbia.

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## Success Through Cooperation: Recovery of the Sandzak Textile Industry

Sandzak, Serbia - Nearly 100 individuals attended a conference in Belgrade on the new direction of Sandzak's textile industry. Attendees included ministers, European diplomats and Chamber of Commerce members. The event focused on the re-emergence of Serbia's textile industry and the vital role it plays on Sandzak's economy and Serbia as a whole. The spokesperson for ASSTEX, the recently formed textile association in Sandzak, credited the vision and support of USAID's Preparedness and Planning and Economic Security Program (PPES) and the partnerships it creates as a driving force behind the most recent achievements of Sandzak and Novi Pazar-based textile companies.



Once the cornerstone of the Sandzak economy, high-quality and well-designed Serbian textiles were in high demand regionally and throughout Western Europe. The textile industry, which peaked in the 1990s, was a major employer in the Sandzak region and generated annual revenues exceeding 100,000 euros. In the decade that followed, the industry mirrored the decline of Serbia's economy and was especially affected by the import of inexpensive goods flooding European markets, outdated production technology and a worldwide recession. By

2005, unemployment rates in the region reached 50% and according to the Government's Bureau of Statistics, unemployment in Sandzak remained higher than the national average. The importance of textiles as an economic bedrock for the region is evident and a key reason why USAID's PPES Program targeted the industry as a partner for its business support activities.

Between 2007 and 2009, PPES-supported companies' sales grew by 14%, results achieved during the height of the world economic crisis. ASSTEX, the association established as a direct result of PPES partnership with companies and other local stakeholders, demonstrated turnover among its cluster members in the amount of 9.5 million Euros between 2008 and 2009.

Companies receive training in core business skills, including management, operations, marketing and sales. True success however is the result of PPES' hands-on partnership with selected companies. Aside from teaching companies how to create brand identity and write a business plan, PPES provides coaching and technical assistance to produce high-quality strategic plans and offers experts who prepare qualifying firms for major business trade fairs.

Following participation at textile fairs in Moscow and Düsseldorf this past year, Serbian textile manufacturers have reported a positive response after initial meetings. The goal of trade mission visits is to turn these positive responses into concrete sales. This has produced great results. The creation of ASSTEX spawned industry cooperation, including working as a cluster to support research and development, advocate for greater government investment and market domestically and internationally.

ASSTEX is emerging as a true leader in the region, and has taken responsibility for the textile industry's long-term health. ASSTEX member companies and the two universities in the region are challenged to more actively engage in preparing a modern workforce and developing research to help businesses succeed in a global economy, operate efficiently and become environmentally responsible. PPES is partnering with these universities and companies to offer student internships and career guidance to complement these goals.

PPES' activities in Sandzak demonstrate that the proper tools, support and experience can help those determined to succeed to achieve their goals more quickly. Business support in Sandzak also highlights how USAID investment serves as a catalyst for a region, helping it to rebuild its economy and set the direction for its future.

# eUprava eGovernment Internet Portal Successfully Implemented with USAID/SEGA Support



The USAID Serbia Economic Growth Activity (SEGA) continued supporting the Serbian's government efforts to modernize its operations and provide simple on-line services to individuals and businesses. At the start of the SEGA project, advisors participated the selection of eGovernment projects that were later funded through the state budget. One of these projects, the eUprava portal, was initiated in 2009 and went live on April 6th, 2010. The Serbian Prime Minister officially presented it at a high-level event on June 11.

The Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Society and the Republic Office for Internet and IT, via excellent cooperation

with local municipalities, managed and funded the eUprava portal. The National Bank of Serbia and the Ministry of Finance Treasury helped to ensure that the most complex part of the system, which for the first time in Serbia introduced the model for generic electronic payment of taxes, was implemented.

The portal is designed to provide individuals and legal entities with a simple, fast and easy way to find all relevant public administration information they need. Information and on-line services are grouped according to Life Situations (i.e. transportation, education, documents, etc), but there are also overviews of responsible authorities and by initial letters of the service name (from A to Š). The most important part of the portal is eUsluge (eServices), where individuals and businesses can make on-line requests to public administration entities and complete the entire procedure, including the required service payments. Here, users can fill out forms and send them through the portal to be processed by a responsible authority. This includes making payments for specific administration services and providing final results (official document sent, etc). Payments can be made in the traditional fashion, by going to a bank or a post office. However, the manner of payment is fully adjusted to the online service provision, which is why users can opt for DinaCard and regular eBanking services.

The entire payment functionality, including all models, processes and procedures, is the result of the support USAID/SEGA provided to the Republic Office for Internet and IT to implement the ePortal project. Mr. Baralic, Director General of the Office, whose vision reached beyond the common administration limits in Serbian government, has was an excellent counterpart for the project.

The implementation of the payment model was based on the systems previously introduced in Serbia, where USAID/SEGA as well as earlier USAID projects, provided advisory support aimed at implementing modern payment infrastructure in Serbia, including the Payment System and DinaCard, a domestic payment card.

The Moja eUprava (my eGovernment) segment provides registered users with the possibility to create their own list of necessary information, as well as to follow-up on the delivery status of requested eServices. As a result, citizens and legal entities can create their own set of information related to the government activities and services. The eParticipacija (eParticipation) segment allows active participation by citizens and legal entities in the process of law making and preparation of other strategic documents. The portal will provide information on all public debates, allowing the public to participate from their homes and offices in a debate that concerns them.

Over 50 eServices have been launched in the initial implementation phase. Services are offered by 27 different government agencies, including the Ministry of Interior, Commercial Courts, the National Employment Agency, the Public Prosecution Office, the National Library, the Ministry of Education and pilot municipalities. This number will grow once training for official users of the system (i.e. government agencies) is completed, enabling more services to be created in the system itself.

# SERBIA IN INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

## Serbia Listed as a Film Friendly Country



EntertainmentPartners is the leading provider of production management solutions, offering information on production incentives around the world. The company recently included Serbia on its site, stating that the Serbian Film Commission was proposing a cash rebate of 15% to 20% of all direct spending by international productions. The USAID Serbia Competitiveness Project is mentioned as an industry supporter to develop a strategy to promote the country's key advantages.

More information on:

<http://www.entertainmentpartners.com>

## STAY CONNECTED

### World Food Moscow Food and Drinks Exhibition: September 14-17, 2010



The USAID Agribusiness Project is supporting the Serbian Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SIEPA) to organize the exhibition of Serbian agricultural products at the international World Food Show in Moscow this coming September. Seven companies and two Associations (Fruit Land and National Association of prune producers) will be presenting the highest quality apples, peaches, prunes, berries and other produce at the Natural Serbia Pavilion. World Food Moscow is a unique international exhibition of food products and drinks, with an established

reputation and tradition in Russia. Founded in 1992, World Food Moscow has become an ideal place for international and domestic food and drink producers to promote their latest products and services to the food retail sector, caterers, chefs, wholesalers and distributors.

World Food Moscow brings together over 1200 participants from 55 countries. <http://www.world-food.ru/eng/>

## International specialty foods show CULINARIA; Belgrade, Serbia - September 23-25, 2010



The CULINARIA international specialty food show will premier in Belgrade in September. This fair is focused primarily on professional buyers and is the first fine food and drinks fair in southeast Europe. CULINARIA will for the first time gather manufacturers and leading professional buyers from the region and Europe who supply major supermarket chains, specialty food stores, hotels, restaurants, institutions and catering companies. Products to be presented at CULINARIA include jams, fruit juices, forest mushrooms and truffles, hams and prosciuttos, artisan white cheese, honey from some of the most preserved forests in Europe, the purest spring water, wines and brandies, rich herbal teas and a wide selection of organic food. CULINARIA will be held at Belgrade's BelExpo Center, with the

support from the USAID Agribusiness Project, GTZ and the Serbian Ministry of Agriculture. For additional information and registration, please see [www.culinaria.rs](http://www.culinaria.rs)

## SIAL Food Fair, Paris: October 17-21, 2010



The USAID Agribusiness Project is supporting the Serbian Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SIEPA) to organize an exhibition of Serbian agricultural products at the international Food Show in Paris in October. Eleven companies and one Association (Serbian Honey producers Union) will be presenting the highest quality products (fresh, frozen and dried fruits, vegetables, sauces, juices, honey, confectionary products, jams, pepper spreads etc) at the Serbia Pavilion. Established in 1964, SIAL host 5,500 exhibitors from over 100 countries. SIAL is a global

food exhibition providing comprehensive food product offering. As a multi-specialist exhibition, SIAL brings together all food industries. This year, food manufacturers from 19 product sectors and food industries will participate in the event.

For more information, please see <http://en.sial.fr/>.

## PEOPLE

### BRANKICA OBUĆINA

Senior Policy Advisor, USAID Agribusiness Project



**Brankica Obućina** joined the USAID Agribusiness Project in April 2008 as an Agriculture Information and Policy Specialist. She was promoted to Senior Policy Advisor in September 2009. Obućina graduated from the University of Belgrade Faculty of Economics, where she obtained an undergraduate degree in International and Domestic Trade.

Before becoming a part of the Agribusiness project team, Obućina worked as an Economic Advisor for the USAID World Trade Organization (WTO) Accession Project for Serbia and Montenegro. With expertise in WTO practices, she also worked on short-term assignments in the WTO accession processes of Ukraine and Tajikistan.

**Obućina is known** for her analytical thinking and problem solving skills, which she applies to her hobby, the stock market. Regarded as a true professional among her colleagues, she is a team player committed to building long-term relationships with clients and colleagues in an atmosphere that inspires and motivates others.

# 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 (SEGA) : [www.bep.org.rs](http://www.bep.org.rs)  
USAID Municipal Economic Growth Activity (MEGA) : [www.mega.ui-serbia.org](http://www.mega.ui-serbia.org)  
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: [www.birn.eu.com](http://www.birn.eu.com)

# CONTACT

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## USAID COMPETITIVENESS PROJECT:

Jelena Đujić,  
Communications Manager  
[jdjujic@compete.rs](mailto:jdjujic@compete.rs)

## USAID AGRIBUSINESS PROJECT:

Danijela Šever Radovanović,  
Communications Advisor  
[Danijela\\_Sever-Radovanovic@agrobiznis.net](mailto:Danijela_Sever-Radovanovic@agrobiznis.net)

## USAID ECONOMIC SECURITY PROGRAM:

Sandra Vlatković,  
Director of Information  
[Sandra\\_Vlatkovic@dai.com](mailto:Sandra_Vlatkovic@dai.com)

## USAID SERBIA ECONOMIC GROWTH ACTIVITY:

Ana Đelović,  
Deputy Chief of Party  
[adjelovic@bep.org.rs](mailto:adjelovic@bep.org.rs)

## USAID MUNICIPAL ECONOMIC GROWTH ACTIVITY:

Nataša Ristić,  
Communications Advisor  
[natasa\\_ristic@ui-serbia.org](mailto:natasa_ristic@ui-serbia.org)