

The Analysis of Economic Platforms of Political Parties in BiH

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of acronyms.....	3
Introduction	4
1. Economic criteria for membership in the European Union	5
2. The analysis of parties and recommendations	6
2.1. Party of Democratic Action.....	6
2.2. Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina	8
2.3. Croatian Democratic Union 1990	10
2.4. Croatian Democratic Union of BiH	12
2.5. Social Democratic Party of BiH	15
2.6. Party of Democratic Progress.....	17
2.7. Union of Independent Social Democrats	19
2.8. Serbian Democratic Party.....	22
3. Conclusion.....	24
Sources utilized.....	25

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	CIK
EUROPEAN MONETARY UNION	EMU
EUROPEAN UNION	EU
KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION	KAS
CROATIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION OF BIH	HDZ BiH
CROATIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION 1990	HDZ 1990
PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS	PDP
UNION OF INDEPENDENT SOCIAL DEMOCRATS	SNSD
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF BIH	SDP BiH
SERBIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY	SDS
PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC ACTION	SDA
PARTY FOR BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	SBIH

INTRODUCTION

This work conducts an analysis of economic platforms of political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina and brings them in correlation with the elections conducted in October of the year 2006. The analysis covers the more significant political parties that exist on the political scene of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These are, above all, the following political parties: Party of Democratic Action (SDA), Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina (SBIH), Social Democratic Party of BiH (SDP BiH), Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), Party of Democratic Progress (PDP), Croatian Democratic Union of BiH (HDZ BiH), and Croatian Democratic Union 1990 (HDZ 1990). Although we do not wish to reduce the significance of any political party in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we have decided to cover these parties because they jointly form a majority on all the levels of government, thus directly affecting the tempo of Bosnia and Herzegovina's accession to the European Union.

According to the data of the Central Election Commission, a total of 47 political parties applied for the elections held in October of 2006. At first glance, the number of political parties in comparison to the size of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina is high, but compared to the number of political subjects in our neighboring countries, it is not quite so high (graph 1). For example, there are 103 political parties registered in Croatia, and 342 political parties registered in Serbia. The majority of parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina exist over ten years, while a smaller number of them have been established in the last three years. This illustrates that the structure of political subjects on the political scene of BiH is already well-defined and that more significant oscillations in terms of the number of parties are not to be expected in the coming period.

50
100
150
200
250
300
350
BiH
Croatia
Serbia
**THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN BiH
AND THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES**
The number of political
parties

Graph 1

The analysis of economic policies of the selected political parties will be presented in three parts, according to the importance of the approach and comprehensibility of the analysis. In the first part, we will analyze the parties' economic policy and provide a response to the following questions:

- 2 Is the economic policy a main or significant segment of the party's political program?
- 3 Are all the areas of economic policy covered by the program?
- 4 Which focus have the parties taken within the economic policies?
- 5 Is the social approach to the market an integral part of the program?

In the second part of the analysis we will observe the relation of the parties' economic program in terms of the requests of the European Union, where we will provide a response to the following questions:

- 1 Are the requests of Acquis Communautaire recognized?
- 2 Are the economic policies adequately developed in order to ensure a proactive course of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the European Union?
- 3 Are the best practices of economic policy recognized and introduced in the region?
- 4 Has the transfer of knowledge between countries within the region, and, in parallel, with the institutions and states of the European Union, been initiated?

In the third part, we will be giving an overview of the main conclusions and recommendations

resulting from the overall analysis.

1. ECONOMIC CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

At the very beginning, it is important to underline that the European Commission requires that the countries candidates for membership in the European Union meet certain conditions in the area of economy. With an analysis of the legal heritage of the European Union, we have not arrived at the data that the political parties are directly obligated in some way by the European Union in this segment, but there is exclusive discourse about the obligations of the states, which we will be discussing as we continue.

The existence of a functional market economy and the existence of capacities allowing the economy to successfully deal with the pressures of competition and market forces in the European Union, as well as a complete adoption of *Acquis Communautaire*, present economic criteria for membership in the European Union that have been adopted in Copenhagen, and are, therefore, also often called the Copenhagen criteria. Integration into the European Union presents a strategic goal for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The very integration into the European Union mostly depends on the degree of fulfillment of economic criteria for membership. Therefore, an analysis of economic criteria for membership in the European Union on the example of BiH and their fulfillment among various subjects certainly presents an extremely significant topic for this country. Of the above mentioned subjects, political parties, without a doubt, take a special place due to the burden that lies on them as instances that create the government and pass laws and decisions on this and other inter-sector segments, which directly and indirectly affects the tempo of approaching the EU.

What may be said for economic criteria for membership is that these criteria are established in such a fashion that they can only be beneficial for the country, particularly in the long run. The essence of the entire process and conditions that need to be met by the individual countries on their path towards the EU is the accomplishment of real convergence, or the drawing closer of the amount of income per inhabitant and living standard of the observed country to the average of less developed EU member countries. Real convergence may only be realized with a long-term sustainable and stable growth under conditions of macroeconomic stability, which, in both cases, presents a benefit for the national economy. On the other hand, the inability to fulfill economic conditions for membership in the EU not only presents a passed up opportunity of the country on the path towards the EU, but is also a sign of poor results in the economic environment from the perspective of a national economy.

The countries that become members of the European Union are also obligated to fulfill the other set of economic criteria, which is necessary for accession to the European Monetary Union. This set of economic criteria is defined by the Maastricht Treaty, with an important note that it relates to all the new members, including the ten new countries from the last enlargement. This has been established in such a way as to avoid the possibility of not accessing the EMU, which has happened in the case of Denmark, Sweden, and Great Britain. Unlike the Copenhagen criteria, the criteria adopted in Maastricht are more clearly defined and more precisely determined. The meeting of economic criteria for membership in the EU and the EMU certainly presents a good, but not an absolutely sufficient condition for economic growth and development over a longer time period. However, the selection of priorities and engagements is the responsibility of every country, although it is perfectly clear that a sustainable economic growth and development is compatible with the economic criteria for membership.

2. THE ANALYSIS OF PARTIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. THE PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC ACTION

The Party of Democratic Action (SDA) adopted its new and innovated electoral platform just before the elections in 2006. It is divided into 16 sections, and the second section refers to economic growth in the time period between the year 2006 and 2010. This is the only Program, out of all the political parties, that contains very precise and well-determined quantitative figures within its goals, and based on that, we may say that the Program is also of a good quality. Although it may be observed that the goals are approximately 10% higher than the present state of the economy, they can still be described as realistic and motivating?

The following goals of economic development have been stated:

- 1 *GDP*
- 2 *production*
- 3 *employment*
- 4 *trade balance*
- 5 *foreign direct investments*
- 6 *budgetary investments*
- 7 *measures of economic and budget policy*

Unlike all the other Programs, this one also contains concrete proposals for the means of accomplishment of the set goals, as well as the cause-and-effect connection of the goals, which indicates that the Program has been prepared well.

PART I

2 Is the economic policy a main or important segment of the party's political Program?

Economic policy in the party's Program takes a central place and is the most elaborated part of the Program. Even in the other chapters, certain economic issues related to accession to the EU are further elaborated and commitment for this direction is expressed.

4 Are all the areas of economic policy covered by the Program?

From the overview of the covered goals, we may conclude that the Program is complete, but, at the same time, well selected in terms of the areas, seeing that the stated areas are most needed for improvement and reform. Perhaps the reform of the overall insurance sector is only explicitly omitted, but it may be implied in the part regarding the social state.

5 Which focus have the parties taken within the economic policies?

The focus in the Program is on the accession to EU and the goals are established so as to lead towards the fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria. The Program also underlines the consolidation of the economy and structural reforms that may lead to a real improvement in the economic situation in the country.

6 Is the social approach to the market an integral part of the Program?

One separate part of the Program is dedicated to the social state with a proposal for concrete activities and measures that are planned to be undertaken in this area in order for BiH to be a social state. Although we could state that the list of measures could be more extensive and amended, the conclusion is that it still is quite comprehensive.

PART II

1 Are the requests of Acquis Communautaire recognized?

The program does not explicitly recognize the requests of the Acquis Communautaire, but the stated goals meet the majority of requests expected by the Acquis Communautaire. The planned deficit rate or the level of internal and foreign debt, as important elements for accession to the EU, is not explicitly stated.

2 Are the economic policies adequately developed in order to ensure a proactive course of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the European Union?

Economic policies are fully developed and ensure a proactive course towards the EU. In this context, there should be a more detailed elaboration of economic policies conducted in order to cover all necessary segments required by the EU.

3 Are the best practices of economic policy from the region recognized and followed?

We may say that the best practice from the region is recognized to a good extent. Proposals for the establishment of cartels and associations of enterprises and the ensuring of a faster growth and export of companies are missing. Also, the reform of chambers of commerce and associations, as an unavoidable element in the promotion of growth and export, is not precisely defined. As far as other experiences in microeconomic and macroeconomic issues are concerned, we have determined that they are, to a greatest extent, recognized and applied.

4 Has the transfer of knowledge between countries within the region, and, in parallel, with the institutions and states of the European Union, been initiated?

This segment has been recognized to some extent, but has not been given as a priority in the Program. There is a part dealing with regional cooperation, but it relates more to the political aspect and less to the transfer of knowledge, which could be explained by the complicated structure of the state.

On the basis of all of the above mentioned, we may conclude that the Program is written very well and quite comprehensively, with a focus on all the more significant economic issues. The platform of the Program is based on the association to EU, with a strong expression of intentions for reforms in all the necessary segments of the economy and the society. Only this Program expresses an undoubting intention to fulfill all the conditions from Copenhagen. The goals of this Program may be assessed as well formulated, motivating, realistic, and mutually complementary.

A recommendation to the authors of this Program would be to conduct an amendment to the

goals in terms of the reform of the insurance system as an important segment for the development of the economy, as well as to dedicate more attention to the state institutions that assist with the growth of enterprises, primarily chambers of commerce and agencies. It would be useful if more attention were to be paid to the establishment of a greater number of state institutions on the state level, thus enabling a more rapid path towards the EU.

2.2. PARTY FOR BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The economic platform of the Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina (SBIH) has been adopted immediately before the elections held in August of 2006. This is a very extensive material of almost 40 pages, and this is the most complete economic platform of all the political parties. It consists of 14 chapters which are given in the text to follow.

- *The Economy of BiH – Ten Years of Implementation of the Dayton Peace Accord*
- *Economically and socially developed BiH in the European Union – Program Orientation of the Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina*
- *Uniform Economic Space in Bosnia and Herzegovina*
- *Employment and Better Quality of Life – the Priority of SBIH*
- *Macroeconomic Stability – Important for Economic Growth*
- *Structural Reforms Necessary for the Construction of an Efficient Market Economy and the Increase in Economic Welfare*
- *Privatization – the Key for the (Lack of) Success of Economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina*
- *A Modern BiH Society with European Values, Goals, and Principles*
- *The Regionalization of BiH on Universal Economic Principles*
- *The Economic Macro-Region of Sarajevo*
- *The Economic Region of Central BiH*
- *The Economic Region of Northeastern BiH*
- *The Economic Region of Northwestern BiH*
- *The Economic Region of Herzegovina*

PART I

8 Is the economic policy a main or important segment of the party's political Program?

Economic policy (party platform) is separated into a distinct document and it, in a comprehensive and very serious fashion, gives an overview of the goals of economy of BiH.

10 Are all the areas of economic policy covered by the Program?

All areas of economic policy are adequately covered.

11 Which focus have the parties taken within economic policies?

The focus in the Program is on the association to EU and the goals are established in terms of priority as to lead towards the fulfillment of Copenhagen criteria in all segments.

12 Is the social approach to the market an integral part of the Program?

Economically and socially developed BiH in the European Union presents the program orientation of SBIH. A necessary level of social element is given in the party program.

PART II

5 Are the requests of Acquis Communautaire recognized?

The Program explicitly recognizes the requests of Acquis Communautaire and means are stated on how these requests would be fulfilled. The complete subject-matter is adequately analyzed and covered.

6 Are the economic policies adequately developed in order to ensure a proactive course of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the European Union?

Economic policies are completely developed and ensure a proactive course towards the EU.

7 Are the best practices of economic policy from the region recognized and followed?

We may say that, to a greatest extent, the best practices from the region and the developed countries are recognized. All necessary elements for the raising of the competitiveness of economy and economic arrangement are proposed as models for regulating economic flows in BiH.

8 Has the transfer of knowledge between the states within the region and, in parallel, with the institutions and countries of the European Union been initiated?

This area is recognized to a great extent, but has not been given as a priority in the Program. There is a part that deals with regional cooperation, but it relates more to economic complementarization of the region and its unification into a strong economic unit based on adequately associated regions.

On the basis of all of the above mentioned, we may conclude that the Program has been prepared on a quality basis, with a particular focus on all the significant economic issues. The Program platform is based on the association to EU, with a strong expression of intention for reform in all the necessary segments of the economy and society. This Program expresses an undisputed intent for the fulfillment of all conditions from the Acquis. The goals of this Program may be assessed as well formulated, realistic, and mutually harmonized.

A recommendation to the authors of this Program would be to conduct a better quantification of goals for a certain time period, of let us say 4 years. The goals are formulated more descriptively, which is something that should certainly also be supplemented with quantitative indicators in order to enable the monitoring of progress in their implementation. On the basis of this program, one is not able to do so for all of its parts. All the remaining parts of the Program have been presented extremely well.

2.3. CROATIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION 1990

The Croatian Democratic Union 1990 has been formed in the spring of 2006, and the party's Program declaration had been adopted on the 8th of April of this year. The declaration consists of 7 pages of written text, with a total of six sub-sections. Economy, as one of these sections, is presented very briefly, consisting of one page only. The main guidelines of the declaration are as follows:

- 1 *dedication to a socially just and market-oriented economy*
- 2 *uniform and accelerated economic development of the entire BiH*
- 3 *ecologically sustainable development of the state*
- 4 *uniform and rational utilization of economic resources*
- 5 *macroeconomic stability, as well as the ensuring of growth of export and import*
- 6 *the reduction of the payments and trade deficit of the state*
- 7 *the development of better conditions for the attracting of investments - above all foreign investments*
- 8 *the decrease of the share of public expenditure in GDP*
- 9 *the need for reform of the social sector*
- 10 *the tax and financial disencumbrance of entrepreneurship*
- 11 *greater subsidies for agriculturalists*
- 12 *a stronger development of the banking sector in the segment of support for private enterprises*
- 13 *a more accelerated completion of the process of privatization that must be in the function of development of economy and increase of the overall welfare of the population*
- 14 *the providing of good conditions for strategic partners' investments*
- 15 *the development of pre-conditions for a better development of tourism and the supporting infrastructure*
- 16 *the return of nationalized property and old foreign exchange savings*
- 17 *the development of a national strategy for economic development and elaboration all the way to the municipal level*

A special importance has been given to the sector of energy, telecommunications, roads and railways, the development of metal and processing industry, as well as the final production of food and goods for export. Advantage in terms of stimulation is given to the development of large economic systems and the forming of clusters, and, as a consequence of this development, there will be a phenomenon of new small enterprises.

Also, there are plans for the establishment of entrepreneurial zones and centers, the establishment of credit guarantee and development stimulation funds. On the basis of the previous overview, we may draw certain conclusions regarding the economic Program of HDZ 1990, and we will be presenting it in three sections, according to the above mentioned order given in the introductory text.

PART I

14 Is the economic policy a main or important segment of the party's political Program?

Economic policy takes an important place in the party's Program, but not the main one. We consider that a much greater significance should be given to economic issues both in terms of detail, as well as in terms of the comprehensiveness of the observations. This particularly relates to the policy of association to EU, but also to the presentation of many other goals that are concretely linked to the raising of the level of development of the sector of economy. Although there does exist a good basis for the development of adequate policy in elements that are presented in the Program, there should, nevertheless, be a much more detailed approach.

16 Are all the areas of economic policy covered by the Program?

The program covered a great number of relevant economic areas, but not all. Some microeconomic and macroeconomic issues are not covered, but only isolated sections are briefly presented. Therefore, we may say that the Program lacks the comprehensiveness of an economic perspective. Here, we would particularly emphasize the segment of development and reform of the insurance sector that falls under the least regulated sector, as well as the problem of youth employment, the reform of foreign trade and chambers of commerce, the analysis of foreign trade and the export sector, etc.

17 Which focus have the parties taken within the economic policies?

The focus in the Program is on the development of BiH economy and the resolving of certain issues that may improve the economic situation in the country. In our opinion, the Program has a good focus that indicates the need to pay special attention to the improvement of economic activities, as well as to ensure a more favorable ambiance for the operation of enterprises. The program did not provide a detailed reflection of the role of EU and the mean in which to utilize the assistance of its institutions in the assimilation of the entire economy to the criteria required by the EU.

18 Is the social approach to the market an integral part of the Program?

The Program has a certain social market-oriented aspect, which draws it closer to the state of affairs as it is in the European Union. *"The goal of the Program is a socially just and market oriented economy, which also implies certain policies with which this approach would be implemented."*

PART II

9 Are the requests of Acquis Communautaire recognized?

The requests of Acquis Communautaire are not explicitly recognized in the Program; therefore special attention has not been paid to them.

10 Are the economic policies adequately developed in order to ensure a proactive course of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the European Union?

Economic policies are not completely developed, but essentially ensure a proactive course towards the EU. There should be a more detailed elaboration of economic policies conducted in this area in order to cover all necessary segments required by the EU.

11 Are the best practices of economic policy from the region recognized and followed?

We may say that, to a certain extent, the practice from the region is recognized, but it is not applied in all segments. This is planned, for example, in the establishment of entrepreneurial zones and centers, the establishment of credit guarantee and development stimulation funds, which certainly present a practice of the states in the region. Also, it has been planned with the development of clusters and large companies, which is quite similar to the practice in Slovenia

that kept under domestic ownership the majority of large companies that dominate the BiH market today, but are also significantly present in the neighboring countries as well.

12 Has the transfer of knowledge between countries within the region, and, in parallel, with the institutions and states of the European Union, been initiated?

A special overview and analysis has not been given in this area, so we may state that the process of transfer of knowledge within the region, as well as beyond, is not evident.

On the basis of all of the above mentioned, we may conclude that the Program is quite superficial. It almost does not deal at all with the issues of association to the European Union or the economic criteria that are set for association. On the other hand, it covers the majority of problems encountered by the BiH economy, but does not provide concrete proposals and solutions for these problems. The goals of this Program may be assessed as general and universal.

A recommendation to the authors of this Program would be to dedicate much more attention to the completion of economic issues, particularly those related to the EU requirements and to propose concrete means of accomplishing the presented goals.

2.4. CROATIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION OF BIH

The Program of the Croatian democratic Union consists of 10 pages, out of which slightly more than a page has been dedicated to economic and social policy. The Program states a great number of goals that cover the majority of segments of economic flows. HDZ BiH bases its own economic policy, which final aim is reaching the degree of economic development in the countries of the European Union, on the following principles:

- 1 the development of a social and market economy based on balanced interests and partnership of workers, entrepreneurs, and the state*
- 2 the ensuring of a secure economic growth and development feasible exclusively due to technological reconstruction, new employment, and the increase of production and export*
- 3 investment into science, education, and new technologies, as well as stimulation of real investments founded on domestic and foreign capital*
- 4 the ensuring of a stable legal and political framework that will be motivating for new investments and new employment in a dynamic social market economy*
- 5 the establishment of a system of education that will train young people for all types of entrepreneurship*
- 6 the providing of a system of stable supply of energy/power sources, the construction of necessary transport infrastructure, the signing of international contracts that will be stimulating for the export of products from Bosnia and Herzegovina to foreign markets*
- 7 the providing of a macroeconomic stability*

- 8 *the establishment of an overall economic policy that must be directed towards an equal and uniform development of all parts of the land*
- 9 *an important factor of economic stability is also a stable banking system in which there must be no monopolistic influences, particularly on the part of foreign bank owners, that is, a banking system that will enable the citizens' savings to serve the development of the economy*
- 10 *an urgent establishment of an effective system of control and restriction of incurring foreign debt, particularly in terms of taking out loans for current spending*
- 11 *with its knowledge, experience, and capital, the Diaspora of Bosnia and Herzegovina may and should be a strong factor in the renewal and development of the economy*
- 12 *artisanship, dynamic and adjustable small and mid-sized entrepreneurship, in a changing economic environment may and must be the main bearer of economic progress*
- 13 *tourism, linked to the service sector and agriculture is one of the most promising branches of the economy*
- 14 *in the process of privatization of the energy sector, due to the overall economic security and stability, the state, must retain control shares*
- 15 *the principle of competitiveness must be a dominant form of relations on the market, and the principle of regulation must be implemented only when this is necessary for the general economic stability*
- 16 *a purposeful development of agriculture and a general improvement of the village and the farmers, with a constant care and support of the state, are a guarantee of a political and social stability, as well as an overall reconstruction of the society of Bosnia and Herzegovina*
- 17 *the construction of a network of modern highways, fast roads, the modernization and reconstruction of the existing road capacities, as well as the modernization and development of rail and air traffic, is one of the fundamental preconditions for the general development of the economy and one of the top priorities of the Croatian Democratic Union of BiH*
- 18 *with their final products, the food, pharmaceutical, wood, and metal industry must conquer more space on the European and the world market*
- 19 *construction falls under the most significant branches of economy in general and presents an important factor in the social life of the country, above all in the sector of housing construction*
- 20 *the reduction of bureaucratic red tape for the issuing of construction permits and other official certificates, the awarding of locations for the construction of housing buildings, and a notable acceleration of procedures, with the facilitation of business operations in this important economic area*
- 21 *an accelerated regulation of the situation in the land registry system, which implies new cadastral surveys and a new land registry and cadastral system transferred to an information system, with a necessary training of the personnel, geodetic experts, lawyers, and citizens*

Also, HDZ BiH is committed to the stability of the national currency, the independence of the Central Bank, and legal safety. The establishment of a just and socially bearable tax system that will enhance new investments. The Program also states the need for the public sector's expenditure to be balanced with the realistic capacities of the economy.

The reduction of unemployment and the opening of work places is one of the most significant priorities of the Program of HDZ BiH. Social justice, which enables the solidarity of generations and social partnership, also presents an important part of the Program.

From all of the above mentioned, it is evident that the economic part of the Program of HDZ BiH has a very broad platform, but it is also noticeable that no concrete steps have been stated for its realization. In the continuation of the text, an overview of certain characteristics of the Program will be given according to the same methodology as had been used for the other parties.

PART I

20 Is the economic policy a main or important segment of the party's political Program?

Economic policy takes a very important place in the party's Program and may be considered in some way the main focus because it is most extensively represented.

22 Are all the areas of economic policy covered by the Program?

The Program covered the majority of relevant economic areas and it may be said that it is comprehensive. The issues of integration into the EU are slightly less extensively covered, probably because the burning problems in BiH are the problems of unemployment and low living standards of its citizens.

1 Which focus have the parties taken within the economic policies?

Similarly to HDZ 1990, the focus of the Program has been placed on the development of BiH economy and the resolving of burning issues in the economy, the solution of which may improve the economic situation in the country. In our opinion, the Program has a good focus that illustrates a need for the most significant attention to be paid to the establishment of an economic environment, and to ensure the most appropriate ambience for a successful operation of enterprises.

2 Is the social approach to the market an integral part of the Program?

The Program has an emphasized social market-oriented perspective, which draws it closer to the situation in the European Union. The goal of the Program is a socially just and market-oriented economy that also implies certain policies with which this approach would be implemented. A social approach presents an inseparable part of this Program.

PART 2

1 Are the requests of Acquis Communautaire recognized?

The Program does not give an explicit recognition of the requests of the Acquis Communautaire, and, therefore, they have not been given due attention. As it may be observed from the above given overview of the Program, the EU requirements, in terms of the structure and characteristics of the economy, are not explicitly mentioned.

2 Are the economic policies adequately developed in order to ensure a proactive course of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the European Union?

Economic policies have not been fully developed, but, in essence, they do provide a proactive course towards the EU. It is necessary to determine many other details in regards to the formulation of policies, as well as to give a proposal for measures for their implementation. Important issues related to the domestic economy are, in this context, only outlined.

3 Are the best practices of economic policy from the region recognized and followed?

In some parts the practices are recognized, and in others they are not. Just as every country attempts to develop the best and most stable economic environment possible within the framework of the state, the focus here is also placed on those practices that concern the increase of competitiveness of domestic enterprises and the establishment of a more stable economic environment. However, the concrete policies do not state the modes of possible optimal implementation of the said practices. The Program proposes for the economy to be built on small and medium enterprises with dynamic and flexible business operations.

4 Has the transfer of knowledge between countries within the region, and, in parallel, with the institutions and states of the European Union, been initiated?

In this field, no specific overview or analysis has been given; therefore, we can only state that the process of transfer of knowledge within the region and beyond is not evident.

Based on all of the above mentioned, we may conclude that the Program had been written very briefly and in form of an outline, which does not provide sufficient grounds for a thorough elaboration according to sectors. One is under the impression that the Program presents more of a “wish list” of those who prepared it, rather than a real foundation for a systematic approach to the implementation of the said according to the economic sectors. Almost identical to the Program of HDZ 1990, this Program also almost completely fails to deal with the issues of accession to the European Union, or the economic criteria required for accession. On the other hand, it covers the majority of the problems faced by the BIH economy, but does not provide concrete proposals and solutions to those problems. Goals of this Program may also be assessed as general and universal.

A recommendation to the authors of this Program would be to more deeply dedicate themselves to developing modes for the resolving of essential issues of BIH economy. This particularly relates to the requirements of the EU in terms of accession and proposal of concrete activities, which should also be given with time-frames.

2.5. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY of BIH

The Program of the Social Democratic Party of BiH (SDP BiH) had been adopted towards the

end of the year 2003, following the request from the Extraordinary Congress of the Party. It is a very detailed and extensive Program, written on over 30 pages and containing 10 sections. One of those sections is titled: Bosnia and Herzegovina – the Land of Development and Prosperity. The issues of economy and integration of BIH in the EU are occasionally touched upon in other parts of the Program as well. The part related to economic goals takes up approximately 6 pages of the text. This is one of the most extensive and detailed Programs. This part contains ten sub-sections in which the Party's orientation is specifically elaborated upon according to the most significant segments of the economy. These are the following segments:

- 1 *open market economy*
- 2 *development strategy*
- 3 *reforms of the economic system*
- 4 *fiscal system*
- 5 *banking system*
- 6 *financial and accounting system*
- 7 *privatization*
- 8 *employment policy*
- 9 *village and agriculture*
- 10 *ecology-a factor of sustainable development*

Based on the given overview, we could conclude that the segment of integration of BIH in the EU had been avoided, but that is not the case. Integration is mentioned in many parts of the Program, and the entire Program is developed following the assumption of adjusting to the systems existing in the EU countries. Therefore, we must state that the Program has a very proactive relation towards the accession to the EU, and that each one of its parts starts with the request for accession and membership.

PART I

3 Is the economic policy a main or important segment of the party's political Program?

Economic policy holds a dominant place in the party's Program, and a very extensive overview of the economic policy in all important segments has been given.

4 Are all the areas of economic policy covered by the Program?

We may freely state that the Program included all areas of economic policy and grouped them into logical sections. Unlike the majority of Programs of other parties, a strong emphasis had been placed on the need to align the BIH economy with the economic systems in the EU member states. We may conclude that the Program covers all areas of economic politics.

5 Which focus have the parties taken within the economic policies?

The focus in the program is on the accession to the EU and the need for BIH economy to be made more open towards all relevant international bodies and companies in order to accomplish a more accelerated development of the domestic economy. Priority has been given to small and medium local companies that may lead, in the most rapid fashion, to the growth of employment of citizens, while the strategic companies would have an open access to the market in almost all

segments of the economy. Also, a harmonized development of economy has been planned without leaving the possibility for some of its parts to become bottlenecks in the overall process of development. We may say that the focus is well balanced and very prone to European integrations.

6 Is the social approach to the market an integral part of the Program?

The Program has a much emphasized social approach to the market, which is also highlighted in the very name of the party. Considering that it bases the fundamentals of its Program on social democracy, represented in the majority of Western European countries, we may conclude that the party's social program is very close to the optimal one and the one present on the scene across Europe.

PART II

5 Are the requests of Acquis Communautaire recognized?

The Program does not explicitly state the requirements of the Acquis Communautaire, but reading the text of the Program, one can sense that the development of the Program itself largely took into account these requirements. If we were to observe each section within the economic part of the Program, we could conclude that the criteria a potential member state must fulfill to become a full member of the Union have not been presented in sufficient detail and in a satisfactorily quantitative manner. This is specifically related to macroeconomic criteria, where, in our opinion, certain quantitative indicators should have been given to provide a better insight into the possibility of the party to fulfill them during the period of the next four-year mandate. For example, this relates to the GDP growth rate, the payments deficit and trade balance, inflation rate, etc.

6 Are the economic policies adequately developed in order to ensure a proactive course of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the European Union?

Economic policies are quite developed and we may say that they provide a proactive course towards the EU. As in the previous cases, it is necessary to give a proposal of measures and the time framework for their implementation. A detailed overview of needed activities is quite a good fundament for qualitative updating of the Program and its full completion.

7 Are the best practices of economic policy from the region recognized and followed?

In majority of cases, the best practices from the surroundings have been recognized and there is insisting on their implementation in BiH as well. The Program is particularly close to the practice used by Slovenia in the EU accession process. When it comes to the social market policy, we may state that proposals, in terms of their quality, are even above the requirements of the surrounding states.

8 Has the transfer of knowledge between countries within the region, and, in parallel, with the institutions and states of the European Union, been initiated?

This Program insists on a transfer of knowledge between the countries through a support to investments from the surroundings, but also through membership in as many as possible European and international institutions. We will quote only one part of the Program, which

confirms this statement. *“Openness towards the world market of goods, services, money, capital, knowledge, and information presents the main condition for a faster reconstruction and an effective development of the domestic economy.”*

Based on all of the above mentioned, we may state that the Program has been written in great detail and thoughtfully, including all important parts necessary for a complete reform of the economic system. It also includes macroeconomic and microeconomic sections, with a constant direction towards the European principles. The goals of the party may be assessed as very thorough, with recognition of the real causes for the slow development of BiH.

A recommendation to the authors of this Program would be to provide more information in regards to the quantitative requirements for EU accession and to give time frames and chronological schedules for the implementation of certain activities.



2.6. PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS

The Program of the Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) had been developed at the beginning of 2000. According to our information, it has not been changed since. It consists of 16 parts and it has been written on almost 40 pages. The economic part of the Program had been written on six pages and it includes the following parts:

- 1 *market economy*
- 2 *industry*
- 3 *electric-power industry*
- 4 *telecommunications*
- 5 *agriculture and village*
- 6 *tourism*

The given overview shows that the focus is placed only on certain economic problems which, truth be told, hold a significant place in the society. The characteristic of this Program is that the economic goals have been given only in descriptive and general terms. The quantification of those is almost nonexistent. Although the processes of regionalization and EU accession are supported, it is evident that the focus is still placed on the raising of the local economy in those sectors where competitive advantages, in comparison to the surrounding countries, could exist.

PART I

7 Is the economic policy a main or important segment of the party's political Program?

Economic policy does not hold a dominant position in the party's Program. All parts of the Program have quite an equal importance, while the issues related to political circumstances are slightly more dominant.

8 Are all the areas of economic policy covered by the Program?

The Program had not covered all areas of economic policy, but only six of its parts. Several other economic areas have been briefly mentioned without detailed overviews (European integrations and foreign direct investments, fiscal policy, and export and import policy). The six

examined economic have been only briefly presented with a definition of several main goals related to the improvement of economic ambience in BiH. Considering that the Program has not been changed for over 6 years, it would be good to amend it with several economic sectors, such as forestry, infrastructure, institutions supporting the economy, etc.

9 Which focus have the parties taken within economic policies?

The focus in the Program is placed on the establishment of more order in the privatization processes, the development of electric-power sector, industry, tourism, and telecommunications, as well as the improvement of work in the sector of agriculture. Priorities have been developed in very general terms, and priority activities and their time frames may not be easily observed.

Is the social approach to the market an integral part of the Program?

The Program contains a social approach to the market and, apart from the political part, it takes up the greatest portion of the Program's structure. Particular attention had been paid to the health care of citizens, pension and health insurance, the issues of refugees and displaced persons, as well as social problems of pensioners and employed persons.

PART II

9 Are the requests of Acquis Communautaire recognized?

The requirements of the Acquis Communautaire are not stated anywhere in the Program, nor is it possible to sense from the Program's text that these requirements have been taken into account in the development of any part of the Program. EU Accession had been presented as a long-term goal of the party, but without concrete evidence of what is needed to accelerate and successfully complete that process.

10 Are the economic policies adequately developed in order to ensure a proactive course of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the European Union?

Economic policies are not developed in this regard. The focus is mainly placed on the raising of the living standard of citizens, the solving of great social problems of refugees and pensioners, as well as the revitalization of small and medium enterprises. We may state that the Program has a certain course towards the EU, but that this is not its priority.

11 Are the best practices of economic policy from the region recognized and followed?

They are not recognized as individually listed, but are mentioned in several places as an important fundament for the reform of economic policy. It may be concluded that the Program had been designed based on the recognition of the need to utilize all good experiences of the neighboring countries for the structural reform of the economy.

12 Has the transfer of knowledge between the states within the region and, in parallel, with the institutions and countries of the European Union been initiated?

The Program recognized the importance of the need for transfer of knowledge between the countries in the region and other European countries, especially in the segment of education. There is an emphasis on the need for involvement in relevant international institutions, which

may assist in the successful transfer of all types of knowledge, with a repeated focus on education.

Based on all of the above mentioned, we may conclude that the Program had been written in great length. It focuses on certain segments of the economy, which may have comparative advantages in relation to the countries from the surroundings, and which are of priority importance for the solution of accumulated problems. The Program has a certain direction towards European integrations and it observes the process as a long-term goal of transition.

A recommendation to the authors of this Program would be to make a more detailed overview with inclusion of all significant segments in it, such as the macroeconomic part, and to extend the part related to EU accession. Also, it is necessary to give much more quantitative information on economic goals, with time frames and chronological schedule for the implementation of individual actions. The Program should be updated because it has been written more than six years ago.

2.7. UNION OF INDEPENDENT SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

The Program of the Union of Independent Social Democrats had been adopted in April of 2002. It contains only a few pages and in 42 points, in a very bleak fashion, provides an overview of all Program objectives. The Program deals with economic policy and development of the economy in seven points in total. Due to their briefness, we are stating them below in their original order.

- 1 *We are committed to a market-oriented nature of the economy. We will support privatization that will lead to an increased competitiveness and economic efficiency of the economy in the function of developing greater domestic product. A system of protection of labor rights and social security should function in parallel with privatization. The regulations regarding privatization must be clear and enable each citizen to exercise his/her rights, to have an equal treatment and the possibility to be an active participant. Privatization of significant enterprises must be in the function of introduction of new technologies, better organization, and benefits for the state. A fast and efficient privatization of state capital in enterprises and banks must take inefficient and non-transparent capital management away from the State and the state authorities.*
- 2 *We will be committed to transforming the right to work into the right to employment and we will use economic measures to stimulate greatest employment possible. Young generation has the right to have existential conditions provided for them in order to recognize their future in this area. The education of highly qualified personnel through practice in European and world institutions will create future leaders in state administration and economy.*
- 3 *We will found the developmental economic policy on priorities that are objectively our comparative advantage. Abetment will be given for the development of small and medium enterprises, primarily in those branches that may produce quality and competitive goods for the world market.*
- 4 *Agriculture is one of the most important priorities in developmental economic politics. Therefore, we will actively involve ourselves in the defining and adopting of incentives – legal, organizational and others- for the revival of villages and rural households. We will*

work on the improvement of conditions for agricultural and other activities dependant on the development of agriculture. We will propose such an agricultural policy so as to allow the village to become attractive for the young people as well. In this manner, we would stop the process of degradation of the agricultural sector and would develop conditions to achieve transformation – from villages with elderly population into vital and strong villages.

- 5 Power/energy industry, forestry, some industrial branches, exploitation of mining wealth and tourist potentials must be placed among the priorities of economic growth and comparative advantages. Undisputed and fully underutilized advantage is the educational and work capacity of the population, mainly the youth, through stimulation of creative, productive and intellectual, modern activities.*
- 6 The country, devastated by war and economic crisis, needs a new development cycle in which a significant place should be given to incentives for housing construction and reconstruction of infrastructure. Refugees, displaced persons, and domestic population have been existentially jeopardized in terms of the housing space, which requires an overall, stimulating Program of the entities, which would, through credit lines, taxation and communal measures, and other acts of support, abet the solution of this burning problem.*
- 7 An efficient control of labor and the acquiring of wealth should provide an equal treatment of all forms of property. The existing fiscal system, which is non-transparent, inefficient, discriminative and non-stimulating, must be fundamentally reformed, made stable and stimulating for taxpayers, while an overall inclusion of all taxpayers will provide sufficient funds for the budget, as well as enable the survival and development of entrepreneurship. In the designing of the new system, we will exclusively use the experiences of European Union countries, industrially developed countries, and countries in transition.*

Although the given overview is very brief, we will attempt to provide answers to questions we used in the analysis so far.

PART I

11 Is the economic policy a main or important segment of the party's political Program?

Economic policy in the party's Program does not hold a dominant place. All parts of the Program hold very similar importance, although the issues regarding political circumstances are slightly more dominant.

12 Are all the areas of economic policy covered by the Program?

The Program had not included all areas of economic policy, but the majority of them have been mentioned without detailed overview. Certain economic branches have mostly been only listed and followed by brief comments. The absence of macroeconomic topics, seeing that only employment and development have been mentioned, is evident. All other elements, such as fiscal and monetary policy, export and import policy, regional and European integrations, and the policy for the development of financial institutions have been left out.

13 Which focus have the parties taken within the economic policies?

The focus in the Program had been placed on the establishment of more order in the privatization processes, the development of small and medium enterprises, as well as the improvement of work in the agricultural sector. Priorities had been set very generally and one cannot easily observe priority activities, or their time frame.

14 Is the social approach to the market an integral part of the Program?

The Program contains a social approach to the market. Considering that its Program fundamentals are based on social democracy, we may conclude that the social direction of the party is noticeable, but insufficiently developed according to individual economic segments. The Program mostly concentrates on the request for the *“right to work to be transformed into the right to employment”*, which is insufficient to give an overall assessment of each element of economy.

PART II

13 Are the requests of Acquis Communautaire recognized?

The requirements of the Acquis Communautaire are not stated anywhere in the Program, nor is it possible to sense from the text of the Program that these requirements have been taken into account during the development of any part of this Program.

14 Are the economic policies adequately developed in order to ensure a proactive course of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the European Union?

Economic policies have not been developed in that regard, and we could say that they do not provide a proactive course towards the EU. The European Union is mentioned only as a priority in terms of foreign policy, but not in terms of economic policy and the need for harmonization of the economic structure of the state with the one required for the membership in the EU.

15 Are the best practices of economic policy from the region recognized and followed?

The best practices of economic policy from the region are not explicitly recognized, but they are mentioned under point 21, which part is herewith quoted: *“In designing the new system, we will use the experience of the European Union countries, industrially developed countries, and countries in transition.”* This implies all experiences without stating the specifics.

16 Has the transfer of knowledge between countries within the region, and, in parallel, with the institutions and states of the European Union, been initiated?

The Program recognizes the need to use the knowledge of countries from the region and other European countries. The following is stated in point 14: *“The training of highly qualified personnel through the acquiring of practice in European and world institutions will create the future leaders in state administration and the economy.”*

Based on all of the above given, we may state that the Program had been written in general terms, although quite comprehensively and clearly, but only mentions the majority of important parts necessary for the complete reform of the economic system. The absence of elements related to EU accession and a further quantitative overview of individual goals is evident. Most of

the Program relates to political issues, while the economic part is in second or third plan.

A recommendation to the authors of this Program would be to conduct a detailed overview with the inclusion of all significant segments in it, such as the macroeconomic part and the part related to EU accession. It is also necessary to provide much more quantitative information on economic goals with time frames and a chronological schedule for the implementation of individual actions.

2.8. SERBIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The general elections platform of the Serbian Democratic Party had been adopted in July 2006. The Platform consists of 15 pages, of which approximately four pages are related to economic issues, which illustrates that this subject matter is most represented in the given material. The presented segment of economy includes the following sections:

- 1 *Economy and finances*
- 2 *Capital investments*
- 3 *Social policy*
- 4 *Agriculture*

In the part of the Program related to European and Euro-Atlantic integrations, attention had also been paid to regional cooperation and the EU accession process. Generally observed, the Program focuses on certain problems which were of primary importance for the economic and social development of BiH, with a specific focus on the RS entity.

PART I

15 Is the economic policy a main or important segment of the party's political Program?

Economic policy is significantly represented in the party's Program; it could be said to be the most represented part. Themes treated in it indicate that the economic part of the Program had been prepared in a thorough manner.

16 Are all the areas of economic policy covered by the Program?

The Program did not include all areas of economic policy, but it did include the four basic areas, as given above. Less significant attention has been given to macroeconomic issues, which are related to the improvement of the work of economic operators and the ensuring of a more favorable economic ambience for them, apart from agriculture, which had been elaborated in most detail.

17 Which focus have the parties taken within the economic policies?

The focus in the Program had been placed on the establishment of more order in the privatization processes, the improvement of work in the agricultural sector, and the adjustment of taxation rates to agricultural producers and cooperatives. Priorities are established clearly, but their time frame cannot be observed. There is significant support for the alignment of domestic regulations with those currently in force in the area of EU.

18 Is the social approach to the market an integral part of the Program?

The Program does contain a social approach to the market and it is quite underlined in the Program. The focus is placed on solving the issue of pension funds and pensioners and disabled persons. There is a request to retain the existing level of social provisions for employees and to, in this fashion, ensure social stability of the society. Also, it treats the issue of aligning the obligatory active working life for women and men with those regulations effective in the EU.

PART II

17 Are the requests of Acquis Communautaire recognized?

The Program had not explicitly stated the requirements of the Acquis Communautaire, but one can sense from the text of the Program that these requirements have somewhat been taken into account in the course of the development of the Program.

18 Are the economic policies adequately developed in order to ensure a proactive course of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the European Union?

Economic policies have not been developed in this regard and we may state that they do not provide a fully proactive course towards the EU. The European Union is mentioned only as a priority in terms of external politics, but not as a priority in terms of economic policy and the need for harmonization of the economic structure of the state with the one required for the membership in the EU. Regionalization is mentioned as one of the steps for a successful EU accession.

19 Are the best practices of economic policy from the region recognized and followed?

The best practices of economic policy from the region are not recognized explicitly, but it is possible to observe certain similarities from the text with the countries from the surroundings. The need to implement the best experiences from the neighboring countries has not been stated in any of the Program's parts.

20 Has the transfer of knowledge between countries within the region, and, in parallel, with the institutions and states of the European Union, been initiated?

The Program had not recognized the need for use and transfer of knowledge of regional and European neighbors. No example specifically indicating this has been given. Based on all of the above, we may conclude that the Program, although not extensive, had been prepared quite comprehensively. Greatest attention had been paid to the segment of agriculture, capital investments, taxation policy, revision of privatization, and the problem of production stimulation. One part also includes requirements for inclusion in regional and European integrations.

A recommendation to the authors of this Program would be to make a detailed overview with the inclusion of all significant segments in it, such as microeconomic issues related to the raising of competitiveness of enterprises, the reform of administrative apparatus providing a space for business operations, and macroeconomic monetary issues related to the banking and insurance sector. The part related to EU accession should be covered in more detail. It is also necessary to give more quantitative information on economic goals, along with time frames and a chronological schedule for the implementation of certain activities, seeing that these elements

have almost not been mentioned in the Program.

3. CONCLUSION

The analysis of economic platforms of political parties that form the majority on all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina has given us a clear insight in terms of the presence of social market economy and economy in general in the Program goals of the party. As it may be observed in this analysis, the majority of parties have paid attention to the economy and economic development, the majority also looked at the process of European integrations, but those parties that have developed economic platforms are rare.

Also, it needs to be emphasized that the goals that are directly and indirectly related to the economy and economic development, as well as the drawing of Bosnia and Herzegovina closer to the European Union, have been broadly positioned and are mostly without elaborated and precisely defined measures and actions that need to be undertaken. Another very important fact is that there are no adequately defined plans for the evaluation and monitoring of activities that the parties would implement in the fields of economy and EU accession.

In the text above, each one of the parties included in this analysis has been given recommendations on what they need to improve, introduce, and modify in terms of their actions, with a general remark that each one of them urgently needs a development of economic platforms with a clear plan for monitoring.

Among the political parties active in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the knowledge of the basis of social market economy, upon which the current European Union is founded, is not on a satisfactory level. The situation is the same in terms of knowledge of economic criteria for membership in the European Union. The Copenhagen conditions for membership in the EU are of primary interest for Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a potential member of the European Union. It gives the criteria that relate to candidate countries and that, above all, imply the existence of a functional market economy, the capacities of the domestic economy to deal with the pressures of competition in the EU, and the full adoption of the Acquis Communautaire. Efficiency in conducting reforms and necessary measures in the given sectors directly influences the tempo of EU accession, and, more importantly, in our case, the economy of BiH and the living standard.

Therefore, as a general recommendation, along with the already mentioned recommendations for each one of the analyzed parties, we also have the following one: with the aim of improving the economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina through proper management of economic policy, and with the aim of contributing to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the field of European integrations, it is necessary to work on the raising of the level of knowledge in these areas among the political parties and among the wider population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The same may be achieved with the development and preparation of suitable publications and their distribution among the political parties, in this case, as well as with the production of concrete and focused analysis and research. A series of presentations, round tables and consultative working meetings, with the aim to educate political parties' personnel in these areas, may also provide a great contribution to the improvement of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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