

# **THE CHAIRMAN OF NIŠ CITY ASSEMBLY, Mr. BOBAN DŽUNIĆ ATTENDED THE CELEBRATION DEDICATED TO THE PATRON SAINT- DAY OF THE CITY MUNICIPALITY OF PALILULA -" ASSEMBLY OF SERBIAN SAINTS"**

The City Municipality of Palilula celebrated its Patron Saint -day "Assembly of Serbian Saints" on September 13th, in St. Nicholas Church.

The celebration, which was held with a limited number of invitees, along with the protection measures, was attended by the Chairman of Niš City Assembly, Mr. Boban Džunić, who is the former Chairman of the City Municipality of Palilula Assembly, and by the representatives of the city municipalities.

The Archpriest Staurophore and Rector of the Theological Seminary, Milutin Timotijevći, together with the clergy of the Eparchy of Niš, performed the traditional ritual of "cutting the feast cake". The guests were greeted by the present-day President the City Municipality of Palilula, Mr. Bratislav Vuckovic. The host of this year's celebration was Mr. Aleksandar Ždrale. This important day for the City municipality of Palilula has been celebrated since 2005.

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# **THE CHAIRMAN OF NIŠ CITY ASSEMBLY, Mr. BOBAN DŽUNIĆ APPEARED ON LOCAL TV “ZONA”**

The Chairman of Niš City Assembly, Mr. Boban Džunić, appeared on local TV “Zona”. The occasion of his visit was the third session of Niš City Assembly, as well as the review of the attained activities at the very beginning of his term of office. Explaining the work procedure of the institution he runs, the Chairman Džunić pointed out that the cooperation between the legislative and executive bodies is of crucial importance, and that he is personally very satisfied with the current mode of their mutual functioning.

The Chairman announced the recent formation of other parliamentary working bodies – commissions and councils, as well as the continuation of the implementation of the E-Parliament project, which will contribute to the liable, efficient and transparent work of the City Assembly of Niš. In accordance with that, the Chairman pointed out that the City Assembly is open to all initiatives and issues, taken both by the media representatives and all the citizens, whose interests are the main guideline in the work of the highest legislative Niš City body, in compliance with all the provisions of the Code of Ethics for the local self-government officials.

You can watch the video here:

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# THE THIRD SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY OF NIŠ

The third session of the Assembly of the City of Niš was held today. The session, which had nine items on the agenda, was held in the Officer's Club due to the respect of epidemiological measures and in compliance with the recommendation of the Emergency Situations Headquarters of the City of Niš.

The financial statement of the city of Niš was adopted at the session, which, as the Chairman of Niš City Assembly, Mr. Boban Džunić, explained in his address to the press, was included as an item on the agenda in accordance with the Article 82 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, given that the deadline for his adoption was the 11th of September, 2020, whereas the Report of the State Audit Institution, which is an integral part of the aforementioned decision, arrived on the 9th of September, 2020.

Regarding the amendment to the Decision on Communal Order, the Chairman Džunić pointed out that the proposed amendment would regulate the working hours of catering facilities in the City of Niš, in compliance with the regulation prescribed by the Serbian Government, during the period of the transmission dynamics of COVID-19.

In addition, decisions related to the appointment of the Chief urbanist of the City of Niš, to the establishment of the Commission for Plans, and to the decision on the establishment of the Emergency Situations Headquarters of the City of Niš, were adopted at this session.

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# MEETING OF THE HEADS OF THE COUNCILOR GROUPS

The Chairman of Niš City Assembly, Mr. Boban Džunić held a meeting with the heads of the Councilor groups in the Assembly of the City of Niš today. The session was attended by Mr. Zvezdan Milovanović, the head of the Councilor group ALEKSANDAR VUČIĆ – FOR OUR CHILDREN, by Prof. dr. Mile Ilić, the head of the Councilor group IVICA DAČIĆ – SOCIALIST PARTY OF SERBIA, UNITED SERBIA – DRAGAN MARKOVIĆ PALMA, by Mr. Dragoslav Ćirković, the head of the Councilor group NIŠ, MY CITY, by Mr. Nikola Marinković, the head of the Councilor group SPAS NIŠ, and by Mr. Slavoljub Savić, the head of the Councilor group UNITED PENSIONERS OF SERBIA-PUPS.

During the discussion on the planned items on the agenda of the 3rd session of the City Assembly of Niš, scheduled for Wednesday, on September 9th, 2020, the Chairman Džunić pointed out his readiness to all proposals that would improve the future work of the Niš City Assembly.

In addition to the good and constructive cooperation with the executive part of the administration, the Chairman Džunić stressed out that the Department for the City Assembly Affairs is available to all Councilor groups in terms of professional assistance and in-work support.

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# **CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR MANDATE AND IMMUNITY ISSUES**

The constitutive session of the Committee for Mandate and Immunity Issues was held in the Assembly of the City of Niš, on the 3rd of September, 2020. The head of this parliamentary working body is MS Rade Rajković, whereas its members are Goran Milosavljević, Mima Živković, Ivan Krstić, Zoran Janković, Dušan Todorović and Uroš Vukanović.

In addition to getting acquainted with the Rules of Procedure, the Committee adopted the draft decision on confirming the mandate of the newly elected councilors of the City Assembly of Niš and submitted it to the City Assembly.

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# **CONSTITUTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES COMMITTEE**

The first sitting of the Administrative Issues Committee was held in Niš City Assembly on Friday, on 28th of August 28, 2020. The Administrative Issues Committee is headed by Nikola Ilić, and the members of the Committee are Miljana Kostić, Marko Ljubenović, Ivana Cvetković, Vuk Popović, Darko Nikolić and Milena Kostadinović.

The Chairman of Niš City Assembly, Mr. Boban Džunić, attended

the introductory part of the sitting of the Committee and on that occasion he wished them a good cooperation and successful work. The Chairman Džunić stressed out that the members of the Committee would have all the necessary professional assistance of the Department for the City Assembly Affairs as well as his own.

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## **European Commission Roma Policy Coordinator Marta Garcia Fidalgo Visits Roma Settlements in Nis**

October 25

Roma Policy Officer in the European Commission, Marta Garcia Fidalgo and Project Manager for Social Inclusion and Minority Rights at the EU Delegation to Serbia, Mirjana Maksimovic paid a half-day visit to Niska Banja City Municipality and the project "Establishing Housing and Financial Autonomy of Roma Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons through Cooperation on the Local Level" funded by the European Union, and implemented by the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence, the Roma League and the City of Niska Banja. During her visit to Niška Banja, the Roma Policy Coordinator and Project Manager got acquainted with the project and the results achieved, but also visited three families from the readmission group. She ended her visit with a visit to the first Roma Cultural Center in the Balkans, which opened in May this year. "There is a lot of work being done to integrate Roma through the documents,

but it is very important to know the situation in the field. My general impression after today is that there are many more problems and needs, but I will leave with the impression that there are people here in the political sphere and in the donor community who are willing to help and that there is real potential in the Roma community," said European Commission Roma Policy Coordinator Marta Garcia Fidalgo. European Commission Roma Policy Coordinator Marta Garcia Fidalgo added that they have been working a lot on the situation of minorities, and especially with regard to the Roma minority. They want Roma integration to become an important part of the political agenda. "In the political sphere, we can make a connection between Roma integration and EU accession because we want those politicians who are not very interested in the Roma issue but are in favor of EU accession to understand that Roma integration is one of the conditions for this", said Fidalgo.

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## **NIS EMPLOYMENT ACTION FOR ROMA**

October 23

The City of Niš, within the framework of the Program "Support to EU Roma Inclusion – Empowering Local Communities for Roma Inclusion", implements the project "Nis Employment Action for Roma – NEAR". Multiple forms of social exclusion of Roma are one of the most important issues for the Republic of Serbia on its path to the EU and sustainable economic development. Roma, women and men, experience severe poverty and social exclusion. Low levels of education and skills, accompanied by discrimination, have led to long-term unemployment for Roma. A

direct obstacle to Roma inclusion in the formal labor market is related to their emancipation in the fields of education, housing and participation in public affairs. In Nis, the Roma unemployment rate is four times higher than the general population average, only 9% of Roma in Nis have a steady income from work, and only 2.5% of Roma women are full-time employed. The greatest responsibility for implementing individual measures within the most relevant strategic framework rests with public authorities at the national level – according to the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma in the Republic of Serbia 2016-2025 and at the local level – Local Action Plan for Improving the Position of Roma in Niš 2017-2019 which foresees employment and self-employment of Roma on the basis of training and retraining for new jobs, gaining additional qualifications and incentives for entrepreneurship, setting up social cooperatives and social enterprises. This approach is based on the Nis City Development Strategy and is supported by the findings of the Roma survey, which there are officially 6,996 according to 2011 census, but this number is estimated to be at least three times higher. The main activities of the project are: providing tailored active employment measures; establishing public/private/civil partnerships and market links; events called “Accelerate Social Inclusion”. The expected results of the project are organized two-month business training and mentoring for 40 selected Roma beneficiaries, as well as employment of 20 Roma among unemployed or entrepreneurs with six months paid internships in local SMEs or with grants to assist in employment, active work on public/private/civil partnership to create more jobs, as well as organizing at least three local social events organized for the Roma population/NGOs and local institutions.

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# Citizens' Satisfaction with Local Self-Governments Increased

October 22

The satisfaction with local self-government authorities, administrative services and civil servants has been increasing continuously, and now almost one in two citizens in Central Serbia feels that local self-governments are taking care of their citizens and providing them with services adequate to their needs. This is demonstrated by the results of the public opinion poll implemented within the Swiss PRO programme, supported by the Swiss Government. The survey was implemented by CeSID, on a representative sample of 11,387 adult citizens in 50 towns and municipalities in the Region of Šumadija and West Serbia and the Region of South and East Serbia. After the 2010 results with only 22 percent of respondents feeling that local authorities were taking care of their citizens, a rising trend has been recorded, with 26 percent in 2013, 37 percent in 2017 and the last survey results show that 45 percent of respondents feel positively about the treatment of citizens by the local self-government. Even though the perception that local self-governments are trying to meet their citizens' needs is enhancing, still one-third of respondents feel that local authorities mostly do not respond to their citizens' needs, and 12 percent feel that they do not respond to them at all. The Presentation of citizens' views was held in Nis at Nis City Hall. A detailed analysis of the results is available on the Swiss PRO website (<https://www.swisspro.org.rs/uploads/files/166-666-citizen-satisfaction-survey.pdf>). On the behalf of the City of Nis, the attendees were greeted by the Assistant Mayor Marina Kostic.

The City of Nis has been doing a great deal in the last few years to improve the quality of life in the local community, especially in terms of increasing the level of services provided by local self-government.

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## **DANCE CARAVAN IN NIS**

October 22

The National Art Dance Foundation and Belgrade Dance Festival, with the support of the Art Mentor Foundation of Lucerne and the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government of the Republic of Serbia, continued this year's Dance Caravan project. This time, the program covered 10 cities in Serbia and Nis was one of them. On the big stage of the Army House, ballet worshippers could enjoy a ballet gala concert with popular variations of the classical repertoire performed by young dancers, students of Serbian and Italian ballet schools and champions of the Belgrade National Theater Ballet, Ana Pavlovic and Jovan Veselinovic. The Deputy Mayor of Niš Milos Bandur, as well as a large number of art lovers and the students of Nis schools attended the gala concert.