

PRESS RELEASE

The winner awarded a cheque for EUR 30,000

Daily Newspaper Blic and Banca Intesa awarded the prize to the best entrepreneur in the year of 2007

Belgrade (31 January 2008) – Daily newspaper Blic and Banca Intesa finalized their campaign for the election of the best enterprise in Serbia for the year of 2007 within small and middle size enterprises sector. The award “Blic entrepreneur of 2007” was presented by Mr Božidar Đelić, Vice President of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and Mr Veselin Simović, Editor in-chief of Blic, whereas Mr Silvio Pedrazzi, Deputy President of the EB of Banca Intesa awarded the winner a cheque for EUR 30,000.

The prize was awarded according to the decision of the jury of experts consisting of Ms Vesna Perić, Director of Serbian Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SIEPA) and the president of the jury; Mr Dejan Trifunović, Secretary of the Small Business Association in Serbian Chamber of Commerce; Mr Silvio Pedrazzi, Deputy President of the EB of Banca Intesa; Mr Vladimir Ilić, State Secretary for Employment; Ms Snežana Filipović, Educational and Training Manager in Agency for Small and Middle Enterprises; Mr Mijat Lakićević, Editor – in – chief of the Economist magazine and Mr Miloš Zlatić, Editor of the daily newspaper Blic.

In terms of choice, the jury of experts was guided by profitability, productivity and liquidity of the enterprise, the results achieved in the course of the previous business year, as well as by further criteria: export results in 2007 and export potential, number of employees and the newly employed in 2007, assortment of the newly – launched products, introduction of technological innovations, implicit orientation towards the environment protection and the realized contribution to the development of the local community. Business operations of the owners and managers of almost 96,000 enterprises were taken into consideration and according to the decision of the jury, the priority was given to the enterprises and entrepreneurs whose business activities and policy are characterized by production and creation of the new.

Upon presenting the initiative for the election of the entrepreneur of the year, Mr Veselin Simović, Editor in-chief of the daily newspaper Blic said: “Every day newspapers, including Blic, are full of reports on great businessmen and those popularly called controversial as well. In brief – newspapers are full of tycoons. Majority of them gained their initial capital during the somber years in a suspicious manner. Almost no one writes about thousands of people who have ideas, knowledge, consistency and especially courage to enter the unfair competition with those previously mentioned. It is my strong belief, that the significance of small and middle size enterprises for the development of Serbia is greater than the contribution of big companies. With this campaign, that will certainly last, we want to correct the mistake.”

Banca Intesa has rich experience and knowledge of cooperation with the small and middle size enterprises sector in Italy, that is one of the pillars of the economy there and for this reason is trying to apply the same knowledge in Serbia as well, by enabling the small and middle size enterprises to use all the products and services that in the earlier

period were exclusively available to big companies, as well as to offer them fair and correct conditions in accordance with the market opportunities. As the confirmation of this business policy, stands the information that Banca Intesa is today, one of the leading banks in crediting small and middle size enterprises, with total placements amounting to EUR 485 million.

“As representative of Banca Intesa, I would like to express my gratitude to the management of the daily newspaper Blic for giving us the trust to be partners in this campaign and enabling us to demonstrate our strategic determination and dedication to the sector of small and middle size enterprises. By awarding the financial prize of EUR 30,000 this recognition is getting more than a symbolic importance, since with this money we should enable the winner to further improve its business operations. Although the propositions of this competition envisage prize for only one, the best entrepreneur, we have decided to provide consolation prizes for the short-listed companies, enabling them to use Banca Intesa loans under the conditions considerably more favourable than the market ones”, said Mr Silvio Pedrazzi, Deputy President of the EB of Banca Intesa.

Ms Vesna Perić, Director of Serbian Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SIEPA) and also the president of the jury declared upon the awarding: “I have the honour to greet you on behalf of the members of the Commission for awarding the Blic Prize for the entrepreneur of the year. I was pleased to accept the invitation from Blic to be the president of the Commission since this is a splendid campaign, designed to attract public attention to the importance of the entrepreneurship and also in accordance with the mission of SIEPA to promote in public the values and indispensability regarding the export, competitiveness and innovativeness of the domestic enterprises. ”