


The HORECA sector needs our help

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The current situation introduced a number of changes to our everyday lives. At the same time, it has shown synergies and brought mutual assistance and support. Joining the crowd actively helping out is the Slovenské združenie výrobcov piva a sladu (Slovak Association of Beer and Malt Producers), which established #podporsvojpgub (Support Your Pub) through the support of its members.

The initiative sought to help the restaurant industry bridge the liquidity-related financial problems they encountered during the lockdown and involve the general public in keeping the HORECA businesses afloat.

Amsterdam, the Netherlands, quickly gaining favor from partners, customers and, of course, from the HORECA establishments themselves. Many other European countries were also inspired, including Slovakia. #podporsvojpgub was able to be launched just before Easter. Besides association members, other project partners and sponsors across several segments of the Slovak economy joined very quickly for a common goal - promoting the HORECA sector.

The principle behind support your pub

Businesses have been able to register from the beginning at podporsvojpgub.sk, which then published their business cards. Subsequently, customers had the opportunity to choose their favorite pub and support it by purchasing a voucher for future consumption. Businesses needed financial assistance immediately and the support mechanism adjusted accordingly. Funds from the purchased vouchers were paid out twice a month to the account of specific operations. In addition, the initiative regularly sent newsletters to companies and prepared ready-made posts on social networks, including visuals announcing current events and interim results. This gave businesses the opportunity to contribute toward promoting themselves in real time. Consumers may redeem the vouchers they purchased for 100 days after restrictions are lifted and in this way the initiative seeks to ensure guests return to the HORECA segment. The return of consumers to businesses is crucial for them continuing to remain open.

Results

Thanks to the initiative, almost 500 restaurants, pubs, bars and cafes in Slovakia have received aid of almost €17,000. Customers are able to use the purchased vouchers from May 20th - the day when restaurants, cafes and pubs could open indoors - to August 27th 2020.

Each of us can help

"Manufacturers and suppliers for the restaurant sector are continuing to help establishments with starter packs and marketing support," said Jana Shepperd, President of the Slovak Association of Beer and Malt Producers, talking about the aid provided. "They accommodated their needs in paying bills, providing advice and even asking for help from the government after the state of emergency ended."

Businesses operating in the restaurant segment are facing both challenging times and the beginning of the summer season, which gives hope for a better future. Every one of us can help;

just a little bit is enough.

- Consider going for a drink or a good meal at your favorite business. Take your friends with you.
- Plan visits to your favorite business regularly. Don't forget to make reservations. This lets businesses schedule their activities and budget their costs more efficiently.
- Let your friends and acquaintances know how satisfied you are about going to an establishment or support it through social networks.

In addition to the association's member breweries - HEINEKEN Slovakia, Pilsner Urquell (Plzeňský Prazdroj) Slovakia and Steiger Brewery, #SupportSvojPub also received support from other producers and suppliers in the restaurant industry, such as BUDIŠ, Coca-Cola, Kofola, Lunys, Mattoni 1873, Staropramen-Slovakia and ST. NICOLAUS. The project also received backing from other sector groupings such as the Slovak Association of Hotels and Restaurants, the Slovak Soft Drinks and Mineral Waters, the Food Chamber of Slovakia and the Slovak Chefs Association. Jana Shepperd concluded by thanking all partners and customers whose purchases of vouchers provided the necessary financial assistance, while simultaneously being a rare gesture of solidarity and loyalty.

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The negative impact of the current situation has been felt by virtually everyone, with HORECA (Hotels, Restaurants & Catering) being no exception, as businesses in the sector were closed for more than two months. When the pandemic emerged, this was the question asked: How to offer them effective help? During the lockdown in Slovakia, several initiatives were launched. However, there was no specific aid for companies operating in the HORECA segment. Establishments needed to retain staff, pay their bills, consume existing inventory and overcome many of the other challenges facing them. No one knew at the time how the situation was going to develop.

Establishing the initiative

The first initiative to help HORECA in Europe was established in

