

# NEWSLETTER

**BRITISH HELLENIC**  
*Chamber of*  
**COMMERCE**



*75*  
*years*  
*working together*  
*SINCE 1945*

29 May 2020, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Dear Chamber Members and Friends,

First and foremost, we hope you and your loved ones are well and coping in these unprecedented times.

2020 is an important year as our Chamber celebrates its 75th year of operation.

The Chamber plans to provide specific new value-added initiatives to our members given that we are currently unable to organize significant events.

Even though we all face restrictions now and in the near future, we are committed to contributing to our country's recovery and the use of new tools for collaboration - primarily digital - has given us all an incentive to quickly adjust to the digital era.

Certainly, person to person communication and networking cannot be completely replaced by teleconferences; but all means of communication are valuable to achieve our goals.

One of BHCC's new initiatives is this Newsletter. Our objective is to regularly update you on Chamber activities, provide you with news / announcements from the UK and Greek Governments, as well as the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), sharing information on bilateral relations between UK and Greece. Another aspect of the Newsletter is to give you the opportunity to communicate with other members by sharing your news and views. We strongly encourage you to take part in this effort.

In addition, our Chamber is in continuous contact and cooperates with the Greek Government and the British Embassy in Athens, to determine a strategy and an action plan relating to future bilateral business relations between UK and Greece. Furthermore, as the Chamber is a strategic member of the British Chambers of Commerce, we have the opportunity to exchange views with all UK related chambers and address our issues directly even to the UK policymakers.

We are proud that Greece has been internationally recognized for the successful handling of the coronavirus outbreak and we welcome the Greek Government's measures for our country's re-opening as well as its plan to address the resulting recession of the pandemic.

We are honoured that H.E. Kate Smith CMG, British Ambassador to Greece has participated in the first edition of our Newsletter and warmly thank her for her support.

We encourage all of you to contribute to this initiative and always remain at your disposal.

Finally, we would like to thank our Members for their continuous support.

Sincerely,

**Anna Kalliani**      **Alexander Turner**  
**Greek President**    **British President**

## BRITISH AMBASSADOR'S TO GREECE WELCOME NOTE

Dear BHCC members, friends

We've all been living through strange and difficult times. I really welcome the initiative of this new Newsletter from the Chamber to reach out and stay connected with the members when our other forms of contact remain limited.

For many of you in the business world, the next phase - recovery - is going to be even more challenging. The Commercial Team in the Embassy, alongside the Chamber, are keen to hear from you and to do what we can to minimise and mitigate the consequences, and protect as far as possible Greek- British trading and investment relations through and beyond the crisis.

For the UK, while the COVID-19 crisis remains our dominant concern, the question of our future relationship with the EU has not gone away.

Negotiations are continuing, and we are approaching a key decision point at end of June when we need to decide if there is fertile ground to continue negotiations with the aim of agreeing a comprehensive FTA and suite of other agreements.

It's a critical moment because – even despite the impacts of Coronavirus, the UK will not be extending the transition period. With or without an FTA, trading relations between Britain and Greece will change on 1 January 2021: one way or another, the UK will be leaving the single market and customs union. Businesses will need to prepare for life outside both at the end of 2020 – as many of you have been doing.

Meanwhile, although discussions have continued on the future trade agreement throughout this period, and remain constructive, big gaps remain. We haven't reached convergence on whether we can agree with the EU a deeper trading relationship on the lines of the free trade agreement such as the EU has with Canada (without tariffs or quotas on goods) or whether we have a trading relationship without an FTA, on WTO terms (as with eg Australia).

The major sticking points are on the degree of regulatory alignment - the so-called "the level playing field" - that the EU is insisting on; and the role of the European Court of Justice.

What is at stake on these issues was illustrated very clearly last week when the UK published the General Tariff schedule that we will apply if we end up without an FTA, and trading on WTO terms from 1 June.

The good news is that this is a simpler, easier to use and lower tariff regime than the EU's Common External Tariff (EU's CET). It will promote the green transition and circular economy; and enhance the UK's competitiveness by reducing cost pressures on many exports to the UK – while protecting key UK productive sectors.

But it will impact many Greek exporters – around 40% of product lines exported to the UK will incur tariffs, including iconic exports such as yoghurt and feta.

Our strong preference is to avoid this, and agree a comprehensive FTA that will not impose tariffs on trade between Greece and the UK. That's the best outcome for the bilateral trade and investment relationship which we all want to see flourish.

**H.E. Kate Smith CMG**

## BRITISH CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE (BCC) AND UK GOVERNMENT NEWS & UPDATES

### **BCC RECENT CORONAVIRUS UPDATES**

**20 May2020: BCC Coronavirus Business Impact Tracker: Firms begin to reopen but one in ten cannot implement government guidance safely**

Results from the latest [BCC Coronavirus Business Impact Tracker](#) reveal that the majority of firms surveyed are in a position to partially restart operations as lockdown restrictions are eased.



## 20 May 2020: Future Fund scheme launches

The UK Government's new Future Fund scheme [is open for applications](#). Aimed at start-ups and high growth businesses, the scheme will provide convertible loans to UK-based companies ranging from £125,000 to £5 million, subject to at least equal matched funding from private investors. The scheme is currently expected to run until the end of September 2020. Take a look at full details of the [eligibility criteria](#) and more details on our [Coronavirus Hub](#).

## Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme

The online service to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) will be available from Tuesday 26 May. The scheme will repay UK employers the SSP paid to current or former employees. The repayment will cover up to 2 weeks starting from the first qualifying day of sickness, if an employee is unable to work because they either:

- have Coronavirus symptoms;
- cannot work because they are self-isolating because someone they live with has symptoms; or
- are shielding and have a letter from the NHS or a GP telling them to stay at home for at least 12 weeks

[Read more](#)

## 22 May 2020: Quarterly Economic Survey (QES) Q2

As we work to restart, rebuild, and renew - the voice of business is more important than ever. This will be the first QES since the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic in the UK and the subsequent lockdown. Our data will mark the clear shift from pre-Coronavirus conditions to the current situation and will form a significant part of the historical record.

Thanks for all your efforts to promote QES so far. Adam Marshall, Director General of BCC, has recorded a message to highlight the importance of QES Q2.



### 14-day quarantine for all incoming arrivals

Take a look at [Adam Marshall's reaction](#) to the UK Government's announcement of a 14-day quarantine for people entering the UK.

[Read more](#)

## **UK GOVERNMENT AND DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE (DIT) NEWS**

### **11 May 2020: Our plan to rebuild: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy**

The Government's roadmap for how and when the UK will adjust its response to the COVID-19 crisis.

[Read more](#)

### **20 May2020: Government introduces legislation to relieve burden on businesses and support economic recovery**

The Government introduced on Wednesday 20 May, the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Bill in Parliament, which will put in place a series of measures to amend insolvency and company law to support business to address the challenges resulting from the impact of coronavirus.

The Bill consists of 6 insolvency measures and 2 corporate governance measures.

[Read more](#)

### **12 May 2020: Chancellor extends furlough scheme until October**

- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will continue until end of October
- furloughed workers across UK will continue to receive 80% of their current salary, up to £2,500
- new flexibility will be introduced from August to get employees back to work and boost economy

[Read more](#)

## **6 April 2020: Coronavirus | DIT offers support to exporters and investors**

- 160,000 exporters and investors trading internationally reached by government with outline of support on offer.
- UK businesses now eligible to secure export insurance cover to major international markets.

[Read more](#)

## **24 April 2020: Coronavirus | Finance for UK businesses trading internationally**

1. Finance and insurance for UK exporters
2. Export insurance
3. Working capital
4. Buyer finance

[Read more](#)

To find out information on more topics you can visit <https://www.gov.uk/>

## **BHCC MEMBERS' SECTION**

### **INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS IN ENGLAND AND WALES (ICAEW)**

#### **Crisis with a legacy: can we build something better?**

**27 April 2020:** can accountancy rise to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and become part of the solution? Now more than ever, the leadership of the profession is needed, argues ICAEW Chief Executive Michael Izza.

[Read more](#)

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## **KPMG**

### **Covid-19 & Επιχειρείν**

Η ταχεία εξάπλωση της COVID-19 παρουσιάζει μια ανησυχητική κρίση υγείας, με την οποία βρίσκεται αντιμέτωπη όλη η υφήλιος. Εκτός από τον αντίκτυπο σε ανθρώπινο επίπεδο, καταγράφεται και μια σημαντική επίπτωση στον τομέα των αγορών και του επιχειρείν παγκοσμίως.

Είναι πιθανό ότι η COVID-19 τελικά θα εξασθενίσει, όπως συνέβη τα τελευταία χρόνια με άλλους ιούς όπως τον Έμπολα και το SARS. Ακόμα όμως και να συμβεί αυτό, η επόμενη καταστροφική, αλλά ταυτόχρονα ανώνυμη «απειλή» δεν είναι τόσο θέμα για το «αν», αλλά για το «πότε» θα συμβεί.

Σε μια προσπάθεια να σας βοηθήσουμε να κατανοήσετε την έκθεσή σας στον COVID-19, και κυρίως η επιχείρησή σας να είναι πιο ανθεκτική σε αυτήν αλλά και στην επόμενη παγκόσμια πρόκληση, βρείτε συγκεντρωμένες εδώ έγκυρες πληροφορίες και υλικό από εξειδικευμένα στελέχη της KPMG στην Ελλάδα.

[Read more](#)

## **ΟΜΙΛΟΣ ΙΑΤΡΙΚΟΥ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ**

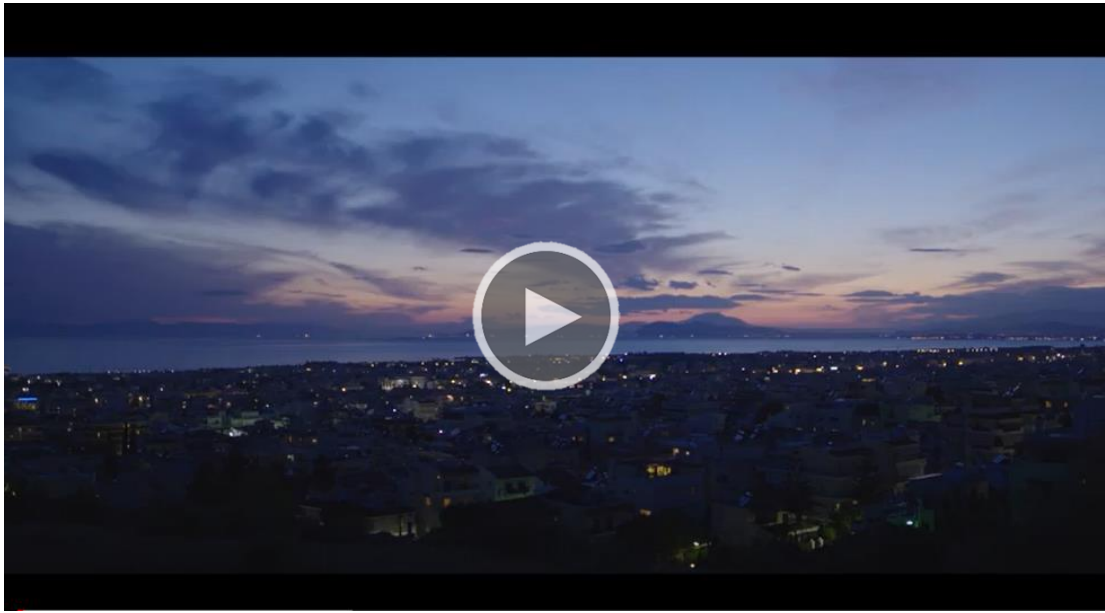
### **Κοντά σας ακούραστα, με ασφάλεια και συνέπεια**

Τους αποκαλούμε ήρωες της πρώτης γραμμής. Ήρωες πίσω από τις μάσκες σε μια άκρως παραγμένη εποχή, που δίνουν μάχη με μια απροσδιόριστη απειλή για όλους μας. Με γενναιότητα και ανθρωπιά. Κάνουν το καθήκον τους, δουλεύοντας άπειρες ώρες κι όμως κανένας τους δεν παραπονιέται γι' αυτό. Σώζουν ζωές, τις ζωές μας. Στην πραγματικότητα αυτό είναι που κάνουν πάντα, γιατί είναι πάντα ένα βήμα μπροστά, προσφέροντας ασφάλεια και φροντίδα στα δύσκολα.

Υπάρχουν στιγμές, σαν κι αυτές που ζούμε, που τα πολλά λόγια μοιάζουν φτωχά μπροστά στο μεγαλείο αυτών των ανθρώπων. Στη μικρή ιστορία μίας ιατρού που δίνει την καθημερινή της μάχη, συμπυκνώνονται η προσφορά του Ομίλου Ιατρικού Αθηνών απέναντι στην πανδημία και η διασφάλιση ότι όλες οι υπηρεσίες του παρέχονται με απόλυτη ασφάλεια και εξειδικευμένους ελέγχους.



Αυτή είναι η αποστολή μας, η οποία δεν έχει αλλάξει εδώ και 36 χρόνια. Να είμαστε πάντα ένα βήμα μπροστά... ακόμη και στα δύσκολα.



## **PEOPLECERT**

**PeopleCert & LanguageCert to deliver Home Office approved Secure English Language Tests (SELT) for UK Visas & Immigration**

[Read more](#)

## **WATSON FARLEY & WILLIAMS**

**The future of e-charging infrastructure: Greece**

This article is part of a series on the future of e-charging infrastructure in the European Union and United Kingdom.

1. E-mobility in Greece: outline of the current regime
2. Legal Framework for constructing and operating EV charging stations
3. EU law requirements for operating a charging station
4. Tax and other incentives promoting e-mobility
5. What different business models do we see in the Greek market?

[Read more](#)

### **Covid-19: Issues under shipping contracts**

The Covid-19 pandemic has rocked the world. Numerous people around the Globe are locked down at home, companies are trying to adapt, and the global economy is suffering. Shipping has been affected as well. In this article, we outline some of the key issues affecting a variety of shipping contracts in light of COVID-19.

[Read more](#)

### **New legislative act: Covid-19 in the energy sector in Greece**

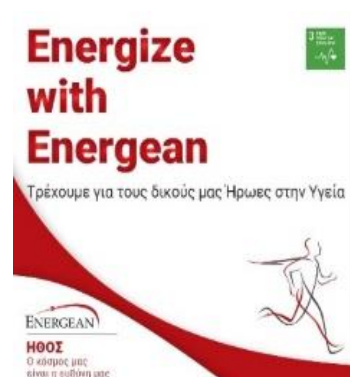
The President of the Hellenic Republic has issued a Legislative Act to address the Covid-19 pandemic which includes measures adopted for the energy sector in Greece. Extensions of various deadlines are granted related to the licensing process and operation deadline for renewable ("RES") projects, so that the current closure of public services and construction delays do not penalise projects with operating support (variable premium) agreements with fixed completion deadlines, or those with licences and connection offers with deadlines which expire in the course of 2020.

[Read more](#)

## **CSR INITIATIVES**

### **ENERGEAN**

#### **Energiean's Initiative "Energize with Energiean"**



Energiean has decided to run a crowdfunding to support your Local Healthcare Heroes, those who are fighting COVID -19 everyday.

Join Energize with Energean pages in LinkedIn or Instagram, then run 5 kilometres, then donate at least 5 euros, GBPs, dollars etc. and nominate five of your friends to join the campaign. Energean urges you to share with them your photos while running by posting them on Energize with Energean pages!

Don't wait, don't hesitate, just MOTIVATE! Don't forget to always comply with the social distancing rules of your country!

Energean as company will match all donations and give funds back to your local Healthcare Systems.

[Read more](#)

The crowdfunding link can be found at <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/run-5-donate-5-nominate-5/backers>

## **HSBC**

### **HSBC supports a series of COVID-19 response activities in Greece**

HSBC announces a number of donations to enhance medical response against COVID-19 in Greece and to support vulnerable populations whose lives have been further complicated by the pandemic outbreak.

HSBC Group recently announced USD 25 million charitable fund to support the international medical response, protect vulnerable people and ensure food security worldwide.

[Read more](#)

## **BREXIT NEWS & UPDATES**

During the last negotiating Round on 15 May, the UK Government has decided to make public the various draft legal texts that had been sent to the EU in recent weeks. These texts are available [here](#).

Considering this publication, David Frost, Sherpa and EU Adviser of the UK Government addressed to Michel Barnier, UK Task Force, Secretariat General of the European Commission, the following [letter](#).

M. Barnier's reply to David Frost can also be found [here](#).

For more information on Brexit developments please visit <https://www.gov.uk/transition>, [https://ec.europa.eu/info/european-union-and-united-kingdom-forging-new-partnership\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/european-union-and-united-kingdom-forging-new-partnership_en) and <https://brexit.gov.gr/>

## INTRODUCING OUR NEW MEMBERS

Welcoming the new Members, who have joined the Chamber since October 2019:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><u>ESTROCHEM CHEMICALS SA</u></b> Industrial Goods &amp; Services</li><li>• <b><u>DIMITRIOS-CHRISTOS ZAFEIROUDIS</u></b> Shipping and Marine Services</li><li>• <b><u>GEOAXIS</u></b> Real Estate, Construction &amp; Maintenance Services</li><li>• <b><u>IOANNIS KARAKASIS</u></b> Consumer Goods and Services</li><li>• <b><u>MARINETRAFFIC OPERATIONS SA</u></b> Shipping and Marine Services</li><li>• <b><u>ENERGEAN OIL AND GAS SA</u></b> Energy, Mining &amp; Utilities</li><li>• <b><u>HYPHEN GROUP SA</u></b> Education &amp; Training</li><li>• <b><u>PANAGIOTIS DOUDONIS</u></b> Legal Services</li><li>• <b><u>GEORGE KARABELAS</u></b> Consumer Goods and Services</li><li>• <b><u>KOSTIS ANGELOPOULOS &amp;SIA EE</u></b> Health, Medical and Social Care</li><li>• <b><u>NORROGROUP IKE</u></b> Arts, Entertainment &amp; Sports</li><li>• <b><u>MINAS CHATZICHRISTOU</u></b> Consulting</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><u>ANNA NAZOU</u></b> Real Estate, Construction &amp; Maintenance Services</li><li>• <b><u>STAMO GALIATSATOU</u></b> Education &amp; Training</li><li>• <b><u>APOSTOLOS ZIKOULIS</u></b> Insurance/Reinsurance</li><li>• <b><u>KONSTANTINOS KARTERIS</u></b> Food and Beverage and Related Products</li><li>• <b><u>METRO ONE REAL ESTATE GROUP</u></b> Real Estate, Construction &amp; Maintenance Services</li><li>• <b><u>SIMON RACKHAM</u></b> Real Estate, Construction &amp; Maintenance Services</li><li>• <b><u>ADUS</u></b> Business Services</li><li>• <b><u>KENNY EVANGELOU</u></b> Real Estate, Construction &amp; Maintenance Services</li><li>• <b><u>SARDELAS PETA LAW FIRM</u></b> Legal Services</li><li>• <b><u>NIKOS ANASTASOPOULOS</u></b> Real Estate, Construction &amp; Maintenance Services</li><li>• <b><u>AFRODITI ARVANITI</u></b> Hospitality, Catering and Accommodation</li></ul>
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- **PUBLIC POWER CORPORATION SA (DEI)**  
Energy, Mining & Utilities

- **BOREALIS MARITIME LTD**  
Shipping and Marine Services

You may find [here](#) the new BHCC Members' short profiles\*.

*\*Only Members that have granted the Chamber permission to publicise information appear [herein](#).*

## CONTACT DETAILS

For more information, articles, reports and press releases please contact  
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