



Swiss Thai



JANUARY 2021 | SWISS-THAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | E-NEWSLETTER #126

Good food, Good life

TOP NEWS

- Economy:** Covid fatigue - Special Report by Deutsche Bank
- STCC Internal News:** Changes in Chamber Administration / Launch of the Thai-EFTA Business Circle / Interview with Hotel-manager Miguel Jaun
- RIS Swiss Section:** Football match / Flea market / Master speeches Christmas market and celebration

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DEAR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF THE STCC



PRESIDENT BRUNO G. ODERMATT

As we enter into a new year and reflect on the one passed, I want to start this message with COVID, but no – we have had enough of that. If in 2020 we had to select five words that weren't part of our vocabulary the year before, it would be Lockdown, Quarantine, Social Distancing, Work from Home, and Superspreader. But the lone winner, which was awarded "Word of the Year" by Oxford Dictionaries, is to no one's surprise – Pandemic. I guess you get the picture.

Though many of us are happy to see the end of 2020, there were still some positive news and trends to observe. One of them is for publishers. With so many people stuck

at home and activities such as concerts, sport events, and movies off limits, people have been reading a lot – and in the process buying a lot of books. Print sales are up 8% last year (source NPD BookScan), and this also includes E-books and audio books. The extraordinary events in 2020 also accelerated the impact of the social media revolution. The advancement of technology enabled on-line videos, complex form of broadcasting, and Podcasts, a complex form of radio, to create a platform for truly independent journalism. YouTube and Podcasts have also opened up a market for huge intellectual material, easily accessible to anyone anywhere; one can have it on demand anytime. There are downside to this trend, as you would expect, such as Twitter, which I think is a pretty rough media platform. The commentary on social media networks can be pretty disturbing and we have to find ways to properly regulate it so we can have a civilized discourse. By that I do not mean censored, but civilized. It is no good when you censor or block

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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offensive Twitter messages of media users, even of high-profile country leaders; rather, force them to engage in a civilized discourse.

As Britain finally leaves the European Union (1,650 days after the Brexit referendum in 2016), there is reason to be both happy and sad about it. The sad part is that over 60% of the British 65 years old and over voted to leave the EU, and 60% of those under 35 voted to stay. The elderly folks really decided on the future of the younger ones. Having had four years to think if this was a wise decision, today the Brits would vote with a 48% to 39% majority to remain in the EU (source YouGov poll). The good news is that the EU block is finally able to develop in the way the major members really want it, without roadblocks or vetoes in the way, as has happened numerous times with the Brits. The late President Charles de Gaulle, one of the great leaders in Europe's history, vetoed twice the British EU application in the 1960s. He was more or less right in his argument that England does not have a European vocation, and hence should not be allowed in. Though the EU and England concluded a "free trade" deal on Christmas Day, it remains to be seen if England will be better off without being part of the EU. I have my doubts and really feel sad for the young generations who voted against Brexit.

England will now join 4 other Non-EU countries, which are part of

EFTA (European Free Trade Association), namely; Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein. As Switzerland and Norway are major trading partners of Thailand, the Thai government and the EFTA members finally agreed to enter into free trade negotiations. Being a firm believer in free markets, free economies and open trade, I truly believe that a properly designed and negotiated FTA will benefit all trading partners involved. It will result in lower cost for consumers, higher export volumes, economies of scale and greater choice of products for consumers. As the private business sector plays an important role, on 17 December 2020 the Thai/EFTA FTA Business circle was officially launched at the Norwegian Embassy. You will find an enlightening article of this event inside this edition.

2021 will be a decisive year for our Chamber, as we are planning a number of internal system and structural changes in order to improve the efficiency of our communication efforts and internal administration. With our full-time Executive Director fully on board, we will keep you regularly updated through our various communication channels. Please follow us on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and help us to strengthen the Swiss business presence in Thailand. The STCC leadership team, in unison with other Swiss partner organizations, is fully committed to further improve trade, commerce and investment between Switzerland

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and Thailand. With joint forces under the umbrella of ONE SWITZERLAND, the STCC will continue to be a strong force in promoting Swiss business and investment in Thailand throughout 2021.

tors I wish you and your families a prosperous and care free 2021.

With my best wishes

Bruno G. Odermatt-Maag
President

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Thank you for your great support and on behalf of the Board of Direc-

STCC CALENDAR JANUARY 2021:

Due to the resurgence of Covid-19 and in accordance with Royal Thai Government regulations, all physical events are cancelled/postponed until further notice.

Wednesday 13th of January: **Crystal Ball Luncheon - Economic Outlook 2021**
at Rosewood Hotel (Rescheduled to 28th of April)

Thursday 14th January: **STCC Stamm** at Arnoma Grand Hotel (Postponed)

Wednesday 27th January: **Multi-Chamber Networking Night**
at Landmark Hotel Bangkok (Canceled)

Tuesday 19th January: **FTCC HR Webinar with Baker McKenzie:**
Employment Trends under the New Normal

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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ECONOMY SPECIAL REPORT BY DEUTSCHE BANK

COVID FATIGUE

It has been almost a year since the news broke of a novel coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan. It did not take long for the Covid-19 outbreak to become a pandemic, resulting in a human toll of 1.7mn deaths from 77.1mn infections – that we know of – and still counting. While there may be light at the end of this dark tunnel – thanks to scientists developing Covid-19 vaccines at warp speed, 2021 marks the nth hour (albeit a long one) for the world, in that it will see herd immunity achieved either via vaccine or naturally. While more advanced economies are preparing for the mass deployment of Covid-19 vaccines in Q1 – namely those produced by Pfizer and Moderna – the rest of the world is still waiting for positive news on other (more affordable and easily distributed) vaccines for wider deployment. These vaccines may not be coming soon enough, however.

Not surprisingly, after almost a year of being in fight-or-flight mode, there is an increasing sense of Covid fatigue around the world – people are exhausted from being scared and are tired of the preventive measures, especially the social distancing measures that keep us from our loved ones. Also, seeing some of the world's leaders contracting the virus may reinforce the view that even stringent preventive measures aren't effective. It may have prompted people to take a more fatalistic view, accompanied by either a lax attitude towards, or rejection of, preventive measures. At the same time, authorities have been more cautious about imposing the rigorous social distancing measures necessary to curb virus resurgence because of the economic costs – and the indirect human costs due to a rise in poverty amid severe economic disruptions.

Our household survey reaffirms our view (noted in our September Asia Macro Insight) that economies have grown more resilient to the virus. According to our dbDIG Household Survey, people are less inclined to pull back from economic activity, as they

did during the initial outbreak, even in the face of a strong resurgence of the virus. This suggests that the authorities face even harder choices than before – with current outbreaks in many places the worst so far, and people less willing to voluntarily socially distance themselves, governments may be compelled to enforce draconian policies to contain the spread of the virus.

Hence, the importance of getting those vaccines deployed as fast as possible – the longer this takes, the less tenable it will be for the authorities to continue imposing strict social distancing measures.

Below, we provide comparative charts to show how attitudes have evolved. Even in the face of a resurgent outbreak, with the number of new infections breaking records, households are less willing to pull back from economic activities than before. Perhaps people have become confident in their ability to mitigate infection risks or they have grown fatalistic about it. At the same time, households appear less worried about their economic conditions – perhaps because people feel that the worst is behind them and are encouraged by the news of vaccines becoming available. It is also worth noting that the public's less restrictive behavior and relative optimism are taking place even in the context of their increased concerns about the pandemic.

Specifically, amid a third wave, the share of households in South Korea worried about Covid has risen considerably, to over 80% from the mid-60s% in April, only outdone by those in Spain, with more households than before now preoccupied by the virus right across Asia and Europe. Even in the absence of a notable rise in new infections, households in China are also more worried than before (up 6ppts to 43%), with an increasing share of households preoccupied by the virus. Despite their relatively elevated concerns, the share of households that are



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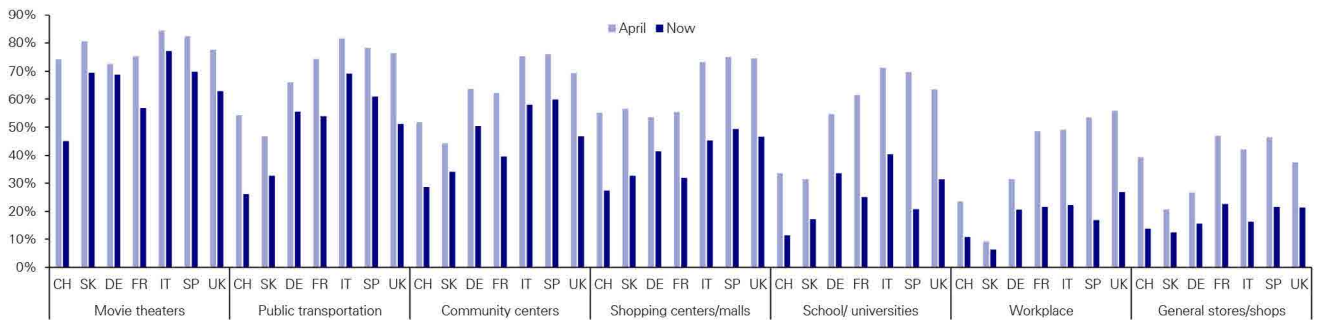


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Which, if any, of the following are you currently avoiding due to the coronavirus?

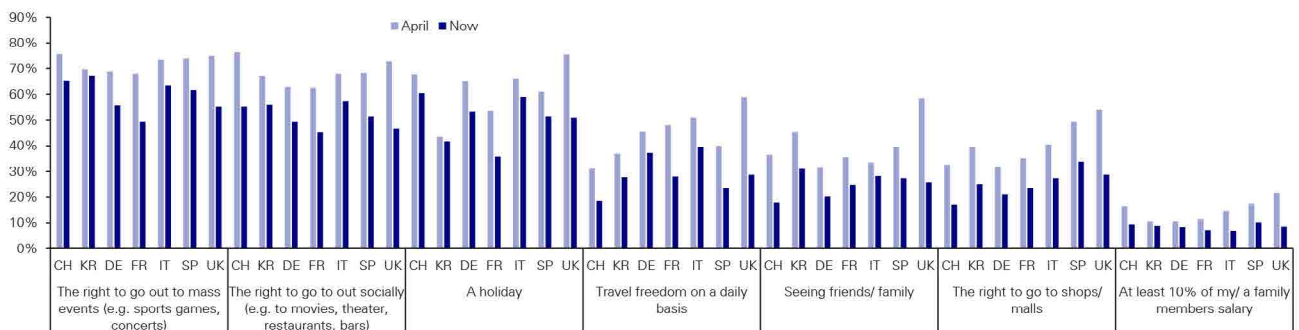


Source : dbDIG Primary Research, Deutsche Bank Research

avoiding various activities – including shopping centers, general stores, medical centers, community centers, social venues, movie theaters, etc. – has declined since April. The share of households that are avoiding travel has also dropped notably, albeit limited to domestic travel for those in Asia.

Also, most households in Asia and Europe alike are less prepared to give up selected activities – such as sports games, concerts, dining out, theater, holidays, social gatherings with friends and/or family – over the next three months in order to help address growing coronavirus concerns, for all economies. In

Which, if any, of the below would you personally be prepared to give up over the next three months to help address growing coronavirus concerns?



Source : dbDIG Primary Research, Deutsche Bank Research

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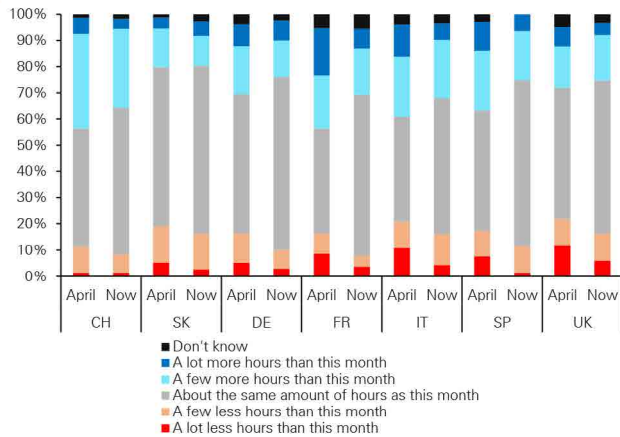
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the absence of “equality of sacrifice” in their economic well-being, it may be a hard ask for personal sacrifices by the wider public for the greater good, although the surge in new infections would appear to demand an aggressive response. Of the sacrifices we mentioned, households were most reluctant in terms of financial sacrifice.

households that worked more was modestly higher when compared to April,

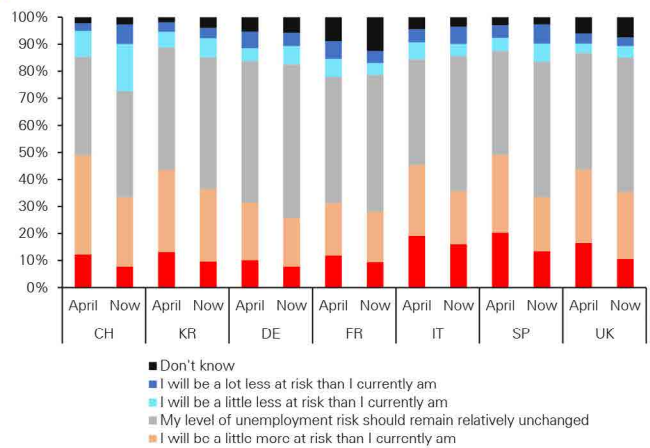
across all economies we surveyed. And the majority, and a modestly higher share, of households said that next month they were likely to work about the same number of hours as this month. At the same

Thinking one month ahead... do you expect to work more, the same or fewer hours compared to this month?



Source : dbDIG Primary Research, Deutsche Bank Research

Now thinking three months ahead... do you think you will be more or less at risk of being made unemployed due to either the performance of the business or the economic climate?

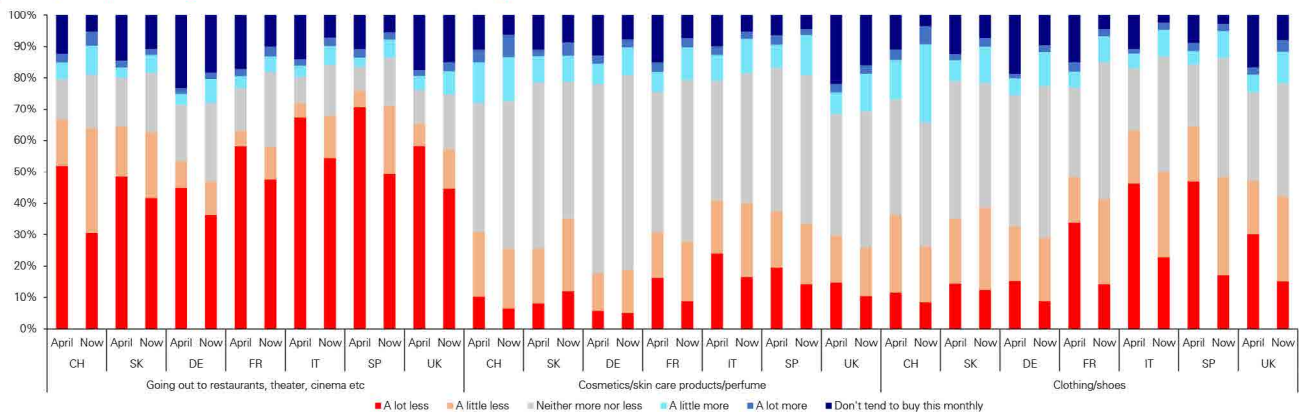


Source : dbDIG Primary Research, Deutsche Bank Research

As far as their outlook on economic conditions was concerned, households were less negative than they were at the initial outbreak, with improved conditions seen. When asked about their working hours compared to the previous month, the share of

time, households felt they were less at risk now than before. Financially, the share of households that felt they were neither better nor worse off than a year ago increased, while those that felt worse off declined. Also, the share of those households that

Are you spending more or less on the following ... ?



Source : dbDIG Primary Research, Deutsche Bank Research



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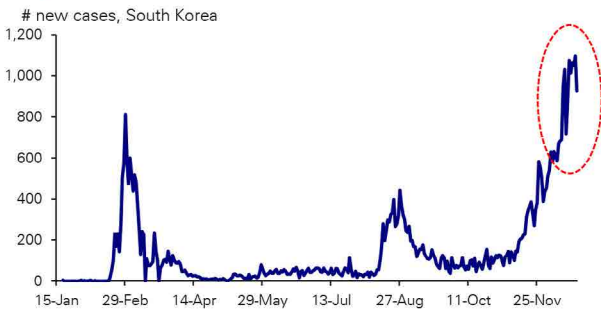
thought their income would decline in a year's time also fell, albeit modestly.

They are also spending more now on restaurants, theater, cinemas, luxury goods, cosmetics/perfume and clothes, with the exception of Korean households, which spent less on cosmetics. Compared to April, the share of households that are shopping online has increased significantly and they expect a further rise even after the pandemic, with the exception of France. There was also some positive news for tourism-dependent economies, albeit more so for Europe than for Asia. The survey results showed that those willing to take a flight within a

month have increased meaningfully, to slightly below a third for households in Europe, vs. low teens for China and South Korea.

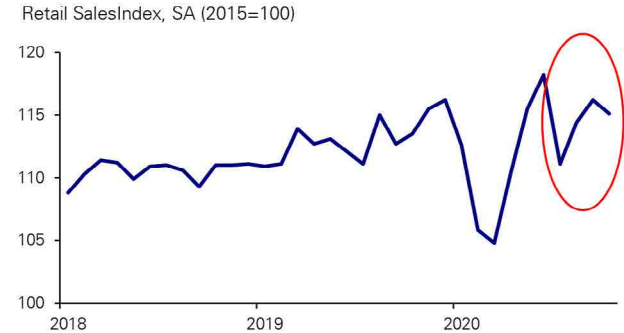
By Monday, South Korea's daily new Covid-19 cases averaged around 1,000 for the sixth consecutive day, marking its highest weekly average thus far and leaving the total number of cases at 50,591, with 698 deaths. The recent resurgence of infections has taken even South Korea by surprise, with the pace of new infections now high enough to prompt a series of Level-3 social distancing measures, including prohibiting social gathering of more than 10 people¹ and shutdowns of wedding halls, theaters,

Surge in new infections in South Korea



Source : CEIC, Deutsche Bank Research

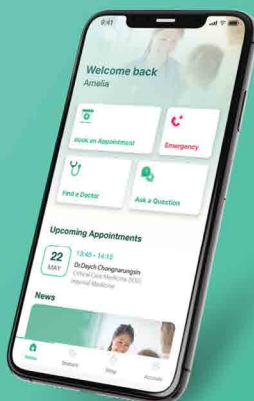
Korea's retail sales rebound at risk



Source : CEIC, Deutsche Bank Research

1 Level-2.5 measures at the moment, prohibit gathering of more than 50 people, allow only up to 20 people for religious gatherings, and require shops

and restaurants to close at 9pm among other things.



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- My digital card (no more physical card)
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- Navigate to Bumrungrad International Hospital (Google Maps)





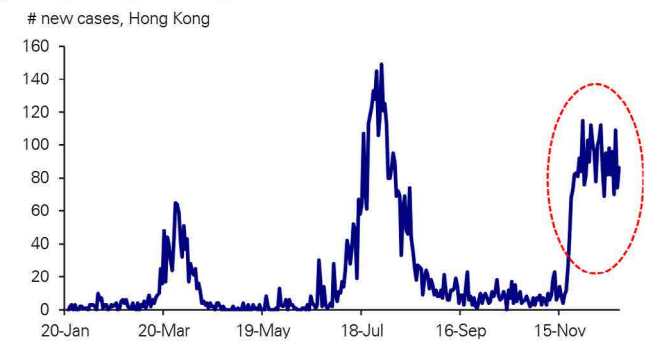
ECONOMY SPECIAL REPORT BY DEUTSCHE BANK

cinemas, concert halls, PC libraries, and beauty salon/clinics. It also means remote schooling only, online religious ceremonies only, no sports, and WFH with the exception of only essential workers allowed on premises. Such draconian measures may be required to curb new infections that the government can no longer track effectively, especially in the absence of vaccines – unless people voluntarily adopt rigorous social distancing habits. However, with the Level-3 measures pointing to a closure of more than 2 million shops and facilities, the government opted to focus on selected hot-spots instead – Seoul, Gyeonggi and Incheon – prohibiting social gathering of more than four people from 23 December to 3 January.

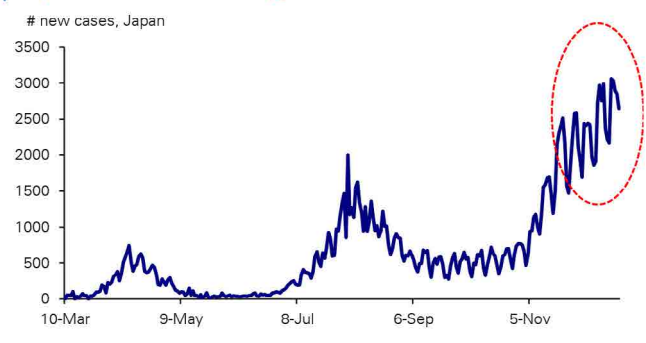
Although the government has announced that it will purchase enough vaccines from Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson and Astrazeneca to cover 88% of its population, the exact deployment schedule is unknown – albeit for the last one, the government suggested sometime in February or March. As noted in our November AMI, Asia's relative economic performance in 2021 will be tied to its ability to achieve herd immunity – the longer it takes for the authorities to secure and deploy those vaccines to help their economies achieve herd immunity, the greater both the economic and human costs may be. For South Korea, the current resurgence of infections is not just a matter of lowering its 2020 growth forecast (our current forecast is -1.1%) by 20bps or so. If South Korea fails to contain the outbreak in the near term and achieve herd immunity via vaccines by mid-2021, as we have assumed, then its annual 2021 growth may be at least 100bps lower than our current forecast of +3.2%. In such a scenario, we would expect the government to opt for a relatively large supplementary budget – it may include grants to help self-employed and small businesses with overhead costs like rentals. Meanwhile, the BoK may be prompted to provide more aggressive monetary support – albeit a formal QE programme would require a more dramatic deterioration in growth and/or significant disloca-

tion in the rates market. Meanwhile, the government's concerns about housing prices will have to take a back seat.

Hong Kong's resurgence



Japan's sustained resurgence



In addition to South Korea, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Sri Lanka and Thailand are all experiencing renewed – and worst to date – Covid-19 outbreaks. In Hong Kong and Japan, this has led to renewed social distancing restrictions. The Japanese government suspended its “Go To Travel” promotions and Tokyo has raised its alert to the highest level for the first time. In Hong Kong, bars, beauty parlors, gyms and other places where people might gather are closed; restaurants are restricted to 50% capacity during the day and must close to diners at 6pm. Still, the number of new cases has averaged above 80 per week for a month, showing no signs of abating.

In both Japan and Hong Kong too, the sources of new outbreaks are becoming more varied and while



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mobility indicators suggest people are refraining a little from public activities, this has been, so far, a very modest reaction. It seems nothing short of a comprehensive lockdown will bring the outbreak to an end, with vaccines likely to be available for most people only a few months from now. For the time being, it seems, neither government seems willing to accept the economic consequence of a full lockdown – which would likely cost 10% of a quarter’s GDP or more – despite high levels of new infections. Instead, the Japanese government is likely to add more fiscal stimulus next year – we expect a third supplementary budget next year after the JPY19.2tn stimulus package announced earlier this month. The government of Hong Kong announced another HKD6.4bn (0.2% of GDP) package of support for the most-affected sectors last week. We expect more support to be offered in February’s budget, if not earlier.



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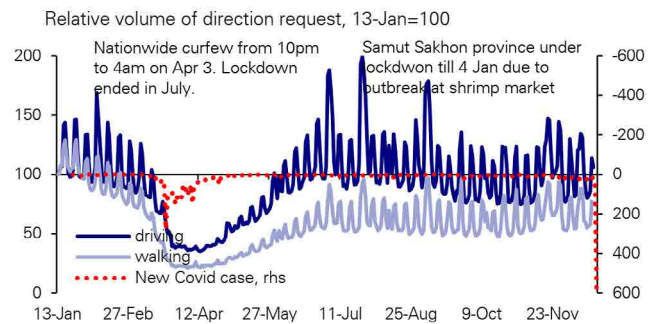
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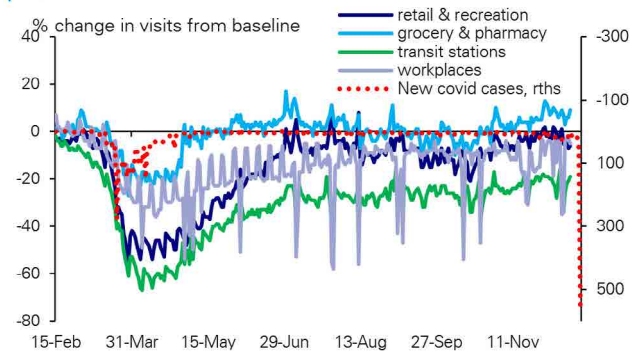
Edwin Kwok

Research Associate

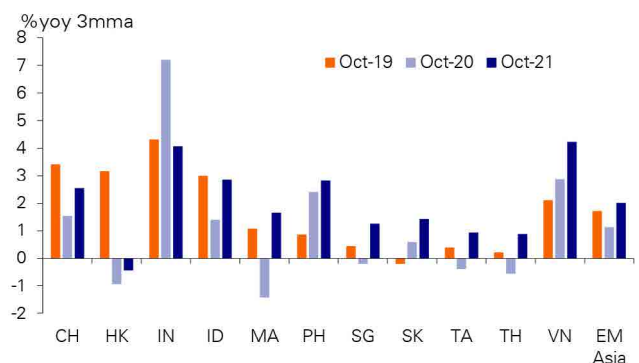
Thailand – Second wave?



Normalization at risk



EM Asia CPI inflation



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Thailand – Inflation (CPI)



Note: Next CPI release: Jan 5, Deutsche Bank forecast (previous): -0.5% (-0.4%)

Thailand

	2019	2020F	2021F	2022F
National Income				
Nominal GDP (USDbn)	543.8	502.2	542.5	583.2
Population (mn)	66.6	66.8	67.0	67.1
GDP per capita (USD)	7,752	7,518	8,101	8,620
Real GDP (YoY%)	2.4	-6.5	4.0	5.0
Private consumption	4.5	-1.5	3.9	4.0
Government consumption	1.4	2.0	4.1	1.2
Gross fixed investment	2.2	-5.9	-0.2	3.4
Exports	-2.6	-19.9	5.0	16.9
Imports	-4.4	-16.0	2.7	15.9
Prices, Money and Banking				
CPI (yoy %) eop	0.9	-0.7	1.1	1.2
CPI (yoy %) ann avg	0.7	-0.9	1.0	1.2
Core CPI (yoy %) ann avg	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.6
Broad money	4.1	8.8	6.1	6.4
Bank credit ¹ (yoy %)	1.8	6.5	3.7	6.6

 Fiscal Accounts (% of GDP)¹

	2019	2020F	2021F	2022F
Central government surplus	-2.7	-5.0	-4.2	-3.3
Government revenue	15.2	15.0	16.1	16.4
Government expenditure	17.9	20.0	20.3	19.7
Primary surplus	-1.4	-4.2	-3.2	-2.1

External Accounts (USD bn)

	2019	2020F	2021F	2022F
Merchandise exports	243.0	223.6	237.5	253.2
Merchandise imports	216.4	187.4	201.9	217.8
Trade balance	26.6	36.2	35.5	35.4
% of GDP	4.9	7.2	6.5	6.1
Current account balance	37.3	18.1	24.3	37.5
% of GDP	6.9	3.6	4.5	6.4
FDI (net)	-7.1	-10.4	-8.1	-9.3
FX reserves (eop)	224.3	251.6	268.9	286.2
FX rate (eop) USD/THB	29.7	30.3	29.3	28.0

Debt Indicators (% of GDP)

	2019	2020F	2021F	2022F
Government debt ¹	38.4	43.8	46.9	47.4
Domestic	37.5	42.9	46.0	46.5
External	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Total external debt	31.7	36.2	35.5	35.0
in USDbn	172	182	193	204
Short-term (% of total)	59.2	59.4	59.3	59.3

General

	2019	2020F	2021F	2022F
Industrial production (YoY%)	-3.6	-10.0	6.0	5.0
Unemployment (%)	1.0	2.2	1.9	1.6

Financial Markets (eop)

	Current	20Q4F	21Q1F	21Q2F
BoT o/n repo rate	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
3-month Bibor	0.62	0.63	0.63	0.63
10-year yield (%)	1.23	1.25	1.15	1.50
USD/THB	30.1	30.3	30.3	29.8

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

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REVENUE DEPARTMENT AND IMMIGRATION BUREAU DATA SYSTEM LINKAGE

Contribution by Dej-Udom & Associates

On November 18, 2020, the Revenue Department launched a new service to directly share the tax information listed below with the Immigration Bureau. The objective is to reduce paperwork and shorten the processing time for visa holders and companies to obtain official certified copies of tax documents.

Background: When filing long-term visa extension applications, official certified copies of the below tax documents are mandatory to support the visa application. The Revenue Department wanted to help minimize the complexity of the process of obtaining official certified copies of tax documents by launching a new service that will allow the Immigration Bureau to be able to access tax data and the status of the visa holder and company in order to verify that the taxes listed below are correctly filed and valid at the Revenue Department. The types of tax documents that the Immigration Bureau can now verify under the new “e-Revenue Filing system” with the conditions and process in brief are as follows:

Types of tax documents the Immigration can verify:

1. Annual Personal Income Tax Return (PND.90 & 91) - tax document for visa holder
2. Monthly Salary Withholding Tax (PND.1) – tax document for company (employer)
3. Monthly Value Added Tax (PP.30) – tax document for company (employer)

Conditions:

1. The visa holder / company must file the taxes through the Revenue Department “e-Revenue Filing system.”

Note: If filing by hard copy at the counter of the Revenue Dept, this process cannot be implemented.

2. The information must belong to the Tax Payer (visa holder / company)

How to proceed:

1. The Tax Payer applies for a Consent ID or Consent Card from the “Data Linkage between the Revenue Department and Immigration Bureau system.”

2. The Tax Payer brings their Consent ID or Consent Card to the Immigration Bureau when submitting the visa renewal application at the Immigration Bureau.

3. The Immigration Bureau uses the Consent ID or Consent Card to access the Revenue Department system and review the applicant’s tax information.

Note:

1. The Consent ID or Consent Card will be valid for 15 days upon receipt from the system.
2. Initially, the tax items that can be verified under this system will only have a 2-year window from the launch of the system. This means the tax items that the Tax Payer can request for verification cannot predate November 2018. This may change in the future.

Important Remarks:

1. As of now, we understand that only the Immigration Bureau in Bangkok will use the new system launched by the Revenue Department. This means that only visa extension applications filed at the



LEGAL

Immigration Bureau in Bangkok will be eligible. However, at this time, the Immigration officers' ability to access the new system is very limited. We highly recommend that clients continue to provide the official certified copies of the tax documents when filing visa

extensions until the Immigration officers can fully access and use the new system.

2. The Immigration Office at the One Stop Service Center and other provinces have not yet started to use this method. We understand that they need

to have the proper training to use the Revenue Department system and need to receive the necessary equipment. We will monitor and advise if and when this method will be implemented countrywide.

DEJ-UDOM & ASSOCIATES
Attorneys-at-Law 

FURTHER EXTENSION FOR E-TAX FILING AND PAYMENT IN THAILAND

Contribution by Tilleke & Gibbins

On December 15, 2020, Thailand's Revenue Department (RD) announced a further extension for e-tax filing and payment until January 31, 2024.

The RD's announcement is meant to support the government's

Thailand 4.0 policy by encouraging use of the online system for filing and paying taxes. The RD has been promoting the use of e-tax filing and payment since 2012 by granting eight-day extensions to anyone who submits online, rather than using traditional paper filing. Initially, this eight-day extension program was due to ex-

pire on January 31, 2021, but the RD has now further extended it for another three years, until January 31, 2024.

It should be noted that tax returns and supplemental tax returns must be submitted via the e-filing system to qualify for the eight-day extension. If a taxpayer

Tax Filing and Payment Schedule for Eligible Tax Returns

Type of Tax	Tax Return Form	Due Date for Paper Filing and Payment	Extended Due Date for Online Filing and Payment*
Personal Income Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PND.90 (annual personal income tax return) • PND.91 (annual personal income tax return for taxpayer that only has income from employment under Section 40(1) of the Revenue Code) • PND.95 (annual personal income tax return for taxpayer who entitled to reduce tax rate) 	March 31 of the following year	April 8 of the following year
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PND.94 (mid-year tax return for taxpayers that have income under Section 40 (5)(6)(7)(8) of the Revenue Code) 	September 30 of the same year	October 8 of the same year



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Corporate Income Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PND.50 (annual corporate income tax return) • PND.52 (annual corporate income tax return for companies or juristic partnerships that carry on international transportation business) • PND.55 (annual corporate income tax return for association, foundation, or mutual fund) <p>The above includes audited financial statements or income account before expense, as applicable.</p>	Within 150 days from the end of accounting period	Within 158 days from the end of accounting period
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PND.51 (mid-year corporate income tax return) 	Within two months after the end of the first six months of the accounting period	Within two months and eight days after the end of the first six months of the accounting period
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PND.54 (income tax and profit remittance tax return) 	Within seven days after the end of the month in which the payment was made	Within 15 days after the end of the month in which the payment was made
Withholding tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PND.1 (withholding tax return on payments to individuals under Section 40 (1) (2) of the Revenue Code (e.g. income from employment, commission etc.) • PND.2 (withholding tax return on payment to individuals under Section 40 (3) (4) of the Revenue Code (e.g. royalty fees, dividends, interest etc.) • PND.3 (withholding tax return on payments to individuals under Section 40 (5) (6) (7) or (8) of the Revenue Code (e.g. rental, professional fees, income from sale of goods etc.) • PND.53 (domestic withholding tax return on payments to juristic persons) 	Within seven days after the end of the month in which the payment was made	Within 15 days after the month on which the payment was made
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PND.1 Gor (Summary of withholding tax on payment under Section 40 (1) (2) of the Revenue Code) 	Within February of the following year	By March 8 of the following year
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PND.2 Gor (Summary of withholding tax on payment under Section 40 (3) (4) of the Revenue Code) • PND.3 Gor (Summary of withholding tax on payment under Section 40 (5) (6) (7) or (8) of the Revenue Code) 	Within January of the following year	Within February 8 of the following year



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Value added tax	• PP.30 (monthly VAT return)	By the 15th of the following month	By the 23rd of the following month
	• PP.36 (self-assessed VAT return)	Within seven days after the month on which the payment was made	Within 15 days after the month on which the payment was made
Specific Business Tax	• PT.40 (monthly specific business tax return)	By the date 15th of the following month	By the date 23rd of the following month
Transfer Pricing Disclosure Form	• Disclosure Form	Within 150 days from the end of the accounting period	Within 158 days from the end of the accounting period

er has submitted their tax return in paper form, they will not be entitled to the extension even if they resubmit via e-filing system. The reverse is also true—a tax payer who submits via the e-filing system, and resubmits in paper form, will not be eligible for the eight-day extension.

gether with the e-filing and that tax payment is also entitled to eight-day extension. The second instalment can be paid within one month after the extended due date of the first instalment, and the third instalment can be paid within one month after the due date for the second instalment.

please contact Varapa Aurat at varapa.a@tilleke.com.



For personal income tax payments set up as three instalments, the first instalment can be paid to-

For more information about these tax filing extensions, or any aspect of tax law in Thailand,



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THAILAND ANNOUNCES SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FOR SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19

Contribution by Tilleke & Gibbins

Due to the resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Thailand since December, 2020, Thailand's Ministry of Labor recently published two regulations under the Social Security Act (SSA) in the Government Gazette:

- The Regulation on Entitlement to Compensatory Benefits in the Event of Unemployment Due to Force Majeure from the Pandemic of Dangerous Communicable Disease Under Relevant Law Relating to Communicable Diseases B.E. 2563 (2020) (the **Force Majeure Regulation**); and
- The Regulation on Determination of the Amount of Contributions to the Social Security Funds B.E. 2563 (2020) (the **SSF Contribution Regulation**).

Details of the two regulations are provided below.

The Force Majeure Regulation

This regulation is similar to a previous regulation from April, 2020, during the first wave of the pandemic, stating that the definition of force majeure under the Social Security Act B.E. 2533 (1990) (the SSA) includes hazards from pandemics of dangerous communicable diseases (including COVID-19). This definition therefore affords protection to insured persons (i.e., employees) in the event that the COVID-19 pandemic results in their being unable to work, or their employers being unable to operate their business normally.

This regulation allows the Social Security Office (SSO) to pay compensation to employees who:

- are insured persons who qualify to receive compensatory benefit in case of unemployment in accordance with the SSA;
- have to cease working temporarily during the period from December 19, 2020 onwards; and
- do not receive wages from their employer during the temporary cessation.

This applies only if the circumstances above result from the following force majeure events related to hazards from COVID-19 (or other pandemics of dangerous communicable diseases that affect the public under the Communicable Diseases Act B.E. 2558 (2015)):

- The employee cannot work, or the employer does not allow the employee to work, because of quarantine or to comply with a COVID-19 preventative measure; or,
- The employee cannot work because the employer temporarily ceases operations, wholly or partially, due to a government order to close the premises temporarily under the Communicable Diseases Act preventing the business from operating as normal.

The affected employee will be entitled to compensation at a rate of 50% of their daily wages during the quarantine period, period of compliance with a COVID-19 preventative measure, or period of temporary premises closure, for not more than 90 days. The payment will be calculated based on daily wages in accordance with section 57 paragraph 1 of the SSA, but will be paid monthly.



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The SSO will cease payment of the compensation if the employee resigns or is terminated by an employer, or the employment contract expires. In addition, the employer is obligated to issue a certificate letter to request compensation in the event of unemployment resulting from force majeure. The certificate must be in accordance with a form letter prescribed in the regulation, can be made and sent electronically, and must be retained by the employer as evidence.

The SSF Contribution Regulation

This regulation reduces the rate of mandatory Social Security Fund contributions under section 33 of the SSA effective from January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021. Contribution rates are calculated as a percentage of each employees' monthly wages, based on a minimum monthly wage of THB 1,650 and a maximum monthly wage of THB 15,000. The reduced rates are as follows:

Category of Contributions	Government	Employer	Insured person (employees)
For compensatory benefit in case of suffering danger or sickness, disability, death, or childbirth	1.05%	1.05%	1.05%
For compensatory benefit in case of old-age and child allowance	1.45%	1.85%	1.85%
For compensatory benefit in case of unemployment	0.25%	0.1%	0.1%
Total Contributions	2.75%	3.0%	3.0%

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The rates of mandatory Social Security Fund contributions under section 33 of the SSA effective from April 1, 2021 onward, are as follows:

For more information on this issue, or any other aspect of labor law in Thailand, please contact Chusert Supasitthumrong on chusert.s@tilleke.com.

Category of Contributions	Government	Employer	Insured person (employees)
For compensatory benefit in case of suffering danger or sickness, disability, death, or childbirth	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
For compensatory benefit in case of old-age and child allowance	1%	3%	3%
For compensatory benefit in case of unemployment	0.25%	0.1%	0.1%
Total Contributions	2.75%	5.0%	5.0%

Therefore, based on the minimum and maximum wages allowed for calculation, from January 1 to March 31, 2021, the contributions would range from THB 49.5 to THB 450 per month for both the employer and the employees. From April 1, 2021 onwards, this will increase to THB 82.5 to THB 750.

Tilleke & Gibbins

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STCC INTERNAL NEWS

CHANGES IN CHAMBER ADMINISTRATION

Under the Chambers 2020-Project to professionalize our office it is with great pleasure that we can inform you that during the last 3 months we could transfer our official chamber office duties successfully to our new Executive Director Mr. David Stauffacher in an orderly and smooth manner.

He will take care of all relevant matters, be it services and support to the board, membership administration, event organization and invitations, Newsletter publishing and Advertising, answering questions from members and other parties and many more tasks necessary to offer an improved service to all our members.

Khun Ploenta as Secretary and me as Executive Director have been in charge of all these tasks during the last 15 years and always tried to do our best. We are proud to have been of service to you all and thank you very much for your support and trust we have received, and kindly ask you to continue in the same way towards Mr. David.

As per 1 January 2021 kindly note that the new phone number of the chamber is the mobile Number of Mr. David, 08-3997-2280;

and that from now on he also handles, reads and answers all emails arriving under the email addresses of the chamber, namely:

secretary@swissthai.com, info@swissthai.com, newsletter@swissthai.com

Khun Ploenta and me will not receive anymore above emails, but we can be reached under our company email trina@loxinfo.co.th for non-chamber matters.

We both wish you a nice festive season and a prosperous new year and are looking forward to meet you again at one of our upcoming chamber events.

Remaining with thanks and best regards

Thomas Gerber
Ploenta Charoenmanop

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STCC INTERNAL NEWS

LAUNCH OF THE THAI-EFTA BUSINESS CIRCLE



On 17 December 2020, the Thai-EFTA Business Circle was launched at the residence of the Norwegian Ambassador in cooperation with the Swiss Embassy, the Norwegian-Thai Chamber of Commerce and the Swiss-Thai Chamber of Commerce. The Business Circle and the active participation of the companies represented in it will play an important role in the upcoming Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between Thailand and the EFTA countries.

At the launch, Professor Dr Kriengsak Chareongwongsak, President of the Institute of Future Studies for Development, presented an analysis of the impact that an FTA would bring to the Thai as well as the EFTA economies. Trade between Thailand and the EFTA region has seen a steady increase in vo-

lume in recent years. An FTA would only accelerate this trend and also help the economies of the countries involved to recover in the post-crisis period.

For the EFTA region, Thailand is one of the most important trading partners in SE-Asia. To look at it from a more Swiss-centred point of view, Thailand is the second most important trading partner in ASEAN (after Singapore). On the other hand, Switzerland is the second most important European trading partner (after Germany) for Thailand. When it comes to foreign direct investment, Switzerland ranks as Thailand's twelfth largest investor. This is reflected in the many Swiss companies active in Thailand. Conversely, Thai investments in Switzerland have increased, and the takeover of the Glo-



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THE STCC NEWSLETTER EDITOR TEAM IS ASKING FOR MEMBER CONTENT.

Contributions of interest are:
General English news and knowledge related to business in Thailand
Please email your contributions to Newsletter@swissthai.com

Thank you
The STCC Newsletter Editor Team





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bus department stores' group by the Central Group is just another great indicator of this trend.

the Business Circle as well as the Thai and EFTA representatives.

The STCC will continue to be actively involved in the FTA negotiations and in close coordination with

We will keep you informed of all developments in this regard

Facts & Figures on the THAI-SWISS BILATERAL RELATIONS

Important TRADING PARTNERS

Switzerland is Thailand's N° 15 most important trading partner, & N° 2 largest European trading partner (after Germany)

Thailand is Switzerland's N° 2 most important trading partner in ASEAN (after Singapore)

75% of our 7.9 billion USD trade volume comes from gold trades

Source: Swiss Customs Administration (2019)

TOP 5 Traded Goods from*

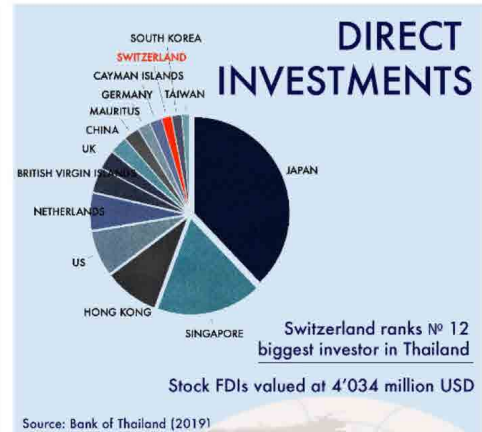
THAILAND to SWITZERLAND

CLOCKS & WATCH	OTHERS
238m	451m
MACHINERY	ELECTRICAL MACHINERY
149m	148m
PRECIOUS STONES & METALS	VEHICLES
100m	59m

SWITZERLAND to THAILAND

CLOCKS & WATCHES	PHARMA PRODUCTS	MACHINERY
251m	198m	181m
OTHERS	ELECTRICAL MACHINERY	MEDICAL DEVICES
305m	128m	73m

*The numbers exclude golds. Currency in USD



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Graphic compiled by the Swiss Embassy in Bangkok



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INTERVIEW WITH MIGUEL JAUN, GENERAL MANAGER PARK PLAZA BANGKOK SOI 18

Miguel, your hotel has been offering ASQ for returnees for almost 3 months now. What prompted your hotel to go down this path instead of reopening the hotel to domestic tourists?

Before deciding on ASQ, I have talked with quite a few Hoteliers operating Hotels for the domestic market. I have seen that the business there is very limited as well (ie low occupancies), and considering that our product the Park Plaza (under Radisson Hotel Group) is much better known internationally, I didn't see a good potential that domestic business could be a success for us.

Having recently been in quarantine myself, I could see how much planning and preparation goes into welcoming returnees to Thailand. What were the biggest challenges in implementing the COVID protection measures at your hotel?

One of the biggest challenges was a full review of all our Operating Standards. As an ASQ, we really had to "re-invent the wheel" for many things, as our usual ways of running the hotel of course didn't work. Training has been very important; to ensure that all team



Covid confirm Check-in at Park Plaza Bangkok Sukhumvit Soi 18

members are following these new Standards and Practices to keep them and all our guests safe.

Food is one of the most important factors in keeping morale up, especially when you are locked in your room for so long. However, it is not the core business of a hotel to provide room service to all guests at all times. How has your F&B department adapted to ensure that meals arrive on time and meet the non-dubiously high standards of your guests?

This has certainly been by far one of our biggest challenges during ASQ! Before starting ASQ for my hotel, I read a lot of reviews and seen that one of the most common issues for many guests was that either the food wasn't warm, not tasty or not enough selection. We therefore chose to offer a good selection from the beginning for every meal, and implemented a system to move the prepared food



Room service delivered the new way

with heat-boxes to the guestrooms, ensuring that the food stays as warm as possible. We do have a small team here, and I am incredibly proud of them as I can confirm that we have consistently received positive feedback on our food.



Some ASQ hotels report that they currently have an occupancy rate of almost 100%. How was the occupancy rate in your hotel in the last months and are you in the range of profitability?

As we have joined ASQ in late September, there was a certain build up needed to make guest aware



STCC INTERNAL NEWS

that we have joined ASQ, hence occupancies started low. But now we are doing very well and we had several days during the month of December we were completely fully booked and had actually to reject business.



Junior Suite City View

As for the profitability, this is a very interesting question. I have seen many times online that people believe that ASQ Hotels are making huge amounts of profit, due to the high prices charged. What many people are not aware of is that the costs of operating for us are much higher than usual. A major part of all room rates charged goes to the ASQ Hotel partner Hospital. Furthermore, as there are 3 meals per day provided, airport transfer, staff wearing PPE equipment at all time, etc... our other costs are high as well. Hence although it is possible to make a profit with a high occupancy, the priority is first and foremost to be able to pay salaries to our employees and cover our costs.

Since the government has recently announced that the visa exemption for certain nationalities will be reinstated, have you already noticed an increase in bookings from European tourists who want to holiday in Thailand and are willing to undergo the 2 weeks of quarantine?

Yes, we did see an increase in bookings from the European Market. This is possibly also related to the fact that our Hotel is already

well known in the European Market due to being part of Radisson Hotel Group.

Considering that the quarantine period might soon be reduced to 10 days what are the biggest concerns and adaptations that you will have to take to manage this increased turnover logistically?

For us, this would be certainly a welcome change, as I do believe it will make it more attractive for many travellers to deal with Quarantine. 15 nights and 10 nights are a huge difference.

Our main concern is the timing and some missing details. It is currently not clear when/if this 10 nights Quarantine will start, and how many Covid Test will be required. Once these details are clear, I do believe a change should be relatively easy and we will be able to amend all existing bookings accordingly.

to conclude this interview, could you tell us what was the most interesting aspect of running an ASQ hotel for you personally?

For me, one of the most interesting aspects of the ASQ was the

many touching stories I heard from our guests. Several have been separated from their families and loved ones for nearly a year, so their excitement to get back with their family has been understandably very high. One experience springs to mind of a lady with her two young children, which did the ASQ with us. Her husband is working in Thailand, and they haven't seen each other for 10+ months. Upon check-out he was able to pick them up and finally see them again. It was a lovely scene; especially the children were of course very excited!

Editor's note: This interview with Mr Miguel Jaun, General Manager of Bangkok Plaza Soi 18 Hotel, was conducted in writing by STCC Executive Director David Stauffacher at the end of December 2020.

For more questions regarding ASQ Mr. Miguel Jaun can be reached via e-mail gm.bangkoksoi18@parkplaza.com





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Website: www.actiwaswiss.com

Representatives: Mr. Jörg Kalt, CEO and Ms. Pharaphatr Jobsri, Administrative Assistant

Activity: Actiwa Swiss was founded as a Swiss-Thai company based in Bangkok Thailand and started with the first production site, a hub for ASEAN and the rest of Asia. In 2018 Actiwa Swiss International Management was established in Macao to manage all existing and future country based affiliated companies with a small head quarter team.

Each region is managed by a Regional Director, taking responsibility for Marketing, Sales and operational activities within the region and country based affiliated companies of Actiwa Swiss. We are an ambitious team with a clear view of the safe and healthy future for humans, animals and plants.

Our Mission

We create a healthier, cleaner and therefore better life for you, for your family, your friends, for everyone. We purify air and water, we de-contaminate and protect environments and infrastructure and we help to increase the organic growth of vegetable and fruits and protect food of all kind with our non-toxic and non-chemical product by a patented physical process.

Our Vision

We want to achieve a safe and healthy daily life for our kids, for us, for our animals, for farmers, for consumers of food and beverage all over the globe. We want clean, toxic and chemical free production of our daily consumptions of nutrition. We want to accomplish long-term commitment from governments, farmers, meat producers, fishers and many other food and beverage related stakeholders to reduce and finally totally avoid harmful chemicals in their production lifecycle.



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NEW MEMBERS

INDIVIDUAL MEMBER:

Mr. Gundolf Schneider

E-Mail: email@gundolf-schneider.de

NEWS FROM THE EMBASSY

CONSULAR APPOINTMENTS

The Embassy would like to inform our readers that due to the new COVID-19 outbreak, the consular section of the Embassy is only open for visitors with prior appointments.

Appointments for consular services can be requested online.

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RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

FOOTBALL MATCH



The football teams of the Lycée Français travelled to our campus for friendly matches against the teams of the RIS and RIS Swiss Section – Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok. The teams of

the U13, U15 and U18 played very well and showed their talents once again. We are looking forward to many more competitions in 2021.

FLEA MARKET



Our very popular flea market took place once again at the RIS Swiss Section – Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok. All members of the school community were invited to sell their merchandise

in the lovely courtyard of our school. Students, parents and staff strolled through the colorful market, everyone looking for a bargain.



RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

MASTER SPEECHES



After weeks of intensive training in rhetoric, the 12th Graders gave their master speeches.

The audience was convinced by their arguments and inspired by their professional presentations.

The German teacher Tina Klaus praised the students of Grade 12 for their brilliant performances.

CHRISTMAS MARKET AND CELEBRATION AT RIS SWISS SECTION – DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK



On December 17th, 2020, RIS Swiss Section - Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok invited all friends of the school to its Christmas market and celebration – traditionally a very popular event. Once again many guests enjoyed the festive atmosphere.

Parents organized a Christmas market, which, alongside crafts,

was a place to sample international delicacies, such as homemade cookies, and take part in different festive activities. Also, Santa Claus made an appearance, and our young guests were happy.

The official event began at 2pm with Christmas workshops organized by students with many activities, food and crafts, both



in front of and inside the various classrooms.

Afterwards, guests were greeted on the sports field by Simon Dörig, the Principal of RIS Swiss Section - Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok. It was a fitting occasion to bid farewell to all stu-



RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK



Later visitors were entertained with live music and dance performances by the students and parents and a Christmas Raffle.



RIS Swiss Section - Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok was able to present this wonderful event with the help and support of many parents of our students and other

members of our school community. Thank you very much!

We wish the entire school community a relaxing holiday, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We are looking forward to seeing you again in the year 2021!

Important events in the second semester of the school year 2020-21:

- 10.03.2021 Open House Day (07:30 - 14:40)
- 22.05.2021 Open House Info Session (13:00 - 15:00)
- 10.06.2021 Flea Market for Primary School (11:00 - 12:00)
- 11.06.2021 Graduation Ceremony (10:00)
- 12.06.2021 Matura Ball

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



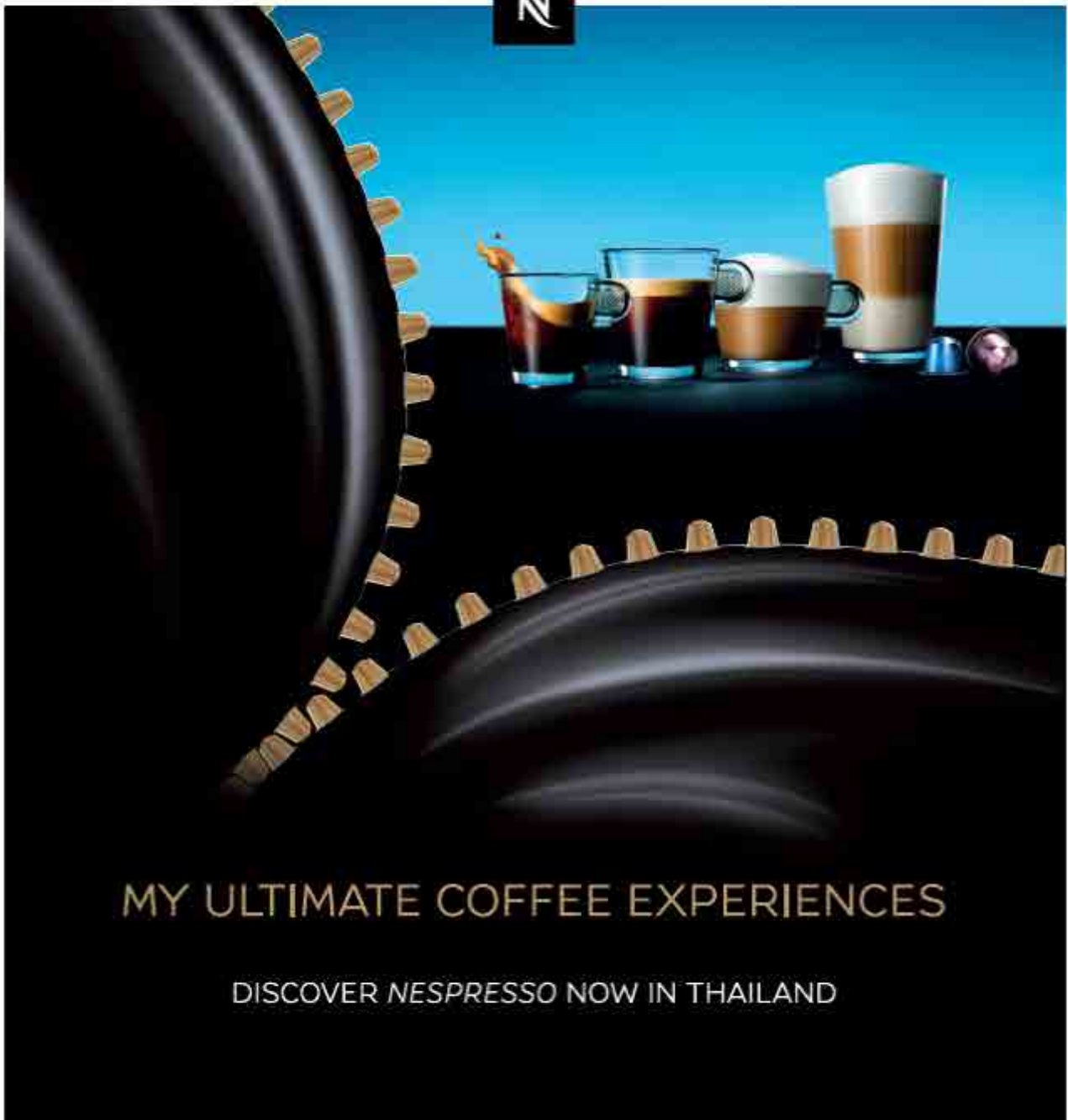
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