

**MEDIA RELEASE****City of Niš and Banca Intesa ad Beograd sign a cooperation agreement**

**Niš, October 4, 2018** - As part of the local economic development programme of the City of Niš for 2018, released by Niš Office for local economic development and projects, the city has published an invitation to tender for banks that are interested in providing short-term loans to commercial entities from the territory of Niš. The City of Niš will subsidize the interest on the loans for procurement of working capital, expenses of procurement of machines and equipment, modernization of production processes, stabilization of production, investing in new modern equipment with the goal of developing entrepreneurship, building, reconstruction and adaptation of office space, and new hiring.

In accordance with the criteria from this tender, Commission for the allocation of funds for the realization of this programme has chosen the best bid, submitted by Banca Intesa. The City Council has accepted the Commission's recommendation and a cooperation agreement was signed today between the City of Niš and Banca Intesa. The agreement was signed by Mayor Darko Bulatović, on behalf of the City of Niš, and by Violeta Marjanović, Regional Retail and Small business Director, on behalf of Banca Intesa.

“It is very important for the City of Niš to have these kinds of programmes in order to incentivize the development of entrepreneurship and contribute to further reduction of unemployment in our city. The local self-government needed reliable partners for the realization of these plans and I am happy that we will release this programme together with Banca Intesa. The City of Niš has allocated RSD 9,362,409.00 for subsidizing the interest on loans that will be awarded to commercial entities and i sincerely hope that there will be more interested parties for this kind of aid, compared to last year“, said Mayor Darko Bulatović upon signing the cooperation agreement.

“We are very happy that, once again this year, the City of Niš recognized Banca Intesa as a reliable partner for the realization of the local economic development programme through subsidized loans for entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium enterprises. Signing this agreement represents the continuation of cooperation within which we have supported entrepreneurs in Niš, last year, with RSD 134 million in loans with subsidized interest rate. This very segment of economy is the main driver of economic growth of our entire country, which is why incentivizing its growth is a strategically important part of Banca Intesa's overall operations“, said Violeta



Marjanović, Regional Retail and Small business Director at Banca Intesa in Regional Centre Niš.

The minimum amount of loans that will be subsidized is RSD 100,000.00 and the maximum amount will be RSD 2 million. The City of Niš will subsidize the interest until the funds are spent. The purpose of subsidizing parts of loans is to contribute to the economic growth through allowing the private sector to have easier access to loans, which are given under more favorable conditions.

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***Banca Intesa ad Beograd**, a member of **INTESA**  **SANPAOLO** group, is the leading bank in the domestic market, a reliable partner for 1.34 million clients in the retail and corporate segments. With net assets of close to 5 billion euros, total deposits of 3.5 billion euros and total loans of 2.9 billion euros, Banca Intesa is leading the list of the most successful banks in Serbia. Owing to a developed business network of 158 branches across Serbia, the most developed network of ATMs and POS terminals and a professional team of around 2,977 employees, the bank is recording stable results in all segments of operation while working with private individuals, small businesses, corporates and local governments.*