



Swiss Thai



AUGUST 2020 | SWISS-THAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | E-NEWSLETTER #121

Good food, Good life

TOP NEWS

- Deutsche Bank:** Nearing an end to monetary easing
- Legal:** New Regulation C839 to Foreign Chambers
- Covid 19:** Swiss Family Repatriation – Experience Report
- School News:** Summer German – Program / Social Project 2020
- Sri Sangwan School in Khon Kaen / Presentation and handover of Secondary School certificates

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DEAR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF THE STCC



PRESIDENT BRUNO G. ODERMATT

Thailand has been cited by the WHO as a true success story in managing the coronavirus outbreak. As it entered into the 6th phase of Covid-19 lockdown lifting, the crucial tourism sector has been extremely affected. According to the World Travel & Tourism Counsel report, the tourism sector accounted for 19% of Thai GDP in 2019; 5.2% of that is generated by local tourism, which is now heavily promoted and supported by government travel schemes to kick-start the troubled sector. As tourism accounts for 21.4% out of total employment in Thailand, everyone agrees that tough

times lie ahead and that tourism will not be the same after Covid-19. Travellers will need to adopt to “new normal” practices and need to maintain social distancing and safety precaution measures. The STCC is engaged in different committees through the Joint Foreign Chamber of Commerce (JFCCT) in advising the government on best possible actions to bring this economically crucial sector back to pre-Covid levels.

As the Covid-19 crisis is affecting almost all business sectors in Thailand, we are well aware that many of STCC member companies are faced with difficult challenges and the need to scale down operations. Through our frequent contact with many of our members, we understand the overall impact on the business community, especially for small and medium sized enterprises. As you have also received the STCC membership invoices for 2020, which were sent out a later day

SERVICE

MEMBER DETAIL UPDATES

Do you have changes among your delegates or changes to your e-mail, mobile, telephone, or fax numbers?

Please send all updates to secretary@swissthai.com



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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

this year, I want to express our gratitude for your backing of the STCC. Most of you paid the membership fee on time and made a firm commitment to further strengthen and support our organization. We do not take it for granted and extend to you our gratitude for your long-term perspective, as this current crisis will soon pass and all of us will emerge stronger and more committed to do business in Thailand.

Due to the Covid-19 travel restrictions, many Swiss expatriates were forced to spend the 1st August National Holiday in Bangkok. This year, our Federal President Simonetta Sommaruga, held her speech at the Aare River in Bern, which was voted by an American magazine as one of the most beautiful rivers in the world. Her message to the Swiss nationals abroad really touched my heart. She reminded the Swiss living abroad that everyone represents Switzerland and its democratic values. It is worth repeating them: 1) A government that reflects all forces in the country; 2) A government that is accountable to its people and must earn their trust; 3) An independent judiciary; 4) An independent media that allows every citizen a chance to be heard and can criticise those in power. It is an immensely powerful message in a time of destabilizing popu-

list movements and emerging authoritarian regimes around the globe. For those of us who are still closely connected to political and social life in Switzerland, we can truly attest that is not just small talk or visionary thinking, but reflects Switzerland's political reality. It is a country which holds up those democratic principles and grants its people freedom and prosperity. It is no coincidence that in a recent survey 80% of Swiss people say they trust their government (source OECD).

As you might remember, one of the key projects of the STC 20th anniversary was the renovation of the Swiss Stone Ball fountain in Lumpini Park. All repair works were completed last year and due to the change of Ambassador in 2019 and following Covid-19 restrictions, we had to postpone the official inauguration to a later date. Our engineering team, headed by Martin Bieri, inspected the fountain last month and some minor maintenance work needs to be done to prepare the fountain for its official inauguration day by the Bangkok Governor. Since Switzerland and Thailand established diplomatic relations in 1931 and will celebrate 90th year anniversary in 2021, the inauguration of the fountain will become part of the year-long festivities. We will let you know the date in due time.

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Despite the difficult environment we are in, I wish you a successful 3rd quarter for your businesses. I am looking forward to seeing you at one of the scaled down 1st August festivities.

With my best wishes

Bruno G. Odermatt-Maag
President

Contact the President:

Bruno G. Odermatt
President STCC
president@swissthai.com
Tel: +66 2 652 1911

STCC CALENDAR AUGUST 2020:

STCC Special Stamm - FULLY BOOKED
7.8.2020

Thursday 13th August 2020: STCC Special STAMM "Covid Relax" Business networking, 18:00 at Embassy of Switzerland

Further Activities for September onwards will be announced later

More details for above events please wait for the invitation-mail or get it from www.swissthai.com, click on "events".

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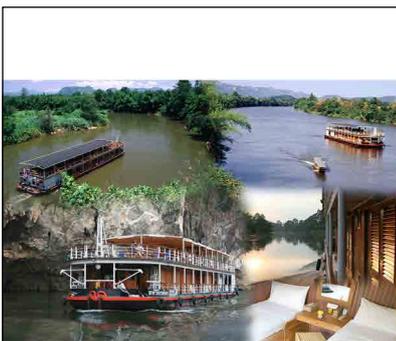
BUSINESS EXCHANGE WITH THAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



The Chairman of the Thai Chamber of Commerce (TCC) and Board of Trade (BOT), Khun Kalin Sarasin, and his executive team, met with the Swiss Ambassador H.E. Helene Budliger Artieda and members of her staff and the STCC for an exchange of business issues at the Swiss Embassy. The

STCC has been enjoying a strong relationship with the TCC over many years and with the current strong support of the Swiss Ambassador and her economic team, we are looking forward to further strengthen these ties. Given the current Covid-19 crisis and the impact on local businesses and

the tourism sector in particular, several ideas were discussed on how to support businesses amidst the worst crisis in the Thai tourism sector. We extend our appreciation to her H.E. for initiating this mutually beneficial dialogue.



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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SWISS STONE FOUNTAIN LUMPINI PARK



the fountain structure. Currently there are three time phases of operation – from 7am to 9am, from 11am to 1 pm, from 5pm to 7pm. We need to adjust the time phases as well.

Martin Bieri and his engineering team will take care of further repair work and we plan to have the official inauguration with the Bangkok Governor as part of the 90 years Swiss-Thai relations in 2021. Once we get the stone fountain back into operations, we need to work out a maintenance plan with the support of the Lumpini Park officials. We will keep you updated about further progress and the official inauguration date with the Bangkok Governor.

The STCC is pleased to update its members on the “The Golden Jubilee Stone Ball Fountain Renovation Project”. Martin Bieri, head engineer of Poyry Ltd and a small team of members of the STCC and the Swiss Embassy met with Lumpini Park officials to inspect the Stone Fountain. Some members reported to us that the stone ball was not operating properly. It appears that the basic structure is still intact and that the water pump is working properly. The main issue is the lack of maintenance work. One connecting water tube was clogged and it appears we need to adjust the pump pressure to ensure that the stone ball keeps moving without human intervention. We also need to do some clean-up work inside



ECONOMY SPECIAL REPORT BY DEUTSCHE BANK

NEARING AN END TO MONETARY EASING

Asia continues to offer the most positive examples of how to suppress the Covid-19 virus, and, having done so, of how quickly economic activity can recover. China, Hong Kong, South Korea and Vietnam have experienced strong recoveries in consumption after containing the virus outbreak. Unfortunately, some other countries have not succeeded in containing the virus, despite lengthy lockdowns. We expect their recoveries to be weaker.

Exports continue to present a positive surprise. While depressed demand in the US and EU and social distancing restrictions, that have at times constrained exporters' ability to ship goods, have certainly impacted exports, the effect has been much weaker than we had expected. Instead of exports falling more than they did in 2009, 2020 is shaping up to be a repeat, perhaps, of 2015/2016 – a lull in exports but not a regime change. As the G2 economies rebound in Q3, Asian export growth could strengthen.

With the worst of the crisis now likely behind them, we think policymakers will transition from providing emergency support to their economies to monitoring the recovery and gradually scaling back fiscal stimulus to avoid a 'fiscal cliff' drag on growth as emergency measures are removed.

We expect that one or two rate cuts remain in a few countries, but only in the Philippines and Sri Lanka do we think central banks will have cut rates more than the Fed has. But in those economies with the strong recoveries and acceleration in asset price inflation – so far, China and South Korea – the question increasingly will be: when do they begin normalizing rates? We think that process will begin next year, long before the Fed or ECB.

Nearing an end to monetary easing

Asia continues to offer the most positive examples of how to suppress the Covid-19 virus and, having done so, how quickly economic activity can recover. **China's** data are the closest approximation to a V-shaped recovery that we're likely to find anywhere, with **Q2 GDP expected to show a complete reversal of the Q1 decline**. There continue to be sporadic outbreaks, to which the authorities respond with the same determination they showed in Wuhan, but these haven't been worrying enough to get in the way of the economic revival.

Vietnam reacted quickly to the news of the outbreak in China, implemented an even harder lockdown than China did and suppressed the virus just as effectively. They are now **seeing a similarly strong economic recovery since the lockdown ended**. As is well known, South Korea and Taiwan didn't go into lockdown but we would argue they have been very successful in containing the virus, although South Korea hasn't suppressed it as completely as Taiwan did. Their more voluntary, but still highly effective, containment strategies meant that their economies contracted much less than economies that were locked down. The **South Korean economy, more so than Taiwan, seems to be reviving strongly in recent weeks with soaring car sales and rising property prices**.

Other countries – **India, Indonesia, and the Philippines** – have not been able to contain their Covid-19 outbreaks. These countries **may experience the worst outcome: a record decline in GDP as economies were locked down but still a failure to suppress the virus**. Their post-lock-



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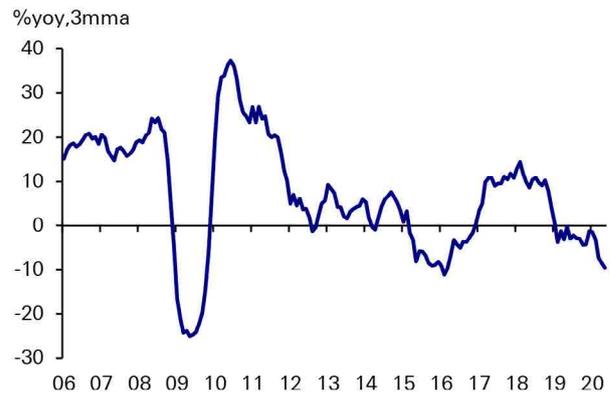
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down rebounds are likely to be much weaker than we observe in China and Vietnam. Indeed, lack of effective containment could mean household demand stalls well below pre-Covid levels.

Hong Kong occupies a middle road: a most voluntary strategy of containment as in South Korea and Taiwan that had been highly successful but, sadly, recent days have seen record numbers of new local cases of unknown origin. As we had expected, consumption responded strongly to the suppression of the virus – indeed by May retail sales were a little ahead of our forecasts – although with the latest setback, sales in July will likely retrench somewhat. With the upward revision to China’s growth outlook and surprisingly strong export growth so far, **we have revised up our 2020 GDP forecast for Hong Kong slightly.** Still, at -4.5% – and a second consecutive annual decline in GDP – this is the weakest economic environment in the SAR since 1998.

We commented last month on the surprising strength of electronics exports in particular but Chinese exports more broadly. While most economies have seen steep declines in exports, this may have been due as much to their own shutdowns as to the declines in demand in the

Asian exports



Sources: CEIC and Deutsche Bank Research

US and EA imports from Asia



Sources: Haver Analytics and Deutsche Bank Research.

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region's main European and US export markets. With G2 GDP expected to contract much more than it did in 2009 (an expected decline of 14%yoy in Q2 versus -4.5% in mid-2009), we had expected Asian exports to be weaker than in 2009. So far, though, they aren't falling nearly as quickly. **April/May export growth in Asia – depressed by lockdowns in some of these countries – was only -10%, a more moderate rate of decline even than in 2015/16 and so far much better than we had expected.**

This is verified also in the import data from the US and Euro Area, which show a combine 11%yoy decline in imports from Asia as of April with US data hinting at a recovery already. Imports from Asia are falling much less than total imports into these regions.

While we remain concerned about downside risks from the 'second wave' of Covid-19 cases in the US, as social distancing policies in the US and Europe were relaxed, retail sales rebounded sharply in May, consistent with the behavior we observe in China. **As the G2 economies rebound in Q3, Asian export growth could strengthen – especially in countries where exports may have been depressed by their own lock-down rules.**

So far, 2020 is shaping up to be a repeat, perhaps, of 2015/2016 – a lull in exports but not a regime change. The external drag on growth that we were worried would hold back the recovery in North Asia about has been real, but less serious than we'd feared.

With domestic demand recovering strongly in North Asia and likely to rebound – if less completely – in South and Southeast Asia as their lockdowns end, we think **policymakers will transition from providing emergency support to their economies to monitoring the recovery and avoiding a 'fiscal cliff' drag on growth as emergency measures are removed.** Many gov-

ernments, for example, have offered cash handouts or wage subsidies as temporary income support. The South Korean government last week unveiled a third stimulus package aimed at smoothing out the loss of handouts and shifting the focus of policy from emergency relief back to longer-term requirements for growth such as infrastructure investment.

Overall, **fiscal stimulus has been considerable across the region, albeit not as generous as in the US and Euro Area** – as is to be expected of emerging markets whose governments don't issue liabilities that are widely held as safe, reserve, assets. Including extra-budgetary items, the Chinese government deficit is expected to rise by about 6% of GDP. Elsewhere, fiscal deficits are expected to rise by about 4% of GDP.

On the monetary front, every Asian central bank has cut its policy rate at least once this year, and while the PBOC has been the most restrained – cutting its 1yr MLF rate by only 30bps since January – other central banks have been more assertive. **Policy rates are generally at record low levels although only the Philippine central bank has exceeded the Fed's 150bps rate cuts and none have taken their policy rate to zero.**

But with the worst of the crisis behind us, **we think, the need for further monetary policy action is diminishing.** We expect another 50bps of rate cuts in Vietnam, 35bps in India but only another one rate cut of 25bps each in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. China and Taiwan aside, policy rates across the rest of the region will have fallen between 75bps (South Korea) and 175bps (Philippines).

With policy rates still positive, there is, of course, still room for rate cuts if needed to respond to a worsening of the pandemic. But, if our forecast of economic stabilization is correct, **in those economies with the strong recoveries**



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and accelerating asset price inflation – so far, China and South Korea – the question later this year may be whether they need to raise rates long before the Fed or ECB.

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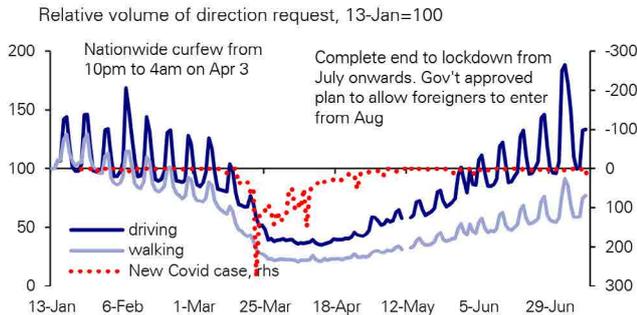
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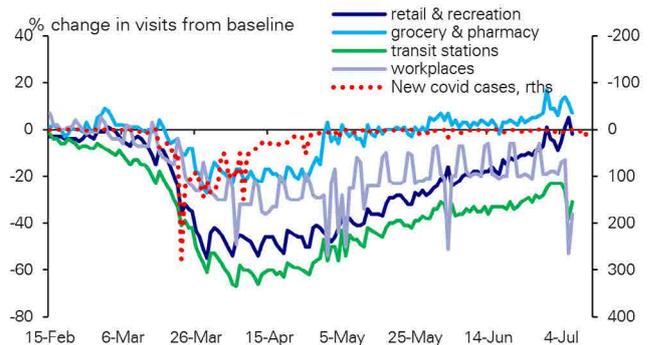
Juliana Lee,
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Thailand – Easing lockdown



Source: Apple, Deutsche Bank Research

Mixed rebound in activities



Source: Google, Deutsche Bank Research

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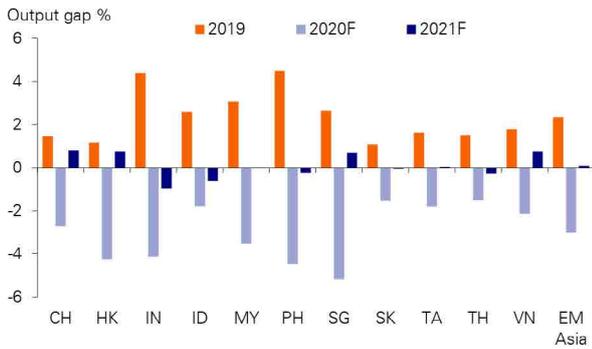


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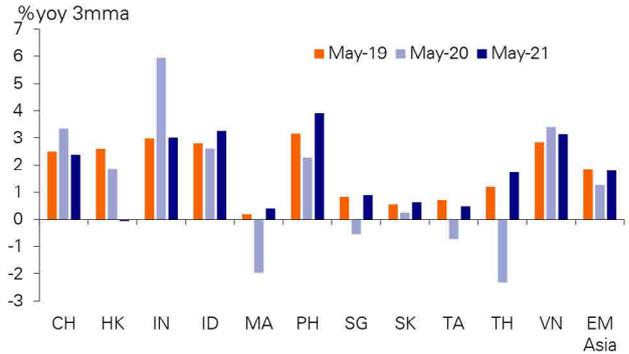
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EM Asia output gap



Sources: CEIC, Deutsche Bank Research

EM Asia CPI inflation



Sources: CEIC, Deutsche Bank Research

Thailand – Inflation (CPI)



Note: Next CPI release: Aug 5, Deutsche Bank forecast (previous): -2.0% (-1.6%)

Thailand – 1-day Repurchase Rate



Note: Next policy meeting: Aug 5, Deutsche Bank Rate Call: 25bps cut expected



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Thailand

	2018	2019	2020F	2021F
National Income				
Nominal GDP (USDbn)	506.6	543.8	495.1	535.8
Population (mn)	66.4	66.6	66.8	67.0
GDP per capita (USD)	7,383	7,752	7,406	7,998
Real GDP (YoY%)				
Private consumption	4.2	2.4	-6.9	5.0
Government consumption	4.6	4.5	-1.5	5.0
Gross fixed investment	2.6	1.4	2.0	2.9
Exports	3.8	2.2	-6.5	4.6
Imports	3.3	-2.6	-14.2	10.8
	8.3	-4.4	-11.2	10.5
Prices, Money and Banking				
CPI (yoy %) eop	0.4	0.9	-1.2	1.4
CPI (yoy %) ann avg	1.1	0.7	-1.4	1.2
Core CPI (yoy %) ann avg	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.4
Broad money	5.1	4.1	6.4	6.1
Bank credit ¹ (yoy %)	5.9	1.8	5.2	5.5
Fiscal Accounts (% of GDP)¹				
Central government surplus	-3.4	-2.7	-4.2	-2.5
Government revenue	15.5	15.2	15.8	17.1
Government expenditure	18.9	17.9	20.1	19.6
Primary surplus	-2.1	-1.6	-3.0	-1.3
External Accounts (USD bn)				
Merchandise exports	251.1	243.0	211.0	228.6
Merchandise imports	228.7	216.4	194.9	216.0
Trade balance	22.4	26.6	16.1	12.5
% of GDP	4.4	4.9	3.3	2.4
Current account balance	28.5	37.3	8.0	11.2
% of GDP	5.6	6.9	1.7	2.1
FDI (net)	-8.0	-7.1	-6.8	-9.0
FX reserves (eop)	205.6	224.3	219.6	221.4
FX rate (eop) USD/THB	32.3	29.7	31.7	31.0
Debt Indicators (% of GDP)				
Government debt ¹	38.4	38.4	45.2	46.1
Domestic	36.3	37.5	44.3	42.8
External	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Total external debt	32.1	31.7	36.9	36.1
in USDbn	162	172	182	193
Short-term (% of total)	59.4	59.2	59.4	59.3
General				
Industrial production (YoY%)	3.7	-3.6	-3.0	4.0
Unemployment (%)	1.1	1.0	2.2	1.5
Financial Markets (eop)				
BoT o/n repo rate	Current	20Q3F	20Q4F	21Q1F
3-month Bibor	0.50	0.25	0.25	0.25
10-year yield (%)	0.63	0.40	0.40	0.40
USD/THB	1.29	1.00	0.80	0.90
	31.3	31.9	31.7	31.6

Sources: CEIC, Deutsche Bank Research, National Sources
 Note: (1) Central government debt and guarantees.



LEGAL

NEW REGULATION C839 TO FOREIGN CHAMBERS



No. 0702/ C. 839

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs presents its compliments to all Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand, with reference to the Ministry's earlier Note No.C.446 dated 28 May 2020, and has the honour to refer to the Regulation No.12 issued under Section 9 of the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situations B.E. 2548 (2005) dated 30 June 2020 that supersedes the referred Note.

In this connection, the Ministry wishes to inform the new procedures regarding non-Thai nationals who have work permit or have been granted permission from government agencies to work in the Kingdom of Thailand as follows:

1. Clause 1 (8) of the Regulation No. 12 allows non-Thai nationals **who possess valid work permit or have been granted permission to work in the Kingdom in accordance with Thai laws, including their spouses and their children** to apply for Certificate of Entry (COE) to enter the Kingdom.

2. The procedure for non-Thai nationals to submit applications for "Certificate of Entry (COE)" into the Kingdom of Thailand, issued by the Royal Thai embassies and the Royal Thai Consulate-Generals, are as follows:

2.1 Contact the Royal Thai Embassy or the Royal Thai Consulate-General in their country of departure at least 10 working days before the date of intended departure. The applicants must present:

(a) A copy of work permit or copy of letter of permission issued by a Thai Government agency (in most cases, by the Ministry of Labour) to work in Thailand;

(b) A completed and signed "Declaration Form" obtained from the Embassy/Consulate-General

(c) A health insurance covering all expenditures of medical treatment, including COVID-19, while traveling to Thailand and during their stay in Thailand, in an amount of at least 100,000 USD.

2.2 At the port of departure/embarcation (e.g. airline check-in counter), the approved applicant is required to present

(1) The "Certificate of Entry (COE)" issued by the Royal Thai Embassy/Consulate-General;

(2) The completed and signed "Declaration Form";

(3) A 'Fit to Fly Health Certificate';

(4) A medical certificate with RT-PCR laboratory result indicating that COVID-19 is not detected, issued no more than 72 hours before travelling; and



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(5) A health insurance certificate covering all expenditures of medical treatment, including COVID-19, while traveling to Thailand and during their stay in Thailand, in an amount of at least 100,000 USD.

2.3 Upon entry into the Kingdom, non-Thai nationals will be subjected to a 14-day state quarantine at a government-designated Alternative State Quarantine (ASQ) facility at their own expenses, and obliged to comply with the government's disease prevention measures pursuant to clause 2 of the Regulation issued under Section 9 of the said Emergency Decree.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand the assurances of its highest consideration.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Bangkok
20 July B.E. 2563 (2020)



All Foreign Chambers of Commerce,
BANGKOK.



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COVID-19

SWISS FAMILY RETURNS TO THAILAND – REPATRIATION EXPERIENCE REPORT

Interview by Th. Gerber

Our Corporate Member Mr Andreas Wanner, Co-Founder and Authorised Director of Mister Loo (Thailand) Co. Ltd., was stuck in Switzerland due to COVID-19 situation and just returned to Thailand. He is sharing with us his experience in below interview.

As for every person trying to return, the situation is different, therefore we would have to declare also our personal situation.

- I am a Swiss national entrepreneur and Co-Founder of Mister Loo and together with my wife (Bettina, Swiss) and my 2 kids (Laura (3) and Ben (1.5)) we applied for the Certificate of Entry ("CoE") following the official announcement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the criteria and guidelines for non-Thai nationals to enter Thailand as per June 30, 2020.
- I am holding the Non-Immigrant B Visa as well as Work Permit whereas my family holds the Non-Immigrant O Visa.
- The reason to return to Thailand was linked to our business, Mister Loo, whereas me and my business partner were managing the operations in Thailand

(as well as other markets such as Vietnam and Indonesia) remotely out of Switzerland since Thailand has closed its borders for international arrivals.

1. Were the instructions received clear and straight forward?

- Following the publication by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the challenge was that media (online and print newspaper) in Thailand shared only high-level information without having really understood the requirements, selection criteria and the underlying process. Our impression was even that they only copy/paste the text from each other but none of them made any efforts to understand the details.
- After contacting the Royal Thai Embassy in Berne, we got a better picture and more visibility incl. the fact that any return to Thailand must be organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Royal Thai Embassy of each country whereas any flights will be "repatriation flights" and not any commercial flights. In the meantime, this is general knowledge, but right after the publication of the new rule, such relevant information was not widely published.

- In any case, once in contact with the Royal Thai Embassy in Bern, the instructions and the required documents were well explained and transparently disclosed. In terms of process and timing, our expectations were managed by the Embassy in a way as they advised that any approval process may take between 3-4 weeks.

2. Were there any special conditions to be fulfilled (e.g. Vermögens- / Einkommens-nachweis, privat or Firma) etc?

- The documents to be submitted were reasonable and no special conditions or documents were required (see question no. 3 below).
- However, for the sake of completeness, we decided on our own to add more documents such as the Lease Agreement of our apartment in Bangkok as well as an excerpt of one bank account proving that we have sufficient funds (during the lock-down in Switzerland, we had to extend the Non-Immigrant O Visa for the family and the excerpt of the bank account is one of the requirements for such Visa – thus, we thought it is reasonable to attach such information as well).



COVID-19

3. What documents were needed to apply for the CoE at the Thai Embassy in Bern (or Consulate in Basel, Genf?)

- We applied for the CoE at the Royal Thai Embassy in Bern. The requirement documents are listed on the Embassy's website (go to "Consular Services" > "Visa" > "How to apply for Certificate of Entry").
- There are different categories for Non-Thais, thus each applicant must select its category. In our case, we applied for category 4.: "Non-Thai nationals who hold a valid work permit to work in the Kingdom, including spouse and children"
- The requirement documents to apply for the CoE were:

1. A completed and signed declaration form (to be downloaded)
2. A copy of applicant's passport (in our case of all family members)
3. A copy of valid work permit
4. A copy of marriage certificate/ birth certificate of spouse and children
5. A copy of valid health insurance certificate, covering all expenditures of medical treatments, including COVID-19, worth at least USD 100,000.- (please make sure

that this insurance includes international coverage and that the certificate is in English)

6. A copy of the valid visa and/or re-entry permit for Thailand

4. Which documents was the most difficult to obtain?

- We were already in possession of all required documents except the confirmation of the health insurance in English. In any case, the confirmation letter from the health insurance was pretty easy to get as insurances are used to issue such confirmation letters these days. Thus, overall it was pretty straight forward

5. Were you treated in a friendly and welcoming way by the embassy staff?

- The Royal Thai Embassy in Bern treated us in a friendly and accurate way. Once submitted the documents for the CoE, the response time and guidance of the Embassy was well done.
- We were aware that there might have been submitted tons of applications. Based on the Embassy's first indication that such approval process may take 3-4 weeks, we did not expect any immediate feedback which however turned-out differently.
- In particular once the CoE was obtained, the Embassy

kept us very closely informed by email as well as personal calls. We even had a dedicated contact person at the Embassy who took care of us which made the process efficient.

6. How long did it take to get the CoE?

- In our specific case, it took only 5 days to get the approval of the CoE. As said, this was far beyond our expectations. We do not know whether there are any selection criteria by the Royal Thai Embassy, but we are convinced that a solid and entirely complete set of documents for the application process is key.
- I guess the timing was also beneficial to us as we applied for the CoE early July which was just a few days after the official publication of the new procedure. As outlined initially, the general information spread by the media were not clear and thus we assume a lot of people were confused and awaited further information.



Check in Zuerich



COVID-19

7. How did you get the confirmation for the Alternative State Quarantine, and how many days?

- The list of hotels in Thailand offering the Alternative State Quarantine Program (ASQ) is available on the Embassy's website.

- Upon confirmation of the CoE, we were asked to book the hotel by ourselves for the 14 days ASQ whereas the hotel confirmation had to be sent to the Embassy thereafter (as a side comment: Actually, it is in total a 15 days quarantine as the first day of arrival is defined as "day zero" and thus does not count).

8. How did you book the flight. Directly with an airline or through the Thai embassy?

- In our case, the Royal Thai Embassy worked together with KLM and thus our repatriation flight was departing from Amsterdam. We had to book the flights by ourselves through the official KLM website and it was strictly prohibited to book any other commercial flight or to use any other travel and booking platform.

- As there were no flights available on the KLM website for the date of the scheduled repatriation flight, we had to book the flights for any later date (i.e. flights in September) whereas the Embassy thereafter took care



Arrival Immigration BKK

with KLM to re-book/change the flights to the correct date.

- It sounds a bit complicated, but actually it worked pretty fast and the instructions were clear along the process.

9. Did you have to go through 1 or 2 covid tests before boarding?

- Before boarding we had to show a copy of a COVID-19 test (i.e. health certificate based on a COVID-19 RT-PCR test not older than 72 hours before departure from Amsterdam).

10. Do you consider the costs for flights and ASQ reasonable?

- The costs for the flight with KLM from Amsterdam to Bangkok (and return) were absolutely reasonable (i.e. 2 adults, 1 kid, 1 baby-boy at roughly CHF 2'500.- for economy class).
- The cost for the ASQ were unfortunately beyond the usual pricing. We contacted around 10-12 hotels (4- and 5-star hotels in Bangkok) to compare the

costs and the range was between THB 110'000 – THB 230'000.- for our family for such ASQ. The challenge for us was to find a hotel where they have either a bigger room (i.e. family suite) allowing 2 adults and 2 kids staying together or having two connecting rooms. Some of the hotels did not allow families to stay together and instructed us to split which would have been ridiculous and not feasible considering the age of the kids.

- As the end, we selected an offer from a 4-star hotel with 2 connecting rooms of total 90m2 space in the lower end of the aforementioned price range. Please see further comments about the hotel and the service package.

11. What were your's and your family's experience during the flight? Social distancing maintained? Fully booked or empty seats? Mostly Thais or half Far-ang?

- The flight from Amsterdam to Bangkok was not fully booked. They left some middle seat unoccupied for social distancing reason, but there were also some few rows still unoccupied too. During the flight, all passengers were required to wear fascial mask (incl. kids from the age of 3 years onwards). There was normal food service where you could take-off the facial mask temporarily.



COVID-19

- Around 70-80% of the passengers were Thai families returning to Thailand and we guess we were the only family being all Swiss born.

12. How many days did it take from the day of your decision that now you want to return to Thailand, until the day of touch down in Bangkok?

- As the CoE approval process went comparably fast and as the repatriation flight took place only 5 days after the CoE issuance, we touched down in Bangkok roughly 2 weeks after we kicked-off the process. It went way faster than expected.

13. The 14 days quarantine – did it come hard to you and your family, as I assume you are confined to your rooms during this time or is it comfortable, good food, good internet and easy contact among the family members. Or did something not work, or was the contact within the family restricted.?

- The quarantine stay with kids was only doable as we had sufficient space in two rooms and as my wife took care of the kids (keeping them busy with singing, painting, games, kids' books etc.). This allowed me to work as good as possible during our quarantine stay.
- We tried to keep the usual daily routine ongoing such as



Family Quarantine in Hotel

dressing-up in the morning, breakfast, working hours for me and play time for the kids etc. up to the afternoon nap of the kids etc. - we did not want to have this "all day pyjama mood" or staying all day in front of the TV. But needless to say, that we also had "ups and downs" during this quarantine time and we were counting the days!

- But let me add some comments on the hotel package in the ASQ which might be helpful for the readers:

7. After the 3rd and 12th day within the ASQ we had to take COVID-19 test where dedicated hospital staff came into the hotel to take the samples.

8. For 7 days we were not allowed to leave our room at all. The room got also not cleaned during this time as they said that Government does not allow to do so due to risk concerns (even we had negative COVID-19 test results prior and post the flight to Bangkok). There was also no clean-



Arrival Immigration BKK

ing equipment in the room and no suitable infrastructure for having food in the room (apart from an office desk and a small lounge table). For a single person, this would not be a bigger concern, but everybody who raised small kids, knows how it looks like after having food. So, we had to order online some wash rags, cleaning chemicals, cleaning tissues etc. to clean-up our rooms by ourselves within the first 7 days.

9. Every day we got food for breakfast, lunch and dinner whereas we had the choice between 2 menus. The food was okay, but the menus were always a bit the same. The food got delivered in plastic boxes in front of the room and we had to pick-it up then. Luckily, we were free to order food



COVID-19

online (Foodpanda, Happy Fresh) as well which allowed to have some variety.

10. After 7 days in quarantine, they cleaned-up the rooms and thereafter every 3rd day again. Moreover, we were allowed to go outside of our room into predefined areas of the hotel (i.e. general area with some gym equipment, restaurant area and lobby). If you wanted to leave your room, you had to book a time slot in advance to avoid that you will meet any other people in quarantine. As a result, the time windows for such "outside-the-room" time were limited to 1-2 hours a day as everybody wanted to go outside the room as much as possible.

11. Two times a day we had to take our temperature with a thermometer and to submit via LINE to a dedicated nurse. If you had a little bit above 37-degree temperature, they were already alerted.

12. The internet connection was o.k., but not constantly stable as many other guests were working remotely or streaming movies.

• Overall, if we compare the regular costs for such a 4 star hotel in Bangkok, the limited staff for any service or maintenance, the size and variety of the food

menus and the general restrictions to use any other area of the hotel (which allows the hotel to run its operations on minimal staff), we are of the opinion that the costs were overpriced.

14. The whole process of returning to Thailand – is it bearable and you would recommend it as a way to go, or would you rather tell the people to wait and stay where they are?

• It depends on the personal situation. If somebody has no urgency due to private or business life, I guess it makes only little sense to go through this journey given the related costs and the aspect of the 14 days ASQ. But on the other hand, we all do not know how the COVID-19 pandemic will evolve and if/when further restrictions get released or relaxed by Thailand's Government.

• As we know, Thailand is following a very strict and protective approach in this regard and we have no influence on the development or to judge whether this

is right or wrong.

• As we personally do not expect an immediate relaxation of the quarantine requirement and given our situation (business and private life), it was the right decision so far.

15. During this ordeal, do you have a funny story to share with us?

• Actually, there were not a lot of very funny stories. I mean we still made some fun with the kids and tried to remain in a good mood, but as said – at the end we were counting the days.

16. Any other advice you have?

• It really depends on everybody's situation and therefore there is no general advice or formula whether to apply for it or how to best stay in the quarantine.

Andreas Wanner, Co-Founder & Authorised Director, Mister Loo (Thailand) Co. Ltd.

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Good food, Good life

RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

SUMMER GERMAN – PROGRAM



two-week program for Kindergarten and Basis Level students. The focus of the two weeks was on playfully developing the German language skills of the kids. 75 students were glad to return to our Campus to learn, play with their friends and have a lot of fun while doing both.



From July 20th to July 31st, the RIS Swiss Section – Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok organized the summer program “Summer German”, a

The “Summer German” participants enjoyed creative and play activities for both Kindergarten and Basis Level – the students built landscapes

and towns, became pirates on high seas and worked further on their sea life booklet learning the names of different animals. “Summer German” was a great success for everyone involved.



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Contributions of interest are:
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Thank you
The STCC Newsletter Editor Team



RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

SOCIAL PROJECT 2020 - SRI SANG-WAN SCHOOL IN KHON KAEN



For nine years RIS Swiss Section – Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok has supported a school for mentally and physically challenged children in Khon Kaen.

expenses for one year. With all the other donations, we supported the students in our partner school with 80,000 THB! This amount really makes a difference for these children. Thanks so much to all the donors!

The generous donations of the whole school community allowed us also during the Covid-19 - crisis to support several students and pay all their fees and



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RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

PRESENTATION AND HANDOVER OF SECONDARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATES



On 16 June 2020, RIS Swiss Section – Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok welcomed guests to a short and atmospheric ceremony for the presentation of the Secondary School certificates, which took place at the German Embassy.

Seven students from Grade 10 got awarded admission to the Gymnasium (Oberstufe), one stu-

dent from Grade 10 with the Realschulabschluss and one student from Grade 9 with the Hauptschulabschluss.

The certificates were handed over to the proud graduates from H. E. Mr. Georg Schmidt, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Thailand. Together with Principal Simon Dörig and Head of Secondary School Jens Eggert they all praised and congratulated the students for their success and wished them all the best for the future. Two of the graduates will leave the school, while the remaining students will continue their school career with the Swiss Matura at our school. Finally, in their speeches, Grade 10 students thanked their teachers and parents for helping them achieve their goals.



Swiss Thai



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Good food, Good life

RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

Planned events in the first semester of the school year 2020-21:

26.09.2020	Open House Info Session (13:00 – 15:00)
20.10.2020	Annual General Meeting of SEA
30.10.2020	Making Krathongs/Loy Krathong – Celebration
03.11.2020	Open House Day (7:30 – 14:40)
13.11.2020	Lantern Parade (KG - Grade 3 - evening)
04.12.2020	St. Nicholas visit (Primary School)
11.12.2020	Flea Market (Primary School)
17.12.2020	Christmas Party (from 13:00)

Please visit our website - www.ris-swiss-section.org - and get more information about our upcoming events.



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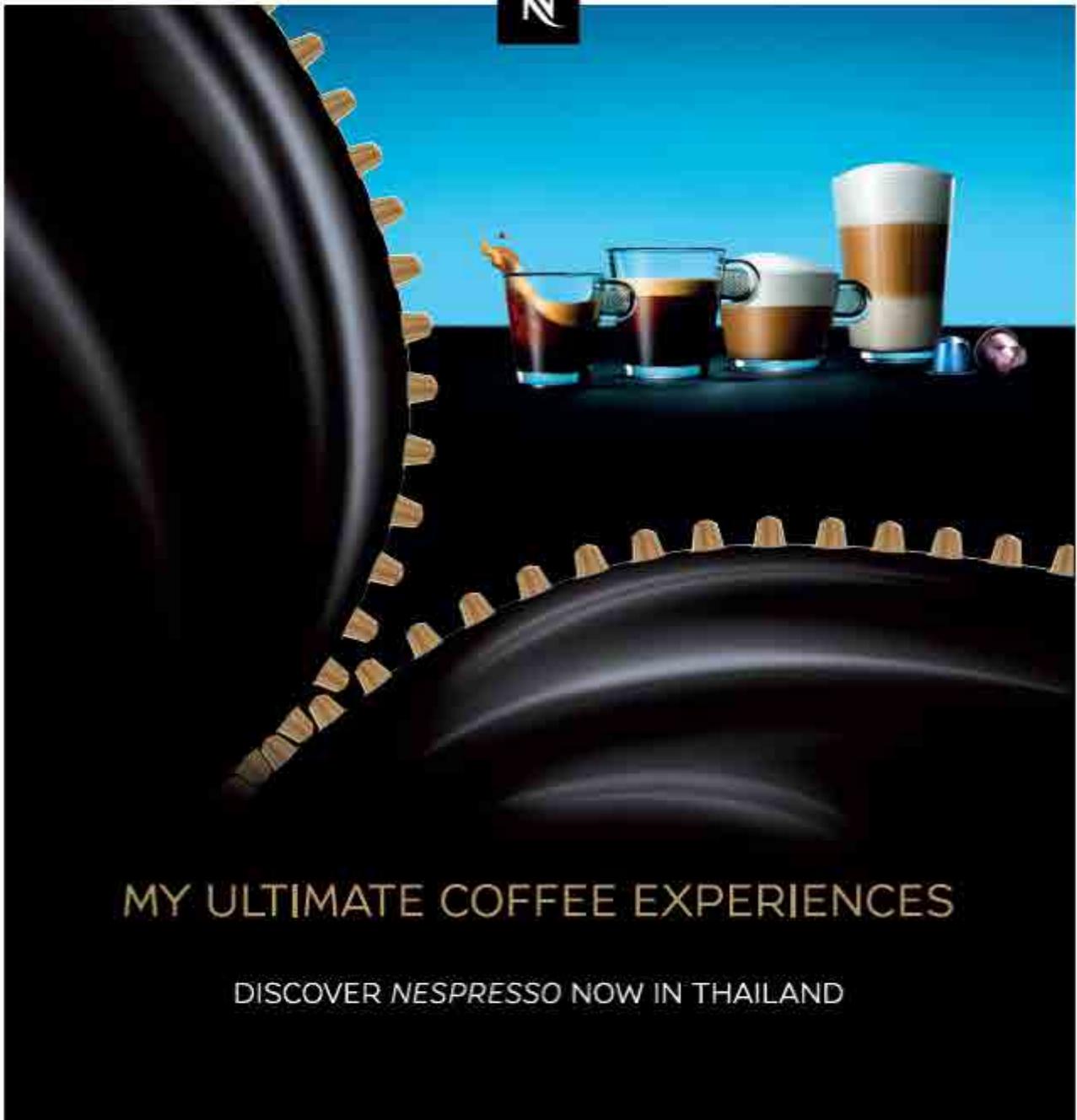
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