

In this Q&A, Mark Oliphant, Head of Communications at The International Stock Exchange Group, describes how the stock exchange has adapted to COVID-19

Question: What challenges has TISE faced during the COVID-19 pandemic?

MO: Foremost has been ensuring the welfare of our staff. At TISE we implemented a seamless transition to remote working both to protect the health of our employees and enable them to provide uninterrupted, quality service to our clients.

There was no operational requirement to revert but due to the effective controls of COVID-19 in each of our 'home' jurisdictions of Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man, we have now been able to return to these offices.

Question: What procedures did TISE adopt to assist clients through these unprecedented times?

MO: We recognised that while we were facing these sorts of challenges, so were all other businesses but the situation was not and is not uniform across geographies or industries and continues to evolve. As such, we have provided and continue to offer appropriate flexibility in order to support current and prospective issuers, whilst at the same time considering the protection of investors.

Critically important is the communication that the Exchange has been providing to our Listing and Trading Members who facilitate business on behalf of their clients, not least in terms of providing guidance around filing and reporting, as well as the acceptance of electronic signatures and other alternative arrangements for signed documents.

Question: What has been the impact on business flows during this time?

MO: Despite the backdrop of COVID-19, there were more new listings on TISE during the first six months of 2020 than in the same period of any other year since the business was established in 1998. There were 390 securities admitted to the Official List of TISE in the first half of the year, which took the total number of listed securities on TISE to 3.030 at the end of June 2020.

Since the end of June, we have continued to see strong levels of new listing applications but delayed impacts from COVID-19 or Brexit issues may result in a slowdown in listing activity during the remainder of the year.

Question: How do you think COVID-19 will change your business in the future?

MO: Remote working has been show to be operationally effective but it has also changed employee expectations. Beyond that, it remains to be seen where COVID will have a more long-lasting impact on the way in which we live our lives and operate our businesses. For example, the reduction in travel has had clear environmental benefits and COVID has also led to a greater awareness of social issues. Not least through our green market segment, TISE GREEN, we continue to facilitate flows of capital into these areas.

Indeed, across the listing of equity (trading companies and investment vehicles) and debt securities, TISE provides an offering which is well placed to help corporates adjust to the 'new normal' and ultimately, assist us all in building back.



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