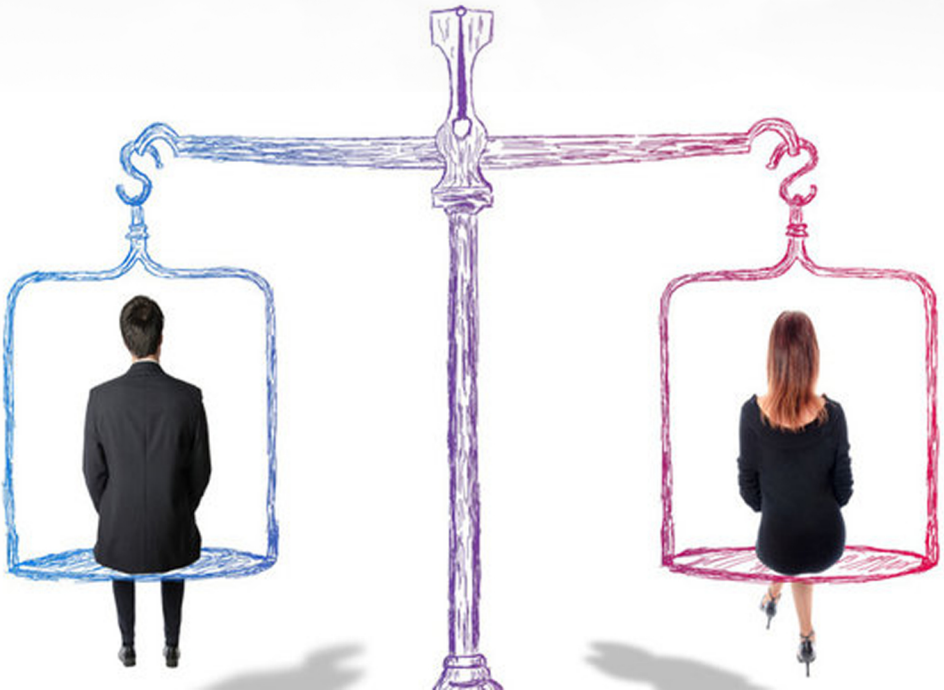




**WOMEN IN BIH POLITICAL SOCIETY:**

# **EQUALITY OR ILLUSION?**



If society is poor - the position of women is getting worse, because we all know that poverty has a woman's face. Women keep family safe of poverty. Women create a better life for the family and all thanks to the fact that they work a lot.

If woman wants to be in politics she can do it only when she raise the kids, complete all obligations and housework, and this is a result of the low percentage of women in politics. Based on the percentage of how many women are in Parliament, the legislative and executive authorities, we can see the true level of democracy in society.

Women spread positive energy and contribute with their work at many ways, because the situation in the society they arrange carefully as they take care of family and home. Also, a woman contributes and takes care of the company / institution where she works.

If woman wants to take leadership position and have the power to decide, she needs a lot of power, energy, knowledge, support, motivation and self-confidence. Political work requires continuity. In BiH there is the phenomenon of "glass ceiling" that prevents women to reach the centers of power and decision-making.

Women who put career on first place are very often seen negatively in society, as a cold and calculated. The BiH society the traditional roles and tasks of women are leading: wives and housewives. However, opportunities have shown that women are responsible, organized conscientious and quite successfully at performing tasks as men.

***Level of culture is determined by the relation toward woman.***

*Jean de La Bruyère,  
French philosopher and moralist*

## **Women in society: equality or illusion?**

At the beginning of the 21st century, after a long and exhaustive struggle for equality between women and men the situation is still more favorable than 150 years ago. However, today we face the questions: where is the place of the woman? Is it in kitchen or in office? Why woman could not be able to work in both places? The aim of these texts is that from a sociological and psychological point of view we examine how far the women arrived in the struggle for their rights, putting the focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina. Rating by international research for Bosnian society is not at all encouraging. Although women have the right to vote, their participation in public life, especially political, is still far from equal with men.

Although many analysts would say that there was remarkable progress in the emancipation and inclusion of women in all spheres of society, it is enough to look at the reality that says quite the opposite: there is still a lot of geographical space where women are in a subordinate position, threatened, and even exposed completely inhuman treatment. The problem are many societies that cultivate traditional and patriarchal values that reduce an equal position of women, so women remain forever trapped in a family, the private sphere, determined to housework and childcare. The woman is seen as a "service provider" to her husband and children as the main caregiver of family members. The logical question: who and with what resources can help a woman to turn the situation in society in her favor? As part of the solution to this complex problem, we can take the activities of individuals, non-governmental sector; actions are presumed movement, civic activities and initiatives, and national strategies and laws. What we focus is: making space for the implementation of respect for women's human rights and the emancipation of women in society.

In BiH, according to the analysis of previous election results, there are a small percentage of women in management positions. We can say that gender equality in BiH is still a myth, as evidenced by facts and numbers of women in the structure of political parties. Women in BiH are facing various forms of discrimination. Women in rural areas and with low levels of education often have to work male, heavy physical jobs because they are forced to fight for family. Very often society lets them to do so difficult jobs and watching them - and this is a form of discrimination. On the other hand, women with higher education, who have a university degree and work experience again, struggle with prejudices and stereotypes: can they properly and professionally do job as well as men? Whether it can get done

as they have a lot of work and commitments around children, home, family? Also, there is a negative trend in BiH society: women who tend to be well educated, because of work and time invested in the education, they fail to start a family, and in a society they are perceived as "unsuccessful" women. This has resulted in a deepening of the conflict between men and women. There are countless forms of discrimination that women put on the margins of social reality. It starts from the earliest moments of birth - the desire of the family for a male child, and continues through early childhood and education of girls so that they can learn "women's jobs" and directs them to the "female" schools. A very serious problem has become directly domestic violence. "Pushing" women at the margins is deepened in the sphere of her life and in economic, political and cultural spheres. More devastating are the fact that during wars, corruption, crime and human trafficking are realized all forms of degradation of women.

In ancient times women were primarily related to household obligations which meant permanent removal from all areas of public life, political and economic participation. Notwithstanding the efforts of international institutions, foundations and projects to achieve greater success in the emancipation of women, there are many areas where women have to cross the long and arduous path to equal status. In Bosnia and Herzegovina the cause of this are uneven distribution of power and traditional cultures, patriarchal consciousness and economic underdevelopment of society.



In our country, for years there have been represented a traditional belief that society has imposed, and in which man has a stronger position, and is initially set as "better and stronger" than women. The position of women in all aspects of society is guaranteed in BiH numerous legislative frameworks, which unfortunately represent only a normative ideal. This state of women's human rights is primarily caused by patriarchal legacy, communist past and transitional period, which contributes putting women in other plan. The collective consciousness of people constructed under the veil of traditionalism and stereotyped concept, puts women in the position of mothers, wives and housewives necessary. In the last decade BiH do a lot in the legal framework. There are signed a number of human rights conventions, standards and guidelines that were recommended by UN and EU. The law prohibits direct and indirect discrimination against women in public life, but all of this in reality is bad or not carried out, and the situation is exacerbated by the complicated social system, and the indifference of the authorities to fulfill their obligations. Women in BiH, although they are clear majority of the population (51%), they are not even close to being the percentage present in the field of labor and social relations. Of the total number of unemployed in BiH, 50.10% were women. Employers are reluctant to women justifying it expensive operating costs, because women are able to use sick leave to care for children, or possibly the use of maternity leave. Women in BiH in job searching are often exposed to various forms of sexual harassment, mobbing, which is often sent by their superiors. There is also a discrepancy between the salaries of men and women, which is absurd indicator when it comes to income and certain benefits for work of equal value. Women continue to suffer discrimination in access to employment and social protection mechanisms. Violence has increased in recent years; a "gender mainstreaming" is still at an embryonic level. Violence in BiH is a major problem, most often manifested through physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence. Unfortunately in BiH public perception of violence and stereotypical reflection is still lacking of understanding of the problem, which is most often caused by economic dependence of weaker sex. The UN Woman BiH said about recently (2013) conducted research among 1,200 young men, of whom 72% approve violence. About 30% of the surveyed youths in BiH consider using force to defend them honor. Research has shown that young men are often violent towards women for low self-esteem, and 10% of them answered affirmative when asked whether they had ever slapped a woman.

## **How is it the position of women in political and public life?**

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a high percentage of educated, entrepreneurial and capable women who are not members of political parties and therefore are not able to become a candidate on the party lists. Political parties usually nominate men and a very small percentage of women candidates. Women are usually at the end of the lists of candidates and therefore have very little chance of being elected. This situation can be changed by increasing awareness, strengthening the capacity of women and the education of the population. Women should be encouraged to gain social and political power of public activities within the political parties, where quota is an important tool for increasing participation in decision-making processes.

By understanding the general context and the state of public awareness of the position of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina and we understand the ways in which their social status can be quickly and efficiently improve. Although the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which regulates, promotes and protects gender equality, guarantee equal opportunities to all persons in public and private spheres, and should prevent direct and indirect discrimination based on sex, available statistical and other data show that women in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains at a disadvantage compared to men.

When we talk about Bosnia and Herzegovina, we are talking about a country where almost half of women older than 15 years survived a particular type of violence, which is a direct consequence of the perception that a woman has a subordinate position in the family and society. The most common form of violence was psychological violence, the prevalence of 41.9% throughout life. The second most common type of violence is physical violence and the prevalence of 24.3% during the life, of which 6% related to sexual violence. Statistics show that women do not suffer discrimination only in the sphere of human rights but also in the economic sphere.

According to data from Agency for Statistics, a total of 2,987,440 persons are included in the working age population, which is further classified into: employed, unemployed and inactive. The share of women in this number is 51.3%. In the structure of employees is only 39.3% of women, while their share in the structure of the unemployed 42.3%. In the structure of the inactive even 60.8% and it is evident that women are looking for a job for a long time, even 43.8% of those looking for work for more than 120 months. In addition, in this structure we find that 14.3% of women with

university degrees, which is twice the number of men, which is 7.2%. In addition to these general parameters, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian social and political scene is characterized by inadequate regulation in the field of gender policy and the gap between the law and reality. This situation is partly the product of a patriarchal upbringing in which the last word has a man, which also reflects the higher level of confidence that suggests men in general and local elections. Holders of traditional patriarchal consciousness in Bosnia and Herzegovina see political activity, as a rule, as a male activity.<sup>1</sup>

Prejudices and cultural perceptions of the role of women, economic dependency and neglect institutions make it difficult to access and participation of women in politics. The imposition of double standards, of one for women and another for men, placing them in separate spheres - a woman related with home and family, while the man is available to the entire spectrum of social activities - comes exclusively women to their reproductive function. It is not rare belittling and underestimating the ability and intelligence of those women who choose to make a difference beyond narrow set of social roles and framework, particularly in the direction of political engagement. The result is an extremely unequal distribution of social power between men and women. Women's participation in political life only formally evolved, while de facto stagnation and discrimination against women are in action. Since the quotas for the participation of the sexes increased from 33 to 40%, the situation is somewhat better, but it is far from satisfactory. Women were excluded from the resolution of the most important socio-political issues. Proponents believe that quotas: Quotas do not discriminate, but to take them beyond the real barriers that prevent women to get a place in politics; women have the right to be equally represented and represented in the bodies of state authority; experiences of women are essential in political life; Women are just as qualified as men; quotas contribute to the democratization process in view of the fact that the process of nominating make transparent and formalized.

At the entity level there are especially disordered and unequal laws in the field of labor law, social security and health care for women and mothers. The consequences of inefficient existing legislation in these spheres affects not only women but also men, children and families in general, which in

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<sup>1</sup> Policy Paper *Jačanje uloge žena u javnom i političkom životu Bosne i Hercegovine*, Association of Legal Institute BiH, Sarajevo 2016, available at: <http://glasajzazenu.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Jacanje-uloge-zena-u-javnom-i-politickom-zivotu-BiH.pdf> [10.11.2016.]

perspective leads to a number of negative consequences for the entire BiH society.

The fact is that women make up 52% of the electorate in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that the number of women in legislative bodies at state and entity level does not even reflect the percentage. Notably small number of women in political life and monitors their under-representation in the media and promotional campaigns. In Bosnia and Herzegovina for the election of members of Parliament at the state and entity levels leaves are half-open, which allows voters, in addition to voting for the political party of their choice, their vote and the preferred candidate or candidates on the list proposed by this political party. About 70% of parliamentary positions are allocated through the half-open list that citizens vote, and the remaining 30% of position allocated to the award of compensatory position. The issue here itself arises is whether and to what extent there is confidence the electorate towards women candidates at all, especially if we consider the female population within that body.

The Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina in its composition did not have a single woman since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The situation with the representation of women in executive authorities is not significantly better. From a total of ten president of FBiH from 1994 to 2015, only one woman has performed this function and it was Borjana Krišto (partie HDZ BiH) from 2007 to 2011.<sup>2</sup>



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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



## **Women in politics: what is more important - the number or quality?**

Reports of the Central Election Commission of BiH gave disappointing results in the local elections 2016 years: the list of women holders and women candidates for mayors were low. Undemocratic parties proved to be an obstacle to greater political participation of women. A list of causes is endless when it comes to BiH society: general conservatism of society, thinking that the "policy" is strictly a man's job, and mistrust and misunderstanding that the majority of BiH political parties show toward women in their member structures.

This year, for the position of mayor of the nominated only 26 women out of 417 candidates, this is about 6%. Mostly we find one woman candidate in a male list, the two only in the municipalities of Novi Grad and Odžak. Of the major party most women candidate had SNSD, with 5, followed by DF 4, and so is independent, while the 3 women candidates had SDP and HDZ (two independent, one in a coalition with the HSS). Other smaller parties have one, possibly two, while coalition SDA-SBB does not have any women candidate. Currently we have at political function in local governments only 3.8 percent of women.<sup>3</sup>

Election in 2016 showed repeated practice that women are represented only minimally as needed to comply with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH. The women are on electoral lists just for the quota, not because someone appreciates their quality or what their party believes in their capabilities. Law was complying with the minimum and just during elections. What is particularly worrying is that women agree to play such a role.

### ***Overview of the representation of women in political life since the 1990s<sup>4</sup>***

In the early 90s in Bosnia and Herzegovina were hold first multi-party elections in which prevails the division along ethnic lines through national parties and parties. In such a national political atmosphere percentage of women in political life was negligible. After elections in 1990, women took very small number of functions at all levels - in the Parliament of Bosnia

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<sup>3</sup> *Da li su žene u politici samo radi broja?* Article: 22.08.2016. Available at: <http://www.oslobodjenje.ba/vijesti/bih/da-li-su-zene-u-politici-samo-radi-broja/178022> [10.11.2016.]

<sup>4</sup> Research: *Zastupljenost žena u politici: Hrvatska, Srbija, Crna Gora, Makedonija, BiH*, InfoHouse, Sarajevo 2015. Available at: <http://infohouse.ba/doc/Zastupljenost-zena-u-politici.pdf> [10.11.2016.]

and Herzegovina of the 240 function, women took only seven function (2.92%), and at the local level of 6299 took place only of 315 (5%).

After the war, due to existential problems and trying to survive biologically, women did not even have time for political engagement. For this reason in 1996, the first post-war elections at the state level, has not significantly changed the representation of women. Thus, in the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament of 42 functions one function won women (2.38%), in the House of Representatives of the FBiH Parliament's women went seven out of 140 functions (5%), and the Parliament of the Republic of Srpska women are ranked sixth of the possible 106 (1.89%). A similar situation occurred at the local elections in 1997 when the representation of women in the FBiH municipalities was 6.15%, and in the Republic of Srpska 2.4%.

A gender quota is a topic that occupies the attention of the public from the time 1998 when it was introduced in the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was particularly interesting in an election year, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina very often due to the fact that the general and local elections are organized every four years, and since it is not held in the same calendar year elections have practically every two years. Article 4.19 paragraph 4 of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina provides for the mandatory election quota:

*Each candidate list includes both male and female. The minority gender candidates shall be distributed on the candidates list in the following manner: at least one candidate of the less represented gender among the first two candidates, two candidates of the less represented gender among the top five candidates and three candidates of the less represented gender among the first eight candidates, etc. Number of minority gender candidates shall be at least equal to the total number of candidates on the list, divided by three, rounded up to the higher integer.<sup>5</sup>*

By the same law are provided the open lists that allow voters to direct vote for individual candidates and candidates on the list of specific political parties, coalitions, lists of independent candidates, or independent candidates.

Women's quota in BiH was first introduced after the local elections in 1997 by the OSCE Provisional Election Commission, which meant that each

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<sup>5</sup> Research: *World cafe Gender kvota u Bosni i Hercegovini*, FES, Sarajevo 2013. Available at: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/sarajevo/09706.pdf> [10.11.2016.]

political party must on the electoral lists put at least three women and among of top ten candidates. So at the next elections in 1998 the situation changed significantly in favor of greater representation of women while in the House of Representatives of the Parliament of BiH women received 26% of the positions in the House of Representatives of the FBiH 15% of the positions in the National Assembly of RS 22.8% of the positions, and the cantonal levels of 18.46% positions. The elections held in 2000 introduced the model of open lists which again reduces the chances of women to gain support traditionalist-oriented Bosnian towns. However, the women manage to survive on the political scene with the two position in the House of Representatives of the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina (4.76%), 24 position in the House of Representatives of the FBiH (17.4%) and 14 positions in the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia (14.86%).<sup>6</sup>

According to the results of the general elections of 2010, in the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of 42 members was nine women, and the House of Peoples of the 15 members were two women (13.3%). Only one woman (5.8%) was appointed as minister of the Federal Government of 17 ministerial positions. House of Representatives of the Federal Parliament of 98 representatives, of which 22 are women (22.4%) and in the House there were 14 women (24.1%) of the total 58 positions. Positive examples of the above-mentioned mandate are the appointment of five women (31%) of the Republic of Srpska, and the appointment of the first woman in the position of Prime Minister of the Republic of Srpska in March 2013. In the RS National Assembly were 18 women (21.7%) representative of the 83 position.

In the period from 2002 to 2012, not general nor in the local elections was not recorded a significant increase in the proportion of women on the certified candidate lists. This share ranged between 35% and maximum 36.82% in 2010, when he recorded the maximum proportion of women on electoral lists. Selection of women in general and local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina was in constant decline from 2002 to 2008, when the proportion of elected women dropped from 20.15% to 14.9% of the total number of selected candidates. In general elections of 2010 this share had increased to 17.37% to the local elections of 2012 again reduced to 16.19% of elected women.

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<sup>6</sup> Research: *Zastupljenost žena u politici: Hrvatska, Srbija, Crna Gora, Makedonija, BiH*, InfoHouse, Sarajevo 2015. Available at: <http://infohouse.ba/doc/Zastupljenost-zena-u-politici.pdf> [10.11.2016.]

### ***Women and political life today<sup>7</sup>***

After Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013 made a huge step forward in terms of harmonization with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, adoption of the Law on Amendments to the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina relating to the provisions governing the work of the body for the conduct of elections as well as provisions governing the certification and nomination of candidates for elections that have been modified in terms of the introduction of the necessity of the existence of 40% of representatives less represented gender, and in view of the position of women on the candidate lists, where the ratio increased from 30% to 40%, so it now: "equal gender representation exists in the case when one of sexes is represented with at least 40% of the total number of candidates on the list", in 2014 for the first time there was a chance for the implementation of this Act, at the General elections held in October 2014.

When it comes to positioning women on candidate lists for the general elections in 2014, it is the result of organized activities of civil sector in the context of improving the socio-economic position of women in BiH society. In addition, in the election cycle there was active promotion of women's role in politics, but not by political subjects than by the civil sector.

When it comes to list, there are three major problems: (1) for women are usually reserved second place on the list, (2) in relation to men, there is disproportionately small number of women at party lists, and (3) men dominate at compensatory list.

### ***BiH Presidency<sup>8</sup>***

For the BiH Presidency there were nominated 17 candidates, of whom only one woman, and for the Serbian member of Presidency but not elected. This however is not surprising, given the current structure of the representative body. Thus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, since independence, and the first general elections in 1996 until today, in the structure of his presidency has never had a women, a number of candidates for this convocation is still at minimum limits.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

## **General elections 2014**

In general elections of 2014 there were elected 19,90% of women at all levels of government. Despite various efforts to women's representation in government increases this year we did not reached a record proportion of women of 20.15% from 2002, and 40% still seems elusive.

### **Results of General elections 2014:**

*The House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH*

<b>Candidat es</b>	<b>Wome n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Elected women</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Candid ate lists</b>	<b>Women - list holder</b>	<b>%</b>
747	306	40,96%	10	23,8 1%	123	13	10,57 %

### **Parliament FBiH**

<b>Candidat es</b>	<b>Wome n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Elected women</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Candda te lists</b>	<b>Women - list holder</b>	<b>%</b>
1337	583	43,60%	21	21,4 3%	187	30	16,04 %

**National Assembly  
RS**

<b>Elected women</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
13	15,66%

Source:  
InfoHouse  
2015:24

When it comes to assemblies of Canton (2014) leads the West Herzegovina Canton (30.43%) while the lowest participation of women is in the Livno Canton (4.6%).

	<b>1990</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>PBIH</b>	2,92	2,38 %	30, 2 %	7,1 %	14,3 %	11,9 %	19,4 %	24,0%
<b>PFBIH</b>	-	5 %	15 %	17,1 %	21,4 %	25,5 %	17,3 %	21,0%
<b>NARS</b>	-	2,4 %	22,8 %	18,1 %	16,9 %	23,0 %	20,5%	16,0%

Source: InfoHouse, 2015: 25

Participation of women, namely the greater participation of women in politics, had a significant impact on changes in public policies. Experience has shown that the impact of women in Parliament depends to a significant number of women, and it is one of the most important changes that the women failed to reach considers the fact that they managed to introduce quotas for the less represented gender, as well as other mechanisms to ensure the representativeness of women. At this point, one of the most

important examples of good practice represents the French government in which after the victory of Francois Hollande, women make up half of the ministerial positions. The introduction of women to half of ministerial positions, considered to be holding pre-election promises of greater opportunities and equality for all.

In addition, the first female majority government is voted after the 2012 elections in Finland. Of the 20 ministers positions in government 12 were women. The introduction of a gender perspective in public policy, gender analysis and gender budgeting as a tool of policy, also have consequences of greater participation of women in politics (especially at international level) and their continuing cooperation with civil society and experts / activists. The introduction of a gender perspective today is the third global strategy (in addition to equality in law and equal opportunities policy) to achieve gender equality.

As for the situation in the region which is awarded with low participation of women in political life, the primary responsibility for increasing women's political participation is on political parties. They deal with issues of gender equality declarative and very conservatively, usually limiting women to their reproductive role. Politicians in the media often talk about women using the stereotypical models as those that largely borne by the state (student, mothers / mothers) rather than as individuals who contribute to the development of the country (entrepreneurs, experts, scholars). Therefore, it is necessary to take the system steps in order to achieve long-term changes.

<b>Country</b>	<b>State/local level</b>	<b>Percentage of elected women</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	Croatian Parliament	26 %
	Local level	17,7 %
<b>Serbia</b>	National Assembly	33 %

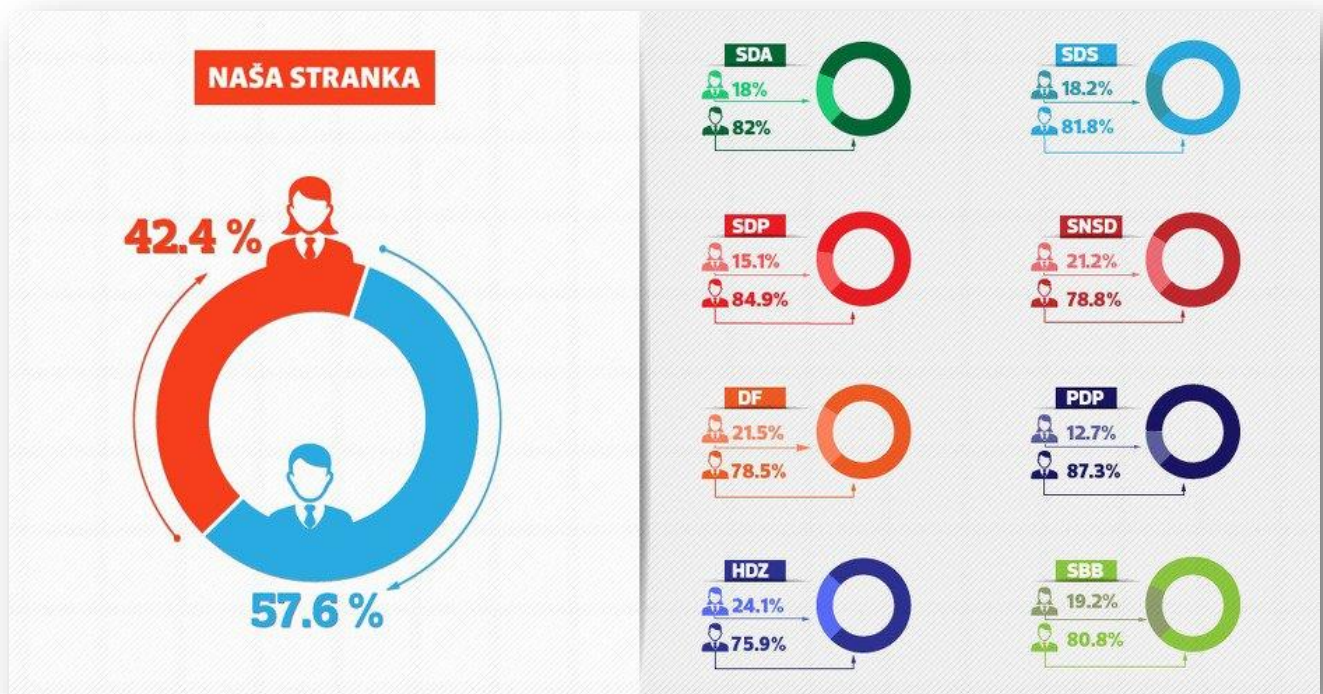
	Local level	29 %
<b>Montenegro</b>	Montenegro Parliament	16 %
	Local level	15 %
<b>Macedonia</b>	Parliament	34,1 %
	Local level	30, 2 %
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	BiH Parliament	24 %
	Local level	17,1 %

Izvor: InfoHouse, 2015: 26

Naša stranka has published an analysis of the representation of women in the total number of candidates elected in local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As announced, women make up 43% of the total number of elected candidates in Naša stranka. Behind them are the Hrvatska demokratska zajednica (HDZ) with 24.1%, followed by the Demokratska fronta (DF) with 21.5%, Savez nezavisnih socijaldemokrata (SNSD) with 21.2% and Savez za bolju budućnost (SBB) with 19 , 2%. The smallest percentage of women elected in the local elections was from Partija demokratskog progresa (PDP) and to 12.7% of Socijaldemokratska partija



(SDP) of 15.1%, the Stranka demokratske akcije (SDA), 18% of Srpska demokratska stranka (SDS) 18.2 %.



Source: photo Naša stranka

The fact is that the women politician does not have to be overtly feminist and advocate women's rights in order to be elected or delegated official, but it is also a fact that women in politics cannot survive without the feminist women's policy, as long as those considered to be equal with their counterparts and to it is enough just to make a statement and use language arguments. Sexism, misogyny, discrimination, bullying and other forms of exclusion of women do not use language of arguments, because if they do, definitely they would not survive. Therefore, a lot of challenges in front of women who are currently active on the political scene, especially from those whose political career just started. As a significant part of many years active politicians are retiring or withdrawing from BiH politics, so they are coming new, younger leaders, full of energy, willingness and openness to change.

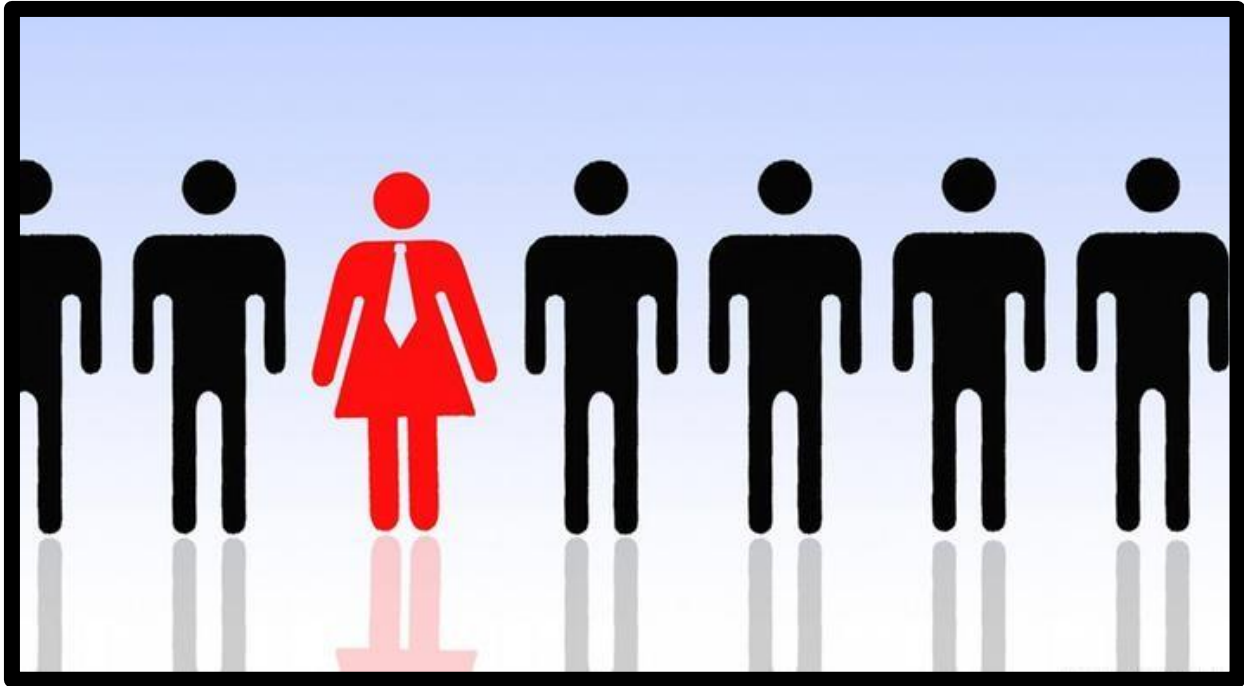


When looking at the development over the past 20 years it can be a reason to ask the question: whether we reached gender equality when it comes to political life in Bosnia and Herzegovina? Last 20 years can be declared as debacle. BiH has never had a woman member of the Presidency, never had the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, nor had a president at the head of a single relevant party. The politics was and still is a male thing. People who have a positive view on the world will appoint progress that has occurred. Of less than 3% women politician at early nineties we climbed to the representation of over 20%. Women slowly but surely winning position and all are present in politics, government and parties. The reality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, is neither black nor white.

Women have not only been ignored at the beginning of the war, during the conclusion of the contract of the Dayton Peace Agreement, they have to this day very often completely excluded from political life and decision-making process. Government of Zenica-Doboj and Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, were formed in 2015 without a single women minister in its composition, and that is the best way to confirm situation. Women are still often excluded from the executive, and not participate in key negotiations such as the negotiations for the implementation of the Sejdic and Finci verdict against Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013 and 2014, and negotiations to form a government after the general elections in 2014. The adoption of the Law on Gender Equality, establishing institutional gender mechanisms at the state and entity level and the introduction of gender quotas in the election system of Bosnia and Herzegovina have established a solid foundation that today no one can deny.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> 1995-2015 *Žene i politički život u postdejtonskoj Bosni i Hercegovini*, SOC; Agency for Gender Equality of BiH, Sarajevo 2015. Available at: [http://www.diskriminacija.ba/sites/default/files/node\\_file\\_upload/1995-2015-zene-i-politicki-zivot-u-postdejtonskoj-bosni-i-hercegovini\\_za-web\\_0.pdf](http://www.diskriminacija.ba/sites/default/files/node_file_upload/1995-2015-zene-i-politicki-zivot-u-postdejtonskoj-bosni-i-hercegovini_za-web_0.pdf) [10.11.2016.]



## Conclusions

Studies that dealt with the barriers that women in politics faced have identified two types of aggravating circumstances. The first kind of obstacles they women are facing entering politics:

- Private obligations at home and family;
- Prejudices about the place of women in society;
- Lack of family support;
- Lack of self-confidence;
- Lack of financial resources.

There are additional barriers that create pressure on women when they are on the electoral lists:

- Lack of support from political parties;
  - The lack of experience in public activities;
  - Lack of support from the electorate;
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- Lack of support from other women and men in politics;
- Lack of support from the media.

Hegemonic form of masculinity is present in all state institutions and in all democratic procedures, electoral system, political culture and the media, and it effect on the absence of women at all levels of political participation and representation. One answer is in the way how political parties recruit women as election candidates.

Direct discrimination is manifest when men network and exclude women from political channel, which brings into question a crucial prerequisite for their political candidacy. Indirect discrimination is reflected in the wrong perception or misconception that a woman is less able than men to perform leading political functions.

The most common three prejudices about women in political parties are that women are not interested in politics because that is traditionally male profession. This prejudice is hard to break and most easily repels women from politics. Another prejudice is that women in decision-making does not come by the rules (as men do), but his female models. The third is that women do not know what politics is.

A woman who is just starting to become involved in politics is easy to intimidate with one of these prejudices. There are two basic levels at which political parties can operate in order to increase the political participation of women: the party and institutional. In addition to the party and the institutional level, it is important and public support, which includes the media and other social actors, creators of public opinion.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Research: *Opšti izbori 2014: (Ne)Vidljive žene*, Government of Republic of Srpska Gender Center – Center for gender equality, Banja Luka 2015. Available at: <http://www.ravnopravnors.com/Opsti%20izbori%202014%20NEvidljive%20zene.pdf> [10.11.2016.]



**Center for social research "Global Analitika" is a non-profit and non-governmental organization, which was established in order to engage in empowering the community and to support the creation of conditions for positive security environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Global Analitika from the very beginning of the official work recognized necessity of promoting gender equality, with special emphasis in B&H political society.**

**Our mission is to improve the quality of life, safety of life through empowering communities and building a society based on equality, justice and equity.**

**Global Analitika was founded by young people, members of the academic community - professors, assistants and students from faculties of universities across Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as citizens, who aim to use their knowledge and experience contribute to efforts for gender equality, the rule of law, as well as providing a secure environment, by preventing all forms of human rights violations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

**The scope of work of organization are social research, analysis, education and empowerment and capacity building of nongovernmental organizations in promotion of democratic values and building a society based on gender equality.**