



## Bosnia Herzegovina



Last update:	7 December 2009
Author:	Marina Ohanjanyan, Sara Schreuder
Population:	4,621,598 (July 2010 est.)
Prime minister:	Nikola Spiric (SNSD), PM of Bosniac-Croat Federation: Mustafa Mujezinovic, Republika Srpska: Milorad Dodik
President:	Zeljko Komsic, chief of the eight-month rotating presidency based on ethnicity
Governemental type:	Emerging federal democratic republic
Ruling coalition:	Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), Party of Democratic Action (SDA), Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SbiH), Croatian Democratic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HDZ BiH), Croatian Democratic Community 1990 (HDZ 1990), People's Party "With
Last election:	Local elections October 2008
Next election:	Parliamentary and presidential October 2010
Sister parties:	Social Democratic Party (SDP) and Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD)

Since the Dayton peace agreement until now, the country's management has been supported by the West through the office of the High Representative of the international community. The EU peace keeping mission, EUFOR, is still present in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and consists of 2000 troops. Nevertheless, ethnic divisions remain present in BiH and even seem to be deepening. If not contained, tensions in BiH could slow EU and NATO integration and deter foreign investors, badly needed because the worldwide economic recession has had a major impact on the region.

### ELECTIONS AND THE POLITICAL SITUATION

The Dayton Peace Agreement signed in 1995 to end the war in BiH, stipulated the Bosnian constitution. As a result, the political system is a complex and an inefficient one. Bosnia is composed of two political entities, Republika Srpska (49 percent of territory) and the Federation (51 percent of the territory). In addition, the Federation is divided into ten cantonal units. BiH is a highly decentralised state with weak state institutions. Its political system is an unhappy mixture of a parliamentary, presidential and half presidential political system. Each political unit has its own governing body, accumulating to 700 elected state officials and more than 140 ministers. As a result, the state system costs approximately 60 percent of the state budget. In the following the Federation of BiH will be referred to as F BiH and the Republic Srpska will be referred to as RS.

#### Political system

##### Bosnia and Herzegovina (state-level)

The parliament consists of two houses. The house of the people's has 15 delegates: five for each ethnic group. The Serb representatives are appointed by the parliament of the RS and Bosniaks and Croats are employed from the



parliament of the F BiH. The House of Representatives has 42 members. Two third are elected from the F BiH and one third from the RS by regular elections for a four year mandate. Their role is to adopt the state budget, to elect the government on the proposal of the presidency, and to adopt laws.

#### The Presidency

The presidency consists of three persons elected by direct election for a four-year mandate. The Serb member of the presidency is elected from the RS and the Croat and Bosniak members are elected from the F BiH. They rotate every eight months on ethnic principle.

#### Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (entity)

Like on the state-level the entity F BiH has a two-housed parliament. The house of the people's has 58 delegates elected from ten cantonal assemblies: 17 Bosniaks, 17 Croats, 17 Serbs and 7 other nationalities. Its role is to protect the ethnic interests of the represented ethnic groups. The House of Representatives has 98 members elected directly from election districts on open lists.

#### Republic Srpska (entity)

Like on state-level, RS has a two-housed parliament consisting of the council of people's and the national assembly. The council of people's has the same responsibilities as the house of people's in F BiH but has a different structure. There are four ethnic clubs: 8 Serbs, 8 Bosniaks, 8 Croats and 4 other elected municipal councils, due to the fact that there are no cantons in RS. In the council right wing parties dominate. The national assembly has 83 members elected for a four-year term, around three quarters elected in multi-seat constituencies and one quarter through compensatory lists.

#### Elections

##### General elections 2006

General elections were held in BiH on the 1st of October 2006. New members of the state-level Presidium were elected, along with the president and vice-presidents of RS. The voters chose also the representatives to the lower house of the state parliament and to the entities' parliamentary assemblies. 53,4 percent of the voters went to the polls, which is in the line with those who voted at the previous elections. Clear winners of the elections were Milorad Dodik's Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) and Haris Silajdžić's Party for Bosnia Herzegovina (SzBiH). Support for the nationalist parties decreased as Party of Democratic Action (SDA), Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) and Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) saw their voters crossing to respectively SzBiH, SNSD and the coalition Hrvatsko zajedništvo (HDZ 1990 HZ-HSS-HKDU-HDU-DEMOKRŠ?ANI), headed by the new Croatian Democratic Union 1990 (HDZ 1990). The shift in support was evident at all levels. However, it did not necessarily mean that the electorate voted for a moderate path on the political scene. The campaign of the 2006 elections was dominated by nationalistic issues and nationalistic rhetoric. Dodik and Silajdzic dominated the media. On one hand, Silajdzic said to be fighting for a civic democracy in Bosnia without ethnic division (e.g. proclaiming his wish to abolish the entities). On the other hand, Dodik threatened to hold a referendum on the independence of RS if its existence would be questioned by politicians in Sarajevo.

##### State-level Government coalition

Representatives of seven political parties in BiH agreed on 3 January 2007 on the line-up of the new ruling coalition of the country. The new Prime Minister is a Serbian representative, Nikola Spiric, from the Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD). The other parties represented in the new government are the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SbiH), Croatian Democratic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HDZ BiH), Croatian Democratic Community 1990 (HDZ 1990), People's Party "With Work for Welfare" (NSRZB) and the Party of Democratic Progress (PDP). This new coalition has 32 out of 42 seats in the parliament. The ministerial posts have been distributed in accordance with the national structure, whereas the parties have decided on the candidates.

##### Presidency

Despite the fact that the constitution includes safeguarding of human rights and fundamental freedoms, election of the members of the presidency discriminates Serbs in F BiH and Croats and Bosniaks in RS. In the October 2006 elections Haris Silajdzic (SzBiH) representing the Bosniaks received 62, 8 percent of the votes. Zeljko Komsic (SDP BiH), representing the Croats, was elected presidency member with 39,56 percent of votes and Nebojsa Radmanovic



(SNSD), representing the Serbs, got 53,26 percent of the votes. The new presidency members are respectively from centre right and two social democratic parties and outvoted the candidates of the nationalistic parties. It is significant to mention that, according to analysts, a large number of Bosniak voters voted for Komsic instead for Silajdzic. This development can be praised as a step forward from the ethnic voting that persists in BiH.

#### Entity Government in the Federation

Two Bosniak parties, the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) and the Party for Bosnia Herzegovina (SBiH), along with the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) of BiH form the entity cabinet in the Federation. The Bosniaks hold the posts of F BiH prime minister and speaker of the F BiH House of Representatives, while the F BiH president and the speaker of the F BiH House of Peoples are Croats. The president and vice-presidents of the F B&H are elected by the house of people's of the F BiH. They are elected for a four-year mandate during which they do not rotate the presidency. President of F BiH cannot be from the same ethnic group as the prime minister.

#### Entity Government in the Republika Srpska

Three Bosnian Serb parties, the Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), the Democratic People's Alliance (DNS) and the Socialist Party of Republika Srpska (RS), have agreed to form the next coalition government in RS. The three parties control 48 of the 83 seats in parliament. Dodik has been appointed as the Prime Minister of RS. The president and vice-presidents of RS are elected directly in general elections for a four years mandate. They are of different ethnic background and do not rotate their functions. The newly elected president is Milan Jelic (SNSD). The vice-presidents are Davor Cordas (HDZ) and Adil Osmanovic (SDA). Osmanovic was re-elected in his second mandate.

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#### Participation of women

After the elections of 2006, the percentage of women in the state-level parliament was 14,3%. With this score, BiH scores average compared to the other countries in the region. The state-level Senate has two women out of 15 senators (13,3%). The state-level government contains no women. Overall it can be stated that women are poorly represented in BiH's politics, but that the country scores not worse than some neighbouring countries.

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#### Local elections 2008

Local elections were held in BiH on the 5th of October 2008. These were the first elections in which representatives of national minorities could be elected to local Assemblies. In these local elections for mayors and city council members, the Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) of Prime Minister of Republika Srpska (RS) Milorad Dodik and the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) of Sulejman Tihic became the big winners. SNSD won in 41 municipalities, SDA in 36, the Croat Democratic Union BiH (HDZ BiH) in 16, the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) in 15 and the Social Democratic Party of BiH (SDP BiH) won in eight municipalities. The results were in line with expectations: they reaffirmed that the three strongest political parties among the three main ethnic groups remain the SNSD among Bosnian Serbs, the SDA among Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) and the HDZ among Croats. The election results have largely followed the ethnic lines and division in BiH. The turnout was higher than most analysts had predicted, at 55%, and higher than in the 2004 poll. However, the voter turnout was higher in rural than in urban areas. In cities such as Sarajevo, Mostar and Banja Luka, the turnout ranged between 40% and 50%.

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## LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

#### Butmir talks

The talks in October 2009 between senior EU and US officials and leaders of the main Bosniak, Serb and Croat parties, aimed to break the political deadlock in the country, ended without agreement on a reform package aimed at ending the lengthy political stalemate and moving the country towards EU and NATO accession. The talks, which



were held at the military camp Butmir near Sarajevo, failed to harmonise the views of the party leaders over much-needed constitutional changes. No agreement was made on giving the central government a stronger role over the semi-independent Serbian and Muslim-Croat entities. Negotiations will continue at a technical level, but most informed commentators and diplomats see little chance of a breakthrough.

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#### Parliament of RS rejects decisions of the High Representative

On 18 September 2009 HR Inzko used his Bonn powers to impose eight laws, mostly dealing with electric transmission utility and the Brčko district. The parliament of RS rejected the laws which it considers as illegally imposed. In October 2009 the Prime Minister of RS Milorad Dodik announced that RS will withdraw all representatives from the state government if the OHR imposes more laws. In a reaction Inzko argued that his decisions are “merely technical”, and not against RS. He was supported by the Peace Implementation Council who called on RS to reconsider its decision, as it directly challenges the OHR authority and the Dayton Agreement. Earlier, on 20 June 2009, Inzko annulled the conclusions previously adopted by RS parliament, obliging the entity’s institutions and officials to oppose any future transfer from the entity to BiH. In a statement, Inzko said the resolution violated both the Dayton Peace Agreement and BiH’s constitution, as it undermines BiH’s exclusive competencies. The conclusions on “Summary on Effects of Transfer of Constitutional Competencies from the Republika Srpska to the Institutions of BiH” were adopted on May 14 by the Republika Srpska National Assembly (RSNA), and entered into force on 16 June. Implementation of the conclusions would undermine the division of competencies between the State and the Entities, seek to give the RSNA veto rights in state level matters, undermine final and binding decisions of the BiH Constitutional Court –a Dayton institution– and determine that the HR’s powers are unconstitutional. As a result, the High Representative decided to use his powers and put the RSNA conclusions out of force.

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#### Constitutional reform

There is no agreement among the Bosnian Serbs, Muslims and Croats on how to proceed with constitutional reform. The Serbs stick firmly to the Dayton formula which gave them a high degree of autonomy, while the Muslims and Croats would prefer a more centralised state. The international community is disappointed about the rejection of the amendments to the constitution. EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn said Bosnia must reform its constitution before becoming a candidate for European Union membership.

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#### EC progress report 2009

In October 2009 the European Commission published its progress report for BiH. The report concluded that BiH has made very limited progress in addressing political criteria. The domestic political climate has deteriorated, and challenges to the proper functioning of the institutions and inflammatory rhetoric have continued. Regarding democracy and the rule of law, there has been little progress towards creating more functional and efficient state structures and towards constitutional reform. Some progress has been made in the area of public administration, but continued efforts are needed. BiH has made limited progress in improving the judicial system, the fight against corruption, human rights and protection of minorities. On the other hand, civil and political rights are broadly respected. As regards to the economic criteria, BiH has made little further progress towards a functioning market economy.

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## IMPORTANT POLITICAL ISSUES

Presence of the international community



The presence of the international community is coordinated through The Office of High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina (OHR). In the post-war years both residents of BiH and the thousands of international officials that are trying to implement the accords, have struggled with the question whether BiH is slowly becoming a viable country or whether it simply is a protectorate waiting to collapse when the international commitment leaves. Clashes between the international community (OSCE and the Office of the High Representative) and Bosnian politicians, and among Bosnian politicians of different ethnic origins make apparent that, at least to date, BiH can not be called a sovereign state in the full meaning of the word.

The international community's High Representative (HR) in BiH assists the authorities of the country to implement the five objectives and two conditions set out by the Peace Implementation Council. The HR's office must stay in place until these goals have been achieved and ensure implementation of the 1995 Dayton accords, which include "peaceful coexistence within one single state of different ethnic communities". When these goals will be achieved, the HR will be replaced by an EU Special Representative for BiH. In November 2009 during a meeting of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) Steering Board the issue of transforming the OHR to an office of an EU Special Representative was not under discussion. According to the PIC, charged with monitoring BiH's progress toward membership in the EU and NATO, BiH has not fulfilled the conditions for this step.

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#### Valentin Inzko, High Representative

On 26th of March 2009, Valentin Inzko, an Austrian diplomat, was appointed as the new High Representative (HR). Inzko succeeded Miroslav Lajcak in both positions, after Lajcak was tapped to become Slovakian Foreign Minister. Inzko is the seventh HR in BiH since the position was established in 1996 under the Dayton Peace Accords. In October 2009 the Prime Minister of the RS Milorad Dodik warned that RS will withdraw all representatives from the state government if the OHR imposes more laws. On 18 September 2009 Inzko used his Bonn powers – which, among others, allow Inzko as the highest authority in the country to sack officials, change and adopt laws – to impose eight laws, most dealing with electric transmission utility and the Brčko district.

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#### The SAA-agreement and road to EU-membership

In October 2005, ten years after the signing of the Dayton peace agreement, BiH started the negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). The start on the SAA was made possible only after BiH agreed on reforms set as a condition by the European Commission (EC) in its Feasibility Study, published in 2003. The EC announced sixteen areas, which needed reform in order to start the negotiations on the SAA. In 2005 reform of the defence, the police and establishment of a state law on the public broadcasting system remained as the last three conditions to be fulfilled. The aim of the reforms is to strengthen the central government, thereby improving the efficiency of the state administration, which will have the power to implement further reforms as required by the EC. Obstacles to initiate reforms came from BiH's smaller entity, RS, which opposes a strong state government at the expense of the entity's powers. In October 2005, RS and the Federation agreed on implementing reforms requested by the EU. After the agreement of October 2005, the additional negotiations caused many problems, especially on the police-reforms. By April 2008, finally an agreement had been reached on the nature of the police-reforms that should unite the Federation's and RS's police-units. These police-reforms were essential to further negotiations on the signing of the SAA. On 16 June 2008 the EU and BiH signed the SAA, which will enter into force once its ratification process has been completed. An Interim Agreement on Trade and Trade-related issues, which was signed on the same day, entered into force on 1 July 2008. The European Commission launched a visa liberalisation dialogue with BiH on 26 May 2008. In November 2009, 95% of the conditions were met. Still, work has to be done on the tightening of border controls and the establishment of an anti-corruption organisation on the state level. A delegation of the European Commission will arrive in BiH in December 2009 to assess Sarajevo's readiness to meet the criteria for visa liberalization. According to Tanja Fajon, MEP and member of the delegation for relations with BiH, visa liberalization will presumably enter into force in July 2010. A new European partnership with BiH was adopted by the Council on 18 February 2008. On 1 January 2008 the visa facilitation and readmission agreements entered into force. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a potential candidate country for EU accession following the Thessaloniki European Council of June 2003.



#### Other constitutional reforms

Further reform of the constitution has been pointed out as essential. The political structures of BiH are due to its complexity seen as a brake on BiH's development and overly costly. The Venice Commission, an advisory body to the Council of Europe, has strongly criticised the present constitution. For example, the constitution allows that only citizens in RS can vote for the Serbian member of the Presidency and in the Federation the citizens are allowed to vote for the Bosniak or Croat candidate.

In November 2005, the U.S. government proposed possible amendments to the Bosnian constitutions and in March 2006, six main parties in BiH agreed on constitutional changes. Although the international community led the negotiations of constitutional reforms, the partaking parties agreed through compromise on the content of the changes. For the first time they realised that changes are essential to BiH's further democratic and economic development. However, on the 26th of April, the amendments did not get the support of the majority in the state parliament.

Main changes would have been the new presidency consisting of one president and two vice presidents, instead of a three partite presidency. In addition, the president would have filled a mainly representational role and would have been chosen by the parliament instead by the people. The House of Representatives would have seen its seat number grow from 42 to 87. Moreover, the House of Peoples would have been granted fewer powers. A key change would have been the provision that the state no longer needed consent of the entities to implement reforms required by the EU. The State would have had jurisdiction over legislation on any issue concerning BiH's EU integration.

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#### Economic development

The country of BiH is going through a transition process from central planning economy to a market economy. The process started just before the war, but 3,5 years of devastation of all economic capacities as well as five years of post-war stagnation strongly influenced the competitiveness of companies.

Today, privatization of companies is still in process, and administrative obstacles to open private enterprises and to start production are high. Existing companies have difficulties to stand on their feet because they lost costumers and their position on the market, and they lack management and new technologies. Most of them are still owned by the state and the government has no money to support them. Some of them are sold for low prices to foreign investors and rich local people. Those companies usually fire the workers, restructure the company, and sell them piece by piece or take large loans for putting them under mortgage and investing outside BiH.

The official unemployment rate for the whole of BiH was estimated at 41,6% in June 2009. Economists differ of opinion on the unemployment rate, since many citizens officially searching for jobs are in fact working on the black labour market.

BiH's agriculture is almost all in private hands, farms are small and inefficient, and the country is traditionally a net importer of food. A sizeable current account deficit and high unemployment rate remain the two most serious economic problems. The country receives substantial amounts of reconstruction assistance and humanitarian aid from the international community but will have to prepare for an era of declining assistance.

The World Bank has announced to continue assisting BiH in the task of undertaking and implementing reforms. The current Country Partnership Strategy for the years 2008–2011 supports BiH's priorities by focusing on two pillars: improving the environment for private sector-led growth and convergence with Europe and improving the quality of government spending and the delivery of public services for the vulnerable. Overall, since 1996, the World Bank has committed over US\$ 1.31 billion to BiH through 62 projects.

Start of the negotiations on the SAA has offered BiH 100 million Euro (2005– 2006) of funds allocated through the CARDS program. Focus of assistance are institutional capacity-building and economic development. Key areas remain the following: public administration reform (including customs and taxation), justice and home affairs-related issues (including police reform, integrated border management, judicial reform) and improving the



investment climate (including trade, education, environment and infrastructure).

On 1 July 2008, an Interim Agreement on Trade and Trade-related issues was installed, which expanded the access of products from BiH to the EU. In 2007, both the country's exports to and imports from the EU increased by 6.3% and 8.8% respectively. The EU remains the main trading partner of the country. It represents 63% of its total imports and 73% of its total exports. Foreign direct investment (FDI) stocks amount to approximately € 4.5 billion, with EU27 accounting for about 50% of total inflows.

#### Economic crisis

As to be expected with a small open economy, the global economic crisis has spread quickly in BiH over recent months, reversing some of the effects of strong growth of the last years and putting at risk macroeconomic stability and some important economic reforms. While there was no serious crisis in the financial sector, private consumption has slowed substantially since the end of October 2008. In August 2009 the European Commission adopted a programme to help BiH to mitigate the impacts of the financial and economic crisis. A grant finance of € 39 million will support the development of small and medium sized enterprises and provide significant investment in infrastructure in the transport, environment, and energy sectors. The € 39 million has been allocated under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance envelope for BiH.

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#### Return of refugees and displaced persons

The 1992–1995 conflict in BiH resulted in the displacement of some 1 million people within the country, as well as 1.2 million refugees, equalling almost half of the population. Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, concerted national and international efforts paved the way for a significant number of Bosnian refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) to return. Still today, however, there are 117,451 IDP registered in the country: within RS 66,000 (nearly the entire Serb ethnic community); within the territory of the Federation BiH 50,500 (of which 85% are Bosniaks, while 12% are Croat); and 750 IDP reside in the Brcko District.

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#### Cooperation with the International Crimes Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)

On 22 June 2004, after a preliminary report on the war crimes in Srebrenica in July 1995 was made public, President of RS and vice-president of SDS Dragan Cavic made a public address to the nation. He stated that Srebrenica is a black page in the history of the Serb people in BiH, that a terrible crime was committed and that those responsible should be punished for it. It was observed however that no apologies were made.

In 2005 RS started to cooperate with the ICTY. In January 2005 RS authorities transferred three war crimes suspects to the tribunal in The Hague. In addition six war crimes trials took place in RS and sixteen more war crimes suspects were arrested in RS. In five out of the six trials, defendants were Serbs. Recent efforts mark a change in the decade long period of impunity by RS authorities. In the Federation twenty trials took place in 2005. In 2005 a Special War Crimes Chamber was established as part of the State Court of BiH.

#### Karadzic trial

During the 1992–95 Bosnia civil war Radovan Karadzic was the President of RS and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. He and Bosnian Serb military leader General Ratko Mladic are accused of ordering the massacre of the U.N.-protected Srebrenica enclave in July 1995. After a long period on the run, Karadzic was arrested in Belgrade on 21 July 2008 and transferred to the ICTY on 30 July 2008. Karadzic faces 11 counts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The trial against Karadzic began on 26 October 2009, but was postponed until 1 March 2010. The decision to postpone the trial follows his refusal to attend the opening of his trial on October 26th, and all subsequent trial days. The former Bosnian Serb leader claims his defence was not ready despite the court's decision that he had been given enough time. The ICTY has ordered the appointment of a counsel to Radovan Karadzic, but recognised his fundamental right to self-representation. The chamber recognised that he would continue to represent himself, with the appointed counsel only taking over as assigned counsel if he continued to obstruct the proceedings.



## SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

### Social Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SDP B&H)

SDP B&H is a multiethnic political party that advocates strong state institutions and implementation of European standards in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The SDP B&H was founded in 1909 by the B&H Trade Union (formed in 1906) and left wing intellectuals. The party changed names several times and was a part of the Communist and Socialist party of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Yugoslavia, too.

In 1992 the SDP B&H was shortly part of the Government for National Unity. When SDA together with HDZ supported the formation of national armies the SDP B&H left the government. In the general elections of 1996 SDP B&H led the coalition called "Joint list", which won less than 5% of the votes. In the local elections of 1997 SDP B&H went alone and doubled its score. In 1998, in the second general elections after the war, the SDP B&H got even more, and created local branches in the RS starting from Banja Luka. In 1999 the SDP B&H merged with the Social Democrats – led by Selim Beslagic. In 2000 part of the Social Liberal Party of Republic Srpska leadership joined the SDP B&H as well as some top-level members of the Croat Peasant Party. In the local elections in April 2000 the SDP B&H won in 21 municipalities in urban parts of the country.

In the general elections in November 2000 the SDP B&H became the strongest party of the country by gathering 21,5% of the vote and securing 9 places in the state parliament. The "Alliance for change" was formed consisting of several parties and important government positions on state level and in the F B&H entity were fulfilled by party members. In the RS the SDP B&H remained weak due to the strong position of the SDS.

Despite the strong engagement in reforms, the party was subject of negative campaigning of the three nationalist parties. The SDP B&H was blamed for the bad economic situation, for not finishing the reforms, and for discriminating respectively Croats, Serbs and Bosniaks. As a result in the general elections of October 2002 the SDP B&H gathered only 16,5 percent of the votes in F B&H and 10,5 % on state level, cutting the amount of seats in the parliament down to 4. SDP B&H supporters did not went to vote because they were not satisfied with the results, expecting too much in 16 months after 10 years of nationalist government.

This defeat caused a split inside the SDP B&H. A part of the leadership wanted to make a deal with the nationalists to secure their positions in the parliaments. The main board of the party refused that and stated clearly that the SDP B&H will not go in coalition with nationalists. The special congress of the party confirmed the political decision made by the president and the main board. As a result, several figures – Ivo Komsic, Sead Avdic, Miro Lazovic and Sejfidin Tokic – left the party and formed a new one. An estimated 2% of the members joined the new-formed party and about 4% were demoralized and left the party without joining any party. SDP B&H has 35% youth and 35% women in its structures due to the fact of well-organized youth and women associations inside the party.

The Main board elects three vice-presidents, general secretary and the Presidency. Previously they were elected directly from the Congress. This solution was made on the request of membership again in order so strengthen the role of the Main board. Moreover, SDP set the new benchmarks in party internal democratization, providing candidates to have primaries and to campaign inside the party and through the media. These kinds of activities are still the taboo in the rest of the parties in BiH. Out of 13 Presidency members five are women and four from the youth, 8 Bosniaks, 2 Croats, 2 Serbs and one from other minority group.

The SDP B&H is a full member of the Socialist International.

Party leader: Zlatko Lagumdžija

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### Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD)

The SNSD is a pro-european party and is focused on cooperation with parties of other ethnic groups. Its political course, however, is still unstable. Its party leader and founder Milorad Dodik has been Prime Minister of Republika Srpska from 1998. Dodik was a protégé of the international community, which regarded him as a moderate politician. In the presidential elections of November 2000, however, Dodik was defeated by the SDS-candidate.

The SNSD was founded in February 1992 in Banja Luka. During the war, Milorad Dodik stayed in Republika Srpska and worked on inter-ethnic tolerance. Already during the war the SNSD was able to win support in Serb held



territories. In 1996, the SNSD participated in the Alliance for Peace and Progress (SMP – the only Bosnian Serb organisation that ran in the elections of both RS and F B&H) for the parliamentary elections. In 1998 the SNSD was the initiator of the Sloga (Concord) coalition, the main opposition group against the nationalist SDS/SRS bloc in Republika Srpska. On 18 January 1998 Sloga succeeded in forming a new government. In the November 2000 elections, however, the SNSD suffered a crushing defeat by the nationalist SDS.

In 2000 the SNSD merged with the Social Liberals of RS (part of which joined SDP B&H) and declared itself as a party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (not only of RS). They started opening party branches in F B&H. In 2002 SNSD merged with the DSP (Democratic Socialist Party of RS).

In the general elections of 2006 the SNSD made good results and proved as the strongest force in the RS. Despite their social democratic orientation, they used nationalism in their campaigns stating that the party protects Serb national interests. The SNSD signed a document with other Serb parties confirming that RS as a Serb entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the best solution. The party membership consists for 99% of Serbs. SNSD is now in government in RS.

The international community and other political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina have accused SNSD and its leader of slowing down the reforms and EU integration of the country. However, SNSD expressed their commitment on EU integration of BiH and argued that all reforms must be approved by all political actors and ethnic groups in the country.

SNSD became full member of the Socialist International in 2008.

Party leader: Milorad Dodik

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#### Socialist Party of Republika Srpska (SPRS)

The SPRS has in the past been accused of maintaining ties with Slobodan Milosevic's party, the Socialist Party of Serbia. It claims not to be a successor to any party, although in the past, Milosevic has expressed his support for this party. The original party leadership was made up of officers of the Bosnian Serb army. The SPRS was the main Serb opposition party against the SDS, although the SPRS shared the SDS's opinion that Republika Srpska should become part of Yugoslavia. The party's views changed over the years from radical Serbian nationalism towards a moderate democratic oriented party. For the September 1998 elections the SPRS joined the Sloga coalition (created by SNSD). In February 2000, however, SPRS left Sloga, because Dodik sacked SPRS' Deputy Prime Minister Gligoric.

In 2002 the SPRS split, since the youth of the party formed the DSP (Democratic Socialist Party) and later joined SNSD. On their last congress the SPRS clearly stated that they will never go in coalitions with SDS again. They also stated that their goal is to create a new image and to involve at least 30% of youth in the party boards and election lists. After these conclusions the leader, Zivko Radisic resigned and left the party. The influence of the party on the political field today is marginal. At the last elections, in 2006, the party lost its seat in the House of Representatives of BiH but gained 3.70% of the vote and retained its 3 seats in the elections to the National Assembly of Republic of Srpska.

The SPRS has no status in the Socialist International.

Party leader: Petar Djokic

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#### Social Democratic Union (SDU)

The SDU was formed in December 2003 by former members of the SDP B&H. Dissatisfaction with the policy of the SDP B&H regarding the refusal to form a coalition with the nationalists and losing the fight for support inside the SDP B&H caused their decision to form a new party. They are for Bosnia Herzegovina as one country by forming a government of national unity with other political parties, including nationalists. The former vice-president of the SDP B&H and member of parliament, Sead Avdic, was the first president of SDU but he left the SDU four months later and became an independent. The party calls itself a party of workers, knowledge and social justice.

The SDU has no status in the Socialist International.

Party leader: Nermin Pećanac



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## OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES

### Party of Democratic Action (SDA)

The SDA is the leading Bosnian party. The overall majority of its members are moderate Muslims. The party is in favour of Bosnia–Herzegovina as a decentralised but unitary state with ethnically mixed cantons. It advocates political and economic unity and cultural autonomy for the ethnic groups. The SDA was founded in 1990 by Alija Izetbegovic, Fikret Abdic, Adil Zulfikarpasic and Omer Behmen. In the first presidential elections in 1990 Fikret Abdic won the majority votes but he stepped down in favour of Izetbegovic. Later Abdic collaborated with the Serbs and formed his own state during the war and now is prosecuted for war crimes. Izetbegovic was the most important political figure of the SDA. During its existence the party, like Izetbegovic, changed its political course. From a multi-ethnic federalist party, the SDA became an ethnic Muslim party. In 1996 one of the influential leaders in SDA, Haris Silajdzic left SDA and created the Party for B&H, thereby reducing SDA for 1/3. From 1996 till 2000 the Party for B&H was in coalition with the SDA and supported by the Liberal Party. On 13 October 2001 Izetbegovic stepped down as party leader of the SDA and Sulejman Tihic was elected to lead the party. After that the party moved toward the political centre, becoming more open to non-Muslim Bosnians. In the 2006 elections, the SDA won a majority of seats in state (9 out of 42 seats), entity (28 out of 98) and cantonal parliaments and formed governments with SNSD, SBiH, HDZ BiH, HDZ 1990, NSRZB and PDP.

Party leader: Sulejman Tihic

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### Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ)

In some translations this party is called Croatian Democratic Community. HDZ is the nationalist Croat party, founded by the former Croatian president Franjo Tudjman. The Bosnian wing of HDZ is officially independent from the Croatian mother party, but its unofficial ties remain close. During the war, the moderate wing of the party lost from the radical wing, which sought unification of Herceg–Bosna (the Bosnian Croatian republic established by ultra-nationalist Herzegovinian Croats during the war) with Croatia. The HDZ is an extremist party, striving for ethnic autonomy, varying from autonomy within the Federation B&H to a confederate structure with Croatia. This has occasionally led to conflicts with the High Representative. Still, the majority of the Croats in Herzegovina vote for the HDZ. HDZ split few times first in 2000 when Kresimir Zubak and Croats from northern Bosnia formed the New Croat Initiative. After that several moderates were expelled from the party. When the OHR dismissed the president of HDZ from all political functions, Dragan Covic (Croat member of the Presidency on state level and former minister of Finance of the F B&H) took the leadership of the party. On the last HDZ convention Barisa Colak (Minister for Security) was elected as President of HDZ with Covic's support. After the elections in 2003 in Croatia, HDZ B&H faced a new split. Due to possibility for B&H Croats to vote for the Croatian Parliament, a part of the membership and local radical branches in Western Herzegovina did not support HDZ B&H candidates but the Croatian Block led by the son of Franjo Tudjman – Miroslav and former Tudjman advisor Ivic Pasalic. The new Croatian Block (HB) in Bosnia was formed and led by Marko Tokic, former Secretary General of HDZ B&H. This was the first time that hardliners left HDZ.

Party leader: Dragan Covic

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### HDZ 1990

On 8th of April 2006 the new party HDZ 1990 was formed. The party was established by former members of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) who disagree with the policies of the HDZ and its leader Dragan Covic. The president of the party is Bozo Ljubic. As the party's name suggests, the founders were all key figures from the original HDZ in BiH who have since walked out or been expelled. The party strives for a federal Bosnian state in which the Bosnian Croats would have a federal unit. HDZ 1990 is a nationalist party which aims at protecting the national interests of Croats in Bosnia, but has marginal influence.

Party Leader: Bozo Ljubic



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#### Serbian Democratic Party (SDS)

Until the September 1998 elections, the SDS was the leading Serb's party in the Republika Srpska. The party's ideological orientation is ultra-nationalist. The party's sole preoccupation with the fate of Republika Srpska, hampers any discussion on other political issues. During and directly after the Bosnian war, all the parties actions and positions seemed to revolve around its political leader, indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic. His role during the war and political positions on most issues were unpredictable. Karadzic was forced to resign from his positions in the party he helped to found, because in the Dayton Accords it was decided that people indicted by the Tribunal are not allowed to hold public posts, and are not allowed to run in any elections. Initially, neither the SDS nor Karadzic himself were inclined to obey this ruling, but with strong international pressure they did it to secure political life of SDS.

Even in the time of the Alliance for Change, the SDS had a strong position in RS. In 2006 general elections SDS won 17 out of 83 seats in the parliament of Republika Srpska, becoming the second party in RS. The party has no seats in the parliament of RS.

Party leader: Mladen Bosic

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#### Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina (SzBiH)

The SzBiH is a moderate but still soft-nationalist Bosniak party formed in 1996 by Haris Silajdzic, a former high official of the SDA, Ambassador to the UN, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime minister. The membership consists for 95% of Bosniaks due to the fact that the party is a split from the SDA. Their vision is a Bosnia Herzegovina without entities, but lacks a plan and program how to achieve this goal. It puts a lot of emphasis on the role of the international community in this process, and to a certain extent ignores the interests of Serbs and Croats. The party program is not specified, but the S B&H declares themselves a centrist party, for liberal market but strong state regulation during transition. S B&H is practically in power since 1990, first inside the SDA, later in coalition with the SDA, after 2000 in the Alliance for Change with the SDP B&H and again in coalition with the SDA after the last elections. Fractions inside the S B&H, consist of those who are for cooperation with the SDP B&H, those who are closer to SDA and those with the interest of holding political positions no matter what coalition partners. In 2006 general elections the party came in second after SDA, gaining 8 seats in the parliament of BiH. Furthermore, SzBiH got 24 seats in the parliament of the Federation of BiH and 4 seats in parliament of Republika Srpska, becoming the biggest Bosniak party in this entity. One of the reasons for this electoral success is that the party led the opposition to constitutional amendments.

Party leader: Haris Silajdzic. Party President: Safet Halilovic

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#### Party for Democratic Progres (PDP)

PDP is a moderate Serb nationalist party formed by Mladen Ivanic, a professor of Economy from Banja Luka University, in 2000. In just few months before elections they gathered considerable support and as a result they became the second party after SDS. PDP is a Serb party, which was supported by the international community. Their program aims at securing the position of the Republic Srpska as a strong entity which has to protect the Serb national interests. PDP supports the idea of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but decentralized and strictly according to the Dayton Peace Agreement. Most of PDP's members are former SDS members and supporters who were not satisfied with the economic reforms carried out by SDS. PDP became part of the Alliance for Change on state level in 2001. After the elections in October 2002 PDP formed a government on state and RS level with support of SDS, SDA, S B&H and HDZ. Mladen Ivanic is former minister of foreign affairs. Former minister for European Integrations – Dragan Mikerevic became prime minister of RS, but Ivanic still has strong influence on him. In the general elections of 2006, PDP became the third party in RS having 8 out of 83 seats in the parliament of RS.

Party leader: Mladen Ivanic

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#### Serb Radical Party of Republic Srpska (SRS RS)

SRS RS is an ultra-nationalist party supporting the idea of a Greater Serbia which – according to the SRS RS –



stretches from Istria to Thessaloniki. Their first goal is the international recognition of Republika Srpska as an independent state, which will allow strengthening ties with Serbia. Under the leadership of Poplasen, the ultra nationalist policy of the SRS has been toned down somewhat, but since the 1998 elections the SRS's isolation was growing. In 1999 the party was suspended by the High Representative, because it was said to promote violence and destabilization of Bosnia. Therefore SRS RS was forbidden to participate in the election process in 2000 but the party pre-registered. SRS RS has strong connections with the Serb Radical Party of Serbia led by indicted war criminal Voislav Seselj. In the 2006 general elections SRS RS got 3% of the votes, gaining 2 seats in the parliament of RS.

Party leader: Milanko Mihajlica

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#### Democratic People's Alliance (DNS)

The DNS was founded when efforts to democratise SNS failed. The DNS claims that they wish to be a multiethnic people's party although the majority of membership are Serbs who left the SDS in 1997/98. In 2002 DNS practically absorbed SNP – Alliance for People's Renaissance, also a split from SDS.

Party leader: Marko Pavic

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#### People's Democratic Union (DNZ)

The DNZ, formerly known as the National Democratic Union, was founded by Fikret Abdic, a Muslim who sided with the Croats and later with the Serbs, against Izetbegovic in the period that the Croat Bosniak alliance fell apart. The Hague Tribunal has indicted Abdic for committing war crimes during the Bosnian war. The party has influence in few municipalities.

Party leader: Rifet Dolic

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#### New Croat Initiative (NHI)

NHI was formed in 1999 after the first split in the HDZ by moderate politicians of HDZ mostly from Central and Northern Bosnia. The founder is Kresimir Zubak, former president of F B&H and member of the state presidency in the first years after the war. NHI is for a unitary Bosnia and Herzegovina, liberal market economy, return of Croats in the Republic of Srpska where they lived before the war (unlike HDZ who tend to concentrate Croats in Western Herzegovina). NHI supported the Alliance for Change. NHI aims at close cooperation with all reform oriented parties, especially HSS.

Party leader: Kresimir Zubak.

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#### Croat Peasants Party (HSS)

Although the HSS has 'Croat' in its name, the HSS is not a nationalist Croat party, but strongly supports the Bosnian-Herzegovinian state. Its backing mainly consists of Croats driven away by the Serbs from central and northern Bosnia. It has less influence in western Herzegovina. The HSS advocates a decentralised administration. The HSS is close to social democratic political thinking, but some top members tend towards a more centrist political view. HSS was a strong supporter of the Alliance for Change that was in power from March 2001 to October 2002.

Party leader: Marko Tadic

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#### Party for Work for Progress (RzB)

This party is a liberal non nationalistic party consisting mostly of Croats from Western Herzegovina. They support liberal market economy and the fight against corruption, especially when HDZ is involved. The party was founded in 2000 by the Ivankovic family, which is a very wealthy family that owns the industry of meat production "Lijanovici". Founders suffered several attacks on their property as well as economic bans on export of their products, but they stayed in politics. The party has good connections with HSS and NHI. In 2002 the party merged with the Peoples



Social Democrats from Banja Luka RS led by Ranko Bakic. In the general elections for the Croatian Parliament in November 2003 the party won more than HDZ in some municipalities, traditionally dominated by HDZ.  
Party leader: Mladen Ivankovic – Lijanovic

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#### Liberal Democratic Party (LDS)

The LDS was formed in 2002 by the merger of the Liberal Party of B&H (LS B&H) led by Rasim Kadic and the Bosniak Liberal Party led by Muhamed Filipovic. The LS B&H was formed in 1990 by a part of the youth wing of the Socialist Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Later SDP B&H). The LS B&H was in government with the SDA, S B&H and two smaller parties in the period 1998 – 2000. After that the LS B&H supported the Alliance for Change in 2001. Before the last elections the two parties merged because they were close to disappearance from the political scene, but that did not help: the LDS hardly passed the threshold of 3%. The LDS is a member of the World Liberal Association.  
Party leader: Rasim Kadic

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#### Bosnian Party (BOSS)

BOSS was formed in 1994 by a former member of the Union of B&H Social Democrats – Mirnes Ajanovic. Ajanovic advocates a Bosniak national state and the party's orientation is radical national socialist. Ajanovic attacks the nationalist government for non-efficiency but his mayor attacks are to SDP B&H as a non-competent and compromising party. Ajanovic's demagoguery is liked by dissatisfied people, especially unemployed, demobilized soldiers and radical students groups. He has a charismatic appearance in public with his "duce" like speeches, in which he accuses everyone for the bad situation in the country without any arguments.  
Party leader: Mirnes Ajanovic