



MARKET, MEDIA AND PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

Trg žrtava fašizma 5, Zagreb, CROATIA, Tel/fax (+385.1) 461 55 22, E-mail: puls@puls.hr

Šime Ljubića 37, Split, CROATIA, Tel/fax (+385.21) 453 140; 453 141, E-mail: puls@st.tel.hr

Kalemova 5, Sarajevo, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, Tel/fax (+385.33) 670 788, E-mail: puls-bh@bih.net.ba

**South-Eastern Europe (SEE) and the Stability Pact:
New Means for Regional Analysis
FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

**QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS
In-depth interviews**

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The Associate Member of



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I. Introduction

I. 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ON PROJECT

A research project for South Eastern Europe is organized by International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) in cooperation with local research institutes. In Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Puls d.o.o. was responsible for the research part. The main aim of this research was to define principal issues and problems in the country which would then be used for the quantitative research.

I. 2 PARTICIPANTS

International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance)

Tanja Petovar (project coordinATOR)

Puls d.o.o. – Market, media and public opinion research

Josip Tvrtkovic (project manager)

Lejla Kadusic (group moderator)

Larisa Masnic (research assistant)

Goran Stergar (research assistant)

Nebojsa Jovanovic (research assistant)

I. 3. CONTEXT

The research was done under very specific circumstances, at a moment when the new government was being established in BH. This period was marked by numerous problems in relations between the international community and political parties that were in power until then especially HDZ. For the very research, this presented two problems:

a) We could not conduct interviews with certain politicians because they did not want to give any statements due to the sensitivity of the situation;

b) One part of the interviewees were leaving their positions literally day before or after the interview, and at the same time there were no reliable information as to who will replace them

Still, one can say that the majority of the interviewees accepted this type of research and they were very cooperative. The only objection was about the length of the interview, because majority of the interviewees was committed to other things and they could hardly set aside so much time for an interview.

People in the elite did not particularly accept the manner of assessing thing on a scale of 1 to 10. Majority of them was inclined to give descriptions on what they think of how is a certain institution functioning. Also, when it comes to associations they were mainly given in "free" manner - they were mostly inclined to giving a type of personal statement about a situation in a certain country.

II. Methodology

II. 1. PROCEDURE

Qualitative research method used in this part of the research is in-depth interview procedure (IDI). Research included 25 in-depth interviews with people from the elite (political, economic, public, etc.). All IDI were conducted in Sarajevo except one IDI conducted in Travnik, during February and March 2001. Participants for IDI were selected primarily by their sector of work.

II. 2. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

GOVERNMENT	Minister of Defence FBH
	Ex-Prime Minister FBH
	Minister of Social Affairs of Canton Sarajevo
ARMY	Commander of the Army FBH
POLICE	Minister For Internal Affairs FBH
	Minister For Internal Affairs of Canton Sarajevo
PARLIAMENT AND POLITICAL PARTIES	NHI – President
	SDP – Representative in the Parliament
	SDA – Spokesman
JUDICIARY	President of the Constitutional Court FBH
	Judge of Constitutional Court FBH
MASS-MEDIA	Director of B&H Television
	Principal Editor, Slobodna Bosna - weekly
	Principal Editor, Jutarnje novine - daily
ECONOMY	General Director of Borac – Travnik – clothing industry (manager of the year '98)
	General Director of ASA Holding – representative of VW (manager of the year '99)
	Executive Director of Raiffeisen Bank
	Deputy General Manager of Investment Bank FBH
NGO	Director of Soros Media School
	President of Association of Displaced persons and Refugees
MINORITY REPRESENTATIVE	President of Jewish Community
	President of Serb citizens council

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	Spokesman of the UN Mission in BH
	Head of the OSCE mission to BH
	Head of the UN mission in BH

III. Main findings

III. 1. OVERVIEW

- The most important problems BH is facing today are:
 - **Political problems:** the very existence and functioning of the State, lack of political will for dialog and resolving the problems, etc.
 - **Economic problems:** unemployment, dismantled market, privatization issues, absence of foreign investors, etc.
 - **Social problems:** return of refugees and displaced persons, brain drain, etc.

These problems are at the same time described as *hardest to solve*.

- According to the majority of interviewees, it is international community that can reinforce solutions for aforementioned problems.
- Problems of economic and social nature are hard to solve because of negative influence of politics, and generally bad legal, jurist system that is not coherent in the whole country.
- Market economy is recognised as one of the primary goals to be achieved, but it is described as very distant from existing state of things. Clumsy privatisation, lack of production of goods and non-existence of solid market that would cover not only BH are most aggravating factors for development of market economy.
- Majority has confidence mainly in international community, perceiving local politicians not only as incapable for solving the problems, but even exclusively responsible for their existence.
- Interviewees claim that they use different sources of information and media to get to reliable information. Media landscape is recognized as influential, but still not fully developed and somewhat crowded with not very good media. There are good examples of professional journalism, but there are also examples where journalists are acting like channel broadcasting pure political messages. Alternative sources of information (satellite TV, non-formal sources of information, Internet) are often being used.
- Non-government organizations are judged as inevitable part of Bosnian society, but there is certain scepticism about their functionality. NGO scene is supposed to be developed in the future.
- Religious organizations are recognised as liberated from heritage of socialistic past, but they are also recognised as institutions that are tending to interfere into political domain, homogenising ethnic groups on religious basis.

- Professional organizations are described as good initiative, but yet underdeveloped, if not completely non-existent. Opinion about trade unions is by rule negative: they are described as institutions that still live in past, not realising that political and economic landscape is completely changed.
- Public services are generally described as not effective. Electricity, water and communal services scored highest, while social services, health and education have scored lowest.
- The influence of international institutions is perceived in ambiguous way: only few people have doubts that international community accomplished the peace and gave ground for progress of the country, but at the same time, international community is described as the most responsible for the remaining bad conditions and crisis.
- Western/European military forces (NATO) is recognised as role model for local armies, and presence of NATO in the region is perceived as major guarantee of peace and stability.
- Majority of interviewees is self-aware of their national feelings, claiming that it doesn't mean that they are nationalists.
- The question of leaving the country/the region is still actual in the head of big number of Bosnians especially youngsters. Even big number who decided to stay in country are justifying that with their late age, and saying that young people can hardly have prospects in BH.
- The main fears of the interviewees are related to further ethnical conflicts, the animosity between these people, and economy crisis.
- The main hopes of the interviewees are related to change of government, successful transition, establishment of market economy, and reducing State administration.

III. 2. THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES IN FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (BH)

The most important problem in Federation BH is the very political existence and functioning of Bosnia-Herzegovina as the complete state system. This problem is described from different point of views: some elite representatives discern it within domain of law and jurisprudence (BH *de facto* doesn't exist and function as state because of non-coherent legal systems, that differ from one level of government to another), other are describing it with regards to unsolved 'national question' or even mentality of BH citizens, etc.

Exemplary statements:

- In my opinion, the international community has, from the start, had a wrong approach in the implementation of the Dayton Agreement. In a political and pragmatic manner, it hindered State institutions and strengthens the Entity ones.
- The very first and basic problem is: does the state exist or not in its full condition. I don't think that state exists in such a way, since an impossible system has been made. (...) What has been made is too complicated state, deprived of instruments for its general policy (...).

- It is obvious that our state is not functioning, since as result of that our economy is not functioning, and there exist no specific integrative process that would diminish distance between BH and Europe.
- Structure of BH in the Dayton framework is ultimately problematic, understated and leaves room for different interpretation of what is BH in the Dayton Agreement: a country with three peoples, two Entities and where authority of entities or the republic were not completely defined. Entity constitutions were not harmonized with the State Constitution, thus opening space for disintegration, destruction of what is call the elementary state system.
- The very first thing to do is creating of state-level framework, or in other words to build all institutions that make one state complete.
- National parties do not favor the establishment of BH central institutions in order to maintain their position in the government, in areas they controlled militarily.
- The most difficult thing to solve in political head of individuals is their understanding that BH is their State and that they should exercise their rights in BH, and not look for that elsewhere.

III. 3. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEMS?

In matter of who is responsible to solve these problems, the opinion of „elite“ can be divided into two orientations:

International community – only representatives of international community can solve these problems, since:

- they are in a way the most responsible for them (they have created Dayton agreement, without longterm strategy and filled with paradoxical ‘solutions’);
- among BH political forces there is no enough good will and capacity for solving these problems, without foreign influence through international organisations.

Local politicians – only when local politicians start to behave in proper political way, working in legal and executive authorities, participating in government with full responsibility and awareness of its conduct, crucial problems will be solved.

In assesment of agency who is the most responsible for solving mentioned problems, almost all respondents pointed out that it is international community that can help problems to be solved. Some respondents see in local politicians absolutely no capacity for solving any problems. Even those respondents who claim that local politicians must take some responsibility always add that even with good will of local politicians, international community must remain active. Exemplary statements:

- According to the Constitution, the greatest responsibility for solving the issue lies with BH Parliament, BH Council of Ministers. Certainly, there are also governments, entity parliaments, cantons’ parliaments and governments, local authorities, and, parallel institution of international community. At the same time, there are international community institutions, monitoring and supporting implementation of Dayton peace accord – Office of the High representative (OHR), UN mission, European Commision...

- Who can solve all these problems: it is we, with the help of international community that have to solve them. We alone do not have enough of strength to do it on our own. International community must act like the moderator, so equilibrium must be achieved where all rights and interest of BH's peoples and citizens will be harmonized.
- Unfortunately, I still think that the High Representative is probably the most important person in this country. Where the local government has failed to act on its own, he has imposed economic reform, measures last year... The senior leadership at the state level if they can form the government, which now they have not been able to do. The State Governments of Bosnia, Yugoslavia and Croatia have to convince republics to move away from the past and enter the future, and to co-operate with each other in all spheres specifically the economic one.

IV. Specific Economy Issues

BH people, to some extent, still put their ethnicity or national aspirations above their own economic needs. While big number of interviewees see the causes for these problems in incompetence of the previous state/political leadership in BH to stabilize the situation, those interviewees coming from domain of economy are more describing the problems with more details. According to them, one of the biggest issues is that in BH economy doesn't exist enough money for circulation, and one of the reason for that is poor reaction of foreign, international investors. Also, attention had not been paid to perseverance of a development institute in the process of transformation of economic giants, which is also part of the privatisation process problem. Exemplary statements:

- The basic problem is a slow privatization process, and even what had been previously done in the sphere of privatization is burdened with different affairs, corruption.
- We have to connect local companies with those abroad, we have to make common investments. It doesn't matter if BH people are owners of 5% or 55% of the company. If one owns only 5% of good working company, he will have bigger profit than one who is 55% owner of poor company.
- When our people are thinking about market, they are thinking in small scale. They talk about Federation BH, Republika Srpska, then about whole BH. It is an utopia, it is extremely small market. When you are starting the firm you have to plan, minimally, 90% of export, since if you are oriented to BH market only, you can have no profit. So, we have to start with the ex-Yugoslavian market...
- The most difficult problem is obviously trying to break down the system of political party control over the economy. Each political party wants to keep its part of the economy.
- BH has no possibility to raise money for opening of new jobs, and you automatically do not have prospects, nor future, you cannot fill the budget. During 50 years we have lived in a system, which was far away from any notion of market economy, so right now we have to adjust ourselves to market system, we have to do privatization as soon as possible. But it is obvious that we are stuck in it, and that privatization process is not developing, as we would like it to.
- Our weakest point is production in all segments of economy, first of all we do not have agriculture production, and you know what that means for any country. Contrary to completely devastated agriculture and industry, trade is in full bloom, but we do not have any income, any use of it.

IV. 1. FACTORS TO ACCELERATE SOLVING PROCESS:

Majority of respondents agree that it is necessary to reduce the bureaucratic apparatus and save the economy from politics. The next step would be setting up legal regulations (customs and taxes) as well as complete privatization process. Thus will be enabled and facilitated the entry of fresh capital and investments into BH economy. Exemplary statements:

- First thing to be done is creation of stable financial institutions that will operate independently from politics.

- Rationalize the State apparatus in the manner of its decrease, but also rationalize from the aspect of efficiency because this is one inefficient State system towards a private entrepreneur
- Funds from outside need to be secured, but not as it was the case so far – that being donations and credits leading to the State being indebted, but foreign private capital
- I think we are on a good path, accepting more and more, the legislation of the European community and what is being imposed in all of Europe. Therefore, by accepting this legislation and with a stronger banking system, one can expect arrival of the foreign capital.
- It is insufficient to say that the way out is in the import of capital, if our institutional State structure and authority structure is not organized, and if regulations are not appropriately arranged. It is then understood that foreign capital will not enter such insecure area

IV. 2 ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN BH ECONOMY

International community and its role in the BH economy are perceived in somewhat ambiguous way. At one hand, there is a general opinion that international community can significantly assist in expert and consultative way with investment process, fresh capital, linking local economy with the global trends, world partners and investors. However, at the same time, a very critical approach is discernable in the answers of interviewees active in economy sphere:

- I as an economist do not really “feel” the impact of international community in Borac and I don’t think we’ve had anyone from the international community coming and trying to fix some things with the help of BORAC management staff.
- One of the International community countries is openly giving 30000 visas for peoples of all vocations, primarily experts. What will this country do without such people? IC should have a strategy on what to do *here*.
- If I judge the time after Dayton, that is five years, what the International community is doing is not successful enough... A century ago, during 20 years of Austrian rule, with primitive resources, railways and roads have been made. And today, with every possible technology being available, with terrific possibilities, machines, investments, concessions this is not being done.

If this is about individual international organizations, then the impact of USAID and the World Bank was assessed as the best and most useful.

IV. 3 EXPECTATIONS ABOUT ECONOMY IN THE NEXT YEAR

People in elite have mostly negative expectations in this regard. Reasons for such opinion lie in rather radical reform of payment and tax system in BH that will increase pressure in companies to discharge their debts much earlier than they had been doing before. The basic BH export product is currently raw material, there are no other products, and the consequence of this will be decrease of social products’ value. Large companies, which were hallmarks of the socialist economy, will continue breaking down to smaller ones, out of which

only some will be able to survive. That will lead to increase of already high interest rate of unemployment.

The assessment is that decrease in foreign investments will continue “as the foreign investors do not go to countries of such unstable political, economic, social and national state.”

Based on its ideas, a part of the elite may be situated in the center, they are neither too pessimistic nor too optimistic. Anticipations of this group are that some economic reform and rehabilitation will take place but not to the satisfactory extent.

The third group is characterized by a moderate optimism concerning economy development in the next year. The optimism is based on change of government, appearance of party coalition ‘Alliance for changes’. It is expected that BH presents itself to the world as a unified country, country of low risk, which would make it more attractive to foreign investors. They also mentioned that small and medium economy should be priority in development.

When it goes for market economy, most of the interviewed people do not see alternative to this manner of economy functioning. Below opinions illustrate it:

- We have established basic elements of the economy, missing is a legal system that would provide security for the market economy and it needs to be build upon. There is absolutely no alternative, no way to seek another solution.
- That is the only chance for BH without which there will be no admission to the Council of Europe, European Union or other Euro-Atlantic integration. There is no technical curve here, which one could cut off and reach them shortly, but important is to create climate to be able to be their peers. That is what I expect that will improve in the next 2-3 years.
- That is an axiom “soon.” Market economy and private property are axioms and basics of development for me. Without solving and positioning of those elements it will not be ameliorate.

However, there are certain hesitations in regards to market economy in BH due to non-existence of legal regulations, monopoly and recrudescence of the socialist way of thinking:

- The problem in such a country is that we are not at all integrated into economic European trends but we are completely isolated and every day of this tardiness represents almost irreversibly lost future.
- In the States you have market economy also, but you also have laws. We still do not have that, and we want market economy. But we have monopoly in the postal system, power supply, fuel supply... that is not market anymore, market is there where the match is, where competition is.
- The problem is the mentality of the people is like they still live in socialist system. We can say that market economy is a goal we should all strive to achieve. First, market economy is competition, struggle for better quality, for lower price, but that does not exist with us in the mentality. Market economy should be the future of BH, but I cannot say this is the present situation.

IV. 4. ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION

Prevailing opinion among elite is that economic cooperation should be developed with neighboring countries as well as with other countries in Southeast Europe. The bond of these relations which can contribute to business development is the similarity of language and existence of compatible economic capacities: "They all represented one market once, it is natural to expect this market will restore itself and that is the easiest way to regain markets that were lost in BH during the war." As some of the interviewees mentioned it, good political relations would precede such a process, that is – overcoming of political obstacles still existing in relations with neighbors. Markets of these countries are individually too small to survive by themselves.

- Until recently, these economic relations were burdened with big distrust, but today and in the future they are increasing. Interesting enough, Federation BH had very good exchange of goods with Yugoslavia; it was forth best economic partner of FRY. There are compatible capacities for production, creating the unique market ten years ago, so it is natural to expect that market to establish again.
- I think it is very positive for our economy to rely on and intermingle with economy of neighboring countries. We are sharing the similar economic fate, we are at the same stage of development, and we have goods to exchange. It is easier to place our products there, then on German market, for example. I think that development of economic relationship in former Yugoslavia is number one priority.

V. Political Institutions

V. 1. INFLUENCES IN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

According to answers members of social elite gave concerning their influence (or influence of their institutions or organizations) on decision-making in the state, three strata of elite could be differentiated:

- Elite members/agencies who claim a significant, all-pervasive role in the decision-making process in the society (Reiffesen Bank, Federation Investment bank (FBH Investicijska banka), Federation Constitutional Court, BHT, former Prime Minister, textile factory "Borac" Travnik);
- Elite members perceiving themselves as a more specific factors in the decision-making process in the society (SDP, Federation Ministry of Interior (MUP FBH), Joint Command of the Federation Army, OSCE, UNMIBH);
- Elite members perceiving themselves as limited by their effects, and not really included in the decision-making process in the society (New Croat Initiative (NHI), Party for BH

(SBH), Soros Media School, Slobodna Bosna magazine, Union of Refugees and Displaced Persons, Jewish Municipality, ASA Holding)

V. 2. TRUST IN LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITIES

Asked whom do they trust the most, and whom the least of local and international authorities, elite members and citizens gave answers whose frequencies is shown in the following table:

1. Whom do you trust the most and whom the least?

Overall confidence and trust of interviewees toward local, national and international authorities are very low. Interviewees expressed biggest confidence in international community and the local community, while at the same time local authorities and state presidency are described as the two untrustworthiness levels of government. Reasons for this general lack of confidence toward local and national authorities are laying in general ineffectiveness of government. While some interviewees underline the non-professionalism among politicians, recognised as mere opportunists pursuing their own personal goals and benefits; other judgements are oriented more generally toward judiciary system and three-national system of government as obstacles for achieving some concrete positive political results.

Here are some of the judgments regarding particular authorities:

Mayor is perceived as personality with no real political or any other influence. He has merely protocolar significance.

Local administration is described within the heavy polarisation of statements. While some of the participants think that local administration is completely untrustworthy, others recognize it as the most effective instance of government after the international community institutions. It is possible that this polarisation is outcome of the very defining what local authorities are – municipal, cantonal or city authorities, and, on the other side, the reflection of disproportion between local authorities' possibilities and responsibility and their effectiveness. There is a consensus that local authorities are extremely important for solving some of the elementary issues in life of ordinary citizens, and that should bear high responsibility for people's wellbeing. But there are still some misrecognitions in relations between citizens and local administratives: citizens still doesn't fully recognize the importance of this level of government, while local administratives are not realizing that their primary function is not to govern the people but to be at its service.

Presidency stands for the institution with great symbolic significance, but with no real positive political results. Negative judgments are prevailing, while some of interviewees are describing presidency as the top of everything worst in BH political life (it postulates national matrix of the government) and accusing it for obstruction of development of other levels of government.

At the same time, presidency is seen as institution that should have protocolary status, while the political decision-making should be displaced into the Parliament.

Prime minister is seen as a member of, generally speaking, unefficient **government**. Some of interviewees are pointing out the fact that prime minister missed the opportunity to do good job in economy (bad privatization process, foreign capital was not introduced...), while some claim that he took advantage of his position for his private benefit and the benefit of the party he is member. Government is described as slow functioning and with no real strategy and results.

Parliament is also marked with polarised perception: while some of more critical interviewees will describe it as 'a circus', other will say that it is the perhaps only institution where some progressive move toward more developed democratic standards can be achieved. There is major consensus that political future of BH should be oriented toward parliamentary democracy, and that parliament should function as main political agency in the country. Some interviewees claim that parliament, like every other institution, depends on people working in it, concluding that only new representatives who will think and act in a proper democratic and European-oriented way will bring fundamental change in functioning of this institution.

Political parties are recognized as underdeveloped, primitive and ignorant toward the party standards known to the rest of world. Parties are ideologically unaware, mainly defining themselves in terms of choice – to be pro-BH, or not. Status of political scene is often described as chaotic and anarchic, without firm rules and regulations of party conduct.

International community is perceived as the agency with the greatest influence in the country, with 'absolute power'. This primarily refers to the High Representative and his office. So, nobody is questioning the fact of 'absolute power' of international community, but there can be heard some criticism regarding the fact that international community take itself for granted:

- I do not question the good intentions of the International community, but I think the bureaucratic apparatus is too large and there are people who do not have the expertise to tackle the problems here
- Like everyone else, the International community makes mistakes in its works, but it acts like a Superman, as it had never made a mistake, and it never admits not tries to correct its mistakes. However, it seems to me that in the total score, its positive effect is far, far greater than the mistakes that happen from time to time.
- Well, I think that in order to move ahead seriously here, the international community has to restructure itself; (...) we need serious leadership, with clear definition of goals and targets. We have enormous redundancy here; four or five organizations are doing Human Rights here, rather than one organization, encompassing everything.

VI. CIVIL SOCIETY

VI. 1. MEDIA

In the greatest number of cases, respondents claim that they use different sources of information to get to reliable information. Trust in the authenticity of media placed information is not very big, and significant number of interviewees is relying to the alternative sources of information: politicians and army officials are using their own more or less informal sources, persons from domain of economy and jurisprudence also have their own sources of information, based on information of their working fellows, etc; some of interviewees are also using satellite and Internet as a mean to get a valid information. From this reason and because of the fact that no BH media house is able to finance itself, big number of interviewees consider that questions like “private or state-owned media?”, “independent or politically influenced media?”, etc., are superfluous. A similar thing happens when it concerns distinctions between foreign-local and national-local. Interviewees often mention the fact that BH is crowded with big number of TV and radio-stations, but that that doesn’t necessary mean that all these media houses are endowed with significant professionalism or quality of program. From this reason, there are only few expressions of confidence in some particular media, information are mainly comparing with regard to other media source or some alternative source (non-formal, foreign etc.).

Exemplary statements:

- Our media are sterile indeed. Journalists are not of the exploring kind, they are just transmitting information, not analyzing its content, its essence and reality, and they even do not make an elementary checking of information.
- Well, I mainly get information through television. (...) News is very well concentrated, and it is easy to use more then one source, I use at least two different televisions. In case of some really important events, I check out foreign resources, satellite TVs...
- I think the most objective source of information is (found with) news agencies. They do, basically, strict, unbiased reporting of the affairs of state in this country. Newspapers and television often chose more so to broadcast one particular side of an argument, which bids they're either there the party they support, or the ethnic group they support. But the wired service is still generally neutral.
- I do not believe in information published in papers with touch of yellow press. I am quiet confident regarding electronic media, even if they are small, local-community oriented ones, since it is easier to to check out validity of their information.

VI. 2. NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS

Although opinions on efficiency of non-governmental organisations are polarized, all agree that these are one important component of a democratic society. Some interviewees behind wide range of NGOs in BH today are recognizing the lack of proper concept to act within

existing social environment. Furthermore, some of NGOs are described as obviously confronted with their own infrastructural problems (issues who finance them, are they merely cover up for some illegal money transactions, etc.). However there is a consensus that BH society in future is hard to imagine without NGO scene, that would function like “a type of filter for everything negative or positive in the society...”. Exemplary statements:

- I am assessing the most positive thing that exists. I think that the civilian sector did the maximum of things and even solved different dilemmas and did something the State would do in few years...
- They do not have right action concepts and concepts on how to exercise these rights they represent, they have to be more rigorous there, and seek rights in existing regulations and legal regulations.
- I think that NGO's have in many ways, internal problems of poor organization, insufficient financial support, or insufficient knowledge of financial administration in non-profit organization, so that they could play their role to the full extent. However, the situation is improving day by day and I believe this segment of civic society will have a significant role in the transformation of BH into a country of market economy and full democracy.

VI. 3. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

The general state of affairs in the field of professional associations is such that it is considered only at the very beginning and that a lot of time will pass by before the professional associations grow up to be what they should be, so that narrow interest groups that can exactly articulate what is necessary to carry out certain duties. Majority of them is now divided on national basis and this is one of principal reasons of their current disfunctioning.

- Very positive thing. The state must support and help those associations since we had no similar associations before the war, during socialism. They are not some parallel system, they are helping the people just like any state institution, and therefore there must be constant relation between professional associations and the state.
- We do not have professional associations in strict sense of that term, unlike some other countries in transition or countries excepting concept of market economy. Of course, it would be very important and good to have associations like these, since they would regulate and articulate activities of workers, especially in the cases when we are dealing with some very small and limited production activities.

The union represents are special problem. None of the interviewees gave a good assessment of its work and activities:

- The syndicate has taken on a metaphor of an old trade union (...). There were workers are on strike, there is the Trade Union's president and it is like as if I was watching an image of 15 years ago. That does not contribute to the problem's solution, it only creates some false image of care for the workers.
- Trade Union's activities should be something else: how to improve production, how to export, how to organize life in the factory.
- It is an issue heavily burdened with politics. There is no decision on state level concerning union and its activities, and some people simply decided to pronounce

themselves as union, syndicate. That is general phenomenon: there is always someone who thinks he is God sent for doing something, regardless of legislative basis for that something. Unions have to be organized in different manner, since we have new conditions, new people... But these two entity unions are just flirting with actual government, doing nothing.

VI. 4. RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Religious institutions are generally perceived as institutions whose work should be directed toward reconciliation and gaining the freedom of religious expression of all peoples in BH. Nobody questions the right of individual to religious belief and practice: it is recognised as one among other human rights. However, when it comes to the role of religious institutions in recent history, and their involvement in political and social life, opinions are clearly polarized. Few of interviewees claim that religious institutions are finally free of socialist torture and that they are finally function as they are supposed to. On the other side, the opinion is prevailing that religious institutions are interfering too much into political issues, which resulted with no good effects during last years.

Exemplary statements:

- They are mostly doing their job. I do not think they are too much involved in the political life and I personally think they can be a significant factor in BH, religious communities, since a great number of BH citizens still have trust in the clergy, that is in the religious communities.
- What they do is two things: they're part of the problem, and part of the cure. In one way, they divide people, because they all claim to be the true faith. They had in the past a blast nationalism of their ethnic groups. At the same time they can be used in a constructive way, if they are willing to work together. You must show that although you are of different faith, you can still work constructively with your partner, and that's what we're trying to do in here.
- Religious institutions should be dealing with religion and not interfere with politics and would educate those who are just entering the sphere of religion so they would be true believers.

VI. 5. POLITICAL LITERACY OF CITIZENS AND POLITICIANS

Most of the comments were directed towards the insufficient of political literacy of politicians and citizens. Significantly, critics were mostly addressed to politicians rather than citizens:

- It is at a low level with both groups. I think this illiteracy is greater in political parties than amongst citizens
- It is at a very low level both amongst politicians and citizens. Among citizens, because there are no democratic traditions and democracy is often equalized with anarchy, so that everyone can do what they want, say and write what they want, which naturally is not a democracy.
- Political literacy of citizens is much more developed than we suppose, and political literacy of politicians is under every level. Generally, the main problem here is that

people are still afraid of policy and politicians. So we are dealing not only with political literacy, but issues of mentality.

- I think our people are very politically literate, sometimes even so much that they are ignorant towards everything that is happening.

VII. PUBLIC SERVICES

Asked to rate public services (water supply, electricity, communal services, gas, city transport, health, education, police, army, social care, pension fund), interviewees gave highest rates to the services providing elementary and energetic needs (water supply, electricity and gas). On the other hand, public services with the lowest scores are pension fund, social care and the army. There is no elaborated account on high rated facility services, like water or gas, partly because of the technical nature of its providing. More complex services like health, education, transport are mainly described as victim of existing political and economical crisis: all these services differs from one region (municipality, canton, entity) to another, since there is no all-pervasive legal control and regulation for them. Police and army best exemplify this. Lowest rated services are described in the most elaborated, critical way:

- Social care – As I know, it is almost nothing. You could have lost your closest family members, and you'll get 70, 90 DEM, it's not social care, since you can not live on it, you can hardly pay water bills and some flour.
- Social care is completely disorganized, it is not run by state institutions. Everything is based on the good will and donations of some individuals, you can see it in those public kitchens. The state is very little involved in this issue, and there are so much hungry people.
- Pension fund – everything is out of the joint. Nobody knows who makes payment to whom, and in which way. Speaking the amount of money, it is extremely low, you have people receiving only 117 DEM per month, and who can survive with it?
- Those poor old people, who need the most attention and care, are on the verge of extinction. They have nothing at all.
- There is no the Army, it is joint [in Federation BH] only formally speaking. Not to mention Republika Srpska.
- Young people, kids, going to the army are deprived of everything, security, hygiene,...
- Army has no solved financial support, it undergoes through 'reform' extremely slowly...

VII. 2. PRIVATISATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Regarding privatisation of public services, there is no general consensus. Some interviewees perceive it as dangerous mechanism where citizens will pay even more for some services which are extremely expensive even now. On the other side, there is opinion that privatisation of these services will result in competence among many services and companies, which will try to purchase the clients with low prices of services. Some of public services like social care, army and police are beyond this issue, and therefore cannot be privatized:

- Privatisation of only one part of health system or one part of education system should create a possibility of different service of those segments of society that are capable of paying such a service.
- Health, education probably has to be public institutions here. So, on principle, I am usually for private enterprise/institutions, but in certain places you cannot do it, because the population cannot afford it. People pay for rent, electricity etc. So, you need the state to have power in order to regulate this... You could privatize transportation, but electricity, water etc., - those things have to remain public enterprises, simply because you don't have the infrastructure yet to allow you the privatizing...
- Perhaps it would be rushing into this process, since we still do not have political government, so we can produce chaos out of it. We have to establish political institutions, tax laws and organs, good financial police, make control function... And then we can start to think about privatization of some public services. Otherwise, it will be at expense of citizens.
- Even in the most capitalistic of states, one part of these services must be under strict control of the state because they are in directly meeting the needs of every citizen which in some way finances the country and should get something back for that.

VIII. International Relations and the Role of International Institutions in BH

All respondents recognise the significance of the impact of international organizations in BH. Having in mind that today's BH, with all its good and bad sides, is in a way result of international solving of regional problems, there is a certain ambiguity in relation toward international community. Big majority of respondents is praising international community's good will and readiness to support development of BH. Only few respondents are critical toward intervention of international community in general: they have doubts concerning 'true intentions' of international community and criticising its strategy as unconditional and humiliating. A certain criticism is at play in comments of those respondents who are generally support international community intervention in BH: they want international community to act in more systematic and firm way, having no compromises with those who subvert the BH. Here are some exemplary statements on particular institutions and initiatives embodying international community in BH.

World Bank is recognized as some sort of two-way sword: at one hand, it stimulates national economy with providing credits, while at the same time it brings state in total dependency on international financial institutions. Its effectiveness is recognized as essential in the establishing of basics of post-war economy and financial market.

International Monetary Fund is described as an international financial policeman, directing global-market capital toward certain areas in the world, regulating financial trends, etc. The relationship toward it is marked by very similar ambiguity like toward WB.

United Nations is seen as multifaceted institution, covering the wide range of functions: dealing with the human rights, return of refugees, supporting establishment of secure police system in BH, etc. Its role is described as generally positive, although there is a firm criticism regarding its huge, bureaucratic apparatus as not efficient enough.

European Union is, again, described in ambiguous way: nobody doubts the fact that BH should one day become the member of EU, but there is a criticism toward some of the gestures of EU toward not only BH, but also the region as whole. Some interviewees are questioning the image EU has about the country and the region. Others are noticing that there is a discrepancy between EU and UN concerning the future of the region, while some points at the fact that not even all members of EU has one clear, developed strategy for the region. Positive judgments are based on the fact that EU is the biggest donor that can help to this country, by stimulating its economy and introducing new standards in the fields of human rights, public services, judiciary system, and politics... There are certain fears that the process of becoming the member of EU will last too long, which will increase the brain drain of BH youth into countries that are already part of EU.

NATO is perceived as authority with very positive impact on situation in BH. Recognized as the army force that reinforced the peace in the country, NATO is still seen as main guarantee of the peace in BH. Some interviewees are describing it as powerful, strong and necessary controller of existing three army components in BH. There are voices that existing military system in BH should be dismantled, and that one army force should be made for the whole country. In this process NATO is again recognized not only as army force that would keep the security during that period but also as an army structure whose rules, regulations and standards should be used as basics for new army. NATO is also seen as main guarantee for the security not only in the country, but region as well, and it is often associated with Stability pact initiative. NATO is also expected to monitor and regulate demilitarization of the region (decreasing of the number of soldiers, destroying of heavy weapons etc.). Big majority of interviewees supports idea of BH becoming the part of NATO, but all of them are aware that it is not possible at this moment, while there are three military forces in the country and existing political and economical situation.

STABILITY PACT is mainly seen as good opportunity for strengthening the security in the region, and as a platform upon which economy, cultural, etc. connections between countries in the region could be made. Some interviewees claim that Stability pact is some sort of test for countries in the region, for testing their ability to cooperate in regional framework and thus show that they are ready to become member of wider, European integration. But some are critical toward the idea of Stability pact, denying in it any real, positive content, and recognizing in it pure formal gesture, “very well designed, empty box.” However, big majority of interviewees fancies the idea of Stability pact, perceiving it in the line of other pro-EU-integrative processes.

VIII. 1. KEY OF REGIONAL SECURITY

According to the majority’s opinion, the security in the region can be achieved in two, mutually complementary way: through combination of further presence of NATO forces in the region and of joint strategy of countries in the region regarding security. All local army forces have to adopt European standards, meaning in the most of the cases that they have to downsize the number of soldiers and to reconstruct. Also, all neighbor countries have to give their best in solving their common problems. Here are exemplary statements:

- ❑ [The key for stability is] NATO umbrella, that would be set over the whole region... as a tent, which supports will be in Greece, Germany, Hungary, around this area of Stability Pact countries, if this is a region
- ❑ At the moment, it [the key for stability] is SFOR, but SFOR has to restructure the three armies. Then the three armies would be focused on the internal dynamics-force, fires, natural disasters etc., but it takes a complete restructuring of the

army. If everyone would go to school together, over time they would change their mindsets.

- ❑ Co-operation. Co-operative security levels. It ought to start with reduction of the loads of heavy armaments of the three countries that are involved in discussion under article four, Croatia BH and Yugoslavia.
- ❑ [The key for stability is] descent of Milosevic who was a threat to this part of Europe, the Balkans. I think he has definitely left, and I think the issue is solved greatly with this.

VIII. 2. HOW WILL THE LIFE OF PEOPLE LIVING IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE DEVELOP IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS

General opinion on near future in BH and the region is very far from being optimistic. Even those respondents with optimistic standpoint are calculating that in next few years there can be achieved only elementary preconditions for further future: within this period and the State and International community must resolve their doubts and questions. International community must finally decide will countries from the region really be included in Europe of the future, while local politicians have to decide are they ready to invest their good will and knowledge to participate in stabilization of the region / BH. Exemplary statements:

- ❑ If Europe decided to incorporate us, and it has, then it will create conditions to decrease the difference between the poverty of the Europe's SE and its property.
- ❑ Achieve democratization of this countries, that is these societies... when it concern the material wealth situation, I think this will run more slowly... a certain percentage will probably run ahead but not to the extent the people here would want it to, even maybe people of Europe.
- ❑ Well, everyone will have to work much more than before, to succeed at achieving what they have before, whether in the socialist times, whether after that – and to get what they have lost.
- ❑ I think that citizens of all these countries will be let down. Because the globalization and integration into European trends do not bring prosperity so quickly and does not solve problems in the way people think they will be solved.
- ❑ I think that the situation in Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Albania, Kosov etc. will not be solved in the next five years, so that the whole region will in a way be a hostage of this situation. The whole area will be greatly burdened by the problem of Serbia, because even the restoration of economic links depends on the situation in Serbia, which is Yugoslavia.
- ❑ These socialist countries of the southeastern Europe, I think, have missed a lot of time and are only now at a phase of reconstruction in the sense of modern European countries. I think that Bulgaria has done the most in this field and its perspectives are a bit brighter then the rest. (...) BH needs to be organized from the inside in the way that is functional, entities need to be harmonized, and state structure needs to be established. I think that is compared with other countries in the region, BH could be in the circle of three-four countries in about 5-10 years.
- ❑ I think that in about 2-3 years here we will have an absolutely open area without borders in the sense they exist today, maybe some type of customs union.

IX. Individual Characteristics and Feelings

IX. 1. ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED TO THE PERCEPTION OF BALKAN COUNTRIES

	ELITES
SLOVENIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Success in transition (2) - Getting close to Europe (3) - Intellect - The most beautiful in the world. - Unscrupulous traders - Mountains, lakes, intimacy of those I have met
CROATIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rapid positive changes - On the path of solving the problems of transition from totalitarianism to democracy. - Positive - Aggressors - Adriatic Sea (2) - Helped to many BH citizens
SERBIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nationalism and retrograde ideas. - Problems for BH in future - Cave - Greatest aggressors, generators of all evil in the Balkans - They must clear up with myths and past. - Still a fascistic country in which no processes have commenced.
KOSOVO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The most sensitive and difficult problem of Balkans (3) - Independence (2) - Madhouse - Lack of development - Total destabilization - Lost case
VOJVODINA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special political status, autonomy (3) - Flat ground (2) - Agriculture - Peaceful, fruitful - Relaxed, quiet people - Nice and positive opinion... hardworking peoples...
MONTENEGRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A small country - Independent country - In confederation with Serbia - Yugoslavia - Ecological country - Between wishes and possibility. - Interesting people - Epics
MACEDONIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problems connected with Kosovo and neighbors (3) - Future filled with problems (2) - Too small, and they still want to be relevant. - Positive - Successful President – Kiro Gligorov - Hardworking and nice people but very poor

ROMANIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I think it is going to remain in the current state for a long more; it is going to be a hostage of the state present during the dictatorship. - Behindhand - Dethroning their dictator, poverty. - Going closer to Europe (2) - Causescu
BULGARIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extremely great progress in European integration and transition (5) - Good Perspective (2) - Developed agricultural country. However, poor. - Poverty... friendship in conversations, sharing of some common views. - I do not differentiate it from Romania (2) - Poverty, failure, Balkanism
ALBANIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal problems for a long time; Kosovo is burden for Albania. - Darkness - Poorest - Bunkers, permanent feeling of small nation being endangered in the region. - It will hardly become a part of Europe. - Very difficult situation
GREECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supports, along the religious line, those who are aiming to disintegrate the Balkans - Police - Positive role in the region - Should solve its matters with Turkey. - Under patronage of NATO and Europe - Country of sun, sea, wine, olives, music

IX. 2. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE CURRENT INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONSHIPS IN OUR COUNTRY?

Regarding international relationships within the BH, especially between three constituent national communities, elite points out that they are going through phase of reconciliation. According to respondents in this group, these relations are even better and more stable that it may appear on the basis of sensation-thirsty media and politicians. However, a significant absence of confidence between Bosniaka, Serbs and Croats is still at play. Some interviewees reason for this see in the fact that political factors with nationalistic tendencies still have significant impact on political scene.

Regarding relation toward national minorities in BH (Jews, Roma people), representatives of elite claim that these relations have never been particularly endangered: it had always been more or less tolerant. However, the respondents stress that minorities should have all rights as constitutive nations. Exemplary statements:

- In BH, this relationship is relatively good... the past 5 years, everyone felt like a minority in certain parts of BH, because the system was such that it enabled

elimination of that total intolerance that exists in certain countries... distrust that war brought cannot be rooted out over night to bring back the normal life, coexistence we had here... the good thing here is that all three groups speak the same language, so there is no language barriers which in some countries creates a problem. Secondly, there are no racial differences, so that you can see at first sight, which is who. Thirdly, deep roots of coexistence have brought us closer in terms of customs, feeling for reality, in our joint view of third countries, or some regional countries.

- ❑ Relationships between the ethnic groups are no better than they were five years ago...
- ❑ Weak inter-ethnic tensions, but relations of trust are still not being established and it is impossible for them to be established without major political changes and individualization of responsibility for war crimes.
- ❑ Problems between majority groups have still not been settled and I think that all problems of relations towards minorities are marginalized, and all three underestimated the problems of Jews, Romas etc. I think the relationship is fair.

IX. 3. DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU BELONG TO YOUR NATIONAL COMMUNITY?

Generally, majority of respondents consider themselves as awared member of their national community. In addition to this, they think that national issue is underlying all aspects of BH society and has prominent role in cultural life of the locals. At the same time, these respondents claim that despite of their national feelings, they are not clinging to nationalistic positions. Exemplary statements:

- ❑ I am a member, the part of my national community. With some of its interests I can completely identify myself, for example with surviving of my nation as relevant political subject in BH. (...) But I refuse to identify with extremistic standpoints.
- ❑ I can say that I am not perceiving my nationality in extreme way, I can say that I am a Croat but to say that my nation is better than Bosniac or Serb, it is – if you ask me – it is stupid to even think, to compare things in that way.
- ❑ If I have to make a list of my values, my national origin would take third or fourth place on it. I think that national aspect must not be demonized; it is a reality (...).

Only few respondents feel no attachment to national communities in BH, giving the priority to civic awarness and belonging to the State community in general.

Exemplary statements:

- ❑ I don't feel like belonging to a particular ethnic group. I feel more like being a supporter of a certain civil concept ...
- ❑ National concept is not something that defines me, so I never have a need to point it out. (...) I would rather say that I have more active relationship toward multiethnic community than toward my own national community.
- ❑ I an kind of a man that considers the entire world small and I have never seen myself as a member of a small community

IX. 4. HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF MOVING FROM THIS REGION?

There is a firm balance between answers of interviewees on this question. Those who positively responded to this question, claiming that they were considering option of leaving the BH at one point in time, mostly during the wartime (because of danger, security of family, etc.), or after the war (reasons: slow development, no perspective for young people, involution of the city and the country, etc.). Interviewees that answered positively are coming from NGOs, mass media and non-government parties, and can be described as younger (comparing to the those who answered negatively).

Those who claim that they never consider leaving the country are eager to prove that they didn't think about it because of their tradition, sense of duty they have toward the public, or simply claiming that they are too old for leaving the country. Those interviewees were mainly directly involved in government during the wartime and in the afterwar period.

Exemplary statements:

- ❑ Yes, I have (been thinking about leaving the country). It seems to me that this region is developing too slow for my sensibility. I would like to witness more rapid development; in that way I would see my future here more clearly. But, I think that obstacles are removing very, very slowly, and I don't think this is the country for the young people. I dare to say that even at this very moment, while we are talking, I still keep this question open.
- ❑ I haven't been thinking about moving to some other part, some other place in the country. But like every normal young man in the country I've been thinking about leaving the country, it is normal to think about that. I haven't thought intensively, and never operatively, meaning I have never applied for visa, or something like that, but I have definitely considered it.
- ❑ Yes. What bothers me today in Sarajevo in BH, I think that city is getting more and more provincialized, losing identity of a normal city, and that really affects me. You simply cannot share the biggest part of your interests with people around you.
- ❑ No, having in mind my function here during and after the wartime. I knew that other people would recognize my eventual leaving the country as a role model for their own behavior, so they would leave the country as well. I was an army commander, and I have to act in proper way, because of people who perceive me as role model.

X. Final comments

X. 1. MOST SIGNIFICANT FEARS AND HOPES WITH RESPECT TO BH

Fears interviewees expressed are connected with inability of the local political, economical and social agencies and structures to overcome disastrous heritage of war and rule of national parties. Many of them are afraid that new government will not be successful in resolving the problems, and that this could result with national parties gaining the rule again, reinforcing the animosity between these people and completely polarizing society for decades. That would increase already existing problems in politics and economy.

Hopes are connected with new government and its prospects, approaching to the European initiatives and solving economy problems.

Exemplary statements:

- ❑ People are people ultimately, and I think the majority want a future in Europe. The key thing is to get into Europe quickly, to show them what “European standards of measurement” are, what are the criteria for being a European. As long as we keep BiH out of Europe, we won’t see a plague in the house of the hard-liners, nationalists, and extremist...
- ❑ My main fear, once again is that the animosity between these people, or the lack of forgiveness between these people will continue to make this a completely polarized society for decades to come, and I think that any kind of state institution, which you have to impose on these people will ultimately fail.
- ❑ My hope is that you will have continued economic support from the international community, which will raise the standards of living of everybody, take their mind of the past and make them think of their family and their future.
- ❑ I hope that new government will introduce such great changes that policy of nationalistic parties will be impossible in the future.
- ❑ Well, my main hope is that these new governments will be formed, and today is the key day for this, and they get all the business. If they do, then the next year and a half before the election should be a year of progress. I guess my worst fear is that this effort will collapse, because the parties are able to co-operate with one another, and will be back with the situation where parties that put this country into war will rule the country again, and you do not really have any interest of keeping them if you want this country to work.
- ❑ Hope will exist only insofar as international community decides to stay in BH, in role of someone who will mediate the things in proper way. I am afraid that, because of all troubles we have mentioned, the new government could somehow get compromised, fail in achieving success in solving the problems, and that would be used for argumentation that there is no solution for BH.