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BUSINESS

Could Croatian Hemp Growing Industry Rescue Domestic Economy?

By [Lauren Simmonds](#) 23 August 2022

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August the 23rd, 2022 - Could the Croatian hemp growing industry boost the overall economic picture? Many believe so, but there are many obstacles to anything being made easy, such is Croatia.

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As [Poslovni Dnevnik](#) writes, it has been estimated that the value of the industrial hemp market across Europe should be almost nine billion US dollars by the year 2027. In Croatia, there are numerous organisations that deal with the cultivation and distribution of this particular plant, but they also encounter numerous problems, [Dnevnik.hr](#) writes.

Industrial hemp (*Cannabis Sativa L.*) is a plant from the cannabis family that contains 0.2 percent or less of the psychoactive compound tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). Although this industry is one of the fastest growing in all of Europe, planters and producers across Croatia continually encounter numerous problems that hinder their full potential and prevent the development of the potential Croatian hemp growing could have.

The Dom konoplje/Hemp house cooperative is a platform that gathers industrial hemp growers from all over Croatia. The executive director of the cooperative, Mihael Zlovolic, has been actively promoting the plant and the entire Croatian hemp growing industry for years. He believes that the future of this industry is too beneficial to ignore. "I think that, according to some of my estimates, the cannabis plant in Croatia will be legalised in 2025 at the latest. We're seeing similar movements across Europe, for example in Malta, Luxembourg, Switzerland... Germany also plans to legalise cannabis by the end of 2022, so this whole story is part of a wider movement," he said.

"I'm convinced that if this entire project was done properly and if systematic investments were made in the industry on a wider level, we'd be able to get rid of all of the country's debts and get out of the economic crisis in the mandate of one single Government. All of that with the help of industrial hemp," he said.



Systemic obstacles

However, numerous obstacles are continuing to slow down the development of this industry and hold back small producers. "Where do I even begin? First and foremost, there are so many cases where people shamelessly steal plants from small producers that it has become something that has to be factored into the cost of production," he said.

He says that this is most often the result of ignorance. Legislation, which often lags behind industry development, is also an obstacle. "There are cases where people ended up in court, and the judge was not aware of the latest changes to the Drug Abuse Prevention Act. Not to mention the police. But I have to praise them, we actively cooperate with the police and competent inspectors who help us a lot, but there are often officials who see a cannabis plant and immediately think - drugs", said Zlovolic.

"These cases most often occur in smaller communities where not only are the officials not familiar with the legal framework, but they're also under pressure from the local population. We still live in a conservative society that, when it sees someone planting a field of industrial hemp, often reacts negatively to it," he said.



"We should be working on educating the population and providing a healthy basis for the development of the Croatian hemp growing industry. The goal is to form a kind of portal and centre of knowledge and information, where people who possess proven knowledge and skills will be able to educate everyone - not only producers and growers, but also ordinary people - because hemp is the future," said Zlovolic.

However, in order to achieve this, systematic support and the formation of an official market are needed. "We have the knowledge, we have the conditions and we can do miracles. Especially when you have such people who also have a great will and desire to throw themselves into it. Now the question is how to get ordinary people to recognise it," he said.

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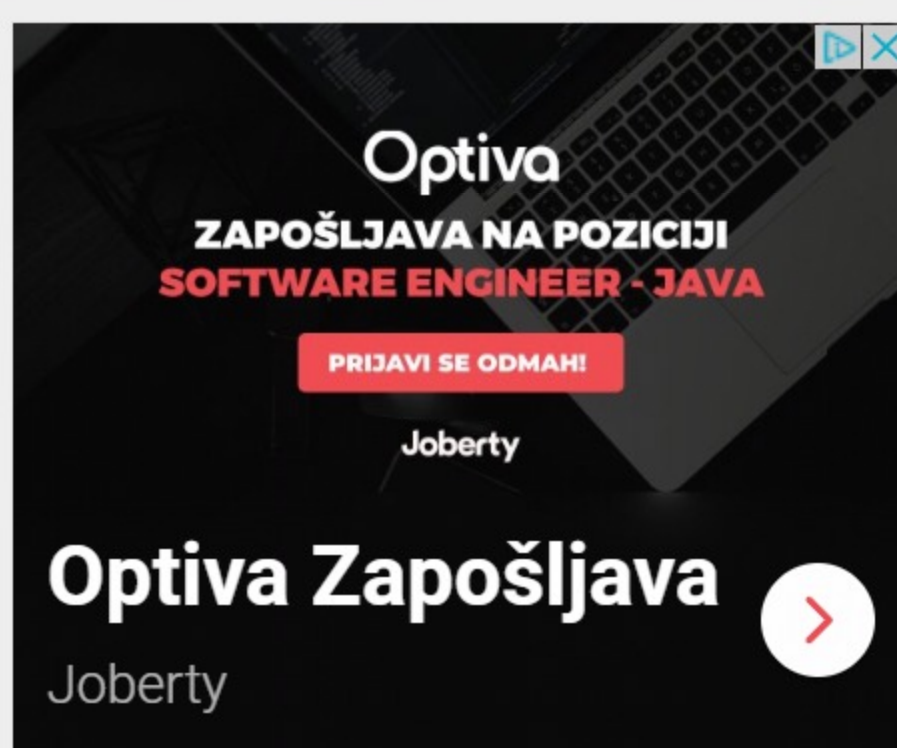
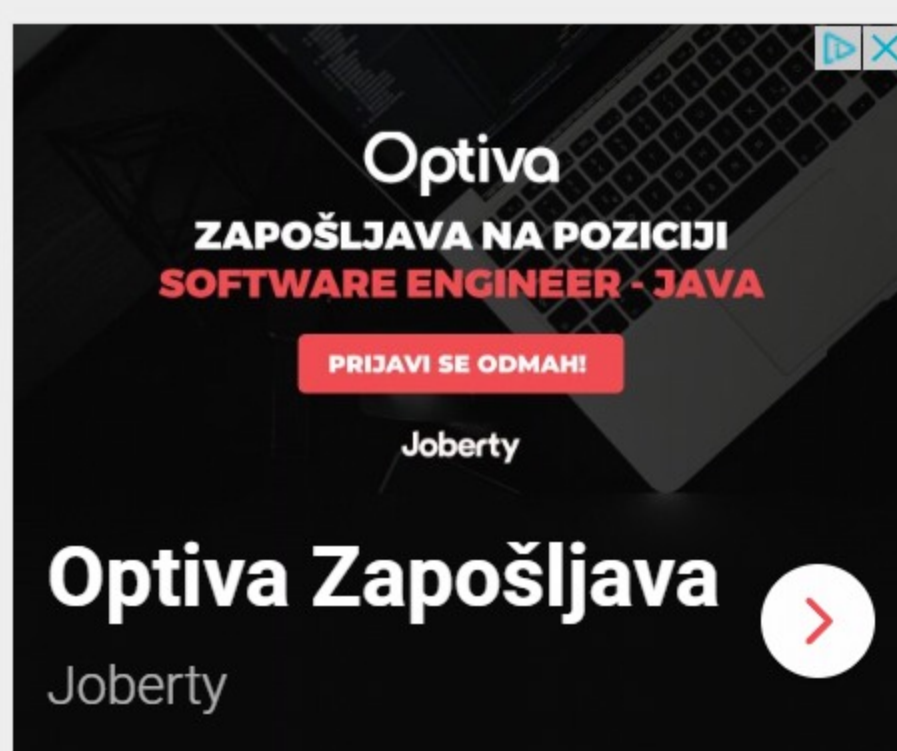
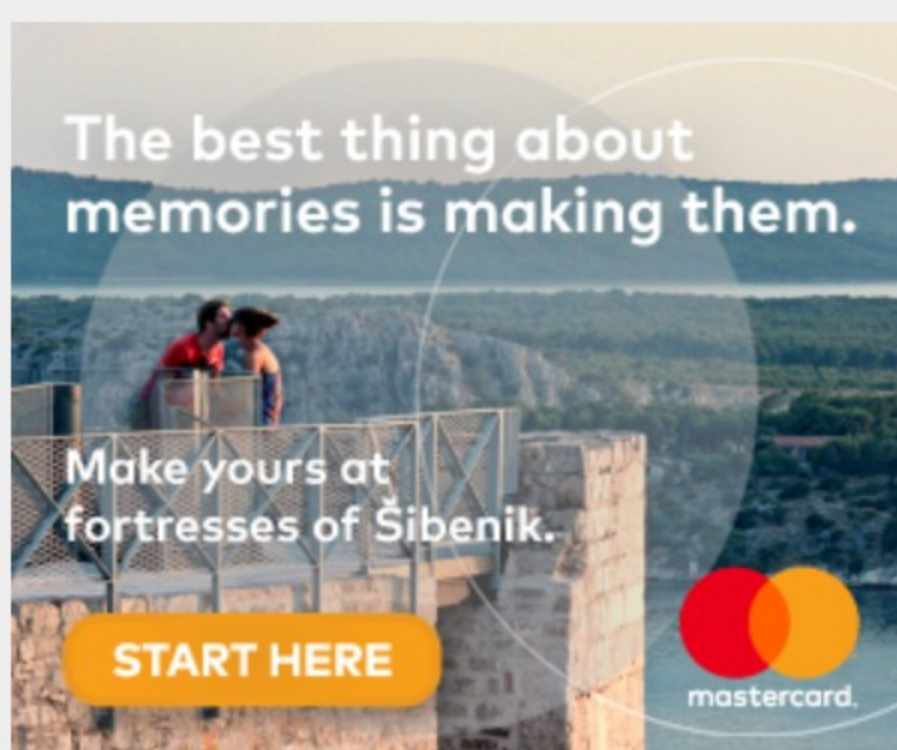
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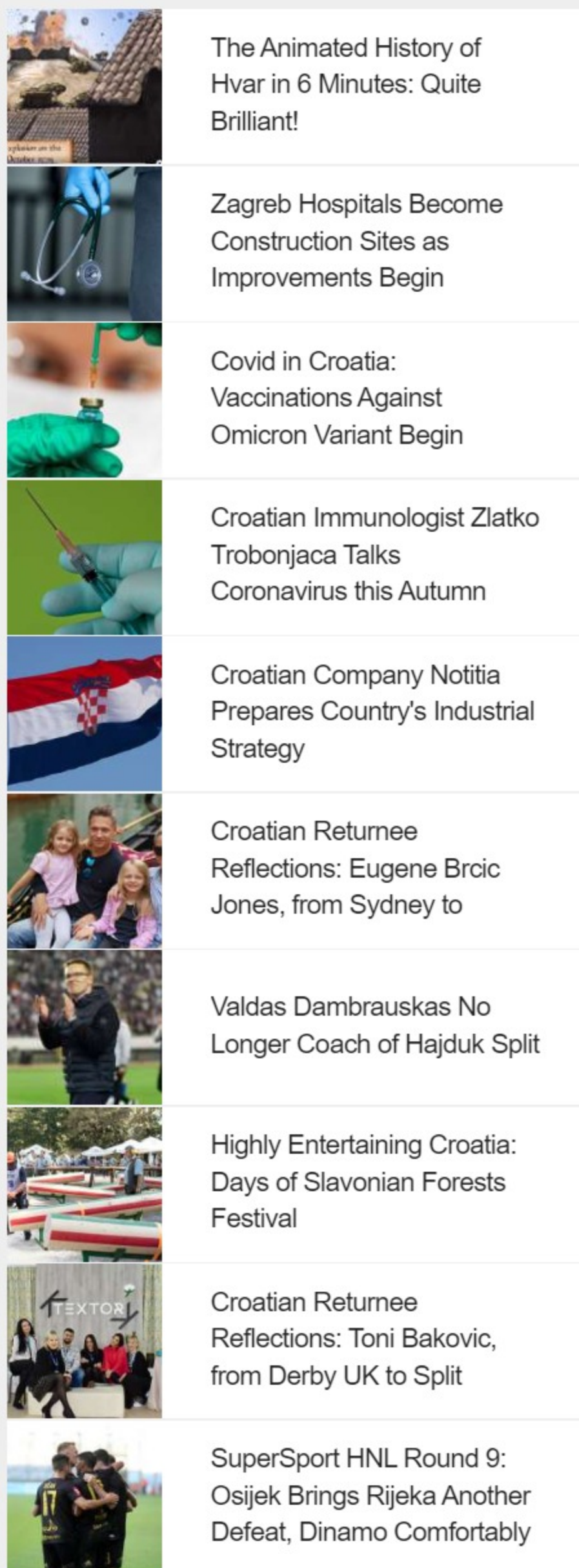
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