VOTERS, PARTIES, ELECTIONS – HOW TO DEMOCRATIZE POLITICAL PARTIES IN MONTENEGRO AND SERBIA?
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VOTERS, PARTIES, ELECTIONS – HOW TO DEMOCRATIZE POLITICAL PARTIES IN MONTENEGRO AND SERBIA?

BALKAN COMPARATIVE ELECTORAL STUDY: IMPACT OF PERSONAL VOTE ON INTERNAL PARTY DEMOCRACY

Beograd, Podgorica 2016
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INTRODUCTION

This study presents the main findings of the two-year project 'Balkan Electoral Comparative Study: Impact of Personal Vote on Internal Party Democracy'. The main objective of this research was to investigate the influence of electoral systems – understood as the set of laws and party rules regulating electoral competition between and within parties – on intra-party democracy. The project was supported by the RRPP – Regional Research Promotion Programme for social science research in the Western Balkans.

This comparative study analyzes data from two similar countries – Montenegro and Serbia that share not only the electoral system (party-list proportional representation system that does not allow voters to vote directly for candidates or to rank them) but also the political legacies and the cultural value patterns. Research project “Balkan Electoral Comparative Study: Impact of Personal Vote on Internal Party Democracy” also encompasses two case studies that present results from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, countries that introduced preferential voting. The above mentioned case studies investigate whether preferential voting produces different outcomes – such as intra-party competitiveness and democratization, and closer ties between citizens and the political elite.

Given that our research question focuses on institutional design of the political and electoral system, the study is also strongly oriented towards the policy field. Intra-party relations and the predominant role of party leaders is the main obstacle for further democratization of ex-Yugoslavia societies. Focusing on party leaders and identification with them weakens the ties between voters and their elected representatives, and diminishes the importance of party electoral manifestoes and programmatic platforms. We argue that all of these lead to discretionary decision-making in politics, the absence of political accountability, and consequently citizens becoming apathetic observers. For all the reasons stated
above, our study tackles the most important question for our societies – is the intra-party democratization a pre-condition for democratization of our countries? And what is the role of us – researchers with multi-year experience in research projects and working groups for the electoral system reform, in reversing these negative trends, at least partially?

This book is structured as follows: Chapter 1 describes the research theoretical framework that examines advantages and shortcomings of party and personal representation (articles by Milan Jovanović and Vladimir Goati). Chapter 2 presents in detail two empirical studies – the Comparative Candidate Study conducted during 2015 and public opinion surveys conducted in 2016 that address: (1) the impact of electoral system on candidates running for national parliamentary elections and their conduct within the party and towards the voters; and (2) the impact of electoral system on voting behaviors. The case study of Montenegro is presented by Zlatko Vujović, while the case study of Serbia is analyzed in articles by: Jelena Lončar and Boban Stojanović; and Dušan Spasojević and Vojislav Mihailović. Finally, the Chapter 3 provides comparative analysis – the first article by Nikoleta Tomovic and Despot Kovačević compares the levels of intra-party democracy in Serbia and Montenegro; and second article by Srdjan Darmanović and Zoran Stojiljković compares research findings of the entire study.

We hope that the current study will deepen the knowledge and understanding of the complexity and importance of intra-party democracy. We are aware that the solution to the problem does not lie solely in the change of institutional design (which is just one determinant), but that power relations need to be taken into account too. However, our contribution to the debate on the reform of the electoral system (in both states) is in the development of actionable recommendations that are evidence-based and drawn from the large comparative studies. We hope that the current study with actionable recommendations will allow for further development of policies, and thus show the applicability of social and political sciences.
Chapter 1

Theoretical framework
ELECTORAL SYSTEMS BETWEEN PARTY AND PERSONAL REPRESENTATION

The last two decades in political science have been marked by strong expansion of electoral studies. It is, however, obvious that one segment of electoral studies remained beyond the researchers’ focus: the character of representation. Does an electoral system represent only parties as the key political actors mediating between voters and political institutions – like parliament and government – or this representation enables personalization as well: this issue has been increasingly occupying psephologists’ attention.

This aspect of political representation has remained in the shadow due to numerous factors. Here we shall emphasize the two crucial ones. The first one is the general domination of parties – from the sphere of elections and politics, they became an actor who influences, guides, controls almost all relations in the society. The aspiration for general domination required both control within the parties and control of their organized action in the state institutions. Such position required dominance first in the candidacy process and, subsequently, in selection of those who would sit in the parliamentary benches. The second factor is the expansion of proportional representation systems as a reply to the aspiration for a more even representation of various parts of society in the representative body. These systems assumed party lists, which very quickly became a mechanism for suppression of personalization of elections into the background.

The genesis of electoral systems shows that this has not always been the case. The pendulum has generally gone far to the party representation side. The consequences are obvious. All societies with systematically disabled personal-based elections formed an actual low-scale movement for personalization of elections, while the requests for returning the pendulum to the other side or at least to equilibrium are increasingly emphasized and corroborated.
We shall present and analyze virtues and flaws of various forms of party and personal representation, in order to prove that these principles are not antithetical but complementary. A balanced design of electoral system in combining party and personal representation can contribute strengthening of democratic potentials, “better” electoral system, higher acceptance by all actors – voters, parties, candidates – stabilization of party system and, consequently, more harmonized functioning of political institutions.

1. ELECTORAL MECHANISMS AND PERSONAL REPRESENTATION

From historical perspective, the relation of personal and party representation has a form of a sinusoid which shows that the dominance of personal representation was being gradually replaced by the party one; in the last decades, this sinusoid again started to move towards personalization of selection of representatives. Traditional elections in small communities and medieval cities rested upon two rules: majority and direct personal election. This set of electoral rules appeared almost “naturally” and “spontaneously” in many communities at the time of deciding on the procedure of collective voting-based decision-making (Colomer, 2013:3).

Personalism in election of representatives started to fade out with appearance of political parties. Emerging to a certain extent endogenously, as an attempt of winning candidates to attract and keep their voters and be in contact with them, and partly exogenously, through search for forms of aggregation, representation and protection of certain groups, parties did not suppress personalized voting quickly. For institutionalization of party system it was easier to distance from personal voting, as this enabled them to build a specific ideology and programme. “In historical sense, “block voting” for party lists of candidates was not institutionally induced; however, strategy induces behaviour” (Colomer, 2013:4). On the other hand, institutionalization of parties in the relative majority system quickly led to polarization and fabrication of majority, which was producing overrepresentation and underrepresentation of parties. The consequences of single-member constituency and relative majority profoundly disavowed majority electoral system. The electoral system produced governments insensitive for more and more complex and pluralized societies. In such context the key actors – parties, candidates and influential leaders – started to spontaneously search for an efficient cure for the majority system’s problems.

There are three groups of mechanisms constructed by designers as solutions, depending on whether they changed the magnitude of constituency, the bal-
Theoretical framework

lot – manner of voting – or the rules of mandate distribution. The first group reflected in replacement of a single-member constituency with a multi-member one. In the context of mandate distribution under the majority rule and personalized voting, this somewhere enabled parliamentary status to homogenous minorities, however without effects in a two-party system. Another group of mechanisms pertained to cumulative – limited and unlimited – voting, also within majority system and preferential voting in a multi-member constituency. They as well enabled representation of minorities, but did not prevent deformation of representation. The third group of mechanisms finally introduced various mechanisms of proportional representation. Reforms towards obtaining of majority, representation of minorities and better representation of parties started to move the scale from personal towards party representation. The introduction of proportional representation acted as an accelerator in this process. Some of proportional representation systems managed to meet parties’ requests for stronger influence on elections and combine them with traditional and new forms of personal representation.” Others, however, “threw the baby out with the bathwater” and neglected or rejected any form of personal representation.” (Colomer, 2013:6). Thus party representation prevailed over the personal one. The focus on fairer representation of parties for the sake of stabilization of party system went to the extreme: personal representation was neglected; the election was prejudiced as not only the candidacy but also the selection of representatives in fact ended in parties. This opened a set of dilemmas on the character of political representation and enhanced requests for the pendulum to return to normal: to re-enable personalization of elections.

The genesis of electoral systems shows that party and personal representation are not mutually exclusive. Personal representation implies representative’s personal characteristics, reliability and capacity for attracting voters’ trust, fulfilment of electoral promises and responding to voters’ requests. Party representation rests on organization of certain groups of society, articulation and aggregation of their interests and parties’ capacities to define public policies thereupon. Emphasize on personal characteristics in performing public affairs is a constant of political theory. The dominance of party representation, however, did not exclude personal dimension – it exists even in the system of blocked party lists: the candidates’ personal characteristics also define the order on the list in these systems and therefore directly influence the electoral outcome. Education, sex, age, occupation, status, experience, communication skills, charisma... are personal features which influence the position of every individual in the group and the community as a whole and as such make unavoidable components of personal representation. They ultimately make voters to pay a different level of trust to the candidates of the same party for pursuing the same ideology, pro-
gramme and politics. Therefore a specific technology was being developed, for recruitment, selection, nomination and election of individuals who will become candidates for representative functions. Some of these mechanisms are linked to party procedures, intraparty elections; some are the part of electoral systems.

Particularly important from the citizens’ point of view are the ballot paper design and voting mechanisms – do they allow citizens to vote and elect representatives and/or parties. Voting can be categorical and ordinal. The former is expressed in the form of individual voting for a person or a party list. The ordinal voting system implies double-vote and multiple voting. Regarding the use of votes, voting can be limited and unlimited. A voter, depending on electoral system, can cast his/her votes in different ways: for different candidates by preferential voting, alternative and single transferable vote and for candidates on party lists by cumulative voting and panachage. Each of these is linked to other elements of electoral system: constituency, party list and ballot paper design. Each of them enables personal voting and/or party voting. They are used in different scopes and produce different consequences for representation, party system, parliament and government.

A research of personal representation in electoral systems of Serbia and Montenegro – both systems are proportional representation with closed lists – implies an introduction with electoral institutions which enable voters to vote and elect their representatives. The classification developed by Joseph Colomer which presents different manners of voting per criteria of openness for direct voting, observing personal and party representation in the variances of majority, mixed and proportional representation systems, is a very useful methodological matrix for our analysis. It includes all types of electoral systems, various manners of voting, and positions them in the dimensions of personal and/or party representation, illustratively showing that these two forms of representation create a whole – two sides of the same medal – and that it is on the designers to bring them into a harmonized relation in accordance with a set of contextual factors.

His classification distinguishes three forms of voting: open, semi-open and closed. The first form provides voter with only one choice: voting for party candidates. The British model of majority elections by relative majority, the Mexican mixed model, a set of blocked lists proportional representation systems – belong to the closed systems category: they give only one chance, only one choice for the voters. Common for all of them is that they in fact have voting procedures for party representation. Even when having voting for persons, it is directed towards party representation. Another form of voting according to this classification implies voting which leaves to voter a possibility for more than one choice in voting. The French two-round system, the mixed electoral...
Theoretical framework

system in Germany and a set of proportional systems with preferential voting in this category enable voters to vote both for the party and for the candidate. The third form of voting – the “open” one – enables voter to simultaneously vote for more than one candidate and more than one party. The Australian alternative voting model, the mixed variance of electoral system in Lithuania, the transferable vote systems in Ireland, Switzerland etc. belong in this category. (Colomer, 2013:8-10). We shall present different electoral systems according to this classification and from the angle of possibilities offered for personal and/or party representation.

Table 1. Two-dimensional classification of electoral systems Personal representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Ordinal ranking</th>
<th>Open mixed</th>
<th>Open list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(all candidates)</td>
<td>(1 candidate + some party candidates)</td>
<td>(all candidates)</td>
<td>Bavaria, Lithuania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia, San Francisco</td>
<td>Luxembourg, Switzerland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semiopen</th>
<th>Two-round voting</th>
<th>Double-voting systems</th>
<th>Preferential list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1 party candidate + 1 party candidate)</td>
<td>(1 candidate + 1 party)</td>
<td>(some party candidates)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France, USA</td>
<td>Germany, Hungary</td>
<td>Brazil, the Netherlands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Single-round voting</th>
<th>Single vote systems</th>
<th>Closed list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1 party candidate)</td>
<td>(1 party candidate)</td>
<td>(1 party)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Britain, Canada</td>
<td>Mexico, Senegal</td>
<td>Israel, Spain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Colomer, 2013: 10

2. PREFERENTIAL VOTING AND PARTY LIST

 Preferential voting has two important components: voters can cast their votes for the candidate and/or candidates and thus decisively influence their election, all votes are summed up and the parties win the number of seats in the parliament in proportion with the number of votes. The systems resting on majority and using the preferential voting such are the alternative voting and transferable vote do not sum up the votes at the party level. The party and personal representations in preferential systems are conjoint. Voters can decisively influence and personalize the election – the parties are sure that they will not be under-represented in representative bodies.
There is a broad spectrum of variances in using the preferential voting in party lists’ system. They influence the electoral system to produce, under the impact of these variations, significantly different consequences not only for the party system, the parliament and the government but also for the characteristics of party and personal representation. Four dimensions decisively influence these variations. The first one is the ballot paper design: are the personally obtained votes the only prerequisite for the election, or there are other systemic possibilities for the parties to obtain mandates in other ways. By placing the candidates on some positions on the lists, some systems allow parties to predetermine the election regardless the obtained preferential votes – in Belgium (De Winter 2008: 421-2) and Sweden, the majority of elected MPs have such position on the list which can ensure their election regardless the preferential votes. In some electoral systems, the distribution of mandates is carried out at several levels: in some of them, preferential votes have advantage, while at other levels the mandate distribution is decided by the party – in Estonia (Mikkel / Pettai 2004: 333-4). Here it can be spoken about the open lists’ flexibility. The second dimension deals with the non/mandatory use of preferential voting: is it mandatory or optional. In some countries voters must vote for a candidate – Finland (Kuusela 1995:25) and the Netherlands (Andeweg, 2008:494) – while in others they need not to do so – Denmark (Elklit, 2008: 458) and Switzerland. The third dimension pertains to the number of votes available to the voter: in majority of preferential voting countries voters have one vote, but there are examples that voters have as many preferential votes as there are the representatives being elected – Latvia (Mikkel / Pettai 2004: 333). The fourth dimension is the height of the electoral threshold – the limit which defines when the preferential votes will be taken into account in mandate allocation – in Austria, it is enough that the candidate wins the number of preferential votes equal to the Hare quota, or that preferential votes reach one sixth of the party’s votes in the constituency; otherwise, the mandates will be allocated according to the order (Muller, 2008: 404).
Theoretical framework

Table 2. Preferential lists systems – theoretical reach of variations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballot paper</th>
<th>Election of candidates</th>
<th>Number of votes</th>
<th>Treshold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Carvonen, 2013:121

The real world of electoral systems does not contain all these theoretical possibilities, but the current systems have a large number of variations. However, preferential voting is still much less present, because the majority of proportional representation systems use the blocked party lists. The open party lists, which are an assumption for preferential voting, are rather an exception than a rule.

The option for preferential voting is decisively influenced by a set of contextual factors specific for each state. The reasons for reformation of electoral systems are more and more in researchers’ focus. Pointing to the deficit in research of this phenomenon, through tree variables – why preferential voting is introduced in a certain moment, what electoral system is thus abandoned and what was the former party system – stabile and clearly structured or not, Carvonen searches for explanations of electoral reforms aimed at preferential voting in the context of reforms oriented towards the use of blocked party lists. He concludes that “It is not easy to detect a clear pattern which might explain why some countries opt for the PLS while others chose the closed list system.” (Carvonen, 2013:129).

He points out that preferential voting has been introduced both in non-democratic and in democratic regimes; that such manner of voting replaced the relative majority system, the blocked list system as well as mixed systems; finally, that the preferential voting was introduced both in the ambience of stabile and structured systems and in the lack of such environment in the party field. How-
ever, the analysis shows certain tendencies worth emphasizing. First, preferential voting was more frequently introduced in democratic than in non-democratic systems. Second, blocked lists were more used in reforms of non-democratic than of democratic systems. Third, the majority of states which introduced preferential systems did so in the conditions of stabile and structured party systems. The preferential system was a clear option in electoral systems’ reforms in the conditions of democratic orders and stabile party system, which reduced the suspiciousness towards institutional reforms enabling more freedom to voters in using direct voting and election and higher influence of personal representation (Carvonen, 2013:131).

The consequences of preferential voting system are limited with empirical research. What strategic consequences, if any, are produced by preferential systems for behaviour of parties, candidates and voters? In what aspects, if any, personal and party representation in such electoral systems differ from the ambience in the closed and blocked lists systems? What is the difference in consequences for the party system, parliament and government in different variances of preferential systems? These are only some of the questions which answers remain at the realm of hypothetical judgments.

Starting from the rational behaviour of actors in preferential system, it can be expected that parties would use preferential mechanisms to obtain the highest possible number of votes and mandates; the candidates to increase their chances to sit in the parliamentary benches; the voters to decisively influence the election of representatives and parties that would perform the legislative activity and form the government. Through the nomination mechanism, the parties always strongly control the electoral system. The preferential system requires a higher sensibility of parties towards the candidates’ personal characteristics – the voters can much easier punish any kind of inconsistency than in the closed list systems. A blocked list of candidates offers space for winning the mandates only on the basis of contribution in votes for the party list. By obtaining nomination in the preferential system, a candidate has an immeasurably broader space for individualization of electoral campaign. However, since in all systems the electoral success depends on the party’s success, a candidate must take care that the competition for obtaining the highest possible number of preferential votes is in accordance with the party’s need to reach an appropriate rating, in order to translate the individual preferential votes into the parliamentary mandates. Preferential systems place a voter into a position to elect both the persons and the parties which will manage the public affairs. The variances of preferential systems, even in the models which narrow the voters’ possibilities – high threshold, small number of preferential votes, non-mandatory preferential voting, and
possibility for favouring the candidates – nevertheless leave space for a higher influence on elections than in the closed blocked lists systems.

The performances of such electoral systems – expected and empirically verified— are mostly carried out in comparison with closed lists electoral systems and within the category, by distinguishing “strong” and “weak” preferential models. The researchers dealing more thoroughly with the analysis of preferential systems’ effects state that they: have negative effects on political stability; impair the central control of party finances; alleviate the party system’s fragmentation; facilitate changes in the legislative body; lead towards lower party cohesion; increase higher volatility; activate electoral participation.

The empirical backgrounds for these theoretically and rationally formulated expectations from preferential systems are not always convincing. Some data show that preferential voting has an encouraging effect on parties’ stability – preferential voting decreases the change of parties, that is, the level of loyalty is higher. There are no reliable data that preferential systems complicate the control of the parties’ financial flows. The electoral participation, interestingly, is not higher in preferential electoral systems. The use of preferential voting shows different tendencies: in Brazil, only 10% of voters vote for party only (Nicolau, 2004: 125); today, two thirds of voters in Belgium use preferential vote while their share in the 1950s was only 25% (Carvonen, 2013:134). In the Netherlands, today 20% of voters give their votes to the candidates who are not on the fore of the list – these votes are considered preferential, which is much more than in the first post-war decades. Similar is in Austria – in 1990 parties started to use the preferential voting system in order to enhance their party leaders’ campaigns and this brought an increase in preferential voting (Muller, 2008, 408-9). On the contrary, there was no increase in preferential voting in Denmark and Sweden: in Denmark, during the recent decades the party massively opted for an open list variance, but this did not increase preferential voting; in Sweden, preferential voting was decreased – in 1998, when it was introduced, 30% of voters voted by preferential voting, in 2002 26% and in 2006 – 22% (www.val.se). “All in all, such divergent pictures do not corroborate that there is a general will of a part of voters to maximize the effects of their votes or to influence which individuals will obtain the parliamentary seat.”(Carvonen, 2013:134)

The effect of these partial data on the supporters of personalization of elections is alarming. However, researchers show that the requests for preferential voting have been gradually expanding and that the availability and systematization of the data on impacts of such systems are only to confirm and/or refute some of the attributed characteristics.
3. THE SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE SYSTEM

This is a specific electoral system applied in two countries – Ireland and Malta. However, the design of the Irish electoral system has rather been a product of contextual conditions in fight for independence from the British Crown than an aspiration for proportional representation. “Ireland adopted the single transferable vote because in the time of conclusion of the peace agreement both the leaders of independence movement and the British government advocated for it” (Chubb, 1970:146 – 7). The proportionality should have been protecting the significant Protestant minority, the personalized voting the traditional manner of election, whereas the transferable vote system should have provided for both tasks.

The transferable vote system functions on the basis of preferential voting. The candidates are listed on the ballot paper per alphabetical order with their names and addresses, without quoting their party affiliations. The party affiliation was being stated on the ballot papers since 1965, while since 2002 the candidates’ names have been accompanied with their photos and party logos. The voter votes by putting 1 before the candidate of his/her choice, that is, he/she can, but is not obliged to, rank by numbers some or all other candidates. The distribution of mandates starts with counting of votes and calculation of the Droop quota as a minimum for winning the mandates. This is followed by counting of the first preferences on ballot papers. When a candidate reaches the number of first preferences in the amount of the Droop quota, he/she is awarded a mandate while a surplus of votes is transferred to the candidate with the highest number of preferences. If none of the candidate passed the quota for transfer of votes, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is excluded and his/her votes are distributed according to the same principle until all the mandates are distributed.

How the transferable vote system functions from the aspects of proportionality, party and personal representation?

The proportionality of this electoral model is two-dimensional: one picture of proportionality is given by observation based on the first preferences only, whereas the picture is significantly different when observing all preferences. Thus Sinn Féin at the 2002 elections won a bonus of 12 seats in comparison to the number of votes as it obviously had candidates acceptable not only as the first, but also as the second and third choice (Gallagher, 2003:111).

The party representation in this system is very dynamic: the fact that the party can candidate more candidates in a constituency leaves space to the voters for selection within the same political option. This does not mean that it will automatically keep all voters, but that the “loss” can be supplemented by other pref-
erences for its candidates. Who is more dominant in the elections – the party and/or the candidate? Does the party or the personal representation dominate? In spite of a high party identification – in the 1980s as many as 80-90% of votes remained within the same party – the preferential voting did not lose the battle – at the last elections that number decreased to 2/3. (Marsh, 2013:142). Some surveys show that as many as 40% of voters claim that at the election they give advantage to the candidate; that they would vote for him/her even if being in another party; that in giving other preferences the candidate, and not the party, are the guiding criterion for the distribution thereof. (Marsh, 2008:158). However, the limits of party and personal representation still remain ambiguous. Due to the party system's stability some researchers emphasize that party affiliation decisively influences the electoral success (Gallagher, 2003:90). “Good” candidates are motivated to be on big parties’ lists, while they are interested in having the candidates who are popular among voters. But it is not sufficient to provide a strong party’s candidacy. They, by rule, propose more candidates and thus one fifth of the candidates sees the main rival in the candidate from his/her own ranks (Marsh, 2013:143)

The reasons for which the voters select candidates apart from their party affiliation are important for understanding the political consequences of this electoral system. Personal representation is under a strong impact of belonging to a local community. The surveys did document this. Three quarters of voters in polls see the representation of the district as the main job of the MPs, whereas 22% of voters think that fulfilment of the party’s policy is the MPs’ main task (Marsh, 2008:155-6, 184-8). Territorial connection of voters and candidates is a signal both for the MPs and for the parties. The MPs hold regular meetings with voters, at several venues within the constituencies. “Clinique”, as these sessions are called, are oriented towards assistance to the individuals, groups and the community as a whole. The candidates are locals, and in the highest number of cases the individuals who worked in local services. This turned out as decisive for obtaining the first preference as well, which additionally emphasized the personalization of elections. In recent years, the additional funds enabled MPs for a more intensive work in the “Clinique” as they have appropriate staff. The MPs having a long parliamentary experience, a practice in local communities on a set of central- and local-levels tasks, are often an insurmountable obstacle for the rivals who enter the electoral arena for the first time (Marsh, 2013:145-6)

The critics’ remarks pertain to excessive dealing with local tasks as a source of clientelism and neglecting of national politics. The supporters, on the other side, claim that such behaviour is not a product of electoral system, and point out that the centralization of political decisions and the factors of traditional political culture both among the voters and among the representatives create a
strong relation between the MPs and the local community, which is perceived as a quality of political representation. “The Irish already for generations know that they need help of a man of connections and influence to gain benefits from the public authority. Democracy is reduced to granting such a man an official role, so as to become a servant instead of the master.” (Chubb 1970:217).

4. OPEN BALLOT PAPER – THE SWISS SYSTEM

The Colomer’s scheme presented in the beginning of this paper positions this model as the farthest from the outcome point of party and personal representation. This is an open list in proportional representation, which allows voting for the party, the preferential voting as an intraparty competition of the same party’s candidates for seats in the representative body and voting through panachage: the distribution of votes among the lists of all parties and their candidates. Such constellation of the use of vote leaves to voters a broad manoeuvring space for election among parties and candidates; it imposes particular conditions of nomination and electoral campaigns; it offers candidates to alone create the road of success for attraction of voters’ sympathies beyond the party’s mechanism. The Swiss electoral system, undoubtedly complicated, has all these specificities and on it we shall analyze the (un)succes of this model which at the first glance seems as an ideal joint of party and personal representation.

The Swiss proportional electoral model for MPs in the National Council – the central representative body – is based on 26 constituencies which are in fact cantons. This causes a large span of constituency magnitude: the average size is 7.7, but six cantons elect one representative each whereas the majority of cantons elect 34 each. The number of representatives is defined on the basis of the canton’s residents. Small cantons which elect one MP use the majority electoral system. The others implement proportional representation in which voters can vote on the basis of open lists, through cumulate voting, panachage and crossing out the candidates. Few weeks before the elections the voters get a set of ballot papers with names of all parties and a blank ballot paper. Voters make their first choice by choosing a ballot paper with one party’s candidates or a blank ballot paper. If choosing a ballot paper with party list they can vote for the list as a whole with no changes whatsoever, they can vote preferentially, cross out the candidates, vote cumulatively – by adding names of the candidates most acceptable for them, they can panachage – add other parties’ candidates, cumulatively as well. If taking a blank ballot paper they can first write the party’s name on the top and the name of at least one candidate. However, the ballot paper is valid even without the party’s name. The ballot paper is invalid if only stating the
party’s name without the candidate, meaning that in this manner of election the voter is compelled to personalize his/her vote. The voter can write down as many candidates’ names as is the number of MPs being elected in the constituency, cumulate votes by writing the same candidates’ name several times, add names of other parties’ candidates – panachage – two times at the most. The mandates are distributed on the basis of the sum of votes for one party’s candidates and the votes given to the parties on the basis of the Hagenbach-Bichoff quota and allocated to the candidates with the highest number of preferential and/or cumulative votes. “Such big freedom in expression of preferences is seldom in preferential representation systems. Among the “strong” systems of preferential voting (the expression used by Carvonen 2004) – which allow for expression of preferences for the same party’s candidates – only Switzerland and Luxembourg has the preferential representation ballot paper systems allowing for the expression of preferences for other parties’ candidates as well.” (Lutz, 2013:155)

Researchers emphasize two dominant factors which shaped the specificity of the Swiss electoral system. The first one reflects in weak, canton-concentrated parties – the national-level ones started to strengthen only after the World War Two – and the weak central leadership. The other is the path of dependence. It would be logical to constitute the national-level system which had already functioned in the cantons. It is clear that the weak central leaderships had to accept the unblocked party lists as a concession to local boards and candidates, but it is unclear where the opting for panachage comes from. The reply is in an expectation that in this manner the candidates will attract votes of the other parties’ voters. “There is no much evidence why this passed the parliament; however, it can be assumed that the lack of a strong central party structure in the time when the system was chosen both at the national and the cantonal level was important.” (Lutz, 2013: 160)

This electoral model apparently reduces the tension between the party and personal representation to the lowest extent and directs it to the party leadership-candidates relation. Namely, the party leadership’s interest is to win as many party votes as possible and influence who of the candidates shall sit in the parliamentary benches. Candidates are interested for the party to win as many votes as possible as it increases the number of seats, but they are also interested in the highest possible preferential votes of party’s supporters and even more in the votes of voters beyond that circle as this puts them closer to the top of the list and creates more possibilities for acquisition of a parliamentary mandate. Both the parties and the candidates have numerous instruments for achieving the goal.

What do the parties do in order to achieve the best representation possible? The first manner of the party leadership’s influence on the elections is to pro-
pose a larger number of lists in multi-member constituencies. In this manner they involve a larger number of candidates into the competition, with an assessment that in this manner they increase the competitiveness, the quality of offer, show human resource potential, increase the possibilities for attracting the votes beyond the traditional party voters, expand the possibility for gathering votes through panachage. Such manner of candidacy enables parties for meeting the different candidacy criteria and for better representation of different groups, fractions and interests: it is possible to create separate lists per regional-local criteria, lists with female candidates only, with male candidates only, mixed, different coalition lists, lists with candidates living abroad, lists of youth party branches. The risk in expanding the number of lists lies in the reduction of controlling who will obtain the mandate, but this need not to be the party elites’ priority. Submission of more than one list is a rule. Another mechanism for influencing the party representation is cumulating. Namely, parties have right to cumulate votes for certain candidates by indicating their names twice at the ballot paper, same as the voters can do. This pre-cumulating mechanism is a very efficient way for influencing the election of a candidate by the party, particularly in conditions when voters don’t intervene on the ballot paper. However, the parties use this possibility very rarely. Namely, it has been noticed that voters more easily intervene on the ballot paper which contains blank lines, and that they do it by panachage. Parties want to prevent this and therefore they cumulate the candidates’ names. Particularly in large constituencies, parties have problems with fulfilment of all places and therefore use this mechanism. The reason for suppression of cumulate voting by the party is very prosaic: it can cause conflicts in parties as it is an obvious favouring: the stated elections registered an example of only one candidate who was not elected although being cumulated by the party. The third manner of party’s influence on the election is the order on the ballot paper. The alphabetical order, priority to party officials, “zipper” – alternatively women-men, first women then man and vice versa, different groups’ candidates – party favourites, results of the parliamentary work, the number of votes at previous elections etc – are all the criteria for definition of order on the list which influences the election and about which there are ongoing fierce party debates. The statistics says that the alphabetical criterion for listing the candidates is dominating, with notable exceptions. Namely, for traditional reasons parties use different criteria and/or combine them and thus flatter the patterns of political culture of voters in certain cantons. There are no reliable data if and how this influences the elections; however, like the other electoral phenomena, it draws attention and causes disputes and debates. The fourth mechanism is in the political marketing domain. Namely, parties can adjust their campaigns to some candidates. If having in mind that candidates are obliged to contribute
the campaign in financial sense, and even more that in Switzerland they are not burdened with the influence of money, there is no obligation for a party and/or candidate to reveal the source of financing of electoral campaigns, it is clear that higher “contribution” in money will favour the candidate and provide him/her with a strong influence on shaping the campaign.

What do candidates do in order to win the mandate? In such system intraparty competition for candidates is more important than the competition against other parties’ candidates. They have two strategies at their disposal: to run a campaign for attracting the votes of party voters, either by cumulating or by crossing out the other candidates’ names, or to run a campaign for attracting preferential votes of other parties’ voters. These strategies are complementary and candidates combine both approaches. Their aim is to be represented to the broadest possible circle of potential voters, thus increasing the probability that someone will give them a vote and thus make the acquisition of parliamentary status more likely. Therefore, candidates cooperate with different organizations, associations, influential individuals, lead intensive own campaign and frequently position themselves on the edge of political programme or ideology of their party in order to attract votes from opposite parties’ spheres. In the electoral cycle which data we are using for our example – the elections for the National Council of 2007 – as many as 171 out of 198 MPs attempted to ensure re-election, whereas 147 (86%) were successful. Those who did not regain the voters’ trust in nine cases lost from their own party’s candidate, while the others did not get the mandate because their party had not obtained the sufficient number of mandates which would, due to their position on the list and the number of preferential votes enables them to remain in the parliament. In the same time, the data show that the candidates who were re-elected in a vast number of cases won on the basis of votes attracted from other parties’ voters (Lutz, 2013: 167).

What consequences such electoral model produces for party and personal representation? First, at the 2007 elections as many as 47% of ballot papers were not amended, that is, voters had interventions in more than a half of ballot papers – in average 3.6 candidates from other parties appeared on the ballot papers and the scope of interventions at the party ballots where voters intervened ranked between 7.7 to 95%. Second, there is no correlation between the size of the district and the changes on the ballot paper, which could have been expected since voters in large constituencies have a larger possibility of choice and a higher number of votes which can challenge their party loyalty. Third, big parties’ voters are more prone to intervene on the ballot paper, to give votes to other parties’ candidates through panachage, and this is more obvious in the German-speaking cantons than in the French-speaking ones. Fourth, the big parties’ candidates attract fewer votes by panachage than other parties’ voters,
however gaining more preferential votes of voters voting for their party. In larger constituencies the number of votes through panachage is lower than in small constituencies. There is a correlation in votes obtained through panachage and the position on the list: the candidates on the top on the list obtain more such votes than those on the bottom and those being re-elected obtain more votes than the new candidates (Lutz, 2013, 168-74).

5. MIXED ELECTORAL SYSTEMS WITH OPEN LISTS

The electoral models combining the principles of majority systems and proportional representation belong to this category. In the beginning, psephologists met mixed systems with scorn and suspicions, but comparative insight shows that they are used in a significant number of countries and that their share in different models is oscillating. We shall leave aside the theoretical disputes about the criteria and subsequent classifications of such electoral systems; are they mixed or combined; are they dominated by majority or proportional electoral formula in distribution of mandates; are they fully separated or are in some interaction, etc. In this part we shall show the consequences of such models for personal representation based on the data from three states which currently use these systems at the national level, although we should not neglect interesting variances in regional elections in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg which will have to be omitted due to small space.

Japan elects 300 MPs in single-member constituencies and 180 – until 2000, 200 – MPs by proportional representation system in 11 multi-member constituencies. Voter has two votes and two ballot papers. The list for election of MPs in proportional part is only partially open: parties put several candidates on some positions, under the same ordinal number on the list, by rule including the candidates from single-member constituencies. If a party wins a parliamentary seat for that position in proportional distribution, it will belong to the candidate on the basis of results in single-member constituency – the difference between him/her and the winner – observed in a relative terms. This practically means that the party can provide the entry to the parliament also to the MPs who lost in single-member constituencies, on the basis of the position on the list in the proportional part: at the 2003 elections 117 MPs were elected in that manner and 97 in 2009.

Lithuania elects one half of its MPs (70) through the proportional representation system with open list where voters can vote for five candidates. The list which passes the electoral threshold of 5% of seats is distributed on the basis of
post-electoral rating – a complicated formula which implies calculation of the candidate's personal rating on the basis of voters’ votes and his/her party rating – the figure based on the position at the electoral list. In practice, the position on the list defined by the party significantly prejudices the voters’ preferences. Nevertheless, at the 2008 elections one third of seats were allocated on the basis of voters’ preferences. Preferences significantly changed the final order of candidates on the list: in some parties the candidate from the position 7 according to the party’s list was moved to the position 17: in another party, a female candidate on the ordinal number 140 reached the 7th position thanking to the voters’ preferences.

Monaco elects 24 MPs by proportional representation with preferential voting. Voter is free to show his/her preferences, add and cross out the candidates’ names on the list proposed by the parties. Seats are allocated exclusively on the basis of the obtained votes – 16 mandates according to the order of the obtained preferences go directly to the candidates with the highest number of votes, whereas 8 belong to the parties on the basis of the obtained votes of their candidates, which parties again allocate according to the rating of the obtained votes.

The electoral systems’ designers or, rather, the political elites deciding on the design, are not in favour of open lists in mixed electoral systems. The most illustrative proof for this is a small number of examples of states with such practice. Therefore the question is if preferential voting in mixed systems influences the outcome at all, and how? The empirical evidences about this are very scarce. However, in studying this electoral model we must refer to the authorities. “Our most valuable finding is that the voters will use every opportunity for expressing their preferences. Sometimes the changes in candidates’ ranking are significant. Candidates without an advantage on the party lists are often elected in this manner. There are indications that the outcome of preferences is negative for the election of female candidates... In mixed systems preferences are seldom possible, but are certainly important. Maybe the academics should shift their attention from party representation to this issue.” (Massocotte, 2013:111)

6. THE RELATIVE MAJORITY SYSTEM

The electoral system for the House of Commons of the United Kingdom with single-member constituency and election of MPs by relative majority is taken as an etalon of personal representation. Its virtues include the firm connection between the representatives and voters, clear responsibility, strong government with homogenous parliamentary majority in the background and simplicity.
Voters, parties, elections – How to democratize political parties in Montenegro and Serbia?

The drastic disproportionality of the “winner takes it all” system is a common point in electoral literature. Speaking about the party representation, it functions relatively well from the position of the two first-ranked parties. However, in the last century the British party system moved from the three-party (1920), through the two-party in the post-war period, and again the three-party after 1980. The representation of the two leading parties is neither without flaws. Since 1990, the Labour Party has been permanently favoured – they win in constituencies with less votes and traditionally lower turnout (Margetts, 2013:39).

The introduction of new electoral systems – mixed electoral system for the Scottish and Welsh parliaments, as well as for the London Assembly, proportional representation for the EU MPs, the transferable vote system in Ireland – opened new perspectives in implementation of party and personal representation. It turned out that voters gladly use possibilities to divide their votes when elections are simultaneously held at local, provincial and national levels (Rallings/Thrasher, 2003: 71).

Supporters of the British electoral model emphasize its success in personal representation. Single-member constituency and election by majority are equalized with personalization. Researchers defined four aspects of constituency link from the representation point of view, how it functions in practice, i.e. what MPs in fact do for voters. The first aspect is political. It is reduced to the link between voters’ political attitudes and MPs behaviour in adopting relevant laws related to important social issues. The second aspect is service-related. It shows what a MP does for individuals or groups from his/her constituency in solving their problems and/or provision of various benefits. The third aspect is financial: it analyzes MPs’ activities on achievement of benefits for the constituency and voters through attraction of state donations and administrative interventions. The fourth aspect deals with symbolic communication, behaviour which should provide for building and strengthening of trust between voters and elected representatives (Eulau & Karps: 1978:241).

The available data challenge the glorification of the constituency link: only 17% of voters contact their MP – less than in Ireland, Wales (22%) and Scotland (19%) where MPs are elected by different electoral systems (Margetts, 2013:41). Opening of a special site which automatically forward citizens’ letters to MPs, even without knowing their names, did not significantly improve the contacts (Williamson: 2009:6). MPs use Internet, but primarily to inform voters on something. The voters, on the other hand, in 2008 sent 53,527 messages to MPs – 50% contacted an MP for the first time. Single-round relative majority system with single-member constituency did not stimulate promptness among MPs – 60% of them reply on e-mails within 2-3 weeks, in comparison with 67% of their colleagues in the Scottish and Welsh parliaments,
The theoretical framework

...elected by proportional electoral system, who do the same. (www.writetothem.com/stats/2008/zeitgeist)

A particular dimension of personal representation pertains to the role of MP as a “social worker”. There are no formal rules which regulate communication between MPs and voters in constituencies – this function was being developed during the course of time. The original position of local officer and well-doer was gradually disappearing. Under the pressure, MPs devoted more and more time to contacts with their constituencies. Researchers point to two reasons for more intensive communication. They see the first one in the growth of the number of voters and increase of state subventions, inducing the voters’ interest in and complaints against distribution of these funds. The second one is seen in education and awareness of the electorate, which is better informed about its rights and MPs’ obligations, due to media, particularly Internet. They cumulatively gave incentives for MPs activity, and a more active MP was more popular in the constituency which, in return, increased the number of voters’ appeals: in the 1980s, as many as 75% respondents in a poll assessed MPs’ work as good. Thus “… the institution of MP in the UK became... more similar to social worker’s job, although better paid and enriched with parliamentary authority. In fact, public perception shows that voters themselves now perceive MPs as “service providers” in democratic procedure”. (Margetts, 2013:43).

The British electoral model has adverse effects in party and personal representation, emphasize numerous British researchers who perceive the system as a mechanism which exercises pressure on MPs to become well paid social workers, whereas the centralized system of candidate selection suppresses preferential voting. How the voters behave in such circumstances: do they vote for party or for person? Replies to three questions: do voters reward MPs for engagement in constituency; do voters reward MPs who do not act as mere party obedients and do voters punish MPs who break loose from the party leadership and discipline – create coordinates forming the field which shapes the answer to this complex issue.

The opinions that local candidates are mere bearers of party colours, anonymous infantry in the war waged in TV studios, are broadly expanded among researchers in spite of the fact that until 1970 the candidates’ names on ballot papers were stated without party affiliations (Butler/Kavanagh, 1988:191). British voter votes in accordance with party preferences, and this is considered a rational behaviour when voters monitor the MPs’ work and manner of voting much less than in other European countries. “The already mentioned developments in the party system point to decrease of votes along rigidly defined party lines, which does not necessarily mean the increase of preferential vote” (Margetts, 2013:47). As for the MPs “reward” for engagement in constituency in re-election, the
data speak that the advantage of those who had already been in the parliament in comparison with those who for the first time enter the electoral arena for a parliamentary seat is insignificant – 1.5 to 3.5 points. It seems that it is rather the party which awards them with re-election candidacy than the voters. The proofs of voters’ behaviour when MPs show disobedience towards the party leadership’s policy are somewhat clearer, although far from resolute. The Labour Party in 2001-2005 convocation faced with mass disobedience – 47 MPs expressed their disobedience to the party leadership by voting against the war engagement in Iraq. “Nevertheless, it seems that voters only registered general dissatisfaction and disagreement of their MP, and not the way he/she voted about certain issue – MP’s accountability was rather general than directed towards a specific problem.” (Margetts, 2013:48-9)

7. CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

The preferential voting and election of representatives on the basis of their individual characteristics were pushed to the background with strengthening of parties. The search for an objective, on proportional principles based majority led to the domination of parties in political institutions’ design. The obtaining of primacy in institutional field required strong parties and a structured party system. This at first assumed the control of the nomination process and, subsequently, of election of representatives. Personal representation is a victim of this process. The domination of personal representation was replaced by the domination of the party one.

The power of parties, influence of party elites, partocratic processes, poor administration, corruption, particularism, alienation from citizens... are some of the characteristics for which the parties got bad reputation equally in theory and in real life. Electoral systems deprived from mechanisms for possible personal, direct election of representatives are seen as one very important element of that negative reputation of parties in contemporary democratic societies. Extreme critics often see elections as a mechanism deprived from the ability to elect. Nomination processes, selection of candidates; role of media; influence of money are the most obvious proofs for claims that there is voting but there is no electing; that voting is predetermined; that we do not elect those who will represent us but give mandate to parties, i.e. to narrow party groups to delegate those who will decide in representative bodies. These critiques yield strong efforts to establish a balance between personal and party in the election of representatives.
Majority of voters in the world today elect their representatives according to some of majority rules of decision-making. However, majority of states today practice some form of proportional representation. Among them, those using the preferential methods of voting are in an extreme minority.

They are characterized by different mechanisms in electoral system – design of constituency, ballot paper and the manner of voting – which give voters more or less freedom to elect both individuals and parties. In this – still narrow – world of electoral rules, personal and party are not antithetic principles. They are combined and supplemented in various manners. Common for them is that they form a field in which voter can move from possibility to full freedom in election of individuals and parties.

Yet there have been no convincing empirical indicators to confirm the capacities of preferential electoral systems attributed by their supporters and users. They do not inspire higher electoral participation. Voters in systems which allow so rather vote for the party list, less frequently attempting to figure out whom to give the preferential vote. There are claims that they can cause weakening of parties, ruining of party loyalty, political instability. However, several characteristics single them out and make them increasingly attractive, particularly in societies which attempt to decrease or alleviate the parties’ domination and increase citizens’ impact on decision-making.

First, preferential voting systems are a product of a set of contextual circumstances. Examples of them as only a rational choice in reforming non-democratic regimes are rare. Territory-wise, they emerged and are expanding on the European continent, in societies with stable democracy, stable and structured party systems.

Second, the states which adopted the possibility of preferential voting experienced different electoral systems. There are no examples that preferential systems have been abandoned and replaced with other models. Where advocating for electoral reforms in such electoral systems, the reforms are not concentrated on abandoning personalization of voting but on other elements, in fact often on broadening of voters’ possibility to elect both parties and persons.

Third, in electoral systems with dominance of party representation, it is the preferential voting that is proposed as a manner of redesign. The manner for voters to directly elect candidates and parties is perceived as a cure for weaknesses and critiques of a serial of actual electoral systems.

Fourth, it is not a coincidence that many post-socialist states which electoral systems are a kind of laboratories increasingly often shift to or debate about the need for preferential voting. These are societies in which personal representation was systematically suppressed and eradicated, and in the transition
period most often enabled as party representation. Preferential voting is a logical choice for societies which want to enhance the engagement and position of citizens in political processes.

Fifth, designers who recommend preferential voting for reformation of electoral systems suggest gradual use of this mechanism, taking care about a set of contextual factors: historical experiences, political culture, tradition, stability of party system... Institutional reforms which do not recognize these contextual limitations can disavow preferential mechanisms, cement the existing electoral systems and their observed flaws and postpone electoral reforms for a longer period of time.

This is exactly what the case of Montenegro and Serbia points to. The electoral systems used in the two states dominantly provide party self-representation with a series of negative consequences. The public – voters, researchers, media, but also certain politicians, parties – require introduction of preferential methods of voting and return of personal representation. The road of electoral reform from the request, idea and proposition to the realization is long. It should be made more certain through reasoned debate, presentation of models functioning according to these rules, education of all actors about advantages and disadvantages of preferential voting. This study is a contribution to this debate.
INFLUENCE OF PREFERENTIAL VOTING
ON INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY

Political parties emerged approximately two centuries ago as an “accidental social discovery in Great Britain” and spread like an oil drop in water to a vast majority of countries on all continents. At the onset of the third millennium, the exceptions are only a few small countries in the region of the Persian Gulf where political parties do not operate. The term political party arose at the beginning of the eighteenth century, while its usage became more widespread following the publication of Bolinbrake’s book 1733: Une dissertation sur les parties (according to Sartori, 1998: 136). The forms of political gatherings had different denominations until the middle of the eighteenth century: factions (faction), connections (connexion), cliques (clique), coteries, clubs, etc. In the contemporary period in democratic processes, the authorities and the opposition are embodied in forms of parties and it is not exaggerated to state that parties are the “jugular vein” of democracy.

In countries of stable democracy, parties “pervade” all other democratic institutions – they determine the mode of working and the content of parliamentary decisions, government activity is dependent on the orientation of the ruling party (or coalition of parties), the personal composition of election participants is determined by parties, and the outcome of elections is, likewise, determined by the balance of power among the parties. Parties contribute to holding elections in one additional essential way, described by Katz: “Without parties to structure the campaign, to provide continuity from one election to the next, and to provide links among candidates in different localities and for different offices, the resulting elections are unlikely to be meaningful, even if they are technically free” (Katz, 1980: 1). A large percentage of citizens is emotionally attached to parties (“party identification”, party loyalty) which is not to the same extent the case with other democratic institutions, on grounds of which it can be
claimed that parties even take a certain level of priority over those institutions. It is therefore not a coincidence that parties are perceived as an active element, “chief protagonists” of the democratic order, “the driving force” of modern politics (Neumann, 1963: 15), and metaphorically also as “the daily bread of liberal democracy” (Seiler, 1982: 3). The existence of more independent parties (at least two) competing for the support of citizens in fair and equal elections, is one of the constituent characteristics of democracy. The “independent” attributes of fundamental importance, for if more parties operate in a country, which are not independent – as was the case in Poland, Bulgaria, GDR and Czechoslovakia until the “pluralist turnover” in 1989/1990 – we cannot speak of a real, but of an illusory multi-party system where only one party operates, while the others are mere decoration.

Political parties played the decisive role in the global transition process from the authoritarian to the democratic order, denoted by Huntington as “the third wave of democratization” (Huntington, 1991). Their importance is illustrated by the fact that the fight for the democratic turnover in the countries of Central and South East Europe in 1989/1990 was in its decisive phase concentrated on the request for conducting free and equal multi-party elections. In the majority of those countries in 1989/1990 the first peaceful transition of power from the reformed communist parties to the newly formed opposition parties was realized. At a later stage, in some countries of that region (Slovenia, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia) democratic orders of enviable stability were established. “The more some countries of Central and South East Europe progressed in the democratization process and approximated the countries of stable democracy, the more their parties and party systems encountered problems similar to those in the countries of stable democracy” (Puhle, 2002: 59).

The doctrine did not, grossomodo, exert a benevolent stance towards parties and followed their rise with undisguised scepticism, uncompromisingly illuminating their weaknesses and shortcomings. Some authors even elaborated the need for their replacement with different forms of activism: temporary citizen associations, clubs, mass movements, unions (“revolutionary unionism”). The need for abolition of parties was theoretically probably most comprehensively elaborated at the beginning of the twentieth century by Moisei Ostrogorski (also known
as Moisey Ostrogorsky), a lesser-known author in our region. Depicting the non-democratic atmosphere in English and American parties at the end of the nineteenth century and negative influence of parties on democratic relations in the society and parliamentary life, Ostrogorski stood up for their abolition and formation of so called “temporary parties”, i.e. associations (leagues) that would cease operating after the achievement of a concrete political interest (task) that previously led to their formation. However, the political life did not care about the convincing theoretical advocacy of Ostrogorski for abolition of parties, and his brilliantly elaborated ideas sank at the “reefs of political reality”.

The irreplaceable function of parties in the democratic process is convincingly illustrated by the failures of some statesmen in countries of stable democracy – such as Washington in USA at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and de Gaulle in France in the middle of the nineteenth century– to marginalize parties. Apart from the efforts of Ostrogorski to theoretically explain the project of democracy without parties, the doctrine also knows of the endeavours to conceive democracy without parliament, persistently supported by a lot of leftist authors in the middle of the twentieth century (“council democracy”). Freely paraphrasing the commentary of Keane where he emphasizes that there was never a political regime that simultaneously cherished a democratic parliament and abolished civil liberties – nor a regime that abolished parliament and ensured civil liberties – I could emphasise that there was never a multi-party regime which oppressed human and civil liberties, nor a regime without parties, which defended these liberties (Keane, 1988: 182).

The link between the multi-party regime and civil liberties is not conjunctural, but systematic, for it stems from the vital functions of parties among which the most important are selection, aggregation and expression of interest, selection of candidates to get the most important political offices in competitive elections, government formation or government criticism. Some of the listed functions, can, however, be performed by other organizations, but not all of the functions. Unions, for example, perform selection and expression of interest (primarily economic and social interests), but they do not exercise power. Political clubs can criticize the authorities, as can the media, but they do not have the opportunity to express criticism directly in parliament, neither can they “corroborate” their stances and orientation with proposals for a no-confidence motion against

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1 Due to the limited scope of this article, I am not able to more widely elaborate the ideas of this outstanding author and therefore refer those interested to my previously published works: Savremene političke partije, komparativna analiza (1983), Partije Srbije i Crne Gore u političkim borbama od 1990. do 2000. Godine (2000), Partije i partijski sistem Srbije (2004), Partijske borbe u Srbiji u post oktobarskom razdoblju (2006), Partije i partijski sistemi (2008).
the government, request for snap elections, parliamentary boycott, nor through organizing protest gatherings and civil disobedience.

This is even more the case with citizens, individually speaking, that have endlessly different orientations, not only towards political objectives, but also towards the means and methods of their achievement, and hence a political action of citizens, unmediated by parties, would inevitably lead to anarchy. Parties are indispensable precisely to formulate a reasonable amount of political programmes to be decided upon in the elections, on the basis of countless ideas, goals and values (often different and even opposite) represented by citizens.

Even though the sceptical, (conditionally) “anti-party stream” can be considered “an in option” in theoretical thinking on parties in the past two centuries, this stream represents, however, the minority flow of thinking of the contemporary period. As opposed, mainstream theoretical thinking accept parties without the emphasised emotional tension (either negative or positive) as conditio sine qua non of democracy and strives to thoroughly depict and explain not only their “anatomy”, but also their “physiology”. From the middle of the twentieth century, besides parties, party systems have also come into focus, not only as a mere sum of parties, but as a separate whole with distinctive modes of operation and dynamics.

Immersing into the analysis of parties and party systems I am aware that in spite of intensive efforts and valuable theoretical and empirical knowledge and insights at the onset of the third millennium – it cannot be spoken of a generally accepted theory of parties, which leaves the author deprived of “solid grounds” that would ensure security in the selection of personal and assessment of other approaches, stances and hypotheses. The contradiction through which Maurice Duverger begun his capital work Les Partis politiques (first published in 1951, in this paper the ninth edition is used, 1976), is not eliminated even today. This contradiction is formulated as follows: “It is at the present time impossible to give a valid description of the comparative functioning of political parties; yet it is essential to do so. We find ourselves in a vicious circle: a general theory of parties will eventually be constructed only upon the preliminary work of many profound studies; but these studies cannot be truly profound so long as there exists no general theory of parties. For Nature answers only when questioned and we do not yet know what questions this subject demands.”. However, Duverger made a step forward from the vicious circle and offered a preliminary party theory which is a valuable “guidebook” for theoretical and empirical research, upon which a science of parties could be constituted, or as Duverger named it “stasiology”.
Theoretical framework

The quest for a general theory of parties is realized through several approaches, and each of these approaches essentially has numerous “creeks” apart from the “main stream”. The differences are evident already at the attempt to explain the origin of parties, and these differences also have a strong influence on stances on the development and role of parties. In party analysis, Ware, for instance, makes a distinction among the sociological, institutional, and competitive approach (Ware, 1966). The sociological approach – named by Haegel as societal “societale” (Haegel, 2007: 17) – emphasizes the importance of sociological actors on the formation and functioning of parties and party systems. In the framework of this approach, one stream emphasizes the importance of analysis of “party routes” of members and factors that influenced those routes (e.g. Joshua, 2007: 17: 25).

The institutional approach concentrates attention on the influence of political institutions on parties, first of all the electoral system (majority, proportional, mixed) and to a lesser extent, the form of system of government (parliamentary, presidential, and semi-presidential). The competitive approach perceives party leaders as political entrepreneurs that, among many differences in the society, select and politicize those differences that give them the biggest chances of winning and (or) maintaining power.

I mentioned several distinctive approaches to research on parties, but it is interesting that authors of various orientations demonstrated a high level of agreement on emphasizing the importance of oligarchic tendencies and unsustainable narrowing of space for intra-party democracy.

When I talk about intra-party democracy as a criterion I use the position of the member, i.e. the opportunity of his influence on all relevant decisions within the party. I am aware that full internal democracy would mean that all members equally influence party decisions, which is, truth be told, an unattainable ideal. Therefore, intra-party democracy is not a “border quality” which either exists or not, but it is always about the degree of democracy. Under oligarchy I presuppose a system of relations within the party, where the decisive influence on all important decision belongs to a narrow oligarchic group, while the membership is reduced to the role of supernumeraries. At the time oligarchic tendencies reach the “critical point” the atmosphere of loyalty, lack of poltroonery winds round the party. In these circumstances the run towards the party top by extraordinarily adaptable individuals begins with simultaneous absolute obedience of the members towards the leadership. Understood this way, oligarchy is the opposite of democracy.

Parties realize their ideas and orientations by nominating loyal followers to all responsible positions in the state apparatus and pare-state institutions. In coun-
tries without institutionalized opposition, ruling communist parties realized a human resource monopoly in a way that deserves to be described. This practice is not only a historical reminiscence definitely terminated with crash of “real socialism” in 1989/1990, but a present mechanism of domination still existent in some communist countries in Asia and South America (China, Cuba). In post-communist countries it is officially abolished, but the fight against over-dimensioned party apparatuses, especially in countries established by the breakup of SFRY, is still not finished.

Human resource monopoly of former monopolist communist parties is personalized by a nomenclature defined in an official Soviet publication, as follows: “The nomenclature denotes the list of most important posts; beforehand, candidates are questioned, recommended and approved by a district city, regional committee etc. The consent of the party committee is also needed to release individuals, who are part of the nomenclature of an appropriate committee, from their functions. The nomenclature includes people that hold chief positions” (according to Voslenski, 1980: 88). Through the operation of nomenclature, an impressive normative congregation of countries of “real socialism” with constitutionally recognized sovereign rights of the representative body, is hopelessly reduced to a facade, hiding the real holders of political power.

The nomenclature mechanism cannot be measured with anything in countries of representative democracy. In those countries, every party, either ruling or opposition, can have their own “nomenclature”, but their effects cannot be compared with the effects of nomenclature of countries of “real socialism” for two reasons. The first is that in countries of representative democracy the shift of parties in power, brings about shift of nomenclature representatives from social positions. This possibility per definitionem does not exist in one-party systems. The second reason is related to the width of the nomenclature. In countries of representative democracy, nomenclature is a sum of holders, first of all of political functions, while in the countries of “real socialism” it existed in all social spheres: economy, science, culture etc. In the latter case, the space of the nomenclature is unlimited, “escaping” is not possible from it. Voslenski (1980: 132) for instance, considers that at the beginning of the seventies of the last century, the nomenclature in USSR consisted of 750,000 positions. A fuller picture of the real meaning of this institution and its width is observed in the three internal directives of the Polish United Workers Party (PURP) from 1979, whose translation is published in Revue française de sociologie, (no.2, 1979). In the directives of PURP the competences of some party organs are elaborated to the last detail, of all levels in the process of selection of candidates for appropriate positions in the party, government, administration, economy; social organizations, army, mass media, publishing enterprises and scientific institutions. Within the list
that entails several thousands of positions, among others are district fire fighting commanders.

In the political practice of SFRY, the nomenclature was applied in a more sophisticated, but not less efficient way. This was realized through a request for consent of the Commission of the Socialist Union of Working Peoples (SSRN) for the selection of individuals for all politically significant positions. In essence, the consent was decided upon by the SKY, as SSRN represented “a scale model organization”, with no autonomy. Following the SFRY disintegration and the establishment of new states, in these states -as in majority post-communist countries -the term nomenclature disappeared from official usage, but not the nearly identical pattern of influence of ruling parties on employment in the branched state sector. When it comes to Serbia, I estimate that in comparison with the nomenclature period it is even more unfavourable, as in that period the number of managerial posts in which SKY influenced the selection was defined (which means limited) – while currently the ruling parties use their influence to employ their supporters on purely expert and executing positions. That way, parties have become the functional equivalent of employment agencies.

In countries with institutional opposition, the party (parties) which receives the trust of the majority of citizens in free and equal elections forms the government and appoints the holders of most important offices. In this case, the ruling stratum is, generally speaking, accountable to the citizens and to the party. However, the responsibility of ministers and MPs is, actually, reduced to responsibility towards the party, while the possibility of citizens to influence the election (and revocation) of elected MPs is reduced to the minimum. Parties ensure obedience of the elected MPs through using their big and sometimes also decisive influence on the process of nomination and election.

Due to the large expenses of election campaigns, the chances of candidates to win the elections without the support of the party are minimal. For decades, for instance, in Great Britain it would be considered a surprise if an independent candidate won the election. The influence of the party is not reduced only to the nomination of candidates because even after that, the elected candidate it is expected to behave according to the expectations of the party (leadership), for otherwise he risks to be eliminated from the candidate list in the following elections. The dominant position of parties in the election of state officials is shaken by the obligation, set forth for the first time in the USA, of citizens to express their opinion for party candidates for USA President (primary election). This practice is gradually spreading to other countries and gradually curtailing the power of party leaderships (to be discussed more later).
According to organizational theory, a party member that does not agree with its decision (decisions) has three options at disposal: to criticize the decision, to stay silent and, ultimately, to leave the organization. The membership of parties in Serbia, especially after the general elections in 2014 and 2016 – that have actually, substantially altered the “political landscape” of the country – opted for abandoning the defeated parties and joining the winning block, where the Serbian Progressive Party is the pivotal party (SNS). It can be surely assumed that the mass abandoning of some parties and joining others, is not consequence of disagreement with a decision, but is primarily the estimation of members that through transfer to another party they will more easily solve some existential problems (employment foremost). Even though we have not been able to receive results of reliable empirical research, the presented assumption is strongly supported by the trend of party switches foremost from non-ruling towards ruling parties.

Here it is about party membership, but the same phenomenon can be seen in higher levels of party organization. It is, however, by far rarer in countries of stable democracy. In those countries highly institutionalized parties operate, which have, over time, clearly defined their party identity, and thus their “electoral clientele”. In those countries often several per cent of voters decide upon the electoral winner. The situation in Serbia is exactly the opposite (as in most post-communist countries) where parties have a “short history” and still a not enough clear political identity. It is not at all accidental that switches of members from the Labour Party of Great Britain to the Conservative and vice versa – especially when it comes to leaders – is a rarity, while in the post-communist countries that have not clearly defined their identity, the change of a “party shirt” (often multiple) is a common occurrence.

Identity (from lat. idem = the same) denotes a set of characteristics which make the feature of a party, by which it differs itself from others. I will list several important characteristics through which parties express their identity distinction in relation to other organizations. These are the following: programmatic orientations (ideology), belonging to “a party family” (often resulting in involvement in appropriate international party organizations), characteristics of a party leader (often also his closest associates), and finally “the personal composition of a party”. The first two characteristics belong to what Luebbert calls (Luebbert, 1986: 53) the external identity upon which observers recognize a party. The third characteristic is part both of the external and internal identity, while the fourth is related to the internal party identity. The function of the party identity is facilitation for members to form the cognitive map of the political landscape,
which enables them, with minimum consumption of time and energy, polling in the election.

We have noted that switches from one party to the other are very rare in parties with long history and a firm identity, but in this case, an additional difference in relation to “younger” post-communist parties can be observed, especially when it comes to members of the leading circuit. In the first case, The member of the leading circuit cannot receive a prominent position in the new organization right upon the switch, but is obliged to live through the period of “party novitiate”. Through the “novitiate” the member symbolically demonstrates to other party fellows and voters that the reason of the change is not his interest for maintaining (or enlarging) his political power, but it is about a deeper, internal change of the member, or his former party has radically altered its programme and political orientation.

As opposed to the aforementioned, in countries where parties have a short history – Serbia and most post-communist countries certainly fall into this category – party events are full of frequent “runs” of leading officials from one party to another. In these countries the converted leaders/officials are not forced to take a break (novitiate) from their activism, but they directly continue their political career at the same level they previously acted in the former party. As a rule, a member of the main board of the former party gets re-elected (co-opted) and continues activism in the main board of the new party, while the similar situation occurs in case of switches of members of the presidency and other managing bodies from one party to another. It is often also about multiple switches, and individuals managed to record membership in 5 to 6 parties, in a relatively short period of political pluralism. For example, it is indicative that over 70 high-ranking officials – “converts” (sometimes even multiple “converts”) were registered within Serbian parliamentary parties since 1990 until the middle of 2014. I assume that the numerous converts in managing levels shall increase the possibility of conflicts among the “internal” party officials and the “converts” (more thoroughly: Goati, 2008: 162-163), which in the future, at least equivocally, can be an incentive for introducing a certain form of “novitiate”.

The emphasized oligarchic tendencies and political combinatorics that party “headquarters” resort to – remarkably demonstrated by Duverger – led to the exclusion of the people from political life (Duverger, 1970. 36). The critical theses on the influence of party oligarchic relations on democratic relations and the atmosphere in society, have been formulated by many authors, however, it is Robert Michels who is considered to be the founder of the thesis of “Iron Law of Oligarchy“ – perhaps due to his comprehensive and strong argumentation, as well as the emphasized passion that every chapter of his capital book
We will try to interpret in brief the thought of Michels. He generalized his experience of the internal relations within the German Social Democratic Party, whose member he had been for a certain period of time (he is hence considered a “disappointed social democrat”), considering that oligarchization is the inevitable destiny of all parties. Without equivocation, Michels states: “Who says organization, says oligarchy. Organization indicates division of a party into the minority of directors and the majority of those directed. Where the organization is stronger, we find that there is a lesser degree of applied democracy. Consequently it is not the task of science to inquire whether this phenomenon is good or evil, or predominantly one or the other, but there is great scientific value in the demonstration that every system of leadership is incompatible with the most essential postulates of democracy (Michels, 1914: 15). The author repeats the same idea on the fatal character of oligarchic tendencies the following way: “In a party, and above all in a fighting political party, democracy is not for home consumption, but is rather an article made for export (Michels 1914: 25). “The masses, Michels repeats, behave towards their leaders after the manner of the sculptor of ancient Greece who, having modelled a Jupiter Tonans, prostrated himself in adoration before the work of his own hands” (Michels, 1914: 140). These pessimistic remarks on the nature of the masses are unrivalled in a whole pleiad of conservative thinkers.

“The Iron Law of Oligarchy” cannot be easily discarded, in spite of the justified critical remarks that have been expressed by many relevant authors such as McKenzie (McKenzie, 1963: 664-665) Panebianco (Panebianco, 1988: 21-25), Daalder (Daalder, 1966, 169-173), Lipson (Lipson, 1954: 278-281), Lipset (Lipset, 1962: 5) and many others. I will not be mistaken if I affirm that the debate on the ideas of Michels has lasted for more than a century and I have written about them in texts mentioned in point four of this article.

It should not, however, be forgotten that parties strive to present themselves in public in the best possible light and they adopt stances in their statutes that improve the democratic life in a party. Among these stances we shall list the limitation of the mandate of the party leader (often also other party officials), the mandatory competition among two or more candidates for elections for a leading position, and finally, involvement of members and citizens in the formation of the order on a party list, which was until recently an exclusive prerogative of parties. Provisions on limitation of the mandate of party leader exist only in some parties, while when it comes to the success of a party in general elections I was not at all able to find a party statute that would link the survival of the leader at the party helm with the electoral success of the party, as if it weren’t about two essentially interconnected things.
**Theoretical framework**

By virtue of the absence of limiting statutory provisions on the number of mandates and linking the survival of the leader at the party helm, in parties in Serbia some party leaders have demonstrated an outstanding longevity unprecedented in post-communist countries, e.g. the leader of SPO is on that position since 1990 until today (26 years). Vuk Drašković was elected for that position during the nineties when SPO was the strongest opposition party, but has remained at the front position until today, when SPO has become a totally marginal party that can enter the Parliament only in coalition with large parties. In return, it receives several MPs, however, is not represented in the Government with any minister. It is a somewhat similar situation in the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), whose leader is Vojislav Šešelj. This party has also demonstrated wide electoral amplitudes: from the second party in the party system of Serbia in the middle of the nineties, it has constantly been losing support in elections in the first decade of this century, even losing its parliamentary status in the general elections in 2014. Though it returned into the Parliament in the 2016 elections, this return was, however, not “in a big way” as it barely managed to pass the electoral threshold of 5 per cent. For the whole time (1991-2016) Šešelj continued to manage the duties of party president, while his multiannual absence from Serbia (2001-2016) due to his detention in the Hague Tribunal was also without influence.

The second statutory obligation, the mandatory participation of more than one candidate in the electoral run for the party leader, is a measure that can make oligarchic tendencies more difficult to occur, at least because the party congress can elect a new candidate instead of the “eternal leader”. Truth be told, this opportunity can be transferred into mere formality, through influencing that only “suitable members” are selected for congress delegates and (or) deciding that the rights of congress delegates are held only by officials elected for leading party bodies in the previous congress. By virtue of this congress composition, only too young, inexperienced and unknown individuals to the party public, appears as the opponents to the party leader (“sparring partners”). Elections of this kind were held at the First Congress of the Socialist Party of Serbia (1990) when the counterpart to Milošević was Radmila Andelković. Milošević won 95 per cent of the votes, and Ms. Andelković only 5 per cent. A similar epilogue of competitive presidential elections occurred at the IV Congress of the Serbian Radical Party, whereby Šešelj defeated his “opponent”, Maja Gojković with 95.5 per cent versus 4.5 per cent of votes cast. In both depicted cases, competitive elections turned into an electoral farce, in spite of the efforts of the official leadership of SPS to present them as a “democratic breakthrough”.

Organizing competitive elections is really not an easy task for the leader, as participants in the internal fight can easily cross the “red line” and start taking out “dirty laundry” in the heat of the battle, which can negatively influence the
reputation of the whole party. Therefore the party act on elections has to define a fine line that can enable, on one hand, a sincere and equal discussion among candidates, while, on the other hand, it should prevent its transformation into an insurmountable conflict, where the defeated and his followers leave the party upon the completion of the elections. In order to avoid escalation of fight for the presidential chair into an “all or nothing” conflict, I consider that the defeated candidate should be ensured a position in the party presidency. Finally, I believe that the party should form a body consisting of several (possibly 5 to 9) most prominent members to avoid that the election process gets out of hand. This body would closely supervise the election and give participants suggestions, proposals and pronounce warnings.

In addition to the internal provisions of the party statute, some provisions of the electoral law can have indirect and significant influence on the democratic climate in the party. I am convinced that preferential voting is an extremely important factor upon which citizens define their preferences within the list proposed by the party. The party monopoly to independently define the composition of the parliamentary group is this way endangered, and thus the autonomy of this group is increased in relation to the party leadership. A similar influence mechanism of members and citizens on the party human resource politics can be observed in the USA through the so called primary elections. In these elections, party members decide upon the candidates of the Democrats and Republicans in the presidential elections. On the South African continent, membership of some parties in Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay have been given the right to participate in the election of party candidates for the parliament (Russell, McAllister and Wattenberg, 2002: 49). Here the right of members of some parties to decide upon the formation of coalition governments with other parties should be added. A good example is the “party referendum” where, in Israel in the middle of December 2004 members of the Likud party were deciding upon the formation of a coalition government with the programmatically different Labour Party. In the same country, Katz registered an interesting phenomenon of individuals who joined parties to participate in primary elections, whereas they abstained from participation in parliamentary elections (Katz, 2002: 107).

Through adoption of a new electoral law in Serbia, which would enable voters to change the order on a party list as compared with the party proposal, another weakness of the existing law could be achieved and overcome- the emphasized “metropolization” of parliamentary composition which is, according to widespread perception, the “Achilles tendon” of the Serbian electoral system. This change could be achieved through increasing the number of constituencies from one to several. This way, parties could propose only individuals with resi-
Theoretical framework

dence in their own constituency, and in this composition, citizens themselves would be obliged to preferential voting.

While the increase in the number of electoral constituencies could be an in-\textit{tra muros} change of the current electoral system, the acceptance of preferential voting – where voters would have the chance to select one to three candidates, to be on top of the list, through voting for a party– would mean a substantial change that would hit the inertia of voters. The consequence of this inertia is the increase of electoral abstinence, as well as the number of invalid ballots. Otherwise, “the classical democratic theory, as remarkably observed by McKenzie, attributes an unreal level of initiative to party membership and rarely, with noticeable discomfort, talks about leadership in parties (and in the political sphere generally), as if operation of parties would be possible without leadership” (McKenzie, 1963: 636).

To avoid failure of the electoral reform in Serbia, organization of a systematic information campaign of voters would be mandatory in the forthcoming period. In that sense, the experience of Italy should be certainly taken into account, where the proportional electoral system was introduced at the beginning of the nineties and voters had the right to use the opportunity of preferential vote and change the order of candidates in party lists. However, surprise followed the elections, for voters expressed satisfaction with the party’s choice, and only one tenth of voters used the possibility of preferential voting. It is clear that 10 percent of preferential votes, also distributed on a large number of candidates of all parties, were not sufficient to influence the official order. This inevitably opens the question, which percent of preferential votes in relation to the total electorate is the minimum that ensures formation of a new order in party lists?
Chapter 2

Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia
THE IMPACT OF PERSONALIZATION OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM ON POLITICAL PARTIES – THE CASE OF MONTENEGRO

The CeMI carried out two kinds of surveys in Montenegro within the project. One was among the MP candidates and the other among citizens. Two questionnaires were developed for this purpose. Each of the surveys in Montenegro and in Serbia used the same questionnaire. In this way we obtained comparable data which help us in coupling comparison of the data obtained both in Serbia and in Montenegro.

The first part shall analyze the data obtained through the CCS survey in Montenegro. The CCS survey helps us to test the initial thesis that the role of party leadership is dominant in comparison with the members’ and other levels of decision-making. In this chapter of the binary study we shall present a part of findings obtained through the CCS for Montenegro. We shall group the responses on that part of questions into the sections dealing with the candidates’ attitude towards the electoral system, the MP candidates’ selection process and the MP candidates’ role in electoral campaign.

In this manner we shall try to comprehend two dimensions of the issue of intraparty democracy. The extent of the impact on intraparty relations, i.e. the intraparty democracy, shall be assessed from two aspects – the candidates intraparty selection procedures and the possibility for a voter to directly express his/her preference for certain candidate.

On the other hand, in the second part we shall present the findings obtained in the survey of citizens’ attitudes, grouped into two parts. The first one deals with

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1 More about the project and the CCS surveys carried out within the project available at http://balkanelectoralstudies.org/
the MPs’ role in the citizens’ representation process, while the second one deals with the citizens’ opinions about the electoral system.

1. THE IMPACT OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM ON CANDIDATES’ ELECTORAL STRATEGIES AND MPS’ BEHAVIOUR

In the period May-June 2015 the CeMI carried out the survey about the attitudes of MP candidates at the last parliamentary elections of 2012. The survey encompassed 136 candidates, which represents about 16.25% of the total number of MP candidates at the parliamentary elections held in 2012 whereas the participation of candidates from parliamentary parties amounts to 25 – 40%. During the survey the CeMI used a questionnaire which is in the same form being used in more than 40 countries of the world and which consists of questions pertaining to four segments of political engagement of MP candidates: (1) political background and activities, (2) political campaign, (3) issues and policies and (4) democracy and representation.

The legislator in Montenegro has since the introduction of multipartism been “loyal” to proportional representation; however, there were legislative changes which have always been aimed at favoring the ruling party so that V. Pavićević thinks that the electoral system in Montenegro should be “identified as a transition from “prevailingly proportional” (1990), through combined implementation of majority and proportional (1992), then “purely proportional” (1992), towards a kind of a “mix system” (1996), i.e. a compilation of positive elements of the majority model and negative effects of proportional model, and final return to “full proportionality” with one-time introduction of the institution of positive discrimination for one of ethnic minorities in Montenegro (1996, 1998 and 2002)” (2005:59). This system exclusively used closed blocked party list. However, for a period of time the Law allowed parties – after the completed elections and without consent of the candidates from party lists – to decide on MPs regardless their position on the list. Goati calls such system an indirect proportional system. Although this solution has been abolished in Montenegro, it

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2 More about the CCS survey available at http://www.comparativecandidates.org/
3 »We classified such system among the indirect proportional systems (Goati, 2004, 252), basing that assessment on a decision of the German Federal Constitutional Court passed in mid-20th century. This court answered the question whether proportional elections for representative bodies were the type of direct elections required by the Basic Law (1949), i.e. the German Constitution. The Court’s attitude was that the elections organized in accordance with the proportional representation system were direct, providing
rather clearly points to the legislator’s intention, supported by a large number of parties, to grant the dominant position to the party leadership, i.e. to stultify the expressed will of citizens, because the order on the list is not obligatory and the change is not happening on the basis of preferential votes but on the subsequently expressed will of the party.

In addition to this example, it is worth pointing out that until 2004 the Montenegrin political system had an imperative MP mandate, meaning that the MP’s mandate was terminated in case of exclusion from the party on which list he/she had been elected. In this manner the party indirectly had the capacity to deprive the disobedient individual from his/her MP position.

The above mentioned clearly shows that the party leadership in the first 14 years of multipartism: (1) controlled the MP candidates selection process, (2) determined, after the elections, who from the list will become an MP, regardless the order, and (3) by exclusion from the party, was indirectly taking the MP mandate away. In this manner the party leadership entirely controlled the candidate selection process, the election and even the actions of MPs, including a kind of revocation. In this period a MP simply had no weight. Party oligarchies kept the political process entirely under their control. Under such “firm hand” it is not surprising that those who disagreed with the party leadership were finding the only exit in leaving the party or, sometimes, in creating a new one. However, in case of leaving the party, a MP could not keep the mandate.

However, the last ten years nevertheless saw changes – yet mild and very slow. The Constitutional Court in 2004 declared unconstitutional the provision under which the MP’s mandate ceased upon exclusion from the party’s list he/she had been elected from. Also, the so-called closed modified blocked list was for the last time used at the national elections in 2009, i.e. the last parliamentary elections (2012) were held with closed blocked lists. The party has not anymore had the right to subsequently determine who from the list will become a MP. The institutionalization of “free mandate” brought numerous transfers among parties as a consequence. In one period, during the incumbent convocation of the Mon-

\[4\] The anachronistic imperative party mandate in Montenegro was on force until 2004, when it was abolished by the decision of the Constitutional Court, according to which an individual retains the MP capacity also after the termination of membership in his/her party. In this manner, Montenegro joint a vast majority of democratic countreis having a free MP mandate. (Goati, 2007: 106-107)
Voters, parties, elections – How to democratize political parties in Montenegro and Serbia?

tenegrin parliament (2012-2016) as many as 14 MPs changed their party colours – a bit more than 17% of the total number of MPs in the Montenegrin parliament (81). It is interesting to point out that these transfers occurred along the government-opposition division: the MPs elected as oppositional moved to another, still opposition party, therefore not influencing the government-opposition balance of power. The table below confirms this thesis, as all candidates who said that on previous elections they stood for another political party were from the ranks of opposition, while none was from the ranks of the ruling coalition.

Table 1: Did you stand for other parties in previous elections?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Last elections in Montenegro (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ruling coalition</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What remains as an open problem is the selection of candidates and democratic election of party leadership. Therefore, we can say that the conditions for MPs’ work are somewhat improved, however with the remaining problem that models of personalization of electoral system have not been introduced, neither through some form of preferential voting nor through regulated procedures of selection of candidates, nor there are examples that party leadership has been directly elected by the members.

1.1. The attitude of MP candidates towards the electoral system

Such electoral system by rule discourages the role of an individual, both as a member and as a MP candidate/MP.

A large number of MP candidates themselves chose the option that a voter should be enabled to vote for parties only, i.e. for closed blocked lists, if we assume that the existing proportional system is not changing. There is a significant difference between the candidates of the ruling and of the opposition parties. The opposition parties rather opt for a stronger party position. In these answers it is encouraging
that a high percentage (39%) nevertheless thinks that voters should have right to vote only for candidates, i.e. 15.4% for both candidates and parties.

Table 2: How much do you agree with following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Last elections in Montenegro (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ruling coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter should have right to vote only for party</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter should have right to vote only for candidates</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral system should contain elements which provide for stabile majority of party list</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter should have right to vote both for parties and for candidates</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral system should provide for a high level of proportionality of votes and mandates</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When directly asked if majority or proportional representation system was better for the development of democracy, a surprisingly high percentage of candidates chose the combined one (majority-proportional) – as many as 54%, with a surprisingly high percentage of those choosing the majority system and a rather small percentage of those choosing the proportional representation (21%). From these findings one can also see that MP candidates prefer electoral systems with certain kind of personalization.

Figure 1: Basically, there are two types of electoral systems, majority and proportional system. Which system do you find better for democracy development?
**Table 4:** Which electoral system do you consider as better for the development of democracy – majority or proportional representation?- Ruling coalition vs. the opposition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Last elections in Montenegro (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ruling coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of proportional and majority system</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportional electoral system</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority electoral system</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both systems are the same</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The clear commitment to personalization of electoral system is obvious also in answers to the question if the existing system should be added a possibility of preferential voting. As many as 79% are in favour of the introduction of preferential voting in the existing proportional system of lists, whereas only 7% opted against the introduction of preferential voting.

**Figure 2:** Do you consider that the current electoral system should keep / be added preferential voting (so that voter would be able to circle one or more specific candidates from party list)?

- Yes: 79%
- No: 7%
- No answer: 14%
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

**Table 5:** Do you consider that the current electoral system should keep / be added preferential voting – ruling coalition VS. the opposition?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Last elections in Montenegro (2012)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ruling coalition</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such responses can be interpreted in several ways. On this occasion we shall review two of them: (1) self-confidence, i.e. trust into own qualities, (2) insecurity in the existing position, i.e. dissatisfaction with a weak position in the party. It is visible that MPs feel insecure, completely dependent on the opinion of party leadership, and therefore it is understandable that they are searching for security, i.e. chance to earn a MP seat on their own. By last changes of salaries MPs became one of the best paid state officials. The net monthly salary of a MP in the Montenegrin parliament is about 2,000 EUR, or more than 4 average salaries at the level of Montenegro, which speaks that the MP mandate brings not only many privileges but also the financial security.

1.2. The MP candidates selection process

The MP selection procedure in Montenegro is in the exclusive competence of party organs, i.e. it is regulated by party regulations. The Law on Political Parties, adopted in 2004, does not deal with regulation of candidate selection procedure or democratic procedures for election of party leadership. The statutes of political parties regulate these procedures mostly in a similar or uniform way. Montenegro has seen no registered case of direct election of party leadership by registered voters. The regulations about the registration of voters are also missing.
Voters, parties, elections – How to democratize political parties in Montenegro and Serbia?

**Table 6: Do you agree that law should regulate …?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Last elections in Montenegro (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ruling coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP candidates nomination procedures</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures for election of political party leadership</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making procedures in political parties</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows a surprisingly significant percentage of candidates who think that the candidate selection procedures should be regulated. However, a significantly lower percentage thinks that the law should regulate procedures of election of party leadership (27.2%), i.e. the same percentage thinks the same for intraparty decision-making (27.2%). When asked who influenced them to become candidates, it is obvious that the (central) party leadership has the key influence. Incentives for candidacy goes from above (43%) and least from the lower levels.

**Table 7: Who had the strongest influence on your decision to run for the parliament?**

|                                | Total | Last elections in Montenegro (2012) |
|                                |       | Ruling coalition | Opposition |
|                                |       |                  |            |
| N                              | 136   | 50          | 86         |
| Sig                            | 0.91  |                |            |
| Party leadership               | 43.4  | 44          | 43         |
| Party members in my constituency/at local level | 22.1 | 24          | 21         |
| Leadership in my constituency/at local level | 10.3 | 14          | 8          |
| Intraparty elections/party supporters (primary election) | 10.3 | 10          | 10         |
| Party delegates in my constituency/at local level | 5.1  | 4           | 6          |
| Open multiparty elections (open primary election) | 2.2  | 2           | 2          |
| No answer                      | 6.6   | 2           | 9          |
| Total                          | 100%  |              |            |

Candidature is seldom contested, and in 88% of cases it is initiated from the party. Out of a small number of those whose candidacy had been contested (4%), 80% said that it was done by the central party leadership and 20% by the
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

local one. It is interesting that these two levels are in the game. It is possible that exactly this proportion reveals the ratio of impact of local and national levels.

**Figure 3: Has your nomination candidacy been contested? If yes, from whom?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Last parliamentary elections in Montenegro (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ruling coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>sig</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National party Leadership</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local party leadership</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8: Has your nomination candidacy been contested? If yes, from whom?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Last elections in Montenegro (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ruling coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sig</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>main board</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presidency</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>president</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>municipal board</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>member/s</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3. The role of MP candidates in electoral campaign

In a situation when voter can vote only for party and not for individual candidates, it can be expected that the campaign itself is rather party-oriented than individual, excluding for the central party leadership.

Parties in Montenegro have large state-given funds at their disposal. Thus Montenegro is the country with the highest percentage of budget allocation for the work of political parties. The national budget allocates 0.6% (budget for 2016), whereas municipalities are obliged to allocate 1% of their budget for the work of parliamentary political parties. According to the official data, the share of private donations in the overall budget of political parties is insignificant. In 2015 the income of political parties with MPs in the Assembly of Montenegro from the state and local budgets amounted to 5.9 million EUR.

The MP candidates’ answers clearly show that they are aware of the parties’ dependence on state sources. State funds, including local self-governments’ ones, are dominant – 70%. In almost all parties these assets are managed by central party leaderships.

Table 10: What portion of the total sum came from the party, from donations, and from your own private funds? – Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Last elections in Montenegro (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ruling coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party's funds, approximately</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations, approximately</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private funds, approximately</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the data of non-governmental organization CDT from Podgorica, “parliamentary parties in 2015 received from state and local budgets 5.9 million EUR in total, according to the annual financial reports which the parties submitted to the Anti-Corruption Agency. The Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) got the highest amount of the budget money – 1.76 million, while the Democratic Front was paid 1.47 million in total. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) last year received 715 thousand and the Socialist People’s Party (SNP) 712 thousand. The positive Montenegro reported the receipt of 502 thousand and the Bosniak Party of 282 thousand EUR. The Croatian Civic Initiative got 126 thousand EUR and Liberal Party 140 thousand. Forca got 50 thousand, and the Albanian Alternative 34 thousand EUR, whereas the Democratic League in Montenegro got 61 thousand. The Democratic Party got 42 thousand” www.cdtmn.org, accessed on May 25, 2016.
Therefore, the campaigns are centralized and party-oriented, while the central leadership controls the total funds. The answers to the question below show that candidates themselves understand their role in the campaign primarily in the function of the party. Therefore on the 0-10 scale, where 10 are candidate's efforts to present the party, i.e. attract attention towards it, and 0 towards him(her)self/to candidate, the average value is 8.2. It is a bit higher in the case of ruling parties (8.4%) and a bit lower among the opposition parties (8.1%).

**Figure 4:** What was your primary aim during the campaign? Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “to attract as much attention as possible for me as a candidate” and 10 means “to attract as much as possible attention for my party”?

![Figure 4: Chart showing the distribution of candidate's primary aims.]

**Table 11:** What was your primary aim during the campaign? Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “to attract as much attention as possible for me as a candidate” and 10 means “to attract as much as possible attention for my party” – rulling coalition VS. The opposition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Last elections in Montenegro (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ruling coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sig</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...for candidate</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The activities which candidates chose to perform clearly show the lack of the elements of personalization, like posters with candidates’ portraits. Almost one half of the respondents did not have such experience. There is no evidence that the last campaign included posters which exclusively promoted the candidates. They mostly contained pictures of the central leadership or, sometimes, heads of the local-level lists. Some of the candidates appeared on group photos used for the posters.

**Table 12: Were any of the following activities part of your campaign? And if yes, how important were they?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>No, not used</th>
<th>Little important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Most important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Door-knocking, canvassing</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributing campaign material</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>08.1</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>05.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling up voters on the phone</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>01.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting businesses and social organizations</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>09.6</td>
<td>01.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings with party members and/or party groups</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>06.6</td>
<td>06.6</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>08.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media activities (interviews, press releases, writing blogs)</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>05.1</td>
<td>04.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public speeches and rallies</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>02.2</td>
<td>02.2</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal campaign posters</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>02.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct mailing</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>00.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence at party rallies</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>05.9</td>
<td>04.4</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lack of personalization is additionally presented in answers on the table below.
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

**Figure 5:** How strongly did you emphasize each of the following in your campaign...? – NOT MUCH OR NOT AT ALL (4+5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issues specific for your personal campaign</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Particular items on the party platform</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocating the policy demands of the voters in the constituency</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking care of the socio-economic well-being of the constituency</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 13:** Were any of the following activities part of your campaign? And if yes, how important were they?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>No, not used</th>
<th>Little important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Most important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal newspaper adds</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>83.8</td>
<td>03.7</td>
<td>08.8</td>
<td>03.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal spots in radio, TV, movie houses</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>03.7</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal flyers or other campaign material (give aways)</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>05.1</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal web site</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>06.6</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>05.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mailing list to inform supporters and voters about my campaign</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own blog</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>08.8</td>
<td>08.1</td>
<td>03.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook (or other social media)</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>08.8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>06.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube channels</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The answers show that the respondents/candidates position themselves in the campaign in the function of the party and that they do not stand out more than requested by the party. Their engagement/performances are not dominated by personal elements.
2. THE IMPACT OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM ON VOTERS’ BEHAVIOR (GPS)

For the needs of this part of the paper we used the General Population Survey (GPS). In the territory of Montenegro, the GPS was carried out in the period from March 13th to May 25th and included 1001 respondents.

The GPS data in this paper help us to recognize the links between the voters and their representatives, i.e. to comprehend, through the opinions of those who expressed their party affiliations, at least a small part of the intraparty relations. For the purpose of this paper, we grouped the answers into two thematic units: the citizens-MPs relation and the relation towards the manners of representation, i.e. the electoral system.

2.1 Citizens and MPs

In difference from MP candidates who do not show a strong support for intraparty regulation of procedures, although more than expected, the citizens to a very high percentage think that the procedures of decision-making in political parties should be regulated by law (63.7%), similar as when it is about the procedures for election of party leaderships (61%) i.e. the procedure of MP candidates nomination (64.7).

Table 14: Should the law specificaly regulate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making procedures in political parties</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership election procedures in political parties</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP candidates nomination procedure</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a visible trend that citizens want democratization of intraparty processes. The findings from the previous overview are also confirmed in answers to the question how the party leadership should be elected. A bit less than one third is in favour of traditional manner of leadership election, through congress, i.e. the largest organ of the party (29%). What is surprising is a rather high openness of citizens to direct elections within the party (24%), i.e. for elections open also for non-party members, i.e. all interested citizens (32%).

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6 General Population Survey
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

**Figure 6**: As for the election of party leadership, in what manner in your opinion it should be elected?

![Pie chart showing the distribution of opinions on the election of party leadership.]

**Table 15**: In your opinion, how should party leadership be elected?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Will vote at elections</th>
<th>Indecisive</th>
<th>Would vote at elections</th>
<th>Voted at elections</th>
<th>Political party membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At elections which all</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interested citizens could</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participate in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At party congress (the</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highest party organ)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At direct intraparty</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elections by all members of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**: The table shows the distribution of opinions on the election of party leadership, with the percentages indicating the number of respondents who believe the party leadership should be elected in each manner.
It can be concluded that voters want changes within the parties, which they perceive as very closed; they are ready to support something like open primary elections for presidential candidates (the USA) – in this case we indeed speak about the election for the president of the party. Montenegrin parties have poorly developed infrastructure. In this survey 12% of the respondents stated that they were members of political parties. However, that these structures are undeveloped, at least in the largest number of political parties, is proved by the data that only 65% of party members participated at elections for members of party organs. Therefore it is not surprising that respondents opted for party elections which would be open not only for political parties’ members.

**Figure 7: Did you participate in election of members of your party organs?**

Basis: political parties’ members (12% of the target population)

![Pie chart showing 35% Yes and 65% No participation in party elections.]

### 2.2 Citizens and the electoral system

Citizens’ opinions about the electoral system should be taken very carefully, considering that they are not familiar with characteristics of certain electoral systems. Having in mind this information through this survey we checked the citizens’ knowledge about some key concepts. Thus, asking questions without predefined answers showed an extremely high level of citizens’ ignorance about the electoral system being used in Montenegro. The table below shows that only 4.9 % respondents correctly answered this question, i.e. that Montenegro uses proportional representation. An extremely high percentage immediately said that they didn’t know the answer to this question.
Table 16: Which electoral system is used in Montenegro at the republic parliamentary elections (for the Assembly of Montenegro)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>18-29</th>
<th>30-44</th>
<th>45-60</th>
<th>&gt;60</th>
<th>Elementary school</th>
<th>High school</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Montenegrin</th>
<th>Serbs</th>
<th>Muslims and Bosnians</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting of citizens</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparty system</td>
<td>07.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority system</td>
<td>05.6</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportional representation</td>
<td>04.9</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary system</td>
<td>03.0</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other replies</td>
<td>04.4</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This conclusion is also confirmed by the data that only 1% correctly answered the question how many constituencies are there in Montenegro, saying that Montenegro has only one constituency, i.e. that Montenegro is a single constituency.

In order to nevertheless find out what citizens think about different methods of election of representatives, we asked a simplified question, i.e. in a certain manner we attempted, with a simpler formulation, to “translate” three main types of electoral systems: (1) proportional – closed blocked lists, (2) majority and (3) proportional with preferential voting. These answers also show that the respondents are not familiar with the concepts, so that they positively declared, in nearly the same values, about three different manners of voting, from 54.3 for majority system to 61.7 for proportional with preferential voting. There is a slight difference in combination of voting for parties and candidates, but it is risky for deriving any conclusion whatsoever.
Table 17: People have different opinions about the manner of voting at elections; how much do you agree with the following attitudes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinions</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Fairly agree</th>
<th>Fairly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Sum +</th>
<th>Sum -</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voters should vote only for lists of candidates proposed by the party</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters should not vote for lists but only for individual candidates proposed by the party</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter should vote both for the party and for the candidates on the list by changing the order of candidates on the list</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>05.9</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, when it is about preferential voting, this concept is closer to citizens; however, asking the question included an explanation about circling the names of some of the offered candidates within the given list. A high percentage is in favour of introduction of preferential voting (46%), but not higher than those who are against (54%). As it can be observed, this data is in collision with the opinion expressed in the previous table – that 61.7% of the respondents strongly or fairly agree that “voter should vote both for the party and for the candidates on the list by changing the order of candidates on the list”, which in fact is the same question.

Figure 8: Do you consider that the current electoral system should be added preferential voting (so that voter would be able to circle one or more specific candidates from party list)?
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

Table 18: Do you agree that current electoral system should be supplemented with preferential vote option?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Will vote at elections</th>
<th>Indecisive</th>
<th>Would vote at elections</th>
<th>Voted at elections</th>
<th>Political party member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certainly</td>
<td>Indecisive-reject+</td>
<td>won't vote</td>
<td>ULA</td>
<td>DEMOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, although with a modest knowledge of electoral systems, citizens are dissatisfied with their outcomes, so that 54.7% think that the existing electoral system reflects the citizens’ opinion to a low extent or not at all, that is, that it completely or to a large extent reflects the opinion of political parties (66.2%, i.e. even more of the parties’ leaders, 69.9%).

Table 19: Think for a moment about functioning of electoral system in practice. To what extent, in your opinion, the current electoral system reflects the following opinions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Completely</th>
<th>To a large extent</th>
<th>To a low extent</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Sum +</th>
<th>Sum –</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizens/voters</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>08.3</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political parties</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>04.6</td>
<td>09.3</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party leaders</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>05.3</td>
<td>08.9</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. CONCLUSION

The existing electoral system has a discouraging effect on strengthening of intraparty democratic process. Citizens notice this and think that political parties themselves require democratization.

Citizens, as well as the MP candidates, with certain limitations recognize several problems for the development of intraparty democracy.

First, under the proportional system of closed, blocked party lists, the voters’ impact on final decision about their future representatives in the parliament is
minimal. Citizens recognize this problem only partially, so that a lower percentage of them is in favour of introduction of preferential voting (46%); this percentage increases among the party members (49%) and becomes extremely high in case of MP candidates (79%). However, citizens to a significantly higher extent supported that “voter should vote both for the party and for the candidates on the list by changing the candidates’ order on the list”, which is essentially the same question as whether you are for preferential voting. Obviously, a higher level of knowledge/recognition of electoral system, together with higher level of personal interest, lead to higher support to introduction of preferential voting. However, on the other hand, citizens clearly show that the existing electoral system to the largest extent reflects the opinion of party leaders (69.9%), and to the lowest of citizens (37.1%).

Second, there is a need for legal regulation of the following procedures: (1) selection of MP candidates, (2) decision-making within the parties and (3) direct election of party leadership. This idea obviously meets a significantly higher support among citizens (61-64.7%) than among the MP candidates. However, even among them it reached a surprisingly high level (27.2 – 38.2%), whereas among the party members the level is even higher, i.e. extremely high (69-73%). The party members obviously want a higher level of democracy, i.e. regulation, thus perceiving a chance for themselves. Within the parties there are indicators of stratification, i.e. parties are not sufficiently inclusive when speaking about the inclusion of their own members in the decision-making process, i.e. election of leadership.

Third, both the MP candidates and the citizens note that the candidate’s role in the campaign is very small, i.e. that campaigns are primarily party-oriented and almost entirely non-personalized concerning the MP candidates. Of course, here we do not speak about personalization at the party leader’s level.
THE INFLUENCE OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM ON CANDIDATES’ ELECTION CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES AND THE WORK OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to investigate whether the electoral system has an influence on candidates’ election campaign strategies, and their work and behaviour in the Parliament, once elected. In this chapter, we analyse how substantial this influence is and what are its manifestations. Having in mind the type of electoral system in Serbia (proportional representation with closed list system), the process of nomination – starting from the election campaign, the actual elections (voting) and finally the distribution of seats and the work of Members of Parliament (MPs) – is determined by intra-party relations. Our main hypothesis is that candidates running for national parliamentary elections largely depend on national party leadership, while they are at the same time focused on running a campaign oriented toward the party promotion rather than a personal campaign. In addition, once a candidate is elected his/her work and actions depend directly on the political party and its leader, and not the citizens who elected him/her.
This chapter analyses the results of the survey “Comparative Survey on Personal Views and Attitudes of Candidates Running for National Parliamentary Elections (Comparative Candidate Survey – CCS)”, conducted in 2015 in the Republic of Serbia. The chapter is structured as follows: Section 2 presents the research methodology (Comparative Candidate Survey – CCS). Section 3 describes candidates’ profiles and their socio-demographic information. Section 4 discusses candidacy nominations, i.e. provides answers on who is the most influential in deciding on the candidacy nomination, what the role of the national party leadership is and to what extent the nomination process is open and democratic. Section 5 maps election campaign strategies and candidates’ activities and provides answers to the question: Do candidates run a campaign aimed at promoting their political party and its leader or do they run personal campaigns? Section 6 then covers respondents’ attitudes on democracy, representation and electoral system, as well as their perceptions of the role of MPs. Section 7 presents the chapter’s conclusions.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted from March to June 2015. Its objective was to provide insight into the personal views and attitudes of candidates running for 2014 national parliamentary elections. The research is a part of the Balkan Elections Comparative Survey: Impact of Personal Vote on Intra-Party Democracy. Primary data processing was performed by Ipsos Strategic Marketing agency, while the distribution of questionnaires, their collection and data entry was done by a group of researchers from the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade. The “Comparative Survey on Personal Views and Attitudes of Candidates Running for National Parliamentary Elections (Comparative Candidate Survey – CCS)” is a multinational project, which uses a universal questionnaire, with the aim of collecting data on candidates running for national parliamentary elections in different countries.

The CCS questionnaire investigates relations between candidates, political parties and voters. While the questionnaire puts into focus the election campaign, questions on candidacy nominations, policies and ideologies, and issues of democracy and representation are also fairly represented.


1 Detailed findings of the research are available at: http://balkanelectoralstudies.org/index.php/survey
2 For more information on CCS project visit http://www.comparativecandidates.org/
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

The number of respondents (candidates running for the 2014 national parliamentary elections) in the survey was 268. Therefore, the 95% of statistical confidence interval for 50% of incidence is +/- 5.7. We have used a targeted sample in our research.

The survey is based on an 81-item questionnaire composed into 5 sections: Political Background and Activities; Campaigning; Issues and Policies; Democracy and Representation; Personal Background.

3. SOCIAL PROFILES OF CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

In this section, we provide an overview of the candidates’ origins, their educational background, age, political experience, tenure in the political party and tenure in elections, and candidates’ reelection rates.

The general age distribution (expressed as the year of birth) ranges from 1962 (average age distribution of the Socialist Party of Serbia’s list) to 1979 (average age distribution of the Third Serbia’s list). Looking across parties, we find that the Socialist Party of Serbia has notably older candidates than other lists, with a statistically significant difference, which may be explained by the coalition with the United Pensioners’ Party of Serbia (Pejković i Trailović, 2014: 49). An interesting fact is that new parties that emerged for the first time in the 2014 elections tend to have younger candidates. According to the CCS, candidates under 45 years accounted for 60% of the sample, 19% of the sample are aged between 46 and 55 years, while those who are older than 56 years accounted for 15%.

One of the main shortcomings accounted for proportional representation system with a single nationwide constituency is the deformation of territorial representation (Jovanović, 2011; Jovanović; 2015; Orlović, 2010). From one to another convocation, there is a distinct over-representation of MPs from Belgrade and Novi Sad, while, as a rule, nearly one third of municipalities do not have any representatives. Deformation of territorial representation is a direct result of the current electoral system, i.e. single constituency. Although some authors claim that voting in several constituencies leads to deformation of political parties representation (Taylor, Gudgin and Johnston, 2003), geographical representation of candidates is nevertheless of great importance. Candidates running for the 2014 national parliamentary elections are mainly coming from large cities/towns. Out of the total sample, only 8.7% of the respondents live in rural areas or villages, 37.6% live in small or middle-sized towns, 5.7% in suburbs of a large city or town, and 47.9% live in large towns/cities. It is important to note that
Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) had the most urban list among established ‘old parties’, while – similar to the average age distribution, new political actors such as Dosta je Bilo (DJB), Third Serbia (TS) and Patriotic Front (PF) had statistically significant gaps in the levels of urbanity compared to other lists (Pejković and Trailović, 2014: 50).

In terms of education, the CCS sample provides a fair distribution of different educational backgrounds (Table 1).

**Table 1. Candidates Educational Background**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Background</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school completed</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed vocational school</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University degree incomplete</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor degree completed</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree completed</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD completed</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The share of candidates with the highest educational background has the SNS list. On the other side, new political actors (DJB, TS, PF) noted educational background differences in comparison to other lists that are statistically significant (Pejković i Trailović, 2014: 50 – 51).

The majority of candidates have attended some form of education while in the party (76%). The most of them attended education provided by the national party office (55%), provided by an NGO (48%), and finally provided by the local party office (43%). There is an interesting difference between ruling and opposition parties. Share of respondents that haven’t attended any political education in ruling parties is 34.5%, while this share is only 19.3% for the opposition parties. An explanation for this difference may be a longer elections tenure of the opposition candidates (they were in average more often candidates in elections), as well as the longer tenure in political parties (in average opposition candidates had longer records of membership in their political parties).

Finally, looking at the levels of social integration among candidates running for national parliamentary elections sample, we find that their involvement in other types of organisations/associations is low. Only one fifth of all candidates (19.8%) are members of sports clubs, 16.4% are members of religious communities, while only 14.6% of them are trade union members.
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

Candidates running for national parliamentary elections tend to have short tenures in their political parties. Only one third of candidates have been members of their own parties for more than 10 years. However, we need to emphasise that there years are particularly interesting (1990, 2008, and 2014) comparing to all the others. Almost one third of all candidates became party members during these three years, which can be explained by: 1) restoration of the multi-party system in 1990, and renewal of political life in Serbia; 2) dissolution of the Serbian Radical Party (SRS) in 2008 and establishment of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS); as well as 3) Boris Tadic’s departure from the Democratic Party (DS) in 2014 and establishment of the Social Democratic Party of Serbia (SDS).

It is informative to look at the elections tenure of the candidates. Only 39,6% of 2014 parliamentary elections candidates stood as candidates for the Parliament in 2012 elections, while only 20.9% of 2014 candidates stood as candidates in 2008 elections. The only list with significant deviation in this aspect is the SPS list with by far most experienced candidates. These data evidence that candidacy nomination processes are complex and that political parties keep changing candidates’ lists. Extremely valuable are the data on reelection rates – it shows the number of times a candidate succeeded to be reelected in the Parliament. Roughly more than half of our respondents who stood for elections in previous years have been elected on these elections. This data implies that some of the candidates have become professionals, who regularly stand as candidates for the National Assembly and regularly get elected. It is also interesting to investigate if the candidates stood for other parties in previous elections. Our survey has shown that there are only 11% of 2014 parliamentary elections candidates who previously stood for other parties in elections. Around 2/3 of such candidates used to stand for DS and SRS in previous elections, as predecessors of new parties (SDS, LDP, SNS). Even though we could assume that a high number of candidates previously represented other parties in elections, this should be coupled with the reported elections tenure, which is only 39.6% in the previous parliamentary elections.

Looking at the political party tenure of the candidates, we could gain insight into the activities that preceded getting the seats in the Parliament. Over 90% of candidates used to work as unpaid party and campaign volunteers, ¾ of candidates were local party officials, over ½ were national party officials, while less than a half (47.9%) candidates were members of local parliaments. These data inevitably evidence the development of candidates, proving that loyalty and devotion to the party as a necessary precondition for candidacy nomination.
4. CANDIDACY NOMINATIONS

As the previous section has shown, party loyalty plays an important role for candidacy nominations. This section aims to examine the process of candidacy nominations. Who is most influential in deciding on the candidacy nomination? This section argues that national party leadership has a dominant role in influencing candidacy nominations, both through deciding who will make it to party list and in which order, and through encouraging the candidate to present his/her candidacy.

The prevailing role of the national party leadership is evident from the decision of a candidate to present his/her candidacy and run in parliamentary elections. Two thirds of respondents, actually 72%, has not make the decision to run in the elections independently, but the decision has been made based on the encouragement within the party, as confirmed by 97.4% of respondents (Table 2). In addition to undoubtedly dominant role of the political party, a great influence comes from the family members, friends and colleagues (61.1%). Far less important is the influence of citizens’ associations and interest groups (21.8%) which can be explained by centralisation of political parties where different interest groups communicate directly to party leaders, instead of individual candidates.

Table 2: Who encouraged you to run as a candidate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family, friends, colleagues</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somebody from within the party</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>97.4</td>
<td>02.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives from a civil society organisation or interest groups</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High degree of political party centralisation is confirmed by our survey (Figure 1), according to which national party leadership is the most influential in deciding on the candidacy nomination (46%). The same Figure shows that political parties do not have democratic nominations mechanisms such as open primary elections or primaries.
Figure 1: Who was most influential in deciding on your candidacy nomination?

Our research states that party leaders have not only a dominant role in encouraging party members to run as candidates in national parliamentary elections, but also 1) the majority of candidates are also party officials; and 2) the final decision on candidacy nominations is made by the national party leadership. Among our respondents, as many as 74.6% have been party officials at the moment of running as candidates in parliamentary elections. In addition, contrary to the rule that all party members have the right to nominate candidates, the decision on final candidacy nomination is reserved for national party leadership, i.e. Main Board (45%), Presidency (34%) or the President (8%), and in extremely low number of cases, the decision may be influenced by Municipal Boards (10%) (see Figure 2).

Nomination candidacy and selection, as well as the degree of party centralisation are two main criteria for assessing intra-party democracy (Scarrow, 2005). According to the research results, we can conclude that intra-party democracy in Serbia ranks relatively low. The research showed no significant difference between ruling and opposition parties. In addition, the answers on who makes the selection, who can become a candidate and to whom are the candidates accountable to, are all important categories for analysing MPs behaviour (Rahat and Hazan, 2001, Shomer, 2009). The party discipline is achieved mainly through the mechanisms of candidacy nominations. When candidacy nomination decisions are made on the national party leadership level (and not the party members or voters), there is a vast potential of political party control over
the work of MP. This mechanism seriously hinders MPs accountability, and increases the party discipline.

**Figure 2: Who makes decision on candidacy nominations?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Board</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidency</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Board</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the party</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/Borough Board</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This can partially be explained by the proportional representation system with closed party lists that encourage political party centralisation. On the other side, political parties with developed competitive and inclusive procedures for candidacy nominations may allow that the best representatives get the seats in the Parliament (even in younger democracies and proportional representation systems) (Bird, 2014, Pedersen, 2012b).

5. WHAT KIND OF CAMPAIGNS ARE RUN BY THE CANDIDATES?

Apart from influencing the candidacy nomination process, the electoral system has a significant impact on election campaigns. Political parties and candidates adopt their strategies, formulate tactics, choose means and campaign types accordingly. The electoral system does not influence only the voters, but also candidates’ behaviour during the elections campaign. Electoral incentives for candidates to focus either on personal characteristics and personal campaigns or party issues and party campaign depend on the structure of constituency. The candidates running for national parliamentary elections in the system of closed
electoral lists are inclined to run a campaign that attracts as much as possible attention for the party (Norris, 2004: 134 – 135).

First of all, we will get an insight into the election campaigns in Serbia in the last 15 years. These campaigns were oriented towards attracting as much as possible attention for the political party leaders. They largely focused on leaders’ personality, on confidence building in his/her competences to solve key issues and on strengthening emotional ties with voters (Lončar and Stojanović, 2015: 104). Scholars agree than these campaigns were predominantly leader-centered. When it comes to 2012 parliamentary elections campaign, leader’s personality was a detrimental motivation factor for the voters (Slavujević, 2012: 50), and the topic-specific campaign has been quickly replaced by a leader-centred campaign (Atlagić, 2012). During 2014 parliamentary elections campaign, the economic and social issues have been almost entirely put in service of the party leaders’ promotion (Atlagić, 2014). In addition, numbers of voters who decide exclusively based on leader’s’ charisma contribute to the strong personalisation of politics (Stojiljković, 2014: 17). However, it is interesting to note that leader-centred campaigns are typical for presidential and majority systems (Slavujević, 2009: 192) and, thus the origins of the leader-centred campaigns in Serbia cannot be explained by the electoral system.

Even though the proportional representation system with closed lists – a current electoral system in Serbia, means that the voter simply casts a vote for the party as a whole and not for the candidates, this does not prevent the candidates to run their campaigns to get the seats in the National Assembly. In this Section, we want to examine whether the electoral system affects candidate’s election campaign strategies.

Utilizing the responses of candidates running for national parliamentary elections aims to gain insight into their election campaign strategies. Respondents were asked what was their aim in the campaign. Figure 3 shows that the average response to this question on the scale from 0 (the primary aim of the campaign was to attract attention for the candidate) to 10 (the primary aim of the campaign was to attract attention for the party) amounts to 7.1.

---

3 Question: "Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'to attract as much attention as possible for me as a candidate' and 10 means 'to attract as much as possible attention for my party'?"
Figure 3. Aim of the campaign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>For the Candidate</th>
<th>For the Party</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are no statistically significant differences noted between candidates of ruling and opposition parties. “T-test has shown that there is no statistically significant difference between younger and older candidates in running campaigns (eta2=0.005), while these differences are observed among different political parties (responses range from 5.1 – DSS to 7.5 – Nova).” (Stojanović and Jović, 2016: 15-16).

A closer look into campaign related activities will lead us to interesting conclusions. Looking at the share of most popular campaign related activities – these are media activities (important for 70% of respondents), public speeches and rallies (69%), meetings with party members and party groups (56%), attendance of party meetings (48%). All of these activities fall into the category of promotion of party politics and building internal cohesion of the party. On the other side, activities geared at personal promotion and campaign have been a little important part of the overall activities. Hence, as many as 41% of candidates have not used individual posters (only 16.8% of candidates accorded little importance to this campaign activity). Similarly, managing a direct mailing was important only to 17.9% of candidates, while 24% of candidates have not called up voters on the phone, and 22% have not run a door-to-door campaign nor have visited any business and social organisations. In addition, 4/5 of candidates (83%) have not used a personal newspaper ads, 69% have not owned a personal website (at the time of the survey), more than half of all respondents (52%) did not have any personal spots in radio or TV, whilst only 45% of respondents had their personal flyers or other campaign material. It is important to be noted that
responses between candidates of different political parties or ruling/opposition parties do not vary significantly.

Our survey confirms the hypothesis that candidate strategies mainly focus on promotion of political parties and their leaders, while candidate’s campaigning is primarily oriented towards broadening their partisan base alone, and not the electorate.

Our hypothesis is consistent with the responses that were given to the question: “How strongly did you emphasise during the campaign issues specific to your personal campaign and your personal characteristics and circumstances (1 – extremely, 2 – very, 3 – moderately, 4 – slightly 5 – not at all)”. Average answers are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Campaign characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Average answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issues specific to your personal campaign</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your personal characteristics and circumstances</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly half of the respondents (48%) have not at all or just slightly emphasised issues specific to their personal campaigns, while 33% candidates have slightly or not at all used their characteristics and circumstances in the campaign.

In the context of relations between candidates and their constituents, it is crucial to look whether the candidates have raised any local issues during the campaign. The answer to the question “Did you raise any local issues during the campaign?”: yes 60%, no 23% and 17% no answer (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Did you raise any local issues during the campaign?
An important finding is the statistically relevant difference between candidates of ruling and opposition parties. Candidates from ruling parties have risen local issues to a larger extent. The most common response to the question “what issues were the most important ones that you’ve raised”: infrastructure (32%), unemployment (26%), economic development and investments (25%). Candidates from ruling parties state that the most important local issue that was raised was infrastructure (46.7%), while only 23.8% candidates of opposition share their views. An important note is that issues raised by candidates running for national elections at the local level often differ from issues that are nationally relevant and raised by their political parties. An exception to this is the issue of unemployment, which is a dominant problem in the country in the last 15 years. Issues prevailing in general elections in the last two election cycles – fight against corruption, poverty reduction and social policy, and foreign and regional policy (Stojilković et. al, 2012), as well as unemployment, poverty reduction, large infrastructure investments, and austerity measures in 2014 general elections (Stojilković et. al, 2014: 29) – differ to a large extent from issues raised by candidates running for national elections. On the other hand, candidates were, at least during the campaign, facing local communities and raising local issues such as infrastructure, transport, environment, local economic development, delivery of core city services etc.

However, even though candidates raise issues of local importance and concern, they fail to personalize their campaigns and focus solely on the activities aiming to promote their political party and leader. In order to additionally back up this hypothesis, we will draw upon the results of an opinion poll conducted in 2016 (see section written by Spasojević and Mihailović). It is informative to look at how notable are the candidates that are highly ranked on the party list, but do not act as party leaders. Citizens were asked if they have heard of long-lasting Members of Parliament that also sit in the national party leadership boards. The key finding of this survey shows a complete invisibility of long-lasting parliamentarians. For example, 90% of respondents have not heard of Đorđe Milićević (Head of Socialist Party of Serbia Parliamentary Group in the previous convocation), 82% have not heard of Aleksandar Senič (member of the Presidency of Social Democratic Party and Deputy Head of the Parliamentary Group in the previous convocation), and 77% have not heard of Nataša Vučković (Vice-President of the Democratic Party Head of the Parliamentary Group in the previous convocation) and Marko Đurišić (Vice-President of the Social Democratic Party and Head of the Parliamentary Group in the previous convocation). These findings show that even highly ranked candidates on election lists are not notable and depend largely on the support of their political parties.

It is clear that candidate’s election strategies are focused mainly on the promotion of their political parties and party leaders, and that all activities are geared
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

towards this goal. As argued below, the main reason for this is the electoral system in Serbia. The proportional representation system with closed list system, means that the party fixes the order in which the candidates are listed and elected, and the voter simply casts a vote for the party as a whole. This does not provide any incentives to the candidates to run their personal campaigns. On the other side, another key factor for candidates running solely party campaigns are the intra-party relations that are predominantly undemocratic. Political parties in Serbia are in many cases authoritarian, with powerful leaders and strong party discipline (characterized by hierarchy, discipline and obedience). The practice of intra-party relations show that party leaders’ authoritarian tendencies are present in the majority of parties, while the democratic deficit of intra-party relations promote discipline as a virtue (Stojiljković, Spasojević i Mihailović, 2015). The causes of this phenomenon may be explained by: 1) authoritarian political culture, submissiveness and rooted cult of personality in political memory of citizens; 2) clientelistic mobilization patterns; 3) influence of the electoral system that enables party leadership to decide on the top places of the party’s list of candidates. As described above, the influence of the electoral system on candidates’ election strategies is twofold. First, it is mechanical as the voters vote for the party list of candidates. Second, electoral system indirectly influences intra-party relations. Candidates running for national parliamentary elections do not have incentives to run personal campaigns but are oriented towards party promotion activities, since national party leadership and party leader are the most influential in deciding on the candidacy nomination, which puts good intra-party relations high on the list of priorities of the candidate.

6. CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ATTITUDES ON DEMOCRACY, REPRESENTATION AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The previous sections show that party leadership plays a key role in candidacy nominations and that consequently the campaign strategy is primarily oriented towards the promotion of the political party and its leader. We want to discover further if the candidates running for national parliamentary elections are satisfied with the current system (characterized by democratic deficit of intra-party relations and strong discipline), what are their views and perceptions of democracy, representation and electoral system. In addition, we are interested in the ways candidates see the role of Members of Parliament.
The survey shows (Table 4) that candidates are in majority dissatisfied about how democracy in Serbia functions. More than 50% of candidates disagree with the statement that “citizens have ample opportunities to participate in political decisions” (52.6%). More than 50% of candidates also disagree with the statement that “legislation reflects the interests of the majority of citizens” (50.7%) and hold the view that special interests do not have too much influence on law-making (76.5%). 48% of respondents believe that political parties are the essential link between citizens and the state, while 75% of candidates for the 2014 national parliamentary elections believe that power holders in the country are political parties and their leaders. These findings challenge the claims that candidates are committed to raising local issues. Even though our respondents stated that they raise local issues during the campaign (see Section 5), these issues lose their relevance after the elections.

Candidates believe that elections do not ensure that the views of MPs accurately reflect the views of voters (Figure 5). 78% of respondents hold view that electoral system do not ensure accountability of MPs. It is interesting to note that 60% of respondents view that MPs should vote according to his/her voters opinion, even if their political party opinion or his/her own opinion does not correspond with the opinion of the voters. On the other side, respondents believe that if their opinion does not correspond to the opinion of their political party, they should vote according to his/her party opinion – 49%; and 51% according to his/her own opinion. This indicates that candidates’ critical attitude towards the shortcomings of Serbian electoral system does not prevent them from accepting the party discipline and giving priority to the party interests, starting from the nomination process.

**Table 4: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements on democracy in Serbia?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>neither agree or disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>no answer</th>
<th>Sum –</th>
<th>Sum +</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizens have ample opportunity to participate in political decisions.</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>07.5</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>01.1</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation reflects the interests of the majority of citizens</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>02.2</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>02.6</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political parties are the essential link between citizens and the state</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>07.1</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>05.6</td>
<td>02.6</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special interests have too much influence on lawmaking</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>06.3</td>
<td>02.2</td>
<td>01.5</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>08.6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our democracy is about to lose the trust of the citizens</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>03.0</td>
<td>01.9</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power holders in the country are political parties and their leaders</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>06.7</td>
<td>01.1</td>
<td>02.6</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>07.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

Candidates running for national parliamentary elections do not have a direct link with constituents which results in problems with accountability. The survey indicates that more than 80% of candidates hold view that they should represent their own voters in constituency, all citizens in the constituency, the party electorate at large, members of specific group at large, and all citizens – which speaks about mixed primary loyalties. The electoral system tends to enable, on one side, citizens being unaware of their candidates, and on the other, candidates whose primary loyalty lies with their political parties, and not the citizens.

Figure 5: How well do you think elections ensure that the views of MPs accurately reflect the views of voters?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly good</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum +</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum -</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not that good</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not good at all</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The argument that MPs reflect opinions of their parties rather than the citizens is also supported by our findings about the influence of political parties on the work of MPs. Two thirds of candidates running for national elections stated that their political party drafts their amendments (79.9%), often or sometimes sends detailed instructions on voting (73.5%), and suggests who should discuss certain issues from the parliamentary group (67.5%). In countries where parties rather than parliamentary groups control the work of MPs, it may be expected that the attitudes of MPs will coincide with the opinions of party leaders and be less accountable to voters (Pedersen, 2012a, p. 306-307).
Table 5: In what ways the political party supports the work of the parliamentary group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sum +</th>
<th>Sum –</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political party provides relevant analysis</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>04.5</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party drafts amendments</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>06.7</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party sends detailed instructions on voting</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party suggests to the parliamentary group on how to discuss certain issues in the Parliament</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party organizes meetings of the parliamentary group with expert, lobbyists, trade unions..</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>06.3</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party organizes additional educations to the parliamentary group</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>08.6</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bearing in mind the party discipline linked to the current electoral system in Serbia, candidates running for national elections (60.8%) hold view that the combination of majority and proportional representation system would allow citizens to be better represented and Members of Parliament to better work. (Table 6). In addition, 72.8% of respondents believe that some sort of preferential voting system would facilitate competitiveness among candidates, contribute to a more democratic nomination process and improved accountability.

Table 6: Reported preference for different electoral systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you think proportional or majority system works better for the development of democracy?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid PR systems</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportional representation (PR) system</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority system</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both systems work the same</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. CONCLUSION

As discussed in this section, political parties have a key role in the election process, and later on in the work of the Parliament. Political parties, i.e. party leadership, have a prevailing role in the nomination process, in the campaign of candidates running for national elections, and the parliamentary work.

Our survey indicates that the average profile of the candidate running for national elections is: a loyal party member, living in a large town/city, and with a function within the party at the time of nomination. Political parties in Serbia do not have developed democratic mechanisms of candidacy nomination (open primary elections or nominations by party delegates) but the decision is made by the national party leadership (presidency or main board of the party). This indicates a low level of intra-party democracy in Serbia, which results in strong party discipline and low level of personal accountability of MPs.

The analysis of the elections campaign draws the same conclusions. Candidates running for national elections do not run their personalized campaigns, but are oriented towards party promotion activities and building a partisan support. This is largely due to the low level of intra-party democracy but also the proportional representation system with closed list ballots, meaning that the party fixes the order in which the candidates are listed and elected, and the voter simply casts a vote for the party as a whole. This does not provide any incentives to the candidates to run their personal campaigns.

The influence of political parties and party leadership is prevailing even after the elections, in the work of MPs. Candidates running for national parliamentary elections that have participated in our survey, reported high levels of dissatisfaction about how democracy in Serbia work, the lack of accountability of elected representatives and limited opportunities for citizens to participate in political decisions. Our findings suggest that elections are not the mechanism that allows citizens voices to be heard in the Parliament, and that direct links between MPs and citizens is missing. Two thirds of our respondents recognized partocracy in
Serbia – the fact that power holders are political parties and their leaders, and not institutions. Political parties control the work of MPs through the process of drafting the amendments, providing detailed instructions on voting, and suggesting who should discuss certain issues in the Parliament.

Lack of accountability and limited opportunities for citizens to influence decision-making may be improved through the combination of majority and proportional representation system, as perceived by a vast majority of our respondents. This will not only allow the proportionality of votes and mandates, but also ensure accountable elected representatives.
In this chapter we investigate, first the influence of the electoral system on the way citizens understand and follow politics, and second the motives on which they base their voting decisions. The chapter is primarily based on results of a public opinion survey, conducted by Ipsos Strategic Marketing for project needs on a representative sample\(^1\) of citizens of Serbia (without Kosovo).

Theoretically speaking, the proportional representation system with a single constituency stimulates identification with parties and their leaders. The advantage of this system is that it favors strong party programs and enables establishment of different coalitions after the elections; in contrary, the one-round electoral system is a system where citizens vote for individuals from political parties and their decentralized platforms. However, in both end cases, the electoral system is not the only determinant – as it is possible that a majority system produces strong parties that ‘cover’ their candidates with a strong ideology and clear program, while the proportional representation system can in some cases allow strong regional leaders, ideological differences within parties and a pre-

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\(^1\) Field research (F2F) was conducted in the period 15–22 March 2016. The sample framework: Population of Serbia (without Kosmet) 18+; Sample size: 1000 respondents; Sample type: Three-phase random representative stratified sample.
Voters, parties, elections – How to democratize political parties in Montenegro and Serbia?

dominant leader identification. In fact, as we move from the ideal type models such as the majority system (two-party system) and the proportional representation system (pluralism) the relations become more complex, while the determination of an independent variable very problematic.

In the case of Serbia, the electoral system favors lists and coalitions; the absence of formally strong singular positions (President, Prime Minister or Mayor) is also in favor of the parties, and at the expense of distinguished individuals; the same electoral threshold of 5% for single parties and coalitions favors the merging of smaller parties, but only to a certain extent; simultaneously, this system stimulates splitting of large and middle-size parties, because separate parts still stand a solid chance of passing the threshold or associating in coalitions; frequent electoral cycles enable a yo-yo effect i.e. parties falling out of and returning into the National Assembly in short time periods and without substantial changes in leadership or policy. Therefore, it is evident that the political system is designed so that political parties have the primary role. However, our current findings clearly reveal that party systems are not institutionalized and that the predominant basis of identification is that of leadership, and not of the program (Stojiljković & Spasojević, 2015, Stojiljković, Zoran & Pilipović, Gordana (eds.), 2012; Stojiljković, Zoran, Pilipović, Gordana i Spasojević, Dušan (eds.) (2014)).

This public opinion survey insight will help us resolve some of these dilemmas. The key questions that we seek answers for are (a) do Members of Parliament (MPs) represent citizens or their parties (b) do citizens identify themselves with leaders or parties, and (c) what kind of changes of the electoral and political system do citizens support. However, first we have to determine (d) to what extent are citizens interested in politics (e) what are the most relevant issues of citizens’ concern and (f) based upon which values do they interpret them.

This chapter is structured as follows: first, we investigate the level of citizens’ interest in politics; how they inform themselves and what are the questions they consider important; later, we investigate how voters assess the state of democracy in Serbia, and how much do they know about politics. Assessing the reported knowledge is important as it shows under which conditions we can take citizen’s perceptions into account when changing the electoral system (in particular when discussions get too theoretical).
1. ARE CITIZENS OF SERBIA INTERESTED IN POLITICS?

The problems that cause concern to the large majority of citizens of Serbia can, with a little generalization, be reduced to economy; first of all, on a personal level unemployment has for a longer period of time been problem number one – therefore, in our research, unemployment is reported as the problem number one by every second citizen of Serbia (50%). In addition to unemployment, citizens also indicate as problematic the low standard (12%), and the general poverty and extreme deprivation (4%). On the other hand, citizens indicate economy not only as a personal, but also as a wider social problem. We therefore come to the number of three thirds of citizens (72%), who, this way or another, perceive economy as the largest problem in the country.

Figure 1: What are Serbia’s biggest problems, according to you? The ones that make you personally most concerned?

Politics itself is not perceived as a big problem, according to our survey. Merely 2% of citizens point out politics as the most relevant problem Serbia is currently facing, while the work of institutions and rule of law are reported by an additional one percent of citizens.

Bearing this finding in mind, it is clear that the large majority of citizens view other topics through the ‘economic’ lenses – preoccupation with personal economic problems (survival) is an utterly convincing explanation for little interest in politics, as well as the low level of familiarity with questions related to the functioning of the political, that is electoral system.
In a country like Serbia, characterized by partocracy, politics is mainstreamed in every aspect of life. The common belief is that politics is discussed everywhere and by everyone. However, as we have already suggested, politics is not a priority problem for Serbian citizens, which leads us to the following question: are Serbian citizens really that interested in politics?

Surprisingly, only ¼ of our respondents (23%) report interest in politics to a certain extent, whilst only 3% of citizens indicate great personal interest in politics. This finding is additionally unexpected having in mind that double of those respondents have reported to be members of a political party (7%) – therefore, over 45% members of political parties report low or complete absence of interest in politics, while only 13% report great interest in politics.

Looking at our figures, it seems that men tend to be more interested in politics, compared to women (30%, versus 7%), and higher educated respondents compared to respondents with a lower degree (35%, versus 15%). Younger generations tend to show lower interest in politics than other age groups, a finding that is confirmed by lower turnout in elections.

Figure 2: To what extent are you personally interested in politics?

Given the low levels of interest in politics, it is not surprising that only 3 of 10 citizens of Serbia (31%) often or regularly follow political events in the country, while over two thirds (68%) report that they follow political events rarely or never. In line with the level of interest, men tend to follow political events more than women (40%, versus 23%). The same tendency is observable between populations with higher and lowers educational degrees (43%, versus 22%). Further, younger generations also follow political events to a lesser extent, compared
to their elder peers (16%, versus 39%). A slightly higher percentage of those that follow political events are registered among citizens of Belgrade. Again, the most interesting is the data related to members of political parties, among whom 3 of 10 report that they rarely or never follow political events.

Figure 3: How often do you follow political events in the country?

In the context of the above mentioned, it is not at all surprising that discussing politics with other people (46%), is the only form of political activity in which citizens of Serbia to a greater extent take part (in the past two-three years).

It is praiseworthy that citizens of Serbia have still not lost faith in democracy as the best form of political system, at least theoretically. 60% of respondents agree with the statement that democracy is (in spite of all difficulties) the best political system for our country. However, every third citizen (32%) does not agree with this statement, which partially explains why leaders that rule with ‘a firm hand’ are accepted in the country. Respondents from rural areas tend to disagree with the democracy statement to a higher percentage compared to the overall sample. The higher percentage of men (25%) than women (15%) totally agrees that democracy is the best political system for our country. What can certainly be assessed as positive is that among the younger generations (age group 29 or less) a higher percentage of those who totally agree with the democracy statement is registered (27%).
As much as citizens believe in democracy as a political system on paper, they are not satisfied with how it works in Serbia. Over 3/5 of citizens (62%) report that they are not satisfied (with over 35% of very dissatisfied), while a third of Serbian citizens (33%) report satisfaction with the functioning of democracy in our country. Expectedly, citizens that have pointed out they will not vote in the parliamentary elections (24 April 2016), to a significantly larger extent point out they are very dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy in Serbia (53%). This dissatisfaction is probably one of the main reasons for their choice to abstain from voting – a common belief is that all politicians are the same, that there is no option to vote for, and that we need to get ‘fresh blood’ into politics.

An interesting finding is that every second citizen (50%) who has indicated that is, currently, member of a political party, reports dissatisfaction with how democracy works in Serbia. This opens the question: have these citizens joined political parties because they are dissatisfied with how things works and want to change something, or, more probably, that the benefits of the partocracy are distributed to a narrow circle of party leadership?

Figure 4: To what extent do you agree with this statement: In spite of all difficulties, democracy is the best political system for our country?
Figure 5: Generally speaking, are you very satisfied, to a certain extent satisfied, to a certain extent dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy in Serbia?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very dissatisfied</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a certain extent dissatisfied</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a certain extent satisfied</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not know</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE FUNCTIONING OF THE POLITICAL AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM

An assumption is that the knowledge about the political and electoral system corresponds to their interest in politics, and that is consequently rather low. However, as we will see, it turns out that the level of interest in politics, does not match the levels of knowledge about the electoral system. It can be said that interest in political events does not increase the knowledge of the topic.

According to our survey, only every 11th citizen of Serbia (9%) knows that Serbia uses the proportional representation system (in parliamentary elections). It is interesting that almost 14% of citizens of Serbia have thought that Serbia uses the majority electoral system.
As previously discussed, interest in politics and following political events, do not automatically mean better understanding of the topic – only 12% of interested in politics respondents recognize the electoral system in use. Neither does the membership in a political party imply greater knowledge of the electoral system. Therefore, only a quarter of members of political parties (24%) knows which electoral system is used in Serbia. The situation is even worse when it comes to particularities of the electoral system, such as the number of constituencies in Serbia. Among the members of political parties only 12% of respondents know that Serbia is a single constituency.

Apart from low levels of knowledge, we find also a lot of misperceptions among citizens, caused mainly by nonprofessional media reporting and politicians’ public appearances. 3/4 of citizens believe that the mandate of the President of the Republic lasts 4, and not 5 years. A plausible explanation might be the current practice of pre-scheduling presidential elections as to match the parliamentary elections. 63% of the survey respondents believe that they have not directly elected Members of Parliament (due to exclusive voting for party/coalition list and not individual candidates). This phenomenon reflects the missing link between MPs and citizens.

On the other hand, over half of the citizens of Serbia believe that they elect the Mayor directly (which is not correct). This survey finding can be partially explained by the system that until recently elected Mayors directly. However, the more probable explanation is the process of personalization of politics, where media report on ‘candidates’ for Mayors, although there are no such candidates (they are elected by the Municipal Assembly). It is interesting that members of political parties, to the same extent, share these misperceptions with citizens of Serbia.
Finally, citizens are aware and better understand certain features of the electoral system, that are strongly covered by the media. Hence, every third citizen of Serbia (34%) knows that the Serbian National Assembly has 250 MPs, while every second (49%) knows that the electoral threshold is 5%.

3. TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

Indifference, apathy towards political events, and low levels of knowledge about the political and electoral system do not prevent citizens to build trust and confidence in political leaders and institutions. If citizens are not interested in political events, on what basis do they develop their (mis)trust?

Traditionally, the institution that gains the most trust is the church (73%). Other institutions that are constituents of civil society scored less points on the trust-level survey. 29% of citizens trust in the media, 28% in trade unions, 23% of citizens have confidence and trust in NGOs.

When looking at the political institutions, citizens have the most trust in the institution of the Prime Minister, namely Aleksandar Vučić\(^2\) (54%). Later in this article we will address the issue of trust in political leaders, but it is important to note that the PM enjoys an increased level of trust and confidence among citizens. In addition, we can state that the whole political system draws legitimacy from this politician – 45% of citizens’ trust in the Government, 42% in the Presi-

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\(^2\) As seen in the Graph no. 8, the name of the PM Vučić appears only as the institution of the PM
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...and 36% in the National Assembly. The exception to this rule is political parties, that enjoy rather low levels of political trust – only 17% of citizens of Serbia have trust and confidence in them.

Low levels of trust present evidence that citizens blame political parties for the current situation in the country and for all unfulfilled pre-elections promises. However, it has to be underlined that the PM Vučić continuously and systematically work on the collectivization of accountability and individualization of achievements, which has led (backed by the media), to the substantial gap between the levels of trust, on one side – in one political leader (and consequently the institution of PM), and on the other – in other political parties.

An interesting fact is that high level of trust in political parties has only 1% of the population, which is significantly less than the number of citizens who said they were members of a political party (only 31% of all members of political parties have confidence in their political organization).

**PROVERI SA SRPSKOM VERZIJOM GRAFIK 8 OLJA**

*Figure 8: To what Extent do You Trust the Following Institutions?*

The analysis of the levels of trust and confidence in political institutions served as an excellent introduction to the next section that addresses the basic research question of the project 'Balkan Elections Comparative Survey' – to what extent

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3 Citizens’ level of trust in the institution of the President of the Republic (45%) is an excellent indicator of the ‘spillover’ effect of confidence and trust in Aleksandar Vučić over other political institutions. When asked ‘In what politician do you have the most confidence in’, our respondents mention Tomislav Nikolić on the level of a statistical error.
the electoral system influence intra-party relations, and/or encourage/hinder certain behaviors within the parties. In this part of the chapter we look at this problem from the perspective of voters – how do voters assess political parties, evaluate intra-party relations, if they focus on political leaders solely or on their party programs and do they feel adequately represented? Of course the electoral system is not the only determinant of these relations, but plays a very important one.

4. DO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT REPRESENT CITIZENS OR THEIR POLITICAL PARTIES?

The above raised question reveals many dimensions – but simply put, 82% of citizens believe that Members of Parliament (MPs) primarily serve the interests of their political parties, while the citizens are second placed (given that the question is suggestive and populist at the same time). Every third citizen believes that 'MPs represent interests of ordinary citizens', a slightly larger number of them (35%) believe that 'municipal councilors are willing to take into account needs of ordinary citizens', where both statements indicate an equal alienation of political elites from the citizens.

On the other hand, it is interesting to look into the views of citizens on how MPs should vote if their personal opinion does not correspond to the opinions of his/her voters/constituents - 77% of citizens hold view that the MP should in both cases vote according to their voters/constituents opinion.

Figure 9: How should an MP vote if voters' opinion does not correspond to the party's opinion?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MP should vote according to his/her voters opinion</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP should vote according to his/her party opinion</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How should an MP vote if his/her opinion does not correspond to the voters' opinion?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MP should vote according to his/her voters opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP should vote according to his/her personal opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In cases where the opinion of MP does not correspond to his/her party opinion, citizens are almost equally divided in two groups, which speaks of the fact that the current practice is that MPs ’own’ their mandates to political parties, and that strong political discipline is in place. The current parliamentary practice shows that MPs almost as a rule follow their party positions, and that they rarely vote in collision with their party’s opinion (Stojiljković et al, 2012).

A corresponding finding is that citizens view that the current electoral system in most cases reflect opinion of the political leader (74%), opinion of political parties (70%), and only 33% of the citizens believe that the current electoral system reflects the views and opinions of citizens/voters. There is a significant difference between Serbian Progressive Party and Serbian Radical Party voters and all other voters (including indifferent citizens) that are more critical of the electoral system.

**Figure 10: Whose attitudes are represented by the current electoral system?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To a greater extent</th>
<th>To a lesser extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voters/Citizens</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Parties</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Leaders</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey findings suggest that voters do not trust neither in political parties nor in the rules of the political system. In addition, citizens believe that the electoral (and the political) system is favorable only to political parties, which further enhances the partocracy thesis. This brings us to the question about how citizens understand intra-party relations and with whom do they identify – with the party leader, the party program or issues that the party raise? This question is particularly important because, despite the recent changes, the Serbian party system shows some stability in party programs and ideology over time (see Stojiljkovic and Spasojevic 20xx).
Influence of electoral systems on political parties and voters in Montenegro and Serbia

The most illustrative example of the hypothesis that voters identify with the party leader is the following result – 47% of respondents would 'vote for a person of trust, if he/she would establish a new political party'. This reflects both a weak party identification and a dominant political practice in Serbia.

Another indicator of voters focusing on political leaders is the question on how notable are the highly ranked party officials that are not party leaders. This question has encompassed 8 Vice-Presidents of 4 strongest political parties at the time of the survey (Serbian Progressive Party, Socialist Party of Serbia, Democratic Party, and Social Democratic Party). In order to get more nuanced insights, we have included two Vice-Presidents per party – one with a position in the executive (or former position) and another that is mainly active in party politics.

Figure 11: Have you Heard of the Following Party Officials?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Official</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nebojša Stefanović</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aleksandar Antić</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordana Čomić</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branko Ružić</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoran Babić</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goran Ješić</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igor Mirović</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vučković Nataša</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nenad Konstantinović</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Đorđe Milićević</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The key finding is that there is a strong invisibility of party officials, while the main focus is put on party leaders. Second, there is an obvious advantage of party leaders with a position in the executive, since the best score has the Minister of Interior – Nebojša Stefanović, and the Minister Antić who scored as the second best (probably as a result of increased media activity). Thirdly, there is a significant difference between party officials that are actively participating in parliamentary discussions (e.g. Zoran Babić or Gordana Čomić) and those who are less active. Fourth, the fact that party officials who are not Ministers or active in the parliamentary work are not notable, speaks of the leader-centered politics. An exception to this rule is the younger generation of party officials that raised media attention by disagreeing with their party leaders (Branko Ružić) or by advocating for a concrete issue (Goran Ješić in the case of ‘aflatoksin affair’).
The size of the party, its presence in the media and the political tenure should all be taken into consideration.

When asked about party affiliation of the above mentioned officials, the percentage of correct answers (only respondents that have already heard of certain party officials were taken into account) ranged from 75% in cases of Stefanović, Babić or Gordana Čomić to 15%, which indicates that even voters who recognize party officials miss the link with a concrete political party or idea that this official represent.

Even Though strong leadership and identification with party leaders are not unique features of Serbian politics (they exist in other consolidated liberal democracies too), worrisome is the fact that these features are influencing intra-party democracy and dynamics. More precisely, 83% of respondents agree with the statement ‘only political parties with strong leaders can form a stable Government’ and 76% agree with the statement ‘different opinions within one political party jeopardizes its chances for electoral success’. Looking into these statements, we conclude that the identification with the party leader gets an authoritarian dimension. The common understanding that different opinions weaken the party prevents the existence of internal debates, and even in the cases where these debates occur, they are hidden from public and media attention. Internal debates are perceived as indicators of crisis and weakness.

Another dimension of this problem are the reported reasons why people have confidence and trust in political leaders – the most common response is that because he/she is ‘hardworking, efficient and dedicated’ (59%), ‘educated and smart’ (32%) and ‘capable and entrepreneurial’ (27%), which are all personal attributes. An exception to this is the response that confidence and trust in a leader stems from his/her previous results (43%), while ideas and personal vision matter only to 7% of respondents.

On the other side, when respondents were asked how do they decide what party to vote for, their responses were: ‘because the party holds a position on certain issue’ (34%), ‘because it’s a party that will lead the country in a good direction’ (34%) and ‘because of the leader of the party’ (28%). This finding puts a shade on the main assumption of dominant leader identification in Serbia; moreover a significant difference between voters of different parties is observable. Voters of Serbian Progressive Party, Serbian Radical Party and Social Democratic Party decide to a greater extent based on the leader; while voters of Democratic Party, Socialist Party of Serbia and Dveri emphasize to a larger extent the party program as decisive for their votes. Having in mind that political parties in Serbia remain ideologically very vague, this is an interesting finding to be further researched.
One-fourth of the population indicates that the leader identification is the main motive for voting, while the majority of citizens (51%) indicate message that the party leader convey as the main motive. Political parties realized the importance of having a party leader as the main channel of communication (a practice that was observable during the last pre-elections campaign). This practice leads to enhanced personalization of politics on one side, and stronger leader identification of voters, on the other side.

5. WHAT SOLUTIONS ARE POSSIBLE AND DESIRABLE ACCORDING TO CITIZENS?

Prior to addressing the topic of citizens’ perceptions on possible improvements of the electoral system, we want to underline rather low levels of citizens’ knowledge about the political and electoral system in Serbia (as shown by our survey), as well as the fact that this topic requests a certain theoretical and practical knowledge base. Having said that, precaution must be used when assessing the respondents’ responses.

Precaution was deemed necessary, since when responding to the question ‘do you believe that the current electoral system can be improved by adding a preferential voting?’ respondents had equal shares of responses in both categories (51% yes and 49% no). Ambiguity is clear, when taking into consideration that respondents again had equal shares in responses in both statements: ’The electoral system should produce a majority that will easily elect the Government’ and ’The electoral system should reflect seat-shares in Parliament that correspond to the vote-shares in the elections’. In theory, these questions are being used as criteria for assessing the attitudes towards the preferred electoral system (majority election system vs. proportional representation system as two-ideal types systems).

A set of additional questions was introduced in order to assess citizens’ perceptions on possible improvements. Our respondents mainly shared the idea of bringing the Members of Parliament closer to the citizens, and thus shrinking the gap between political elites and ordinary citizens. 62% of respondents believe that MPs would be more accountable if ‘there was an obligation to respond to citizen’s emails in due time’, while ¾ of them believe that the accountability would improve by ‘creating an environment that promote direct interaction between MPs and citizens’. Not surprisingly, these statements correspond with the reported satisfaction of citizens with MPs offices (an informal mechanism supported by the National Democratic Institute in the convocation 2008-2012).
One of the possible mechanisms that would enable citizens to be better represented is the introduction of the preferential voting, often discussed by scholars. We have already mentioned that half of the respondents stated their preference to adding preferential voting into the current electoral system; however, if we slightly modify the question, 60% of respondents agree with the statement ‘voters should vote for the party but should be also able to rank candidates in order of preference’, while 65% of respondents agree that ‘voters should not choose lists but only candidates nominated by political parties’. While the preferential voting is not a widespread practice, we still believe that adding a preferential voting would be an important corrective of the electoral system of Serbia, while at the same time keeping its main features. The example of the last parliamentary elections in Croatia, states that other societies opt for this solution too.

Finally, our respondents have also supported the idea of increasing the threshold for pre-elections coalitions (the idea often discussed in public). A significant 76% of respondents support this idea, that can be explained either by the negative image of smaller parties or by the necessity to enlarge the party scene.

6. CONCLUSION

This chapter presents insights obtained from the survey on citizens’ perceptions about politics. Generally, our respondents report a surprisingly low degree of interest in politics, as well as low levels of knowledge about the main features of the political and electoral system. What was expected and proved by our survey is that citizens put the main focus on economic topics, over political ones.

Furthermore, our survey shows that citizens tend to perceive that they are alienated from political process, while a common belief is that political parties work in their own interest. Despite dissatisfaction, democracy still presents a system that enjoys a major support (rather its theoretical concept, than the practice). Looking into the perception of political leaders and intra-party relations, our findings suggest leadership tendencies, and a clear focus of citizens on political leaders and their first entourage. Citizens report that different opinions within the party and the existence of the factions weaken the political party.

The research argues that the existing electoral system achieves part of its democratic potentials, while leaving intact some possibilities that should be further investigated during electoral system reform. As discussed in this chapter, the conclusion is that the electoral system cannot be used as the only determinant of the political scene in Serbia, but that other elements play an important role.
Chapter 3

Electoral systems and intra-party relations in Montenegro and Serbia in comparative perspective
INTRAPARTY DEMOCRACY IN
SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

Introduction

The issue of intraparty relations and intraparty democracy is still almost unexplored both in the old democratic states and in the so-called new democracies. There are few papers which define relevant criteria and standards for categorization of intraparty relations and determination of the level of internal democracy within political parties. Even when it is about the very concept of intraparty democracy, authors share no common and generally accepted definition of what consist the intraparty democracy and what are the standards which political parties should meet in their internal functioning. Hence, there are different approaches in defining the concept of intraparty democracy. Certainly the concept of intraparty democracy should be researched as one of the elements which characterize the level of democracy of the entire society, i.e. as a very important indicator of respect of democratic procedures in the process of public interest decision-making at the national level. Speaking about the definition of intraparty democracy, Susan Scarow says that intraparty democracy is a “broad concept which describes a wide scope of methods for engagement of members in the intraparty deliberation and decision-making process” (Scarow 2005: 3). Scarow in the same time thinks that political parties characterized by intraparty democracy have more chances for achieving better electoral results.
On the other hand, some authors support the attitude that visible elements of intraparty democracy imply higher participation of party members in decision-making processes and thus influence weakening of cohesion of parliamentary parties, losing of power of party leadership, election of unreliable candidates for the position of party leader, which might yield alienation of the party from its electorate as a consequence (Vujović and Tomović 2015: 155).

Regarding definition of the criteria based on which it would be possible to characterize intraparty relations, Susan Scarow defines three dimensions for her comparison of political parties: inclusion, centralization and institutionalization (Scarow 2005: 6). Inclusion implies the level of involvement of party members in decision-making activities, centralization points to the level of delegating the decision-making competences among party authorities, whereas institutionalization means party autonomy from other actors, the level of internal organizational development, the level to which voters identify themselves with the party and perceive it as an important social actor (Scarow 2005: 6). On the basis of these three dimensions, Scarow distinguishes parties in which the decision-making right is granted to party leaders and parties in which more structures are entitled to the right to decision-making; centralized, decentralized and strataarchical parties (Vujović and Tomović: 160), and, finally, highly institutionalized and lowly institutionalized parties.

Besides Susan Scarow, Goran Čular also defined the dimensions and criteria of intraparty democracy. His model is two-dimensional and implies differentiation between the dimension of autonomy and the dimension of inclusion. The dimension of inclusion pertains to horizontal aspects of political party; it points to the number of political party members involved in the decision-making process and to the difference in the scope of competences granted to broader party authorities in comparison with the competences enjoyed by a narrow circle of party leadership (Čular, 2004: 35). The dimension of autonomy pertains to the vertical ratio of power distribution, i.e. it deals with the issue of autonomy of party’s components at various levels and, in Čular’s words, how “the party in the field” can influence the decision-making process at its various levels.

Čular defines a set of indicators for both dimensions, in the following way:

The dimension of autonomy is characterized with three sub-dimensions and the following indicators:

1. Sub-dimension the rights of party members, with characteristic indicators:
   a. general rights,
   b. right to creation of intraparty groups (fractions),
   c. protection of members against disciplinary measures;
2. Sub-dimension *party autonomy at the local level* with following characteristic indicators:

a. autonomy in the decision-making process (in the structure of local authorities, disciplinary proceedings, selection processes of candidates for local elections and entering local coalitions);
b. the scope of competences of the higher level party authorities in deciding on local issues (in elections of local authorities, local level decision-making processes, coordination of local level party activities and possibility for national level party officials to be members of local party authorities, by position);

3. Sub-dimension *direct influence of local authorities on the decision-making process at the party’s national level*, with the following characteristic indicators:

a. participation in election of representatives in the party’s representative body (congress, i.e. assembly),
b. participation in election of members of political and executive party authorities at the national level,
c. participation in candidates’ selection procedures for parliamentary elections,
d. influence through capacities for convening the congress (assembly) sessions;
e. capacities for initiating amendments to the statute.

The dimension of *inclusion* is characterized with three sub-dimensions and the following indicators:

1. Sub-dimension *direct participation of political party members in decision-making process*, with the following characteristic indicators:

a. direct participation of members in decision-making and elections;
b. direct participation of members in selection processes;
c. direct participation of members in the central level-oriented initiatives.

2. Sub-dimension *the scope of competences enjoyed by the representative bodies in comparison with the executive party authorities*, with the following characteristic indicators:

a. at the central level – in adoption of the statute and the political program, in election of members of central political and executive bodies and in selection procedures;
b. at the local level – in election of members of local executive bodies, election of representatives at higher level conventions and in selection procedures.
3. Sub-dimension *competences of the political party president*, with the following characteristic indicators:
   a. right to propose/appoint the vice-president;
   b. right to propose/appoint members of the central body;
   c. right to suspend/replace/exclude a member;
   d. influence on selection procedures at the central and local levels;
   e. other prerogatives.

In accordance with this three-dimensional structure, on the one side there are parties which authorize the members of their representative bodies for making all key decisions and carrying out of direct elections, and whose presidents have limited competences and possibilities for an independent action, whereas on the other side there are parties which narrow leadership or executive authorities make all key decisions, implement indirect system of representation, and whose presidents have significant competences and privileges (Čular, 2004: 36). Following these dimensions and indicators, Čular makes distinction among four kinds of political parties, in relation to the level of their intraparty democracy:

1. Parties of low level of democracy (low level of autonomy and low level of inclusion)
2. Parties of democratic centralism (low level of autonomy and high level of inclusion)
3. Individualist-elitist parties (high level of autonomy and low level of inclusion)
4. Full democracy type of parties (high level of autonomy and high level of inclusion)

In order to obtain the clearest possible picture of the situation in intraparty relations in Serbia and Montenegro, the paper shall use Čular’s model and its dimensions and indicators, based on which we shall characterise intraparty relations in these two states.
Intraparty relations – the case of Serbia

The analysis of intraparty relations in Serbia shall explore the parliamentary parties – leaders of their coalitions at elections (SNS, SPS, DS, SDS, DSS) and the SRS which ran independently at the parliamentary elections of 2016. The other players in the party life of Serbia are not included in the analysis because they did not fulfil certain criteria (network of boards, party organs, formal documents etc.).

The dimension of autonomy primarily refers to the vertical division of power among different levels in party organization, capacity for field action and participation in decision-making processes. The formal framework of the first sub-dimension of autonomy, the rights of party members, is in the statute and rules of procedures prescribed by the party authorities, whereas the second part of the segment has a practical side as well. The admission into membership is in all political parties done in the same and quite common way, with similar criteria (adult citizens of Serbia, not members of other political parties etc.). In the

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1 Parts of this chapter were originally published in: Despot Kovačević, “Unutapartijska demokratija u Srbija kao deo procesa institucionalizacije partija”, zbornik “Srbija i institucionalni modeli javnih politika – problemi i perspektive”, ur. Đorđe Stojanović, Mladen Lišanin, Institut za političke studije, Beograd, 2016

2 The analysis involved the statues, rules of procedure and other documents of the following political parties: SNS, SPS, DS, SDS, DSS, SRS
formal sense, all parties have envisaged the same rights and obligations of their members and in this standard form there are no significant differences among the parties in Serbia.

From the aspect of protection, members of political parties often suffer sanctions with or without disciplinary proceedings; exclusion from the party is common. All parties have prescribed procedures for disciplinary accountability of their members and they are very similar, with some important exceptions. This segment is in all parties regulated by the party’s Statute, whereas some of the parties also have an additional Rules of Procedure on disciplinary proceedings (DSS, DS, SDS). The organs carrying out the disciplinary proceedings can be standing or ad hoc formed and their power can be different. In the majority of cases the process is two-instance – led by the Disciplinary Commission (DSS) with appeal applied to the Executive Board (DSS).

The SNS has a two-instance process as well (the Executive Board decides in the first instance in all cases except against the members of the Presidency and appeals against the decision are in the second instance applied to the Main Board), as well as the DS (in the first instance the decision is made either by a municipal board or by the Executive Board and in the second instance by the Statutory Commission) and the SRS (depending on the case, participants in the disciplinary proceedings are – in hierarchical order – the National Board, Executive Board, County Board, Municipal Board and, in specific cases, a specially formed Court of Honour, whereas in the second instance the decision is directly made by a higher authority). The most complex disciplinary proceeding is in the SPS since the process is three-instance, starting from the executive boards in municipalities and cities, through municipal and city boards to the Statutory Commission as the third instance. The SDS’s Rules of Procedure and the Statute regulate this part and the procedure is identical to the one carried out in the DS. It should be added that the SDS and the DS also have the Ethic Board which can initiate disciplinary proceeding on the basis of the Party Ethic Code.

Here we should add the grading of disciplinary measures. In this segment the SPS again has the broadest scope of disciplinary measures (reprimand, warning, suspension, exclusion), while other parties reduce these measures to suspension and exclusion. However, the SPS and the SNS are the most outstanding due to their disciplinary measures under urgent procedure, i.e. without a disciplinary proceeding, enabling the party authorities to exclude a member without a substantial debate. In practice all these provisions are even less respected in all the parties, so that the arbitrariness of party authorities through different mechanisms is almost unlimited; members with different attitudes are usually excluded regardless the provisions of the party’s statute about the protection of dissenting opinion.
Another sub-dimension, the autonomy of local level at the parties, reflects in centralized organization. Common territorial organization of parties is level-based: local, municipal, city, county and provincial boards. All parties in Serbia have the same organizational scheme. At the local level the most important organizational unit per the scope of competences is the municipal (city) board. Although there are differences in autonomy among the parties, some of these details can in practice be very problematic for lower (local) levels of party organization. The SNS dominates in centralization, the DS, DSS, SPS and the SRS have a more autonomous structure, while the SDS differs due to a lower level of procedures and competences of central authorities over the local ones. The competences of the party president in deciding on this issue are particularly indicative for autonomy of municipal organizations in the SNS. According to the Statute, the SNS President shall “approve local-level coalitions, appoint and dismiss commissioners and acting presidents of municipal and city organizations; in urgent cases, the president may dismiss city and municipal boards and the chairs thereof” (the SNS Statute). In other parties the president as an independent authority has no such competences in decision-making, except in the SPS where president approves the election.

In all parties, the autonomy of local organizations is limited by competences of the main board, the executive board and the presidency (in the SRS, of the Central National Board) and this is an approximate framework which monitors and analyzes the work of local organizations, dismiss them and limit their work. The SDS differs from other parties because only its Main Board can manage the work of local organizations, while other party authorities reach the provincial level at the lowest. These frameworks of competences enable us to derive conclusions on the autonomy of local organizations and capacities for their practical action.

The influence of local authorities on central levels of decision-making, the third sub-dimension, implies the presence of members and leaders from the local level in central organs – electoral, administrative and central party authorities like the Assembly (Congress), main board, executive board etc. Considering that all parties have an equal right to voting, presence means influence, although this domain enters the sphere of authorities’ participation. Here we should make a distinction, because the participation of local authorities enters the domain of autonomy and participation of members enters the domain of participation. There are clear criteria for becoming a part of these authorities and all parties have regulated procedures to that end.

The SNS Assembly, according to the Statute, consists of elected delegates and delegates by position. A part of the elected delegates comes from local (municipal) boards and their number is determined by the Main Board in accordance
with the number of members of municipal board and the number of votes in
the respective territory. Delegates are appointed by the electoral assembly of the
municipal board. The Main Board of the SNS is the highest decision-making
authority between the two assemblies and, according to the Statute, it includes
also “the representatives of local organizations: by position, the presidents and
commissioners of municipal and city boards as well as city and municipal may-
or” (the SNS Statute).

According to the DS Statute, the highest authority of decision-making in the
party is the Assembly which can be ordinary (every year) or electoral. The DS
Assembly is made of a broad circle of delegates; a significantly higher number of
people is included by position while the elected delegates come from the local
organizations in the proportion defined by the Main Board upon the proposal
of the Executive Board. Under these rules, the delegates are elected by munici-
pal and city organizations themselves. The key function holders from local self-
governments are included in the work and decisions of the Assembly as well.
According to the Article 37 of the Statute of the Democratic Party, the Main
Board also includes “presidents of municipal and city organizations, key func-
tion holders in local self-governments and all members – city and municipal
mayors in at least 2 terms of office.” In comparison with the SNS, the involve-
ment of local organizations in the DS is not much higher, except that the work of
the Assembly as the highest authority is still burdened with the issue of legality
of the 14th Electoral Assembly which saw the change in counting procedure due
to the electronic system failure.

In difference from other parties, the highest authority in the SPS is the Congress
which, without particular details, consists of the members of SPS’s authorities
and the elected delegates of municipal and city organizations, in accordance
with the number and the manner proposed by the Main Board. Such impre-
cisely determined number of delegates gives to the Main Board a large space for
arbitrary decisions. Nevertheless, it is important to add that the Congress can
as well be convened by 1/3 of city and municipal boards or by 10% of members
with the status verified 6 months in advance. In the SPS, the number of mem-
bers and the criteria of the Main Board are defined by the Congress.

The SDS’s Statute clearly and precisely states the manner, number and venue of
election of delegates. Exactly 200 delegates are elected for the Assembly through
constituencies (municipal and city branches) at direct elections with clearly de-
finite criteria, whereas the second part from the local delegates come by posi-
tion as heads of city and municipal caucuses and other local officials. However,
the Main Board can, upon proposal of the Executive Board, decide to increase
the number of elected delegates. The Main Board of the party gathers all presi-
Electoral systems and intra-party relations in Montenegro and Serbia in comparative perspective

dents of city and municipal branches, as well as 33 elected members of the Main Board.

The SRS holds its National Congress in the form of an assembly, with participation of the elected delegates and the delegates by position. Each “municipal board elects two delegates, one in every thousand members in the board, with presidents of municipalities from the SRS and presidents of county, city and municipal boards of the party included by position” (the SRS Statute). “The National Congress elects the President of the party and the members of the Central National Board, acting as the main board in other parties, of 101 member in total” (the SRS Statute)

The DSS has the Assembly which can have maximum 600 members by position and elected. Each “municipal board elects up to 5 members of the Assembly, according to the criteria defined by the Executive Board in accordance with the quality, results and size of the board” (the DSS Statute). The main board of the DSS besides members by position also elects 170 members from the lists from the districts and from the DSS Youth. Presidents of municipal and city boards who are not the MB members can participate in the work of this authority.

Our conclusions based on this short review of the situation regarding the involvement of local authorities at the central level of decision-making differ in nuances among the parties, nevertheless showing a clear trend that in parties in Serbia local authorities have the medium level of inclusion into the central-level decision-making.

The dimension of inclusion in political parties is important for intraparty democracy primarily due to the role of members and exercising of their rights in the party structure, as well as broadness of these rights in relation to the party leadership. From the aspect of direct participation of members in the decision-making process, the first sub-dimension of inclusion, parties in Serbia cannot be praised for participation of broad membership in their activities or for participation in decision-making. As already presented, they join the work of authorities as officials and by election from the party organs through the procedures defined from the top of the party structure.

The SNS members can count on party’s protection if threatened because of party activities, but the members do not have a particular role except the statutory right to vote and be elected, to participate in the work and have capacity for initiative. Members have certain role in their local boards, as by becoming the party member one becomes the local board member as well – this can be defined as direct participation of members. The DS, DSS, SRS are not significantly different – the statutory regulated rights of members without specific rights which might be characterized as a comparative advantage and indirect participation
in election of authorities. The SPS grants a bit higher capacities to its members, above else because 10% of members can initiate an extraordinary Congress and because it statutory poses the freedom of political initiative of members as its first program principle. The SDS achieved the highest level in this segment, with direct elections for president and other electoral functions (delegates) for the Electoral Assembly which, although being the strong foundations for future intraparty democracy, have by now in fact been used only once so that serious assessments cannot be given.

The competences enjoyed by representative bodies comparing to the executive authorities of the party, the second sub-dimension, above else refer to the “division of power” at various levels of party institutional structure. The very election of these authorities is under certain influence of representative bodies. In the SNS the Presidency and the Executive Board have concrete competences and broad possibilities for decision-making and their election is under the decisive influence of the Main Board and the President of the party, whereas the Assembly only confirms the election of the part of the Presidency proposed by the President from among the ranks of honorary members. Similar situation is in the DS, SPS, DSS, SRS, (Presidential Collegium and Executive Board), the SDS, which Main Board and the party President have influence on the Presidency and the Executive Board, with the Presidency members coming by position only.

Regarding the level of competences of the Assembly (Congress) and the executive party authorities, there are no big differences among the parties. Prevailing in these competences is the capacity for formation and dismissal of lower organizational levels, opening the possibility for arbitrary decisions which the Assembly can influence on only after the session as there is no high level of representation in these bodies but the party leadership manages their work directly, through the majority of representatives by function. The indirect control of executive authorities makes them stronger in the division of power among the organization levels, so that oligarchic tendencies are unavoidable on the account of broader participation even through the possibility of control and pressure on “poor” implementation of decisions.

The third sub-dimension, the authorization of the party president, relies on the nature of political parties in which the leader (president) is also the centrally recognizable figure and the general reflection of the party; the post-communist countries “suffer” from the party presidentialism syndrome much more than the old democracies (Biezen, 206). Parties in Serbia and their presidents are not much different, as besides the formal statutory strengths party presidents also have big informal strengths in leading the party. In addition to the role given to them by the public, neither the members nor other parts of party leaderships move away from this matrix in which the party president is the strongest figure.
The election of party president is led by party Assemblies (Congresses), through quotas of delegates again prescribed by the leadership, while the SDS opts for a higher level of democracy through direct elections, but that democracy is trivialized through candidacy of one person only. There are no significant differences among the parties concerning the level of competences and the statutory power of all party presidents is at a high level, but besides the statutory power the presidents of the SNS and the SRS particularly rely on the informal one. In these parties the replacement of the party president is practically unimaginable. The situation is not much different in the DS, SDS, SPS, DSS, but the practice nevertheless saw certain fractions which are not “close” to the party president.

As for the types of intraparty democracy, parties have different levels of closeness. The types cannot be entirely defined, but the parties in Serbia move toward certain models and we can assess them in that manner. The SNS is between “weak democracy” and “democratic centralism”. The DS has a rather centralized position between these types and it would be difficult to chose the type it belongs to, but is somewhat closer to the “individualist-elitist type”. The SPS is the closest to the type of “democratic centralism”, whereas the SRS is rather close to the “individualist-elitist type”. The DSS is between “individualist-elitist” and

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**Table 1: Implementation of dimensions of inclusion and autonomy on the example of parties in Serbia. Each sub-dimension was assessed on 1-3 scale.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SNS</th>
<th>DS</th>
<th>SPS</th>
<th>DSS</th>
<th>SDS</th>
<th>SRS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dimension of autonomy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights of members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy at the local level</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of the local level at the party's headquarters</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dimension of inclusion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct participation of members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative vs. executive party authority</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statutory competences of the president</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“full democracy” types, whereas the SDS have most characteristics of the party with “full democracy”.

**Figure 2:** *Graphic presentation of political parties in Serbia in relation to implementation of dimensions of autonomy and inclusion*

This review, besides individual assessments, leads to general conclusions about the parties in Serbia. The political parties in Serbia have not developed a high level of democratic procedures, but the prevailing characteristics of emphasized individualism in parties (president) and elitism (narrow leadership) with the practice of granting certain autonomy to local organizations, albeit of a more statutory nature. From the aspect of participation of lower levels we see that the purpose of their inclusion is only procedural while the key decisions are made exclusively by the party leaderships.
Intraparty relations – the case of Montenegro

Through an analysis of statutory competences of Montenegrin parliamentary parties we shall define the key elements of intraparty relations and the rank the Montenegrin parties according to the level of their intraparty democracy. In the beginning we explored the dimension of autonomy in relation with the defined sub-dimensions and the posed criteria.

Namely, when speaking about the sub-dimension of the rights of party members, the analysis of statutory regulations of Montenegrin parties reveals that all parties define similar conditions for regulation both of the membership procedure and the members’ rights and obligations. The Statutes envisage that members have right to participate in realization of party program and goals, participate in creating and carrying out of the policy, vote and be elected into the party authorities and participate in party activities on an equal basis. On the other hand, the Statutes also define the obligations of political parties’ members, so that the members commit that they will achieve program goals of the party, accept its program and statute, represent and actively implement the party’s policy and all decisions of its authorities and put efforts aimed at increase of membership and achievement of electoral success, pay fees, protect the party’s reputation and the like. Although none of the parties give its members the right to form fractions within the party, pursuant to the statutory solutions, parties provide full freedom of expression to their members and challenging of the decisions made by the majority or by the party authorities. In case of failure to observe the obligations defined in the statutes, the parties envisage various measures against their members, such is the withdrawal on member’s own accord, exclusion (DPS, the Bosniak Party), deleting from the party records (SDP, PZP, New Serbian Democracy).

Concerning the sub-dimension of autonomy of party’s local level which we assess in relation to the autonomy in the decision-making process and the scope of competences of the higher levels of party authority in deciding on local issues, it can be observed that in Montenegrin parties the decision-making power is concentrated in central party authorities, which is the most visible when speaking about dismissal of municipal, i.e. county boards. This is also the case when we observe the influence which local authorities exercise on the decision-

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3 Parts of this chapter were originally published in: Vujović Zlatko, Tomović Nikoleta, Unutarnja demokratija u Crnoj Gori in: Goati Vladimir, Darmanović Srđan (ur.), Izborni i partijski sistem u Crnoj Gori – perspektiva razvoja unutarpartijske demokratije, Centar za monitoring i istraživanje, Podgorica, 2015.

4 The analysis involved the statues and other founding documents of the following political parties: DPS, SDP, Nova, SNP, PzP, BS.
making process at the national level of the party, particularly when it is about the election of the party president. Namely, the possibilities for direct election of candidates for certain position are almost non-existing, whereas the candidacy procedure is solely under the firm control of the central party authorities. In the majority of cases (DPS, SDP, PzP) the key role in defining the list of presidential candidates is played by main boards of the parties, which also define the criteria and proportions for election of members of the highest party authorities.

Observing the key criteria of the dimension of inclusion and direct participation of members of political party in the decision-making process, we analyzed representative bodies belonging to the lower (local) party level, i.e. their number, delegated competences and privileges, as well as frequency of their convening, having in mind the fact that all other party authorities are elected through indirect model of representation. The most frequent representative authorities at the lower levels of party organization are electoral conferences consisting of elected members of local organizations, whereas the criteria, number and manner of election of their members are defined by municipal boards.

In the DPS and the SNP, the only direct activities of the members imply elections of representatives of local, i.e. municipal electoral conferences. If analyzing local organizational structure of the New Serbian Democracy, the situation is similar. Representatives of assemblies of municipal organizations are determined by the executive board, which points to the lack of direct participation of members. Direct participation of the SDP members depend on the size of local, i.e. municipal party organizations, because for municipal organizations of the SDSP with less than 100 members the Convention of the given municipality consists of all SDP members. In case of larger municipal organizations, municipal conventions consist of delegates determined by the relevant municipal boards. Situation is similar with the Movement for Changes, where all members participate in the election of municipal boards of smaller municipal organizations. In larger municipal organizations, the representative bodies function on the delegation principle. The situation is similar in local and municipal organizations of the Bosniak Party, because the assembly of its local organizations consists of all party members in the given local community, whereas the municipal assembly bodies are formed on the principle of representation.

When analyzing the criteria of sub-dimension of the scope of competences enjoyed by representative bodies in comparison with the executive authorities of Montenegrin parties, we explored the competences of members of representative bodies for election of members of political and executive bodies, the capacities for initiating the adoption of the Statute, political program of the party and the competences available to the members regarding the candidates’ selection.
Electoral systems and intra-party relations in Montenegro and Serbia in comparative perspective

Party), the national representative body adopts program documents and party statute, elects the members of majority of political and executive authorities. In electing the president and vice-president of the party, the congresses of the DPS, PzP and the New Serbian Democracy elect the president and the vice-presidents, whereas the congresses of the SDP, SNP and the Bosniak party elect the party presidents but their vice-presidents are elected by the main board. However, members of the presidencies of the DPS, SDP, Bosniak party are elected by main boards and not congresses. Only in the case of the PzP representative body elects the Presidency members.

Regarding the competences in the selection of candidates for party members, adoption of party lists and verification of candidates for local i.e. parliamentary elections, they mostly belong to the executive and not to the representative party authorities. The position of executive authorities is strong in almost all parties. Namely, the main boards call for elections for party members, define criteria and procedures of election of members of the authorities, determine the party candidate for the president of Montenegro, determine criteria and manner of proposing candidates for MPs and delegates, confirm MP and delegate lists, confirm the party candidate for the speaker and the deputy speaker of the Assembly and the party candidates for the prime minister and the member of the Government. The case is same at the local level, concerning the delegate lists of the parties determined by the municipal boards.

Regarding the volume of competences of representative bodies at the local level in the domain of election of members of the local executive authorities, election of members of the national representative authority of the party and in candidates’ selection procedures, local representative bodies have very limited competences. In the highest number of cases (DPS, SDP, SNP, BS, Nova), municipal boards are elected and their work is controlled by municipal electoral bodies, while other competences of this sub-dimension are withheld by executive authorities of local organizational party structures.

At the end we analyzed the competences of party presidents regarding proposing vice-presidents, proposing members of central party bodies, capacities for exclusion or suspension of members, impact on selection procedures at the central and local levels and other competences. Presidents of political parties in Montenegro have very strong concentration of power. They almost always symbolize the party, so almost all political parties are recognized by their presidents (Vujović and Tomović: 174). They are elected and dismissed by the highest representative bodies of the party (Congress, i.e. Assembly). In earlier research, referring to the statutory competences of the president, we categorized Montenegrin parties based on the scope of competences of their presidents. Thus we defined the “presidential” parties in Montenegro which statutory provisions
grant significant competences to the presidents who, upon being elected by the Congress, elect other executive party authorities aimed at carrying out the programme envisaged by the Congress (Vujović and Tomović: 175). Thus we found out that the DPS, SDP and the SNP have milder versions of presidentialism, in which the SDP president has much larger competences, particularly in the selection of members of the executive authorities of the party and in the candidates’ selection procedures. Regarding the president’s competences in the election of members of the executive authorities, the competences of the SDP and the SNP presidents are the largest. These parties give significant competences to the presidents to convene the other executive authorities and preside over them at the local or national levels as well as to appoint members of relevant executive bodies, and in the same time be their members by position, by which the presidents to a significant measure control the decision-making process in all central authorities of the party (Vujović and Tomović: 175).

Presidents without a significant scope of competences envisaged by the statutory provisions are from the PzP, the Bosniak Party, the New Serbian Democracy. Their presidents cannot control the election of members and the composition of the key authorities of the executive power and their competences regarding the selection of candidates are also very limited. Presidents of these parties don’t even have right to initiate the disciplinary accountability procedures for suspension of party members, which shows very modest statutory competences reserved for the presidents of these parties (Vujović and Tomović: 176).

Although the daily practice of political parties often speaks differently, the analysis of the statutory provisions of Montenegrin parties in relation to the defined indicators of intraparty democracy places them in the category of a very low intraparty democracy. Exactly through the analysis of statutory provisions, pursuant to the presented Čular’s model of intraparty democracy, we assessed Montenegrin parties and presented the implementation of criteria for the dimension of autonomy and the dimension of inclusion (Table 1).
Electoral systems and intra-party relations in Montenegro and Serbia in comparative perspective

Table 2: Implementation of dimensions of inclusion and autonomy on the example of Montenegrin parties (Vujović, Tomović: 176-178). Each sub-dimension within the two dimensions was assessed on 1-3 scale. Higher values point to a higher level of democracy in political parties, except in the case of sub-dimension of statutory competences of the president, where lower values point to the higher level of intraparty democracy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DPS</th>
<th>SDP</th>
<th>BS</th>
<th>SNP</th>
<th>NOVA</th>
<th>PzP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dimension of autonomy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rights of members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy at the local level</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of the local level at the party’s headquarters</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dimension of inclusion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct participation of members</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative vs. executive party authority</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statutory competences of the president</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is obvious that Montenegrin parties are characterized by a low level of inclusion (the DPS, BS and PzP have the highest level of inclusion) and a high level of centralization (particularly in the NOVA and PzP parties, whereas the DPS, SDP and the BS are in the same position when it is about the level of centralization). Graphic presentation of the obtained values shows that all political parties are in the bottom half of the space, in the squares reserved for the parties of democratic centralism and parties with low intraparty democracy (Vujović, Tomović: 178). Regarding the Čular’s categorization of political parties to parties of low level of democracy, democratic centralism, individualist-elitist and full democracy, Montenegrin parties can be divided to the parties of low level of democracy (SNP, SDP, NOVA), and the parties of democratic centralism (DPS, BS, PzP).
Having in mind a very low level of intraparty democracy, it is very important to provide conditions for enabling larger action of party members in Montenegro in selection of candidates, election of party leadership and definition of party policies. However, observing the history of Montenegrin parliamentarism and having in mind the obvious independence of parties from the donors and even from their voters, considering that significant financing of political parties comes from the budget, the process of democratization of political parties will be very long and complex. The current Law on Political Parties does not recognize provisions which would make the intraparty democracy procedures obligatory for the parties, while for additional adoption of such provision there is almost no political will. Not only that there are no legal obligations, but there is also no will of party leaderships to democratize their internal operational and decision-making procedures.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of intraparty relations and intraparty democracy on the cases of Serbia and Montenegro reveals similar tendencies in party systems of both countries. In both cases the analytical framework has shown that political parties have the intraparty democracy deficit with high concentration of power among the party presidents and higher authorities which often have discretion rights to decide about the lower levels in hierarchical organization of parties. The parties within the party systems of Serbia and Montenegro show certain
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nuances in the level of democracy according to the posed criteria and depending on that the parties are positioned per types. A general conclusion is that intraparty democracies in political parties of Serbia and Montenegro are defective and that this conclusion opens a new analytic field for research of implications of such situation and external effects on political systems in Serbia and Montenegro as a whole.
ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND INTRA-PARTY RELATIONS IN SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

The key findings from the survey on personal views and attitudes of candidates running for national parliamentary elections and public opinion survey, show weak functioning of democracy, lack of autonomy and accountability of political representatives, and low level of interest in politics reported by the voters.¹

¹ The research is a part of the Balkan Electoral Comparative Study: Impact of Personal Vote on Internal Party Democracy. Within the project, CEMI in Montenegro together with a team of researchers of the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, Serbia, have conducted two types of surveys. The first one encompassed candidates for national parliamentary elections, while the other was done among citizens. To this end, the researchers have developed two separate questionnaires. During the conduct of two surveys, the same questionnaire was used in Montenegro and in Serbia. This way, the researchers analyzed comparable data. CEMI has conducted from May to June 2015 a survey on the attitudes of candidates for MPs in the last parliamentary elections in 2012. The study included 136 candidates, representing approximately 16.25% of the total number of candidates for MPs in the parliamentary elections held in 2012, with the participation of candidates of the parliamentary parties of 25 – 40%. CEMI has used the same questionnaire that was used in over 40 countries around the world, and consists of questions related to the four segments of political engagement of candidates for MPs: (1) political views and activities, (2) political campaigns, (3) problems and policies, and (4) democracy and representation. In Serbia, on the basis of the available data of the Republic Electoral Commission,
According to the majority of our respondents in Serbia and Montenegro, partocracy rule in our countries since power holders are political parties and their leaders, and not institutions. An illustrative example is that political parties not only control the nomination process, but have a key role on the parliamentary work of MPs – through the process of drafting the amendments, providing detailed instructions on voting, and suggesting who should discuss certain issues in the Parliament.

Aforementioned findings confirm the fact that 15 years after the restoration of the multiparty system, we have just developed a formal intra-party and electoral democracy.2

The absence of the open democratic debate and the fair intra-party game (in which candidacy nominations would be supported by the party membership), results in a prevailing strong party discipline and career pragmatism. In a similar manner, the absence of the internal party debate and intra-party democracy has an impact on undemocratic political institutions, lack of critical thinking and public debates, and ineffective political accountability. It is probable that a set of undemocratic party components will only lead to a formal democracy both within the party and the political system. Political democracy will find it difficult to survive, in such a vicious circle.

What are the causes of this ‘flawed democracy’?

Our viewpoint is that we have in place a combination of the dominantly authoritarian orientation of people unconditionally ‘worshiping’ political authorities, and the clientelistic relations. The social order in which relations of patronage are even further enhanced within political parties, leads to a state in which ruling political parties at the end ‘own’ the state.

The above described order is supported by political engineering of the institutional design, in our case the proportional representation electoral system, in which the party leaders and leadership control the nomination process.

3,020 people were nominated as candidates on national parliamentary elections. The survey has encompassed 268 respondents (candidates for 2014 national parliamentary elections).

2 Many political scientists, including the authors, accept the distinction between electoral and liberal democracy developed by Larry Diamond. The need for distinction has raised especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall that resulted in many countries leaving one-party systems and adopting a multi-party system. Nevertheless, it was obvious that the quality of democracy is not the same in established, long-lasting Western pluralistic societies and the ‘emerging democracies’ in Eastern Europe, but also in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Electoral democracy largely matches with Robert Dahl’s concept of polyarchy, i.e. a kind of ‘minimal democracy’, while liberal democracy assumes not only a politically competitive system, but also the rule of law, rooted in the society.
Additionally, different political packages contain the more or less same content. Political pattern of populism creates alienation between party leaderships and politically 'immature' voters.

Although some consolidated democracies, such as e.g. Italy, Japan and Belgium were or still are functioning as partocracy, the evolution towards liberal democracy in partocratic regimes is quite difficult, almost a mission impossible without the parallel evolution of the civil and political society, its democratic institutionalization, stabilization and legitimization.

There are three key pre-conditions of this democratic evolution:

1. The limitation or ideally, abundance of the partocratic regime and patronage system in which 'to the victor go the spoils' – by appointing persons to public administration at all levels of governance, the ruling party 'captures' the state. The result of this abundance/limitation of the patronage system will be the professionalization and rationalization of the public administration as well as the introduction of the corporate management in public enterprises.

2. Stabilization and legitimization of the overly fragmented, weak and non-functional party system is the second pre-condition of the democratic evolution. This can be done through reforming the electoral system and introducing preferential voting – where voters would directly elect their representatives\(^3\) and through raising the threshold for coalitions.

3. The third pre-condition which is also a parallel process to the democratic evolution is the democratization of intra-party power structures. We see a great deal in enhancing the rights and democratic capacities of party members and their organizations, strengthening democratic procedures, organizing opinion polls, party referendums, direct elections for party functions and primaries for elections. Another important advantage of the democratization of intra-party relations is the decentralization of the power at all levels: geographical, social (women's and youths' forums) and ideological (factions).

\(^3\) We are aware that in politics there is 'no free lunch' as Goati would say, so there is also no ideal electoral system. Each has its advantages and disadvantages, including various models that to a greater or lesser extent favor the direct election of representatives by citizens. We will discuss in more detail the dilemmas and debates around the ideal electoral system later on.
1. ACTORS AND PROCESSES

1.1. Members of Parliaments – Key Actors or Players from Sidelines?

Candidacy Nominations

Our research has shown that national party leadership has a dominant role in influencing candidacy nominations, both through deciding who will make it to party list and in which order. Not only the party leaders have a dominant role in encouraging party members to run as candidates in national parliamentary elections, but also 1) the majority of candidates are also party officials; and 2) the final decision on candidacy nominations is made by the national party leadership. Among our respondents, as many as 74.6% have been party officials at the moment of running as candidates in parliamentary elections. In addition, contrary to the rule that all party members have the right to nominate candidates, the decision on final candidacy nomination is reserved for national party leadership, i.e. Main Board (45%), Presidency (34%) or the President (8%), and in extremely low number of cases, the decision may be influenced by Municipal Boards (10%).

Nomination candidacy and selection, as well as the degree of party centralization are two main criteria for assessing intra-party democracy (Scarrow, 2005). According to the research results, we can conclude that intra-party democracy in Serbia ranks relatively low. The research showed no significant difference between ruling and opposition parties. (See article by Lončar and Stojanović).

The party discipline is achieved mainly through the mechanisms of candidacy nominations. When candidacy nomination decisions are made on the national party leadership level (and not the party members or voters), there is a vast potential of political party control over the work of MPs. This mechanism seriously hinders MPs accountability, and increases the party discipline.

Candidacy nominations in Montenegro are also the 'jurisdiction' of the national party leadership, and are defined by party statutes. The Law on Political Parties, adopted in 2004, does not stipulate the candidacy nomination process nor the democratic procedures of selecting the party leadership. Statutes of political parties, often uniformly regulate the candidacy nominations procedure. So far, no direct elections for party leadership were held in Montenegro. There are no voter registration procedures neither (by which the citizens could register in order to be authorized and allowed to vote in party primaries) (article by Vujović).

In the context in which the voters can vote only for the political party, and not individual candidates, it is to be expected that the campaign strategy is primarily oriented towards the promotion of the political party and its national party leadership, and not the candidate.

Consequently campaigns are centralized, with party-centered campaign strategies, and national party leadership controlling the budget for the campaign. From the candidates’ responses it is evident that candidates see their role in the campaign in the function of the political party. Accordingly, on the 0 to 10 scale, where 0 marks the agreement with the statement ‘the primary aim of the campaign was to attract attention for the candidate’ and 10 marks the agreement with the statement ‘the primary aim of the campaign was to attract attention for the party’, the average response is 8.2 in Montenegro.

A closer look into the activities undertaken by the candidates, show a visible absence of activities geared at personal promotion and campaign. An illustrative example of this is the complete absence of individual posters as a campaign activity.

Another indicative finding, proved by the research findings, is a fairly low level of social integration of candidates of MPs in other forms of social organizations – trade unions, professional associations and NGOs.

The data on elections tenure and reelection rates of candidate show that processes of candidacy nomination, selection and career advancement are complex and that political parties keep changing candidates’ lists.

On the other side, a smaller number of high-profile party members – the leading core of the political party, have become professionals and regular candidates with high re-elections rates.

These data prove that party loyalty and devotion to the party (including the unpaid party work) are the necessary pre-conditions for candidacy nomination. Exemptions to the rule are the celebrities whose appearance on party lists should convey the message of the popular support to the party and bring additional votes.


When directly asked about their preference for an electoral system (proportional representation system or majority system), candidates believe that some sort
of preferential voting system would be better for the development of democracy. A clear preference is visible also in our research survey – in Montenegro 4/5 of candidates would opt for the introduction of some sort of preferential voting into the current electoral system.

Candidates for MPs tend to perceive serious problems and obstacles in the way democracy works, and they believe that certain mechanisms should be replaced. More than half of all respondents both in Serbia and Montenegro believe that citizens do not have enough possibilities to participate in political decision-making, that laws and other regulations do not reflect view of voters, and that lobby groups have too much influence on policy and law-making. As an illustrative example, ¾ of candidates running for 2014 national parliamentary elections in Serbia believe that political parties and party leaderships are the main power holders.

On the other side, if the candidate’s opinion does not correspond to the opinion of their political party, 49% of all respondents believe that they should vote according to his/her party opinion; and 51% according to his/her own opinion. This indicates that a very critical stance towards the shortcomings of the electoral system in Serbia does not prevent candidates to accept strong party discipline and give priority to party positions, starting from the candidacy nominations stage.

1.2. CITIZENS AS APATHETIC OBSERVERS

Are Citizens Interested in Politics?

In Serbia, every fourth citizen (23%) report interest in politics to a certain extent, whilst only 3% of citizens indicate great personal interest in politics – and can be put into the category of ‘political gladiators’. The surprise is even greater having in mind that double of those respondents have reported to be members of a political party (7%) – therefore, over 45% members of political parties report low or complete absence of interest in politics, while only 13% report great interest in politics.

Logically, we ask ourselves what are the motives of membership in political parties of every 10th citizen (in the age group above 18 years old) of Serbia?

Having in mind this low level of interest in politics, it is not surprising that only 3 of 10 citizens (31%) regularly or often follow political events, while 68% of them report that they rarely or never follow political events.
Acquaintance with the Functioning of the Political and Electoral System

Following of political events and interest in politics do not match the levels of knowledge about the electoral system – only 12% of interested in politics recognizes which type of electoral system is in use in Serbia. Party membership responded in the same manner supporting the hypothesis of inadequate political education within political parties.

The same flagrant ignorance is observable in Montenegro – only 4.9% of respondents knew that Montenegro uses proportional representation system. In addition, only 1% of all respondents have correctly answered that Montenegro is a single constituency.

Do Members of Parliament Represent Citizens or Their Political Parties?

Every third citizen believe that 'MPs represent interests of ordinary citizens' and that 'municipal councilors are willing to take into account the needs of ordinary citizens', which states about the same level of alienation at all levels of governance. On the other side, ¾ of citizens believe that MPs, if their personal opinion does not correspond to the opinions of his/her voters/constituents, should in both cases vote according to their voters/constituents’ opinion. Of course, the parliamentary practice in Serbia show that these cases are extremely rare, and that MPs as a rule vote according to their party opinions.

The results indicate that voters report low levels of trust both in political parties and the rules of the political system. Furthermore, citizens believe that the electoral (and the political) system are dominated by political parties, a fact that further enhances the hypothesis of partocracy or party-despoty (Goati 2007).

In societies with an authoritarian tradition and a widespread combination of indifference, apathy towards political events, ignorance, cynicism and mistrust in political institutions and actors, citizens are in constant pursue for a political leader to trust in. More precisely, 83% of respondents agree with the statement 'only political parties with strong leaders can form a stable Government' and 76% agree with the statement 'different opinions within one political party jeopardizes its chances for electoral success'. Looking into these statements, we conclude that the identification with the party leader gets an authoritarian dimension. The common understanding that different opinions weakens the party prevents the existence of internal debates, and even in the cases where these debates occur, they are hidden from public and media attention. Internal debates are perceived as indicators of crisis and weakness (see article by Spasojević and Mihailović).
Citizens and the Electoral System

Despite rather low levels of citizens’ knowledge about politics, one set of questions was focused on potential directions of change/improvements of the current electoral system. Citizens’ responses mainly addressed the issue of bringing citizens closer to their elected representatives, and thus shrinking the gap between political elites and ordinary citizens.

One of the possible mechanisms of bringing citizens closer to their MPs could be the introduction of preferential voting. If we take a closer look into the question of who should elect MPs, 4/5 of respondents (60%) agree that ‘voters should vote for the party but should be also able to rank candidates in order of preference’. We are aware that this statement is not unique for Serbian citizens (it’s common in other societies too), and that the decision on the country’s institutional design is rarely in citizens’ hands. It’s the MPs that decide in their name about the adequate institutional design, after a debate which involves political scientists and law experts. However, ‘citizens feeling’ or ‘instinct’ on this matter must be taken into account.

Furthermore, our survey shows that citizens tend to perceive that they are alienated from political process, while a common belief is that political parties work in their own interest. Looking into the perception of political leaders and intra-party relations, our findings suggest leadership tendencies, and a clear focus of citizens on political leaders and their first entourage. Citizens report that different opinions within the party and the existence of the factions weaken the political party, which proves that the potential reformers of party and electoral mechanisms are being sandwiched between party oligarchs and citizens with strong authoritarian tendencies.

2. KEY DIRECTIONS OF CHANGE

2.1. A Missing Link – Intra-Party Democracy

A weak and modest democratic input provided by the citizens is based on a mutually reinforcing calculation between party leadership and party membership, following the logic of strong discipline and party hierarchy. Through a model which combines the degree of autonomy of party members and local/regional party structures, and the degree to which party members are involved in decision-making, the research has shown that political parties’ are a place of weak inclusion and limited autonomy (see article by Tomović and Kovačević).
For the reasons stated above, we have decided to further investigate two possible dimensions of intra-party democracy. We investigate the extent to which candidacy nominations procedures are open (dimension one), and the extent to which voters’ possibility to directly elect candidates (preferential voting) influence intra-party relations (dimension two).

Electoral systems have many important implications, one of them being also the influence on the development of intra-party democracy. The structure of the voting ballot – whether voters are allowed to rank candidates – is not only a technical solution. It influences the conduct of political parties. If the system allows voting for individual candidates, the political party will nominate the best candidate, and not the loyal one. This can lead to a necessity to develop intra-party procedures to select candidates on direct and democratic elections. Consequently, the power will not be centralized in the national party leadership, and a closer relation between leadership and membership will be established. On the other side, in the context where voters are only allowed to choose for a party, the political party will opt for a pyramidal structure.

Party decentralization has the potential to hamper party unity and cohesion. The smaller constituency is, the more difficult it is to maintain party unity and cohesion. In the case voters have opportunities to rank candidates or vote just for certain party candidates, the possibility of intra-party conflicts augments. This is the root of party leadership’s resistance to change. They fear the possibility to lose elections and/or loose positions within the party.

The research findings indicate that the candidates for national parliamentary elections are at large loyal party members, with residence in large cities/towns and positions in the party at the time of candidacy nomination. Political parties do not have developed mechanisms of selection of candidates (e.g. party primaries), the decision on final candidacy nomination is reserved for national party leadership, the main board or the presidency. We can conclude that intra-party democracy ranks relatively low, which results in strong party discipline and weak accountability of MPs. On the other side, if there voters are allowed to rank candidates, potential conflict and fight for votes among the candidates of the same political party may occur.

Scholars believe that electoral rules have a large impact on relations within the political party, namely the intra-party cohesion (Giannetti and Benoit, 2009: 6). By party cohesion, we mean voting according to the party opinion, in spite of the candidates’ own opinion. Therefore, electoral systems that focus on individual candidates lead to candidates focusing on their individual campaign, which jeopardizes the cohesion of the party. The smaller constituency is, the more difficult it is to maintain party unity and cohesion. In the case voters have opportu-
nities to rank candidates or vote just for certain party candidates, the possibility of intra-party conflicts augments, while party cohesion weakens (Depauw and Martin, 2009: 106).

**Argumentation for and against Inclusion of Party Members**

In political science, there are conflicting perspectives on the very necessity of inclusion of party membership in the nomination and selection of party candidates for elections. Cross for instance emphasizes the process itself (Rahat, 2013: 147). For him, internal elections are an additional tool for correcting certain democratic deficiencies on the state level; there is therefore no predetermined valid model for every case. Hence, in spite of the importance of inclusion, it does not have to be applied everywhere, since it is only needed in closed list systems where the personal element is lacking.

Unlike Cross, Rahat and Hazan emphasize the results instead of the process (Rahat, 2013: 148). For them, excessive inclusiveness can lead to negative consequences, such as an excessive influence of lobbyists or an insufficient level of representativeness, consequently causing disappointment among members. Also, Shugart highlights how much intra-party elections both for the leader and the party-list for parliamentary elections, can influence party cohesion. The more inclusive the process is, the better chances there are that candidates will have opinions different from the party headquarters which will, at least potentially, lead to jeopardized party cohesion (Giannetti and Benoit, 2009: 7). A more centralized process of election of party candidates leads to a larger degree of party cohesion, but according to research, where elections are centralized, a larger number of MPs 'fled' to other parties (Depauw and Martin, 2009: 108).

Ultimately, it seems that merely the existence of the opportunity for individuals to be promoted in the party, to develop their careers, and above all to have the opportunity to participate in the executive power contribute to the party unity. The poorer the chances are for someone to be promoted in the party hierarchy, the greater the chances are that they will act independently from the party leadership.

**Directions of Change**

In order to comprehend the nature of intra-party relations, its environment have the largest and probably the most important role. Whether the party will have a developed internal democracy is influenced by several conditions: 1. The political tradition of the society (authoritarianism, traditionalism and populism, con-
formism, national and religious ties, decentralization) which essentially defines
the type of engagement of party membership; 2. The party ideology itself, as well
as the ideology of rival parties (non-radicalism); 3. The number of relevant rival
parties; 4. The ruling vs. opposition position of the party; 4. The electoral system
in use (Cross and Katz, 2013: 7).

What are the causes of the intra-party gap between the democratically tailored
party statutory regulations and the political practice?

In our view, the cause of the gap between the rule and the practice lies in the ‘de-
structive mix’ of the dominant authoritarian form of leadership worship, relying
on widespread clientelistic ties and strengthened within the partocratic order.
In the ‘passionate’ relationship between the leader and the leadership on one
hand, and the lower party echelons on the other hand, there are clearly mutual
calculations and expected profit, especially within parties in power. The post-
election political party switchers are perhaps the best example and confirmation
of this hypothesis.

In order to achieve change and strive towards a polyarchic model of power dis-
tribution, proclaimed by statutory documents, several processes need to be put
in place simultaneously:

1. The personalization of the electoral system that results in bringing the can-
didates closer to their citizens and not solely to the party nomenclature.
2. The reduction of the system ‘to the victor go the spoils’ and occupying the
management positions of the public sector by party activists;
3. The occurrence of a rational, informed and versed voter;
4. Finally, a very critical interpretation of a party’s organizational pattern and
the practice of rectification (correction) of its (unintentional non-demo-
cratic ‘insertions’. In other words, a question is what kind of rules and pat-
terns contribute to a formally (by the statute) democratic model to function
in practice as a fight club and/or coalition building within the party mecha-
nism.

In the first instance, it is about a set of solutions that practically enable the con-
centration of power in the hands of the party executive and at the level of na-
tional leadership.

Simultaneously, the control over money flows and human resource policy, such
as the practice of prior headquarters’ approval of a local electoral list or the (self)
election of desirable delegates in party conferences (conventions/congresses),
further cement the dominance of the leadership over the party base.
A very important mechanism is placing the decision-making bodies of the party – the party conference (convention/congresses – any form of general meeting of a political party) and the standing bodies under the control of the party executive. As a result, the power concentrates in the party presidency, or even in the party chairmanship – the leader and the circle of his/her persons of greatest trust.

The logic behind the leadership self-election and ‘bending’ statutory solutions starts with the control over the process of nomination and selection of delegates for the party conference. It is later consolidated and safeguarded by the preventive limitation of their (self) will.

Furthermore, all party officials, as well as MPs, mayors and ministers enter into decision-making bodies of the party by function. At the end, they are more numerous than the elected party delegates. The party decision-making body is therefore impregnated and occupied by the party leadership, as a controlled, clientelist and dependent party executive apparatus.

Within the small circle of party officials the supremacy of the leader is ensured by the agent-based system of (self) selection of his/her vice-presidents and deputies and expansion of the powers from those of coordination-representation to those of management. Truth be told, in many established democracies and parties with far stronger internal democratic mechanisms than what is the practice in the Balkans, party leaders tend to establish strong leadership, and not merely *primus inter pares*. This stems from their status where, in case of electoral victory, the leader of the winning party or coalition automatically becomes the prime minister of the country i.e. head of the executive power. This form of highest responsibility must be supported by real, and not only formal powers.

The position of a strong leader includes the direct appointment of advisors, spokesmen, executive secretaries, party directors and managers, who then enter party decision-making bodies. In our opinion, rectification of these ‘democratic shortcomings’ would surely contribute to the democratic redesign of intra-party relations.

2.2. Why Change the Electoral System?

The debates on the need for reform of the current proportional representation electoral system with a closed list, have not ceased for more than 15 years. In Serbia and in Montenegro for many years, exclusively these forms of electoral lists were applied. After the elections voters would have no influence on the party-supplied order in which party candidates are elected. Vladimir Goati de notes this form of electoral system as an indirect proportional representation
system. Even though this solution has been repealed, it clearly indicates the will of law-makers, supported by a large number of political parties, to ensure the dominant position of the party leadership, i.e. to stultify the expressed will of citizens to a certain extent.

Simultaneously, the mandate of an MP was linked to the membership within the party, i.e. exclusion from the party led to the termination of the parliamentary mandate. This way, the party had the capacity to deprive the disobedient individual of the parliamentary seat.

In such a way the party leadership: (1) controlled the process of selection of candidates for MPs; (2) determined, after the elections, who will become MP from the list, regardless of the previous order; and (3) through exclusion from the party, indirectly, took away the parliamentary mandate. The party leadership totally controlled the process of candidacy nominations, the selection and acting of MPs, including also a form of their revocation. At that time, the MP simply did not have any political weight. Party oligarchies held the political process under full control. Under such a ‘firm hand’ it is no wonder that those who did not agree with the party leadership only had the option to leave the party i.e. establishing new parties.

Through the repeal of these provisions, the conditions for autonomous acting of MPs have been somewhat improved, but the problem of a non-personalized electoral system still remains. This could be improved through introducing the preferential voting. On the other, internal party side, there are not even examples of direct election of party leadership by the membership. (see article by Z. Vujović).

In the meantime, both a diagnosis and a therapy for the weaknesses of the electoral system have been established in the professional public, i.e. a catalogue of shortcomings with an overview of ‘cures’. Researchers have detected numerous democratic deficits: depersonalization, ‘anonymity’ of representatives, disparities in territorial representation, fragmentation of the party, electoral and consequently the parliamentary system, a variety of procedural shortcomings in registering voters, formation and operation of electoral bodies, in procedures of gathering signatures and nomination, in voting and in determination of election results.

As an illustrative example, our comparative research on electoral systems in the Balkans shows that there are no democratic mechanisms for selection of candidates, such as intra-party elections, but the final decision on the composition of the electoral list is made by central party bodies. All of the abovementioned indicates a low level of intra-party democracy resulting in strong party discipline and weak accountability of MPs.
Candidates for MPs therefore do not run personal campaigns, but aim at promoting the party and building their support base within the party. In addition to the low level of intra-party democracy, this is also a consequence of the proportional representation electoral system with closed party lists and the voting ballot structure where voters have the opportunity to vote only for the party, and not for the candidate.

**Key Directions of Change**

The first strategic direction of change is certainly the completion of democratic political electoral legislation that guarantees at least a sustainable minimal electoral democracy. Several presumptions of the democratic government are: clear electoral procedures and processes, the opportunity for citizens to get introduced with the proposed electoral actors and platforms in the campaigns, the possibility for citizens to track the funding of political campaigns, and a permanent electoral administration resistant to political pressures.

Citizens’ perceptions of not having an influence on party lists, and of poor performance of both individual MPs and the Parliament as a whole were the main arguments that the parties were no longer able to ignore, without risking to draw the public’s odium. Following sharp criticism among experts and citizens, parliamentary parties in Serbia finally put forward a number of ideas on possible electoral reforms through public hearings and the work of the Task Force for the Reform of the Political System of the National Assembly, according to Milan Jovanović. Currently, both in Montenegro and in Serbia the majority of political parties are advocating for a set of crucial changes within the retained proportional representation system.

First, the majority of political actors see the direct elections of representatives within the introduction of ‘preferential voting’ to the proportional representation electoral system.

MPs should be elected through the optimal combination of the advantages and avoidance of the key shortcomings of both the majority and proportional representation system.

The personalized proportional representation system, i.e. solutions that enable the citizens to elect a candidate with a full name, is the essence of changes of the current model of indirect (party-list) proportional representation controlled by party oligarchies.

Second, the commitment for a gradual increase of threshold for coalitions is becoming more and more widespread among relevant actors. The argumentation
in favor of the graduation points out that this would discourage larger parties to ‘tow’ parties that would certainly not pass the threshold through independent participation. At the same time, the blackmail potential of small parties would be reduced, as well as opportunities for parliamentary factions. Simultaneously, coalitions would become ideologically and programmatically more consistent, which presumes their more efficient operation and clearer accountability.

Third, when it comes to the voting ballot structure, in addition to the dilemma whether to vote for the candidate or the party, the existence of the possibility of preferential voting is also important. There are countries where voters can express the order of preference, casting their votes to several candidates. Open lists mean that voters cast their vote for the party, but are able to rank candidates on the party list, as is the case with Belgium, Norway etc. On the other hand, there are also electoral systems where voters can cast their votes to candidates from different parties, as is the case in Ireland, Australia and other countries.

Fourth, there is almost a general consensus on the establishment of a smaller number of constituencies in Serbia, which would enable a more even territorial distribution of parliamentary seats with preserved proportionality.

Fifth, almost all actors in Serbia have supported the reduction of the total number of MPs, with a reservation that the reduction of number of MPs should avoid voluntarism and should be guided by important principles including the undisturbed and quality operation of numerous parliamentary committees. One of the propositions was to link the number of MPs to the cube root of the number of inhabitants, i.e. some 180-200 MPs.

Sixth, apart from the proposal to directly elect presidents of municipal assemblies and mayors in Serbia, there are requests for introducing stricter requirements for citizens’ groups nominations; for specifying the conditions for national minorities’ parties nominations; and consequently repressing the practice of party ‘switchers’.

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4 At the local level in Montenegro (municipalities and the capital Podgorica) for a period of time (2003-2009) a ‘presidential’ system was in effect, i.e. mayors and municipal presidents were elected directly and independently from the elections for municipal assemblies. After several cases of unsuccessful cohabitation between mayors and the municipal assembly majority coming from opposed parties/coalitions, this system was abandoned and replaced with a previously applied classical ‘parliamentary’ system that is in effect also at the national level. It is interesting to note that the abandonment of the direct election of the head of executive at local level and the return to the previous system was achieved through consensus of parties in power and in opposition. Even though both sides indicated the ‘inefficiency’ of such a system as a predominant reason for change, it is possible to assume that certain concerns were present in parties regarding possible rises of directly elected mayors as new ‘party barons.’
Seventh, initiatives for electoral reform are directed towards other segments of the electoral system. Departisation and professionalization of electoral bodies as well as the creation of an impartial and professional electoral administration are key. Apart from the previously promulgated repeal of ‘blanco resignations’ and charging independent regulatory bodies (Anti-Corruption Agency, State Audit Institution) with controlling the campaign expenses and financing of political parties, the formation of a professional and independent state electoral commission is vital for a consolidated ‘electoral’ democracy. It is of key importance to control the electoral process, without the pressures of the executive. Proposals for a precise and efficient protection of the electoral law and the role of the judiciary are especially emphasized.

Eighth, changes are requested in the media sphere that would emphasize the equality of the electoral actors and limit the usage of money. In that context, there are various ideas on how to further improve the financing of parties in the elections.

Ninth, we will elaborate in more detail only the three key strategic directions of change that could halt widespread tendencies of cartelization of the political landscape, i.e. the endeavours of established parties to increase their advantages through (self) financing from public sources and therefore to practically prevent the occurrence of new political actors with a real chance of political success.5

Political parties act as law-makers too. In addition to the already linking of funds for regular activities of parliamentary parties for (more modest) budgetary revenues and the reduction of the agreed percentage, legislative changes could go towards a more balanced and even approach to resources that are at disposal to parties for the electoral campaign. Namely, the distribution of resources given to parties for their post-electoral campaign financing that have acquired the parliamentary status is indisputable. From the viewpoint of fairness, it could however be considered that certain funds are given also to non-parliamentary actors that have acquired 3% of votes6 in the elections in Serbia, for their polit-

5 In Montenegro parties have large amounts of money at disposal that they receive from the state. Montenegro therefore represents a state with the highest percentage of budgetary money at disposal for the work of political parties. 0,6 % is taken from the national budget, while municipalities are obliged to provide 1% of their budgets for the work of political parties that participate in the work of the assembly. According to official data, private donations constitute an insignificant percentage in the total budgets of political parties. In 2015, political parties that are represented in the Parliament of Montenegro had revenues in the total amount of 5,9 Euros from the state and local budgets (see article by Vujović).

6 If the same solution would be applied in Montenegro, this percentage could be somewhat lower (e.g. 2 or 2,5% of votes, as 3% of won votes is the threshold that automatically ensures entrance of a party or coalition into Parliament.)
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cal ranking is far larger than that of numerous ‘coalition schleps’ that with an independent appearance would never even approach the threshold. However, the distribution of four fifths of public resources for campaign by the same principle does not have any principled justification from the viewpoint of fair and equal conditions of the election game. As an example, if we distribute a million Euros on an average twenty participants of national elections in Serbia, each participant receives about fifty thousand Euros, which is insufficient for basic recognisability. That way, winners in the elections are rewarded twice – during the distribution of campaign funds and upon receiving the parliamentary appanage. On the other hand, new faces on the electoral scene do not receive enough for an elementary chance to present their offer to the voters. The prior distribution of the total sum (5-6 million Euros) on equal basis, would balance the electoral chances. Electoral warranties and the obligation to return public funds if 1% of votes is not won is a clear argument against a widespread opinion that in that case bunches of politically obscure figures would storm towards some 200-250,000 Euros of ‘citizens’ money’.

Similarly, limitations should be imposed on the amount of bank loans parties take during the campaign. As an example, no electoral list should be able to receive a loan that surpasses a fifth of the amount provided by the state for purposes of running the campaign – naturally, if we do not aim at building political monopolies.

For the very reason the media are part of contemporary politics, the rules of the game need to impose at least elementary decency on the commercial, private and media sector and ensure access of all electoral competitors to the voters. Access to media is restricted to new parties, not only due to the limited amount of money at their disposal and formal rules, but also due to the journalistic self-censorship and professional rules that specify which political actor will be rated as credible for participation in a certain programme. It is clear that journalists will difficult find a valid reason to give media coverage to a small or newly established party with unknown leaders. Recurrently, without media coverage a party can forever remain in that status, leading to another vicious circle of cartelized party systems. Simultaneously, a professional and ethical electoral codex also needs to be in place, setting at least principled limitations to a dirty campaign ad hominem and ad baculum – to the man and with a stick.

Instead of an Epilogue

As the electoral storm quiets down, those who enter the Parliament and have realistic power to initiate changes, mostly tend to forget the necessary legal chang-
es that would ensure equal starting points of electoral competitors and transparency of the electoral process. Many things that require changes are indeed disputable, such as the: the control of the compliance with rules of fair conduct in the elections campaign, the limitation of campaign funding, the abolition of party leadership monopoly to form the party-list for elections, the process of gathering and certification of signatures, short deadlines for removing flaws and responses to complaints, etc.

Political parties, mainly acting as non-democratic political actors (not only in the Balkans but in Western democracies too) will be put before a great test of democracy – whether they will postpone or take seriously the above mentioned reforms. In other words, there is a need for political parties that won the elections to use the power they have at disposal for an electoral reform that would to a certain extent also limit the political party itself.
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