
IV. YOUR BUSINESS VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA

Services of the Canadian Embassy

The Commercial Division of the Canadian Embassy in Belgrade functions primarily as a liaison between Canadian firms and local business enterprises, and offers a wide variety of services. The Canadian Trade Commissioner is a valuable contact: his concern is to identify business opportunities for Canadian firms. He is also able to help the marketing effort by introducing and guiding buyers and sellers, and by providing recommendations and advice on a variety of commercial matters.

The Trade Commissioner should be advised well before a business trip to Yugoslavia. Ample advance notice will allow him to provide appropriate assistance to the visiting businessman. The extent to which the Canadian company can be helped by the trade office depends largely on the information provided by the company.

Business Calls

The best introduction to the Yugoslav business community is through personal visits, which also provide an opportunity to study the market firsthand. Yugoslav business methods and customs differ somewhat from those in Canada. For example, business hours are quite different: firms open their doors at 07:00, work non-stop until 14:30, then shut down for the rest of the day. Business visitors to Yugoslav firms will be greeted warmly, with Turkish coffee, fruit juices or plum brandy (Sljivovica), which should be accepted lest one be deemed impolite. Invitations reciprocating Yugoslav hospitality extended earlier are very much appreciated.

The "businessman's lunch," which begins at 14:00 or so, can last throughout the afternoon and is very much part of the process of "getting to know you." The excessive amount of time devoted by Yugoslav officials to initial pleasantries should not be seen as