

[Serbia Energy Business](#) explores the competitiveness of Doing Business in Serbia



Interview with Mr. Nikola Jankovic, Senior Partner, Jankovic Popovic Mitic Law firm "JPM" Law Office 'Jankovic, Popovic & Mitic' has for 20 years been providing adequate legal assistance to numerous companies in Serbia and abroad. Period of the first M/A transactions at all in Serbia (Messer Griesheim from Germany took over Tehnogas from Belgrade). The correctness of our decision to engage in the business law found its confirmation after the changes in the year 2000, rendering of the Privatization Act and more significant entry of the foreign investors into the market of Serbia. The first wave of the changes included adoption of a number of the new laws which were supposed to bring Serbia closer to creation of the market economy and integration into the European market. The ultimate goal of all these changes in the business environment in Serbia is to make Serbia recognizable as a country with market economy, open borders and ready to join the competition on the EU market. Serbia is an agricultural country and maybe this sector is the one having the best chances of expediting the country's penetration into the World market and creation of the new employment opportunities. Analysis of the obstacles will lead to the conclusion that we are faced with a long process of elimination thereof, which should result in the change of the concept of development of Serbia from the consumer and import oriented to the production and export oriented expansion model. Through compliance with the EU legal heritage, local companies will, observing the local regulations, also observe the EU regulations, without actually being aware of doing so.

[Serbia-business.eu](#): Jankovic Popovic Mitic Law Firm (JPM) is one of the first law firms in Serbia, you are now celebrating 20 years of work on the market, can you tell us something about the starting of the law practice considering the fact that you are specialized in commercial and trade law?

JPM was formed in 1991, the year which cannot be considered the optimum year for the beginning of engagement in advocacy, especially the advocacy focused on commercial law.

Less than 12 month thereafter, Yugoslavia was encountered with the sanctions imposed by the UN, which resulted in blocking of the foreign investments and all legal business operations with the foreign countries. Under the circumstances, JPM primarily engaged in representation of the clients within the commercial disputes and supported mainly the foreign companies within the procedure of their adjustment to the new (almost impossible) conditions of operating.

That was also the period of the beginning of application of the new, i.e. first Yugoslav corporate law. Therefore, it can be justifiably claimed that JPM is the first law office in Serbia which was established subject to the “business law firm” concept, i.e. the concept of providing legal services in all sectors of business/commercial law. These sectors included corporate law, trade law, real estate law, labor law, commercial disputes and intellectual property law. Over the years, and especially after the year 2000, the diversification among our departments has become more precise and the departments have been formed for banking and finance, competition law, energy law, PPP, etc.

The first significant boom in this type of advocacy was in the years 1996-1997 following rescinding of the sanctions on account of the war at Croatia and Bosnia, up to imposing sanctions on the account of war at Kosovo and Metohia. That was the period of the first M/A transactions at all in Serbia (Messer Griesheim from Germany took over Tehnogas from Belgrade). The correctness of our decision to engage in the business law found its confirmation after the changes in the year 2000, rendering of the Privatization Act and more significant entry of the foreign investors into the market of Serbia.

Complete interview can be read [here link](#)