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## Ljubisa Zivadinovic

Lawyer (Afeja Consulting)

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**This is the opportunity for Spanish readers to know more about the medical tourism of Serbia. We are in the presence of Mr. Ljubisa Zivadinovic, lawyer, founder of the Medical Tourism Association of Serbia and also manager of Afeja Consulting. First of all we would like to know how you came to this idea of developing health care services in Serbia.**

Over the past 10 years this office is specialized in medical issues, it represents both the main private hospitals and the major Association of Tourist Organizations in Serbia "YUTA". Over the time we came up to the idea to offer the medical services of our clients to the foreign people that come to our country. Many hospitals were founded and an association was made between them in order to offer a brand new tourist product – medical tourism, to Europe, to the World, as well as to Spanish citizens. It refers on the major private clinics that are extremely well equipped, and have worldwide known medical specialist. Tourist agencies services, which offer logistics to patients from foreign countries, are also included. The main role of the lawyer office is to give a completely legal protection to all clients. Travel agencies are in charge for the guests' hosting, accommodation, guiding to the hospital, to sightseeing and fare welling. Our guests, (that is how we call our patients), receive much attention during their stay, and we are doing our best to be excellent hosts. That hospitality is the main similarity that connects Spanish and Serbian people. Every sector, the tourist agencies, medical institutions and our own lawyer office, has its own function and does its own job independently. There are 47 different specialties. An individual may chose a specialty and a specialist, and groups may do it as well, as it is included in a classical tourism program. For instance, people that has to be treated because of their hemodialysis, are obliged to come every second day and be connected on apparatus for blood changing. In Serbia over 40 package tours, that include both the treatment and the sightseeing of the country, are organized for them. There are ophthalmology and anti stress programs, and diabetes and thyroid cure as well. Furthermore, I would like to underline special programs that are referred to parents and their children, especially for the autistic ones.

**How would you describe the profile of your guests?**

Regarding the profile, our clients are only over 50 year old people, although we would like to offer our utilities to everyone who needs prevention. In Serbia making diagnosis is over 15% cheaper than on the West, sometimes the same quality can be obtained here at 10 times lower price.

**Mr Zivadinovic, what are the main reasons to attract potential guests from Europe and worldwide?**

I think it's the tourism of the future. Our own jobs keep us fully occupied. We don't have time to treat our health until we lose it. That is when the medical help is being requested. Our aim is to fuse two things - health and vacation.

**What is the association doing to actively promote the medical tourism of Serbia and their utilities on the international level?**

A marketing plan is made. Our association appears in some foreign newspapers; it made use of the help that some similar associations and tourist agencies from abroad offered. Contacts with some foreign embassies are established and we are asked to make a presentation of this program. Not to speak about the personal contacts we have abroad.

**We already interviewed important persons from tourism industry. Did you thought about including these package tours in the tourism offer of Serbia?**

Our Association is invited by the Tourist Organization of Belgrade to include this medical product in the official offer of the city of Belgrade. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs showed the interest in promoting our utilities abroad. Two meetings with the Secretary of the Government already took place.

**Can you tell us about your professional background?**

Representing a great number of serious companies, I came to the idea of aiming foreign people to use the services of my clients here. As for my career, it is based on working in law, and public persecution. My older daughter is student of law, and the little one, that has 9 years, promised to become a lawyer as well.

**What would you like to tell the Spanish people, who don't necessarily know Serbia, about your country, and the potential in medical tourism?**

Welcome and feel like you were home. You can acquire top medical service by reasonable prices. Furthermore Serbia has so many things to show, not only natural landmarks, extraordinary hospitality, but also the charm of the leisure. As for Spanish people, I would like to underline, that common values are shared between these two countries and there was no diplomatic conflict. Another thing that has to be mentioned is that the interest that Serbian people show regarding the Spanish football league is huge; Real Madrid and Barcelona enjoy our support.

**Interview realized by Xabier Garagorri and Mariella Olea**