
FACTORS HINDERING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM AND EU ACCESSION: CASE STUDY OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA¹

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Review article

Sara Rajić*

Abstract

Public administration represents operations and practice of the government through management, administration and implementation of government policies having in mind public interests and the society as a whole. However, analysis of the political system and public administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH) reveals that this definition is rather “modified” when it comes to the mentioned country. Even though public administration reform is one of the priorities for BIH, the reasons why it has not been more successful are post-conflict reconstruction and state building, unique political organisation as a result of a peace agreement, veto mechanisms and ethnic quotas which makes the consensus harder to achieve and delays adoption of important strategies. Even though political elite in BIH is committed to public administration reform and the key reform institutions have been established there is a lack of necessary knowledge and skills, competences and most importantly, political will. However, public administration reform definitely represents one of the key conditions for the future of BIH and its accession to the European Union (EU).

Undoubtedly, public administration reform is a complex reform, and in this paper, the focus is on the case study of BIH by identifying its key issues on the way to the EU member-

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* MA in Political Sciences from the Faculty of Political Sciences University of Belgrade and Karl-Franzens University of Graz, e-mail: sararajic@live.com.

ship. This paper is based on analytical method with an explorative and descriptive purpose, comparative legal method, literature review method, and finally, synthesis of results, combined with professional insight and conclusions.

Key words: Public Service, Public administration, Public administration reform, Political system of Bosnia and Herzegovina, European integration process, European Union accession, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Western Balkans.

INTRODUCTION

The subject of public administration encompasses a large scope and is often discussed and debated. Due to its complexity and variety, it does not have a generally accepted definition. Public administration represents implementation of various government policies, together with the responsibility when it comes to organisation, planning, management, coordination, and control of different government operations (Kernaghan 2008, 392). Or as Rabin, Hildreth and Miller (2007) put it simply, public administration is policymaking. It is also an academic discipline studying these phenomena and it represents a theory of politics and society (Waldo, 1980). The main goal is to advance those policies and management, so that government can function (Rabin et al. 2007), by creating optimal solutions from the point of a society as a whole. On the other hand, Nigro and Nigro (1973) define public administration as the cooperative group effort in a public setting that covers executive, legislative and judicial activities and their interrelationship. It represents a country's ability to successfully design and manage public policies (Ladi 2008, 27). Public administration is essentially an execution of public law, while regulation is one of its oldest functions (Shafritz et al. 2013). In the organisational sense, the public administration consists of a set of all public administrative bodies that perform administrative tasks at all levels of government, as specified in the constitution and laws (Tanović 2014, 423). Zaum (2007) on the other hand, argues that states have the responsibility towards their population, as well as towards protecting human rights, the rule of law and maintaining free market economy, but more than anything towards an effective administration. Public administration reflects cultural norms, beliefs, and power realities of its society, meaning that similar administrative acts can be performed differently in different societies (Shafritz et al.

2013). Rabin, Hildreth and Miller (2007) explain public administration as the science of the artificial because it is not just focused on the state of things and how they are, but also how they might be.

As much as we have different definitions for the term public administration, we also have differences between countries when it comes to their public service systems. Bovaird (2016, 14) explains that different European countries have different administrative systems due to differences in culture, values, policies, objectives and desired outcomes, systems, and processes, “accidents of history” and dependence on certain conditions.

OVERVIEW OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

BIH is a country that has gone through many turbulent events. Ethnic conflicts of the 1990s caused a lot of human suffering, damage, refugee flows, sanctions, stagnation, and setbacks in all fields. These conflicts ended with the intervention by the UN and NATO forces with the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995, in order to ensure the stability and peace of the region, which was further promised with the accession to the EU. This agreement is often seen as Zdeb (2019, 602) explained it, as a plural consociational settlement within the boundaries of a single state, intensifying deep ethnic divides that were already in place.

Politics in BIH is, unfortunately, still dominated by nationalist rhetoric and BIH is still undergoing transition. Even after more than 20 years since the war ended, the international community is still very much involved with the peacekeeping and state-building initiatives and activities. It is also clear that “most if not the entire region is composed of societies emerging from conflict, with leaders intent on retaining power by whatever means possible” (Fouere 2017). The transition that BIH is going through is triple, towards liberal democracy, towards a market economy and institution building (Blagovčanin 2020, 54).

Today, BIH represents a very complicated and at the same time unique and sensitive political system.

The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina² establishes BIH as a parliamentary democracy in which the executive powers are exercised by the Presidency and the Council of Ministers, and the legislative

2 The Preamble to the Constitution of BIH states that “Bosniacs, Croats, and Serbs, as constituent peoples (along with Others), and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina” (Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 1994, Ch. I, Art. 1, p. 3)

powers by the Parliamentary Assembly. However, it can also be seen as a hybrid regime and a country of premature democratisation³, as Blagovčanin (2020, 7, 10, 12) identified it.

Due to failed transitions, BiH is somewhere between liberal democracy and autocracy. Blagovčanin further explained that by combining elements of democracy and autocracy, political elites have been able to maintain their position and power through corruption. Having multi-party elections, BiH has experienced the capture of the democratic process, where state elites enjoy enormous power. The region is still very fragile, and there is a deep mistrust with governing elites and between different ethnic communities (Fouere 2017). Ethno-national elites control the state, institutions, and the democratic process of the country. These political elites have organised themselves into a form of a cartel in order to secure the monopoly over the state as well as the society (Blagovčanin 2020, 6). Cartel party theory is a theory in politics where, as Katz and Mair (1995, 13) state, a political party uses the resources of the state to maintain its position within the political system, aimed at deceiving or gaining an advantage over others. These resources can be control over state funding, control over electoral rules and access to the media (1995, 20). Using their position, dominance, and power they control the entrance of new parties into the cartel, reducing party competition (Enroth 2017, 128). Political scene in BiH is dominated by ethnic parties whose main characteristic is the representation of ethnic interests and agendas. By limiting political competition, political parties in BiH establish greater control and electoral success. They are not motivated to go beyond or do more other than promote and push ethnic party programs and ideas. The theory claims that political parties will use all the disposable resources of the state to maintain and strengthen their position within a certain political system. In BiH it is through multi-ethnic rhetoric and complex history attached to it, where same ethnic parties have been ruling the country for years by dividing, promoting and controlling media to share their ideas of ethnic unity, instead of uniting the country in a fight towards the same goals. Also, as Zdeb (2019, 609) emphasised, there is no culture of political compromise among political parties in BiH, rather each party is more “against” the other and instead of being focused more on interest-based politics, the focus is rather on the ethno-politics. Rhetoric of political parties has not changed in years, even though their leaders have.

3 “Democratisation that takes place before the basic foundations have been laid in terms of functioning institutions and elementary capacities of the state to uphold the rule of law.” (Blagovčanin 2020, 10)

On 7 October 2018, the general elections took place. However, the inability to form the government (because of the disagreements over NATO integration and other issues) for more than one year has hindered regular public and state work, especially regarding adoption of laws, dealing with the ongoing issues and the adoption of the budget. BIH has succeeded in forming the Council of Ministers in December 2019 (14 months after the elections), but the whole political situation was marked by increased polarisation and political antagonism.

The aim of the government in these instances, according to Blagočević (2020, 25) was and still is “to delegitimise any criticism or expression of protest and create a climate where the expression of dissatisfaction or protest is not treated as a legitimate consumption of human rights and freedoms, but as a conspiracy against the existing order.” It is important to mention that the ethnic-based veto rights are very problematic for the overall undisturbed work of the Parliamentary Assembly, because they delay everyday processes or often slow them down (European Commission 2019a, 11). Veto rights are often used to stop or even block certain decisions and processes that are viewed as problematic or threatening to the interests of certain groups or certain entity.

Tanović (2014, 422) indicated that main issues in BIH are constitution structure and system and political and legal concepts. The Constitution of BIH sets out the internal structure of the country as a state consisting of two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS) and Brčko District, which is a multi-ethnic self-governing administrative unit (UN 1995, Art. 3, p. 3). Within this complex administrative system, there are many different goals and aspirations, where RS is trying to fight for greater autonomy and overall power, FBiH and mainly Bosniak political parties would like to have a more centrally governed state, while Croat parties are hoping for a third entity. However, the Constitution of BIH is not in line with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and its Protocols (European Commission 2019b, 27; 2019a, 46) Reforms are necessary in the area of political rights for each and every citizen in BIH, especially after the case-law of *Sejdić-Finci* of the ECHR. *Sejdić* (Roma ethnicity) and *Finci* (Jewish) argued that the BIH’s constitution is discriminatory towards minorities, by preventing them to run for the presidency or parliament. They argued that immediate changes are needed in order to provide equal rights and opportunities for every citizen of BIH. However, there has still not been any significant progress.

Annex X to the Dayton Peace Agreement established the Office of the international High Representative (OHR) as the final authority on the interpretation and implementation of the peace agreement

(UN 1995, Art. I, p. 111; Art. V, p. 114). Bonn powers of the OHR refer to the extensive power to decree legislation and remove public officials if deemed necessary (UN 1995, Art. III, p. 113). Today role of the High Representative has become “function without the meaning“ (Dedović 2019). The executive powers of the OHR need to be gradually abolished (European Commission 2019c, 8). The main problem is the lack of local ownership of political agendas, processes, and developments in BiH, which brings the discussion to the sovereignty paradox. The term sovereignty can be defined as “the authority of a state to govern itself or another state” (Oxford Dictionary 2019) and having its own independence and autonomy. Zaum (2007) explained that BiH has been a playground for different international, national, and local actors and their powers. BiH is also highly dependent on the EU services, expertise, supervision and provided guidance. Institutional building and public administration reform (PAR) are also heavily influenced by EU and international norms and values, even though most of those standards cannot be fulfilled by BiH at the moment.

One must wonder whether EU has a role of an actor in BiH providing its expertise and knowledge in different economic, political, and legal processes or it is just stating and confirming its own regional power within BiH. Not only the EU but UN, OHR and international criminal courts have affected BiH’s sovereignty as well.

Nevertheless, BiH has strongly expressed its wish to join the EU. However, complex constitutional structure and the frequent disputes on the distribution of competences between levels of government delay the alignment of legislation with the *acquis*. Furthermore, BiH has insufficient or no capacities at all to assess and review legal compliance with EU *acquis* and there is no one single centralised body in charge of the European integration, but rather every level of the government has its own EU coordinator (European Commission 2019a, 21).

Even though public administration is not part of the EU *acquis*, it is without the doubt one of the main and more important parts of the EU integration path. There is no EU law and clear system on the organisation of public administration, but administrative, institutional and other areas are subjected to EU regulations and principles.

EU accession is one of the highest strategic priorities of the Government of BiH and its foreign policy. It seems that the EU membership provides great motivation and incentive for BiH to further pursue reforms in accordance with the EU legislation. However, BiH still has a potential candidate status towards the EU. It seems that BiH is in the so called ‘stand-by’ mode when it comes to EU integration.

The path towards EU membership is not easy at all, because in order to have a fully functioning society and state, all of the EU requirements and goals need to be fulfilled and values respected.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Background and Overview

of Public Administration Reform in BIH

PAR is a complex reform that requires a holistic approach and working not only with governments, but also with parliaments, independent institutions, media, civil society, and private sector.

PAR represents an obligation according to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), but also an important condition and requirement for the successful integration of BIH to the EU, where reform processes need to be coherent and have clear agendas and framework. It is a systematic reform that requires the adoption and amendment of a large number of laws, but more importantly probably a constitutional reform, as well (Tanović 2014, 441).

PAR process in BIH started in 2003 with the adoption of the document Public Administration Reform – Our Agenda by the representatives of governments at all administrative levels. Then in 2004, the Council of Ministers of BIH established the Public Administration Reform Coordinator’s Office (PARCO), to ease the implementation of the PAR. In 2006 the Public Administration Reform Strategy for 2006-2014 and the Action Plan 1 were created and adopted. They served as the framework identifying main priority areas for dealing with the socio-economic issues and advancing the rule of law and PAR (PARCO 2006, 7). Reform Agenda for the period 2015-2018 made it even clearer that PAR is one of the key priorities for improvement of the socio-economic and legal systems, and for ensuring fiscal sustainability and quality services to citizens (PARCO 2015a, 1, 7). The Reform Agenda covered: public finance, taxation, and fiscal sustainability; business climate and competitiveness; labour market; social welfare and pension reform; rule of law and good governance; and public administration reform (Sanfey et al. 2016, 39). Many goals were fulfilled, and others were too ambitious, so the Revised Action Plan 1 (RAP 1) for the period of 2011-2014 was created. In 2015, the government adopted the decision and gave their support for the continuation of the unrealised activities from the Strategy and Revised Action Plan 1 (Transparency International BIH 2017, 3). Then in 2018 the Strategic framework for Public Administration Reform 2018-2022

was created. (Council of Ministers of BiH 2018, Art. 1, p. 1). It is a document intended to reform public administration in BiH into more transparent, efficient, effective, and accountable over the next decade (PARCO 2018, p. 11). Achieving this is seen through improving capacity of the public administration by creating more coherent administrative structures and framework, focusing on the improvement of the central administrations with defined goals for the whole state in areas of PAR (PARCO 2018, 31, 41).

However, the aforementioned document was only fully adopted in July of 2020 after the approval of the Government of RS, two years after other administrative levels had done it.

The following areas were recognised as the most important ones to be reformed and improved (PARCO 2018, 14): Policy development and coordination, Transparent public service and human resource management, Accountability, Service delivery, Public financial management.

PAR aims to strengthen public relations capacities in public institutions, gain citizens' support, create positive attitudes towards public institutions, and encourage active civic participation in the decision-making process, to create public administration that is more efficient and more responsible, giving citizens better services with more open and transparent procedures, which would finally create sustainable socio-economic development in the country (PARCO 2018, 54).

Annual Progress Report of PARCO and Council of Ministers of BiH provided data and information for the overall assessment and implemented measures of the Action Plan 1 (until 2010) which was 52.28% and of the Revised Action Plan 1 (2011-2016⁴) which was 68% (PARCO 2018, 15; 2016a, 76) from the previous Reform Agenda (2006-2014). Rather high numbers, but analysis below suggests otherwise.

4 The period is until 2016, because of the duration and deadlines of different projects.

Capacity Building Programs and Projects

The following table provides a list of the most significant projects related to the PAR in BIH in the past years with the indicated timeframe and amounts of contracted budget.

Table 1: Projects related to the public administration reform in BIH

No.	Project name	Reform area	Contracted budget without VAT (in BAM)	Period
1.	Strengthening of Capacities for Strategic Planning and Policy Development – phase II (SPPD II)	Strategic Planning, Coordination and Policy Making	1.762.996,95	June 26, 2016 – November 26, 2018
2.	Establishment and/or Strengthening of Capacities of the Institution/s for Control of Regulations and Establishment of the System of Reduction of Administrative Barriers	Administrative Procedures and Administrative Services	1.078.400,00	May 10, 2016 – May 10, 2018
3.	Building of Capacities for Combat against Corruption in the Structures of Civil Service in BIH	Human Resources Management, Institutional Communication	397.000,00	May 10, 2016 – May 10, 2017
4.	Public-Private Partnership	Public Finance	2.459.025,00	May 26, 2016 – November 26, 2017
5.	Specialist Education Programme for IT Managers	e-Administration	174.400	January 04, 2016 – November 04, 2016
6.	Training of Employees Who Execute the Jobs of Civil Administration for Application of Information Technologies and Work on Computers	Human Resources Management	616.275,00	February 22, 2016 – February 21, 2017
7.	Implementation of Common Services for eServices	e-Administration	1.129.000,00	July 08, 2016 – July 08, 2017

8.	Upgrade of the Unified Information System for business registration in the Republic of Srpska through procurement of necessary HW infrastructure (back up servers)	e-Administration	36.300,00	July 26, 2016 – September 26, 2016
9.	Program of Strengthening Central Level Public Administration	Public Administration	11.148.231,00 (Donor: USAID)	August 01, 2010 – July 31, 2016
10.	Gender Responsible Budgeting (Widening of the Budget Management Information System – BMIS by a software component for gender responsible budgeting)	Public Finance	155.114,42	April 11, 2014 – July 01, 2014
11.	Widening of the Information system for Human Resources Management by Software Modules for personnel Planning and Maintenance of the Internal Labour Market in the Republic Bodies of the Republic of Srpska	Human Resources management	49.220,00	July 04, 2013 – March 04, 2014
12.	Budget Management Information System (BMIS)	Public Finances	639.744,26	July 27, 2011 – January 27, 2013
13.	Blueprint of Development of Central Bodies of Governments in BIH – Implementation of Phase I	Policy Making and Coordination Capacities	1.376.904,32	July 20, 2010 – November 20, 2012
14.	Transposing EU Legislation in the Legal System of BIH	Policy Making and Coordination Capacities	338.250,00	December 08, 2010 – October 08, 2011; extended to February 07, 2012
15.	Development of Performance Management System in the Structures of Civil Service in BIH	Human Resources Management	649.900,00	January 04, 2010 – October 31, 2011

16.	Improvement of Rules and Procedures for Legal, Other Regulation and General Acts Drafting in BIH	Policy Making and Coordination Capacities	671.830,40	June 09, 2010 – December 09, 2011
17.	Training of the Public Relations Officers	Institutional Communication	109.646,05	January 15, 2010 – June 29, 2010
18.	Strategic Communication	Institutional Communication	127.800,00	September, 2009 – February, 2010

Source: PARCO. (2020). PAR Projects. Available at: <http://rju.parco.gov.ba/en/rju-projekti/>

Results of the project ‘Building of Capacities for Combat against Corruption in the Structures of Civil Service in BIH’ are (PARCO 2017, 4-5, 9, 14-17) raised awareness and greater transparency in the field of public administration regarding corruption and increased availability of information to the public; Adoption of anti-corruption measures and mechanisms, as well as preventive measures; 70% of public service officers and 30 trainers were educated on corruption and anti-corruption measures during the duration of the project (PARCO 2017, 5); Handbook on corruption and anti-corruption measures was created for the employees. Identified issues (PARCO 2017, 10-11): Lack of interest of public servants in these issues and the importance of education.

This Monitoring report has not provided any concrete achieved results and analysis on a topic that is of great importance. Corruption as such has been identified as one of the key issues for the PAR. This project mostly dealt with informing and education of public servants on corruption and anticorruption mechanisms, instead of more concrete actions and practical knowledge, which is very disappointing. Furthermore, corrupt, and nepotistic practices in recruitments of public servants are still present. On the other hand, number of public administration employees needs to be reduced, as public administration is still complex and overstaffed, but it seems that number continues to grow despite government’s announcements to the contrary. The civil service is still highly politicised and in need of transparent and efficient recruitment procedures and modern career development.

Results of the project (PARCO, 2015b, pp. 4-6, pp. 22-25) ‘Budget Management Information System (BMIS)’ are as follows. Budget preparation processes, planning and budget management are simplified and time-efficient while potential mistakes are minimised through the use of BMIS, which was implemented at the entity and state level. However, it was not implemented in Brčko District. 260 budget users were linked into the centralised BMIS systems. This created a

more efficient and transparent work done by the ministries of finance and strengthened communication between them. Drafting of reports and analysis was also improved and made easier, timely and more cost-effective. Identified issues (PARCO, 2015b, p. 9, p. 14): Joint project was created for all levels of administration even though there are many differences between them. Brčko District, for example, was not able to successfully implement the project in the envisaged timeframe, due to delays in procurement of equipment and delays in user training phase and software installation and testing phase. Insufficient IT and staff capacities were some of the main overall identified issues of the project.

This is a perfect example of how interconnected projects can be, as partial failure of this project was due to the inadequate IT knowledge, skills which were then needed for the implementation of BMIS. Again, BiH public administration is faced with the issues regarding lack of computerisation and modernisation of its daily work tasks and processes. Mentality and habits of public service employees need to change and follow the existing EU standards in the field.

Budget planning does not only cover financial aspects, but it is also crucial for the overall quality of life in a country. It encompasses not only financial, planning and control activities, but also political, legal, and economic ones (PARCO 2015b, 26). Budget is an important instrument for the policy-making, implementation of programmes, identification of priorities and allocation of resources. And, without a doubt, it is of utmost importance for the implementation of projects.

Results of the project (PARCO 2016b, 3-4, 6) ‘Training of Employees Who Execute the Jobs of Civil Administration for Application of Information Technologies and Work on Computers’ are as follows. Implementation of trainings was done on all levels in BiH, and teaching materials and methodologies were provided. 1780 candidates were trained, tested, and given certifications (PARCO 2016b, 4). Main result was the increased number of civil servants with certifications and verified IT knowledge and skills.

Results of the project (PARCO 2012, 4, 8-9) ‘Transposing EU Legislation in the Legal System of BiH’ are as follows. Civil servants gained knowledge and a better understanding of the EU legislation, especially in the area of methods and manners of transposing EU legislation and translation of legislation. 348 civil servants were trained, while regular additional trainings were also provided (PARCO 2012, 9).

This is one of the more crucial projects, but analysing it above, I noticed that it is very broadly and vaguely described. There were no clear ways of monitoring and measuring the success of the project, no objective indicators, and therefore, it is not possible to give precise and accurate

conclusions on its impact. I do, however, believe that through this project civil servants gained some new overall understanding of the EU legislation, but I am not sure that they gained valuable specific knowledge in order to transpose and harmonise local legislation with the EU legislation.

Results of the project (PARCO 2013a, 3, 6-8) 'Development of Performance Management System in the Structures of Civil Service in BiH' are as follows. The harmonised and objective evaluation system of civil servants based on common principles in BiH that measures accountability and effectiveness of civil servants. Link was made between work evaluation and plan for the professional development of the employees. This project required an amendment of the Law on Civil Service in the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the adoption of Ordinances on evaluation and Handbook on evaluation, which was done in three out of four administration levels (Brčko District had not done it). More than 80% of invited civil servants attended the training organised through this project, except in FBIH where the attendance was lower. 471 HR managers/evaluators and 61 trainers have been trained in the field of civil servants' evaluation (PARCO 2013a, 3).

Identified issues: Not all institutions have been completing their reports on the implemented evaluation of civil servants (PARCO 2013a, 11-12) (mostly institutions from FBIH). There is no common information system for support, and no maintenance system, so funds for this area need to be planned and foreseen.

Even though there have been some positive outcomes, one project cannot and is not enough to influence or improve the quality performance evaluation process and system, because the change of mentality is needed. This process is a rather new concept in BiH as well as the idea of evaluation itself. I believe this is the biggest issue. Employees see performance evaluation reports as one more addition to the list of their daily tasks. They do not see it as a useful tool for achieving long term goals or a potential chance for advancement.

Motivation as well as stimulation, in a form of rewards, advancements or incentives for employees are very significant for the fulfilment of project goals. Those rewards and advancements are based on the evaluation of their work. Civil servants must realise that even though they work for the public administration, there should be certain consequences if they do not deliver desired results and work objectives. On the other hand, there should be incentives and rewards if the desired results and goals are met.

Results of the project (PARCO 2013b, 5-12) 'Improvement of Rules and Procedures for Legal, Other Regulation and General Acts Drafting in BiH' are as follows. Implemented and drafted

comprehensive assessment and analysis of the existing practices and rules in legal, other regulations and general acts drafting. Concrete measures, proposal and recommendations for this area were prepared. Planned trainings of key personnel were implemented, as well as the Handbook on legal regulations. Draft of the nomotechnical rules was completed. Proposals of amendments to the existing and new regulations were also prepared.

Identified issues (PARCO 2013b, 6): Some laws and legal acts are common for the whole state, while others only exist on the entity level, or cantonal or District level. Rules and Procedures for Legal and Other Regulation Drafting in BiH need to be adopted on the whole territory of BiH. Further improvement of human resources for the application of these rules needs to happen.

Drafting of legal regulations is crucial and is the backbone of the whole PAR process. Often legal and strategic documents are adopted late or not at all. This circles back to the already mentioned topic which is the needed political will and support at the highest levels. This project was not as successful as intended at the beginning, due to disparities in adoption of Rules among different administrative levels.

Analysis of the Public Administration Reform in BiH

Even though millions of BAM have been spent on the PAR in the past years, there are few positive results. Lack of more significant progress is the biggest sign that PAR has not been successful as BiH is still at the early stages of a modern and well-functioning public administration.

Conclusions made by analyses and reports from local and international outlets have not been positive either. After more than a decade of work in the field of public administration reforms, there are no concrete results.

The biggest challenge seems to be the continuous improvement and progress among all of the administrative levels in the country. Only when all levels of the government have the same success and progress, then the PAR results can be meaningful and impactful. Also, adoption of PAR documents needs to have the full political support of the whole government.

Projects and programmes are not always harmonised with the medium- and long-term goals and perspective of the strategic documents. Often, some of these documents have not been implemented properly or are missing. There are, also, delays in adoption of the state budget, which, of course, affects and slows down budget execution,

budget spending, public procurement, especially when big projects for all levels are at stake.

The reason why there has not been a greater progress in the area of PAR is because of the delayed start and sometimes unrealised deadlines in planning documents and long procedures for harmonising project documents and procedures for public procurement. Also, often slow implementation of projects and insufficient indicators for progress measuring are the reason reforms and strategies have not reached the level envisioned for the future. PAR for BIH requires progress and improvement in all areas in a shorter period of time, but most importantly, all at the same time!

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I believe that BIH is experiencing a reform fatigue, which was created after many years of constant changes and political turbulences, but also lack of significant and more concrete results. However, the promise of the EU membership still represents the best hope.

Problem definitely lies in constitutional and organisation difficulties, but mostly in the lack of clear and unified political will. The problem is in the very root of what is supposed to be a steering wheel for the PAR. Political parties have lost credibility and are mostly focused on their personal ethnic agendas and rhetoric.

The focus of future action should be increased coherence and reduction of fragmentation within and between different levels of government. This is, however, far more complicated since it is conditioned by the specific constitutional arrangement of BIH.

From the above analysis of different projects, it is clear that the topics covered are very useful and necessary, but it remains to be seen in which direction PAR will develop further and whether it will lead to more significant results in the future.

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Сара Рајић

РЕФОРМА ЈАВНЕ УПРАВЕ И ПРИКЉУЧЕЊЕ ЕВРОПСКОЈ УНИЈИ: СТУДИЈА СЛУЧАЈА БОСНЕ И ХЕРЦЕГОВИНЕ

Сажетак

Јавна управа представља пословање и праксу владе кроз управљање, администрацију и спровођење владиних политика, имајући у виду јавне интересе и друштво у целини. Међутим, анализа политичког система и јавне управе у Босни и Херцеговини (БиХ) открива да је та дефиниција прилично „модификована“ када је у питању поменута земља. Иако је реформа јавне управе један од приоритета БиХ, разлози зашто она није била успешнија су везани за постконфликтну обнову и изградњу државе, јединствену политичку организацију као резултат мировног споразума, вето механизме и етничке квоте које чине да је консензус много теже постићи, и одлаже усвајање важних стратегија. Иако се политичка елита у БиХ залаже за реформу јавне управе и успостављене кључне реформске институције, недостаје неопходно знање и вештине, способност и што је најважније политичка воља. Међутим, реформа јавне управе дефинитивно представља један од кључних услова за будућност БиХ и њеног приступања Европској унији (ЕУ). Без сумње, реформа јавне управе представља сложenu реформу, а у овоме раду, фокус је на студији случаја БиХ

кроз идентификовање њених кључних проблема на путу ка чланству у ЕУ. Овај рад се заснива на аналитичкој методи са истраживачком и дескриптивном сврхом, компаративној правној методи, методи прегледа литературе и на крају, синтези резултата, комбинована са професионалним увидом и закључцима.

Кључне речи: Јавна управа, Јавна администрација, Република јавне управе, Политички систем Босне и Херцеговине, Европске интеграције, Приступање Европској унији, Босна и Херцеговина, Западни Балкан.

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