MAPPING OF SANDŽAK

SANDŽAK IN THE REGIONAL CONTEXT: MAPING INFLUENCES AND PROPOSING SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE SOCIO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SANDŽAK

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The views expressed in this Policy Paper are those of the author(s) and should not be attributed to the Embassy of the Netherlands
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The present policy paper has been prepared in the framework of the project "Sandžak in a Regional Context - Mapping Influences and Proposing Solutions for Improvement of the Socio-Political Development in Sandžak", funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Serbia.

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The main objective of the policy paper is to examine and depict basic trends and features of life in Sandžak, including practices and ceremonies (social gatherings and/or celebrations); institutions and policies that contribute to preserving a concept of "Sandžak"; socio-cultural phenomena and social structures that existed in the past, or exist now or those that can be developed in the future.

It is our intention to shed light on the topic of Sandžak; to encourage public debate, i.e. namely to map, inscribe and unveil the Sandžak region on the map of the Western Balkans, and especially of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo; to identify current issues and chart path to the future; to examine whether this could be the "common European future"; and to elaborate the importance of normalization of life in the Western Balkans and mutual relations between the peoples and countries in this region, and thus the normalization of regional cooperation.

Although it welcomed numerous visitors and witnessed several armies, and although it lies in the heart of the Balkans, the region of Sandžak, paradoxically still remains “lost” and “forgotten”. For its controversial and, at the same time, strategic position on the European historical, political, and symbolic maps, the Balkans have often been described as the “other” of Europe. (Lukač – Zoranić, Ferhatović, 2016:137,139).

Today, the topic of Sandžak is primarily a domain, even a monopoly of the local politicians. Among them there are few politicians who comprehensivelyponder upon the problem. The so-called
pragmatic approach prevails in the practice of those politicians. In the absence of a strategy, those politicians apply the “lucrative approach”, i.e. petty politicking and accommodationism.

The attention of the public is drawn to Sandžak only in situations of incidents, particularly of political and security nature. Hence in the narrative on Sandžak insisting on criminalization of the population of this region is present as well as on their religious and political extremism although the reality, as compared to many other Balkan regions, is far from this perception.

Among the public, politicization is advocated, specifically from the aspect of ethno-nationalism, while discussions and actions in which multiethnic, multicultural and multi-confessional reality of this region is recognized, are particularly rare. Such reality is just stated but all the consequences resulting from it are not deliberated, in particular the consequences to politics.

Thus, it is not surprising that researchers face the obstacle of finding professional literature, and in particular the absence of multidisciplinary research and relevant opinion polls. Therefore, this policy paper relies on particular high-quality scientific research papers, primarily in ethnography and cultural anthropology; statistical sources, political programs, announcements; studies - policy papers produced by independent think-tank organizations, newspaper reports and interviews conducted for the purpose of this paper.
1) SANDŽAK: REALITY AND MYTH

1. The problem of terminology: from ethnification to reality

“Sandžak”\(^1\) refers to the historical region in Serbia and in former Yugoslavia. The region of Sandžak stretches on an area of 8,409 \(\text{km}^2\). The part which belongs to Serbia covers an area of 4,504 \(\text{km}^2\), while the part that lies within Montenegro has an area of 3,905 \(\text{km}^2\). It is predominantly mountainous area with vast highlands, cut through by river valleys (Lim, Uvac, Ibar and Raška), but still relatively easily passable. Through its history, Sandžak was at a crossroads of oldest routes of great military, strategic and commercial importance, connecting eastern and southeastern part of the Balkan Peninsula with Western Europe (roads known as: Bosanski, Zetski and Dubravački put) (Bajrović, 2005, Fijuljanin, 2010:11, 12; Pfeifer and Šećeragić, 2009:10). Dubravački put placed this region at the Silk Road, the shortest and easiest land route connecting the East and West. The fact that Sandžak is relatively easily passable, along with poor road infrastructure and internal weaknesses of countries connected by this region, make it one of the major organized crime hubs along the “Balkan Route”.

Sandžak is the region divided along the border between Serbia and Montenegro, stretching from the north Kosovo and the border with Republic of Srpska, i.e. Bosnia-Herzegovina (near the towns of Rudo, Foča, Čajniće and Goražde, which belonged to Sandžak at one period in the history). This region represents the point of encounter, cooperation and possible ethnic, religious (between Christians and Muslims) and other conflicts. That is the military, political, commercial and cultural crossroad at which the interests of the Balkan, European, and of the big world powers have often coincided and clashed. It is the territory in which the crises and wars, redrawing of the borders,

\(^1\) The word “sandžak” dates back from the period of the Ottoman Empire, it emanates from the Turkish word “sancak” - “flag” and it denominated administrative and territorial units within the Ottoman Empire. At the time of the Turkish conquests, the so-called border or akinci sancaks were formed at the borders, the task of which was to guard the conquered and to conquer new territories. Therefore, the majority of the population consisted of the warriors who were granted, due to their military service, special privileges (exemption from taxes and the like).

The term “Sandžak” to refer to only to its Serbian part became widespread during the second half of the nineteenth century as the Great Powers fought over the disintegrating territory of Ottoman Turkey from the “West” and Austria.
migrations, and changes in the ethnic structure by way of “ethnic engineering”, have been a frequent historical phenomenon.

The name Sandžak comes from “Novopazarski sandžakat” (Sandžak of Novi Pazar). From 1373 to 1463, Sandžak was a unique administrative entity within the Bosnian state, all until the Berlin Kongress in 1878 (Fljuljanin, 2010: 11; ICG, 2005: 2). Through this period, the administration and the cultural seat of Sandžak was in Novi Pazar. Novi Pazar was founded by Isa-Bey Ishaković, near the medieval Town of Ras (Nemanjic Dynasty) and Trgovište (Kahrović, 2014: 359; Lukač – Zoranić, 2016: 143).

But Sandžak’s history did not begin in 1461 with Ottoman Empire. Sandžak is the true heart of the medieval Serbian kingdom. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the area was known as Rascia, a Serbian state under Byzantine tutelage ruled by what became the Nemanjić dynasty. Serbia’s oldest Orthodox churches and monasteries were built from the ninth to thirteenth centuries (St. Peter and St. Paul churches, Đurđevi Stupovi, Sopoćani, Mileševa monasteries). In 1217, Stefan Nemanjić received a crown from the Pope, by which time Rascia had already begun to expand. The centre of the Serbian state was Ras, a fortified town located within a ten km radius of the present-day Novi Pazar (ICG, 2005:5).

The ethnic composition of Sandžak is diversified, where Bosniaks make up the majority of the total population, followed by the Serbs and Montenegrins. Within Sandžak, there are municipalities with overwhelming Bosniak majorities and those in which they constitute a minority (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005: 7).

Although Sandžak as an autonomous administrative unit has ceased to exist since the end of nineteenth century, and the official use of the term “Sandžak” as an administrative designation ended in 1912, the term itself has remained employed informally over 110 years (ICG, 2005: 2). Within this meaning Sandžak is associated in particular with the Muslims, or Bosniaks, while the idea of Sandžak has the power of some kind of a historical myth. The ethnic nationalism of Bosniaks made use of that mythical dimension in the last years of the past century. The special focus is given to the ethno-

2 In its Turkish variant Yeni Pazar (“pazar” coming from the Persian word “bazaar”),
3 Isa–Bey was a commander of Skopsko and Bosansko Krajište (lit. borderland of Skopje and Bosnia), and later a Bosnian Sanjak-Bey and founder of Sarajevo and Sabac.
4 This can be seen from the fact that Sandžak existed as an independent and territorial entity for only two years, in the documents from the rule of partisans – communists at that (in 1943 – 1945).
5 In order to confirm the identity of Muslims, the term “Bosniak” was introduced, which was suppose to confirm their statehood and connect them with Bosnia as their “parent state”, and to reach the ideal of the ethno-national ideology and politics, according to which ethnicity is exclusively completed in one’s own state. However, an over-pronounced call for administrative unity with Bosnia, evoking the Ottoman period and Islamization, brings into question the autochthony of the Muslim – Bosniak identity. With respect to historical facts, this arises as an insurmountable task of suppressing the ties with pre-Slavic and/or Slavic origin on one hand, and emphasizing
nationalist interpretations of the origin of Bosniaks. Ethno-nationalists excessively insist to prove that Bosniaks are autochthonous people, which is indisputable, and distance them from links South Slavs and in particular with Serbs.6

The Bosniak and Sandžak issue was made topical in the period of the Yugoslav crisis, when the national issues were opened up and the Republics became independent. This caused ethnification of the name according to which “Sandžak” is exclusively the hallmark of the Muslim, or Bosniak, identity, territory and culture. Opposed to them were the Serbian ethno-nationalists who felt comfortable with the slogan "Serbia for Serbs" and did everything to marginalize the presence of "Others". Their only response to ethnification of the term “Sandžak” was the nationalistic rhetoric that called this region “Old Raška” in view of the historic fact that the roots of the Medieval Serbian sovereignty (Nemanjić’s Raška State), and efforts to minimize any contacts with Bosniaks (Jugozapadna Srbija/Sandžak, 2005: 8,9). The concept of creating municipalities following the ethnic principle, i.e. creating new Serbian municipalities comes from the same source (known as the “White Book”).

However, the term “Sandžak” has a double meaning in this policy paper. Firstly, it is used to describe a present “narrow” concept of understanding/interpreting the name “Sandžak”, connecting it only with the Bosniak identity, and secondly, to describe the cross-border, multi-ethnic and multi-confessional region, in which there are many differences as well as many similarities found amongst the people.

difference in relation to Turks on the other. In an attempt to execute this difficult task, the term “Sandžak” is being built into the very core of the Bosniak identity.

6 According to the studies on the non-Slavic origin in this area, prior, Illyrians dominated in this area prior to the settlement of Slavs, which is confirmed by numerous toponyms or Illyrian origin (for example, names of rivers, mountains and valleys, such as “Tara” and “Lim”). According to this study, Serbian tribes (who were polytheists) settled in Raška valley in the 7th century. Apart from Serbs, this area was also inhabited by Bogomils, who were of the unknown origin, but Serbs called them “Babuni”, because they came from the Babun mountain in Macedonia. Bogomilism came to Bosnia via Sandžak. When Bosnia, under Tvrtko I Kotromanić conquered Sandžak, these inhabitants began to declare themselves as "Bosniaks".

According to another study, Bosniaks are Slavs, mostly Serbs, who accepted Islam and created a separate identity.
2. A brief history of Sandžak

The Serbian and Bonsiak historical narratives of this region differ from each other. History itself provides enough arguments that can be interpreted in different ways, but ideology and politics have an important influence on the creation and maintenance of various and often contradictory narratives.

Furter in this policy paper we shall depict a general framework for understanding the history of this region, with emphasis on determinants that have a high degree of agreement in how they are interpreted.

In the Middle Ages, the region was part of the first Serbian state ruled by the Nemanjić dynasty, with its capital, the city of Ras, located near the present-day city of Novi Pazar (Pfeifer and Šećeragić, 2009: 28). In 1396, soon after the Battle of Kosovo, Ottoman Empire took several of towns near Ras, but the Serbian-Ottoman administration functioned in parallel for a long time. It was not until 1455 however that the whole region fell under Ottoman rule. Following the conquest of Bosnia in 1463 by Fatih Sultan Mehmed with his Grand Vizier Mahmud Pasha, the Sandžak of Bosnia was established. Throughout its existence, it included most of the present day Sandžak region.

Based on the Treaty of Bucharest (1913) which was the final act of the Congress of Berlin, and through an agreement between the kings of Serbia Peter I Karađorđević and of Montenegro Nikola I Petrović, but thanks to Russia, Serbia and Montenegro took over control over the Sandžak (Jugozapadna Srbija/Sandžak, 2005: 7).

Between the two World Wars, Sandžak was part of a province (banovina) of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, resulting among the Bosniaks in the emergence of some political and religious organizations accepting the given conditions and status of Sandžak, on the one hand, and organizations rebelling against such status, on the other. Among the latter were armed rebels known as komite, who collaborated with similar groups of Albanians in Kosovo.

Political advocates of opponents of the status of Sandžak within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia organized a conference in Sjenica, which ended with a Resolution. The authorities declared the

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7The conference was organized on 13-15 August 1917, in the presence of Bosniak mayors of almost all Sandžak towns.
8The Resolution was demanding the following: “I. Merger with Bosnia and Herzegovina is our ultimate desire and simultaneously the only reasonable manner in which we can finally resolve our issue; II. In case our demands, which we believe justified, cannot be met, owing to reasons incomprehensible and unforeseen to us, we demand: The Autonomy of the Sandžak; III. In the event that these demands and desires of ours could not be met and that all hope for the above-mentioned and our existence is lost, the need to emigrate
conference as "Austrophile" and accused its participants of treason. By the the intervention of the caucus of the Yugoslav Muslim Organization (JMO), headed by the Mufti of Tuzla, and later Reis ul-Ulema, Hafiz Ibrahim ef. Maglajić, on 17 February 1921, a royal edict was issued dismissing the proceedings and the accused were released.

During WWII (1941 – 1945), the Sandžak area was a scene of fierce inter-ethnic conflicts. At that time, this area was under NDH (the Independent State of Croatia) rule, and there was a constant, mass recruitment of able-bodied men by the German army. A number of Muslims, Serbs and Montenegrins joined the anti-fascist movement, led by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. The anti-fascist movement took part in the liberation of Sandžak and established the National Anti-fascist Council of National Liberation of Sandžak (ZAVNOS) in Pljevlja on 20 November 1943. ZAVNOS administration governed Sandžak as an autonomous province, which had never developed into a federal unit of the New Yugoslavia, despite the fact that by decisions and resolutions of the Second session of the AVNOJ, Sandžak was treated equally as other republics.

The decision on the division of Sandžak was passed by the Presidency of AVNOJ, and on a session held in Novi Pazar on 29 March 1945, ZAVNOS passed a decision to divide Sandžak between Montenegro and Serbia.

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9 This is a time of mass murders and deportations of Bosniaks by Serbian and Montenegrin chetniks, as well as time of violence against Serbs and Jews by German occupying authorities and its allies organized in the Sandžak Muslim Militia.

10 At a request of a delegation from Sandžak (from Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje and Prirepolje), Sandžak was annexed by the NDH (Independent State of Croatia), which lasted from April to September 1941, after which NDH forces had to withdraw and Sandžak was occupied by Fascist Italy. After Italy’s capitulation in 1943, Muslim leaders urged Dr Ante Pavelic for the incorporation of Sandžak to NDH, but the Germany established military command over Sandžak and appointed Acif Hadžiahmetović for mayor/commander of Novi Pazar, who was supported by Albanian nationalists (Balli Kombëtar), and who was Albanian himself. In the beginning, Acif Hadžiahmetović or Acif Bljuta, promoted open “albanisation” of the local Bosniak population, but eventually gave up after facing local resistance. Nevertheless, Acif Hadžiahmetović is still today perceived among Bosniaks as an exceptionally important historical figure, mostly credited for defending Novi Pazar against chetnaiks.

11 For example, during the German administration, able-bodied men were recruited to SS troops. First, Karl von Krempler, head of the SS police for Sandžak, formed the "SS Police Self-Defence Regiment" ("SS Polizei-Selbstschutz-Regiment Sandschak"). Additionally, the Krempler Legion ("Kampfgruppe Krempler" and "Muselmanengruppe von Krempler") counted from 8,000 to 12,000 members, of which 5,000 from among local Muslim-Croatian militias, anti-communist and anti-Serbian volunteers, as well as 3 Albanian battalions. The head of this formation was Hafiz Sulejman Pačariz. In September 1944 Tito proclaimed general amnesty for Axis powers, at which point several members of the SS division deserted, and on 22 September the town of Pljevlja was handed over to Tito’s partisans. Commander Pačariz left Sandžak for Sarajevo with remaining troops, where he was placed under command of the Ustashe general Vjekoslav “Maks” Luburić. Pačariz was then promoted to Ustashe colonel.
During FNRY, later SFY, this area was divided between Serbia and Montenegro. The status of Muslims (“Muslim” both in capital and lower “m”) was never clearly defined, up until the 70s of the last century when they were given the status of “constitutive people”, equal to Montenegrians, Croats, Macedonians, Slovenians, and Serbs. This is a time of great development of Sandžak, but also a time of new waves of immigrations and killings of “collaborators of the occupying forces”, among which many prominent Bosniaks. Many families left in search of a better life to Germany, Holland, France, Austria, etc. Over time, many successful companies and economic centers emerged, road and electricity infrastructure was developed – the quality of life was generally improved. However, in former SFY, Sandžak was the most underdeveloped area and Tutin the most underdeveloped municipality.

The crisis and disintegration of Yugoslavia during the 1990s, marked by wars, EU and UN sanctions, hyperinflation (which exceeded that of Hitler’s Germany), brought upon further social and economic deterioration, black marketeering, and shadow economy. The political life was pumped with ethnic nationalism and national homogenization, hate speech, distrust, occasional inter-ethnic violence, including kidnapping and murder of Muslims by para-police groups, supported by state and security services. Chetnik leaders, who were generally members of the Serbian Radical Party (SRS) had prominent roles in fear-spreading campaigns, and political scene was dominated by political parties with underlined ethno-nationalist programs (ICG, 2005: 15; Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:11).

Despite the fact that many Muslims / Bosniaks were suspicious of the rise of Milošević, majority of them supported cooperation with his government, which in turn made an effort to have representatives of Muslims at the national level who did not oppose to the general course of the government. This did not cause the government to give up the „oppression“ of ethno-nationalist politics of Bosniak political leaders and parties. In May and June of 1993, twenty four (24) Bosniaks, leaders and activists

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12 This is about eradicating illiteracy, increasing the level of education and establishing the system of elementary and secondary education; increasing the scope of social and health care; increasing financial capacities of employees and such.

13 The first victim of ethnic violence was Ramo Berbo, who was killed in the center of Sjeverin (Priboj), on 26 August 1991, and two most infamous instances of ethnic cleansing of Bosniaks occurred on 22 October 1992, when a Serbian paramilitary group „Osvetnici“ (Avengers) in the village of Mioča kidnapped from a bus operating from Pljevlja to Priboj, sixteen (16) bosniak civilian passengers who were on their way to work in Priboj, took them to Višegrad and shot them on the Drina bank (the so called Sjeverin Case) (Fijuljanin, 2010:48); and on 27 February 1993, when nineteen (19) Bosniak civilians were taken at the train station in the village of Štrpci and shot in the village of Prelovo near Višegrad, on the Drina bank (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:11).

14 Among these, the most famous is Dačević who had established a type of autocracy in Pljevalja (Montenegro), and who was removed after JNA (Yugoslav People's Army) had demonstrated its readiness to confront him.

15 Most Bosniak political parties lack clear public voice, and those rare ones, such as Rasim Ljajić, discretely lean towards the opposition.
of SDA (Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak) from Novi Pazar, Tutin and Sjenica, were arrested for organizing a referendum and tortured in prisons in Kraljevo and Novi Pazar. In September 1993 arrest warrant was issued for Ugljanin, president of SDA, who was at that time in Geneva lobbying to include the issue of Sandžak in the agenda of the Peace Conference on Former Yugoslavia (Fijuljanin, 2010:48). During 1994 in Montenegro (Bjelo Polje, Pljevlja, Rožaje), under official rationale of “searching for weapons”, several members of SDA were arrested, and BNMCS (Bosniak National Minority Council) was accused of secessionism. In such an atmosphere, Ugljanin fled to Turkey.\textsuperscript{16}

Since the signing of Dayton Agreement, in November 1995, Milošević and therefore Montenegro eased the repression (ICG, 2005: 18); but on 10 jula 1997 a state of emergency was declared in the municipality of Novi Pazar, on the grounds that the local government led by Ugljanin “provoked ethnic and religious hostility by putting up SDA flag between the flag of Serbia and Yugoslavia on the municipality administrative building“ (IFIMES, 2005: Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:11).

In today’s Montenegro, former Sandžak area is incorporated into a wider context of “North Montenegro”, and in Serbia it is divided between two districts (Raška and Zlatibor).\textsuperscript{17} Current conditions in these areas will be discussed later in the text.

\textsuperscript{16}At that point, Rasim Ljajić took over the helm in SDA, and even appointed himself president. However, after the return of Ugljanin, Ljajić left SDA and formed SDP (Democratic Party of Sandžak).

\textsuperscript{17}Due to the established system in Serbia, there is no state authority located in Sandžak, apart from those necessary for proper functioning of towns and municipalities. Regional center for municipalities Novi Pazar and Tutin is Kraljevo, and regional center for Sjenica, Prijevoj, Priboj and Nova Varoš is Užice.
II) SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

Sandžak is an area with pronounced demographic, economic – social, political, and cultural characteristics, including territorial concentration of Bosniaks. One of the features of this area is the presence of various ethnic communities in one city or area (majority are Bosniaks and Serbs), so depending on the point of observation, ethnic majority can also be a minority. 18

The situation in Sandžak is a testament to the success and failure of minority policies, to the condition of inter-ethnic relations, especially between Serbs and Bosniaks in Serbia. Later in the analysis we will show numerous indicators from different aspects of life that are significant for the inhabitants of that area, including the attitude of others toward the life in Sandžak. Most arguments confirm the initial hypothesis that in both Serbia and Montenegro, no successful model of integration of ethnic communities, including Bosniak community, although there are factors which support the stepping out of the ethnic-nationalist period and the life in “parallel worlds“ to a state of integration, cooperation and development of own identity and preservation of differences.

1. Demographic momentum in municipalities

“Demographic dynamics“ in this area is characterized by complex religious and national structure, as well as by an upward trend in the absolute number and relative share of Bosniaks, and a downward trend in the share of Serbian and Montenegrin population in the demographic structure of this area (Lozančić, 2003: 131).This general finding can be cross-checked at the municipal level, which will be observed in the future (See: Appendix 1 Demographic momentum in municipalities on the territory of the former Sandžak, 2014).However, there is a limit to obtaining a full demographic picture in

18For example, in Novi Pazar, Bosniaks who are a minority at the national level are majority relative to Serbs, who are majority in Serbia but a minority in Novi Pazar.
relevant municipalities, since the latest statistical data is from 2014 (based on the 2011 Census results). Especially interesting for this policy paper is the movement of inhabitants of the North Montenegro (See: Appendix 2. Main demographic indicators in Montenegro).

Novi Pazar is by far the largest municipality with over one hundred thousand inhabitants, while Bjело Polje has half as much inhabitants. Third in size is Prijelpolje with 36.1 thousand inhabitants, while nine municipalities have a population between 30 and 20 thousand. Nova Varoš and Plav have 15.7% or 12.8 thousand inhabitants.

Negative population growth is another demographic aspect of this area, recorded in as many as nine municipalities.

2. Challenges to economic development and social insecurity

The economic situation in Sandžak area is marked by extreme underdevelopment, which is the result of past policies of many previous governments, and since the end of the XX century, it is additionally burdened by the penetration of grey economy and organized crime, as well as by a wide-spread corruption, from politicians and business people, to lower levels; it is also marked by deep recession in industrial and agricultural production, and high unemployment rate especially among young people, who live without a hope of getting a job and having a better life, and who are strongly motivated to immigrate (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:10, 13; Lukač – Zoranić, 2014:6, 9).

The economy of Sandžak is known as “self-made economy” because it relies on industrious business people who initiated economic activities during the war and economic crisis in Serbia, and under EU and UN sanctions - without any help from the state and the banking sector. Economy of this region

19 Higher death rates compared to birth rates is registered in three municipalities in the Republic of Serbia (Nova Varoš, Priboj and Prijepolje), and two municipalities in the Republic of Montenegro (Andrijevica and Pljevlja). In Plav municipality the registered number of newborns is higher by one (1) compared to the number of deceased, while in other municipalities there is a clear positive population growth. Population growth rate per 1000 inhabitants ranges from -6.9 permil in Rudo i Nova Varoš to 8.7 permil in Tutin in 2014.

20 Particularly dangerous aspect is the pronounced “close relationship between local authorities and criminal / narcotics clans. Drug dealing in public is a common sight, even in front of schools, and there is a high number of dangerous drug addicts ...” (Zukorilić, 2016: 19).

21 High unemployment is the consequence of the passivity of large social enterprises, which are still in the process of being privatized, or their privatizations were controversial, or are undergoing bankruptcy, with added recession in private entrepreneurship.

22 Unemployment rates are high, and those who are employed generally work in low-profit sectors (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:13; Pfeifer, Šećeragić, 2009:11,26).

23 Inadequate age and education structure is also affected by waves of immigration. In some municipalities there is a constant decline in population, involving mostly young and educated people (Pfeifer, Šećeragić, 2009:16, 22).
is also influenced by “political donors” and their mutual conflicts, which combined creates obstacles for business operations and overall economic development. Also, existing business associations do not operate well mostly due to the lack of professionalism on high levels and influence of political leaders in the work of these associations (Pfeifer, Šečeragić, 2009:9, 17, 23).

According to the data of the National Bank of Serbia, at the end of 2008, there were 1,594 legal entities/companies/cooperatives in Sandžak. According to the ownership structure, 95% of the companies are privately owned, and about 2% of the companies are under mixed ownership, about 1% of the companies are socially owned, 1% are cooperatives, and 1% are state owned companies.

Economic structure of Sandžak is extremely unfavorable because commerce share is dominant with 44.8%, followed by process industry (26.0%) and transportation, warehousing (8.7%), other sectors (7.0%), construction/engineering (5.3%), real estate operation (4.3%), and agricultural sector (3.9%) (Pfeifer, Šečeragić, 2009: 12, 13). Economic activities according to municipalities are given in detail in the appendix (see Appendix 3).

Constant lack of direct foreign investments is the consequence of unfavorable economic circumstances, as well as political instability and insecurity (Pfeifer, Šečeragić, 2009:22). For two decades political conflicts and conflicts between Bosniak parties have been draining people’s energy, steering them away from important economic issues. High level of corruption and lack of efficiency and independence of the administration bring additional negative impacts on the economy, such as increased uncertainty, higher operational costs, making it difficult to attract new investments (Pfeifer, Šečeragić, 2009:22, 23).

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24 Over 50% of the companies operate in Novi Pazar (55.4%), followed by Prijepolje (13.6%), Tutin (10.0%), Priboj (7.3%), Sjenica (7.1%) and Nova Varoš (6.6%).

25 Average life span of private companies is 5 to 20 years, in some cases even longer, with simple, complex or very complex structure. About 97% of private companies have simple organizational structure, up to 50 employees, about 2% of the companies have a complex structure and are classified as medium-sized companies with up to 250 employees, while 1% of the companies have the most complex organizational structure (large companies) with over 250 employees.

26 Research shows that local companies are unable to have positive relationships with municipalities – municipalities do not make long-term development strategies; the attention of political parties is mostly directed toward everyday political conflicts, and not on social and economic development; private and party interests dominate over public interest; it is not possible to secure favorable business conditions for potential investors or other significant commercial institutions i.e. international development agencies or development banks.

27 So far, the state has not put into operation any commercial facility in this area through incentives. It all comes down to maintaining existing economic capacities, private investments and small- to medium-size initiatives. For a decade now there have been negotiations on how to revive vehicle production in FAP – Priboj; it is almost impossible to tear down the bastion of corrupted administration, wrong policies and “grey economy” to, for example, build mini power plants on Peštar (out the six planned only one was constructed), or to realize the project TE Stavlje etc.
Educational structure of the employed population is very disadvantageous: the share of employees with I, II, III qualification degrees is dominant (37,430 or 78.6%) or employees who do not have any theoretical or practical specialized knowledge.28

Social picture of this part of Serbia is worrisome, which is confirmed by the WB’s description of Sandžak as “the area of actively poor population”. Mass poverty brings insecurity in terms of survival, and therefore it represents a high social, political and security risk.

Poor economic and social situation in the North Montenegro is seen in the fact that in 2013 the income per capita in this area was EUR 1,035.50, which is 2.5 times less compared to the central Montenegro (EUR 2,233.8); average unemployment rate was 21.9% in 2013 while in the costal region this rate was 11.7%, which is 1.87 times less compared to the North Montenegro i.e. 40% of unemployed and 60% of the poor resides in the North Montenegro (Strategija, 2014: 17); there is also a high level of social vulnerability. For example, in 2015 in Rožaje, a municipality with 23,000 inhabitants, there were 7,000 people using some type of social welfare. All of the above explains a strong wave of immigration from North Montenegro to EU countries.29

At the same time, the most valuable natural resources of Montenegro are located in this area. These resources should be efficiently evaluated in order to bring Montenegro closer to the European average rate of development.30 For this reason, the central and local authorities of this part of Montenegro observe the issue of Sandžak from the perspective of economic development.31

The Social Democratic Party of Montenegro places particular emphasis on recognizing, encouraging and managing the insufficiently exploited potentials in the northern part, as well as other underdeveloped parts of Montenegro” (Program declaration of the VIII Congress of the Social Democratic Party of Montenegro of 3 June 2015; available at: http://sdp.co.me). The political program of DPS from 2007 contains a similar attitude – promoting faster regional development.

Also, SD (Social Democrats of Montenegro) is a political party which was formed by a split faction of SDP, proposes that the newly established municipalities Gusinje i Petnjica should be able to use assets from the fund, without waiting three years to establish its fiscal capacities (http://www.cdm.me/ekonomija/sezovic-petnjica-i-gusinje-i-a-2016-godini-da-koriste-egalizacioni-fond Friday, 16 October, 2015 - 13:44).

25 million EUR are allocated from this fund annually.

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28 This unfavorable educational structure of employees is directly related to the unfavorable economic structure (Pfeifer, Šećeragić, 2009: 16).

29 For example, were 2,500 asylum seekers in Germany only, most of whom were returned in accordance with the agreement or readmission. See: www.vijesti.me; www.faktor.ba)

30 For example, the bulk of the total hydro potential of Montenegro, entire coil reserves, about 67% of arable land, 71% of timber, close to 70% of livestock, almost the entire zinc and led reserves, as well as resources for the development of winter and eco tourism, organic food, and food with protected designation of origin are located in the north part of Montenegro. For better understanding, see SWOT analysis of the Northern region prepared by the Government of Montenegro (see: Appendix 4. Northern Region).

31 The Social Democratic Party of Montenegro places particular emphasis on recognizing, encouraging and managing the insufficiently exploited potentials in the northern part, as well as other underdeveloped parts of Montenegro” (Program declaration of the VIII Congress of the Social Democratic Party of Montenegro of 3 June 2015; available at: http://sdp.co.me). The political program of DPS from 2007 contains a similar attitude – promoting faster regional development.

The right to use assets of the fund is given to those municipalities whose fiscal capacities per capita for the past three years (prior to the year in which funds are allocated) are below average fiscal capacities per capite in all municipalities in the same period. Apart from municipalities in the North Montenegro, these assets are allocated to Cetinje, Danilovgrad, and Ulcinj.
and resolving common issues, and strengthening consultation mechanisms with economic and civil sectors, professional and academic community, especially in terms of providing guidelines for representatives in the Partnership council for regional development.  

Montenegro has adopted the Regional development strategy for Montenegro from 2014 to 2020, which specifies the following development priorities: transportation and other public infrastructure; agriculture and rural development; energy; environmental protection; competitiveness and innovations; industry; tourism and culture; education, employment and social policies. For the financing of the strategy until the end of 2020, Montenegro should allocate annually about 191 million EUR, or at least 5% of the GDP.

3. Participation in public and political life and decision-making

3.1. Political participation of Bosniaks in decision-making and work of public institutions and public companies

One of the challenges existing in Sandžak is the fact that political and social reality is in the shadow of ethno-nationalism. Leaders have been delegitimized to a great extent, but new ideas, policies and people cannot break the rampart around Sandžak’s public space created by today’s leaders through money and power. In order to unblock the development and political life in this area it is necessary to restructure political, cultural and business leadership, which requires abandoning ethno-nationalist complacency, reducing the risk of religious fanaticism, accepting the reality of multiculturalism, as well as initiating inter-ethnic and inter-religious dialogue and cooperation.

The existing legal framework enables members of the Bosniak community to be represented in state authorities of Serbia. One of the positive accomplishments of the Bosniaks is strong influence in local community and on the state level (both in Serbia and Montenegro). By having political representatives

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33For municipalities in Sandžak it is especially important to use the possibilities envisaged by article 20 of the Law on Regional Development, which favorizes projects of smaller underdeveloped self-government units and joint projects of two or more units of self-government, with positive social and economic effects, which are of great significance for Montenegro. (Analiza:2015).

34The Strategy envisages large development projects (Bar–Boljari highway, II phase of the thermal power plant in Pljevlja, hydro power plant, tourist facilities etc.). The Strategy recommends that teams should be formed to prepare and implement IPA projects in each unit of local self-government, as well as establishing a fund to assist the units of local self-government in co-financing EU projects, the so-called „Revolving fund“. The purpose of this fund would be to lend funds to municipalities for pre-financing 10% of the value of EU project. (Strategija, 2014:27).
in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, since the 2000 elections\textsuperscript{35}, realization of rights of the Bosniak national minority has become more adequate. But that did not improve the position of members of the Bosniak community, nor did it bring stability and development of Sandžak and Serbia. The realization of rights of Bosniaks is disproportionately larger at the local community level than compared to the national level. In reality, representation in the executive bodies, administration, judiciary, police, military, and in high-level management in public enterprises and institutions is still not proportionate. The same goes for the local level. Actually, the representation of Bosniaks in local institutions, in communities where Bosniaks are majority is significantly lower compared to the share of Bosniaks in the population of that area.\textsuperscript{36}

In the mind of the local population, primarily Bosniaks, Novi Pazar has become the “capital” (political, intellectual, and cultural). This is the seat of many Bosniak institutions (political parties, Bosnian National Council, Islamic Community in Serbia, international and state universities, et al.); it is a site of the most important historical and cultural heritage; the center of social and political ideas, cultural and religious identity, and of educational and cultural events of Bosniaks in Sandžak.

Organization of local authorities as well as the overall administrative – territorial framework in Sandžak municipalities in Montenegro is different to that in Serbia. In Montenegro, there is a single-instance\textsuperscript{37} and single-type\textsuperscript{38} local-self government, and Podgorica has a special status as the capital.

In 2014 local elections in Montenegro and Sandžak municipalities of the “North”, the Bosniak Party of Montenegro ran independently in Rožaje, Petnjica, Plav and Bijelo Polje. In Rožaje, the Bosniak Party is the sole ruling party. In Pljevlja, it was a part of the pre-election coalition, and later a part of the ruling coalition with DPS. In Gusińje, it ran together with DPS and SDP and now they are the

\textsuperscript{35}Bosniak representatives have been participating in all assembly and government sessions of the Republic of Serbia and Republic of Montenegro since 2000. In Serbia, since the 2000 i.e. for the past 17 years, Rasim Ljajić was a minister in every government (human rights and minority rights; labor, employment, social policies, disability and veterans affairs, foreign trade, telecommunications and tourism); in charge of the Coordination Body for Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveda, as well as for cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia. Sulejman Ugljanin has in the past served as minister without portfolio in Serbian Government and headed the Office for Sustainable Development of Underdeveloped Areas. Both positions have carried out significant competences, with substantial funds and possibilities for the improvement the status of Bosniaks and Sandžak. However, there has been no noticeable change in the status. Quite the contrary, businesses and other activities in Sandžak were in control by interest groups which emerged at that time, thus hampering its development. Therefore, those who feel that this network is maintained only because it suits the central government and because it has a strong support outside of Sandžak and Serbia, are apparently right.

\textsuperscript{36}For example, Bosniaks account for 82\% of the total population in Novi Pazar; in the district court in Novi Pazar there are 14 Bosniaks and 14 Serbs employed; in the district public prosecutor’s office there are 4 Bosniaks and 4 Serbs; in the municipal public prosecutor’s office there are 8 Bosniaks and 5 Serbs; in the misdemeanor court there are 17 Bosniaks and 22 Serbs, and in tax administration 70 Bosniaks and 66 Serbs, while in other public services (judiciary) there aren’t nearly as much.

\textsuperscript{37}Counties have been abolished after 1967, after which horizontal links were created by means of community of municipalities, which also no longer exists.

\textsuperscript{38}Municipalities have been equalized in terms of authority and scope of operations, with the same attitude toward the central government.
ruling coalition. In Bijelo Polje and Petnjica39, this party came to power thanks to the pre-election coalition with DPS. Cooperation between the ruling DPS and the Bosniak Party, both on state and local levels, is pretty solid. Another Bosniak party is the Bosniak Democratic Union (BDZ), which run independently on local elections in only two towns (Rožaje and Bijelo Polje).40

Distribution of mandates on local levels in Serbia and Montenegro, after the 2016 elections, is given in Appendix 7 - Cross-border cooperation programs with Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in Appendix 8 - Distribution of mandates in local governments in Serbia.

3.2. Political parties – rulers of Sandžak

Electoral and party system in Serbia and Montenegro allows Bosniaks to realize their rights and promote the interests of the Bosniak community by forming political parties. As a rule, founders of those parties should be members of the Bosniak community. This strengthens the significance of political parties for the Bosniak community, and other national minorities, which is important for the political scenes in Serbia and Montenegro. The fact that political parties are main decision-makers and that institutions which they control have the highest number of employees, which is especially visible in Sandžak municipalities, speak volumes of the influence that political parties have. (Pfeifer, Šećeragić, 2009:9).

Numerous multi-ethnic and mono-ethnic political parties emerged at the very beginning of the transition towards a multi-party, parliamentary system.

There are 108 parties registered in the Republic of Serbia, of which 63 are parties of the national minorities, which accounts for 60% of the total number of registered parties.41 (See: Appendix 10 - Relations between minority political parties and the share of national minorities in total population).

Out of 12 registered Bosniak parties, SDA is the “oldest”, and Bosniak Democratic Union of Sandžak (BDZ Sandžak) is the “youngest”.

39 Municipality of Petnjica in Montenegro was established in 2013, along the national lines, where majority of the population are Bosniaks (and Muslims).

40 They have several councilors in Rožaje, and not one in Bjelo Polje. In Bjelo Polje, BDZ ran under the name “Akovo”, which is the name of Bjelo Polje from Ottoman times, attacking DPS and Bosniak party.

41 Out of 63 registered minority parties, in the last elections only the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (SVM), Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak (SDA), Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak (PDD), Bosniak Democratic Union of Sandžak and Green Party (which is registered as the party of the Slovak national minority) ran independently and won 10 seats in total.

If we compare the results of the last parliamentary elections in 2014, minority lists won one seat less, but the new assembly session now includes two new political parties of national minorities (BDZ Sandžak – Bosniak party, and Green Party – Slovak party). This is because there are no representatives of Roma and Vlach political parties.
When SDA was formed\textsuperscript{42} it had many features of the national Bosniak movement. SDA was then headed by Dr. Sulejman Ugjanin, and general secretary was Rasim Ljajić.\textsuperscript{43} SDA had political success since its early beginning. \textsuperscript{44}

Many new political parties emerged later on from SDA, such as SDP, which have representatives in local parliaments. \textsuperscript{45}

Bosnian Democratic Union (BDZ) was formed before the 2012 elections, with the support of Mufti Zukorlić and had representatives in all assemblies, except Nova Varos. BDZ president Emir Elfić took over BDZ along with three councilors. After that, Muamer Zukorlić formed BDZ Sandžak, with Jahija Ferhatović as the president.

Other parties that exist in Sandžak are Democratic Party of Sandžak (DP of Sandžak), with head office in Prijepolje, which has eight councilors in the local parliament; Bosniak People’s Party (BNS), with Mujo Muković as the president and central office in Novi Pazar, with one member in the Serbian Assembly, as part of the coalition with SNS.

In Sandžak municipalities there are groups of citizens which run independently in local elections (for example, two independent Bosniak councilors in Sjenica – A Group of Citizens Independent SDA for Sjenica – Nusret Nuhović).

In the Montenegrin part of Sandžak, the most influential ethno-national Bosniak parties are SDA Montenegro\textsuperscript{46} and Bosniak Party (BS) which has been operating since the 1990s under the leadership of Harun Hadžić, who was replaced by Rasim Sahman.

In Montenegro, unlike in Serbia, majority of Bosniaks gravitate towards “big” multi-ethnic parties, especially the ruling DPS and SDP. This has marginalized the issue of Sandžak in the political life of Montenegro (\textit{IFIMES}, 2005).

\textsuperscript{42}SDA was formed in Sarajevo on 26 May 1990. SDA Sandžak was formed at the SDA assembly in Novi Pazar on 29 July 1990, with dr Sulejman Ugjanin as the president. SDA Montenegro operates in Montenegro, and the first president of this party was Harun Hadžić.

\textsuperscript{43}Later, Democratic Reform Party of Muslims (VAKAT) was formed in Prizren and Liberal Bosniak Organization (LBO) in Sarajevo, headed by Afil Zulfikarpašić who left SDA; later LBO Sandžak was formed with head office in Novi Pazar. (\textit{Fijuljanin}, 2010: 50).

\textsuperscript{44}During 1994 godine, there was a split in SDA Sandžak, which resulted in the formation of “Sandžak Coalition” in 1996, headed by the then vice-president of the SDA Sandžak Rasim Ljajic (in 2000 “Sandžak Coalition” was renamed to „Sandžak Democratic Party). In 1996 local and federal elections, this Coalition was in competition with the “List for Sandžak”, which was formed by Ugjanin from BNMC Sandžak and SDA Sandžak upon his return from Turkey.

\textsuperscript{45}The Muslim National Council of Sandžak and Bosniaks boycotted early parliamentary elections held on 31 May 1992 and 19 December 1993. (\textit{Fijuljanin}, 2010: 51).

\textsuperscript{46}On parliamentary elections on 3 November 1996, SDA Montenegro won three seats, and Harun Hadžić became MP in the Assembly of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (\textit{Fijuljanin}, 2010: 50, 51).
Large number of political parties of the Bosniak national minority suggests that members of the Bosniak national minority are extremely motivated for political action. However, a deeper analysis of activities related to elections (election campaigns on the national and local level) shows that a large number of registered political parties of national minorities are not active and do not have any significant political influence. However, despite that, the existence of a large number of political parties points to a strong political mobilization along the ethnic line and ethnic solidarity. In reality, the interest in party engagement stems from the prevailing partocracy that has been established in Serbia i.e. party membership monopoly over public resources is created through party membership.

In case of national minorities, the most influential political parties have created a monopoly over the political life and representation of national minorities. The most obvious example for that are Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (SVM), and as for Bosniak community, these are SDA, SDP and BDZ Sandžak. These parties, along with the Muslim community in Serbia represent true rulers of Sandžak (Pfeifer, Šećeragić, 2009:9; Politička participacija, 2016:17-19).

In the struggle for monopoly, Bosniak political parties encourage politicization and mobilization of their followers. This mobilization often leads to political, as well as physical, conflicts between Bosniaks. During 2007 – 2009, Bosniak internal party conflicts claimed human lives. These victims have left a long-lasting mark on the political life of Bosniaks, which is described as “politically exclusive”.

There is a prevailing belief among the public and influential groups, including Bosniak, that only mono-ethnic parties “truly” represent the interests of national minorities, and that they should be given the exclusive right to represent national minorities. This attitude indicates ethno-nationalist approach to politics and society and shows that the issue of national minorities is extremely politicized. At the core of this politicization is the issue of a “legitimate representative” of interest of a given community. However, when election results or ethnic composition of parties are analyzed, it is obvious that many members of national minorities, including Bosniaks, vote for and are members of multi-ethnic parties. The exclusive right of mono-ethnic parties to represent national minorities has not been verified in reality. Actually, interests of one national minority are represented by several political parties.

47Observed from this perspective, a kind of curiosity on the Serbian political scene and beyond is that one and the same politician – Rasim Ljajić has two political parties: one is registered as multi-ethnic Social Democratic Party of Serbia, and the other is registered as mono-ethnic Bosniak party – Sandžak Democratic Party. A calculated manipulation with the public is visible in the fact that both parties have the same abbreviation – SDP.

In parliamentary elections from 2012 to 2016, Ljajić and SDP were in coalitions with the then ruling parties (in 2012 with the Democratic Party (DS), and in 2014 and 2016 with SNS), while SDP ran in local elections in municipalities with Bosniak voters (Novi Pazar, Sjenica, Tutin, Prijepolje and Priboj) (Politička participacija, 2016: 37, 38).
Dominant political figures in today’s political life of Sandžak are Ljajić, Ugljanin and Zukorlić.

The conflict between Ugljanin and Ljajić lasts from the very beginning of the SDA, and since 2004 it has grown into an open hostility which weighs down the entire country, because the central government is used in this conflict. What’s more, in this bitter fight for power, neither of these leaders hesitated to seek the help of “informal power centers” and foreign governments, primarily Turkey and Bosniak leaders in Sarajevo (IFIMES, 2005).

Ugljanin had a dominant position among Bosniaks, until local elections in September 2004, when he was overpowered by Ljajić.

Since the elections in April 2016, Zukorlić’s influence has been on the rise. Bosniaks are now represented by two parties in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia – BDZ Sandžak and SDA, whose lists won two seats each. A part of the Bosniak electorate will also be represented by the Social Democrat Party of Serbia (SDP), headed by Rasim Ljajić, which is registered as a multi-ethnic party, and which participated in the election as a member of the SNS coalition.

One political activity that brought together the SDA, SDP and BDZ Sandžak was the rally held in Novi Pazar in August 2016, to show support to the Turkish president Erdogan in his fight to remain in power after the “unsuccessful coup” in Turkey.

Unwilling to accept the new distribution of power and strong influence of BDZ Sandžak, and unyielding in their attempt to restore the power, former fierce opponents Ljajić and Ugljanin have united, and presidents of the SDA and Democratic Party of Sandžak, Ugljanin and Nihad Hasanović signed a “Declaration on Strategic Partnership” on 20 December 2016.48

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48The Declaration contains 13 points and one of them states that the key goal is full political and social stability in Sandžak, which implies less tensions and divisions amongst citizens, especially Bosniaks.

This document advocates economic strengthening of Sandžak, development of infrastructure, realization of strategic projects, such as construction of highways across Pešter, regional road network between towns in Sandžak, as well as establishment of several regional and local institutions.

“Ensuring harmonization of the national structure in police, judiciary, prosecutor’s office and other state bodes, institutions and public authorities in Sandžak according to the national structure of the population in Sandžak municipalities. Ensuring realization of all rights and competences of the Bosniak National Minority Council (BNMC)”, is stipulated in one item of the declaration.

The signatories of this document are committed to promote and support the idea of a unified and autonomous Islamic community, whose dignitaries and representatives will not take part in political life, political campaigns, and will not be associated with any political party.

In addition, the two parties will provide mutual participation in local government in Sandžak municipalities, by creating new coalitions or expanding existing ones, which will be governed by a separate agreement, in line with this Declaration.

“The Parties will establish closer cooperation at the government level, including staffing solutions, if there is interest and need of the other party, especially in the implementation of development and infrastructure projects in Sandžak municipalities. The parties will agree on possible support and common positions on laws, regulations, decisions, declarations, resolutions and other acts passed by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, the Government, and other state authorities, which are related to the position and rights of Bosniaks and Sandžak…”

These two Bosniak parties are committed to enable the exercise of competences of the BNMC in local governments in Sandžak, in which they participate, in areas prescribed by the Constitution and law, as well as to anticipate and regularly finance this national body.
Priority issues of economic development have been cast aside by the rivalry between Bosniak political parties and leaders, who have taken a “pragmatic” attitude on important economic issues. Without party connections, private companies are not equally treated on public tenders, which is damaging to the companies, citizens and the state because they get lower quality at higher prices, and instead of going to the budget, the taxpayers’ money goes to private accounts or is spent irrationally (Pfeifer, Šećeragić, 2009:21).

3.3. Bosniak National Minority Council (BNMC)

National minority councils, as the most important institution through which members of the national minorities realize their rights to self-governance in the area of culture, education, information, and the use of language and script, have been established by the Law on Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities (“Official Gazette of SRY“, no. 11/2002, "Official Gazette of Serbia and Montenegro no. 1/2003 – The Constitutional Charter and "Official Gazette of RS", no. 72/2009 – state law). The Law on National Councils of National Minorities (2009), regulates the issues related to the status, competences of national councils, relations with state bodies, bodies of autonomous provinces and units of self-government, international and regional cooperation, election of national councils, financing of operations of national councils and monitoring the implementation of law. In May 2014, amendments to the Law were adopted in the part related to the procedures for the election of national minority councils.

Together with the Association of Jewish Communities, there are 21 national minority councils, specifically: Albanian, Ashkali, Bosniak, Bulgarian, Bunjevac, Montenegrin, Vlach, Greek, Egyptian, Hungarian, German, Roma, Romanian, Rusyn, Slovakian, Slovenian, Ukranian, Croatian, Czech, and Macedonian.

Muslim National Minority Council of Sandžak (MNMC Sandžak) was formed on 11 May 1991 and in 1993 it was renamed to Bosniak National Minority Council of Sandžak (BNMC Sandžak), and has

“The Parties agree to closely cooperate in the next elections for the Bosniak National Minority Council, with the aim of providing mutual support to that electoral list whose plans and programs will contribute to the improvement of the overall situation of Bosniaks and a higher degree of realization of their rights...”. It was decided that both parties will jointly promote this Declaration, taking into account the differences of their respective programs and maintaining political identity and autonomy in their work, and to refrain from the rhetoric, statements and public appearances that are contrary to its spirit and proclaimed goals.

The implementation of this document is the responsibility of the coordinating body, which is made up of three representatives of each party.

49. Since its adoption in 2009, the Law was amended several times, and on 16 January 2014, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Serbia passed a decision by which it was determined that certain provisions of the law related to the competences of the national councils, partially or entirely, are not in accordance with the Constitution. The decision of the Constitutional court made it clear that it is necessary to amend the law in the part related to the competences of the national councils.
been operating as such until 2003 when it was renamed to Bosniak National Minority Council (BNMC) (*Filjuljanin, 2010:62, 63*).

The constitution of BNMC 50 had triggered conflicts over the political control of BNMC, which included the state authorities, the Islamic community in Serbia, and Mesihat of Islamic Community in Sandžak, which was supported by the authorities in Belgrade. 51 Despite the election success, Ljajić was able to prevent BDZ to form BNMC, with the help from the central government. During the elections for national minority councils in 2010, difficulties were experienced by BNMC and it was not formally constituted. The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights breached the principle of equality by amending (illegally) the Regulation on Establishing the BNMC, in order to prevent the constitution of BNMC by the list of the Bosniak Cultural Community led by Muamer Zukorlić, Mufti of the Islamic Community in Serbia, which managed to secure majority in BNMC by being backed by the list of Bosniak Revival. The consequences of interference into the election process by the Government of the Republic of Serbia and its Minister of Human and Minority Rights, Svetozar Čiplić and Minister of Social Policy, Rasim Ljajić, are that the old BNMC has continued to exercise its technical mandate, while Mufti Zukorlić established a parallel “council”, which was in place until new elections in 2014. With this, he created parallelism similar to that of the Islamic Community.

In 2014 elections, SDA confirmed its control over BNMC. In reaction to that, a General Assembly of the Islamic Community was organized on 7 November 2016 in Novi Pazar, which gathered all members of the Assembly and Mesihat, heads of institutions, Chief Imams, presidents of majlis, teachers (muderis), Imams, religious teachers of the Islamic Community; Bosniak MPs, members of BNMC, Bosniak councilors and other political representatives; members of the Senate and the Academic Council of the International University in Novi Pazar; representatives of Bosniak NGOs; representatives of Sandžak medias, as well as other distinguished guests. The Assembly adopted the “Fourth Sandžak Declaration”. 52

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50 On 5 September 2003, BNMC was formed in Novi Pazar, consisting of 35 members. Sulejman Ugljanin was elected as the president, who was the president of SDA, and also, at that time, leader of the coalition “Sandžak List” (*IFIMES, 2005; Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:11*). SDP and Party for Sandžak did not participate in the work of this Electoral assembly.

51 Actually, this was simply a revival of Belgrade’s attempt from the Milosevic era to sever all ties between the Islamic community in Serbia and Sarajevo, and to place the Islamic community under control of Belgrade. On its part, the Islamic community in Sandžak maintained its position that, spiritually, they are a part of the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*IFIMES, 2005*).

52 Declaration firmly condemns the decision of the National Council for Higher Education on the accreditation of the International University in Novi Pazar, which aims to obstruct the further development of this university and education of young people in Sandžak and asks the Prime Minister and other competent bodies to “urgently remove all illegal obstacles to allow further development of this institution in the spirit of its role and the needs of students and the wider community”. It rejects the damaging, unconstitutional and illegal behavior of state bodies and officials at the expense of unity of the Islamic Community, and requests from the highest representatives of the state to provide the Islamic community with the opportunity to realize the “constitutionally guaranteed right to institutional unity”. ... “We demand from the Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey to stop interfering with the internal affairs of the Islamic Community, which causes serious damage to Bosniaks and Turkish-Bosniak relations.”
4. Education, cultural and religious life

4.1. Educational institutions

Education, from pre-school institutions, elementary and secondary schools, to universities, has a great significance for the preservation, protection and development of the national, cultural, religious, and language identity of Bosniaks (Vujić, 2011). However, the state of education in Sandžak is not satisfactory. In support of this assessment is the fact that there is a high illiteracy rate. Highest illiteracy rate is recorded in rural underdeveloped areas, in population over 60, most of whom are women. (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005: 9).

4.2. The use of Bosnian language

The official use of the Bosnian language is partially in effect through statutory decisions of local self-governments in Novi Pazar, Tutin and Sjenica. Local self-governments in these municipalities use the Bosnian language and Latin script, with the exception of Prijepolje (which had adopted the name Bosniak – Bosnian language, but this did not come into effect in the acts of local self-

Next, it is requested that the Law on the Return of Confiscated Property to Religious Communities is respected, including the return of property to the Islamic Community, to which no Waqaf property was returned; that the state officials and competent authorities cease to ignore the demands of the families of the kidnapped victims in Sjevertin, kidnapped victims in Štropci and those killed in Kukurovići and Priboj in 1992 and 1993; that the government of Serbia “urgently makes the final decision on the Pester route of Corridor 11, which would finally end a decade-long policy of the economic and infrastructural isolation of Sandžak and stop the further decline of the economy and the emigration of the population”; the Government must “speed up the talks on the constitutional and legal position of the Bosniak peoples in Serbia, which would improve the feeling of belonging among the Bosniaks, and contribute to the opening of Chapters 23 and 24 and the success of Serbia’s EU membership talks.

The Declaration states that “the cross-border European region of Sandžak is a necessary factor for improving regional stability and peace and for long-term incentives for the economic development”. That is why it calls for the initiation of a dialogue for the realization of this project.

33In the educational structure of the population over the age of 15, the population with secondary professional education (34.3%) is dominating; the most favorable ratio is in the municipality of Priboj (47.2%), as well as in relation to the average realized at the level of the Republic of Serbia (41.1%).

The share of the population with secondary education is the lowest in Sjenica (17.1%) which lower by half compared to other Sandžak municipalities, and compared to the average at the Republic level it is 1.5 times lower. Also, the share of the population of the region with high education in relation to the total working-age population is very low (3.1%), and compared to the average achieved at the Republic level it is 1.1 times lower (6.5%) (Pfeifer, Šećeragić, 2009:30).

34Official use of the languages of national minorities specifically implies: use of languages of national minorities in administrative and judicial proceedings and conducting administrative and judicial proceedings in the language of the national minority; use of the language of the national minority in communication between bodies with public authorities and citizens; issuance of personal documents and keeping official records and collections of personal data in the languages of national minorities and acceptance of such documents in those languages as valid; use of language on ballots and voting materials; use of language in the work of representative bodies; in territories where the language and script of a national minority are in official use, the names of bodies exercising public authority, the names of local self-government units, settlements, squares and streets and other toponyms must be in that language.
government) and Priboj (where the introduction of the Bosnian language was never even on the agenda).

The issue of the Bosnian language is also an open issue in Montenegro, as it pertains to the return of Bosniaks to their nation and culture (IFIMES, 2005; Wood, 2005). The Islamic community is actively dealing with this issue, maintaining that the Bosnian language, along with Islam, is one of the most important features of Bosniaks / Muslims.55

4.3. Culture, cultural institutions and events

Culture, including physical culture – sports, is of great importance for Bosniaks, who attribute positive values to it. Ethno-nationalist exclusion is visible, but inter-ethnic cooperation is prevailing (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:14).

Sandžak has a rich cultural and historical heritage, numerous archeological localities, cultural and public institutions, which were established in the past. By its tradition, Novi Pazar is at the very top of the European and world cultural heritage.56 Despite the passage of time, and even grotesque urban planning,57 the bazaar in Novi Pazar has many remnants of the Ottoman times.

There are numerous cultural events in Sandžak. Central cultural events of Bosniaks in Sandžak are: Festival of Sandžak sevdalinke (FSS), Festival of Bosniak folk dances (SBONI) i Sandžak Literary Events (SAKS), and municipalities hold various cultural and sport events.58

55 The Council of Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the session held on 9 July 2016, adopted a Resolution on the Bosnian language. Since the official language of the Islamic Community on the territory of Bosnia is Bosnian, and since the Islamic Community uses Bosnian language in its address to Muslims / Bosniaks outside Bosnia, the Islamic Community confirms multilingualism and supports the right to mother tongue to all its members as well as those who are not Bosniaks: Albanians, Turks, Arabs, Romas and others. Also, its religious authorities and representatives in diaspora are allowed to address and use the language of the host country. The Council is ordering the leadership of the to produce the Strategy for affirmation and preservation of the Bosnian language within six months in the Islamic Community, as well as for their members / Bosniaks on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sandžak and Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosniaks / Muslims in diaspora.

56 The following monuments are testimony to that: Altun-Alem Mosque, Peter's Church, Đurđevi stupovi, Hamam Gazi Isa-bega Ishakovic, Arap-Mosque, City fortress with observation tower, Amir-agin han etc., “Stambol street” which is today First of May Street, with numerous traditional shops.

57 For example, Ejup-beg Mosque in the city center was demolished in 1963 to make room for a movie theatre, and the building of Islamic institutions, which currently hosts the Faculty of Islamic Studies, where Isa-beg Ishaković dome mosque used to be, is currently subject to litigation, because that is just one of the endowments over which the Islamic community is trying to seeking ownership.

58 For example, Pljevalja has a long tradition of urban life and hosts the following events: Festival of humor and satire “Vuko Bezarović”, “First scythe of Montenegro”, Pljevlja November Festivities, Festival of tamburitza music, Days of Pljevalj cheese, and the newly formed municipality of Petnjica organizes “Bihor cultural summer”. Gusinje hosts traditional meetings of diaspora on Alipasa springs, Bijelo Polje hosts the festival “Ratković poetry evenings”, which gives award for the best book of poetry in Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, International Festival of Tamburitza bands, Festival of Drama amateurs of Montenegro, International Arts Meetings and jazz festival. Rožaje organizes the following events: International Festival of Children Songs “Golden flake” which is one of the most prestigious children's festivals in the region, “Days of mushrooms and medicinal plants”, Rožaje cultural summer, September Days of Culture, Jeep photo safari, Winter Tourist Car Racing, literary meetings “Miroslav Đurović”, and art salon.
Sandžak Sports Games have a very important role because it is the largest amateur sport event in Europe, which was initiated in 1953 in Prijeponje, and later it spread to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia (Fijuljanin, 2010:69; Panović:2012).

4.4. Islam, Islamic and other communities and leaders

Islam has become an important element of everyday life in the Balkans, since the Ottomans came at the end of the 14th century. Islamization and Islam provided the basis for the shaping of religious and cultural identity of Bosniaks. Over time, and primarily due to political factors, this identity assumed the characteristics of the “national identity”.

The Islamic Community, as it is today in the Balkans, emerged after the capitulation of the Ottoman Empire, in order to minimize the links between Muslim believers (including Bosniaks and Albanians) with Turkey and the Caliphate. This does not mean that the intention was completely successful. The Grand Mufti Hadžiomerovic and his two successors Mehmed Teufik ef Azabagić and Hafiz Suljeman ef Šarc were appointed and dismissed by the council of mullahs, with the blessing from Austrian authorities. Hafiz Ibrahim ef Maglajlić, the mufti of Banjaluka, had a seat in Bajrakli Mosque in Belgrade, and during his mandate from 1930 to 1936, the residence of the chief Muslim leader was in Belgrade.

The mandate of the most prominent figure among Imams Mehmed Džemaludin Čaušević lasted ten years (from 1910 to 1920). Another important person for the history of the Islamic Community on the territory of former Yugoslavia was dr Muatsfa ef Cerić, who was twice elected as Grand Mufti (Reis-ul-Ulema) in Sarajevo, and is currently the president of the European Conference of Reis.

59 Eleven years since the establishment (1964), „Sandžak Sports Games“ were renamed to “Inter-republic youth sports games“ (MOSI) (Kalezić, 2014). Games were not held after the beginnings of the armed conflict in former Yugoslavia, but ten years later (2001) they were held again in Novi Pazar (38th games). The last time this even was organized was in 2007 in Tutin. The event was planned to be organized in 2008 in Novi Pazar, but it was not held under the name Sandžak Sports Games, but under the name MOSI, the name which is used today.

60 A witness to that is the oriental and Islamic lexic in the speech of population in Sandžak, especially Bosniaks. This influence is primarily related to the islamized population, but it also influenced the population which spoke Serbian language which was widely open outside influence, but which had also preserved its original features and characteristics (Ujkanović, 2014: 149, 150).

61 For example, several leaders (such as the first Grand Mufti Hilmi ef Hadžiomerovic) were educated in Turkey.

62 Later, on 31 October 1987, the appointment of hafiz Husejn ef Mijući was performed in Bajrakli Mosque.

63 Reis-ul-Ulema Ibrahim Maglajlić replaced Džemaldin Čaušević, who adopted Srškić law on the Islamic Community, which aimed to abolish the “self-governance of the Islamic Community”. Accused of being pro-Serbian Reis-ul-Ulema, Maglajlić was dismissed and replaced by Dr. Mehmed Spaho, leader of the Yugoslav Muslim Organization, who helped his brother Fehim become Reis-ul-Ulema in 1938.
The manner of election and occasional change of the seat confirm that politics, state and religious communities, including Islamic Community, are closely related. In the time of socialist Yugoslavia, the Committee for religious relations, which was controlled by the League of Communists (SK)\(^{64}\), had an important role in the election of Reis. The election of Jakub ef Selimoski in 1991 can be characterized as democratic, because there was no open and direct influence of the SK, although the support of the then Prime minister Ante Marković was crucial.

Muslims in Serbia are organized as the Islamic Community of Serbia, which was acknowledged as the legitimate religion by appointment of the State Council of the Principality of Serbia on 18 May 1868, with the seat in Belgrade.\(^{65}\) By decisions of the Berlin Congress all rights of religious minorities were protected, and by the agreement between Montenegro and Turkey, the Muslim Community was established in Montenegro.

After the creation of Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the independence of the Islamic Community of Montenegro was abolished, and as of 1930, pursuant to the Law on Islamic Community, Montenegrin Muslims found themselves in a single community under the leadership of the Islamic Community and Grand Mufti with the seat in Belgrade. This union was disintegrated during the Second World War, but was re-established in 1947, and “the organizational division followed, to the greatest extent possible, the federal organization of the Yugoslav state“ (Folić, 2001: 175).

In the period of socialism, religion, including Islam, took a back seat and was not fully practiced (Lukač – Zoranić, 2014: 7). Unlike the Serbian Orthodox Church and Catholic Church, spiritual jurisdictions of the Waqf Councils of Montenegro, Serbia, and Macedonia, corresponded with the administrative borders, and in the time of former Yugoslavia with state borders. \(^{66}\) (www.monteislam.com/islamska-zajednica-u-crnjoj-gori). At that time, Sarajevo was “undisputed spiritual center“ (Antić, Veković, 2012: 106).

With the disintegration of SFRY in 1992 and the emergence of new states, the structure of the Islamic Community in Yugoslavia had changed. In 1994, the Islamic Community in Montenegro\(^{67}\) gained independence and adopted a new Constitution of the Islamic Community governed by Meshihat and

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\(^{64}\) Grand Muftis were Ibrahim ef Fejic (1947 – 57), Sulejman ef Kemure (1957 – 1975) and Neima ef Hadžiabdić (1975 – 1987).

\(^{65}\) By the decree of Miloš Obrenović, Serbia undertook to restore Bajrakli Mosque, as the seat of the Islamic Community in Serbia, as well as to provide financial support (Fijuljanin, 2010: 59, 60).

\(^{66}\) Islamic Community in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia consisted of four traditional units, the so called Assembly territories, specifically: Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia, with the seat in Sarajevo, Assembly of Islamic Community for Serbia with autonomous provinces Kosovo and Vojvodina, with the seat in Prishtina, Assembly of Islamic Community for Macedonia, with the seat in Skopje and Assembly of Islamic Community for Montenegro, with the seat in Titograd (Podgorica).

\(^{67}\) Disintegration of the Islamic Community in SFRY was formalized at the meeting of all representatives of Meshihat held in Istanbul in 1994, which was attended by representative of Islamic Community of Sandžak.
headed by Grand Mufti. This had confirmed the continuity of the organization of Islamic Community of Montenegro in legal and organizational activities. Islamic Communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo, as independent institutions, were formed at the meeting of Rijaset in Skopje on 5 February 1993. Islamic Community of Sandžak was formed in 1993, within the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Novaković, 2007: 80).

During the wars of the 1990’s, mosque was a place of refuge for many people. This had strengthened the influence of all religious communities, and had a great impact on other social and political developments. (Filandra, 2012:13).

For several decades, Islamic Community in Sandžak was politically passive. It became politically active again and restored its influence on the population, thanks to the (fashionable) revival of devoutness in Sandžak, which came as a result of the fall of socialism and the disintegration of Yugoslavia, and work of young Imams, such as Muarem Zukorlić68.

Active organizations today in Serbia are Sandžak Meshihat of Islamic Community in Serbia69 and Rijaset of Islamic Community of Serbia. Meshihat of Islamic Community in Serbia had preserved its status and composition as it had in SFRY, when the seat Rijaset was in Sarajevo.70

Increased politicization of Islamic Community and its leadership came about with the support from the authorities in Belgrade, which resulted in an open interference in the internal affairs of the Islamic Community or, as defined by Zukorlić in 2007 “aggression on Islamic Community“, 2007. (Zukorlić, 2016: 14).71

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68 In contrast to the strong social conservatism of his followers, Zukorlić is pragmatic and supports modernization: He does not hesitate to use Mosques to put Sandžak in the 21st century by promoting education, including the establishment of universities and the system of Islamic secondary education and Islamic book publishers. He supports young people to integrate into the modern world while maintaining Islamic values. Some of his moves are seen as controversial and that his maneuvering space is narrowing. But, Islamic community, especially Grand Mufti Esad Ćimić recognized and supported Zukorlić's modernism.

At that time Zukorlić was the youngest mufti in the world. During the nineties of the twentieth century, Zukorlić had political support from Ugljanin and SDA. He first expanded his influence in rural population and then in urban population. After the return of Ugljanin from Turkey in 1996, and as a result of tensions between them which is manifested through Sandžak newspapers controlled by Ugljanin and the Voice of Islam controlled by Zukorlić, Zukorlić established Bosniak Democratic Union, which marked a complete break with Ugljanin (ICG, 2005: 32). (ICG, 2005: 32).

69 Meshihat of Sandžak was founded in 1992, and since 1993 it is under the leadership of Mufti of Sandžak, Muamer Zukorlić. In response to the establishment of Islamic Community of Serbia, a unification parliament was held on 27 March 2007 in Novi Pazar, which transformed the Islamic Community of Sandžak and founded Islamic Community in Serbia, led by Muamer Zukorlić.

70 With the disintegration of SFRY, this composition was retained in Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia. But, in 2007, a group of disgruntled imams broke away from the Meshihat of Islamic Community and established Riyasah of Islamic Community of Serbia, with the seat in Novi Pazar.

71 Without the presence of representatives of Islamic Community of Sandžak, with the support of a part of Sandžak Muslims, a decision was passed on 29 January 2007 on the establishment of Riyasah of Islamic Community of Serbia, headed by Grand Mufti Adem Zilkic. The Government of Serbia and the Ministry of Religious Affairs broke the law on churches and religious communities and registered the newly established Islamic Community of Serbia. Sandžak politicians, especially Ljajic, as well as politicians from Belgrade, particularly the then president Boris Tadic had a prominent role in this act. (Lukač – Zoranić, 2014:8) The influence of the Turkish community and officials from Ankara was also evident. This issue will be further explored later on in the relevant section of this analysis.
Relations between Islamic Community of Montenegro and Meshihat of Sandžak of Islamic Community in Serbia deteriorated because Zukorlić’s activities had opened the issue of territorial jurisdictions. In an attempt to preserve the unity of Islamic Community of Montenegro, Fejzić received support from the authorities in Montenegro.

From the above it follows that “the main point of contention between Muslims in Serbia” is where the spiritual, educational, cultural and political center in Serbia should be; and in Montenegro “whether Islamic Community in Montenegro should be independent or united with the Islamic Community in BIH” (Antić, Veković, 2012: 116; Filandra, 2012:147).

An open issue is the extent to which the policy of Sandžak Muftiate is different from policies of the Islamic Community concerning Sandžak. Many believe that in case the division of jurisdiction in Montenegro is realized and Sandžak Muftiate is allowed to operate in Montenegro, that would mean challenging the concurrence between the territorial jurisdiction of the Islamic Community and Montenegro state borders, as well as challenging the existence of the Islamic Community in Montenegro. Finally, it would mean requesting regional re-composition of Montenegro.

4.4.1. “Ekstremizam”

Extremism has been on the rise since the wars in ex Yugoslavia. According to many, this extremism, when it comes to the Islamic Community, is related to Wahhabism if that “at this moment does not represent a threat to regional security” (Morrison,2008:12).

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72 Mufti Zukorlić claimed that „mildly put, this part of Sandžak, South Sandžak or North Montenegro, whatever we may call it, can be considered an unresolved issue within Islamic Community” and that „Islamic Community will be offered to be a part of Islamic Community with the seat in Sarajevo, and if it accepts, the Meshihat in Podgorica will facilitate solutions for many issues” and that „what happened before were forced solutions” and that „integrations are a solution for creating national and religious bonds” (Muftija Zukorlić: ‘Montenegro Sandžak remains an unresolved issue within Islamic Community, available at: www:bosnapress.net).

The Reis of the Islamic community in Montenegro Rifat Fejzić answered that applicable regulations do not correspond to the „actual situation”. (Živa istina, guest: Rifat Fejzić, RTV Atlas, 22 November 2015, available at: https://www.youtube.com). He accused Zukorlić of extremism because he turned certain institutions in Rožaje into a „service for the marriage of Salafi oriented people”.

73 Politicians and even the president of Montenegro Filip Vujanović joined the discussion, by saying that Reis Fejzić “demonstrated total devotion to Montenegro interests, which is to have Islamic Community which operates in the entire state” (available at: www.vijesti.me). Accusing “his brothers in Montenegro who accept political mentorship and tutorship” Zukorlić stated in an interview for “Pobjeda” that he has jurisdiction in Montenegro based on the Constitution of Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which established the Muftiate of Sandžak „which comprises the entire territory of Sandžak in Serbia and Montenegro (Sandžak is not a threat to the state of Montenegro, Pobjeda 2 December 2015, 3).

74 In an attempt to prevent this, authorities in Montenegro prescribed in the Law on Freedom of Religion that “prior to the appointment of the highest religious dignitaries, a religious community shall confidentially inform the government of Montenegro /article 4/”, and that “activities of a religious community must be directed against other religious communities” (article 7), and that “territorial configuration of religious community which is registered and operates in Montenegro cannot spread outside Montenegro” and that the “seat of religious community which is registered and operates in Montenegro must be in Montenegro” (Draft law on freedom of religion,available at: www.gov.me).
The ideas associated with religious extremism came to the Balkans from the Middle East and the West, through global networks, which culminated in 2007, after the split in the Islamic Community of Serbia.

Wahhabis first appeared in Bosnia and Herzegovina and later in Sandžak in 1997, when Imams instructed believers to practice the Wahhabi way of praying. After 2000, with the help of Islamic Active Youth (IAO) from Bosnia, the influence and presence of Wahhabis in Sandžak is on the rise. This movement was heavily financed by the Bosniak diaspora from Sandžak as well as Western Europe (Sweden, Austria, and Switzerland). According to the findings of the International Crisis Group, there are close ties between the Bosniak diaspora, parts of the Islamic Community and REFAK party from Turkey (ICG, 2005: 33).

According to Zukorlić, as long as the Islamic Community is strong, Wahhabis do not pose great threat. Also, in 2016 Zukorlić was the targeted by extremists for advocating Bosniak – Bosniak and Bosniak – Serbian reconciliation. (Alo, Beograd, 2 July 2016.)

Wahhabis are “mostly focused on recruiting young people, ages 19 to 27, with weak financial standing, often with family problems and poorly educated. Indoctrination is mostly carried out in private facilities (masjids) which are leased or are owned by Wahhabis, as well as in certain religious facilities (Mosques) where Imams support Wahhabi teachings and prayers in these facilities are performed exclusively by Wahhabis.” (Kladničanin, 2013: 130; Ilić, 2016: 3). Fertile soil for religious extremism implies: social and political polarization; economic poverty; difficult integration of young people into the community; disunity of the Islamic community; financially supported religious indoctrination, and distorted interpretation of Islam. All this makes it difficult for Bosnian and Serbian society to heal, and makes them susceptible to risks of the internal and transnational terrorism. (Azinović, 2012:165-166; 209 - 210).

Despite a high risk of possible terrorist activities, including those which could be committed by former fighters of the Islamic State recruited in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia (Editor, 2016), there is a visible lack of adequate measures for the prevention of political violence and terrorism, and there are numerous factors which enable them. Among these, one of the main factors is the

75 The Muslim Youth Club (MOK) is under direction of the Islamic Community and it keeps close ties with Wahhabis. The establishment of MOK instigated new tensions between Zukorlić, who formed Bosniak Youth of Sandžak (BOS) and Ugljanin. A link between MOK and Wahhabis was publically confirmed through the boycott of the idea by OSCE to implement a project on multicultural mobile container. This event had produced tensions between Zukorlić and local NGOs.

76 REFAK – the Welfare Party was an Islamic political party in Turkey in 1983. One of its founders and leader was Necmettin Erbakan. The party has a distinct Islamist agenda. Before prohibited, its members were The current President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and former President of Turkey, Abdullah Gül, were members of the Welfare Party before it was banned.

77 The fear of strengthening of Wahhabism and support from the US, Turkey and Sarajevo, has partially empowered traditional Mystical Tradition of Islam (Sufism), which is common to Islam in the Balkans.
dysfunctional state; easily available weapons and ammunition; omnipresent corruption and insufficient border control.

According to newspaper reports on Syria, in 2015 there were approximately 10 to 15 citizens of Montenegro fighting for the Islamic State, of which four are women. Nine radical Muslims returned from Syria and, as reported by the daily “Pobjeda” „all of them were previously members of various Islamic fundamentalist for as much as five years and were openly opposed to the Islamic community in Montenegro and its officials, especially Reis Efendi Fejzić “(Tomić, R, 2015: 7, 8). It is estimated that there are about 100 to 150 Wahabbis in Montenegro (Ilić, 2016:3).

In 2015, Montenegro changed its criminal legislation and joined other states in the region, and prescribed sanctions for its citizens who go to foreign battlefields, labeling it as a criminal offence “participation in foreign armed forces“. This was done by passing the Law amending the Criminal Code of Montenegro in February 2015. Also, in December 2015, the government of Montenegro adopted the Strategy for prevention of violent extremism for 2016 - 2018, which supplements the National Strategy for Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism, Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism. (Tomić, 2014:8,9).

In order to lower the risk of extremism, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. Also, the attitude of local Muslim communities toward groups which promote religious extremism is also important, and they must work on creating positive social models and positive social values.

4.5. Civil society and NGOs

In this area, civil society is marked by activities of religious communities and related NGOs. Non-governmental organizations dedicated to human rights and rights of national minorities are also active, especially in terms of improvement the position of Bosniaks, youth, education and local development. These organizations generally operate locally and are rarely visible on the national scene, but they foster close relationships with organizations which operate on the national and international level, especially when it comes to the rights of the Bosniak community (for example: Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Academic Initiative Forum 10, Forum for Ethnic Relations).

78 The Strategy establishes the following strategic goals: “1. Adequate understanding of the initiators of radicalization in order to prevent radicalization; 2. Establishment of effective mechanisms of coordination among the relevant institutions at national and international level; 3. Implementation of activities in response to the initiators of radicalization - combating radicalization and violent extremism; 4 Implementation of monitoring and evaluation in order to eliminate the consequences of violent extremism and terrorism and planning of future activities” (Strategija,2014:5).
Among NGOs in this area, there are those which are known at the national level, such as UrbanIn i DamaD (both from Novi Pazar).

In reality, activities of a large part of the civil sector are coordinated with activities of political parties (SDA, SDP and BDZ Sandžak).

Activities of foreign NGOs are also noticeable. At the very beginning of the establishment of civil society, during the 1990s, most active were Helsinki Citizens Assembly (HCA), Interchurch Peace Council (IKV) and Forum for Ethnic Relations. Later, these issues were especially treated by the International Crisis Group (ICG) and the European Stability Initiative (ESI) and in recent years the Council for Inclusive Governance (CIG) with headquarters in Princeton, USA.

Most civil society organizations, including those that have a long history of operations, are institutionally fragile. Basically each have a prominent leader, limited administrative staff and a circle of experts who are engaged when necessary. Existing actors rarely make decisions on partnerships and pooling of capacity. They are usually brought at "the same table" by "third" parties, such as NGOs, donors, etc. In fact, the sustainability of these organizations is at risk.

Unfavorable conditions for the development of civil society are the lack of new actors, ideas and approaches. Civic initiatives are primarily present in solving problems at the micro level (construction of road network and water supply network in certain settlements etc.) but actions of greater importance for municipalities and the regions in Serbia and Montenegro are lacking (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:13).

There is certain degree of interest of local public and civil society for advancing women's rights and gender equality, although a clear concept and awareness as to why that is necessary is lacking. Gender inequality is particularly recognized in employment and distribution of political and economic power (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:16).

Although there is a number of minority groups based on sexual orientation, this issue is still a "taboo" in public. Members of these groups are widely seen as "problematic", "sick", "doubtful" or "immoral". At the same time, organized activities of local authorities and political parties and civil society actors

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79 From 1994 to 1997 IKV and Forum for Ethnic Relations, in cooperation with Helsinki Committee for Sandžak (led by Šefko Alomerović) organized Summer School of Inter-confessional, Intercultural and International Dialogue and Understanding (SIDU).

80 The Council for Inclusive Governance (CIG) implemented the project "Regional Forum of southwestern Serbia/Sandžak" with the support of the Open Society Foundation Serbia, during the period 2013–2015. One of the benefits of this project was to motivate all stakeholders to actively participate in creating conditions for free and fair elections for the Bosniak National Minority Council (BNMC) and thus ensure that the electoral process for the BNMC is legitimate. Apart from that, the Forum for Ethnic Relations scrupulously monitored the election campaign, media and election day. The consultative status of Sandžak CSOs with the BNMC was formalized along with the principle that the leaders of BNMC should withdraw from performing functions in their political parties. This was a symbolic first step towards departization of the BNMC. The Forum for Ethnic Relations south to serve as a platform for intra-Bosniak dialogue.
aimed at changing this state of consciousness and public opinion as well as opposing discrimination based on sexual orientation are lacking. (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:15).

Certain non-governmental organizations in Montenegro participate in regional initiatives, such as Euromost from Bjelo Polje, which took part in a regional ecological initiative to protect Lim River (www.cdm.me/drustvo/crna-gora/predstavnici-nvo-iz-crne-gore-srbije-i-bih-usvojili-deklaraciju-o-zastiti-lima).

All this indicates that civil society Sandžak, as well as other parts of Serbia, lacks sufficient social power to force the state to make changes in practice, and their voices are mainly directed toward representatives of the international community. However, it is evident that in Montenegro IPA funds related to international cooperation projects are mostly awarded to NGOs, stationed in Podgorica, which points to insufficient capacities of organizations from the North.81

81 For example, Fors – Foundation for the Development of Northern Montenegro from Nikšić, which had already received funds from IPA fund, completed the training for IPA funds through workshops, organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations and Niksic municipality. During the spring of this year, the Ministry had organized workshops in Nikšić, Šavnik, Plužin, Žabljak, Pljevlja, Kolašin, Mojkovac, Bijelo Polje, Berane and Petnica, within which it represented a new financial perspective through Instruments for Pre-Accession Assistance – IPA II (www.forsmontenegro.org/me).
III) A VIEW FROM (CLOSE) NEIGHBOURGHOOD

1. A view from Belgrade and Podgorica

The relationship between the political leadership and the government of Serbia and Bosniak community in Sandžak is within the framework of the constitution and the law. However, there is a constant support to certain representatives of Bosniaks, based on their contributions to the central government. This behavior is caused by the very nature of the centralized power in Serbia and the existing doubt in the loyalty of Bosniaks and their leaders. The social and political actors in Serbia, especially those who share ethno-nationalist views in relation to Bosniaks show mistrust and lack of activities on the integration of Bosniaks in public institutions and public life, particularly security institutions, army, and police. These doubts are an expression of burdens from the past (starting with the Ottoman Empire, which Serbs see as synonymous with violence and slavery, over a period of inter-ethnic conflict during the Second World War, up to the recent past marked by armed conflict between Serbs and Bosniaks in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which Bosniaks see as "the time of genocide").

For many in Serbia the area of Ras and Sandžak are almost "mythical" because the first Serbian state was formed there and many Serbian sanctities are located there. For that reason, the Serbs and the state Serbia insist on the official title of "Raška" and Serbian names and prefixes for institutions, events, streets, towns, etc.

The issue of Sandžak and Serbian - Bosnian cooperation is considered as delicate, over which the official authorities in Belgrade have a monopoly. This is confirmed by the fact that the Prime Ministers (Vučić, and earlier Cvetković) can announce Serb - Bosniak dialogue without any negative public reaction, and to cooperate with Bosniak political leaders in government. But, when similar initiatives are promoted by others than state officials, they are condemned in public and the media "close to the authorities." In addition, although the government has been announcing for years that it will lead the Serb - Bosniak dialogue, for now there is no significant progress in this direction. This is because the
actual steps of cooperation encounter strong ethno-nationalist resistance and the ruling coalition relies in many ways on this part of the electorate body of Serbia.

When it comes to the status of Sandžak, at the time of the government headed by Prime Minister Mirko Cevtković and former Serbian President Tadić, Belgrade officials had promised that, instead of two administrative districts, municipalities in the Serbian part of Sandžak will be one single administrative unit within Serbia. The current government did not initiate this issue, so far. Only Bosniak politicians give sporadic statements concerning the status of Sandžak, especially SDA, SDP and BDZ Sandžak leaders (more on this is available in the relevant part of this policy paper).

The election campaign for the extraordinary parliamentary elections in Serbia, in April 2016, brought a qualitative shift in advocating Serb-Bosniak dialogue, which is a part of the political program of the list BDZ Sandžak "For Reconciliation". However, the pre-election promises made by Aleksandar Vučić, the ruling coalition and Bosniak leaders, have remained unfulfilled.

Key issues and misunderstanding between Belgrade and Novi Pazar and Podgorica and Novi Pazar is in the constitutionally and legally established centralization and refusal to incorporate in the constitutional framework European legal values related to regionalization and decentralization. Also, the dominant position of ethno-nationalist political parties on the political scene in Serbia produces strong anti-minority, and therefore anti-Bosniak and anti-Islam narrative in public. (Krcić, 2015: 23).

2. A view from Sarajevo

In the time of former Yugoslavia, Bosnian nationalism was focused on defining the identity of Muslims or Bosniaks, which had placed the issue of Sandžak in that context. At that time, the vast majority of members of the Muslim nation did not accept the ethno-nationalist ideologies and programs, so they had difficult time understanding the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

At the time of the final crisis in relations in the former Yugoslavia, political leaders of Bosniaks Adil Zulfikarpašić and Fikret Abdić were fully aware of the risks that Muslims / Bosniaks were facing, but did not know how to react to those risks, especially in relation to the issue of statehood. That is why

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82 It is important to say that this program of dialogue, reconciliation, and joint search for solutions through the concept of cross-border cooperation in Sandžak area is supported by a multi-ethnic political party “Active Serbia”.

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their policies were more directed to the defense of the identity of Muslims and Bosniaks, rather than on building national framework for the confirmation of the national identity of Bosniaks. This is when Alija Izetbegović appeared on the scene. He was the author of the “Islamic Declaration” (1983) and “Islam between East and West” (1984), where he flirted with the pan-Islamic idea. However, Izetbegovic did not succeed in establishing a connection between the survival and development of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Islamic world. He based the program of his party (SDA) on the concept of survival of unity and integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina within the Yugoslav state. (ICG, 2005: 13). The course of events, especially war mobilization, with significant support from Turkey and Islamic states, pan-Islamic groups (Muslim Brotherhood, Wahhabis) and extremists (primarily Mujahideen) only added Islamic and extremist features to his program and the Bosniak ethno-nationalism. That, however, had placed Bosnia high on the map of the Holy War (Jihad) (Margolis, 2005).

The war and post-war period in Bosnia and Herzegovina have made Bosniaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina preoccupied with their own problems and the issue of Sandžak was put aside.

Political structures in Sarajevo, such as the SDA, which advocated the change of the name "Muslim" to "Bosniak" and promoted the Bosnian language, were spilled over to the territory of Sandžak. With the establishment of influence of Bosniaks in state institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and creation of national institutions of Bosniaks, similar institutions emerged in Sandžak.

SDA of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most influential channel for maintaining a relationship with the Bosniaks in Sandžak through “sister parties” (“Izetbegovic in Novi Pazar: SDA is the most important political party for Bosniaks”, 28 July, 2016, available at: www.faktor.ba). This was confirmed during the last visit of Bakir Izetbegovic to Novi Pazar, who on that occasion said that SDA is the most important factor for Sandžak, and the most important political party for Bosniaks in the Balkans (“SDA delegation visited Sandžak”, 29 July, 2016, available at: www.avaz.ba). Also, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denis Zvizdić (SDA Bosnia and Herzegovina) said: “We see Sandžak and other parts inhabited by Bosniaks as European regions and, through cross-border cooperation, we can help in terms of economic development and improvement of other segments of life, which is the basis for the self-sustainability of Bosniaks” (DSDA delegation visited Sandžak, 29 July, 2016, www.avaz.ba).

Despite everything, the SDA of Bosnia and Herzegovina and other political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, have no program documents related to Sandžak.

Throughout history, Bosniaks from Sandžak and Bosnia and Herzegovina have been building strong relationships, and Sandžak Bosniaks have tied their political, religious and cultural activities with
Bosnia and Herzegovina as their "home country". They also relied on cooperation with the Bosniaks living in Bosnia and Herzegovina who were originally from Sandžak. These ties are not based solely on ethno-nationalism; they are also based on kinship.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are Sandžak associations which closely cooperate with institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in the fields of education, culture and publishing industry. Among these are Bosniak Cultural Society "Revival" and Council of the Congress of Bosniak Intellectuals (VKBI), based in Sarajevo.

Certain organizations from Sandžak in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Sarajevo Canton are developing models for the education of Sandžak Bosniaks in the Bosnian language in Serbia. The issue of Sandžak is also treated by the Association of Citizens originally from Sandžak, based in Sarajevo, which has been active for 25 years. When asked what Serbia means to the people originating from Sandžak in today's context, and what kind of relationships should be built with the people from Sandžak, the president of the Association Ekrem Lekić says that for him, Serbia is an independent state which must be respected as much as it respects Bosnia and Herzegovina. He added: “When Bosnia and Herzegovina voted for independence on the 1991 referendum, most of the Sandžak area remained in Serbia and Montenegro. From that date, I was convinced that the Bosniaks in Sandžak, whether in Serbia or in Montenegro, must adapt, but also fight for better constitutional position within these states. Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the home country of Bosniaks, must look after the Bosniaks, as part of the policy represented by Bosniaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including their religious, educational and other institutions, through bilateral and diplomatic relations”.

Some of the most important issues discussed between Bosniak organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina and organizations from Serbia and Sandžak are: realization of the rights of Sandžak Bosniaks in Serbia; preparation of curricula for the education of Sandžak Bosniaks in Serbia in the Bosnian language, realization of joint projects in the field to publishing (www.Sandžakcbs.com, Center for Bosniak Studies, Tutin).

83 Program goals of this Association is maintaining and improving relations with Sandžak, gathering, studying, and fostering cultural and historical value, and promoting scientific and literary achievements in Sandžak (www.ugSandžakubih.ba).

Through its activities, this association emphasizes the evaluation of Sandžak traditions and culture, but also the preservation of civil society, given that Sandžak towns are mixed both along the national and religious lines. One of the major projects realized by this association is the magazine "Damar", the contents of which include the current situation in Sandžak and helps communication and cooperation between those engaged in cultural and public affairs and economic sector.

84 Interview with Ekrem Lekić, president of the Association of citizens originally from Sandžak “Sandžak people are building and developing Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina through economy and entrepreneurship, science and culture”, 9 April 2016, www.depo.ba.
It is important to emphasize that there is a large number of scientists and university professor in Bosnia and Herzegovina who are originally from Sandžak, and that there are many students from Sandžak studying at the universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sarajevo.

Among the most successful private entrepreneurs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in Sarajevo, particularly among those engaged in production, there are many of those originating from Sandžak.

3. A view from Kosovo

In Kosovo, there is no great interest for the issue of Sandžak. Some attention is given to those events and topics related to the position of Bosniaks in Serbia and Montenegro. There are no print media in the Bosnian language in Kosovo, and there are but a few electronic media and public programs (RTK) in Bosnian language.

Public institutions, Kosovo officials and political parties do not have relevant opinions on the issue of Sandžak. Up until the end of February 2017, when Ugljanin and the delegation of the Bosniak National Minority Council met with the President of Kosovo Hashim Thaçi, no Albanian politician from Kosovo had ever officially met with politicians from Sandžak.

Vice President of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo Duda Balje (i), feels that Albanian politicians in Kosovo mention Sandžak “only in the context of reciprocity i.e. considering that Serbs as a minority in Kosovo can be educated in Serbian language, Albanian politicians raise the question as to why Albanians in Novi Pazar or the Pešter plain cannot be educated in Albanian language. However, southern Serbia (Preševo and Bujanovac) is much more interesting in that context for Albanian politicians in Kosovo”.

Since Sandžak is not an issue of significant political interest, it is therefore not an issue in the NGO sector, with the exception of the recently formed Association "Kosovo for Sandžak". According to

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85 Guests from Sandžak participated in a commemorative gathering in Prishtina dedicated to Šaban Poluža and Mehmet Gradica, commanders of Balli and Muslim militia, and SS German troops during WWII. This visit had caused a great media and political turmoil, which resulted in a proposal to ban SDA (The state will ban Ugljanin’s SDA, “Večernje novosti” daily, Belgrade, 25 February 2017).

86 An in-depth interview with Duda Balje, vice-president of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, from VAKAT coalition was published on 21 December 2015 in Prishtina.
founder and president of the association Ismet Azizi, this association was founded in order to reconnect Kosovo with Sandžak, and Albanians and Bosniaks.

Association "Kosovo for Sandžak" had some discussion with the Bosniak National Minority Council (BNMC) in Serbia, on matters related to cooperation on joint projects, and BNMC has offered the Association to have one member in the BNMC, in the advisory capacity. So far, such an agreement has not been officially signed.

Judging from the Internet page of this association (www.kosovapersanxhakun.org), it is indicative that they insist on linking Albanians and Bosniaks from Kosovo and Sandžak, while Sandžak Serbs are not taken into account. Moreover, Serbs are portrayed only in a negative context, as war criminals and often referred to as “chetniks”, while friendly and brotherly relations and fight for survival are cited as a link between the Bosniak and Albanian people a (Redzep Skrijelj, history professor and member of the association “Kosovo for Sandžak”) (www.rtklive.com).

Bosniak NGO sector in Kosovo is publically supported only by BKZ Sandžak.

However, business relations are somewhat developed. For example, most transportation operators and freight brokers are from Sandžak and Northern Kosovo, and largest markets for goods from grey markets are in Sandžak and Northern Kosovo (Centar za regionalizam, 2012: 10).

According Ćerim Bajrami, member of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, in terms of education, for now there is no cooperation between Kosovo and Sandžak. But future plans include the use of some of the textbooks from Novi Pazar in teaching in Bosnian language in Kosovo and vice versa.

For Bosniaks in Kosovo it is very important that they have the opportunity to be educated in the Bosnian language at least until the ninth grade, or even high school.

When certain studies are concerned, Bosniaks study in the near region – Novi Pazar, Sarajevo, Skopje. The latest practice, however, is that they are allowed to study in Albanian language and take exams in the Bosnian language.

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87 An in-depth interview with Ismet Azizi, founder and president of the Association “Kosovo for Sandžak” was published on 19 December 2015 in Prishtina.

88 Of all Sandžak officials, Zukorlić made most visits to Kosovo, in an attempt to awake the national awareness in Bosniaks, although he never spoke of any specific mode of cooperation. In November 2015 he was a guest of the Prizren municipality, along with Sulejman Ugljanin, at the promotion of the Bosniak cultural center in Prizren.

89 This area has the highest rate of unregistered trade revenues (Srbija – Kosovo – Srbija), which is at the expense of tax and customs services of both Serbia and Kosovo, as well as at the expense of producers and consumers, since unregistered goods are not subject to any sanitary and phyto-sanitary control measures.
Cooperation between Sandžak and Kosovo in the sphere of culture exists, but it is weak. There is a cultural exchange in the form of organization of theater and film performances, and new literary editions in Bosnian or Albanian languages and their translations from Bosnian to Albanian or vice versa, or to Serbian language in Novi Pazar. There is also intensive cooperation between cultural associations of Kosovo and Sandžak.

4. A view of international factors

International actors and representatives of international organizations have been present in this area from the beginning of the 1990s, initially in peace-keeping missions, and later as assistance in building democracy and civil society.

The presence and interest of many international organizations (OSCE, Council of Europe, EU, international and local non-governmental organizations and embassies) indicates that the international community is aware of the possibility of escalation of violence and radicalization.

This policy paper will highlight only some of the most influential cases of the international interest in Sandžak.

4.1. Turkey

In 2009, Turkey became a significant factor in the Western Balkans and the government of Tayyip Erdogan has paid special attention to Bosniaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sandžak. This was confirmed through the signing of the international agreement on economic cooperation and on strategic partnership between Serbia and Turkey. This was followed by a visit of the Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremić to Ankara, Ministers Mladen Dinkić and Rasim Ljajić and Sulejman Ugljanin, as well as the President of Serbia, Boris Tadić. Turkish president Abdullah Gul visited Serbia in October 2009, and confirmed that Turkey will finance the construction of roads in Sandžak. However, this has not been realized yet. During the meeting with Gul, Tadić proposed the construction of Islamic center near Belgrade, a proposal that also didn’t go any further.

Turkey mediated in the reconciliation between Ljajić and Ugljanin, the then Ministers in the Government of Serbia which is a kind of curiosity that a Minister of a foreign government reconciles
Ministers of another foreign government. In contrast to this, the attempt of Ankara to mediate in the reconciliation between religious leaders Zilkić and Zukorlić had failed, primarily because Anakra supported Zilkić, with the intention to place the Islamic Community of Serbia under control of the Islamic Community of Turkey.

By its engagement in Sandžak and other parts of the Balkans inhabited by Bosniaks, Turkey has sought to assert its growing importance in the Balkans and in Europe, but also to show its citizens of Bosniak origin⁹⁰ that it is concerned with their homeland.

A trilateral summit between Turkey - Serbia - Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the adoption of the Istanbul Declaration was the political pinnacle of the strong presence of Turkey in Serbia and most Western Balkans. Hence, it is no wonder that the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey Ahmet Davutoglu, during his visit to Sarajevo and before meeting the Bosnian Presidency Chairman Nebojša Radmanović, requested that the flag of Republika Srpska be removed form the Palace of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This gesture by Davutoglu was the evidence of his rejection of the international legitimacy of the Republika Srpska, and interference in issues of the host country.⁹¹ This was seen as Davutoglu's vision of the return of Turkey to the Balkans in the light of neo-Ottomanism⁹² which was the official policy of Ankara (Janjić, 2011).

In the strengthening of its influence in the Balkans, Ankara had relied on the SDA and Izetbegović in the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was confirmed after an unsuccessful coup in Turkey when Izetbegovic, upon his arrival in Novi Pazar, encouraged SDA Sandžak to support the Turkish president. (Jasnić Mastilović, 2016; Jurilić, 2016)

According to Erdogan and Turkish authorities, nationalist and Islamist Gulen movement was at the heart of the attempted coup in Turkey on 15 July 2016. This movement, with the help of Erdogan’s

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⁹⁰ It is estimated that at least four million citizens of Turkey originate from the former Yugoslavia, and among them there is a significant number of Sandžak Bosniaks.

⁹¹ This event had unmasked the weakness of politicians in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and their inability to have a clearly defined strategy, goals and frameworks of cooperation with Turkey. Actually, local politicians, with Tadić at the forefront, faced with a complex economic and political crisis in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina saw a solution in Turkey and its possible investments, neglecting the impacts of this cooperation.

⁹² In this analysis, neo-Ottomanism implies a specific ideological program of a gradual re-Islamization of the Turkish secular population, and dissolution of the basic assumptions of Kemalism, with a pronounced strengthening of the international position of Turkey.

In the last several decades, neo-Ottomanism is evidently present in Turkey’s domestic and foreign policies, and since 2009 this is also evident in the Balkans.

Bosniak and Albanians are two traditional cornerstones of the Ottoman - pan-Turkish policies in the Balkans. They represent the main human base for the regeneration of Turkish policies, and they need satisfy their political appetites. Strong Albania, centralized Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are of the main interest for Turkey from the perspective of opposing the interests of others powers in the region: Russian (through Serbs and maybe Bulgarians) and Germany (through Slovenes and Croats). According to the Davutoglu’s vision, an arc that spreads from the west, from Bihać, over central Bosnia, Sandžak, Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, Kardzhali to Thrace, is a corridor that is of the outmost importance for Turkey. Maintaining this corridor enables Bosnian Muslims to resist assimilation and Croatia’s influence, and Albanians to resist Serbian influence. (Davutoglu, 2011:190, 192; Svrčević, 2010)
government during 2008 – 2013 made a significant impact on the Turkish bureaucracy. This Islamic trans-national religious and social movement, which has no official name except “Hizmet” (or “the Service”) was for many years very close to the ruling, pro-Islamist AK party (Justice and Development Party), helping it to remove secular “Kemalists” from the state bureaucracy and military. However, 2012 was the beginning of the split of these parties, which later turned into a type of “silent civil war, and was spread to the streets of Istanbul. (Aydintasbas, 2016: 2).  

Turkish government sent an official request to the Serbian government and other governments of the Western Balkans to close all schools, NGOs and Foundations under the patronage of Fetulah Gulen. On the territory of Serbia, these are primarily “Bejza” elementary school and “Bejza Educational Center” in Belgrade.

For now, it seems that Erdogan is not fully capable to overtake the Gullen movement in Turkey or limit its operations in the Balkans (Deni, 2016). This is because this movement is an alternative to a much more extreme movements, such as Salafi movement, but also because, generally observed, Erdogan is not convincing enough. At the beginning of the “Arab Spring” in 2011, the reputation of the Erdogan’s AK party was at its global and national peak. AKP’s idea was to replace the authoritarian secular regime in the region by democratically-elected Islamists i.e. AKP, as the leading movement of the “democratic Islamists”, which has the key role in these transformations. Accordingly, it stood by the opposition in Syria, along with brotherly Sunni powers, such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, as well as those from the West, such as USA and France.

In 2012 the presence of foreign fighters in Syria had caused concern in the West, but Ankara was exclusively focused on overthrowing Assad’s regime, claiming it can control Islamist groups. But, Ankara’s plan did not work out. One of those “extremist Islamist groups” will soon become ISIL, which will terrorize Syria and poison Syrian revolution and bring chaos in Turkey. Turkey did not support ISIL directly, although there is proof that Turkish secret service delivered guns and ammunition to Syria, primarily as Ankara’s support to less extreme Islamist rebel groups, such as Ahrar al-Sham. But, the Islamic State had profited at least in the first phase from Turkish participation, which had enabled it to penetrate Syrian border.

93 Gulen and Erdogan have cooperated tightly towards the reshaping of the Turkish society, in accordance with Gulen’s conservative – religious vision. This had strengthened Gulen’s strongholds in police, judiciary and administration.

However, the relations between Gulenists and Erdogan took a turn for the worse ever since their mutual enemies – secularists, were taken out of the picture. Since then Erdogan had less need for the movement, and the breaking point was in February 2012, when Gulenists had attempted to bring down the chief of the state security, who was close to Erdogan, who responded by removing many Gulenists from various positions in the police and judiciary.
Since 2016, and especially in 2017, Turkey is going through a crises marked by insecurity and polarization, including increased presence of terrorism of the Islamic State. Attacks of the Islamic State and Kurdistan Workers’ Party, PKK, a coup attempt in the summer of 2016 followed the government repression, have traumatized Turks. No one know when will the next terrorist attack be or whether Turkey will be able to win the “war on terror” by fighting on two fronts – against ISIL and against PKK. This insecurity is contributing to the extreme polarization of the nation: while the opposition is blaming Erdogan’s government for bringing Turkey in that position, government supporters, which make up almost half of the electoral body, see this situation as a reason for even greater support. In the face of real threats to its security, the government in Ankara deserves international empathy and support. But that same government is damaging its own legitimacy by attacking those with different views and using the security crisis to establish an authoritarian regime. Instead of resolving complex problems and own failures, it says that problems are a product of “western conspiracy against Erdogan’s glory”.

It was not “a great Islamic conspiracy” that caused Turkey to avoid confrontation with extremist groups, rather “Muslim naive”. Turkish Islamists, who are dominant in the Justice and Development Party (AKP), did not see the horrors of ISIL at their doorstep. Assad was a secular tyrant who oppressed the pious Sunni masses, and blaming him for everything bad in Syria was a perfect fit for the AKP’s collective memory, like a “black and white narrative”. Moreover, when it was evident in the northern Syria that ISIL is against the Kurds, or secular, leftist pro-PKK Kurds, it won tacit sympathies in the AKP ranks. However, ISIL turned its rage toward Turkey because of the war in northern Syria against Kurdish fighters. In the beginning, Ankara kept its distance in this conflict, which made ISIL and the Kurds angry.  (Akyol, 2016).

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94 These terrorist attacks have been happening in Turkey because in September 2014 Turkey joined the coalition against ISIL and began direct intervention against this group in August 2016 under the code name „Operation Euphrates Shield”. Turkish army and allied Syrian rebel groups executed this operation in northern Syria, with the aim to prevent Kurds from winning over more territory and to drive out ISIL away from the Turkish border. At the same time the Turkish government accused USA for “not providing sufficient support” to its brave campaign. It must be kept in mind that the government of Racep Tayyip Erdogan was the main supporter of ISIL. Turkey had created this monster by its own hands, by supporting Jihadists against the regime of the Syrian president Bashar al-Assad”.

95 That is why Ankara tried to avoid conflict with the Islamic state as much as possible, directing all its efforts towards overthrowing the Assad's regime and minimize the Kurdish territorial conquests. In June 2014,a Jihadist groups made the first move against Turkey by invading the Turkish consulate in Mosul in Iraq and killed 36 Turks who were released three months after the agreement with Ankara. In February 2015, after ID had threatened to destroy the grave of the grandfather of the founder of the Ottoman Empire, Ankara quietly sent troops to Syria to move it.

96 From the perspective of the pro-PKK Kurds, Erdogan gave jihadists advantage over them. Turkish and Syrian Kurds were particularly angry because Erdogan failed to respond to the siege of the Syrian Kurdish city of Kobani in 2015. This was the main factor in the fall of Erdogan's “peace process” with the PKK in July 2015. Judging by ISIL communication in Turkish language, the politics did not assuage the hostility of jihadists toward Ankara. Jihadists saw Erdogan as “the great devil”, and PKK “atheist gang fed up with Erdogan”.
However, due to political conflicts, the Turkish government labeled Gülen’s movement “Gulenist Terror Organization” – FETO or “Parallel State Organization” – PDY. After the attempted coup tens of thousands of supporters of this movement were arrested.

In general, there is no unified stand on the real influence of Gulenists in Serbia and Montenegro. For example, Reis of the Islamic Community Rifat Fejzic, who is seen by the Islamic community as being associated with Gulenists, along with his closest associate Ernad Ramović, president of the Islamic Community in Rožaje, said that the Gülen’s group, which is blamed by the Turkish government for the coup, does not have any significant influence in Montenegro, and that their representatives cannot influence relations between Montenegro and Turkey. Their influence is stronger in other countries of the Western Balkans (Prelević, 2016).

In Serbia, Gulenists were active in conflicts regarding the Islamic community in Serbia since 2007, but at that time they had the same task as the Grand Mufti Mehmed Gormez in providing support to Zilkić. This movement in Serbia operates through non-governmental organizations “Open hand” which is involved in humanitarian work, “Bridge”, which raises scholarships for students, “Lighthouse”, which is involved in the same projects as the Gülen’s movement, Initiative for Reconciliation in the Islamic Community (Filipović, 2016; Zirčanin, 2016). However, the main source of influence of Ankara in Sandžak is the Turkish Cultural Center which, as part of the Turkish Embassy in Serbia, operates within the Cultural center in Novi Pazar with a task to promote Turkish cultural heritage.

4.2. “Friends of Sandžak”

At the initiative of the American ambassador in Belgrade Kameron Munter, an informal group called “Friends of Sandžak” was formed in January 2009, which meets occasionally and discusses issues related to the southwest Serbia. Apart from the US and Turkey, members include France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Portugal, Czech Republic, Spain, Austria, EU, UN, and OSCE (Biserko, 2010: 20, 21).
The main goal of this group is to provide economic support to Sandžak and their activities, according to representatives of the Friends of Sandžak, are to a large extent coordinate with the Serbian government and representatives of units of local self-governments.

Thanks to the “Friends of Sandžak” the international community can have an insight into the situation in the region, detect issues that must be resolved, and coordinates assistance to enable citizens of Sandžak to realize their aspirations.

A number of projects have been realized with the help of this group, from renovation and adaptation of elementary schools, accommodation of the internally displaced persons, to the protection of human rights of LGBT people. 100

Former head of the EU delegation to Serbia Vincent Degert stated in 2013 that the EU will remain dedicated to Sandžak region, in which the Brussels invested 14,6 million EUR since 2004, mostly in local infrastructure.

In the opinion of Head of OSCE Mission to Serbia Peter Burkhard, Sandžak is a "very important, but neglected region in Serbia, which could take advantage of its multicultural character. Geographically speaking, Sandžak is located on the periphery, away from main roads. Novi Pazar has a lot less representative state institutions compared to other cities of similar size. For that reason, OSCE opened an office in this city and we want to use our presence to draw attention to this region, said Ambassador of the OSCE, adding that the organization is trying to implement projects related to the reform of the police system, the rule of law, media and the community.”

Burkhard stated that one of the priorities of the OSCE operations is the project for the establishment and improvement of local security councils in municipalities in this part of Serbia, because “the safety of citizens does not depend only on police, because police is only one of the elements that affect it” (Novosel, 2015: III).

Montenegro ratified the Convention on Trans-frontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities with two Protocols by which completely accepted the standards of the Council of Europe in the field of cross-border cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, which are neighboring and non-neighboring and geographically close. (International Treaties, 2010, Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro, Podgorica, No. 9 of 30 July)

100 This is about renovation and adaptation of elementary schools. Germany donated 28,000 EUR, Czech Republic 15,000 EUR, and UNDP 70,000 USD.
Montenegro has begun the process of cross-border cooperation in the framework of the IPA (The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance) (Lazarević, Knežević, Božić, 2011: 124, 125,126, 159) and the value of the program for Serbia for the years 2009, 2010 and 2011 was 1,490,000 EUR.101 European PROGRES (Programs of cross-border cooperation and training) is the largest development program in the Republic of Serbia which is focused on a specific area, and aims to support sustainable development of 34 local self-governments in southeast and southwest (See: Appendix 4).102 In 2014, Serbia was accredited for the so-called decentralized system of use of EU funds, and this was applied for the first time on a part of the IPA projects for 2013, which are still being implemented. Funds for the implementation of cross-border cooperation are provided by the EU. By the end of 2016, there were only two work contracts and the supervision of works in Novi Pazar (See Appendix 6: Projects Progress in Novi Pazar). The total value of the "grant schemes" amounts to 3.15 million EUR allocated to 34 municipalities in the south and western Serbia. However, at the end of 2016 there was no information on how much money will go to the municipalities of Sandžak (Novi Pazar, Prijepolje, Tutin, Priboj, Nova Varoš) since the evaluation process is still underway. But it is known that the maximum value of the grant for each municipality is EUR 300,000 and since it comes down to about five municipalities in total, it is possible that they get the maximum of EUR 1.5 million. (See: Appendix 7: Programs of cross-border cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina).

101In the second generation of this program for the period 2014-2020 the following cross-border cooperation between the following municipalities in Serbia is envisaged: Nova Varoš, Priboj, Prijepolje, Sjenica in Zlatibor District; municipalities of Vrnjačka Banja, Kraljevo, Novi Pazar, Raška, Tutin in Raška District; and municipality o Ivanjica in Morava District; In Montenegro, the following municipalities: Andrijevica, Berane, Bijelo Polje, Gusinje, Kolašin, Mojkovac, Nikšić, Petnica, Plav, Pljevlja, Plužine, Rožaje, Šavnik i Žabljak. Financial assets allocated for the period 2014-2020 are 8.4 million EUR. The program is therefore focused on stimulating employment and social inclusion, development of tourist potentials and environmental protection (www.cbcsrb-mne.org). Cross-border cooperation program within IPA Serbia – Montenegro was adopted on 10 December 2014 (www.cbcsrb-mne.org). As a form of cooperation, Sandžak was left out again.

102 PROGRES is focused on achieving four results: 1) Strengthening local self-government; 2) Improving local economy; 3) Social inclusion; 4) Raising awareness of the importance of European integration. Funds for the implementation of the Program are provided by two major donors - the EU and the Government of Switzerland - together with the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Beneficiaries are given financial, technical and advisory support. The program is implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and Department for Contracting and Financing of European Union Funded Program (CFCU) within the Ministry of Finances of the Republic of Serbia. The amounts directed toward observed municipalities are given in the table:
IV) IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS

1. The status of Sandžak

Due to its political consequences, the issue of administrative – territorial organization of Sandžak is the issue of the “status” of Sandžak.

If the issue of the status of Sandžak is linked with the issue of the status of Bosniaks i.e. with the request to define the status of Bosniaks in Serbia and Montenegro as “constitutive peoples”, as it is now in today’s post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina or as it was in former Yugoslavia since the 1970s, that points to the ethno-national charge in this issue and its political, security, and social significance, and even risk.

The revival of the issue of the status of Sandžak is linked to period of revival of ethnic nationalism in the former Yugoslavia and to the decision of the BNMC Sandžak to organize a referendum on political autonomy of Sandžak, which took place on 25 – 27 October 1991, when the “people of Sandžak” (who were actually Bosniaks) voted on the autonomy with a possibility uniting with one of the republics (it was not explicitly stated which of the republics) (IFIMES, 2005). According to organizers, referendum was successful, although no convincing data were provided to support that claim.

Since the referendum for the autonomy of Sandžak was held in time of disintegration of Yugoslavia, on 6 June 1993 BNMC Sadnžak adopted and published, following the example of the National

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103 In the electoral rolls for the referendum on the autonomy of Sandžak, in October 1991, there was a total of 264,156 adult citizens enrolled who had the right to vote. Of the total registered voters 185,437 voted (70.19%); Full political and territorial autonomy of Sandžak with the right to unite with one of the sovereign Republics, was supported by 183,302 voters, or 98.85% of those who voted, representing 69.39% of the total electorate; "Against" full political and territorial autonomy of Sandžak with the right to unite with one of the sovereign Republics, were 1,982 voters, or 1.07%; there were 153 invalid ballots or 0.08% of the number of voters (Krcić, 2015: 25).

104 On 11 May 1991 Muslim National Council of Sandžak was formed (MNMC Sandžak), which was in 1993 renamed to BNMC Sandžak. At that time Bosniaks from Montenegro were in the MNMC Sandžak.
Council of Hungarians of Vojvodina, *Memorandum o the special status of Sandžak* 105 which confirmed the request for the autonomy status within the then SR Yugoslavia (SRY). When the Memorandum was published, the authorities of Serbia and Montenegro i.e. SRY reacted by initiating court procedures, accusing SDA leaders of “secessionism and jeopardizing the sovereignty of Serbia and Montenegro“ (*IFIMES, 2005; Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005: 10,11*). 106

Apart from referendum, successful advocacy of the Sandžak – Euro region requires the following two documents: *Memorandum on the Special Status of Sandžak* (Novi Pazar, July 1993) and *Resolution of the Bosniak Council on the return of the national name “Bosniak”* (Sarajevo, end of September 1993) (*Krcić, 2015:2*).

On 19 July 1999, BNMC Sandžak adopted a Declaration of the Bosniak National Council on Right of Bosniaks to Political and National Equality (Declaration) and Memorandum on the Autonomy of Sandžak and special Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina (Memorandum), which were supported by all Bosniak political parties (*Filjuljanin, 2010: 62, 63,64; IFIMES, 2005; Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005:11*). The Declaration calls for the establishment and development of national, cultural, religious, educational, scientific, economic, financial, political and other institutions as a prerequisite for preserving national identity of Bosniaks in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which should be arranged as a federal state with a bi-cameral parliament, that is, Lower House (the one of Citizens) and Upper House (the one of States), with Sandžak arranged as a modern political, territorial unit with a high-degree of autonomy. The Declaration also calls for creating parallel relations between the Bosniaks from Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, modelled on special parallel relations between the Serbs from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At the same time, the Memorandum elaborates autonomy of Sandžak, which should have its own constitution, judicial, legislative and executive powers, special relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with its jurisdiction and the Constitution of the FRY. Bosniaks, Montenegrins and Serbs were constituent peoples in Sandžak and, as such, would be eligible for

105 This is about a special status which contains the elements of statehood, and a document which has not been revoked, as of yet.

106 The beginning of the political – judicial process against a group of 25 Muslims from Novi Pazar, Sjenica and Tutin, charged with the attempt to infringe the territorial integrity of SRY and establishment of the Republic of Sandžak, was on 31 January 1994. In January, February, and March Bosniaks – Muslims were arrested in Bjelo Polje, Rožaje and Pljevlja under the same charge. At that time, mass police actions were carried out in which “fire arms was collected from Bosniaks”, accompanied by harassment by security services. Many Bosniaks remember that period as a period of repression in Sandžak and mass emigration (it is estimated that about 70,000 people immigrated to EU countries – Germany and Scandinavia).

Faced with charges for secessionism, the president of BNMC Sulejman Ugljanin fled to Turkey, from which he returned to Serbia right before elections on 3 November 1996, in which he ran as the candidate of SDA in coalition with other Bosniak parties and won. The Coalition won but shortly after that, on 10 July 1997, Milosevic introduced compulsory administration over the municipality, under the excuse that local authorities, headed by Ugljanin “caused national and religious hatred” by placing a flag of the SDA at the municipal building, between the flags of Serbia and Yugoslavia. Statement of the Government of Serbia also noted: “SDA has organized its authority in a shameful way, bringing their own people on all leading positions, caused unrest among Serbian population, and refused to cooperate with the Republic authorities”. 
election to the Lower House (the one of Citizens) in the Parliament of Federal Republic Yugoslavia. Sandžak should have a Parliament, President, Government, Supreme Court and courts. The Memorandum in parallel specifies the powers of the FRY.\(^{107}\)

Since the 2000 elections, the political advocacy of the “special status” for Sandžak has become a relevant political issue.

Sandžak political parties (SDP, Party for Sandžak, which had split from the SDA, Bosniak Democratic Alternative, Liberal Bosniak Organization of Sandžak, LBO Sandžak, and Bosniak – Muslim organization), associations and NGOs (Sandžak intellectual circle, Sandžak committee for the protection of human rights and freedoms, Association “DamaD”, Association of economists of Sandžak, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Sandžak, Center for multiethnic dialogue) have gathered on a joint meeting on 3 September 2003 in Novi Pazar and adopted a new Declaration which, among other things, states that it is necessary to resolve the status of the Bosniak community in Serbia and Montenegro, and that it is necessary to enable “efficient participation of Bosniak representatives in the political, cultural and public life at all levels” (IFIMES, 2005).

This issue was further heated in an atmosphere that followed the referendum on the independence of Montenegro, because that referendum had marked the end of SR Yugoslavia or “a single wider framework in which all Sandžak municipalities were together”. In such circumstances, in 2005, SDA and Sulejman Ugljanin called for “historical Sandžak”, presenting themselves as representatives of all Bosniaks in 11 municipalities, both in Serbia and Montenegro.\(^{108}\)

Ugljanin claimed that “creation of two independent states (Serbia and Montenegro) will reflect badly on Bosniaks”, adding that the solution lies in “Europe without borders” (Bajrović, 2005).

Ljajić, who was at the time the Minister of Serbia and Montenegro for human rights and national minorities, and leader of SDP, pointed out that Bosniaks in Serbia and Bosniaks in Montenegro have completely different attitudes\(^{109}\), but remains unclear and suggesting cross-border cooperation between Sandžak municipalities as a form of autonomy.\(^{110}\)

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\(^{107}\)Sixth regular session of the Bosniak National Council of Sandžak; Platform on Resolving the Status of Sandžak and Bosniaks in FRY; published by: The Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak, Novi Pazar, September 1999

\(^{108}\)However, in reality, SDA has a decisive influence only in three municipalities - Novi Pazar, Sjenica and Tutin. In Montenegro it has almost no influence at all. This idea is unrealistic as it neglects the sovereignty and statehood of Serbia and Montenegro, as well as the actual multi-ethnicity of Sandžak. Also, even the most influential political factors in Serbia and Montenegro are not ready to accept this idea. (ICG, 2005: 26).

\(^{109}\)Bosniaks in Serbia promote the preservation of the joint country, but 90% of Bosniaks in Montenegro is in favor of Montenegro independence. “Reasons for that are complex, and one of them is that Bosniaks in Montenegro consider Podgorica as their capital, and not Novi Pazar; another reason is that they see Montenegro as politically more tolerant environment compared to Serbia. (Bajrović, 2005)

\(^{110}\)Ever since it formed SDP in 1997, Ljajić left the idea of “historical Sandžak, which he had promoted beforehand. His focus is to ensure participation in Serbian government, and thus to exert influence on Sandžak. For these purposes, Ljajić had occasionally
In contrast to advocating “historical Sandžak” or “cross-border region” both of them, along with their followers were mostly concerned with and dedicated to exercising their own authority in the three municipalities in Serbia (Novi Pazar, Sjenica and Tutin) which they refer to as “Our area” (ICG, 2005: 27).

BNMC “as the highest representative body of Bosniaks in the Republic of Serbia” published on 29 January 2016 a Declaration on Bosniak unity, in which, as one of the goals, it stipulates “the establishment of autonomy of Sandžak, within the reform of the political system of the Republic of Serbia, as a mechanism for political existence of Bosniaks”.

As part of the election campaign for the parliamentary and local elections in April 2016, BNMC, headed by Ugljanin, issued a Notice, asking the UN Security Council to “ensure, without delay, the presence of international forces for the prevention of conflicts, and take all preventive measures to protect Bosniak peoples in northern Sandžak which is under the jurisdiction of Serbia“; it is requested that Bosniaks are given (returned) the status of “nation”; establishment of the autonomy of Sandžak in line with the decision of the 1991 referendum; guaranteed mandates in representatives bodies of the state; the right to veto to the national minority councils on all legal acts which regulate minority rights; OSCE, Council of Europe and the EU are requested to establish a special mission in this part of Serbia for the protection of Bosniaks whose position is marked as “unsustainable”, and Bosniaks as “nation under threat”, due to discriminatory and hostile relations of the highest bodies of the Republic of Serbia (Bakračević, 2016:15).

In its electoral program "For reconciliation" BDZ Sandžak points out: "The status of Sandžak should be realized through constitutional and legal framework of Serbia and Montenegro, and according to the model of the existing cross-border regions. The establishment of European cross-border region of Sandžak will enable the preservation of existing cultural, traditional, religious, ethnic, kinship and other ties and closer integration of cities and municipalities of the northern and southern Sandžak, and enable faster flow of people and goods, which will increase the overall economic and social potentials of this border region (Zukorlić, 2016: 14).

A significant step towards the elaboration of the idea of Sandžak as "the European region," was taken by Ejup Ganić for whom the idea of a "European region" is "the way to preserve the historical, territorial and cultural identity of Sandžak in accordance with a European model, and to ensure its revitalization in the full sense of the word. According to Ganić, in order to realize this idea it should be proceeded as follows: "Following democratic commitments and European principles, cities and
municipalities of Sandžak, as a function of the League of Cities and Municipalities of Sandžak, should form their Assembly called - A Union of the European region of Sandžak.

Initially, representatives or members of the first convocation of the assembly from individual municipalities shall be appointed on the basis of the results of the last elections for the Bosniak National Council and municipal bodies. Assembly of the region, through its Executive Committee as an executive body, will encourage a more intensive and comprehensive work between local authorities (municipalities) and central government bodies (Government of Serbia and Montenegro). At the same time, it will cooperate with similar regions in the immediate and wider surrounding. The authority of this self-government would be the Executive Committee of the Assembly which would form the Secretariats for more efficient coordination of the program.111

According to Ganić, by establishing a cross-border region of Sandžak, Serbia and Montenegro will ensure a faster social and economic development of the region, and a faster accession to EU: “Both countries, especially Serbia, are improving and accelerating the process of economic and democratic development. The concept of Sandžak as a European region is without prejudice to the constitutional powers of local government and central government authorities.

In this process, all legislation modalities and experience of European regions are absorbed, in order to improve the overall progress. The fact that Serbia is not able to initiate significant investment and development cycles in regions such as Sandžak, due to the heritage of the Greater Serbian ideology and due to current internal and foreign debt, it is requested that the overall progress is divided on several regions to the greatest extent possible, which is a concept confirmed by the EU practice.

The citizens of Sandžak will have a greater sense of security and belonging, and the right to actively contribute to a better future of their country – Serbia and Montenegro. Cross-border region of Sandžak

111 At the very establishment of the Assembly, it would be necessary to establish a secretariat for international cooperation – for Sandžak diaspora, entrepreneurship, and secretariat for education and culture. Secretariat for inter-regional cooperation should open representative offices in the Brussels, Istanbul and Washington, and consulates in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey, USA, as well as a representative office of the EU in Novi Pazar.

“Cooperation of the Executive Committee of the Assembly of Sandžak region with the governments of Serbia and Montenegro, as well as local authorities, aims to produce a faster accession of Serbia and Montenegro to the European Union and the opening of new markets, and to initiate development projects in Sandžak and the surrounding areas. Establishment of institutions and enterprises (Archive of Sandžak, National Theater in Novi Pazar, Forest and Water Utility Company of Sandžak, Sandžak Development Bank, etc.) should contribute to more efficient overall development of the region for the benefit of all its citizens”.

Through its secretariats, the executive board prepares draft laws and amendments with the aim to improve the existing laws and regulations which govern jurisdictions of units of local self-government (towns and municipalities) and entail a new concept of regions.

Also, it prepares proposals related to the distribution of public revenues, in the part related to the financing of units of local self-governments of the regions, ensures funds for the cooperation with similar organizations at home and abroad, and covers the fees for membership in international associations.

Without the consent of the Assembly of Sandžak (without the consent of 12 municipalities of the region) it is not possible to impose territorial reconfiguration (new districts, new municipalities etc.), which invades the historical and territorial integrity of the region and jeopardizes its cultural heritage. All such activities are illegal” (Ganić, 2015).
is a type of a “buffer zone” between Serbia and Montenegro, which certainly assuages the surge of radical currents from Serbia on the stability of Montenegro” (Ganić, 2015; Krcić, 2015: 50)

The idea of Sandžak region is not new, and its interpretation depends on the interests and positions of political and social factors – institutions, political parties, citizens associations or individuals who advocate that idea. In that sense, it would be good to understand the more recent interpretations, such as “European region”, “mini European region” and alike.

This idea, as seen by its proponents, especially Bosniaks, can be interpreted in several ways: from “historical Sandžak”, through “community of municipalities”, cultural autonomy, “special status”, “autonomy at all levels”, “Autonomy of Sandžak” outside Serbia and Montenegro and “linking with Bosnia and Herzegovina”, to “independent single administrative region” or “cross-border region”, and “mini European region”.

Authorities, political parties, and public in Serbia viewed the discussions on the status of Sandžak from different angles: from seeing these initiatives as a form of separatism and secessionism, labeling them as “creation of Mujahideen state”, “green transversal”, to advocating the idea of a region with specific features that should be given some type of cultural autonomy. However, there was no visible effort to resolve this issue.

The discussion on the status of Sandžak is obliviously necessary. The starting point should be that which is widely accepted, which is that Sandžak is a historical region with ethnic, cultural, religious, geographic, economic and other distinctiveness. Sandžak is a “self-recognized” entity which could be the basis for establishing cooperation, including cross-border cooperation. Through cooperation, Bosniaks, Serbs, Montenegrins and other citizens of that area would bring a new level, aside from the existing local and republic level, of realization of their interests, confirmation of their identity and belonging, increased feeling of security and safety, and marginalization of possible risks of inter-state and ethnic conflicts. That would create more favorable conditions for better and sustainable economic and social development. Decentralization is crucial for the resolution of the issue of Sandžak. Only within a future regionalization of the Republic of Serbia, if performed in line with rational needs, can the identity and distinctive features of Sandžak be preserved. (Biserko, 2010: 23)

In Serbia, although there is a need for decentralization and decentralized development which may include regionalism, there has not been any clearly defined politics so far. In 2009, Serbia passed the Regional Development Law, whereby it is supposed to be divided into seven statistical regions. By this law the municipalities of Sandžak, since to the then administrative and territorial division were located in two districts (Raška and Zlatibor), and are now classified into two “statistical” regions (Southwest of Serbia and Central Serbia and Šumadija). The Parliamentary Parties of Sandžak
(“Bosniak List for the European Sandžak” and SDP), declared against this and required that these municipalities belong to one “statistical” region (Filjuljanin, 2010: 55). So far there has been no response to this request. The issue remained on “statistical regionalization”, which was a step to the right direction, and although inconsistently carried out, showed to be the “request of the time”; but also that “centralization, which was inaugurated by Milosevic, crashed long ago and blocked the process of completing the territorial and political organization of the state “(Biserko, 2010: 22).

In Montenegro, the belief of majority is that there are no grounds for regionalization and the question of “Sandžak” is subsumed under the general heading of the “North” whose territory is beyond the historical territory of the Montenegrin part of Sandžak. Although the issue of Sandžak has not been recognized, the existence of Bosniaks and their rights are identified. In addition, this area is not presented as an exclusively Bosniak area but there is a persistent call for a multi-ethnic region. This situation greatly frustrates the advocates of restoration of Sandžak.

Sandžak as a region in Montenegro is primarily an initiative of Bosniak political parties dealing with this matter in the context of their politics related to ethnic and territorial identity. Sandžak is present in the politics of all-over Montenegrin civil parties too only if and to the extent where certain issues of the territory of Montenegrin Sandžak or Montenegrin Sandžak itself come out as an inevitable question of their politics.

BDZ (Bosniak Democratic Community) from Rozaje advocates for the autonomy of Sandžak which define Sandžak as a “region with historical, geographical, ethnic, economic, transport and other peculiarities, which is as a potential that needs to be comprehensively valorized, and can be best achieved by applying the experience of European regionalism, and to that end BDZ stands for cross-border European region of Sandžak, respecting the integrity and sovereignty of the country.

112 Ministry of Economy and Regional Development proposed the amendment of the Law on regional development, so that instead of seven Serbia should have five regions. By changes of the law, east and south of Serbia should be brought together into a single region, and Zlatibor District should be taken from Šumadija region and Western Serbia and allocated to the current Raška District in the region Southwest Serbia so that all municipalities of Sandžak belong to one sub-region. Šumadija, along with the rest of the current “Western Serbia” when Sandžak municipalities are taken away from it, would make the region “Central Serbia and Šumadija”.

113 The term “North” is not consistently explained. It is used in discussions about economic development as a mark of underdeveloped area, and as climatic and geographical category. In the last ten years, the concepts of north - south are mainly used “in political discussions on development and economic inequality” (Despotović, 2010: 83-110).

114 Montenegrin newspapers published news about the “North” in the column “Regions” and the Belgrade newspaper “Danas” (“the gazette of civic orientation”) has a weekly supplement Sandžak today where pieces of information are published “from the Montenegrin municipalities along the border with Serbia!”

115 According to its program of “decentralization of power in accordance with European standards in the field of local self-government and regionalization of Montenegro by the geographical, historical and economic criteria, is the requirement of stable economic and general social development as well as the way to eliminate and overcome the consequences of the destructive politics that has been implemented throughout history towards some areas and peoples, especially against Bosniaks and the Sandžak region.”

116 The party based its view on the fact that “cultural identity is the backbone of national identity” and “Bosniak Cultural Community in Montenegro, shall subordinate a significant portion of its resources to the preservation of the cultural heritage of Bosniaks. To this end, it is necessary to form the Bosnian Cultural Center, the Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments of Sandžak, Institute of
Bosniak Party (BS)\textsuperscript{117}, in 2006, encouraged political debate on the subject of Sandžak (http://www.bscg.me).\textsuperscript{118} BS has given clear support to Montenegrin independence and its support was conditioned by signing an agreement on the creation of Sandžak as a cross-border region. Although the agreement regarding the question of Sandžak was put aside it does not mean that it is not discussed since there are evidence and different interpretations on the method of implementation of this agreement.\textsuperscript{119}

The most influential Montenegrin civil parties DPS and SDP view the question of Sandžak through the perspective of economic development “of the north of Montenegro”, which includes the part of Sandžak. Both parties exerted power for years in all municipalities of the North and BS came to power for the first time in recent elections in Rožaje and the new municipality of Petnjica.

SDP is “convinced that the regional development is the necessary precondition of balanced economic development, and only in this case may have the character of sustainable development, whereto we otherwise as a society should strive for ... Contrary to the economic logic is that the least developed areas in Montenegro are just the ones that have the most resources and comparative advantages. Therefore, the SDP shall put a special emphasis on recognition, encouragement and management of so far underused developing potentials in the North, and other less developed parts of Montenegro “(Programska deklaracija, 2015).

Ethnology and a number of other institutions and associations in the long run resulted in adequate treatment of the Bosniak cultural heritage to the public civilization scene."

The Party considers "Islam as the foundation of identity and Islamic community headquarters preserving traditional values of Bosniaks. Bosniak Democratic Union in Montenegro believes that the unique Islamic community has an essential importance for the survival and affirmative future of all Bosniaks in the world. In this regard, the Islamic Community in Montenegro in the future, is seen as part of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, based in Sarajevo, and the full implementation of the constitutional principle of separation of religious organizations from the state, and it is considered as a civilization step forward in freeing the Islamic community from the constraints of political and state structures."

\textsuperscript{117} It is about "uniting of several parties of Bosniak orientation: The International Democratic Union, Bosniak Democratic alternative, the Party of national equality and Bosniak Muslim Alliance. The party is committed to "resolving of Sandžak as a cross-border region".\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{118} The Statute of Bosniak party under the heading "The Sandžak Issue" it is said that "Bosniak Party is committed to the affirmation of the Sandžak as a cross-border region, with a free flow of people, goods and capital, while respecting the territorial integrity and internationally recognized borders of the state of Montenegro. The current border must be made more transparent, should provide more intensive local border traffic and increase the number of border crossings. Bosniak Party will work on strengthening of economic and cultural ties and cooperation between citizens, a number of cultural, sporting and other organizations, businesses and local governments within the region "(www.bscg.me).\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{119} DPS spokesman Rajko Kovačević: "In one of the articles of the agreement the two parties express commitment to the promotion of decentralization of power and the application of the European Charter of Local Self-Government in the part of the highest standards for balanced economic development in northern Montenegro. In this context, we see the development of Sandžak as a multiethnic, multi-religious and multicultural as the cross-border region with a transparent border which would be a bridge of connection not a wall of separation between Serbia and Montenegro. So, putting the provisions of the agreement in any other context and its interpretation out of its domain is neither politically correct nor to my opinion said in good faith.”

Hazbija Kalač, of Bosniak Party: “In item 4 of this agreement clearly is stated the commitment of the Bosniak Party and the PSD to see Sandžak as a multiethnic, multicultural and multi-religious as cross-border region with transparent borders that would be a bridge connecting not a wall of separating of Serbia and Montenegro. Simply, from this point of view I do not see why our coalition agreement was called into question. This whole issue is correlated with our agreement"(www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/crna_gora_dps_bosnjacka_stranka_sporazum_Sandžak).
DPS opposed to the regionalization of Montenegro in order to enter into the cross-border cooperation and the issue of Sandžak is viewed through the prism of cross-border cooperation with Serbia. In its program, for 2007, DPS is committed to the faster regional development of the society.\textsuperscript{120}

Regionalization of Montenegro in a Sandžak model is opposed by some leading Bosniak intellectuals in Montenegro. In doing so, they reject the argument, that Zukorlić highlights, that the formation of cross-border region between Serbia and Montenegro by model of South Tyrol would allow the free movement of people and goods, but would not jeopardize the integrity of Serbia and Montenegro as states, as it is the case with the integrity of Italy and Austria.\textsuperscript{121}

At the time of preparation for the referendum on Montenegro’s independence, in 2006, in Sandžak was formed a “Block for the Unique Sandžak”, which joined the “Block for preservation of Serbia and Montenegro”. The main objective of the operation of this block was to prevent dividing of the territory of Sandžak by national borders.

Aware of the fears that the restoration of independence of Montenegro produced to Bosniaks in Sandžak, Milo Đukanović President of DPS and Rafet Husović President BS signed the “\textit{Cooperation Agreement between the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) and the Bosniak Party (BP) on the Cross-Border Region of Sandžak}” (See: Appendix 11: Cooperation Agreement). This agreement ensures political representation of Bosniaks in the Republic and Local Assemblies; representation in all institutions of Montenegro; decentralization is guaranteed in Sandžak and it is, in accordance with European Charter on Local self-government set as a cross-border region; participation in working bodies for making new Constitution of Montenegro and the Law on minority rights and the election of deputies; the right to use the Bosnian language is guaranteed and a program in the public service - RTCG.

Having performed a successful referendum the signatories of the agreement tried to downplay its importance for the decision to Bosniaks to support the independence of Montenegro and to delay its

\textsuperscript{120} This is illustrated by the following paragraph: “The rapid economic development of the northern part of Montenegro is the condition of stable and dynamic development of Montenegrin society in its entirety. If the southern part of the country is our current priority, the northern part is the future opportunity, not less generous in terms of resources and not less demanding in terms of wise management needs. Examples of some cities in the north of Montenegro show that as much as their inhabitants showed wisdom and responsibility to arrange the life of the community through local government offices, was the state able to help them along the way. The state is obliged to build modern roads in the northern part, to strengthen the politics of purchase of agricultural products and to promote agricultural production. The obligation of the state is to intensify the development of winter tourism” (www.dps.me/images/stories/DPS_-_V_Kongres).

\textsuperscript{121} Šerbo Rastoder, the leading Bosniak intellectual in Montenegro, which opposes the autonomy of Sandžak commented that here the matter is not about Austria and Italy but about “two countries in transition, still with dubious democratic capacities and countries that have not yet learned that certain initiatives and questions are to be resolved through a dialogue and in a democratic manner. This fact makes the initiative more complex in a way. The democratization of Serbia and Montenegro and their European perspective makes this question in itself actual and easier to solve than it looks today” (www.slobodnaevropa.org).
implementation. Namely, Husović claimed that the agreement was signed (Husović, 2013: 12) whereas Dukonović denied that the agreement was signed (Dukonović, 2013: 12).

Numerous Bosniak representatives responded to it pointing out to the fact that the agreement was a condition for BS support to DPS in a referendum vote for a sovereign Montenegro, according to Hazbija Kolač, president of municipal organizations of BS Rožaje and one of the participants in the preparation of Agreement. According to him, it was “a thoughtful, coordinated and very smart political decision of the then team led by Rafet Husović”, which, in 2013, was denied by Husović. That was why he invited the Montenegrin authorities to comply with the Agreement because it “affirms the statehood of Montenegro” (Kalač, 2013: 12-13). Basically the same view is held by Mufti Zukorlić and a Member of Parliament of Montenegro Kemal Purišić (Zukorlić, 2013: 12; Purišić, 2013: 13).

In Kosovo, there are no notable advocating efforts of the association between Kosovo and Sandžak, even in the case of the municipality of Zubin Potok, namely the border area between the municipalities of Zubin Potok, on the one hand, and Novi Pazar and Tutin, on the other hand, the region of Gazivoda lake. Parts of the territory belonged to the former Sandžak region.

In the opinion of most people interviewed in Kosovo, the idea of autonomy of Sandžak as a cross-border region is legitimate. In respect of the demands for autonomy and regionalization of Sandžak, if it does not go at the expense of the territorial integrity of Serbia and Montenegro, that is to say if the intention is not to separated Sandžak from Serbia and Montenegro and join its territory to Bosnia and Herzegovina, or to make it become an independent state, but the intention is to improve the lives of Bosniaks and all citizens of Sandžak, then the solution is in favor of all the people. This would be a European region, which would also constitute a transversal of Bosniaks from Kosovo, Bosniaks from Sandžak and Bosniaks from Bosnia and Herzegovina, say interlocutors.

According to Sahit Kandic,122 from Peć, one of the co-founders of the international movement for the autonomy of Sandžak (www.vijesti.me/vijesti/osniva-se-pokret-za-autonomiju-Sandžaka), founded in 2011, such an autonomous region of Sandžak would include only parts Sandžak in Serbia and Montenegro, given that the Serbian and Montenegrin parts of Sandžak are considered the most sensitive, the most important, and the most vulnerable.

Sandžak managed to avoid open political and armed ethnic conflicts in the nineties of the last century, which took place in their neighborhood (in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo) (Wood, 2005). But the wars, the crimes, the rise of ethnic nationalism, across the territory of former Yugoslavia, in the

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122 An In-depth interview with Sahit Kandić, president of the Bosniak Cultural Community in Kosovo, held on 19 December 2015 in Peć.
immediate vicinity - in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, have caused deeper ethnic discrepancy and mistrust between Serbs and Bosniaks, and diminished mutual respect and tolerance.

Lack of a democratic public debate on Sandžak region is an evidence of absence of a mutual trust. The absence of discussion by itself, together with treating of Sandžak as an exclusive issue of Bosniak National Program, is certainly an obstacle to accept the real situation. In reality, it is a distinctive multiethnic, multi-confessional identity of the area. What direction shall the public to go depends on the decisive impact that politics in the countries of the Western Balkans may have. If Sandžak is going to be constituted as a (cross-border) region of cooperation and a support to create a distinctive identity, the politics of ethnic and territorial engineering are undesirable. In addition, the negative fact is that these countries as well as Sandžak are on the demarcation line between the current NATO and non-NATO sphere of influence in the Western Balkans. A new global distribution of power is taking place, through the wars in the Middle East and the “war against terrorism” and against the so-called Islamic State, is increasing the need for dealing with the issue of Sandžak.

2. **Interethnic relations and the position of Bosniaks**

The transition of societies of the former Yugoslavia, and Serbia and Montenegro too, as previously indicated, has been taking place under the sign of the revival of ethnic nationalism, which is one of the basic factors of mobilization of people for the establishment of the new system of government, new values and relationships among people and among national communities. This certainly applies to the position of Bosniaks as well as to the relationship of Bosniaks with other ethnic communities.

A particular challenge in determining the position of Bosniaks is the definition of categories and status of the “new national minority”, i.e. those members of the national communities in SFR Yugoslavia that had the status of “constituent people”.

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123 These policies encourage ethnic distrust leading to outstanding political and local armed conflicts for “ruling the territory”. So it was through the history, whenever there was a lack a broader framework that could support the personality and territorial identity of Sandžak, and it might happen even now in the world of present weak, incomplete, and small states such as Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

124 At the same time, Serbia is probably the most complex but also one of the most important NATO partners in the Balkans and Bosnia and Herzegovina's way to NATO is extremely complicated due to the unclear position of Serbia to NATO (Lukač-Zoranić, 2014: 1.2, 4). In fact, this area is not on the agenda for joining NATO but it is a dialogue between Serbia and NATO about the normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo as well as the stabilization of peace and of the institutional functioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
For the purpose of this policy paper, the concept of “new national minorities” shall mean the result of the dissolution of the multinational federations, the status of which has been regulated differently in different states - former members of SFR of Yugoslavia. One of the “new minorities” is that of Bosniaks which had a constitutionally guaranteed status of “constituent peoples” but by dissolution of former Yugoslavia have lost it everywhere except in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In respect to Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to “Dayton Agreement and the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (24 February 1993), it is defined as “a sovereign and independent state of equal citizens, peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Muslims, Serbs and Croats and members of other peoples living in it (Article 1). In legal terms, Bosniaks and Serbs enjoy constitutionality in both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with Bosniaks making a majority in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and most of them in the Republic of Serbian are de facto a national minority while Serbs in the Republic of Serbian are a majority, and they are de facto national minority in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In such circumstances, the position of national minorities is extremely difficult.

In Serbia and Montenegro or FRY, until “the Žabljak” Constitution of the 1992, the “Muslims” (then still not the Bosniaks) were one of the constituent peoples. A “Transition of Bosniaks from “constituent peoples” to “national minority” was performed first de facto and then in a political – legal sense.125

The political agreement of the federal government of SR Yugoslavia is included in the statements of former Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica and the then federal minister for minorities Ljajić, at that time the most influential Bosniak leader. They promoted in their statement as an official name “Bosniak” and a status of “national minority”. This was a step towards a new politics, the politics of compromise, which was significant for the opening of a new phase in the construction of national identity of Bosniaks.

It is well known that the Bosniaks declared themselves as “Muslims” up to the 1991 census. The decision to rename the name of “Muslim” to “Bosniak” was made at the convocation of all Bosniaks in Sarajevo in 1993. Three years later the term Bosniak was accepted in Novi Pazar, and then in Kosovo, Macedonia, Croatia, Slovenia. Since 2003, the term was also accepted in Serbia (IFIMES, 2005). In accordance with the decision of the Council of Congress of Bosniak Intellectuals of B&H and the decision of B&H Assembly on renaming the national name “Muslim” to “Bosniak”, the

125 However, even a census of the FRY and Serbia, completed in 2002, at which 136,087 persons identified themselves as “Bosniak” and 19,503 as ”Muslim”, showed that the question of the identity of this community is still open.
Bosniaks living in the part of Sandžak in the Republic of Serbia, as of 1996, accepted Bosnia as their “home country” and the name of “Bosniak” (Bašić, 2005: 80, 81).

At the gathering of Bosniak Intellectuals called “Muslims / Bosniaks – What is Your Name? “, In Podgorica, on 22 March 2003, organized by the Forum of Muslims / Bosniaks of Montenegro and of the “Almanach” Association adopted was a Declaration which established that “Muslims from all states - former republics of SFR of Yugoslavia, have decided to restore the traditional folk name – Bosniak” and they believe that the name Bosniak was historically justified and appropriate name for the part of the people who live in Montenegro.” Such repositioning of identity caused opposing reaction with the part of Montenegrin Muslims who were organized around “Matica Muslimanska”, and adhered to the old name not agreeing that their ethnic or political identity should be bind, either directly, or indirectly, to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This repositioning of identity influenced the politics of each of the Islamic communities in the territory of former Yugoslavia. According to the study of the International Crisis Group, the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina explained to the public that opting for the introduction of new name is the reasons for “acceptance and return of the old traditional national name which was accepted by all “ex-Muslims” from the territory of former SFR of Yugoslavia”. In addition, it was specified that “mainstream of people live in Bosnia and Herzegovina (which is a state of Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats).” According to this, for example, Montenegro was a “home state” of Bosniaks / Muslims in Montenegro (Dimitrovova, 2005: 103; Rastoder, 2003).

However, still an influential effect has the interpretation according to which Bosniak national ideology was based on “loyalty to the Bosnian state and attachment to Islam where the cultural identity is shared by both believers and the secular” (International Crisis Group, 2012: 19). This ideology was established by a Bosnian Reis Mustafa Cerić, who, unlike Alija Izetbegović who wanted to Islamize the Muslims around the world, claimed that his ambition was to “nationalize Bosniaks”.126

The degree of attachment to Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the attitude towards Sandžak unity is where the Bosniaks in Serbian and the Bosniaks in Montenegrin part of Sandžak vary. In a certain way the politics of identity in Sandžak are in the function of identity politics of Bosniaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This could be illustrated by the statement of Sandžak Mufti Zukorlić: “I live in one half of Sandžak. There is no doubt that Bosnia is my mother country and that I live in Sandžak no matter where that half of Sandžak is: in Serbia or in Montenegro. Both of them are halves of Sandžak,

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126 With the aim to realize the idea of pan-Muslim movement reis Cerić and Sandžak Mufti Muamer Zukorlić, in the year 2012, created World Bosnian Congress and its founding document states that “Bosnia and Herzegovina belongs to all Bosniaks” and that “Bosniaks are united in order to have all that other peoples in the Balkans have: self-conscious nation and a sovereign state” (www.sbk.eu.com).
and we know if there is no Bosnia there will not be any Sandžak, further implying that if there is no Bosnia there will not be me.”

In the current context, the scope and contours of the national and state politics of Bosniak political actors are substantially determined by dual objectives of Bosniaks’ ethno-national politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as by the national interests of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the extent that the Bosniak politics has an impact on it. In reality, the politics of all actors are not identical but in their relationship, the interests of the State shall always prevail. Even an analogy could be drawn regarding this relation of differences and overlapping interests of Serbia as a state and the interests of the Serbian nation that do not coincide with the ones of Serbia. Conflicts between the representatives of Bosniaks in state bodies of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Sandžak Mufti Zukorlić (www.vijesti.me/svijet/dzudzevic-pozdravio-izetbegovicestav-o-Zukorlicu) convincingly talk about the incongruity of the ethnic and national politics.

Bosniaks in the former Yugoslavia then in Sandžak and Serbia and Montenegro are autochthonous peoples, and their origin has different interpretations ranging from statements that Bosniaks are pre-Slav ethnos of Illyrian origin to the one that mostly Serbs and Croats are of Slavic origin. Increased “ethnic” and “religious awakening” of Bosniaks brought an insisting on self-identifying symbols or attributes such as flags, emblems, designation of national holidays, etc. (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005: 10). By political pulling for symbolic and ritual framing of identity, Bosniaks only joined the other national identities and simply recognized the “classical instruments” of building national identity. This decision confirmed the ethnical concept of the term Sandžak. Interesting enough, “ethnical concept of the term Sandžak” deserves a deeper analysis since it did not encounter opposition from other residents of Sandžak (Serbs, Montenegrins and Romani people).

127 In the extension of this statement Mufti says: I am first and foremost a man, then a Muslim, then Bosniak, then the mufti and all these values are imbued in me and they do not exclude each other. (Mufti Zukorlić to Face TV at Senada Hadžifejzović at: https://www.youtube.com).

128 Writing on Montenegrin Muslims, Dr Ejup Mušović says that “Muslims of Montenegro were formed by the islamization process of Montenegrins and the others by the Turks in the existing population of the present territory of the Republic of Montenegro”, and in terms of Islamization they shared the same fate of other Islamized in the Balkans, and that “among the Muslims of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ) only regional differences can be seen” (Mušović, 1995). The intrinsic quality of this identity is the Islamic culture regardless of the high degree of secularization (ibid).

129 National holidays are: the ”Day of the Bosniak National Flag”, May 11 - the day when in 1991 BNMC of Sandžak was established, declared by the BNMC, 11 May 2004; ”Memorial Day”, 11 July – the Day of Remembrance on all Bosniak victims of genocide, on the occasion of the genocide crime committed in Srebrenica, 11 July 1995, Declared at a session of BNMC on 10 July 2005; the Day of Sandžak, 20 November, declared as remembrance day on the establishment of the Anti-Fascist Council of People’s Liberation of Sandžak (ZAVNOS), declared by the BNMC, 11 May 2004 (www.BNMC.org.rs/obiljezja/blagdani; Fijuljanin, 2010a: 49-51).

130 The situation of Roma in this area could be defined as the position of a "socially and generally marginalized group". Roma live in extremely poor housing conditions, especially in the municipality of Raška, where they live in villages next to the landfill, in the homes of poor materials, often without electricity and water supply (Jugozapadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005: 16).
“Revising of history” is one of the favorite competitive discipline of political and intellectual elites and the post-communist societies, or “societies in transition”, as well as of the counties/societies that emerged after the breakup of Yugoslavia. “Revising of history” includes primarily political and ethno-national motivation for “new interpretation” and writing of “new history”. In so doing, the most often used method is ignoring or declaring of “ideological constructs” as facts and illuminating of “new facts” that have been “neglected” or “misinterpreted”. In the case of Bosniaks, “revising of history” refers to the historical and ethnic origin of Bosniaks and the peculiarity of their religiosity.

The target of the “new interpretation” is the period of socialist Yugoslavia, when the Bosniak community experienced full affirmation or confirmation of its existence and got the determination of its status of “constituent peoples”. This period is generally presented as a period of suppression of religious particularities, as “dictatorial regime”. At the same time, completely darkened is the period 1941 - 1943, when Sandžak belonged to the fascist creation of – NDH (Independent State of Croatia), and in writing the biographies of “historical figures” of this period suppressed or justified by the threat of “the Serbian side” (Chetnik Movement) are the attachment of these personalities to ideas, movement and the creation of fascism and Nazism, which in fact experienced their own downfall as a “non-historic” or “losing side”.

A list of prominent historical figures composed by contemporary leaders of Bosniaks shows that a period of the Second World War left powerful impact on the Bosniak identity. These figures and their operations are used to trace the modern Bosniak and Sandžak identity. These are: Jusuf Mehonjić, one of thousands of warriors called “gurumlije” who fought throughout the Turkish empire from the Black Sea to Ukraine, taking part in “Crimean War“ and Gallipoli battles; Ali-Pasha of Gusinje who ruled this area for over 30 years; Aćif-Efendi Hadžiahmetović in the eyes of many Bosniak is a politician – a founder of Bosniak political party Cemiyet-al-Islami, a military commander and a “defender of Novi Pazar”;

131 During the Balkan wars he fought as an officer in the Turkish units of “ashkers” and during the First World War (1914-1918), with the Sandžak and Albanian “komitadjí” (local level officials) “helping” the Austrian army in the fight against the Serbian and Montenegrin troops. The close cooperation between Kosovo and Sandžak “komitadjí” lasted from 1921 to 1925, when, after the death of Mehonjić and Bajram Curri, there was a schism in “komitadjí” movement and in Sandžak and Kosovo. While Kosovo “komitadjí” movement sought unification of all Albanians in one state, so long as the Sandžak “komitadjí” fought for merging Sandžak to Bosnia. In these conflicts, the Montenegrin King Nikola I Petrović was forced to capitulate, in 1916, and the king of Serbia Petar I Karadorđević withdrew to Corfu, Greece. But as Serbia and Montenegro at the end of the First World War, appeared on the side of the winner, they re-establish control over the territory of Sandžak. Mehonjić, being dissatisfied with the regime of Serbian King Aleksandar Kardorđević, apostatized himself and went to the woods to organize “komitadjí” troops.

132 He served four Turkish sultans; Abdulmejid, Abdul-Aziz, Murat V, as well as Abdul Hamid II and cancel his obedience to Turkish Sultan when, in 1878, big powers assigned district of Plav – Gusinje to Montenegro.

133 Acif-Effendi Hadžiahmetović was born in 1887, in Novi Pazar. He graduated from the Turkish Military Academy in Bitola, the same one where Turkish President Mustafa Kemal Ataturk used to study. Acif-Effendi, as the central figure of the Muslim political and military organization in the region Novi Pazar, was the target of three failed political assassination.

134 This party gathered Bosniaks and Albanians - Muslims from Sandžak, Kosovo and Macedonia. Since it did not want to submit to the dictatorship of King Alexander and Nikola Pašić, Cemiyet was banned in 1924.

135 At the end of 1941 Acif-Effendi organized a defense of Pazar against attacks of Chetniks. On the day when the Kingdom of Yugoslavia capitulated on 17 April 1941, the German army entered Novi Pazar. Residents of Pazar did not hide their satisfaction with the arrival of the Germans, because they hoped that the new government should restore the autonomy of Sandžak and abolish the Serbian - Montenegrin rule. At the consultation, in Kosovska Mitrovica, organized by the German Command, on 19 April 1941, political power and control was handed over to Sandžak Muslims.
Hasan Zvizdić is the founder and commander of the Muslim militia and for most residents of Sandžak a war criminal while for advocates a “freedom fighter”.

In addition to these figures of fascist ideology and politics, is also Vladimir Perić - Walter who became a legend during his lifetime as one of the bravest anti-fascists and National Liberation War intelligence officer, and Rifat Burdžević Tršo, anti-fascists and national hero from the National Liberation War.

Even a cursory review of the list historical personalities and their biographies shows that politicians have a primacy which confirms the enormous importance of politics to build national identity of Bosniaks. It is obvious that in the construction of the identity of Bosniaks in Sandžak a negative model of self-identification has been employed, primarily in relation to the Serbs. Hence shortlisted are the personalities who were involved in armed struggles against the government of the Kingdom of Serbia or Yugoslavia or against Serbian ultra-nationalists (Chetniks). The inclusion of two anti-fascists expresses commitment to overcome the divisions within Sandžak and to build-in the Bosniak identity this elusive combination of a fascist and anti-fascist. However, Bosniak politicians and intellectuals in their efforts to equate fascism and anti-fascism, historical losers and winners, are no exception. They just do what ethno-nationalists from the Serbian, Croatian and other ethnic communities do. In this way they just got connected, at the end of the last century, to the strong trend present in Europe that aims to justify any ideology except the Communist in the name of liberal democracy. This is a kind of unique Balkan interpretation of the “end of ideology” or the “triumph” of Western liberal democracy and the imports of human rights and freedoms from the United States. From this perspective fascists or Nazis and communists are “the same”. However, anti-communism is the dominant and it has been accepted by extreme nationalist options as “democratic”. Thus Ustasha, Chetniks, ballistic and others become “freedom fighters” and their anti-communism is interpreted as a helping hand to the establishment of

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136 Born in 1892 in Sjenica, and died in 1980 in Adapazari, Turkey.
137 Was declared a war criminal and Yugoslavia asked Turkey for his extradition.
138 Born in 1919 in Prijepolje. After schooling in Belgrade, he got employed in Sarajevo.
139 Joined communist movement in 1940. During the Nazi occupation of the he became commander of Majevica detachment. Then, he formed partisan intelligence service in Sarajevo. Almost until the end of the war, until 6 April 1945, he stood at the head of the organization all illegal action in Sarajevo. He was killed in the final battle for the liberation of Sarajevo. The legend remained on intrepid and bold intelligence officer Walter. He was proclaimed National hero on 24 July 1953.
140 He was born on 11 February 1913 in Bijelo Polje in a poor family and in his second year of life he remained an orphan. He attended primary school in Bijelo Polje and, from 1925 to 1933, he attended the Great Madrasa “King Alexander” in Skopje and was enlisted at the Faculty of Law in 1933, in Belgrade, and there he was engaged in the revolutionary student movement.
141 In April 1941, he formed in Bijelo Polje the District Committee of the CPY for Sandžak and managed the preparations for the armed uprising. During the uprising, managed siege and the liberation of Bijel Polje, in July 1941, participated in other armed operations. Following the withdrawal of partisan forces from Sandžak, in late May 1942, and by the decision of the District Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, left Sandžak by early June, then participated in the formation of the Third Sandžak Proletarian shock brigade, where he was the deputy political commissioner. Chetnicks killed him, in the night between 2 and 3 October 1942, in the village of Trnovo, near Mrkonjić Grad. By Decree of the Presidency of the Antifascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ), on 25 September 1944, he was declared the national hero among the first soldiers of the National Liberation Army.
the “New World Order” that is, the removal of powers of the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union and even the communist and socialist authorities around the world. In this respect a special role has had strengthened religiosity and the awakening of extremism from Islamic to orthodox. Accordingly, the theme of Sandžak has not been bypassed “locally.”

Bosniaks in Kosovo consider to have had more success in the acquisition and enjoyment of minority rights in reference to Bosniaks in Serbia, specifically in the region of Sandžak, where Bosniaks are mostly concentrated, and this especially applies to the establishment of education in the Bosnian language in Kosovo. Also, according to the Law on Use of Languages in Kosovo, in each municipality where Bosniaks make up more than 5% of the population, Bosnian language has the status of an official language at the municipal level. Currently teaching in the Bosnian language is carried out in the municipalities of Prizren, Dragaš and Peć. In all these municipalities there are councilors at the local level from among Bosniaks. According to the Kosovo Constitution and the law, Bosniaks have three guaranteed seats in the Kosovo parliament, and these three positions are accompanied by Deputy Ministers. However, what the Bosniaks in Serbia managed to achieve, unlike their compatriots in Kosovo, is to have its municipalities - Novi Pazar, Tutin and Sjenica. Bosniaks in Kosovo seek their municipality since the 1999 war. This right has never been rejected, but the formation of Bosniak municipalities has been stalled. Although the laws and mechanisms to protect and promote the rights of minority communities in Kosovo are well known, their implementation in the field is quite weak.

Finally, it should be emphasized, that the process of normalization of inter-ethnical relations has been underway since 2001 and inter-ethnic confidence has been increased both in the part of Serbia and Montenegro. The vast majority of people do not see the existence of inter-ethnic conflict in the region Sandžak (Pfeifer, Sećeragić, 2009: 19). But the situation is still far from normal. Sandžak is an area where in a given set of political activity, with crisis in the economic and social sphere it is possible to make interethnic conflict concrete and real. The risk to safety, stability and inter-ethnic relations represent the ethnic detachment and distrust. This is quite often manifested in the relations between the citizens of Novi Pazar, populated mainly by Bosniaks, and the citizens of Raška, predominantly inhabited by Serbs. This is confirmed by the data on fights between “football fans”, the fact that inhabitants of Raška are often called “Jews” in Novi Pazar, in its derogatory meaning, but also that residents of Novi Pazar are called “Turks” by the residents of Raška (IFIMES, 2005: Jugozpadna Srbija / Sandžak, 2005: 11, 13).
V) RECOMMENDATIONS

Narratives and policies on the "Sandžak" are ethnic or ethno-nationalist and narrowed to the Ottoman heritage and the issue of Bosniaks. In reality, "Sandžak" is a peculiar area whose population and history is multiethnic and multi-confessional. It belongs to all its citizens - Bosniaks, Serbs, Montenegrins and Roma. Therefore, there is no principled reason for this region to be renounced by the Serbs and Serbia, Montenegrins and Montenegro; there is no principled reason to link Sandžak exclusively with Serbia because it is also a part of Montenegro.

To overcome the limitations of ethno-nationalist policies, in order to preserve the multi-ethnic image of this area, in order to provide sustainable solutions for the extremely important political, social, economic, and ethnic issues as well as to lessen the risks of interethnic and interreligious conflicts, it is necessary to take a step towards the politics of normalization and cooperation.

The issue of Sandžak should be put on the agenda of a public debate primarily in Serbia and Montenegro, and for the purpose of creating conditions for a democratic resolution of this issue. This requires a kind of political and social coalition or agreement for Sandžak, which would contribute to preventing the occurrence and spread of conflicts on the territory of Sandžak and the creation of conditions for the maintenance and development of the Bosniak national identity as well as "others", while insisting on the fundamental values of democracy, civil society and the rule of law.

It is necessary to create an agreement or a coalition for the respect of the multicultural and multi-religious complexity of Sandžak, for political and social integration rather than ethno-national exclusivism. The issue of the status of Sandžak as a single region is an extremely important issue for the Serbian - Montenegrin relations as well as relations in the Western Balkans, including Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, so it should be approached as such.

By improving road, rail and river infrastructures, creating conditions for sustainable economic and social development requires a policy of integration, a policy of normalization of life of people of the area and lowering tensions that exist in this area and in Western Balkans. Considering that Kosovo or the north of Kosovo and Sandžak share a border it is of great importance to advance the process of
normalization, in particular the implementation of the Brussels Agreement in the area of freedom of movement, integrated border control and to reach an agreement on the re-establishment of the system of payments between Kosovo and Serbia (Janjić, 2015: 20 - 29). It is necessary to thoroughly consider the realization of cross-border cooperation which would cover the area of Sandžak and linking this area with the municipalities of northern Kosovo, especially those "forgotten" municipalities of Rudo, Foća and Goražde, in Republika Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina, so that this area can be treated as a "Mini European region". Such cross-border cooperation is a chance for the normalization of relations between Serbs, Montenegrins and Bosnians, but also for the strengthening and normalization of relations and cooperation between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Kosovo, and connecting Kosovo with Western Balkans.

Regional approach in mutual cooperation in the Western Balkans, especially on the territory of former Yugoslavia is necessary and useful in the management of inter-ethnic relations. In this framework it is possible to review and resolve issues such as the issue of the status of Sandžak. It is therefore necessary to analyze the conditions and to undertake activities or create and implement policies in the regional framework that would be based on the following assumptions:

- All interested institutions of Serbia and Montenegro and the EU are recommended to consider the possibilities and possible outcomes of the process of normalization and regional cooperation;

- Extending the area of free movement of people, goods and ideas. This would improve the economic underdevelopment and create conditions for faster economic and overall growth in the region. In future development projects, special attention should be given to energy and ecology, especially in terms of efficient use of natural renewable resources, such as river courses, wind and solar energy. The Ibar-Lim initiative is a great opportunity for the development of this area, because it can bring together all local governments located in the basin of these two rivers. It would also enable these local self-government to apply for the European funds (IPA and IPA2) for cross-border projects. Business entities in this part of Sandžak and their distribution will be presented by municipalities;

- In terms of economic development, it is necessary to support the development of small and mid-size companies, agriculture, especially cattle breeding on Pešter, production and processing of medicinal plants, tourism;

- Support awareness raising on the need of association in collectives, especially on organizing village households as agro-tourist cooperatives, which would boost employment and strengthen families and villages as economically sustainable units;
• Decision makers on the local and national level should maintain contacts and take into account recommendations of business people, especially those related to the economic development of the Sandžak region, specifically: business sector must be strengthened by improving the level of organization with the sector itself; it is necessary to establish strong and politically independent business associations; intensive lobbying activities by the business sector must be directed toward political decision makers; negative image about private companies must be changed; managerial structures within companies must undergo professionalization; local administrations must be open to the needs of the companies, and the practice of cooperation with business people must be established, even if they do not belong to any political party; economy and politics must work together to increase the level of foreign investments in the Sandžak region; fiscal policies must be changed in order to produce better incentives for the economic development of the region; administrative centralization must be reduced; the audit of spending of development funds must be institutionalized /Development Fund of the Republic of Serbia/; it is necessary to provide technical support to small and mid-sized companies from the Sandžak region in order to increase their chances of appearing on foreign markets. This type of support is expected from international institutions (Pfeifer, Šećeragić, 2009:8);

• Promoting the values of democracy, regional cooperation and stability in the Sandžak region, including support to the values of decentralization and protection of features of national and cultural identity.

• Lowering the risk of political extremism and radicalism, armed conflicts and terrorism

It is recommended that the Sandžak area, as a cross-border region, is plotted in maps used in tourist cooperation and tourist offer in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is a way of making them a part of the European and world recommended tourist destinations; strengthening cooperation in the development of infrastructure, agriculture, tourism, agro-tourism in this part of the Western Balkans. This area, with all its specificities, differences and natural resources should be offered to tourists, including the North Kosovo, Montenegro, and Albania, and spread the interest in this area and expand its development capacities.

It is recommended that the Government of the Republic of Serbia prepare and submit for Adoption to the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia the National strategy of integrated minority policy (Strategy). The Strategy should first be verified through a broad public and democratic discussion, particularly on the importance of decentralization, and on the initiated but not completed
regionalization of Serbia, and the importance of a regional approach to the issue of minorities in the context of the upcoming constitutional changes. In the process of adoption of a new Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, the geography, economy, ethnic and other features of Sandžak must be taken into account. Actually, it is necessary that municipalities which are administratively divided between two districts are placed in one administrative unit. For example, as a sub-region in the region of Southwest Serbia.

In order to remedy unqualified and inefficient operations of local self-government, the governments of Serbia and Montenegro are recommended to develop dedicated strategies and action plans for the reform of local administration, employment based on qualifications and not political affiliations, providing assistance in education and training for the work in public administration; it is necessary to reform the existing legal framework in order to realize the measures of affirmative actions related to the employment of Bosniaks in administrative bodies. These measures should, for example, allow for the selection of a job candidate who, in addition to all necessary qualifications, is a member of the Bosniak community. Such measures are only possible in combination with other criteria – knowledge of the language of a national minority in official use, which should be taken as advantage in terms of employment in bodies where there is a legally prescribed official use of the Bosnian language.

Local authorities and civil society organizations are recommended "partnership in diversity" i.e. production of action plans and working on the strengthening of civil society and combating of discrimination.

It is recommended to institutionalize local interconfessional councils, which would enable the exchange of ideas and joint activities by religious communities, primarily the Islamic community and Serbian Orthodox Church.

In order to raise awareness on mutual cooperation, trust, dialogue and reconciliation, it is necessary to use examples of best practices and reactivate the Summer School for Interconfessional Dialogue and Understanding, which would, unlike in the period 1992 – 1996 include a wider circle of participants, not only from religious communities, but also from civil society, political parties, state institutions, business associations and experts, especially young people.

Taking into account the need to improve the level of knowledge, to change old habits, opinions, and prejudices formed during ethnic conflicts, the educational system must be reformed in its core, which should include education in tolerance. Therefore, curricula on all levels should include courses in human and minority rights, war crimes, genocide, ethnic cleansing and holocaust. Also, it is necessary to promote pluralism and diversity as a special value and wealth, and include information on the
existing minority communities, ethnic, cultural, and religious pluralism. These should not be limited to specific school subjects, but they should be present in the entire curricula.

It is necessary that, with the support of civil society, all levels of government get involved in suppressing corruption, as well as direct links between political actors and organized crime i.e. the so-called “informal centers of power”.

Sandžak diaspora is scattered all over the world, but mostly in Turkey and western Europe. It emerged from two sources: first, forced migration due to wars, and second, economic migration. The influence of diaspora on Sandžak, mostly through the Islamic community, is evident but insufficiently explored. This is the main reason why more attention should be paid to this issue. The government and society as a whole must be encouraged to implement adequate public policies, to allow the diaspora to give its positive contribution to development of their birthplace, as well as Serbia, Montenegro and the Western Balkans.
VI) APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1

Demographic momentum in municipalities on the territory of the former Sandžak, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Territory</th>
<th>Population *</th>
<th>Live born</th>
<th>Dead</th>
<th>Marriages</th>
<th>Divorces</th>
<th>Arrivals**</th>
<th>Departures**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Serbia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>619</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>453</td>
<td>588</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nova Varoš</td>
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<td>213</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prijepolje</td>
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<td>255</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republic of Montenegro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrijevica</td>
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<td>63</td>
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<tr>
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<td>309</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Plav</td>
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<td>Pljevlja</td>
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<td>Rožaje</td>
<td>23 098</td>
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<td>156</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>170</td>
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</table>

Remarks:

* A population estimates for municipalities in the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro, on 30 June 2014; a population estimates for municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, taken from the 2013 Census preliminary results.

** The data on mechanical components refer to internal movement of population.
### APPENDIX 2

*Main demographic indicators in Montenegro.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Population 2003</th>
<th>Population 2011</th>
<th>Change 2011/03</th>
<th>Rate of growth 2011/03 (%)</th>
<th>Population %</th>
<th>Population density</th>
<th>Average population age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>191.610</td>
<td>177.837</td>
<td>-13.773</td>
<td>-7.2</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>24.35</td>
<td>37.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>277.279</td>
<td>293.509</td>
<td>16.230</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>59.69</td>
<td>36.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>143.378</td>
<td>148.683</td>
<td>5.305</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>93.45</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Regional Development Strategy of Montenegro, 2014-2020)*
APPENDIX 3

Local economic development (LED) indicators for municipalities in Serbia

Novi Pazar

More than 95% of companies in Novi Pazar are privately owned, while 98% among them are small and medium-sized enterprises. According to official data, these enterprises are operating mostly in the following economic sectors: trade around 55.3% of all active businesses; processing industry 20.58%; and transport, storage and communication 7.20%.

Trade companies have a big number of retail premises, over 1,000 independent shops, wholesale premises and storehouses for building materials; in Novi Pazar there are over 450 private companies and over 2,500 independent shops, whose business is production and sale of denim clothes and footwear. There are also companies operating in the metal industry, building material industry and furniture industry.

Within the processing industry the production of textiles and textile products (50.92%) has the biggest share, while the most prominent among them are Menus, Stig, Nar, Exit, Nesal, Classic Jeans, Edihal, Brug; manufacture of leather products (11.04%), with the most significant manufacturers: Panama nuovo, Fareti, Beso, Ceco; metal processing industry includes the manufacturer of disconnectors Minel, manufacturer of building material IGM Sloga; prominent furniture producers are Tahirović, Numanović and Dasa. The food processing industry has a share of 8.59% in the processing industry with most represented industries: meat processing, homemade confectionery manufacturing, Turkish delight manufacturing, production of biscuits and small-sized confectionery made mostly in the households; some of these businesses have expanded beyond Novi Pazar and their products are present throughout Sandžak, such as Mea and Hadžiibrahimović. Due to natural resources, the food processing industry is a big chance for development of Sandžak. Transport, warehousing and communication are characterized by a big number of private carriers of people and goods on domestic and foreign routes. The private sector is significant for the development of transport; its strength is illustrated by the fact that there are more than 500 carriers of goods with a respectable fleet of vehicles, as well as 10 travel agencies who have their own newest busses which can fully satisfy the needs of clients in both the national and international transport.

There are not many agricultural businesses in the territory of Novi Pazar, which is partly due to geography and partly to the lack of agricultural tradition and the fact that agriculture has been reduced to satisfying individual needs. The Novi Pazar region is mainly mountainous, and nearly a half of Novi Pazar municipality’s territory (36.270ha) is agricultural land. Since this is a predominantly
highlands area, the total agricultural land consists mainly of natural grassland (70.85%), of which meadows make for 29.55% or 10,717 ha, and pastures 41.3% or 14,981 ha. Ploughing land has a relatively high share of 23.77% or 8,620 ha, and orchards cover 1,952 ha. In the agricultural sector are engaged 10% of the total population. Among them, 58% are individual farmers; 59.10% are active agricultural population, and 40.90% are dependent agricultural population.

Sjenica

Sjenica municipality is situated in Zlatibor County, and with a territory of 1059 km² it is one of the biggest municipalities in Serbia. According to the 2011 Census, it has 26,392 residents: the majority are Bosniaks (19.498 or 73.87%); there are 5,264 or 19.94% Serbs; 1,234 or 4.67% declared as Muslims; others are in negligible numbers. The economy of this region has been based on: animal husbandry, farming and mining. Due to specific climate and local population attached to agriculture the Sjenica region is mainly a livestock breeding region. In the 1970s and 1980s organized agricultural production was developing due to the agricultural industrial complex Pešter, which laid the foundations for modern production and made recognizable and esteemed products from Sjenica, such as Sjenica cheese, sudžuk (smoked mutton-and-beef sausage) and lamb. Today, after the PIK Pešter industry collapsed, the individual farmers are carriers of production and it is exactly these products that they can see as their chance. With 32,000 sheep and 27,000 cattle, and with over 4,500 agricultural households, Sjenica is the leading agricultural producer in this part of the country. This is the reason why the Regional Center for Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas Ltd. was founded by the Sjenica Municipality, the town Novi Pazar and Tutin Municipality and has thus become a regional entity. Its basic field of activity is research and development of agriculture, as well as advisory and technical support to agricultural households, associations and clusters. Attached to it is also a laboratory for analysis of milk and dairy products and meat. Significant are Mini Dairies, FASS, Hajredinović, Kalender, milk and meat processing LAV, ladies' lingerie manufacturer Sanitex and RIS plastic packaging. Farming became topical in this part of Pešter due to soil composition and climate, which are favorable for specific plants, particularly potatoes and buckwheat. The brown coal mine Štavaj in Sjenica has a monthly coal production of 4 to 8 thousand tons, and reserves of 240 million of tons, which makes it one of the richest deposits in Serbia. The mine has 470 employees, of which 350 are miners. It is estimated that a thermal power plant with a capacity of 300 megawatt could be built. Due to its geographic position, and the fact that it is at 1,000 m above sea level, this region is suitable for winter tourism and the preparation of athletes. In this regard outstanding is the hotel Borici, which was designed for these purposes. The canyon of the Uvac River should be particularly highlighted; it is very unique and unusual, and a true attraction for tourists.
Tutin

The development of industrial production in Tutin Municipality has been primarily linked to the wood processing sector and the former Jelak Company which had over 500 employees. This company was privatized through a tender procedure and now it has around 90 employees; it is processing wood and producing polyurethane foam, and is also a manufacturer of board furniture. Considering that furniture manufacturers Dalas, Elan MMS and Stil Jasen are employing over 500 workers, and that Dalas is a leading manufacturer of upholstered furniture, it is clear that economic progress of Tutin Municipality in the forthcoming period must be based on support to this sector. The company 23 November is active in mining and quarrying. The sector of privately owned small and medium-size enterprises constitute 92% of all companies in Tutin Municipality; small businesses constitute 99% of small and medium-sized enterprises. The majority of them are in the sectors trade (85) and processing industry (16), which is 74.8% of the total number of privately owned small and medium enterprises. Individual livestock production is rising, particularly in regard to milk production and processing.

Prijepolje

Prijepolje municipality is in Zlatibor County and covers 827 km². According to the 2011 Census, it has 37,059 residents: 19,496 or 52.61% of Serbs, 12,792 or 34.51% Bosniaks, 3,543 or 9.56% Muslims, and a small number of others. Over 90% of companies are in private ownership (a certain number of companies is further on undergoing the privatization procedures). Some 250 companies are active in Prijepolje. Over 95% of them are small enterprises, followed by medium-sized (3.5) and big enterprises (1.3%). Prijepolje Municipality has a total of 1,719 shops, distributed to the following sectors: trade (41.58%), transport (28.34%), restaurants (11.45%) and processing industry (6.13 %). The main pillar of economic development of the Prijepolje Municipality were primarily the textiles sector – TK Ljubiša Miodragović, Jasen–Brodarevo and Iris, which are undergoing the process of privatization along the auction model; footwear Limka, which is divided into new businesses;and the metal industry, FAP Livnica, as part of the FAP Priboj system, which is undergoing tender procedures. Today the most significant companies are the following ones: Voćar Lutka, production and trade; AD Rad-Labud, construction sector; PP Stileks, production of textile products; DOO JUS, production of metal products; DO Produkt Promet, production of wood, wholesale and retail trade; AD Trgopek, production of bread and pastry; DOO Mušović, furniture production; and, Es-komerc, wholesale and retail trade.
Priboj

Priboj Municipality’s economic potentials are linked to the development of small and medium-size enterprises, tourism, agriculture, as well as developmental technologies, production of vehicles and chemical industry. The main driving force of the town’s economy and its surroundings was the Automobile Factory Priboj (FAP) which was founded in 1953, when Priboj transformed from a small backwater to an automobile center, recorded on the European automobile map. This is when a completely new town emerged on the other bank of River Lim and Priboj experienced economic boom, when new residential objects were built together with accompanying infrastructure, educational and health institutions, restaurants and other facilities. It is estimated that up to the mid-nineties when it ceased work, the factory had produced over 150,000 vehicles. FAP has been known for the production of trucks, busses, trailers, specialized vehicles; production of truck and bus equipment and assembly parts was based on the MB license or on own design. The main pillar of development for this border municipality is the FAP Corporation, which is undergoing a privatization process. This automobile factory with a worldwide reputation employs 1,500 workers in its parent company, and in the subsidiary enterprises (Lim, Transport, Stan and Livnica) in Prijepolje 400 workers. Second ranked in terms of significance is the factory Poliester, which also had a big role in the development of Priboj. Poliesteris known for manufacturing parts for the automobile industry and for the exterior and interior of commercial and passenger vehicles, cylindrical dishes, reservoirs and tanks, polyester booths as well as anti-hail rockets. Today, the corporation Poliester is 100% in private ownership; the owner is the consortium from Slovenija. Poliester has been placing its products on both the national and international markets. In the surroundings of Priboj there are thermal wells with water temperatures best suited for human bodily temperature (around 37 C). In the vicinity of Priboj (at an approximately 5 km distance) is Pribojska Banja, a spa well-known for its healing wells.

Nova Varoš

There are 507 companies in Nova Varoš Municipality, of which 73 are representatives of economic operators and the rest of 85% are entrepreneurs. Out of the total, 34 have their seat beyond Nova Varoš – Drinsko-Limske HE, PES rbijašume, Telekom, banks, insurance companies, shops... Small enterprises are extremely dominant; more precisely, there are 6 medium-size enterprises in the municipality, of which one is a public enterprise – PE 3. September. The energy sector has traditionally a leading role for the development of Nova Varoš; it is generally represented by the economic operator Drinsko-Limske HE, to which Limske HE were affiliated in 2005. Today this public enterprise employs 170 people from Nova Varoš. Investment potentials in the energy sector
are exceptional and very significant for further development of the entire community. Nova Varoš
municipality is recognized as a big resource both for production of electric energy based on water
resources, and the production of energy from renewable sources. Apart from the energy sector, the
processing industry is also the pillar of development of the municipality. Within this sector, best
developed are the production of plastic and rubber, the wood processing sector, production of food
and textile products. Active companies are: PPP Trgoprom Bošnjaković, which has been processing
annually around 400t of raw material, and Interprodukt which has a wide assortment of products for
busses, trains and tractors. A significant representative of the metal industry is the enterprise Sloga.
Entrepreneurship is developed within the wood processing sector: the total number of mini sawmills
for primary wood processing reached 140. Agriculture and food production is very much present in
this area; apart from traditional home-made cheese production, Nova Varoš has industrial milk
processing in the dairy facilities Zelenika Plus, Viskom and Zlatarka. The annual quantity of milk
produced in the territory of the municipality is just over 2 million liter. Cereals, fruit and vegetables
are also processed in the municipality. The company Zlatarplast owns cooling storage capacities and
has been processing 1,500 t of raspberry and plums intended for export to EU countries. Confectionary
manufacture is characterized by production of chocolate cake fillings and frostings in
facilities of Avdić company. Zlatar is known for production of buckwheat; the most prominent
manufacturers of buckwheat flour and buckwheat hull pillows are Agro Zlatar and Delfin NV, which
are at the same time among the five biggest producers of buckwheat.
## APPENDIX 4

**Northern region**

### SWOT ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
<th>WEAKNESSES</th>
<th>OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>THREATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusive growth</strong></td>
<td>- Relatively good educational opportunities</td>
<td>- Pronounced depopulation of young and educated population, in particular</td>
<td>- Investment in lifelong education</td>
<td>- Further depopulation of the region – Insufficiently developed capacity for preparation and implementation of EU projects – Lack of interest of the population to stay in the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Good educational structure of the population</td>
<td>- Long-term unemployment</td>
<td>- Retraining programs and active employment policies – Training on EU programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The primary and secondary healthcare in place</td>
<td>- Structural imbalance between supply and demand on the labor market</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainable growth</strong></td>
<td>- Significant natural wealth: mineral raw materials, energy potential, forests, agricultural land, protected areas – existence of attractive locations for etno-tourism and skiing.</td>
<td>- Inadequate management of natural resources – Fragmented and uncultivated agricultural land – Under-utilized natural resources and areas suitable for development of specific types of tourism.</td>
<td>- Identification and higher valorization of natural resources in spatial plans of local self-government units – Improvement of the management and higher utilization of natural resources</td>
<td>- Illegal exploitation of natural resources – Inability to attract investments for the development of renewable energy sources and the use of other natural resources – Natural disasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Relatively good network of regional and trunk roads - relatively good energy and municipal infrastructure in urban areas</td>
<td>- Poor quality of roads in rural areas and poor connections with cities – Insufficient number of waste water treatment plants and sanitary landfills – Lack of irrigation systems</td>
<td>- Construction of the highway Bar-Boljare – Project development through Public-Private Partnership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smart growth</strong></td>
<td>- The existence of industrial zones equipped with infrastructure - good potential for developing food industry, different types of tourism, wood processing - Rich cultural heritage - potential for developing creative industries - Developed institutional framework for culture</td>
<td>- Low level of investment – Low level of competitiveness, innovation of economy and promotion of available resources – Underdeveloped economic infrastructure – Low degree of goods processing – Unorganized purchase of agricultural products – Inadequate promotion of cultural heritage – Poor condition of cultural property – Inadequately equipped cultural property – Lack of investment in the creative industries sector</td>
<td>- Strengthening the production sector - Development of new trends in tourism - Higher leveraging of EU funds and MN Government’s support - Transfer of knowledge and technology - Strengthening and development of the SME sector and its connectivity through the development of clusters and cooperatives - Opportunities for funding through the MIDAS program and Investment and</td>
<td>- Competition at the global and EU level - Lack of financial resources for the promotion of economic activities - Lack of human resources for the implementation of investment activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Fund (IRF) – Valorization and promotion of cultural diversities - Revitalization of old crafts and domestic industries - Development of entrepreneurship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adoption of spatial and urban development spatial plans of local self governments – Adoption and implementation of strategic development plans of local self-governments – Improvement and adjustment of administrative capacities of local self-government units to modern social-economic needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Utility development plans are not in place – Local government units do not have databases – Lack of financial resources – Low level of cooperation between local government units and insufficient integrative activities at the regional level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Opportunities for cross-border cooperation and financing from EU funds – Development management decentralization – Education and improvement of administrative capacity through the exchange of experiences with EU countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adverse external funding sources - Lack of institutional infrastructure at the regional level – The most qualified people from local governments migrating to other countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Strategija, 2014:35.*
## APPENDIX 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Novi Pazar</td>
<td>€11,226</td>
<td>€408,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prijepolje</td>
<td>€34,795</td>
<td>€61,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutin</td>
<td>€19,193</td>
<td>€55,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priboj</td>
<td>€17,998</td>
<td>€38,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Varoš</td>
<td>€29,612</td>
<td>€31,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>€112,825</strong></td>
<td><strong>€594,718</strong></td>
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</table>
## APPENDIX 6

*Projects of the EU Progress Programme in Novi Pazar*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Basic project information (budget, duration…)</th>
<th>Project beneficiary</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Novi Pazar – The Construction of the Building for Emergency Services in Novi Pazar Health Centre within EU Progress Program | Project budget: 732,880 €; IPA: €622,880 Co-financing: €110,000  
Total – project budget with contingency cost: €749,000; IPA: €636,650; Co-financing: 112,350 €  
Commencement of first project activities - late November 2016. | Novi Pazar           | /                    |
## APPENDIX 7

### Cross-border cooperation programs with Bosnia and Herzegovina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Basic project information (budget, duration, location...)</th>
<th>Project beneficiary</th>
<th>Project objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/58 Improvement of the International Lim Biathlon manifestation Prijepolje-Rudo (Setihovo) - Regatta for all</td>
<td>Contract value: €88,725.12 Project duration: 10 June 2013 – 9 June 2014 (12 months)</td>
<td>Tourist Organization of Priboj</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Cross-border cooperation programs with Montenegro

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Basic project information (budget, duration, location...)</th>
<th>Project beneficiary</th>
<th>Project objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLEAN – Citizens Learning Environmental Actions Needed</td>
<td>Project budget: €391,453.38 (Serbia+Montenegro) EU Grant to Serbia: €137,048.99 Other donors: Recycling yards for public utility companies (PUC) are funded by EU Progress Programme Project duration: 11 July 2012 – 10 March 2014 (20 months) Locations: Prijepolje, Nova Varoš Project partners: PUC Nova Varoš, Municipality of Prijepolje, PUC Prijepolje</td>
<td>Municipality of Nova Varoš</td>
<td>Overall objective: to decrease negative effects of waste on human health and on environment in cross border zone in the target countries. Specific objectives: 1) to improve waste management in the cross-border area and 5 target municipalities through created conditions for separate waste collection and recycling, strengthened capacity of the public utility companies and informal dumps cleaned up in the period of 20 months; 2) to raise the level of awareness of people in the cross-border area and 5 target municipalities about proper waste collection through media campaign and educational lectures in the period of 20 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right for Life</td>
<td>Project budget: €191,351.90 (Serbia + Montenegro) EU Grant to Serbia: €79,101.90 Project duration: 3 September 2012 – 2 September 2013 (12 months) Location: Novi Pazar Project partners: SEDA (Sandžak Economic Development Agency), Novi Pazar</td>
<td>Health Center Novi Pazar</td>
<td>Overall objective: 1) to reduce infant mortality and morbidity in the Montenegro-Serbia border area; 2) to improve medical care for pregnant mothers and infants. Specific objective: to build capacity of neonatology departments of hospitals in Novi Pazar and Bijelo Polje to reduce infant mortality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening of Economic</td>
<td>Project budget: €505,397.57 (Serbia + Montenegro)</td>
<td>Public Utility</td>
<td>Overall objective: to improve the quality of environment and management of water,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development Through Sustainable Management of Water Resources</strong></td>
<td><strong>PARHS - The Preventive Actions in the Reproductive Health Sector</strong></td>
<td><strong>Partnership for Sustainability</strong></td>
<td><strong>Through Geographic Information System Towards Better Cross-Border Flood Risk Management in the Lim River Basin</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>through joint efforts of all relevant stakeholders, as a main precondition for sustainable development of agriculture and economy in cross border zone; to introduce and promote relevant EU standards and practices in respective area. <strong>Specific objective:</strong> to create necessary preconditions- strategic and infrastructure for boosting sustainable development of agriculture in border zone by establishing the foundation for sustainable and efficient water management and irrigation systems.</td>
<td><strong>Overall objective:</strong> to improve reproductive health of women in cross border region between Montenegro and Serbia. <strong>Specific objectives:</strong> to improve access and raised awareness about available preventive examinations in 5 health centers for early detection of breast and cervical cancer among women of reproductive age through conducting at least 1000 check ups in 5 target municipalities in the period of 18 months.</td>
<td><strong>Overall objective:</strong> contribution to sustainable economic and social development in Serbia-Montenegro border area through increased sustainability of civil society organizations (CSOs). <strong>Specific objectives:</strong> enhanced quality and quantity of partnerships between CSOs in the programme area; enhanced quality and quantity of partnerships between CSOs and businesses in the programme area.</td>
<td><strong>Overall objective:</strong> to maintain the high quality of environment in the border area, as a relevant economic source of both targeted countries, by developing joint, effective public institutions’ systems of emergency preparedness in relation to flood prevention and control. <strong>Specific objectives:</strong> 1) to conduct a joint baseline research on existing water management master plans and water management legislation in the Lim river basin, provide exchange of know-how and define recommendations for their modernization; 2) to conduct comprehensive capacity building of civil servants and technical enhancement of public institutions engaged in flood risk management; 3) to develop efficient, publicly accessible sets of services for all engaged in flood risk management; 4) to raise joint expert and public awareness on environmental issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Through Professional Cooperation to Better Services</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overall objective:</strong> to improve the provision of social services in a wider area of Bijelo Polje and Priboj municipalities and to increase public awareness of children and youth about the protection of environment. <strong>Specific objectives:</strong> to improve cooperation between the two towns through exchange of experience and promotion of social services by enhancing services that are not currently being implemented in Bijelo Polje and Priboj municipalities.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project budget:</strong> €154,938.18 (Serbia + Montenegro)</td>
<td><strong>Social Care Center Priboj</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EU Grant to Serbia:</strong> €53,971.18</td>
<td><strong>Project duration: 15 October 2012 – 13 October 2013 (12 months)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project location:</strong> Priboj.</td>
<td><strong>Project partners:</strong> Municipality of Priboj – Youth Office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Together is better</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overall objective:</strong> to promote child development through interactive extracurricular activities of transnational meetings with peers in order to support mutual knowledge, comprehensive income and physical development of the primary school. <strong>Specific objectives:</strong> 1) to provide opportunities for students to deepen their knowledge and horizons concerning life skills, through interactive work; 2) to facilitate the development of good neighborly relations among students by meeting students from other countries; 3) develop understanding of the cultural features of people who live in the targeted regions with the aim to develop inter-ethnic harmony and tolerance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project budget:</strong> €123,455.05 (Serbia + Montenegro)</td>
<td><strong>Primary school</strong> &quot;Desanka Maksimović&quot;, Novi Pazar, Serbia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EU Grant to Serbia:</strong> €46,419.35</td>
<td><strong>Project duration: 10 October 2012 – 9 August 2013</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project location:</strong> Novi Pazar</td>
<td><strong>Project partners:</strong> Municipality of Novi Pazar – Youth Office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-border Flood Protection and Rescue</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overall objective:</strong> to reduce the risks of disasters caused by natural hazards in Serbia and Montenegro. <strong>Specific objectives:</strong> to improve the capacity of the cross-border area and six municipalities in Serbia and Montenegro to reduce the risks of floods through cross-border cooperation and coordinated approach, including technical and human capacity building process and raising awareness of general population about flood prevention and management within the period of 20 months.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project budget:</strong> €372,197.83 (Serbia + Montenegro)</td>
<td><strong>Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia – Emergence Sector</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EU Grant to Serbia:</strong> €140,949.25</td>
<td><strong>Project duration: 15 August 2012 – 14 April 2014 (20 months)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Serbia + Montenegro)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Locations:</strong> Prijepolje, Priboj, Nova Varoš</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Youth for Active Societies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overall objective:</strong> to enhance the cross-border professional and civil-society cooperation in the area of youth activism as a basis for social relations revitalization and strengthening of ongoing democratization processes, as basis for a common path towards the EU. <strong>Specific objectives:</strong> promotion and protection of human rights in the Sandžak region through capacity building and networking of formal and non-formal youth groups, including youth offices in youth activism, protection of human rights and fostering multiculturalism and diversity in their communities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project budget:</strong> €149,200.80 (Serbia + Montenegro)</td>
<td><strong>Centre for Youth Work, Novi Sad</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EU Grant to Serbia:</strong> €50,413.58</td>
<td><strong>Project duration: 15 August 2012 – 14 August 2013 (12 months)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Serbia + Montenegro)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Locations:</strong> Novi Pazar, Sjenica, Prijepolje</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project partners:</strong> Urban In</td>
<td><strong>Partners:</strong> Urban In</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Training courses delivered in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Training title</th>
<th>Training organizers and date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Novi Pazar</td>
<td>Capacity development of women in the public sector in the field of gender equality</td>
<td>UNOPS/EU and SDC, 4-6 March 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Varoš</td>
<td>Action planning workshop</td>
<td>SCTM/EU, 1-2 July 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Overview of attendance of cities and municipalities at the training courses in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipalit y</th>
<th>Number of training</th>
<th>Training / donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Novi Pazar</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Preparation of municipal and regional infrastructural projects (3); Introduction of program budgeting process at the local level – preparation of 2015 budget, Module II (2); Introduction of program budgeting at the local level - preparation of 2015 budget, Module III (2); Annual program for agricultural land protection, development and utilization – development and implementation (1); Instructive seminar on the Law on Legalization of Buildings (1); Improvement of Public Finance Management at the local level (6); Capacity development of women in the public sector on gender equality (15); Decentralization and application of the principle of subsidiarity in Europe and Serbia (16);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prijepolje</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Development of rural development programs at the local level (4); Preparation of municipal and regional infrastructural projects (3); Introduction of program budgeting at the local level - preparation of 2015 budget, Module II (2) Promotion of investment potentials and enhancing communication with the business community (11); Gender analysis is the first step towards Gender Mainstreaming (15); Capacity development of women in the public sector in the field of gender equality (15); Partnership of public and civil sector in creating local development policy (8);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sjenica</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Introduction of program budgeting at the local level - preparation of 2015 budget, Module I (2); Protection of patients’ rights after one year –from the local government perspective; Local economic development (11); Gender analysis is the first step towards Gender Mainstreaming (15); Partnership of public and civil sector in creating local development policy (8);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutin</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Law on Public Property – implications on the work of professional services of local governments and utilities (4); Development of rural development programs at the local level (4); Introduction of program budgeting at the local level - preparation of 2015 budget, Module I (2); Introduction of program budgeting at the local level - preparation of 2015 budget, Module II (2); Introduction of program budgeting at the local level - preparation of 2015 budget, Module III (2); Local Economic Development (11); Instructive seminar on the Law on Legalization of Buildings (1); Gender analysis is the first step towards Gender Mainstreaming (15); Capacity development of women in the public sector in the field of gender equality (15); Capacity building and sensitization of men as decision makers at the local level (15); Decentralization and application of the principle of subsidiarity in Europe and Serbia (16);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priboj</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Preparation of municipal and regional infrastructural projects (3); Introduction of program budgeting at the local level - preparation of 2015 budget, Module II (2); Local Economic Development (11); Promotion of investment potentials and enhancing communication with the business community (11); Gender analysis is the first step towards Gender Mainstreaming (15); Capacity development of women in the public sector in the field of gender equality (15); Capacity building and sensitization of men as decision makers at the local level (15); Partnership of public and civil sector in creating local development policy (8);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Overview of attendance of cities and municipalities at the training courses in 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipalité</th>
<th>Number of training</th>
<th>Training / donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nova Varoš</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Development of rural development programs at the local level (4); Preparation of municipal and regional infrastructural programs (3); Introduction of program budgeting at the local level - preparation of 2015 budget, Module I (2); Introduction of program budgeting at the local level - preparation of 2015 budget, Module II (2); Local economic development (11); Promotion of investment potentials and enhancing communication with the business community (11); Workshop on implementation, monitoring and evaluation of strategies and action plans (2); Energy planning workshop (2); Action planning workshop (2); Energy plan development workshop (2); System of decentralization and local government in Serbia (5); Improvement of Public Finance Management at the local level (6); Gender analysis is the first step towards Gender Mainstreaming (15); Capacity building and sensitization of men as decision makers at the local level (15); Partnership of public and civil sector in creating local development policy (8);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novi Pazar</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Creation of Rural Development and Agriculture Programs at the local level II (1); Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance during the period 2014-2020. (IPA II) - introduction in the new EU budget perspective (3); Available EU funds and preparation of project proposals according to EU procedures (4); Business environment improvement at the local level through regulatory reform (8); Local government risk assessment model (3); The Law on Patients’ Rights: implementation and challenges from the perspective of local governments (1); The role of building inspectors at the local level in the implementation of the Law on Amending the Law on Planning and Construction (1); The role of building inspectors at the local level in the implementation of the Law on Legalization of Buildings (1); Interaction with investors (13); New provisions of the Law on Planning and Construction, with special emphasis on the establishment of unified procedure for issuing building documents (13); Promotion of tolerance, combating discrimination and respect for the rights of internally displaced persons in Serbia with emphasis on the search for durable solution (19); Entering in the register of birth of persons belonging to the Roma national minority who have not been entered in this official record (11);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prijepolje</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Creation of Rural Development and Agriculture Programs at the local level II (1); Implementation of projects within EU Exchange 4 Grant Scheme - elderly care / home help (2); Improvement of Public Finance Management at the local level (6); Available EU funds and preparation of project proposals according to EU procedures (4); The Law on Public Property – implications on the work of professional services of local governments and utilities (4); e-Training “Good Governance in cities and municipalities” (5); e-Training “Financial management and control at the local level” (6); Local elections – consistent application of the election law (9); The role of building inspectors at the local level in the implementation of the Law on Amending the Law on Planning and Construction (1); Entering in the register of birth of persons belonging to the Roma national minority who have not been entered in this official record (11);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sjenica</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Implementation of projects within EU Exchange 4 Grant Scheme - elderly care / home help (2); Improvement of Public Finance Management at the local level (6); Available EU funds and preparation of project proposals according to EU procedures (4); e-Training “Good Governance in cities and municipalities” (5); e-Training “Financial management and control at the local level” (6); Local elections – consistent application of the election law (1); The role of building inspectors at the local level in the implementation of the Law on Amending the Law on Planning and Construction (1); Interaction with investors (13); Entering in the register of birth of persons belonging to the Roma national minority who have not been entered in this official record (11);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutin</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance during the period 2014–2020. (IPA II) - introduction in the new EU budget perspective (3); Improvement of Public Finance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Management at the local level (6); Business environment improvement at the local level through regulatory reform (8); e-Training “Good Governance in cities and municipalities” (5); e-Training “Financial management and control at the local level” (6); Local elections – consistent application of the election law (9); Local government risk assessment model (3); The Law on Patients’ Rights: implementation and challenges from the perspective of local governments (1); The role of building inspectors at the local level in the implementation of the Law on Amending the Law on Planning and Construction (1); Interaction with investors (13); Entering in the register of birth of persons belonging to the Roma national minority who have not been entered in this official record (11);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priboj</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Implementation of projects within EU Exchange 4 Grant Scheme - elderly care / home help (2); The Law on Public Property – implications on the work of professional services of local governments and utilities (4); e-Training “Financial management and control at the local level” (6); The role of building inspectors at the local level in the implementation of the Law on Amending the Law on Planning and Construction (1); Entering in the register of birth of persons belonging to the Roma national minority who have not been entered in this official record (11);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Varoš</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance during the period 2014-2020. (IPA II) - introduction in the new EU budget perspective (3); Improvement of Public Finance Management at the local level (6); Available EU funds and preparation of project proposals according to EU procedures (4); The Law on Public Property – implications on the work of professional services of local governments and utilities (4); Business environment improvement at the local level through regulatory reform (8); e-Training “Good Governance in cities and municipalities” (5); e-Training “Financial management and control at the local level” (6); The role of building inspectors at the local level in the implementation of the Law on Amending the Law on Planning and Construction (1); The role of building inspectors at the local level in the implementation of the Law on Legalization of Buildings (1); Entering in the register of birth of persons belonging to the Roma national minority who have not been entered in this official record (11);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**APPENDIX 8**

*Distribution of mandates in local governments in Serbia*

**Novi Pazar**

The Assembly of Novi Pazar City is composed of 47 seats.

European Novi Pazar – Rasim Ljajić has 18 seats, or 38.3%

Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak – Dr. Sulejman Ugljanin has 11 seats, or 23.4%

Muamer Zukorlić – Bosniak Democratic Community of Sandžak has 10 seats, or 21.3%

Aleksandar Vučić – Serbia Wins has 5 seats, or 10.6%

Sandžak People’s Party – Dr. Mirsad Derlek has 3 seats, or 6.4%

Novi Pazar Coalition Government has the majority of 26 seats, as follows: European Novi Pazar – Rasim Ljajić has 18 seats, Aleksandar Vučić – Serbia Wins has 5 seats, Sandžak People’s Party – Dr Mirsad Derlek has 3 seats.

**Tutin**

The Assembly of Tutin has 37 seats. The Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak - Dr Sulejman Ugljanin holds majority.

The Party of Democratic Action of Sandžak won 55.2 % of the vote; Sandžak Democratic Party (SDP) - 23.9%; Bosniak Democratic Community (BDZ) - 14.9%. Others have not crossed the threshold.

**Sjenica**

The Assembly of Sjenica Municipality is composed of 39 seats, as follows: SDA - 12, BDZ - 11, SDP - 8, URS - 2, GG - 2 and SPS - 4 seats. The government is formed by majority gathered around the SDA Sandžak – Dr. Sulejman Ugljanin.
**Prijepolje**

The Assembly of Prijepolje is composed of 61 seats, as follows: SDP – 13; DPS – 10; SNS – 10; DS-SPS 9; SRS - DSS 8; SDA - 6 and BDZ - 5 seats.

The coalition government is composed by: SNS, DPS, DS-SPS and SRS-DSS.

**Priboj**

The Assembly of Priboj Municipality is composed of 41 seats.

The SNS caucus holds 16 seats, SDP-Rasim Ljajić caucus - 4 seats, SDA- Sulejman Ugljanin 4 seats, SPS - 4 seats, PUPS - 2 seats, New Serbia - 2 seats, SPO – 1 seat, Movement of Socialists Pokret Socijalista - 1 seat, LDP - 2 seats, SDS - 1 seat, BDZ - 1 seat, Dveri - 1 seat, DSS - 2 seats.

The government is formed by majority gathered around the SNS caucus.

**Nova Varoš**

The Assembly of Nova Varoš Municipality is composed of 26 seats.

The Assembly composition: SNS-DSS - 8 seats; DS - 5 seats; SPS - 5 seats; Group of Citizens “New People for Nova Varoš“ - 4 seats; NS - 2 seats; URS - 2 seats; SDP – 1 seat.

The government is formed by the coalition gathered around the SNS-DSS.

The SDA and BDZ have two in the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, whereas others have forms the coalition agreements.
APPENDIX 9

Distribution of mandates in local governments in the North of Montenegro

Pljevlja

Bosniak Muslims are a persuasive minority in Pljevlja, and their ethnic parties did not participate in local elections. The Bosniak party made a coalition with DPS. The end result was that DPS, BS and SDP (which acted independently and won one seat), after a number of years have won local power in Pljevlja. The ethnic composition of Pljevlja is as follows: Bosniaks 6.91%; Muslims 5.65%; Serbs 57.7% and Montenegrins 24.34%.

The coalition of the Socialist People’s Party of Montenegro and the Movement for Pljevlja Dr. Novica Stanić – Dr. Milojie Pupović won 28.2% and 10 seats; United Serbian List 0.8% votes and no seat; Democratic Front 19.8% or 7 seats; Coalition for European Pljevlja – Milo Đukanović 45.4% or 17 seats; SDP 4.3% or 1 seat.

Rožaje

Rožaje BDZ won 3.5% votes or 1 seat; SDP 13.8% or 4 seats; For European Rožaje Milo Đukanović 34.6% or 12 seats; Bosniak Party 47.4% or 17 seats.

Plav

DF 7.1% or 2 seats, For European Plav Milo Đukanović 32.4 or 11 seats, SDP 21.2% or 7 seats, Civic Initiative Hoti Iber 1 seat, SNP 9.5% or 3 seats, Bosniak Party 22.9% or 7 seats.

Petnjica

Petnjica DPS 45.6% or 15 seats, Socialist People’s Party 3% or 1 seat, Bosniak Party 13.5% or 4 seats, SDP 34.55 or 11 seats.
Gusinje

United for Gusinje DPS-BS-SDP 39% or 12 seats, DUA 7.9% or 2 seats, Coalition for Gusinje Dr. Rusmin Laličić 12 seats, Democratic Alliance in Montenegro 12.6% or 4 seats, Albanian Alliance 7.4% or 2 seats. DPS-BS-SDP is in power, but the municipality is blocked because one DPS representative transferred to opposition.

The municipality is fully depending on the Equalization Fund. It has been blocked for more than a year, and in this period the local assembly was not convened.

Bijelo Polje

Bosniak Party 6% or 2 seats, DBZ Truth is Coming, Akovo Moje 1.4% and no seat, SDP 12.8% or 5 seats, DPS 47.1% or 19 seats, Democratic Front 11.8%, SNP 16.5% or 7 seats, Bijelo Polje list United for Our Town 1.8% with no seat.

Berane

For Victory of Berane DPS Milo 43.7% or 17 seats, Bosniak Party Berane 2.0% Berane, SDP for a Better Berane, 2.7%, Positive Montenegro 2.2% with no seat, Healthy Berane, SNP-Democratic Front 18 seats.
APPENDIX 10

Relations between minority political parties and the share of national minorities in total population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National minority</th>
<th>The total number of persons belonging to the national minority: expressed in %</th>
<th>The total number of political parties registered in 2012</th>
<th>The total number of political parties registered in 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bosniaks</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanians</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vlachs</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croats</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegrins</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonians</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorani</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russins</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanians</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovaks</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgarians</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunjevci</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11.83%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


145Source: Danas, 30 January 2013

APPENDIX 11

*Cooperation Agreement between the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) and the Bosniak Party (BP) on the Cross-Border Region of Sandžak*

*Cooperation Agreement*

Between the Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro, represented by Milo Djukanovic, President, and the Bosniak Party, represented by Rafet Husovic, President of the Presidency, signed on 23 March 2006.

This Agreement applies to cooperation between the Parties in the pre-referendum and post-referendum period concerning the protection of the rights of Bosniaks in Montenegro.

1. The Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro will take all necessary measures to ensure that the law governing minority rights in Montenegro is adopted by 30 April 2006, i.e. before holding a referendum on the state status of Montenegro.
   a) This law will include a provision to reserve 3 seats in the Parliament for representatives of the Bosniak parties, pursuant to the Law on Minority Rights and the Election Law.
   b) In the assembly of local government, one seat will be reserved for representatives of ethnic minorities representing 1 to 5% of the population and 3 seats for minorities representing over 5%, pursuant to the Election Law.
2. The Government of Montenegro will ensure and affirm the proportional representation of Bosniaks in all institutions and at all levels of government in Montenegro, as soon as possible.
3. Decentralization of power in Montenegro.
4. Implementation of most of the standards laid down by the European Charter of Local Self-Government as a precondition for ensuring balanced economic development of Montenegro. In this context, Sandžak is seen as a multi-ethnic, multi-confessional and multicultural cross-border region, with a transparent border that would be a bridge of connection, and not a wall of separation between Serbia and Montenegro.
5. Enable representatives of Bosniak parties to participate in the work of committees responsible for drafting and enactment of:
   a) Constitution of Montenegro;
   b) Law on Minority Rights;
   c) Law on Election of Members of Parliament.
6. The Parties agree that the future Constitution of Montenegro will ensure the civil character of an independent Montenegro and no preference shall be given to any nation; should Montenegro be constituted as a state of nation, any time in the future, all autohtonomous nations will be enumerated, including the Bosniak nation.
7. Until the adoption of the new Constitution of the Republic of Montenegro, the protection of national rights of Bosniaks in Montenegro will be ensured in accordance with the Law on Minority Rights.
8. Bosniak population in Montenegro should be guaranteed the right to choose and use national symbols and to celebrate national holidays.
9. Bosniak population should be guaranteed the right to use the Bosniak language in official use in accordance with law.

10. The program and the relevant administrative authorities media (radio, television and the print media) established by the Republic, to provide an appropriate number of hours for broadcasting information, cultural, obrazovog, sports and entertainment programs in minority languages and their members, such as program contents related to life, tradition and culture of minorities and obeybjudjuju financial resources for funding those program contents.

Podgorica, 23 March 2006

Bosniak Party, President of the Presidency

Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro, President
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