

Blic daily newspaper and Banca Intesa choose the best entrepreneur three years in a row

Development of entrepreneurship a key milestone in the economic recovery of the country

Belgrade (November 11) – It is a third year in a row that Blic, a daily newspaper and Banca Intesa organize the campaign for the election of the best entrepreneur in Serbia within small and mid-size companies. After the official announcement of 'Blic entrepreneur 2009' to be held at the beginning of next year, as it was the case at two previous elections, Banca Intesa will present the winner with EUR 30.000. According to defined rules this year as well, the award shall be used with a specific-purpose for improving current business operations and for investments into new business projects.

The jury of experts shall be lead by profitability, productivity and liquidity of companies, achieved over the last business year, as well as by additional criteria: export results in 2009 and export potential, number of employees and newly hired in 2009, range of newly launched products, introduction of technological innovations, showed orientation towards the protection of the environment and achieved contribution for the development of the community. According to the decision of the jury of experts, the advantage shall be given to companies and entrepreneurs whose business activity and business policy is characterized by production and creation of a new.

Vojislav Tufegdžić, editor of Akcija daily paper, said that in the period from December 2009 and January 2010, Blic will present all the 50 companies, which will be placed in the group of most successful according to the decision of the jury of experts, and by the end of the campaign, members of the jury of experts will visit those companies which will be placed, according to all criteria, among 10 which applied for the choice of the best in 2009.

"The basic aim of this campaign is to promote the sector of small and mid-size companies in Serbia, which employs between 65 and 70 per cent of all employees in the country. In 2007, the award was presented to "Obuća Pavle", and in 2008, the jury of experts decided to award "Agrounik" Zemun, as the most successful and innovative Company, added Tufegdžić.

Owing to its strategic orientation to encourage and invest the entrepreneurial spirit, Banca Intesa is one of the leading banks in Serbia in the small segment business. Starting with the assumption that clients' needs are starting point in designing and creating products,

the Bank tends to offer small entrepreneurs all types of services available to large companies.

»Thanks to the strength and stability of our Parent group Intesa Sanpaolo, which has great experience and knowledge in cooperation with SMEs sector and orientation to provide a stable support to its clients in the period of economic growth and in the period of recession, Banca Intesa recognized in time problems that the sector of entrepreneurs faced by realizing the financial help they needed most under such circumstances. Within that context, the Bank actively participated in the government program for subsidized loans, and adjusted its offer to the actual situation, trying to meet the ever greater need of the economy for working capital«, said Mr. Giancarlo Miranda, COO of Banca Intesa.

It has been widely recognized that Banca Intesa was among first to join the government program for subsidized loans, still being its most active member. For the first ten months in 2009, almost EUR 900 mil was placed in SMEs sector, of which more than EUR 200 mil was approved within the program of the Serbian government to safeguard financial stability applying subsidized interest rates.