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Installing Democracy in the Balkans?

Analysis of Political Party Assistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo

PhD dissertation

by

Maja Nenadović

University of Amsterdam
Installing Democracy in the Balkans?

Analysis of Political Party Assistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus
prof.dr. D.C. van den Boom
ten overstaan van een door het college voor promoties
ingestelde commissie,
in het openbaar te verdedigen in de Agnietenkapel
op donderdag 8 november 2012, om 12:00 uur

door

Maja Nenadović

geboren te Zabok, Joegoslavië
Promotiecommissie

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Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen
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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Alfred Mozer Stichting     AMS
Alliance for the Future of Kosovo    AAK
Alliance of Independent Social Democrats   SNSD
Bosnia-Herzegovina     BiH
Croatian Democratic Party     HDZ
Dayton Peace Agreement     DPA
Democraten 66 (Dutch social liberal party)     D66
Democratic League of Dardania     LDD
Democratic League of Kosovo     LDK
Democratic Party of Kosovo     PDK
European Union     EU
European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo     EULEX
European Union Special Representative     EUSR
Federation Bosnia-Herzegovina     FBiH
Freedom of Information Act     FOIA
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung     FES
Friedrich Naumann Stiftung     FNS
Get Out the Vote     GOTV
Heinrich Boll Stiftung     HBS
International Civilian Office     ICO
International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia     ICTY
International Democracy Initiative     IDI
International Republican Institute     IRI
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung     KAS
Kosovo Liberation Army     KLA
National Democratic Institute     NDI
National Endowment for Democracy  NED
Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy  NIMD
New Kosovo Alliance  AKR
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  ODIHR
Office of the High Representative  OHR
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe  OSCE
Partij van de Arbeid (Dutch Labour Party)  PvdA
Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina  SBiH
Party of Democratic Action  SDA
People’s Party Work for Betterment  NSRzB
Provisional Institutions of Self-Government  PISG
Reformist Party ORA  ORA
Republika Srpska  RS
Serbian Democratic Party  SDS
Social Democratic Party  SDP
Special Representative of the Secretary General  SRSG
Training of Trainers  ToT
United Nations  UN
United Nations Mission in Kosovo  UNMIK
United Nations Security Council Resolution  UNSCR
United States Agency for International Development  USAID
Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy)  VVD
Westminster Foundation for Democracy  WFD
Abstract

This thesis examines the effects of political party assistance provided in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996 – 2008) and Kosovo (1999 – 2008) and concludes that this type of democracy assistance comes with more challenges and risks than opportunities. The conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo occupied the headlines throughout the 1990s. As two particularly bloody episodes of Yugoslavia’s demise, they demanded attention from international organizations, governments, media and scholarly circles. Heavily involved in stopping the wars, the international community assumed an active role in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo’s post-conflict reconstruction. They set out to convert them into functioning states through fostering democratic governance institutions, rule of law, free market economy, civil society and independent media.

Democracy promotion and democracy assistance have in the past two decades become a prominent element in foreign policy of many Western countries. Democracy was identified as the desired end goal of post-conflict reconstruction effort in the Balkans, and aiding the spread of democracy became one of the main pillars of the international administrations mandated with this task. Democratization in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo was thus heavily influenced by the fact that they were placed under transitional international administration. They represent cases of unprecedented external actor intervention in transition processes.

One of the ways in which international organizations tried to install democracy in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo was through assisting the development of their political parties. As specific type of democracy assistance, party aid sought to strengthen, internally democratize and in general organizationally develop political parties to serve as catalysts, rather than inhibitors of the internal democratization processes. However, political elites in both countries have received much critique for their behavior and functioning, and political parties are considered a major part of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo’s problem-ridden path to democracy.

This research contributes to filling several existing gaps in literature. Political party assistance has not been sufficiently explored within the domain of democratization and democracy promotion studies; the aid focused on parties is entirely omitted from analyses of post-conflict reconstruction and statebuilding processes. This study also provides insight into scarcely researched subject of political party development in aftermath of war; finally, it details development of political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo which so far have not received much attention from academic circles. By drawing on original working plans of international party assistance organizations, 166 interviews in centers of both party aid policy origin (Washington D.C., Berlin, The Hague, London) and its implementation (Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka, Prishtina, Mitrovica) and through participant observation and survey questionnaire, this research provides original empirical information and analysis of the never before investigated world of international aid to political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996 – 2008) and Kosovo (1999 – 2008).
Detailing the party assistance provision in these two countries during their post-conflict, internationally administered statebuilding period and then evaluating the extent of the role it played in their overall post-conflict democratization illustrates the complexity and tensions inherent in this process. Research reveals how in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the assistance was geared heavily towards removing the nationalist parties from power and installing the moderate ones, in hopes of supporting democratization. The result was an example of the law of unintended consequences at work: party assistance led to the empowerment of a moderate-party-turned-nationalist and ultimately obstructive to the democratization and peacekeeping process. In Kosovo, the party assistance organizations effectively helped build parties from scratch, as Kosovo did not have functioning political parties prior to the international intervention. At the same time, in spite of the extensive assistance they received, most analyses and public perception surveys list political parties at the top of the list of corrupt institutions in the newest country on European soil. Finally, this research concludes that in post-conflict countries such as Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, building political parties with the aim of supporting democratic development comes with many challenges and risks. The lesson to take home is that in such contexts, political party assistance may prove ineffectual and worse yet, potentially aggravating to democracy’s development.
Acknowledgements

[“‘Why on Earth would you do that to yourself?’”]
[Sine, šta ti je to trebalo?”]
– question to author by taxi driver in Sarajevo, after hearing the subject matter of the PhD research

From the very beginning of this research, it was obvious that I was personally involved with my subject. Investigating political elites in the Balkans unavoidably meant dissecting their role in the unmaking of Yugoslavia, the only country that I could ever conceive myself a national of. As I embarked upon this emotional rollercoaster, I was lucky to encounter many individuals without whom this journey would have been lonely and impossibly hard to complete. Merely mentioning them does not do justice to their support in this process, but I hope it nevertheless symbolically conveys my gratitude: Abigail, Aes, Ahmed, Aleksandar, Andrea, Anna, Benjamin, Bridget, Daniel, Danijel, Dieuwerke, Elisabeth, Hajra, Hamza, Haro, Heleen, Jelena, Katie, Krenar, Kurt, Laura, Leela, Linda, Milada, Paša, Scott, Sylvie, Vedrana, Willem, Žuja. Paqe, whose life I saved not knowing only weeks later she would be the one to save mine, deserves a special thank you for teaching me how to dig fearlessly. My family has also shown immense understanding in tolerating my incessant travels and absences, so I thank them here for their patience and grace.

I am indebted to Anna and Johannes for helping me out with processing and analysis of the survey questionnaire quantitative data. Mirela’s and Mira’s assistance in transcribing some of the voice-recorded interviews has been both comical and invaluable. My colleagues Marlene Spoerri-Joksić and Max Bader provided comments on the early drafts of the dissertation and we shared some memorable joint field research experiences: I learned a lot from both of them, and consider myself lucky to have been a part of our research team.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the help and openness of all the 166 interviewees from various democracy promotion, party-aid organizations and political parties I had the chance to talk with. Here I especially single out the staff of the National Democratic Institute, who were most helpful during my field research and who expressed genuine interest in the research results and in improving the work of their organization. Furthermore, staff of the Alfred Mozer Stichting and VVD’s and D66 international departments were kind enough to invite me to several conferences and trainings that made participant observation possible. I also gratefully acknowledge the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) for providing funding for this research within the framework of the project ‘International intervention, democracy and

* Literal translation: ‘What did you need that for?’

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political parties: the external dimension of democratization processes in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union.’

Dr. Annette Freyberg-Innan and prof. Marieke de Goede I thank for their reading and comments on the earliest drafts of my work. My gratitude also extends to Nena Vrkić-Tromp who offered highly constructive critique on the first five chapters of the dissertation. I am indebted to Thomas Carothers for providing the ‘theory’ or state-of-the-art introduction on the subject of party assistance, but moreover for his valuable suggestions and advice during my field research in Washington D.C. My second supervisor prof. Peter Burnell always provided insightful comments and constructive critiques on my work, and was thus instrumental in improving my focus as well as argumentation. Finally, my prolific supervisor prof. André Gerrits I thank for his guidance, patience and overall support throughout the PhD experience. The final nudge I needed to get this dissertation completed came in various shapes and forms from Dima, Andrea, Vedrana, prof. Chandler, prof. Russell, Urša, Leela, Mirjana, Anna M., Barry & Fiona, iDEal & HERMES – and for that, I am deeply grateful. Any mistakes or omissions that remain in this dissertation are mine alone.

Maja Nenadović
Budapest, September 2011
Note on Terminology

Throughout this dissertation, Bosnia-Herzegovina is referred to by its acronym BiH. The three constituent peoples i.e. the three major ethnic groups living in BiH are referred to as Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks. At times, when citing interviewees or other sources, I use the affix ‘Bosnian’ (e.g. Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Croats), though it is important to note that some interviewees’ expressed strong objections to this terminology. In the cases when ‘Serbs’ and ‘Croats’ refers to inhabitants of BiH’s neighboring states Serbia and Croatia, this distinction is made clear in the text. The two entities of BiH are referred to as the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (abbreviated as FBiH) and the Republika Srpska (RS). ‘Kosovo’ refers to the once autonomous territory that used to be a province of Serbia but that has proclaimed independence on February 17, 2008, becoming Republic of Kosovo. The terms Kosovo Albanians and Kosovar Albanians are used in reference to the Albanian ethnic group living in Kosovo, while for the Serbs living in Kosovo the term Kosovo Serbs is used in this dissertation. Spelling in the original language(s) is used when referring to the names of places and individuals. Finally, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is referred to as (the former) Yugoslavia.
Prologue

Back in 2006, I was working in the Music Therapy Research and Education Centre (‘MUSERS’) in Mostar, BiH. This non-profit organization offered music therapy to children with special needs, and to youth suffering from (secondary) war-related trauma issues. My job as development manager was to raise funds for the organization’s work, and I grew increasingly frustrated with the extensive amounts of donor funds going into promoting democracy in BiH, with little or no funds dedicated to psychosocial assistance for its citizens. This, to me, seemed counterintuitive at the time: I strongly felt that traumatized people did not care for democracy and that the best chances for setting a fertile ground for its eventual development in this post-conflict country would be to first work on the psychosocial health of its citizens. Moreover, living in the divided city of Mostar ensured a continuous exposure to an overdose of ethnic nationalist politics put forth by the main Bosniak and Croat political parties. I grew amazed that the country managed to function at all – not thanks to, but in spite of its political elite and leaders. Knowing about the amount of funds that were poured into democratizing BiH, and puzzled by the apparent lack of impact of those initiatives, I set out to learn more about the effects of international political party assistance on the political elites that were, in my opinion, at the core of the post-conflict democratization plethora of problems.

Very soon into the PhD research, it became apparent that I was required to navigate a minefield of assumptions about the nature of democracy, the motives behind its promotion, opinions and beliefs about its value and the (detrimental) legacy of the previous system of governance in BiH and Kosovo. ‘Democracy’ meant many things to many people, and treating the term loosely was a breeding ground for misunderstandings. To illustrate, my first visit to the U.S. in spring of 2007, for interviews with State Department and political institutes’ staff, got off to a confusing start at the Dulles International Airport Customs in Washington D.C. When asked about the purpose behind my visit, and the business visa, I explained I was a researcher investigating democracy promotion. The customs officer froze his shuffling between papers and writing, slowly raised his eyes to meet mine, leaned over and conspiratorially whispered, “You investigate promoting democracy in America?” This reaction, in turn, got me profoundly confused, and I corrected him, “No, I research what you Americans do abroad, you know - spread democracy in other countries, and all?” At hearing this, the customs officer looked dejected, and as he handed me my passport back, he muttered, “Someone should seriously do it here.” George Bush Jr. was at the time in his second term, and the changes instituted in the domestic legislation following the September 11 attacks as well as the U.S. administration’s spread of democracy worldwide had received quite a backlash during his time in office.

Next to navigating the minefield of assumptions and differing understandings and interpretations of ‘democracy’ and opinions of what functions political parties were supposed to fulfill in such a political system, I was also faced with the precariousness of my own thoughts and feelings about the research subject. It is therefore necessary to put in this prologue the following disclaimer for the readers of this dissertation: author’s own

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proneness to optimism/pessimism does influence their choice of yardstick against which the research findings are evaluated. Political elites played one of the key roles in dissolution of Yugoslavia. Though this research did not set out to uncover the causes behind my homeland’s death, the issue nevertheless emerged in most of the interviews I conducted in the field, some of which were even held with individuals who played a role in the conflict or its resolution during the peace talks held in Dayton, Ohio. While I did my utmost best to maintain objectivity and distance from my research subject, at times it was difficult not to fall prey to the very human desire to assign blame for the troubled status quo in both of my case study countries. I therefore implore the readers not to hold this against me. Managing expectations, it turned out, was something that my research subjects – international democracy promotion organizations – needed to learn and apply in their work as much as I did throughout the course of the data collection and analysis.

While the conclusion of this dissertation offers little hope for rehabilitation of post-conflict areas, and for democratization of political parties through international assistance, it needs to be borne in mind that a bloody conflict raged in this region mere two decades ago. Expecting a smooth war-to-peace transition at this point and a fully functioning democratic system of governance is utopian. Democracy itself in today’s dynamic world seems an elusive, moving target – one which even countries we refer to as ‘established’ or ‘consolidated’ democracies have difficulties reaching. As I type these words in Hungary, whose democratic downslide in the past months has raised serious concerns worldwide, even warranting comparisons with 1930s Germany owing to the rise of right-wing extremism, I cannot help but conclude that democracy as a process depends on citizens’ active participation and watchdog vigilance. Without them – all democracies in this world are endangered.

- Maja Nenadović (in Budapest, Hungary: January 2012)
1. INTRODUCTION

The nineties were a tumultuous time in global politics: as countries in the West celebrated the fall of the Berlin wall, the countries of Eastern and Central Europe embarked upon a difficult path of multiple transitions. Almost half a century behind the iron curtain had left its mark on the Baltic states, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Albania, and Romania. A series of free, post-1989 elections resulted in the ousting of communist parties from power by newly elected multiparty, pro-democratic governments. The new political elites also started their countries’ economies on the path of complex transformation from centrally planned to free-market operating principles. These internal processes of democratization received ample support from abroad: the U.S. and Western European countries offered expert advice and financial aid in form of democracy assistance programs.

While each of these new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe underwent its own unique transition, and with varying degrees of success, one country in particular captured the attention of the world: Yugoslavia. The world audiences were left in shock watching the news of shelling, siege of cities, civilian casualties and refugee crises. The country's breakup resulted in several independent states: Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro. The conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992 – 1995) and Kosovo (1998 – 1999), countries central to this research, occupied the headlines throughout the 1990s as two particularly bloody episodes of Yugoslavia’s demise.

Heavily involved in stopping the wars, the international community assumed an active role in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) and Kosovo’s post-conflict reconstruction. They set out to convert them into functioning states through creation of democratic governance institutions and through fostering the development of free market economy, civil society, and independent media. Since the conclusion of conflicts both countries have been under international administration, constituting so far unprecedented forms of modern protectorate. Since the mid-1990s, billions of Euros have been invested in their post-

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1 During the PhD research, several articles and conference papers based on the findings were published. While none of these articles are reproduced here in full, some smaller sections from these published articles have been included in the dissertation text. Full list of author’s published work that relates to the dissertation subject can be found in the Bibliography section.

2 The international recognition of Macedonia’s independence was conditioned by its adoption of provisional name - Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), owing to Greece’s strong objection to the use of the name ‘Macedonia.’ The name dispute is ongoing, despite efforts at mediation by the United Nations and various Western governments.


4 By September 15, 2010 Kosovo’s independence was recognized by 70 of 192 UN member states. Kosovo will be referred to as ‘country’ throughout this dissertation, owing to the fact that author is based at a Dutch university, and the Netherlands is one of the states that has recognized it.
Both countries received ample attention from various analytical circles: journalists, think tank analysts, academics, as well as international organizations’ staff working there were openly calling them ‘social experiments in the making’ – and this is what they in many ways still continue to be.

Much of the research on BiH and Kosovo has focused on evaluating the track record of their international administrations. One important element in post-conflict reconstruction, democratization and statebuilding in BiH and Kosovo – the role of local political elites – has not received comparable attention. Though diminished in stature by the presence and the mandate of international administrations, local political parties and their ability for democratic governance have been repeatedly set as the benchmark of success and a condition for phasing out of the international administration institutions. That both BiH (1996 – 2009) and Kosovo (1999 – 2009) continue to be under international administrations at the time of the writing of this dissertation is a fact that speaks for the elusiveness of that goal.

Domestic political parties and elites in BiH and Kosovo have been on the receiving end of much criticism from international administrations and Western governments footing the bill of the countries’ post-conflict statebuilding and democratization. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, a crisis in domestic politics that erupted in 2006 as result of failed constitutional amendments has bred increasing alarm in the ranks of international spectators. This resulted in newspaper articles with titles, “While Europe Sleeps, Bosnia Seethes,” “The Death of Dayton: How to Stop Bosnia from Falling

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5 Various sources offer conflicting information on the total sums that financed post-conflict reconstruction and statebuilding projects in both countries. The World Bank estimates that in BiH alone, the international community provided $5.1 billion from 1996–2004. (Source: Author’s e-mail communication with a local senior official from the Sarajevo World Bank office, BiH: 27 May 2010.) For Kosovo, the figure most often cited is $3 billion for the decade of international assistance (1999–2009), for e.g. Fatos Bytyci, “After billions in aid, Kosovo still poor and idle,” Reuters, 19 November 2009. Various reports and investigations unearthed the fact that much of the donation aid cannot be accounted for, implying large-scale government embezzlement and fraud, for e.g. Anes Alić, “Bosnia: The donation sieve,” ISN Security Watch, 19 February 2009.

6 For more information, refer to widely cited reports by think tanks International Crisis Group and European Stability Initiative. This approach is also adopted by authors such as David Chandler, Peace Without Politics? Ten Years of State-Building in Bosnia (2006); Bosnia – Faking Democracy After Dayton (1999); Iain King and Whit Mason, Peace at Any Price: How the World Failed Kosovo (2006); Richard Caplan, . International Governance of War-Torn Territories. Role and Reconstruction (2005); Simon Chesterman, You, the People. The United Nations, Transitional Administration, and State-Building (2004).

7 The international community has somewhat euphemistically summarized this benchmark using the term ‘local ownership.’ It ultimately denotes the international expectation that local political elites create and enact responsible and democratic policies and legislation, and for local institutions to function much alike their counterparts in Western, established democracies. The paradox in vocabulary of ‘local ownership’ lies in the fact that domestic political elites – when allowed to function independently – tend to enact exactly the opposite from what international administrations prescribe, which is then used as a warrant for internationals to intervene and overrule these local policies, deemed to be either ‘not in spirit of democracy’ or contrary to peacekeeping principles. Local ownership, finally, is an impossibility in itself for as long as international administrations’ mandates and presence continue in both countries.

Apart,” “Halting the Downward Spiral,” “Bosnia Risks Sliding Into Turmoil,” “Sliding toward the precipice: Europe’s Bosnia Policy,” “A Bosnian powder keg: We are sleepwalking into another Balkan crisis: the EU and the US must take urgent, united action.” Political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the animosity between them have, in other words, pretty much run out of international control. In Kosovo, ever since the international administration took over control in 1999, there have been widespread allegations of corruption and deep-seated links between organized crime sector and the country’s main political parties. Domestic non-governmental organization acting as accountability watchdog, as well as newspaper articles, have warned that international community’s reconstructing and building Kosovo may in fact be assisting the birth of a criminally captured state in the heart of Europe.

Through focusing on the international assistance provided to political parties, this dissertation explores a never before studied aspect of post-conflict reconstruction and statebuilding in the Western Balkans. A constituent element in democracy promotion and democracy assistance programs, party assistance sought to strengthen and empower democratic parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. The aim of this dissertation is the evaluation of that assistance. The following section provides an overview of the central questions in this research. Next is the discussion of the relevance of the proposed study. The third section introduces the key theoretical and research concepts, which is followed by the description of the research design and the methodologies used to gather data. Finally, the overview of dissertation chapters can be found at the end of this introductory chapter.

1.1 Research Problem and Central Questions

This research examines international assistance to political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996 – 2008) and Kosovo (1999 – 2008), carried out within the wider framework of democracy promotion. The central questions of this research examine the primary hypothesis, namely that party aid has a positive, democratizing effect on political parties. Did political party assistance influence party (system) development in BiH and Kosovo,
and if so – in what way? Was this influence beneficial, did it undermine or had little to do with the process of party development in BiH and Kosovo? In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to know what organizations provided party aid in BiH and Kosovo, and what kind of strategies they used in the process. In BiH, the time frame chosen for the study is the beginning of international administration and party assistance in the country in 1996, ending with the municipal elections in October of 2008. In Kosovo, similarly, the starting point is the entry of international forces in late 1999 and the cut-off date is the proclamation of independence in February of 2008.\footnote{16}

One also needs to take into account the specific context of party aid in BiH and Kosovo. These two cases are post-conflict countries where international administrations have far reaching mandates and governance powers, while the work of party assistance organizations falls under the domain of development and democracy assistance work, which is conditioned upon voluntary participation of local partners, in this case political parties. The second hypothesis assumes that the international administration institutions exerted more impact on party (system) development in BiH and Kosovo, than did party assistance organizations. In other words, how have international administrations influenced political party (system) development, and the provision of party assistance in general? It needs to be clarified here that though the research will investigate both international administrators and party aid officials, as these were the major external actors influencing party development in the two cases, the major focus of this dissertation is the analysis of party assistance and organizations providing it, rather than the work of international administrations.\footnote{17}

By focusing exclusively on party assistance organizations, one would risk overlooking the impact of international administration, or mistakenly attributing the impact of the latter to the former. The activities of international administrations and their influence on parties will therefore be analyzed with the purpose of discounting or distinguishing their effect from that of party assistance organizations, and not in its own right.

Since this investigation deals with two case studies, this allows for comparison between the party assistance offered in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. This premise is based on the fact that Kosovo intervention and party assistance were launched some four years after the BiH one. Some of the planning that went into set-up of the UNMIK, EU-pillar and the OSCE-run international administration in Kosovo drew on lessons from BiH. The third hypothesis therefore assumes that the international party assistance was better coordinated and thus more influential on parties in Kosovo, than it was in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Were there any lessons learned from party aid in BiH that were applied in Kosovo’s case, and if so – how did they influence the strategies and activities provided, and the results?

\footnote{16}{Even though the cut-off year for research is 2008, some major political developments, especially as concerning to party aid, that occurred afterwards, are nevertheless mentioned/analyzed, where relevant.}

\footnote{17}{While international administrations have received ample attention from think tank, policy and academic circles, party assistance organizations have been largely overlooked, so this dissertation seeks to fill this research gap by focusing on the impact of the latter rather than former on political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo.}
As the post-conflict international administration is a definitive element which signifies that these two countries are not fully independent or sovereign, it means they cannot be studied as general cases of new democracies undergoing democratization, or post-communist transitions. The fourth hypothesis therefore stipulates that party aid implemented in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo took a different form from the type of party assistance provided in fully sovereign countries in transition. Did party assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo reflect the unique context in which it was being implemented, and if so – in what way?

Finally, an important overall question in this research is whether the international assistance given to political parties influenced the process of democratization in BiH and Kosovo. The multiplicity of factors and actors playing a role in transition makes it difficult to distinguish the nature and extent of party assistance influence on democratization, from the influence of other factors. Nevertheless, this research attempts to investigate party assistance impact on individual parties, party systems and political systems of BiH and Kosovo on the whole, and place these findings within the larger discussion of Bosnia-Herzegovina’s and Kosovo’s problematic post-conflict democratization processes.

To summarize, this research has several aims. Its exploratory goal is to provide greater familiarity with the phenomenon of party assistance in post-conflict, internationally-administered environments, so more precise research questions can be formulated later in research building on this inquiry. As cases of social experiments of post-conflict reconstruction through active international administration, lessons from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo provide help in answering tough questions, such as: can Western countries ‘administer’ or ‘assist’ post-conflict countries into becoming sovereign, democratic states? Gordon Crawford establishes that despite the unprecedented level of external involvement from the side of democracy promoters, “there remains general agreement that internal actors and activities are key to democratization, and that the contribution of external actors, while not necessarily insignificant, remains limited and marginal.”18 This case study research is therefore also an evaluation of this dominant hypothesis that external actors can exert only limited influence on domestic political elites. The comparative goal of this dissertation is to determine differences and similarities in party aid application and results in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, and to consider the causes behind them. Finally, it is also a goal of this research to contribute to theory building in the sphere of post-conflict statebuilding, foreign aid to parties and its effects in furthering democratization and political party development in aftermath of war.

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1.2 Relevance of the Study

Stabilizing and rebuilding post-conflict areas into functioning democracies is an imperative task on Western world’s agenda for the twenty first century. State failure has become a pressing problem in the post-Cold War world, and one whose spillover effects cannot be ignored in the globalized world. As social experiments in the making, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo merit the attention because the research conducted on the potential and limits of international actor involvement in their democratization can yield findings applicable to other post-conflict processes, international administration of failed states, or post-intervention statebuilding practices. This research also sheds light on post-conflict democratization in ‘assisted democracies’ where international community spearheads this process, with the ultimate goal of leaving it in the hands of local political elites. The continued extension of international administration mandates in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo speaks for political immaturity and lack of capacity amongst local political elites. This further stresses the importance of studying political party aid and its potential for empowerment, capacity building and democratic socialization of political parties in post-conflict areas.

This investigation represents a magnifying glass into the process of party development, local politics and the openness of local political elites to external democratizing influence. At the same time, through analysis of both beneficial and detrimental external influences on political parties, it gives empirical evidence for and against certain approaches of the international party assisting organizations. This research therefore also serves as a ‘lessons learnt’ addition to party assistance practitioners’ toolkits.

Democratization of post-communist, post-authoritarian and post-conflict states and the potential influence international actors can exert in this process through provision of democracy assistance is a nascent field of research within political science and international relations. Owing partly to novelty and increasing application of such forms of assistance, and partly to difficulty of isolating causal effects between external actor involvement and domestic processes of change, research in this field has been progressing at a slow pace. Research and evaluation of democracy assistance policies yields findings that can serve to improve them, through identifying strategies that are effective and conducive to democratization processes, and by pointing to necessary improvements in those methods and projects that are found to be less effective or at times even detrimental to domestic democratic developments. This dissertation therefore also aspires to be relevant for practitioners and policymakers in areas of post-conflict statebuilding, democratization and democracy assistance.

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In terms of scientific relevance, this research contributes to filling several gaps in scholarly literature. Political party assistance has not been sufficiently explored within the domain of democratization and democracy promotion studies, where the overarching focus has been on civil society sector organizations, media and governance institutions (legislatures, judiciary) as recipients of democracy aid. The subject of political party development in aftermath of war is also scarcely researched and this dissertation offers insight into Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo’s post-conflict party development. This research also contributes to general political party literature which has thus far shown little interest in studying the role of external influences on parties. By providing empirical data in form of case study analysis of two distinct, yet comparable processes of post-conflict party development, in context highly susceptible to external influences, this research informs on the international dimension of party development. Finally, the aid focused on parties is entirely omitted from analyses of post-conflict reconstruction and statebuilding processes. As both cases in question are internationally administered zones, special focus on political parties and their development also adds to the body of literature on post-conflict governance-building, statebuilding and democracy promotion in post-conflict areas, on the role of domestic political elites and the limitations and opportunities for external actors to influence them.

Finally, studying the development of political parties in BiH and Kosovo offers insight and lessons for general potential and limitations of assisting political parties, as well as for rebuilding political systems following destructive conflicts through democracy assistance. Political parties and their leaders are key factors in transition processes. They carry even more leverage in post-conflict societies where transition from war-to-peace is a highly politicized process in which formerly warring parties are expected to resolve disagreements and arrive to compromise and policies through negotiation in the political sphere rather than through resorting to violence. The added difficulty in democratizing political parties in post-conflict settings is that – as cases of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo go to illustrate – political elites were often active parties in the civil war/conflict, which makes their de-radicalization and inter-party cooperation less likely to happen. Finally, political elites are crucial components in internationally administered post-conflict zones because they are the ones on whose capacity and reliability these societies depend on once international community concludes the mission and leaves to other, more troublesome areas. Analysis of party aid and its effect on moderating post-conflict politics and on building democratic political parties yields policy recommendations on which strategies can be conducive to this goal, and which ones should be avoided.

1.3 Key Concepts
There are several concepts central to this dissertation. They are tackled in more depth in the following chapter on theoretical foundations underpinning this research so this section contains a brief overview.
**Political party** is the most frequently used term throughout the dissertation. The classic definition by Giovanni Sartori is used here, namely that, “a party is any political group that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections, candidates for public office.”

20. **Political party system** is the domain of political parties’ interaction and rules governing their creation, functioning and electoral competition. 21. **Political system**, on the other hand, is a broader term that denotes a country’s form of government and its complete set of administrative and governance institutions. 22. Political system is a variable that also includes the concept of *political culture*. Larry Diamond’s defines it as, “a people’s predominant beliefs, attitudes, values, ideals, sentiments, and evaluations about the political system of their country and the role of the self in that system” 23. and this is the definition informing this inquiry.

**Democracy** has a variety of competing definitions. In this research, democracy is defined as a system of government that involves both procedural/formal (free and fair elections; distribution of power into legislative, judiciary, executive branches) and substantive (human rights, citizen participation, principles and values) elements. 24. **Democratization** is understood as the process of transition from an undemocratic form of government to a democratic regime. **Democracy assistance**, according to Thomas Carothers, is a set of policies and aid programs “specifically designed to foster a democratic opening in a nondemocratic country or to further democratic transition in a country that has experienced democratic opening.” 25. **Political party assistance**, the core subject of this research, is a subset of democracy assistance geared towards making parties in new democracies more democratic, and empowering them to become facilitators rather than impediment to the democratization process.

Regarding the context in which this party assistance is taking place, **post-conflict country** is a state whose infrastructure, governance mechanisms and societal relations have been destroyed in war, thus implying the need for large-scale rebuilding effort. **Statebuilding** denotes extensive post-conflict reconstruction of governance institutions with the final aim of building a functioning state. Statebuilding is carried out in contemporary world by the international community, which is a notoriously vague term despite of its frequent use in the domain of international relations and politics. **International community** in this dissertation refers to the group of governments/countries and international (intergovernmental) organizations which are actively involved in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo’s post-conflict reconstruction. Finally, the term

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21. According to Sartori, “a party system is precisely the system of interactions resulting from inter-party competition.” Ibid, 39.
22. In democratic political systems, the customary division is into judiciary, legislative and executive branch.
24. The implications of this broader definition of democracy are discussed in more depth in the next chapter (2).
international administration stands for the international institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo that are created through and mandated by the United Nations Security Council Resolutions to assume “some or all of the powers of the state on a temporary basis.”26

1.4 Research Design

Studying external actor impact on domestic processes of transition is a peculiarly complex task, as isolating the effects of different actions and actors on change taking place simultaneously is near impossible.27 This complexity is enhanced by the burdensome legacy of conflict and the international governance institutions’ administration of these effectively semi-sovereign countries. These difficulties are alleviated through the chosen methodology and research design.

Case study analysis is a particularly suitable method for exploring events and processes that are lacking a sound theoretical base. As mentioned before, this research aims to contribute to several bodies of literature through addressing previously uninvestigated concepts and relations between them. Therefore, qualitative methodology of case study research was chosen as the best one to take on the exploration of phenomena under parallel influence of various factors.

BiH and Kosovo were chosen for their similarities as post-conflict, ex-Yugoslav territories, under international administration. Both are multiethnic countries struggling to democratize and have similar political development background. Comparison between them can help identify the causes between their points of divergence. They are treated as unique cases of party assistance, owing to the context of international administration, where – arguably – the international community has greater leeway in ensuring the implementation as well as reach of the reforms and policies it wishes to further. Naturally, the level of cooperation between party assistance organizations and international administrations is a key factor to investigate and determine here, but nevertheless – BiH and Kosovo are cases where the international dimension of democratization is unusually high and this needs to be recognized. If party assistance is shown to have little or no impact on political parties in internationally-administered countries, or worse – if its impact is found to be detrimental to democratization and statebuilding processes, then perhaps the hope of being able to encourage democratic party development through international assistance should be altogether abandoned.

The primary data collection methodology was open-ended, semi-structured interviewing. Altogether 166 interviews in centers of both party aid policy origin (Washington D.C., Berlin, The Hague) and its implementation (Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka, Prishtina, Mitrovica) were conducted with party assistance organizations and various political parties they cooperated with, along with expert political analysts, donors, policymakers, international administration officials, journalists, academics and other informed individuals. This evaluation of party assistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo also draws on primary sources, most notably the classified working plans of major US party assistance organizations the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI). The supplementary methods used to cross-reference the information gathered through interviews and through NDI/IRI working plans analysis were participant observation and survey questionnaire. Through usage of multiple methods, this dissertation provides original empirical information and analysis of the never before investigated world of international aid to political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996 – 2008) and Kosovo (1999 – 2008).

1.5 Chapters Overview

Chapter two will explore the theoretical foundations this research is based on, and will further clarify the key concepts used throughout the dissertation. This chapter will discuss the modern primacy of democracy as preferred system of governance (2.1) and literature review will focus on the leading theories and debates in the field of democratization. Special attention is given to the international dimension of democratization, namely democracy promotion and assistance. The importance of political parties will also be analyzed in terms of the functions and role they fulfill in the democratic system. The second section of chapter two (2.2) will emphasize the post-conflict context and the implications arising from it. The practice of statebuilding is analyzed by drawing on literature on post-conflict reconstruction, international administration of post-conflict zones and peacebuilding. This is followed by a detailed examination of specificities of post-conflict party development due to the inapplicability of standard political party literature and analytical frameworks developed therein. The post-conflict context, at last, also influences the democratization processes in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo and consequently this section will investigate the tensions present in externally-led post-conflict democratization. Finally, the third section (2.3) will introduce political party assistance through analysis of its main tenets, goals, tools and approaches. A review of existing policy evaluation documents will offer insight into general views on the effects and effectiveness as well as limits and opportunities in political party assistance.

In chapter three, methodology and research design will elaborate on the process as well as challenges in measuring democracy assistance impact and it describes different methods used in generating the results of this investigation, namely: interviews, analysis
of primary documents and reports, participant observation and the quantitative analysis of survey questionnaires. The research design chapter will conclude by elaborating on the methodological challenges in measuring democracy assistance in general and party aid impact in particular.

Chapter four will address background and context analysis (4) of the two investigated cases, establishing essential similarities and differences between them prior to the launch of political party assistance programs. It examines information on political party development in BiH and Kosovo prior to Yugoslavia’s breakup, analyzes their position within the post-1945 Yugoslavia and the institutional legacies of this period. Particular attention will be focused on the unraveling events in the 1980s following the death of Josip Broz Tito, Yugoslavia’s communist leader, as well as Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo’s descent into war. The next section (4.2) will address the post-conflict political developments in the country, discussing first and foremost the peace agreements that ushered in the international administrations into BiH and Kosovo, as well as the ensuing setup and mandates of these administrations. Major political developments in the 1996 – 2008 period in Bosnia-Herzegovina’s case and 1999 – 2008 in Kosovo will be introduced here, with special focus on international administrations’ influence on political parties and political process in general. The final section of the fourth chapter (4.3) will introduce the party systems of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, along with a description of their main political parties.

Chapter five will focus on political party assistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina (5). Divided in two parts, it first details the provision of party aid (5.1), including summaries of the working plans, quarterly assessment reports and a chronological progression of activities in the field. Evaluation of this assistance (5.2) comprises the greater part of this chapter, and is based on data collected through interviews with policymakers, practitioners and recipients of party aid. It is divided into several parts, starting with the evaluation of self-proclaimed goals of party assistance, which is followed by main recipients’ appraisal of effectiveness of the aid they were given. This section also includes a micro-level look at the two of the largest party aid recipients in BiH, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), by looking at their evolution, electoral failures and successes and internal party structures in the 1996 – 2008 time frame. The impact of assistance on the party system and on politics in general concludes the BiH chapter.

Chapter six follows the structure of the previous chapter as it focuses on political party assistance in Kosovo (6). After the description of party aid provision, it moves on to its evaluation. Following the analysis of self-proclaimed goals of party assistance in Kosovo is the main recipients’ appraisal of effectiveness of the aid they were given. This section also includes a micro-level look at the two of the largest party aid recipients in this country, Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), by looking at their evolution, electoral failures and successes and internal party structures in the 1999 – 2008 time frame. The impact of assistance on the party system and on politics in general will conclude the Kosovo chapter.
Chapter seven will discuss, compare and analyze the results of research on party assistance effects in BiH and Kosovo. The first part (7.1) aims to answer whether, as a result of ‘lessons learned’ from Bosnia-Herzegovina, political party assistance had been implemented differently in Kosovo’s case. This is followed (7.2) by the analysis and comparison of survey questionnaire and its main findings in both cases. The third section of this chapter (7.3) compares the European and U.S. party aid approaches, documenting their similarities and differences in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. The fourth section (7.4) explores the party assistance challenges and opportunities in the two countries. Finally, chapter seven will conclude with some general observations on party assistance in BiH and Kosovo (7.5).

Chapter eight will address the results of political party assistance during international community involvement in post-conflict Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. The closing summary will deliver a ‘final verdict’ on the effect of international political party assistance and its overall contribution to parties’ development and domestic political change. The final section will explore the lessons learned about application of party assistance in internationally-administered areas, and hypothesizes on its role in post-conflict democratizations.

Chapter nine, or epilogue, proposes suggestions and questions for future research that can use this study as its starting point for further developing the body of knowledge on the role of party aid within post-conflict state-building, democracy assistance and democratization literatures. The appendices include an example of the survey questionnaire (1), figure illustrating the BiH institutional/administrative setup after 1995 (2), the list of all the interviews conducted for this research (3) as well as the list of participation observation events (4). The bibliography of the sources used in this dissertation is listed at the very end.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first section briefly deals with the concept of democracy and its constitutive elements. This is followed by analysis of democratization and the leading theories in this field. Special attention is given to literature discussing the international dimension of democratization, the role of external actor impact on this essentially domestic process and the extent to which promoting and assisting democracy can facilitate it. This section ends with an overview of functions that political parties are believed to perform in democratic political systems. The second part of this chapter deals with the post-conflict context that is central to this research. Literature on statebuilding is examined for lessons learned thus far in post-conflict reconstruction. Post-conflict political party development is discussed next, as well as the tensions and paradox inherent in externally-led post-conflict democratizations. The third section of this chapter is dedicated to analysis of political party assistance. Its main tenets, goals, tools and approaches are introduced here, and then followed by a review of existing policy evaluation documents, which give insight into general views on the effects and effectiveness as well as limits of political party assistance.

2.1 On Democracy

Democracy is not so much a form of government as a set of principles.

– Woodrow Wilson

The spirit of democracy is not a mechanical thing
to be adjusted by abolition of forms.

It requires a change of heart.¹

– Mahatma Gandhi

Democracy is a multi-faceted concept: it can be seen as an ideology, a form of government, a value. Its definitions range from minimal ones, which focus on basic procedures and institutional regulations such as free elections, while the more comprehensive ones contain institutional, procedural, participatory, societal and normative elements. This research defines democracy in the latter form, precisely because this substantive definition better encompasses the large-scale transformation that is inherent in the democratization process. Kaldor and Vejvoda also make a distinction between formal and substantive democracy, pointing out that

…the existence of formal mechanisms and procedures,
which represent an a priori safeguard against abuses of power, is a necessary condition, but by no means a sufficient condition for democracy in a substantive sense.²

This substantive element lies in the domain of political culture, people’s attitudes and beliefs about democracy and support for its values. In the study of political party assistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, it was precisely these cultural elements that were found to be important. Through their focus on the procedural and formal elements of democracy, it is argued in this research that party assistance organizations have omitted to promote development of substantive democracy.

Operationalizing or measuring (substantive) democracy is difficult. Democracy is a highly dynamic concept: it is a gradual process (often consisting of steps forward as well as backwards), with different levels of development, and it should be analyzed as such.\(^3\) As Gerring puts it,

> Concepts inevitably take on local color…Contextual definition…is achieved by adding properties to a minimal definition or subtracting properties from an ideal-type definition.\(^4\)

Democracy in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo is ‘assisted’ by international administrations and this makes the analysis of democracy in these two areas more complicated than in other, fully sovereign emerging democracies.\(^5\)

Finally, democracy has in the last half of the twentieth century asserted its dominance as the preferred form of government, and one that is most likely to ensure individual liberty and human rights for those living under its auspices. It is widely believed that liberal democracies do not fight wars against one another, so democratization and democracy promotion supposedly also promote world peace.\(^6\)

### 2.1.1 Democratization

Schools of thought in democratization studies have evolved throughout time by focusing on different elements of the process. For the purpose of this research, democratization is defined as the process of transition from an undemocratic to a democratic regime. This process entails the transformation of not only governance institutions and their functioning procedures, but also of values and norms associated with the previous system of government. Table 1: *Overview of dominant theories of*

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3 Some of the widely used indexes of democracy are the Freedom House Index, Bertelsmann Transformation Index, Economist Intelligence Unit’s index on democracy, Polity IV.


5 Assessing the level and state of democracy in these two countries is not the primary or secondary purpose of this research – these are simply necessary frameworks within which this research aims to explain the process of party assistance and its results in BiH and Kosovo.

6 Democratic peace theory is a dominant one in today’s international political arena: based on assumption that liberal democratic countries do not wage war against one another, it serves as justification for many Western countries that have placed high importance on democracy promotion as part of their foreign policy activities. Today, this theory is widely critiqued due to the spuriousness in the argument, the difference between established and young democracies, wars waged by liberal democracies against authoritarian states. For more information on the debate: Bruce Russett, Christopher Layne, David E. Spiro, Michael W. Doyle, “The Democratic Peace,” *International Security* 19:4 (Spring 1995): 164 – 184; Sebastian Rosato, “The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory,” *American Political Science Review* 97:4 (November 2003): 585 – 602.
The general understanding of democratization processes has evolved from focus on the structure and historical context of these transformations, to encapsulating and involving the role of actors within these processes. This research mostly relies on transition studies and social constructivism, as these two schools of thought focus on actors, institutions and political culture, and therefore include the procedural/formal and substantive democracy elements.

The last two decades of democratic transitions worldwide have given rise to hybrid regimes, caught in between the authoritarian departure point and consolidated democracy that is the elusive destination of democratization processes. In his influential article Fareed Zakaria concluded that as many as “half of the ‘democratizing’ countries in the world today are illiberal democracies.” The confusion between which countries can, and which cannot, be defined as democracies has been expanded through increased adoption of elections in the last few years: many so called, electoral democracies, “fail to meet the substantive test.” The birth of these contemporary ‘pseudodemocracies’, according to Larry Diamond, is a result of “unprecedented pressure (international and domestic) to adopt – or at least to mimic – the democratic form.” Wolfgang Merkel has further divided these ‘defective democracies’ into subtypes of ‘exclusive,’ ‘illiberal,’ ‘delegative’ and ‘tutelary’ and established that these are not necessarily transitional but surprisingly stable regimes. Illiberal democracies are characterized by predominance of the executive and legislative branches, which are “only weakly limited by the judiciary.” Weak rule of law and authoritarian tendencies of parties elected to power in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo signal incomplete or sidetracked democratization processes in both countries under analysis and will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Finally, Eugene Mazo’s figure “The Stages of Democratic Transition” illustrates the multi-dimensionality of democratization processes:

![Figure 1: The Stages of Democratic Transition](image)

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11 Ibid: 49.

This figure, however, does not illustrate the fact that democratization is also a multi-directional process. The emergence of contemporary “democracies with adjectives”\textsuperscript{13} has drawn scholarly attention to the fact that democratization process can stop halfway between its starting point and the end goal of liberal democracy, just as equally as it can revert to de-democratization.\textsuperscript{14}

Table 1: Overview of Dominant Theories of Democratization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory (School of Thought)</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
<th>Main Themes</th>
<th>Critique</th>
<th>Prominent authors</th>
<th>International Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modernization theory</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Capitalist development influence on democratic development; democracy = outcome of capitalism.</td>
<td>Insufficient attention to ‘human’ factor, i.e. politics and human behavior.</td>
<td>Seymour Martin Lipset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical institutionalism</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Interplay and changing relations between state structures and classes.</td>
<td>Too simple view of the world; unable to explain sudden post-1989 democratization wave.</td>
<td>Barrington Moore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition theory</td>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>The role + interaction of domestic political elites in negotiation and advocating transition from authoritarian to democratic rule. Democracy = created by conscious, committed actors (elites).</td>
<td>Overly elitist; too narrow understanding of democracy (=set of procedures for government/institutions); ignores civil society; insufficient attention to structural context/constraints</td>
<td>Dankwart Rustow; Philippe Schmitter; Guillermo O’Donnell; Laurence Whitehead; Adam Przeworski; Juan Linz; Alfred Stepan</td>
<td>Democracy promotion and assistance ➔ emphasis on institutional rules / procedures, electoral law, constitutions. Contagion / control / consent / conditionality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave theory</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Interconnectedness between democratization processes in different countries; far-reaching influence of globalization.</td>
<td>Too narrow understanding of democracy (=free &amp; fair elections); overstating the role of globalization.</td>
<td>Samuel Huntington</td>
<td>Globalization i.e. demonstration effects (snowballing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Constructivism</td>
<td>Political Culture</td>
<td>Role of norms, values, beliefs, principles, attitudes, identity formation in democratic transition and consolidation. Ideational versus material factors.</td>
<td>Difficulty of establishing cause-and-effect relationships between variables.</td>
<td>Larry Diamond; Martha Finnemore; Kathryn Sikkink</td>
<td>Norms diffusion / socialization / democratic consolidation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.1.1 The International Dimension of Democratization

Democracy promotion constitutes a set of assistance programs, offered usually by Western states, institutions of global and regional governance and transnational NGOs. Its aim is to influence the internal democratization processes in countries (formerly) governed by undemocratic regimes. Democracy is promoted by the provision of financial, organizational, ideological and systemic assistance to different sectors considered crucial for development and functioning of democratic states, such as rule of law, civil society organizations, political parties, parliaments, media, economy or human rights. The more stringent instruments in democracy promotion toolbox are the use of political conditionality and application of diplomatic pressure to comply with democratic norms.

Why promote democracy? Aside from the aforementioned theory of democratic peace, some authors have argued that the US also exports democracy due to a sense of obligation and moral leadership in the world. In general, theories of American pacifist idealism, democratic internationalism and exceptionalism all contain elements of the idea that US has the power as well as the burden of spreading democracy worldwide. While during the Cold War, democracy promotion was seen as an additional tool for fighting the spread of communism, in the past two decades it has come to be perceived as a legitimate foreign policy in its own right. Established democracies together, currently, invest billions of dollars annually on the promotion of democracy in the world’s authoritarian and undemocratic regimes, and on aiding those countries already marching the transition path. Former US President Bill Clinton stated back in 1995 that, “ultimately, the best strategy to ensure our security and to build a durable peace is to support the advance of democracy elsewhere.” This idea has been advanced by his successor George W. Bush who, in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attack claimed democracy promotion to be one of US’s principal foreign policy aims. A welcome element of democracy promotion has been the spread of capitalism, which has become an indispensable ingredient in the liberal democracy recipe promoted by the West.

Democracy promotion and foreign assistance to democratization are far from being universally accepted. Thomas Carothers’ article on the backlash against democracy promotion argued that an increasing number of countries have begun to view the US (and other Western countries’) democracy assistance programs and projects as an incursion into their policies, violation of their sovereign regimes, and in general, as “illegitimate political meddling.” This criticism customarily arrives from undemocratic and authoritarian regimes, which are increasingly taking a stance and

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17 The idea of democracy promotion as “White Man’s Burden” (reference to same title poem by Rudyard Kipling) has been explored by André Gerrits, Democratie door interventie: De nieuwe White Man’s Burden? (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006). [Democracy through intervention: The new White Man’s Burden?]
trying to neutralize or banish domestic as well as international organizations focused on democracy building.

Fostering democratic development and supporting domestic democratization processes in new democracies has become a budding business, and in the past two decades many organizations have established their expertise in this area. During the past two decades of involvement in democracy support programs a consensus has emerged that certain sectors of society need to be strengthened in order to boost the democratization process. While agreeing on the sectors that need assistance, there is still debate in the international democracy promotion circuit about the timing or importance of different foci of assistance. Civil society organizations have been among the favorite recipients of foreign democracy aid. Other targets of democracy promotion are strengthening the rule of law and supporting the development of free and independent media. One of the beneficiaries of democracy assistance, however, has remained far from the spotlight and therefore now presents an understudied area of this policy: political parties in new democracies.

Initially, the main strategy of democracy assistance was institutional modeling and the assistance programs targeted a “set list of institutions…that US aid providers believe are the constituent elements of democracy.” However, in 2002 a prominent expert in the field put forward a convincing argument that the transition paradigm on which much of democracy promotion has relied, has outlived its analytical and prescriptive purpose, because real-life democratization involved more complex characteristics – and that ‘institutional checklist’ on which the democracy assistance programs were based on was no longer appropriate. Moving away from institutionalism, social constructivists began studying the way democracy assistance influences and shapes political culture and attitudes of the elites within countries in transition. In that sense, organizations assisting democracy could also be considered norm entrepreneurs:

Norms do not appear out of thin air; they are actively built by agents having strong notions about appropriate or desirable behavior in their community. Norm entrepreneurs are critical for norm emergence because

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50 Some accounts of democracy assistance to civil society: Marina Ottaway, Thomas Carothers, Funding Virtue: Civil Society and Democracy Promotion, Carnegie Endowment, 2000; Peter J. Burnell, Peter Calvert, Civil Society in Democratization, Routledge, 2004; Marc Morje Howard, The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe, Cambridge University Press, 2003, etc.
51 For more information, consult: Thomas Carothers, Promoting the Rule of Law Abroad: In Search of Knowledge (2006); Center for International Media Assistance web site containing various reports, http://cima.ned.org.
they call attention to issues...norms may become so widely accepted that they are internalized by actors and achieve a ‘‘taken-for-granted’’ quality that makes conformance with the norm almost automatic.\textsuperscript{24}

This automatic conformance with democratic norms is what democratization scholars view as the endpoint of transition processes, namely – consolidation.

Finally, how significant is the impact of external support to democratization in new democracies? Does democracy promotion work? Thomas Carothers has voiced his concern regarding the extent of the influence that international actors yield through democracy aid on receiving countries’ democratization processes, concluding that

… democracy programs are at best a secondary influence because they do not have a decisive effect on the underlying conditions of the society that largely determine a country’s political trajectory – the character and alignment of the main political forces; the degree of concentration of economic power; the levels of education, wealth and social mobility; the political traditions, expectations, and values of the citizenry; and the presence or absence of powerful antidemocratic elements.\textsuperscript{25}

This primacy of domestic or local conditions echoes throughout the literature on democratic transitions. External actors are seen as having a minor role in democratization, since “regime change is primarily a dynamic process which is internally motivated.”\textsuperscript{26}

\subsection*{2.1.2 Political Parties}

\textit{Modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties.}\textsuperscript{27}

- Eric Schattschneider

Even though Schattschneider made this claim over half a century ago, this belief still seems to hold today. What functions do parties fulfill that makes them so essential to modern democracies? Diamond and Gunther identify several roles of political


parties. Core function is elite recruitment, which leads to candidate nomination and electoral mobilization. Parties also facilitate the process of structuring the choices and alternatives on different policy issues and they act as social representation organizations by advancing different groups’ specific interests. Furthermore, they form coalitions, negotiate joint policies through inter-party cooperation, which constitutes their interest aggregation function. Once elected, they take part in forming and sustaining governments in office through performing different roles and holding power positions. Finally, they also play a social integration role through enabling citizens to participate in the political processes. In other words, their functions as articulators, aggregators and representatives of social interests and demands place political parties in the position to shape public opinion and perceptions of the society.

The political party system is the domain of parties’ interactions with one another, and is defined most often by the number of parties within it, their dominant ideologies, interest aggregation-base and the interaction between the parties. Ware’s framework for classifying party systems will be used later on for an analysis of BiH’s and Kosovo’s party systems: it involves looking at the extent to which parties penetrate society, party ideologies, parties’ stance towards the legitimacy of the regime, as well as the number of parties in the system.

Finally, party system institutionalization is another useful tool for analyzing party systems. It is defined as,

...a process by which a practice or organization becomes well established... Actors develop expectations, orientation, and behavior based on the premise that this practice or organization will prevail into the foreseeable future. In politics, institutionalization means that political actors have clear and stable expectations about the behavior of other actors.

It is now generally accepted that party system institutionalization or lack thereof influences the consolidation of democracy within countries in transition. Countries undergoing transition are generally characterized by weakly institutionalized party systems, which undermine the process of democratization and may prevent these countries from becoming consolidated democracies.

Before continuing, it should be emphasized that thus far mentioned literature is largely based on investigations of political parties in established democracies. Some scholars believe that the concepts and theories created through studying the parties in established democracies do not translate well to the study of parties in new

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democracies because there, political parties have followed different trajectories of development.\(^{33}\) Ingrid van Biezen’s analysis of party formation in new democracies concludes that the international actors’ involvement in this process “has encouraged these parties to adopt an organizational style largely resembling their contemporary counterparts in the older democracies.”\(^{34}\) It was this swift reproduction of organizational party models from the West coupled with party adaptation to established ideological groups in old democracies that contributed to these countries’ successful transitions and eventual entry into the European Union. Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo’s party system development, however, cannot be compared to either those of established democracies, or to those of Central and Eastern Europe’s new democracies. The environment in which their parties developed was profoundly different from post-communist transitions of the third wave. The next section is dedicated to the analysis of this unique post-conflict context.

2.2 Post – Conflict

The post-Cold War world witnessed the changing nature of conflict from inter-state to intrastate wars. These wars are usually characterized by ideological and/or geo-strategic competing claims of identity, political authority, access to resources; disparate armed groups; they are fragmentary; taking place against the backdrop of a weakened or collapsing economy and societal infrastructure; they often have higher incidence of civilian victims and population displacement.\(^{35}\) The highly destabilizing influence that these intra-state conflicts carry for their neighbors and regions make their resolution one of most pressing imperatives in the international system.

The damage that conflict leaves behind is extensive, ranging from a devastated economy, shattered infrastructure and sky-high unemployment to destruction of the social fabric. In addition, the peacekeepers have to demobilize and disarm the warring parties and deal with the complex rebuilding of the political system:

> The old political process has been discredited (you do not want to re-create the political system that resulted in a civil war), there is no single legitimate government… there is often little democratic tradition, and the police and judicial systems are seen…as part of the problem rather than as part of the solution because they have no legitimacy for much of the population.\(^{36}\)


If one adds the problems of deep mistrust and grievances between the groups resulting from atrocities committed during the war, the issues of reconciliation and justice get added to the already long list of concerns to deal with during the statebuilding process. Include the grave problems of common occurrence in war-torn countries – organized crime and corruption – and the result is somewhat of a nightmare.37

This section provides an overview of the major aspects of the post-conflict context in which party assistance was provided in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. It first analyzes the practice of statebuilding, the question of political system design and the role of international administrations. It goes on to detail post-conflict political party development, discussing all of the different factors and actors playing a role in it. Finally, this section is concluded by a discussion on the paradox of externally-led post-conflict democratization. Throughout this section, BiH and Kosovo are used as examples in order to introduce the specificities of their transition processes, but also because much of the literature on post-conflict reconstruction and statebuilding has been informed by the experiences from these two cases.

2.2.1 Statebuilding

In this research, statebuilding stands for the overall set of activities in which international community engages in weak or post-conflict countries, with the goal of creating a viable, preferably liberal democratic state:

…the term ‘state-building’ has evolved to refer to extended international involvement...that goes beyond traditional peacekeeping and peace-building mandates, and is directed towards developing the institutions of government by assuming some or all of those sovereign powers on a temporary basis.38

Democracy has been hailed as the preferred model for post-conflict societies, so its specific institutional design deserves more attention. Most of the authors on the subject of post-conflict governance reconstruction advocate the institution of a power-sharing system for ethnically divided societies.39 The model that has received

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substantial attention is consociationalism, first introduced by Arend Lijphart, which is based on power sharing, group autonomy and representational proportionality of different cleavages in society.\textsuperscript{40} Its downsides are an excessive and often insupportable amount of bureaucratic structures and stalemate made possible by the constitutional presence of veto power in cases of ‘vital group interest.’ At the same time, Timothy D. Sisk and Anna K. Jarstad warn that:

some types of power-sharing systems may contain the seeds of their own self-destruction as the search for consensus turns into deadlock by political leaders aware that they hold the power of veto over governmental action.\textsuperscript{41}

This warning echoes strongly with assessments of BiH consociational political system and its functional flaws. Finally, in answering their own question – can democracy be designed? – Bastian and Luckham point out that,

Institutional design is an apparent oxymoron… because institutions…evolve, grow, become rooted… And where attempts are made to design them, history, ‘accident and force’ and political manipulation may turn them on their heads and produce perverse and unforeseen outcomes…\textsuperscript{42}

Similarly, Fukuyama cautions against the limits of institutional design and stresses the importance of society’s norms, traditions and values for shaping the (political) actors’ behavior.\textsuperscript{43} In short, there is no theory to fall back on when it comes to creating or resurrecting political systems after war. Likewise, the literature seems to issue more warnings than advice regarding the design of governance institutions.

Several authors have voiced criticism against the prevailing insistence on instituting democratic forms of governance in post-conflict countries. Roland Paris points out that “peacebuilding exposes the inherently conflictual character of democracy and capitalism, both of which paradoxically encourage societal competition as a means of achieving political stability and economic prosperity”\textsuperscript{44} and goes on to argue that these characteristics of democracy and capitalism hinder rather than aid the peace building process in the long run.\textsuperscript{45} He believes that instead,
“peacebuilders should pursue a strategy of ‘institutionalization before liberalization.’”\textsuperscript{46} He has even suggested the institution of ‘temporary directorship’ under the control of the international community, arguing that only in this way, provided there is long term commitment, could local institutions of democratic governance grow strong enough to sustain themselves.\textsuperscript{47} Finally, Ben Reilly warns against premature elections in post-conflict situations:

…if held too early, elections in fragile situations can easily undermine the longer-term challenge of building a sustainable democracy. First, elections in conflictual situations act as catalysts for the development of parties… which are primarily (and often solely) vehicles to assist local elites gain access to governing power. Second, because of the …deeply divided nature of most post-conflict societies, elections often have the effect of highlighting societal fault lines and hence laying bare very deep social divisions.\textsuperscript{48}

These warnings also highlight the fact that unsuccessful introduction of democracy in a post-conflict area is likely to lead to democracy’s loss of legitimacy, which may result in undesirable de-democratization.\textsuperscript{49}

\textbf{2.2.2 Political Party Development}

The attention political elites have received in post-conflict countries is markedly disproportional to their importance as key actors in democratization and transition processes. As creation of functional democratic states is the final mission objective of international administrations in both BiH and Kosovo, local political elites play a key role in the eventual fulfillment of this goal. While the international actors have

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 774.
received ample attention from the scholarly community,\textsuperscript{50} local political actors have been largely overlooked as subjects of analysis.\textsuperscript{51}

Despite the lack of attention they receive, political parties are believed to have “magnified importance” in post-conflict and conflict-prone societies.\textsuperscript{52} They are furthermore seen as important post-conflict “agents of democratization”.\textsuperscript{53} At the same time, Roland Paris advises that – before allowing a party to be registered and to function – “parties should be obliged to have members from all of the formerly warring groups and to espouse cross-factional compromise and coexistence as a principal goal.”\textsuperscript{54} Timothy D. Sisk concurs with him, saying that creating multiethnic parties and coalitions would serve “to create incentives for political leaders to be moderate on divisive ethnic themes, and to enhance minority influence in majority decision making.”\textsuperscript{55} Political parties can be influenced in various ways through “using institutional incentives and constraints”: party regulation (on party formation, financing, and distribution of members), electoral law design, strengthening parties in the parliament (top-down approach aimed at building greater intra-party discipline) and international party assistance interventions.\textsuperscript{56}

Owing to the complexity of the context in which post-conflict party development takes place, contemporary literature on parties does not offer a suitable framework of analysis. The following sections concentrate on actors that play a role in post-conflict party development, as well as on the dominant contextual factors that shape these processes and their outcomes.


\textsuperscript{53} Anna K. Jarstad, Timothy D. Sisk (eds.), \textit{From War to Democracy: Dilemmas of Peacebuilding} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 139 – 141.


Figure 2 on the following page illustrates the multiplicity of actors influencing party development in post-conflict environments, of which international party assistance is only one element.

International administrations effect on parties in BiH is discussed in detail in chapter four. It is however important to mention here that in BiH, the High Representatives imposed legislation and removed local elected officials from power, while together with OSCE they made various amendments to the electoral system design. The international administration also identified and promoted some parties as ‘pro-European’ options and steps were taken to ensure their rise to power; however, the nationalist rhetoric repeatedly ensured the election of nationalists in BiH.\(^{57}\) In Kosovo, the situation was somewhat different, as one of the supposed ‘lessons learned’ from international administration in BiH was that removing local elected politicians from power was not very conducive to the creation of local governance capacity. Therefore, here the international administration has not removed local officials but has strived to work alongside them. At the same time, equal to the case of BiH, both local and international officials recognize that there is little local ownership over the governance process and that both countries are effectively semi-sovereign and incapable of conducting their own governance independently of the international administrations.\(^{58}\)

International party assistance organizations have been an active factor in political party development in BiH and Kosovo from the very beginning of the international community involvement in the region. In the past decade, they have provided numerous trainings on party organization, voter outreach, electoral campaigning, intra-party democracy, media relations and policymaking. The general goal of their work in these two countries has been the leveling of the political playing field and one of results and supporting moderate professionalization of the political party sector. As the influence of party assistance organizations on party development in BiH and Kosovo is the central subject of this dissertation, chapters five and six discuss it in depth.

The influence of the former military groups on the political party development is rather high in post-conflict environments. Due to their organization into different veterans’ clubs or continuing activism in the police, army and different private security organizations, they exert substantial influence on the political actors. In the early years of Kosovo’s post-conflict reconstruction it was not uncommon for political parties to resolve their political differences through use of guns, bombs and political assassinations. Kosovo political elites’ links with former military groups add to their perceived symbiotic relationship with organized crime.\(^{59}\) Finally, in some cases

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\(^{57}\) For more information on the international community policy of trying to get ‘the right’ local political elites into power, see: Carrie Manning, “Political Elites and Democratic State Building-efforts in Bosnia and Iraq,” *Democratization*, 13:5 (December 2006): 724 – 738.

\(^{58}\) This dependency was most likely the outcome of the international administrations’ ‘hands-on’ approach with little or no independent space for decision making left to the local actors, combined with the local capacity for governance and consensus decision making having been inherently diminished as result of the conflict.

former military groups transformed into political parties after conflict: this was not an overnight processes and it involved adaptation, reform and extensive influence of the international administrations and international party assistance present in Kosovo.\(^{60}\)

**Figure 2: Actors Influencing Party Development in Post-Conflict BiH and Kosovo**

Religious actors’ impact on parties is exemplified best by the BiH case. With three ethnic groups and three main religions in the country, religious actors affiliated themselves with the nationalist parties during the conflict and after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The Islamic Religious Community,\(^{61}\) supporting the Bosniak parties and the Catholic Church supporting Croat nationalist parties have played an active role in the political space of BiH. Similarly, the Serbian Orthodox Church supported the Serb nationalists. These different religious actors not only campaign together with the political parties during the elections, but they went as far


\(^{61}\) Islamic Community (‘Iamska zajednica’) is the top religious institution for Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Led by Raisu-l-Ulama Dr. Mustafa Cerić, it is closely affiliated with Bosniak political parties. The official web site: www.rijaset.ba/en (Accessed: April 02, 2010).
as to instruct the mosque/church-goers which numbers to circle on the ballot.\textsuperscript{62} This continuing symbiosis of politics and religion in the country has not facilitated the reconciliation and coexistence between the formerly warring ethnic groups. Furthermore, the presence of religious influence in the political space brings to question the secularity of the BiH state and the level of democratic development. Finally, the symbiosis between the religious and political actors points to absolute politicization of the public space. This adds to the voters’ disillusionment with the political processes and results in religion being a divisive rather than uniting element in this post-conflict country.\textsuperscript{63}

**Neighboring states** also play a role in BiH and Kosovo’s party development. There was a historical tradition of political parties from Serbia and Croatia organizing their branches in Bosnia-Herzegovina from the very beginnings of party politics functioning in these countries.\textsuperscript{64} Considering the most recent conflict and the Croatian and Serbian territorial pretensions over BiH lands that were the cause behind them, it does not come as a surprise that Croat and Serb ethnic groups in BiH nurture close links with their counterparts in the neighboring countries. The same stands for several Serb parties in Kosovo, though situation here is somewhat different, as Serbia does not recognize Kosovo’s proclamation of independence that took place in February 2008. The implication of these continuing relationships and of neighboring countries’ involvement in BiH and Kosovo issues is that the countries and political parties within them do not function as sovereign entities. Their semi-sovereignty therefore is caused not just by the presence of the international administrations, but also by continuing advice seeking and relationships with political elites from the neighboring countries.

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\textbf{2.2.2.2 Contextual Factors Influencing Party Development in BiH and Kosovo}
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In addition to various groups influencing party development in post-conflict countries, it is also the context that shapes the environment of electoral competition and political processes. This section discusses different contextual and historical factors that bore a legacy on party development in BiH and Kosovo, as illustrated in the Figure 3 on the next page.

**Communist legacy** played an overarching role in the development of parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. As with many other communist regimes, the legacy of the dominant (one) party system permeated deeply into the political culture of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo:

\begin{quote}
After decades of extracting from society, communist regimes created and maintained an enormous public domain that served as a depository of all productive societal resources. It was precisely this domain that the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{62} Local newspapers have extensively covered the issue of religious actors’ involvement in the political processes, for e.g. Dani, Oslobođenje, Slobodna Bosna.

\textsuperscript{63} Dino Abazović, “Religious politics and political religion in Bosnia and Herzegovina,” \textit{Paper presented at the annual meeting of the ISA’s 49th Convention}, San Francisco, USA (March 26, 2008).

\textsuperscript{64} Marko Attila Hoare, \textit{History of Bosnia from Middle Ages to Today} (Saqi Books: 2007).
state’s competitors targeted after 1989. The dominant predatory elite project in post-communism is extraction from the state. Balkan states are rarely, if ever, trusted by their citizens. At the same time, others have pointed out that state weakness in the Balkans is ingrained, since “it does not necessarily lead to state failure. It is self-perpetuating...” In terms of the post-communist legacy, BiH (and in many ways similarly, Kosovo):

...is the victim of state capture by private interests subjugating the public good, bloated bureaucracies devouring public funds while impairing, rather than providing adequate government services, privatized media masquerading as independent, and the near complete absence of social capital...

The post-communist legacy is deeply embedded in the political culture of both countries, and with introduction of multi-party systems, though many parties put ‘democratic’ into their names, this communist legacy continued to influence their development and functioning.

Figure 3: Contextual Factors Influencing Party Development in Post-Conflict BiH and Kosovo

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The list of influences that stem directly from the conflict is extensive. This section constitutes a brief introduction to explaining the linkages between conflict and party development. The post-conflict legacy is one of deeply seated mistrust between the former battlefield enemies. The lack of reconciliation initiatives and no agreement on the historical facts of the conflict and the committed crimes against humanity make coalition governments and consensus politics highly susceptible to crises and stalemates. As Benjamin Reilly explains,

> In societies divided along ethnic lines...it is often easier for campaigning parties to attract voter support by appealing to ethnic allegiances rather than issues of class or ideology. This means that aspiring politicians have a strong incentive to mobilize followers along ethnic lines, and unscrupulous leaders who ‘play the ethnic card’ can be rewarded with electoral success.  

In other words, in cases like BiH where three dominant ethnic groups dominate the political landscape through ethnic political parties, nationalism equals votes. Finally, it is also a legacy of the conflict that civil society sector is non-existent or weak, and that there is no independent media. The international community active in rebuilding post-conflict areas and engaged in democracy promotion has invested massive funds into the creation of a vibrant civil society sector and an independent media in both BiH and Kosovo, but the results of this exercise have been deemed largely unsatisfactory. The printed media tends to be affiliated with different political parties, which makes access to independent and objective reporting difficult. The civil society, despite the invested funds, fails to set a genuinely local agenda and is dictated by the donor programmatic goals. As Roberto Belloni explains,

> Civil society has become the weak link in the chain of power that is inaccessible and obscure to most Bosnians. Thus, the expectation that local organizations will hold political leaders accountable is a fundamental illusion.

Another extensive evaluation of assistance given to civil society sector in Bosnia-Herzegovina has similarly concluded that various mistakes have been committed in the process (such as externally set priorities, overly bureaucratic procedures, lack of donor coordination, providing only project support, lack of flexibility, working with same grantees, etc.) and that continued civil society assistance needs to be refashioned to better fit the needs of the society in question.
Finally, *the international administrations mandate* has in both countries created a rather unique context for party development. There is a consensus between the international community and the local stakeholders in BiH and Kosovo that domestic governance institutions and public officials are too dependent upon external aid. Both groups believe that local ownership should be strengthened in order to facilitate a smooth and effective transfer of power. This will allow international administrations to wrap up their missions and hand over the power to their domestic counterparts. Some scholars point out that political parties may pose a threat to the peace process by having former military groups transform into political ones or by establishing their identity and support base on divisive issues such as nationalism, suggesting that “one way of avoiding these problems is to remove political parties from the process.”

In BiH and Kosovo, however, this move has not been considered. On the contrary, elections were one of the primary tools that international administrations have used to introduce democracy in these two countries. This brings us to the issue of post-conflict democratization paradox, which is the subject of the next section.

### 2.2.3 The Democratization Paradox

Among different cases and trajectories of the democratization processes, none is more influenced by external actors than the countries placed under international administration in aftermath of conflict. The analysis of BiH and Kosovo offers insight into the complexity of externally-driven, internationally-administered democratization processes. This section will discuss some of those complexities, detailing the issue of tensions inherent in post-conflict democratization, the question of external actor impact and the paradox of parallel statebuilding and democratization.

As argued previously, scholars warn against premature introduction of democracy owing to the tensions inherent in the liberalization and democratization processes. Jack Snyder, for example, points out that the process of democratization is not always smooth or conducive to peace. He shows that it can destabilize a society because transitions create the conditions under which nationalism can flourish: freedom of speech and media, free elections and the ‘elite persuasion’ (i.e. manipulation) of the political and public space hold the potential to make democratizations turn violent.

In their work, Mansfield and Snyder explain that the process of democratization includes volatile dynamics of large-scale societal change, which introduces an important caveat to the democratic peace theory. They therefore urge caution against “ naïve enthusiasm for spreading peace by promoting

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*Herzegovina* (Sarajevo: Center for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies of the University of Sarajevo, 2011), 93 – 124.


democratization.”  

Susan Woodward, in her book *Balkan Tragedy*, confirms Snyder’s hypothesis by viewing the breakup of Yugoslavia as a case of ‘interrupted democratization.’ In the book she describes Yugoslavia’s gradual opening up and early post-communist transition, as well as the beginnings of multi-party politics and shows how these processes coupled with a large foreign debt and rising nationalism in the country’s constituent republics resulted in war.

Perhaps the best example of this tension within democratization process is the practice of free elections. While indispensable as one of the building blocks of democracy, political competition for votes can turn volatile and jeopardize the fragility of the post-conflict peace agreement. Nevertheless, elections were a prominent element in international community’s democratization strategy in both BiH and Kosovo. Lord Paddy Ashdown, one of Bosnia’s High Representatives, in retrospective also advised against premature post-conflict elections:

> The Bosnians got very tired of constant elections, belief in Democracy suffered, and, because elections were held before the rule of law was established, the result was that those who ran the war, and profited from it politically or criminally, reinforced their positions by becoming elected to government. Very frequently, early elections prove not to be a short route to Western-style democracy, but rather a quick road to the criminally captured state.

Similarly, Krishna Kumar examines the two main objectives of post-conflict elections – transferring power to a democratically installed government and initiating and consolidating the democratization process in the country. He concludes that elections may stifle rather than facilitate democracy when introduced prematurely.

In terms of external actor impact, international assistance to post-conflict societies, according to de Zeeuw and Kumar, has been based on several premises: not mere rehabilitation of the shattered system of governance that existed before the conflict, but instead aimed at building new institutions and promoting changes that would prevent reoccurrence of conflict. In addition, the second premise on which international assistance to post-conflict areas is based is that it should be “comprehensive, covering social, political and economic sectors.” However, despite the ample material for study of peace-building missions of the past few decades, there is little literature that suggests what these strategies should consist of. Christopher Coyne believes that the failure of international community in reconstructing post-

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conflict societies “is due to the gap between the know-what and know-how.”\textsuperscript{80} He returns to culture as the key variable in this gap, explaining that:

Culture is perhaps the greatest constraint on the reconstruction efforts. Francis Fukuyama has argued that democratic consolidation must take place on four levels, Culture is the “deepest” level and therefore is “safely beyond the reach of institutional solutions, and hence of public policy.”\textsuperscript{81}

Kumar confirms this belief, stressing that democratization is not just about building institutions but also involves the countries in question developing

…behavior patterns, and a political culture…a gradual internalization by the populace of a set of beliefs, values, and norms that promote political tolerance, compromise and mutual accommodation.\textsuperscript{82}

Post-conflict democratization is therefore a far more complex and multi-dimensional process when one takes into account the cultural aspect.

“Democracy…has become a ‘settled norm’ in the post-Cold War period,”\textsuperscript{83} but the origins of democratization aided by external actors can be traced earlier than that. Some authors have compared democracy promotion to the concept of ‘civilizing mission’, arguing that the “…diffusion of imported norms represents the precise telos of a mission civilisatrice of a postcolonial institution-building mission.”\textsuperscript{84} Kimberley Coles in her ethnographic work on democratization confirmed this view through interviewing international officials working in BiH, who stated: “Democratization is a new form of missionary work – elections simply replace the Bible.”\textsuperscript{85} Barnett and Finnemore also refer to international organizations and their staff as the ‘missionaries’ of our time, who have “a desire to shape state practices by establishing, articulating and transmitting norms that define what constitutes acceptable and legitimate state behavior.”\textsuperscript{86} Finally, in diffusion of norms, it is of highest importance “where the stimulus for emulation comes from:”\textsuperscript{87}

\textsuperscript{82} Krishna Kumar (ed), \textit{Post-Conflict Elections, Democratization & International Assistance}, 215-216.
Perhaps the most important element of a theory of diffusion is the existence of a 'model' or prototype. The prototype exhibits certain behavior patterns and an observer matches these behaviors.88

The model in both BiH and Kosovo was based on Western liberal democracies. At the same time, one of the biggest warnings in post-conflict peace- and state-building literature is to steer clear from ‘cookie-cutter approaches’, and for intervening actors to tailor their strategy and the post-conflict reconstruction solutions to the specific context of the society they are administering.89 In other words, “attempting to transplant a formal institution is not the same thing as transplanting the entire social system that generated the institution in the first place.”90 The failure of interventionist and statebuilding practices to yield desired results in post-conflict societies has given rise to critique of the liberal peace model and the assumptions on which it is based. The tensions of promoting the liberal democratic model in societies ravaged by war have given birth to unstable and worrisome peace, causing some authors to accuse the Western interveners of hubris.91 The liberal peace critique literature therefore calls for re-examination of the activity of exporting democracy and the assumptions that are its guide.92

David Chandler was one of the first authors to explore the limits of external actor impact in post-conflict statebuilding in depth. Having studied the case of BiH, where he accused the international administration of ‘faking democracy’, he concluded that,

Bosnia has become a parody of democratization because international action in Bosnia appears to be geared towards the democratization process as opposed to democracy. [In time]…more and more barriers to international withdrawal have been flagged-up and in the process Bosnian people and politicians portrayed in an increasingly unflattering light. The extension of democratization has necessitated the continual postponement of self-government.93

The international administration has been accused of being a very undemocratic agent that has imposed supposedly democratizing measures into local legislation and on the local elites. Instead of fostering the development of democracy, this in turn has generated dependency and further emphasized the raison d’être for international

90 Christopher J. Coyne, After War: The Political Economy of Exporting Democracy, 56.
92 Examples of liberal peace critique literature are David Chandler’s Empire in Denial: The Politics of State-Building (London: Pluto Press, 2006); Oliver Richmond’s The Transformation of Peace (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
administration’s continued presence in the area. This Catch-22 situation lies at the heart of the paradox of post-conflict democratization in countries under international administration. The reason why international intervention in the form of statebuilding is paradoxical is because the processes of statebuilding and democratization run parallel to one another. Can one democratize a non-state? According to Dankwart Rustow, the resolution of statehood is one of the basic conditions for democratization to be successful. However, both BiH and Kosovo suffer from the fact that their state formation process is unfinished. The challenge to BiH’s statehood stems from the different ethnic groups’ inability to come to an agreement on the constitutional amendments and setup of the country. Similarly, Kosovo Serbs do not recognize Kosovo’s proclamation of independence and Serbia is actively lobbying for the withdrawal of the recognition of independence that Kosovo has thus far received from less than half of UN member states. The challenge to statehood, however, also has an external element: as long as the international community retains administrative as well as military control over their territories, BiH and Kosovo will continue to be protectorates or semi-sovereign entities, rather than full-fledged, self-governing states.

Are statebuilding and democratization mutually exclusive or contradictory processes? Thomas Carothers seems to believe so:

In certain situations, democratization does need to wait for statebuilding. Where a state has completely collapsed or failed under the lash of civil conflict…moving rapidly toward open political competition and elections makes no sense. The state will need to have at least minimal functional capacity as well as something resembling a monopoly of force before such a country can pull itself onto the path of sustainable, pluralistic political development.

Nevertheless, the international administrations have attempted to push ahead both processes simultaneously. Recent evaluation of their track record in statebuilding in BiH and Kosovo by Niels van Willigen suggests that, though successful in creating political institutions, international administrations have not succeeded in making those same institutions sustainable:

In 2008, Bosnia and Kosovo were weak states with weak institutions…dependent on support from international organizations and foreign states. Furthermore, instead of a positive peace, defined as the absence of violence of all kinds, both international administrations had created a

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negative peace, in which there is (merely) an absence of direct violence.\textsuperscript{96}

It was in this context of simultaneous internationally-administered statebuilding and democratization that international party assistance organizations attempted to encourage and generate democratic political party development.

2.3 Political Party Assistance

Political party assistance is aimed at helping parties “improve their organizational capacities, promote internal democracy, recruit women and minorities, and effectively participate in the legislative processes.”\textsuperscript{97} Several organizations have emerged at the forefront of political party assistance. German political party foundations (Stiftungen) exist since the 1950s, with the notable exception of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, which was founded in 1925. The US party institutes National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) began their work in the 1980s. The German as well as US party institutes are affiliated with their respective political parties, as can be seen in Table 2 on page 38. This research also encompasses the work of Dutch political party foundations providing assistance in the Balkans, namely the Alfred Mozer Stichting of the PvdA (Labor) party, VVD (liberal) International, and D66 (social liberal) International Democracy Initiative. The main difference in the approaches between European and American party assistance organizations is that while the Stiftungen and Dutch party foundations tend to provide bilateral assistance to their ideologically-close sister parties in new democracies, NDI and IRI provide multilateral assistance to all parties deemed to be democratic, viable and capable of absorbing the assistance.\textsuperscript{98}

The principal party assistance organizations under this investigation – the American and German party foundations – are funded through their respective state development agencies (United States Agency for International Development and German Federal Ministry for Cooperation and Development i.e. BMZ). Thomas Carothers, the author of the book on international party assistance, “Confronting the Weakest Link: Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies”, points out that, “obtaining hard numbers for the amounts of party aid is very difficult.”\textsuperscript{99} Other authors have encountered similar difficulties in pinpointing the exact costs of party assistance activities.\textsuperscript{100} All foundations are busy with various democracy assistance activities such as civil society or independent media support, or legislative/electoral

\textsuperscript{97}Krishna Kumar, “Reflections on international political party assistance,” Democratization 12:4 (August 2005): 505.
\textsuperscript{98}Political Party Development Assistance, policy brief published by the Center for Democracy and Governance, United States Agency for International Development, April 1999.
\textsuperscript{100}For example, see: Peter Burnell and André W.M. Gerrits (eds), Promoting Party Politics in Emerging Democracies (Routledge, 2012).
processes support, so this multitude of activities makes it difficult to discern the amount of money spent exclusively on political party activities. As an illustration, German Stiftungen were believed to have spent anywhere between $40 million and $80 million on international party assistance in 2004, while the US institutes NDI and IRI together allocated an estimated total of $68 million to party aid in the same year.\textsuperscript{101} Carothers arrives at the estimate that “party aid is…somewhere between five percent and seven percent of democracy aid overall.”\textsuperscript{102}

Interpreting the term ‘party assistance’ literally would entail all types of external assistance to political parties, ranging from professional for-profit political consulting services to dubious financial ‘gifts’ from communities in diaspora. However, party assistance in this research is understood exclusively as the work of international party assistance organizations conducted within the framework of democracy promotion. Where relevant, other types of external assistance to parties are discussed separately.

Table 2: Party Assistance Organizations and their Affiliations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Party Assistance Organization</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>National Democratic Institute (NDI)</td>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Republican Institute (IRI)</td>
<td>Republican Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Friedrich Ebert Stiftung</td>
<td>Social Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Konrad Adenauer Stiftung</td>
<td>Christian Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friedrich Naumann Stiftung</td>
<td>Free Democratic Party – liberals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heinrich Boll Stiftung</td>
<td>Green Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>Alfred Mozer Stichting</td>
<td>Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA) – Social Democrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VVD International</td>
<td>Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD) – Liberals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Democracy Initiative</td>
<td>Democraten 66 (D66) – Social Liberals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)</td>
<td>Labour Party; Conservative Party; Liberal Democrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Olof Palme Center</td>
<td>Social Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This section will analyze the main tenets of political party assistance, exploring first the goals behind this particular type of democracy assistance, and the assumptions that are inherent therein. It continues with a look at the party assistance toolbox, focusing on the methods, strategies and activities that party assistance programs entail. Finally, the section concludes with an overview of contemporary literature on party assistance and a summary of existing evaluations on its general successes and failures.

\textsuperscript{101} Thomas Carothers, \textit{Confronting the Weakest Link}, 85.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., 86.
2.3.1 Why Parties? The Analysis of Goals behind Party Assistance

Why do established democracies assist parties in emerging democracies? Parties, as argued earlier, hold special importance for development and functioning of democratic states. Carothers points out that no alternative has yet been devised that could replace parties and the function they hold in the democratic process: “in a well functioning democracy, parties’ represent citizens’ interests before the state, engage and involve citizens in democratic participation, structure the political choices that citizens have in elections, and for the governments and take responsibility for governing.”

Parties in new democracies are believed to experience many problems that prevent them from fulfilling this important role that they are meant to have for the functioning of democracy, and party assistance is meant to assuage some of those issues. Carothers has identified major perceived problems with parties in new democracies (and increasingly affecting parties in established democracies as well), and compiled them in a list he refers to as ‘the standard lament’:

- Parties are corrupt, self-interested organizations dominated by power-hungry elites who only pursue their own interests or those of their rich financial backers, not those of ordinary citizens;
- Parties do not stand for anything: there are no real differences among them. Their ideologies are symbolic at best and their platforms are vague or insubstantial;
- Parties waste too much time and energy squabbling with each other over petty issues for the sake of meaningless political advantages rather than trying to solve the country’s problems in a constructive, cooperative way;
- Parties only become active at election time when they come looking for your vote; the rest of the time you never hear from them;
- Parties are ill prepared for governing the country and do a bad job of it when they do manage to take power or gain places in the national legislature.

Bearing in mind this negative image of political parties in new democracies, it is not difficult to understand why they are thought to be organizations in dire need of assistance. Party assistance is therefore an attempt to address the problems associated with political parties in new democracies and the following section looks at its the methods and strategies.

2.3.2 The Party Aid Toolbox

We can distinguish between indirect and direct forms of party aid. Indirect forms of aid are those activities and programs “whose primary objective is something other than party strengthening” but which may have side benefits/effects on parties, such as

103 Thomas Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link*, 9.
104 Thomas Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link*, 4.
105 Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link*, 90-93.
supporting the legislative process and the work of parliamentary committees. The primary focus of this research is direct party aid, or those activities whose primary objectives are to strengthen political parties.

As Kumar details, party assistance can involve organizational development, election campaigns, focus on improving women’s participation, parties’ performance in legislatures, multiparty collaboration and legal/regulatory reform. Within these different sectors, aid can further be divided into financial, technical, seminars/workshops, training of party leaders and functionaries and foreign visits and tours. This assistance involves expert consultancy on inside party organization, improvement on party statutes, campaign management, party platform development, voter outreach, membership strategy, and public relations. Assistance is provided to different sectors within parties, for example women and youth. Focusing assistance on women and youth branches of political parties is considered important in terms of addressing gender balance within parties and with goal of providing democratic education to a new generation of political leaders. Party assistance organizations also work on connecting parties with the electorate through public opinion research, or through opening constituency outreach offices. Policy-making capacity within parties is supported through encouraging development of internal party think-tanks and policy research centers.

Finally, it is important to note the criteria for party organizations to enter into working relationship with local political parties in BiH and Kosovo. Two principles that the USAID policy on party assistance is based on are that their programs “support representative, multiparty systems” and that “USAID does not seek to determine election outcomes.” In the spirit of those two principles, the criteria for receiving assistance are that parties need to be democratic, as assistance to non-democratic parties is prohibited; parties should be significant i.e. politically viable, as can be evidenced by legitimate election results; they should have the ability to absorb the assistance.

2.3.3 What Do We Know about Party Assistance?

The field of party assistance within the democracy promotion literature did not receive attention comparable to that directed to civil society, media, human rights or rule of law programs. This section is going to summarize the main conclusions of the few existing evaluations of party assistance. It will deal with the critique of the party aid toolbox, the question of high expectations, the issue of perceptions-gap and limited effects, and lastly, the issue of political socialization through party assistance.

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106 Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link*, 90. For example, organizing elections or assisting legislative assemblies is seen as assistance that may have (positive) impact on political parties and their functioning.
Several concerns target the party aid toolbox and its ability to address the ‘standard lament’ checklist of problems facing parties in transition countries. Kumar wonders whether professional party organizers and political consultants hired to offer trainings and workshops on behalf of NDI and IRI have sufficient knowledge and understanding of recipient countries, their political parties and landscape in which they operate and compete for votes. He concludes that despite improvements in the trainer pool, “there still exists a critical need to train more experts…at national and regional levels.”

Along the same lines, others have questioned the relevance of party-assistance model, namely the fact that the strategies, concepts, and prescriptions are derived from the established democracies’ experience, while the countries in transition are faced with a different set of structural conditions and challenges. Carothers labels this ‘a mythic model’ that party aid seek to promote:

…Western party aid seeks to help build parties that are internally democratic, rationally and competent managed in a non-personalistic manner, effective at campaigning, rooted in society, law-abiding, financially transparent, ideologically defined, strongly inclusive of women and youth, good at media relations, and focused on grass-roots membership development and citizen outreach in between elections. These priorities for party development grow out of a generalized model of parties in established democracies. In fact this model could be described as mythic or idealized.

He concludes by saying that activities from the standard toolbox of party aid thus, “usually fail to penetrate the sociopolitical fabric of the recipient society, to identify and nurture local processes of change, and to generate much real ownership among the intended beneficiaries.”

In his research, Carothers has also identified a striking perception gap between party assisters and the recipients of their aid:

…[party assistance organizations’] representatives often reported having a direct influential line to the leader and other key figures in the recipient party. Yet when I asked senior people in the parties in question about these same field representatives, they tended to describe them as pleasant friends of the parties but distant outsiders to the real internal workings of the party.

This same perception gap also helps explain the existence of two divergent perceptions on party assistance effects: party aid organizations base their optimism on

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111 Krishna Kumar, “Reflections on international political party assistance:” 517.
114 Thomas Carothers, Confronting the Weakest Link, 124.
115 Thomas Carothers, Confronting the Weakest Link, 121.
faith and the goals they are striving to achieve, while the skeptics voice doubts about party aid’s ability to effect change.\textsuperscript{116} The bias of those involved in party assistance can also be justified by the organizations’ lack of both internal and external evaluations of their work. How to define success in party assistance? Carothers believes that,

…aid is transformative if it helps a leader-centric, structurally debilitated, ideologically incoherent, weakly rooted party establish genuine internal party democracy, build a strong organizational culture, embrace and embody a clear ideologically rooted platform, and develop an extensive social base. Very broadly speaking, there is an absence of evidence of transformative effects of party aid. This is clear from the sobering fact that almost everywhere party aid providers are working…the political parties today embody most or all of the shortcomings that party aid seeks to overcome.\textsuperscript{117}

This creates the following conundrum: is the party assistance, its tenets and methods to blame for lack of transformative effects, or are parties simply impervious to external influences? Table 3 summarizes what Thomas Carothers has identified as the causes behind limited effects of party assistance:

Table 3: Why does party assistance have limited effects?\textsuperscript{118}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resistance from the top</td>
<td>Party leaders have strong grip on their parties and thus resist reform and change (especially internal democratization of the parties); leaders have different visions on what their party should look like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties are hard to help</td>
<td>Strong organizational weakness that impair capacity to absorb aid effectively; underlying cause for existence and modus operandi as patronage networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underlying conditions &amp; structures</td>
<td>Aid does not address the context/underlying environment in which parties are born and operate: political system, socioeconomic conditions, enduring authoritarian legacy, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard method weakness</td>
<td>Standardized trainings that do not speak to the parties’ context and experience, with little or no follow up; workshop/training fatigue among recipients.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In his research, however, Carothers also identifies areas where assistance is believed to have modest positive effects. Parties, after having received the standardized party assistance, are better at campaigning, in some instances have better internal organization and communication, and finally, there is the emerging norm on “how parties in a democracy are supposed to be and to act.”\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 161 – 162.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 163.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., 176 – 184.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., 188.
The only existing assessment of USAID political party assistance programs commissioned also argues for the potential of aid to promote democratic norms. The report states party assistance effects are less tangible than in other types of democracy assistance programs, but nevertheless important, because through creating opportunities for building relationships with parties and political elites, party aid in fact works on socialization of democratic norms and increasing acceptance of basic democratic values. Political socialization, however, is hard to study and its effects are difficult to isolate. Diana Owen calls it “a messy, in some ways elusive process.” In broad terms, “political socialization is the transmission of political culture to new generations of citizens in a given society.”

Political education has also been a part of democracy assistance programs in transition countries, carried out under the name ‘civic education.’ Research on political culture shows little faith in effectiveness of civic education on democratization, because

…the democratic transformation of an entire society’s attitudes and values is the work of decades, and requires the action of large structural forces, such as economic modernization and generational succession, as well as sustained experience with democratic institutions and responsible behavior by opposition and governing elites in turning over power and the like. Party assistance, however, in theory, is in unique position to influence, to educate and thus socialize political elites in new democracies. Nonetheless, Carothers points out that although, “The role of party aid in helping establish and spread international norms about parties is real…the effects of these norms in practice are still only very tentative.” This research was therefore also geared towards seeking evidence of party assistance effects in the field of political socialization and transfer of democratic norms onto party aid recipients. The next chapter will explain the methodology that was used to gather data and determine the impact of party assistance effects in BiH and Kosovo.

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120 In January 2009, USAID awarded a $685,000 grant to the University of Pittsburgh for a 2 year “evaluation to identify the impact of USAID assistance on political party development and democratization, and advance technical knowledge and understanding in the field of political party strengthening.” Generally, the evaluation of party assistance has lagged behind its practice.  
125 Thomas Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link*, 189.
3. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research is less interested in measuring and more interested in describing and understanding complexity.¹

This chapter presents the methodology and the research design for the investigation of the effects of party assistance on political parties in BiH and Kosovo. It starts by addressing the rationale for case study research. Thereafter, the dominant data collection technique is described, providing detailed information on the interviews, interviewees as well as some of the challenges in gathering data this way. This chapter then deals with the supplementary data collection techniques, namely the analysis of primary source documents, participant observation and survey questionnaire quantitative data processing. What follows is the discussion of the analytical framework used for determining impact of party assistance on parties in BiH and Kosovo. The final section provides an overview of some of the challenges in democracy assistance research as well as the limitations that played a role in devising the methodology used for this particular investigation.

3.1 Case Study Research

The analysis of party assistance in BiH and Kosovo constitutes ‘thick research,’ or comprehensive examination of that phenomenon and its effects.² The independent variable, namely political party assistance, is assessed in terms of its impact on the dependent variable, political parties. Considering the highly dynamic context of post-conflict international administration, which constitutes an additional independent variable, one of the challenges of this research lies in determining whether the two impacts can be isolated from one another. Process tracing is a useful method, as it is often used for case studies and within-case analysis. This method attempts to bring the investigation as close as possible to defining links and causal mechanisms between independent variable(s) and their effect on the dependent variable.³

Internal validity of propositions relating to the extent and nature of the impact yielded through party assistance on party development was strengthened by the use of multiple methods: qualitative data collected through interviews and primary source documents were cross-referenced with quantitative data collected through surveys. To address reliability issues, two methods were used: recording the interviews where possible or taking elaborate interview notes. The general post-interview procedure of data preservation and processing was making typed transcripts as soon as possible after the interview, to record personal impressions of what was revealed in the

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process. In order to encourage greater information sharing, respondents were granted anonymity.

The external validity of this research is promising: lessons drawn from studying party assistance in post-conflict BiH and Kosovo can potentially be generalized to other (post)conflict cases like Afghanistan and Iraq, where there was a substantial increase in political party assistance activities following the international intervention. Both Afghanistan and Iraq are currently scenes of international interventions and intense democracy promotion activities. In order to test this potential, a comparative case study analysis would need to be conducted, comparing the BiH and Kosovo party assistance approaches, to those implemented in Iraq and Afghanistan.

3.2 Interviews

The dominant data collection technique in this research was open-ended, semi-structured interviewing. All respondents were asked a set number of questions, while at the same time allowing for departure from those questions in a direction that the interviewee suggested. Considering the specific knowledge held by party assistance organizations and key political party members involved, elite interviewing was a particularly useful method in this process tracing research. It should also be stressed that, of the total 166 interviews, only one was conducted with the aid of an interpreter: the others were conducted in English or Croatian/Serbian/Bosnian languages. The added value of this research therefore also lies in the direct gathering of information, with little loss in translation.

The issue of selection of respondents, or sampling, was relatively uncomplicated. The number of donor organization officials, party assistance organizations staff and political party officials relevant to BiH and Kosovo case studies was not particularly large, so interviewing majority of them was feasible, thus removing the need for random or probability sample. Furthermore, considering the size of the case studies and especially the concentration of relevant respondents in urban areas, as well as the specific focus on the subject of party aid, snowballing or chain-referral as well as convenience/availability sampling were the best method of identifying and reaching the interviewees.

To avoid bias, several types of interviewees were approached for this research, to get the broadest possible picture and set of opinions on the subject matter. The overview of different types of respondents can be found in Table 4. The 166 interviews were done during field visits to Washington D.C., Berlin, London and

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4 Some of the findings from field research in Washington D.C. in 2007 revealed that major party aid organizations have diverted as much as 40% of their budget to covering the Iraq program, and are employing as many as 300 staff members there. The BiH and Kosovo cases fade in comparison.


6 Croatian is author’s native language. The differences between Croatian and Serbian and Bosnian are minor, thus allowing easy communication. In Kosovo, most respondents were fluent and willing to speak Serbian, and where this was not the case, English was the principal language of communication.
longer stays of altogether three and a half months in Kosovo and seven months in BiH over the course of three years. A few interviews were done over Skype, in the case where party assistance organization staff had moved on to different assignments and were posted in Africa, Middle East, Canada, and Asia.

The interviews with party aid recipients i.e. political party members in BiH and Kosovo proved somewhat sensitive. It soon became obvious that most respondents did not give international party assistance much thought and were thus likely to give it brief, superficial praise and then move on to other subjects, such as politics, current events or the internal setup of their respective parties. In order to get as objective evaluation as possible, and to avoid selection bias, respondents from political parties were identified using several different approaches. The first way was going through the official channels, namely using the ‘info’ phone number from their political party web site, calling the central bureau, introducing the research subject and asking for them to recommend the most suitable person(s) to interview. The second way of getting political party interviewees was through using referrals from party assistance organizations, who often recommended talking to parties’ international secretaries. The third way of identifying politicians to interview was through resorting to informal channels. This multivariate approach was also used to evaluate the level of transparency, organization and internal party discipline, as there were cases where it was evident that only certain persons within a given party were allowed to speak to outsiders about it.

Table 4: Overview of Conducted Interviews in Research on Effects of Party Assistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996-2008) and Kosovo (1999-2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of interviewee</th>
<th>Sub-type</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Number of Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>Governmental, Development &amp; Aid Agencies</td>
<td>USAID, NED</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intergovernmental Organizations</td>
<td>U.S. State Department / former Clinton administration officials</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implementing organizations (heads of programs, mid-level officers, local staff)</td>
<td>UNDP, OSCE, OHR, UNMIK</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipients</td>
<td>Political party members / staff (leaders, mid-level, youth branch)</td>
<td>NDI, IRI, German party foundations, UK &amp; Dutch parties</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Local and international NGOs, think tanks + scholars / academics / analysts + media / journalists</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Party consultants, experts, (former) government officials (international and local)</td>
<td>Major parties in Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka, Prishtina, Mitrovica</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total number of conducted interviews:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>166</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The information obtained through interviews – especially the controversial findings – were subjected to further scrutiny and triangulation before presenting them in the dissertation. Triangulation is of imperative importance in qualitative research, and is best defined as “a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study.” Here, it meant that information relevant for conclusions reached in this study was only presented after having been confirmed by a minimum of three sources (interviewees, documents, participant observations or questionnaires). Finally, by adopting multiple methodologies of data collection and applying the triangulation rule in data analysis, the possibility of overlooking rival explanations or receiving an overly positive evaluation of party assistance through face-to-face interviews was minimized.

3.3 Primary and Secondary Sources

The evaluation of political party assistance programs in BiH and Kosovo also draws on primary sources, most notably the classified working plans of major U.S. party assistance organizations NDI and IRI. These working plans were obtained through request to USAID, based on the Freedom of Access to Information (FOIA) act. USAID was able to provide all the working plans for both organizations in question until the year of 2007, with the following exceptions: IRI 2003 report for BiH, i.e. the first year of IRI’s activities in this country; NDI BiH reports 2002, 2003; and NDI Kosovo reports 1999 – 2001, i.e. the first three years of engagement.

In spite of applying the FOIA request, getting access to these documents was not straightforward. When pushed to deliver the remainder of the working plans, the justification USAID official gave for not providing all the reports was that the ones that they did not send in were simply – missing. Further dismay was created by an email from a high-positioned USAID officer who – after receiving the FOIA request for NDI and IRI working plans – responded with the following request:

Your request has created an enormous amount of work for many USAID staff here and in Europe. And you still haven't told me if you or your colleagues even bothered to research our vast online library. Please check dec.usaid.gov online. And, please consider withdrawing this FOIA request as it is quite burdensome.

This email and USAID’s failure to provide all the requested documents were rather disappointing in their lack of professionalism. The Development Experience Clearinghouse website of USAID that this officer referred to has indeed provided a number of quarterly reports by NDI and IRI evaluating their programs in BiH and Kosovo. At the same time, these reports are far from complete, and contain

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8 Official letter from USAID sent to Marlene Spoerri (researcher who filed the original FOIA request) in 2007.
9 USAID Division Chief, e-mail to author. November 14, 2007.
information different from the one provided in the original working plans on basis of which NDI and IRI were given grants by USAID and NED.

Further primary sources used in this research were the political party statutes, publications, documents and party programs often directly accessed from party web sites. Some NDI staff members were also kind enough to share internal documents and reports not accessible to wider public. Finally, German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) invests in local research on domestic issues and politics, and this investigation has drawn on these reports published in BiH and Kosovo.

The secondary sources used in this research were academic journal articles and books, as well as various think tank reports and assessment documents produced by non-governmental organizations, both international ones and domestic ones in BiH and Kosovo. An important element of this secondary literature is the previous evaluations of USAID’s party assistance programs and democracy promotion in general, which have been outsourced to various consulting companies. Though these evaluations are biased in many respects, such as “by organizational interests and a lack of both resources and long-term perspectives,” they nevertheless provided a useful starting point in devising this comprehensive evaluation of party assistance using multiple methodologies.

3.4 Supplementary Methods
In order to minimize the bias of receiving overly positive evaluations of party assistance through excessive reliance on face-to-face interviews, this research has supplemented its data collection methodology by using both participant observation and survey questionnaire to generate information on party assistance effects on parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo.

3.4.1 Participant Observation
Thanks to Dutch party assistance organizations such as the Alfred Mozer Stichting (AMS), VVD’s International department, D66 International Democracy Initiative (IDI) and the German party foundations, the author had the opportunity to participate in various conferences, seminars and trainings offered to parties in BiH and Kosovo. On some of those occasions, the author offered lectures and participated actively in the workshops.

Participant observation is considered the primary method in ethnographic research. It proved invaluable in getting to learn and understand the views of as well as challenges facing political parties and international party assistance organizations. Many insiders have criticized the “shortcomings of audit-based evaluations” of democracy promotion “which fail to capture on-the-ground reality,” and

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11 The list of participation observation events can be found in Appendix 4.
anthropologists have offered ethnographic research as one way of countering that shortsightedness. Through both passive and active participation in various workshops, conferences and party trainings in BiH and Kosovo, the author gained first-hand access to participants’ insights and attitudes, organizers’ approaches, tools and the experience of the general atmosphere of such party assistance activities. The impressions gathered through participant observation can be found throughout the evaluation chapters on party aid in BiH and Kosovo.

3.4.2 Survey Questionnaire

Another supplement to this research is a quantitative element in the form of survey questionnaire. Whether at different party aid trainings or through assistance of party members, the author collected 131 questionnaires of survey on political party assistance. An example of the distributed survey questionnaire is in Appendix 1.

The questionnaire is based on background and demographic questions, a simple 5-point rating scale evaluating the respondent’s opinion on usefulness of received party assistance, and also includes a few open questions asking for respondent’s opinions on what could have been done better. The primary purpose behind using a survey questionnaire was to use it as a check on the data gathered through qualitative methods. In other words, while it could be anticipated that in face-to-face interviews, party assistance officials and party aid recipients will express positive views about party aid, the questionnaires gave them absolute anonymity and space to express their views, without the need for self-censoring. The processing of the questionnaires using the SPSS and STATA data analysis statistical software confirmed the findings gathered through interviews, thus constituting a double check on the validity of the results presented here.

3.5 Understanding and Establishing Impact

Several causal claims are put forward in this research. The primary concern of this research is to determine whether and in what way political party aid played a role in the development of political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Since party aid was only one factor among many others influencing party development, the influences of these other (f)actors need to be accounted for, in order to discern them from party aid impact. The way that was used to determine the impact in this research was by evaluating different levels of policy implementation: the micro-level (in this case, the influence of party aid on individual political parties), the meso-level (party aid impact on political party system development) and the macro-level (the impact of party aid on political system transformation and change in general).

13 65 questionnaires from major parties Kosovo, 66 from Bosnia-Herzegovina’s main parties.
This research focuses in large part on the micro-level assistance (to political parties) within the wider framework of democracy assistance. Micro-level impact also lies in the professionalization and education of individual party members who attended the various party assistance trainings and subsequently amended party procedures to make them more transparent or effective. In cases where evidence of this is given in interviews through self-reflection of different respondents, it is interpreted as a case of successful micro-level impact. Another way of determining micro-level impact was by comparing the two largest party aid recipients from each of the case studies, analyzing their pre-assistance status quo and the evolution they underwent throughout the time they received party assistance. Through this micro-level, inter-party comparison, party elites’ openness to aid was revealed as a major variable that determines the aid's success i.e. impact.

The determination of the party system and political system impact is more complex and it depended primarily on the empirical observations from the field and data received in interviews with local and international experts in this field. Political party systems of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo were born out of conflicts of the 1990s and the legacy of war exerted profound influence on their formation. Party assistance was expected to have, at best, played a very modest role in influencing their present characteristics. Nevertheless, some of the party assistance activities did target inter-party communication and in general relations between parties, coalition formation as well as party regulations and electoral law. These type of activities fall under the meso-level impact analysis.

The influence of aid on political systems of BiH and Kosovo constitutes macro-level impact. While it is difficult to determine the causal relationship between party aid and political system change with certainty, it is possible to determine how the evolution of the political system and party assistance activities overlap. One of the distinctions established in this macro-level impact domain is that between institutional changes in the political system and the ones in political culture, attitudes and behavior of elites. As presented in chapter seven, one of the research findings was that while party aid did exert some impact on the political system by strengthening the institutional framework of political parties, it did not influence the underlying political culture in which those parties operate.

Finally, as the law of unintended consequences suggests, every action is bound to elicit results that may be starkly different from its original goals. The results of this research suggest that the same maxim applies to political party assistance. Together with evaluating its intended, explicit goals of democratizing political parties and the political system in which they operate, this investigation has also evaluated the detrimental effects on political party (system) development that could be contributed to party assistance in BiH and Kosovo.
3.6 Limitations and Constraints

Due to its position at the interplay of democratization, democracy assistance and political party development disciplines and the added complexity of the parallel post-conflict reconstruction, statebuilding and democratization processes, the inquiry into effects of party assistance in BiH and Kosovo generates many questions. One way to deal with the methodological limitations and the inherent complexity of the context is by taking into account the scope and time constraints and choosing carefully what to focus on. Therefore, this dissertation will not address the issue of governance institutions building and design in the wake of a conflict. Similarly, its purpose is not to evaluate the current state of democracy in BiH and Kosovo, though some of the existing analyses will be used where relevant to the discussion of political party (system) development.

The previously mentioned difficulty of measuring the domestic impact of foreign actor involvement has several causes. Owing to the multiplicity of actors and factors involved in the process of political change, it is difficult to distinguish and single out contributions of individual actors; it is impossible to determine the alternative trajectories of development without the element of external support – in other words, counterfactual reasoning cannot be applied; the intricate interplay between domestic and foreign (f)actors further convolutes the identification of causal links and the measurement of the impact of such policies; the political context in which assistance is provided is a major factor in the impact of the program and projects involved and is a complex variable in itself; democracy assistance projects take time to yield effects – there is an added difficulty in evaluating the impact of recently completed projects; finally, research often focuses on the goals and objectives expressed by the donors of democracy assistance, which poses the danger of overlooking unintended, sometimes negative side-effects.

Democracy promotion and in general the domain of international development aid is characterized by a further set of factors that do not allow for thoughtful, long-term planning and evaluation. When designing and carrying out this research, some of the concerns listed here were carefully considered in order to minimize their effect on

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the conceptualization and findings. Often deployed in emergency or rushed conditions, the implementers often find themselves unprepared for conditions they meet on the ground, which in turn leads to ad-hoc reactive rather than proactive activities. In such time-constrained and fluid conditions, what criteria and standards should researchers use to evaluate projects implemented in the name of advancing democracy? One of the major mistakes committed by most of the parties involved in this exercise – policymakers, implementers of the democracy assistance programs, recipients of the aid and researchers of its impact – is having overly ambitious expectations of the outcome. Policymakers paint rosy pictures of glorious outcomes (of, for e.g. authoritarian countries joining the club of liberal democracies) in order to convince their legislatures to provide the funding. Implementers feel they need to create the impression of their positive presence and impact, while at the same time calling donors’ attention to the never-ending plethora of problems still plaguing the community they are active in, thus justifying their presence there and the continued need for additional funds. Recipients are attracted into participation through the promise of various rewards in return, and most of the time they remain in the backseat of such initiatives, as mere passive observers or objects, rather than active subjects in that exercise – which naturally sooner or later leads to inertness and resignation. Finally, researchers commit the error of overlooking the contextual constraints and holding the democracy assistance programs to standards higher than what the implementers or policymakers themselves hoped to achieve. This bias often comes through focusing on ideal-term definitions of key concepts (e.g. ‘democracy,’ ‘rule of law’) rather than on the definition and meaning of those terms in the context which is being studied.\(^\text{18}\) In other words, this research recognizes the need to reconcile ideal-term definitions of goals set forth in democracy assistance programs with the constraining local conditions that are their starting point.

Finally, one of the limitations of this research has been access to materials of European, most notably German party assistance organizations (Stiftungen). It needs to be stressed here that the results and findings from field research are heavily based on the work of US party institutes NDI and IRI: their staff both in headquarters in Washington D.C. and locally in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Prishtina, were more open to being interviewed and to talking about their work, than their German counterparts. Similarly, the US party assistance organizations publish quarterly reports and there is a general higher level of transparency in their work than in the activities of German foundations. The bias, or bigger focus on US party aid stems from lack of access to working plans and evaluation documents on party assistance by the German Stiftungen.

\(^\text{18}\) To illustrate: while the Kosovo Assembly in the eyes of an observer from an established, Western democracy will most certainly seem ineffective, dysfunctional, unsustainable and at best crude, in Kosovo – especially when bearing in mind that this young country had no similar political institution less than a decade ago – this constitutes remarkable progress towards eventual attainment of a functioning, independent democratic state.
Political party assistance is a relatively recent phenomenon in the complex histories of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Active in BiH since 1996 and in Kosovo since 1999, party aid organizations entered the scene at a difficult point in time, when both countries were emerging from violent conflicts and with the international community just starting to set up their administrations. It would be difficult if not impossible to understand the political context in which party aid was distributed without first taking a look at some of the dynamics and events that shaped the political systems of these two countries. A longstanding history of rivalry between different empires and ethnic groups fighting over the territory, two world wars and a half century long one-party dictatorship all left their unique legacies. Looking at these different stages in BiH and Kosovo’s history is necessary for understanding the context in which political party assistance took place in the last decade as well as the democratization constraints inherent within these two countries.

As argued previously, the international administration institutions in BiH and Kosovo constitute the biggest alternative explanation for external influence on political party development in these two countries. In order to correctly attribute the impact of external intervention on political parties, the influence of international administration needs to be distilled from the effect of party aid organizations. The following chapter is therefore divided into three parts: the first part looks at the political history of BiH and Kosovo prior to the conflicts of the 1990s, while the second part focuses on the post-conflict statebuilding by international administrations. It is here that main post-conflict political developments are discussed, in an effort to distinguish the role that the international community played in political party and political system development in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Finally, the third section of this chapter introduces the main parties in both countries and describes the political party systems within which they function. This section also covers the main political developments that took place in the period under which BiH and Kosovo political parties were receiving foreign assistance.

4.1 Pre-Conflict Politics

Reading any of the well-known historical accounts\(^1\) on the Balkans demonstrates with certainty only one thing: that history is a highly contentious subject in this part of the

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world. Both BiH and Kosovo had been contested territories over which wars were fought throughout centuries. Bosnia-Herzegovina was in the past continuously under imperial rule, starting with the Ottomans in the 15th and ending in 18th century and under Austro-Hungarian Empire for much of the late 19th and early 20th century. Kosovo experienced a similar destiny. After a period under Byzantine rule, it was incorporated into Serbia in the 11th century, where it went on to play a significant role not just as a place of special importance for the development of the Serbian Orthodox religion, but also as the scene of several major battles against the invading Ottoman Empire. After four centuries under Ottoman rule, Kosovo was once again integrated into Serbia in the 19th century. During the Ottoman period, large segments of population converted to Islam. This Islamization has further contributed to religious and ethnic fragmentation of already diverse populations of BiH and Kosovo.

Political history analyses are most often tied to the concepts of nation and statehood, both of which are highly contested terms in the countries under investigation. This section will start by looking at the position of BiH and Kosovo in Yugoslavia and by analyzing political developments during the rule of Josip Broz Tito and his Communist Party. The concluding segment analyzes the political parties’ role in the countries’ descent into conflict.

4.1.1 Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo in Tito’s Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia is a nation of six states, five cultures, four languages, three religions, two alphabets, but one political party.  
- Josip Broz Tito

We have been very liberal up to now.  
I have never been in favor of this liberalism.  
- Josip Broz Tito (April 15, 1971)

The second Yugoslavia, led by Marshall Josip Broz Tito for most of its existence, was founded following the end of the Second World War. In it, Bosnia-Herzegovina had the status of a full republic (alongside five others). Kosovo, together with Vojvodina, was


first granted the status of autonomous region in 1946, which was later extended to the status of autonomous province under Republic of Serbia in 1963. The 1974 constitution granted Kosovo self-government institutions, as well as education in Albanian language. Since the percentage of interethnic (mixed) marriages was highest there, many believed Bosnia-Herzegovina to be the most successful model of mini-Yugoslavia and the embodiment of the country’s slogan ‘brotherhood and unity’. Kosovo, on the other hand, remained the poorest part of Yugoslavia with highest unemployment and birth rates, and lowest number of interethnic marriages.

The Yugoslav Communist Party (SKJ) was the main political body in post-1945 Yugoslavia. One party rule was facilitated through federal party bureaus, with one in each of the republics as well as in the two autonomous provinces of Serbia. The management and leading decision-making posts were ‘reserved’ for Communist Party officials throughout Yugoslavia. Taking into account the ethnic diversity in Yugoslavia, all federal activities had to “take directly into account the proportional representation of individuals by constituent nationality – called the national key (ključ or quota system).”

This quota system was particularly necessary in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as it was the republic without a clear majority ethnic group: Serbs were believed to comprise 31.4% of the population of BiH, Croats 17.3% and Muslims 43.7%. The latter were a subject of much contention, because until 1960s they were not recognized as a separate ethnic group i.e. nationality. Bosnia-Herzegovina’s society operated under the ‘national/ethnic key’ job-division system throughout much of Tito’s Yugoslavia. In Kosovo, things operated in a similar manner, all until the 1980s, when Serbs pushed out majority Albanians from leading posts in the government, businesses and other relevant societal sectors.

Yugoslavia prospered in the 1960s under Tito’s leadership. After his rift with Stalin in 1948, Yugoslavia broke with USSR and was no longer one of its satellites. Tito embarked upon the building of socialism based on workers’ self-management. As one of the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement, he was also able to position Yugoslavia as a cushion between the East and the West, at the time heavily involved in the Cold War against one another. As a result, Yugoslavia was able to receive Western loans and was not subject to USSR’s redistributive policies as its other satellite countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

Though disagreements between different nations inside the federation were always present, the first major signs of discord came to surface in the 1970s when the world economy took a downturn and Yugoslavia’s suffered a simultaneous fallback. In the atmosphere of worsening economic conditions, nationalist tendencies emerged. Tito responded by imprisoning some of the nationalist protests’ leaders and by introducing a

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3 Renamed in the 1950s to Savez Komunista Jugoslavije (SKJ) – League of Yugoslav Communists.
7 Suad Arnautović, *Ten Years of Democratic Chaos in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, 2006
new constitution in 1974, which created a federal system of government with greater, decentralized self-rule for all the republics. His death in 1980 marked the beginning of a tumultuous decade during which the Communist Party leaders from the six republics and two autonomous provinces struggled to keep the union together. Despite the continuing lip service to socialist democracy and worker self-management, Yugoslavia’s Communist leadership was elite-based and heavily bureaucratized, which elicited criticism due to the rising level of social and political inequality that this system gave birth to.\(^{8}\)

It is interesting to note that the Communist League of Yugoslavia founded in 1975 its political school in Kumrovec – the village where Tito was born.\(^{9}\) The founding of the school came in response to the dwindling confidence in the Socialist ideology and the organizational struggles that the Communist party had been experiencing in the 1970s. The school’s framework, curriculum and methodology of political education were in many ways similar to the democracy-promoting political party assistance programs that are at the centre of this research. The purpose of the Kumrovec School was to identify and train young Communist Party members with great potential, in order to ensure the party’s survival by renewing its cadre and thus perpetuate the influence of the party throughout Yugoslavia. The future society leaders – politicians, businessmen, journalists – were housed on the premises of the Political School for several months, where they attended lectures and workshops on party ideology, economics, management, and most importantly – on keeping Tito’s legacy alive.\(^{10}\) Parallel to this extensive political education program in Kumrovec, each republic’s Communist Party bureau crafted and disseminated an educational curriculum to its municipal branches, who in turn organized their own local political schools.\(^{11}\) Towards the late 1980s, these local political schools were the scene of passionate discussions on the problems of socialist self-management system, and many advocated openly the need for introducing multiparty system.\(^{12}\) The atmosphere of liberalization, democratization and rising nationalism coupled with economic crisis contributed to the eventual demise of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia which unraveled during its Fourteenth (and last) Extraordinary Party Congress in Belgrade on January 23, 1990.\(^{13}\)

### 4.1.2 Sliding into War

The conflicts of the 1990s arguably bear the defining impact on BiH and Kosovo and the evolution of their post-conflict political systems. This section is therefore divided into three parts, with the first one providing a general description of the conflicts, and the

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\(^{9}\) In reference to its location, it was known as ‘the Kumrovec School’ – *Kumrovečka škola*.

\(^{10}\) Interview with a former Kumrovec Political School student in Zagreb, Croatia: April 18, 2008.

\(^{11}\) Interview with a former local political school lecturer from Croatia, over Skype: November 03, 2009.

\(^{12}\) Interview with a former local political school lecturer from Croatia, over Skype: November 03, 2009.

second one delving deeper into the politics of warfare. The concluding part outlines the role that political parties played in the war.

4.1.2.1 The Conflicts
Kosovo erupted already in 1981, with Albanian students’ protests against the poor standards in their institutions of higher education and clamoring for Kosovo’s status to be upgraded to a republic within Yugoslavia. The protest was extinguished and put under control by the Yugoslav National Army (JNA), but it signaled a beginning of a trend in Albanian-Serb tense relationship and sporadic skirmishes throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Slobodan Milošević’s rise to power on the tide of growing Serbian nationalism and his self-assumed role of champion of the Serb people ‘endangered’ outside of borders of Serbia proper did not bode well for survival of Yugoslavia. When he revoked Kosovo’s autonomy in 1989, Kosovar Albanians organized a referendum the following year which resulted in great majority of its population supporting independence from Yugoslavia. This move was proclaimed illegal by Belgrade, and Assembly of Kosovo was subsequently dissolved. A few months later, Albanian representatives passed the constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, which marked the beginning of ‘parallel’ Kosovar Albanian state.  

The 1990s were marked by increasing segregation between the two ethnic groups in everyday life and workplace, and organization of parallel government structures by the ethnic Albanian group, existing alongside Serb-dominated ones. Ibrahim Rugova, leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) movement, became the face of Kosovo Albanian’s peaceful resistance against Serbia.

Bosnia and Herzegovina’s descent into civil war was preceded by Slovenia and Croatia’s bids for and international recognition of independence in 1991. Bosnian Serbs were closely watching Milošević and his actions in Kosovo, feeling jeopardized by the prospect of independent Bosnia-Herzegovina in which Bosniaks would constitute a majority. Bosnian Croats, on the other hand, were closely involved with Croatia’s nationalist leader Franjo Tudman, whose arms supply and war for independence from Yugoslavia was largely financed by diaspora communities of Croats of Herzegovinian origin. Though politicians tried to create and participate in a multiethnic government, it fell apart in 1992 and Bosnia-Herzegovina erupted in a full-scale conflict. This former Yugoslav republic suffered the worst collapse during the country’s breakup: more than 100,000 people dead, estimated 2.2 million displaced and refugees and tens of thousands women raped are the horrible statistics the people of this country will have to deal with.

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14 Julie A. Mertus, Kosovo: How Myths and Truths Started a War (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 297.
15 By this time, the continuing debate on the existence of separate Muslim ethnic group or nationality got framed with the usage of a new term, ‘Bosniak.’ For more information, please see the ‘Note on Terminology’ in the beginning of the dissertation.
for many years to come. The bloody events of 1992 – 1995 in Bosnia shocked the world. An army of foreign journalists covered the deterioration of a European country; a slow hemorrhage of a multicultural and cosmopolitan city that hosted the 1984 Winter Olympics; and the death of a nation of people who were much closer in culture, lifestyle and appearance to the Western audiences than their counterparts in Somalia or Rwanda, two other conflict hotspots at the time. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was one that paralyzed the international community: both the EU and the US were reluctant to get involved. The presence of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) failed to deter atrocities and massacres against civilians in this war: the most infamous case of this is the murder of estimated 8,000 of men and boys under the watch of Dutch peacekeepers in the UN safe-haven of Srebrenica. Following several particularly brutal massacres of civilians in Sarajevo, US President Bill Clinton authorized NATO air attacks against Bosnian Serb military positions in late 1994 and 1995.

Following the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement that ended the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovar Albanians became increasingly disillusioned with Rugova’s strategy of peaceful resistance, and 1996 saw the appearance of Kosovar Liberation Army (KLA), whose goal was Kosovo’s independence. In the following three years, the KLA guerilla warfare and Serb army clashes resulted in substantial casualties from both sides. The international community intervened in 1999 in an unprecedented military mission, launched without United Nations Security Council Resolution. Under the guise of humanitarian intervention, intending to stop grave human rights abuses and persecution of ethnic Albanians by the Serb military and paramilitary groups, NATO-led Operation Allied Force conducted from March 24 to June 10, 1999 consisted of aircrafts conducting over 38,000 combat sorties and 10,484 strike sorties against targets in Kosovo, Vojvodina, Serbia proper and Montenegro.

4.1.2.2 The Politics of Warfare

In the period leading to Yugoslavia’s death, there were changes in the political system on the central level as well as in the federal republics. New parties were born which loudly

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17 The estimate of casualties and refugees is used in reference to the research conducted by the Casualty Unit of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in the Hague, the Netherlands, as well as to the one performed by the Sarajevo-based Research and Documentation Centre. Estimate of mass rapes differs between that of Bosnian government (50,000), the Investigating Commission of the European Union (20,000) and specialist Dr. Zvonimir Šeparović (30,000), as quoted in an interview with journalist Seada Vranić who conducted extensive research on the subject, available at: www.barnsdale.demon.co.uk/bosnia/rapes.html (accessed February 16, 2007).
18 Original name: Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës (UÇK). English name and acronym are well known and thus used throughout the dissertation.
19 The actual number of killed on both sides is still to be determined. The West, gearing up for intervention, widely publicized the figure of more than 100,000 missing (implying they had been murdered) ethnic Albanians. Later on, this figure was challenged by recovery of substantially less bodies (~3,000). Read more in: Jonathan Steele, “Serb killings ‘exaggerated’ by West,” The Guardian (August 18, 2000).
contested the autocratic rule of the all-present Communist Party. In this respect, developments in Yugoslavia were not that different from those in its neighboring countries, where strengthening of the opposition, weakening of the Soviet grip and unraveling of the Communist parties opened the way to multiparty elections in the early years of 1990s. The results in Yugoslavia, however, were far from the democratic transitions that its neighbors embarked upon.

Bosnia-Herzegovina during that brief period from 1989 till early 1992 seemed to stand a chance: as Slovenia was signaling a desire to leave the union, and in neighboring Croatia Tuđman’s nationalist party Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) won the elections, Bosnia-Herzegovina managed to institute a multi-ethnic power-sharing government. Though the newly created parties there were formed almost exclusively along ethnic lines (Bosniak, Croat, Serb), they nevertheless formed a coalition:

The elements of consociationalism in pre-war Bosnia can be seen at the informal level as well as in the institution that came into existence with the elections in November and December 1990. At the first free elections, the three national parties, winning an overwhelming majority, formed a grand coalition… the state institutions functioned properly only for a brief period of time before the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) withdrew from the coalition, established the Republika Srpska and engaged in conquering and the ethnic cleansing of large parts of Bosnia, followed soon after by the HDZ…

This spontaneous pre-war consociational system was the result of initiative that came from the political elites of BiH’s major ethnic groups. It was a short-lasting experiment in democratic power-sharing.

Throughout the war, dominant nationalist parties each ran its own territorial dominions of control, and cultivated close links to military and paramilitary groups. While HDZ (Croat Democratic Union’s branch) in Herzegovina and central Bosnia were linked with military Croat Defense Council (HVO), Serbs and the SDS cooperated with the Milošević-run Yugoslav National Army which supported their own Bosnian Serb Army (VRS) with arms and paramilitary groups. Bosniaks, on the other hand, were left defenseless, without access to arms due to an internationally imposed arms embargo. As the war progressed, however, Alija Izetbegović’ Party of Democratic Action (SDA) became affiliated with the Green Berets (Zelene Beretke), self-organized Bosniak paramilitary groups which were the base for the newly founded Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina (ARBiH). The ethnic political parties were acting as “political arms of the armed groups” and in fact, “the leadership of the military and political wings virtually

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overlapped.” As such, these parties were the only organized political organizations after the conflict ended.

In Kosovo, where conflict was not as blown out in the open as in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the first rival to the Communist Party leadership came in form of a resistance movement led by Ibrahim Rugova. Responding to increasing repression and expulsion of Albanians from professional positions in Kosovo, he organized a movement of peaceful resistance, and was elected its leader in 1989. LDK constituted the first political alternative to the Communist Party leadership in Kosovo. As they had no access to positions of influence, Rugova and his party organized institutions of self-government running parallel to those led by Serbs. In the mid-1990s, however, another organized force emerged from the Kosovar Albanian ranks, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Funded by the Kosovar Albanian diaspora as well as connected with the Albania’s organized crime networks peddling weapons, the KLA worked actively on provoking Serbian military groups. At the same time, their diaspora – especially the one located in the US – lobbied hard for West to intervene. Following NATO’s intervention and at the time of the conclusion of the civil war, LDK was the dominant political party in Kosovo, joined in competition for power by the newly formed Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) and Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK). The latter two parties originated from two different factions of the KLA, and the international community facilitated their transformation from guerilla into political groups, in attempt to de-radicalize and de-militarize Kosovo.

4.1.2.3 The Role of Political Parties in the Conflicts

The democratic opening of Yugoslavia and the birth of multiparty politics took place in an environment of economic chaos. The immense foreign debt, failure to reach a federal agreement on restructuring of economic policies, steeply rising unemployment and skyrocketing inflation all contributed to the atmosphere of extreme insecurity. Susan Woodward explains the profile of contenders for political power that surfaced in such an environment:

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23 For more information on diaspora’s money and arms supply to KLA, as well as its role with lobbying Washington D.C. political elites for intervention: Stacy Sullivan, Be not afraid for you have sons in America: How a Brooklyn Roofer Helped Lure the U.S. into the Kosovo War (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2004). Also: Klaartje Quirijns (director), The Brooklyn Connection (2005), www.thebrooklyncollection.net.

24 By 1989 it is believed to have reached over $33 billion. Figure cited in: John Catalinotto, Sara Flounders (eds.), Hidden Agenda: U.S./NATO Takeover of Yugoslavia (New York: International Action Center, 2002), xix.

25 “Official unemployment was at 14 percent by 1984, varying from full employment in Slovenia to 50 percent in Kosovo, 27 percent in Macedonia, and 23 percent in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in large parts of Serbia, including the capital, Belgrade.” In: Susan Woodward, Balkan Tragedy, 51.
The resulting electoral competition among political and cultural elites brought into the open political arena all manner of persons who had been or felt excluded from political life – persons jailed for incitement to nationalist hatred, purged from the party for ideological views too liberal or too conservative, resentful toward real or imagined discrimination for not being a party member or a certain nationality, and political or economic émigrés awaiting a chance to return.26

In short, all the newcomers to the political scene were driven with anti-communist ideas and advocated ideas that presented a radical break from the past.

Furthermore, the process of political opening and organization of various parties was very short, as all the republics, following Slovenia’s lead, embarked upon the path towards democratic elections. The brevity allowed for little policy planning or development of party ideologies or base:

Not only did voters not have the time to shape new political identities in terms of the interests and loyalties appropriate to multiparty, parliamentary democracy, but politicians who might wish to appeal to such particular interests and campaign on specific governmental programs and policies had very little time to build campaign organizations and learn the skills of electoral competition.27

Nationalism came very handy to aspiring politicians who wanted to woo the masses and get their support and votes. Moreover, playing the nationalist card in the atmosphere of pending economic chaos served to pitch different ethnic groups against one another, and only facilitated the pending demise of Yugoslavia. As Richard Holbrooke put it, “Yugoslavia’s tragedy…was the product of bad, even criminal, political leaders who encouraged ethnic confrontation for personal, political and financial gain.”28

Finally, the 1990s development of Croatian and Serbian cross-border party organization in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo was not a new occurrence, but simply a continuance of the process that began in the early twentieth century, parallel with the beginnings of political parties in the region.29 The goal behind this practice was straightforward: control over territories inhabited by members of own ethnic group. At times of turbulence and major geopolitical changes, that desire for control rapidly expanded into attempts at annexation of those territories.

29 Croatia’s and Serbia’s efforts to control Bosnia-Herzegovina through cross-border party organization is well documented in Marko Attila Hoare, *The History of Bosnia: From the Middle Ages to the Present Day* (Saqi Books, 2007).
4.2 Post-Conflict Political Developments

Following the signing of peace agreements and conclusion of hostilities, the international community entered the area in peacekeeping and statebuilding capacity. The second part of this chapter outlines the initial and evolving mandates of the international administrations placed in charge of BiH and Kosovo as well as the administrations’ role in building their governance institutions. This part also introduces the political systems that were born in BiH and Kosovo out of the wars of Yugoslavia’s dissolution. Finally, the section concludes with an analysis of the international administration impact on political parties’ development and functioning.

4.2.1 International Administrations

The peace treaty between the warring factions in Bosnia-Herzegovina was reached in 1995 with Americans as mediators. The Dayton Peace Agreement (hereafter: DPA) was signed on November 21, 1995 by the presidents of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Alija Izetbegović), the Republic of Croatia (Franjo Tuđman) and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Slobodan Milošević). A power sharing political structure was created between the three major ethnic groups. The Constitution laid out in the Annex IV of the Dayton Agreement introduced a complex four-tier level of government structure. Appendix 2: Bosnia-Herzegovina Constitutional/Administrative Political Setup illustrates all the governance levels in the country. The state consists of two entities, Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (populated mostly by Bosniaks and Croats) and Republika Srpska (with majority Serb population). Federation is further divided into 10 cantons. Finally, in RS there are 63 municipalities, and in FBiH 74. This inflated administrative structure eats away an estimated 60% of the country’s GDP and has been left largely unchanged throughout its 15 years long existence.

Article II of the Annex 10 of the DPA outlines the role of the High Representative in BiH. According to his web site, the HR is “working with the people and institutions of BiH and the international community to ensure that BiH evolves into a peaceful and viable democracy on course for integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions.” International officials hired in this position have always been actively involved – with varying degrees of persistence and forcefulness of approach – in the decision and policymaking processes in BiH since the very beginning of development of BiH political

31 Appendix 2: Bosnia-Herzegovina Constitutional/Administrative Setup, p.223.
33 The Office of the High Representative (OHR) is an ad hoc international institution responsible for overseeing implementation of civilian aspects of the accord ending the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, at: www.ohr.int (accessed December 20, 2006)
system. They had the clear mandate to intervene in domestic issues and laws made at municipal, cantonal, entity and state levels. This mandate was expanded in the Peace Implementation Council Conference held in Bonn in December 1997 which “...requested the High Representative to remove from office public officials who violate legal commitments and the Dayton Peace Agreement, and to impose laws as he sees fit if Bosnia and Herzegovina’s legislative bodies fail to do so.”

Through this active intervention mandate, the OHR was able to exert continuous influence on the political system of BiH.

Kosovo became the responsibility of the international community on June 10, 1999, when United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1244 that established the UN Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK). The mission’s mandate was, “to carry out all aspects of civil administration, establish democratic institutions required for substantial self-government and create the basis for eventually resolving Kosovo’s disputed political status.” During its initial months, however, the UNMIK mission was too weak and uncoordinated to prevent massive reprisals taking place by the hand of the KLA against remaining Serbs living in Kosovo. UNMIK instated the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) by 2001, and Kosovo citizens got the chance to elect their political representatives. Figure 4 on page 64 provides the illustration of Kosovo’s political system under international administration.

The political landscape, though consisting of several parties, was rather uniform: all Kosovo Albanian parties were united in their desire for Kosovo’s independence. The paradox lay in the fact that UNMIK was mandated to deal with all aspects of running Kosovo and its society, except for discussing or determining its eventual status. The continuing lack of rule of law, anti-Serb and organized crime activities of members of disbanded KLA and the lack of direction of international administration all led to an explosion in March of 2004 when thousands of Kosovo Albanian demonstrators rampaged across the area, expelling and murdering remaining Serbs, looting, attacking vehicles of international administration and causing general unrest, all under the watch of international military forces. The Western governments funding UNMIK as well as the international staff present in Kosovo were shocked and disillusioned with this turn of events, and still at loss of solutions for the status question stalemate.

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34 Also known as the Bonn Powers. More information on Bonn Powers can be found at the official OHR website, http://www.ohr.int/pic/default.asp?content_id=5182 (accessed November 02, 2009).
36 Ibid.
37 Resolution 1244 even went as far as to state that Yugoslavia’s (i.e. Serbia’s) territorial integrity would be fully respected and maintained. This was one of the points of contention, without which Serbia would never have allowed the peacekeepers to enter its territory and UNMIK to set base.
4.2.2 International Administrations’ Influence on Politics

The international administrations in BiH and Kosovo were both mandated with the task of building governance institutions and creating functional, democratic states. Next to a wide range of state-building activities that they were involved in, international administrations also got involved with political parties. This ‘political state building’ will be discerned through looking at party regulations, international administration assistance to parties and electoral system designs in the post-conflict period. The narrow focus allows for greater insight into the impact of international administrations on political parties and their development in BiH and Kosovo.

Figure 4: Kosovo Administrative Setup after 1999

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39 Figure taken from official United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) website www.unmikonline.org (accessed December 07, 2007).
4.2.2.1 Party Regulation & Assistance

The international administrations in charge of BiH and Kosovo actively engaged in construction and (re)design of political institutions. While in BiH the process was almost exclusively a top-down initiative with the international administrations implementing laws on political parties and elections and amending them on rather regular basis, in Kosovo it was more a consultative process where the leaders of Kosovo’s main (Albanian) political parties were present during the discussions of these laws, which were then later voted on and passed by the Kosovo Assembly.

The international officials saw the ethnicization of the political arena, the basic fundament of party organization from the early 1990s, as one of the greatest obstacles for the reform and effective local governance in BiH. At the same time, little was done in terms of party registration and organization laws to change the status quo and encourage party formation across ethnic lines. In BiH, the base of the party registration law is the pre-war 1991 Law on Political Organizations.\textsuperscript{40} This law is very basic and does not take into account the specific nature of the BiH electorate and politics. The only recognition of that special nature lies in the following provision:

BiH Election Law and PIC Rules and Regulations prescribe restrictions related to members, particularly party officials…that a political party or coalition will not meet the requirements for participating at elections for as long as a function or position in the party is held by a person who is serving a sentence delivered by the International War Crimes Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia, or is indicted by the Tribunal and has failed to appear before it when requested.\textsuperscript{41}

Indictment by the ICTY has been used in BiH as reason for High Representatives to remove dozens of elected officials from public office. In Kosovo, the Office of the Political Party Registration and Certification was initially set up and run by the OSCE. The ICTY provision is also a part of the Rule No.01/2008 on Registration and Operation of Political Parties.\textsuperscript{42} In the same rule, article 5.1 c) stipulates that,

a party may be denied registration if it applies “…under a name, acronym, or symbol that is likely, in the judgment of the Office, to incite inter-communal, ethnic or religious hatred or violence.”\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{40} Law on Political Organisations, \textit{Official Gazette SRBiH} No. 27/91.
\textsuperscript{41} Rebeka Kotlo, “Democratical Role of the Political Parties: Does the Party System Assist the Working of Democracy?” in: \textit{Democracy Assessment in BiH} (Sarajevo: Open Society Institute, 2006), 150.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, Section 5: \textit{Grounds for Denying Registration}, 4-5.
This provision within party formation and organization legislation seems to be the only one that recognizes that Kosovo’s society and recent history contain tensions that bear political implications.

Regarding the laws on party financing, the international administrations were slow in their implementation in both BiH and Kosovo. In BiH the Law on Party Financing was implemented in 2000\(^{44}\) (some four years into the international intervention) whereas in Kosovo it was incorporated within the Rule No.01/2008 on Registration and Operation of Political Parties. In BiH the amount of both individual and corporate contributions to political parties is set at eight average salaries (currently it comes to about €2,500 in total). In Kosovo, the limit is substantially higher (set at €20,000). At the same time, journalists point to the exuberant spending by the BiH political parties and the funds channeled into them from the state and entity budgets.\(^{45}\) Also, several of the BiH parties were found to be in breach of the regulations on party financing, having accepted donations from abroad in excess of the allowed single-contribution sum.\(^{46}\) In Kosovo, the general perception holds that most, if not all political parties are linked to organized crime networks.\(^{47}\) Ahead of the 2007 general and municipal elections, the candidates running for office were required to disclose their financial assets: the fact the several leaders and prominent members of the main political parties declared incomes over one million euros in a country with virtually non-existent economy seems to confirm that predominant perception.\(^{48}\) Finally, an extensive investigation has revealed that state budget funds are by far the biggest source of financing of political parties:

The funds put aside for some political parties were up to as high as a million EUR per year…these funds are progressively increasing, and the estimate is that public budgets on all levels of governance yearly distribute as much as 10 million euros to political parties.\(^{49}\)


\(^{46}\) For e.g., in 2007 the Central Electoral Commission (CIK) in BiH has found the SDP party guilty of receiving well over €200,000 worth of donations from the Westminster Foundation in UK. It has imposed a large monetary fine on the party which is in the process of being appealed.


\(^{48}\) For the 2007 general elections, all candidates running for office had to declare their incomes. The database in which one can look the records of all the candidates can be accessed from the OSCE Mission in Kosovo Elections website, at: http://kosovoelections.org/ (Accessed: November 27, 2007). The same data can also be found via Kosovo’s Central Electoral Commission: www.cec-ko.org

This goes to show that the laws on party financing in BiH have not prevented “the dominant predatory elite project in post-communism – extraction from the state.”

The question of direct party assistance was approached rather differently in the two international administrations. In BiH, OSCE in its startup phase had a Political Party Development unit that provided financial and technical assistance to different parties. In Kosovo OSCE took up that role starting only in 2007, some eight years after the beginning of the international administration. The reason for this may be that the BiH case of direct party support generated a great deal of controversy due to its non-transparent functioning, including a few financial scandals, which led to the unit’s closure. OSCE in Kosovo was likely not too keen on revisiting that experience, and this is why they waited before they began providing direct assistance to parties. In recent years, OSCE in Kosovo was most active in connecting local political parties with wider European ideological ‘party family’ networks, with the wider aim of helping these young parties clarify their platforms and policies.

4.2.2.2 Electoral System Design

International administrations turned out to have a proven affinity for elections – in BiH they organized general elections in 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2006; in Kosovo, the electoral enthusiasm was still intact, with general elections taking place in 2001, 2004 and 2007. According to an OSCE discussion brief, …continuous elections, if held in as free and fair a manner as possible, have been viewed by the international community as a means to bring stability and recovery to a country divided by extreme nationalist political leaders…

This continuing faith of the international community in elections as an appropriate and effective tool for political change stemmed from their view that popularly represented local officials would pave them the way for a quick exit strategy. In BiH at least, this expectation proved to be based on a faulty premise – that the elected local political actors

51 The OSCE was discovered to have given financial assistance to political parties directly supporting Radovan Karadžić, the former leader of Bosnian Serbs during the war, and later one of the most prominent ICTY indictees. More on OSCE assistance to political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina can be found in: Kristine Ann Herrmann-De Luca, Beyond Elections: Lessons in Democratization Assistance from Postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina, PhD Dissertation, American University (Washington D.C.: 2002).
52 Author interview with a former BiH OSCE Democratization unit high-ranking official in Amsterdam, Netherlands: April 25, 2007.
53 The municipal and presidential elections were also held in this period.
will be responsible, democratic and interested in working for the welfare of all the citizens. Instead, they ended up with political parties and their nationalist leaders who were pitching their own group’s individual interests against the other groups, making the consociational power-sharing deadlocked at best and potentially violent at worst.

In BiH, the electoral law that was in power until 2000 was one of proportional representation and closed-party lists. It was amended by the international administration in hope of moderating the political space and allowing the moderate and non-nationalist i.e. multiethnic parties to get to power: the lists were made open for the 2000 elections. The electoral system of BiH at the moment is a combination of several elements:

…majority/plurality first-past-the-post principle for the Presidency elections…proportional representation principle for the Parliament…3% electoral threshold, preferential voting, compensatory seats… This complex electoral system was implemented by the international administration in a very specific political moment…and it is a high time for it to be reconsidered.

The fact that in BiH the OHR so frequently resorted to its powers of removing elected officials from power as well as its mandate to vet candidate lists and remove from them candidates perceived to be harmful to the peace process has made the original nationalist political parties sensitive to their candidate selection. At the same time, this failed to influence the leading parties’ nationalist ideologies. The 2006 general elections further discouraged the international administration mandated with the task of democratization of BiH: the appearance and electoral success of the second-generation nationalist parties (SBiH, SNSD, HDZ 1990) has only further cemented the already present political and governance stalemate.

The multiparty system in Kosovo gets elected through proportional representation, with a 5% vote threshold. The party lists were closed in 2001 and 2004. Following the pressure by the international administration institutions, the decision to switch to open party lists was the result of consultation with major political parties. Kosovo’s first elections with open party lists took place in 2007. This step was meant to bring the candidates closer to their constituencies. At the same time, the 2007 general elections had the lowest voter turnout yet – less than 45% of the eligible voters cast their vote,
indicating a disillusionment and disappointment with democratic politics in Kosovo.\textsuperscript{60} Finally, it is important to note that although from the beginning of the intervention, the international administrations (most notably, OSCE) were in charge of organizing and monitoring the elections, gradually these tasks were transferred to the domestic institutions in both BiH and Kosovo.\textsuperscript{61}

4.3 Political Parties and Party Systems in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo

This section introduces the major political parties\textsuperscript{62} in BiH and Kosovo in the post-conflict period. It also explains the types of political party systems that have been formed since the beginning of international administrations. The final section outlines major political developments that occurred in the country and that exerted the most impact on political parties and their formation and functioning, throughout the period during which party assistance was distributed in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996 – 2008) and Kosovo (1999 – 2008).

4.3.1 Political Parties: Bosnia-Herzegovina

One of the main provisions in the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) was the immediate holding of elections in 1996. Though it was difficult to organize nation-wide elections at short notice alongside other tasks of post-conflict reconstruction, the international administration in BiH nevertheless delivered. This proved to be a pyrrhic victory:

The election project stalled the process of reforms for at least a couple of years because this very democratic measure, backed by no rule of law to speak of, simply allowed criminals to legitimize themselves by being elected to office all over the country. What this led to in September 1996 was not the launching of a democratic future for Bosnia, but allowing criminals and war profiteers to hijack the institutions of the state.\textsuperscript{63}

The political parties that emerged as winners of the 1996 elections were all ethnicity-based. Also, they were the same mono-ethnic parties that led BiH into war in the early 1990s. This ‘ethnicization’ of the political landscape effectively resulted in a tripartite party system: Bosniak, Serb and Croat. This section will briefly discuss the main parties

\textsuperscript{60} Interviews with several OSCE election specialists / officials disclosed that even this figure may be inflated. Prishtina, Kosovo: November, 2007.
\textsuperscript{61} Central Electoral Commission of Kosovo, official website: \url{http://www.cec-ko.org}. Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, official website: \url{www.izbori.ba}.
\textsuperscript{62} Information presented here is based on the Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo entries in: D.J. Sagar (ed.), \textit{Political Parties of the World} (London: John Harper Publishing, 2009), 7\textsuperscript{th} edition. These entries were contributed to the volume by the author of this dissertation.
in all three ethnic groups as well as the major changes that have taken place in the last fifteen years within their ranks. A separate paragraph looks at the parties that declare themselves multi-ethnic. The description of the BiH party system can be found at the end of this section.

There are several smaller parties in the Bosniak party system, but two parties dominate the Bosniak political scene. These are the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) and Party for BiH (SBiH). SDA is a nationalist Bosniak party founded in May 1990. Its founder and leader Alija Izetbegović was BiH’s wartime President and later, after the war, the holder of the Bosniak seat in the tripartite Presidency. Though in the beginning they were coalition partners for the 1998 elections, the SBiH soon established itself as SDA’s chief competitor. Though traditionally the Bosniak seat in the tripartite Presidency has been occupied by SDA leaders, in 2006 the leader of SBiH Haris Silajdžić won the bid for the post. Both SDA and SBiH are affiliated with the Islamic Religious Community. The remaining Bosniak political parties are small and largely irrelevant, so the Bosniak ethnic group political party system could be classified as two-party system.

While in FBiH, Bosniak and Croat parties share power, Republika Srpska is a largely ethnically homogenous entity.\textsuperscript{64} The Serbian political party system in BiH was in the first half of the post-Dayton period dominated by the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS). Originally, the party was led by Radovan Karadžić, who is currently undergoing trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity at the ICTY in The Hague. Widely perceived as the nationalist obstructers of the DPA implementation, the SDS was under direct assault of the international administration throughout most of its time in power. Its elected officials were systematically removed from power following indictments by the ICTY and corruption allegations. Their coalition partners, Serbian Radical Party (SRS), were often at the receiving end of similar treatment by the international administrations. The political party from the Serbian ethnic group that was supported by the international community was the initially non-nationalist, moderate Alliance of the Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), led by Milorad Dodik. With the international support, SNSD has managed to win overwhelming support of the RS electorate in the 2006 elections and squeeze its former rivals SDS and SRS into opposition. SNSD’s tightening grip on power could be seen as a sign of one/dominant-party system evolution in the RS. Since 2006, RS Prime Minister Dodik has received increasing criticism from the international administration for his lack of cooperation with BiH state level institutions and repeated threats of holding RS referendum on independence.

Similar to the Bosniak case, there are several smaller parties in the Croat political representation in BiH. Since the beginning of multi-party system, the Croats living in this country were represented by the nationalist HDZ. It has close links with both Croatian Democratic Union party in Croatia\textsuperscript{65} and with the Catholic Church hierarchy. Throughout

\textsuperscript{64} This is a direct result of the ethnic cleansing committed during the 1992-1995 war when Croats and Bosniaks living in the RS territory were systematically expelled and/or killed.

\textsuperscript{65} It was in fact originally formed as a branch of Croatian Democratic Union Croatia, in Bosnia-Herzegovina.
its time in power, HDZ was troubled by internal factions that resulted in breakaway parties (for example, the New Croat Initiative, NHI). In 2006, the most serious split took place and a group of HDZ members who felt that the party no longer represented the interests of the Croat people living in BiH founded their own party, giving it the name HDZ1990, to signal their commitment to the party’s original, nationalist goals. Finally, one Croat entrepreneurial/family party has been on a steady rise since its formation in 2006 – People’s Party Work for Betterment (NSRzB). The Croat party system, therefore, could be classified as a multi-party system.

Finally, the strongest multi-ethnic party in BiH is the Social Democratic Party (SDP), successor to the Communist League of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The party opposes ethnic nationalism and runs campaigns on civic, bread-and-butter issues platforms. It is the party consistently supported by the international community. SDP was in power within the governing coalition Alliance for Change from 2000 until 2002 that was championed by the international administration at the time. The Alliance was a short-lived coalition of moderates and was beaten by nationalists in 2002 elections. Since, SDP has been the main opposition party in BiH. The party’s self-proclaimed multi-ethnic character is threatened by the general perception that it is a Bosniak-dominated party. There are several minor parties such as the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS) or Our Party (Naša Stranka, NS), which also identify with the principle of multi-ethnicity, but they have not been successful in obtaining substantial popular support in elections thus far.

4.3.1.1 BiH’s Political Party System

The dominant political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina are ethnic nationalist parties. As Kristine Herrmann explains,

Nationalist parties were created in Bosnia [in early 1990s] as a way for former communists to hold onto power, as well as for some anti-communist groups to seize power. There was no space in the political sphere for a reformed Communist Party or more liberal democratic parties, as in other transitioning Eastern European countries.66

Diamond and Gunther’s typology of parties characterizes nationalist parties as those that put the nation above the individual, while ethnic parties are those that promote and protect the interests of specific ethnic groups.67 Both types of parties share the central figure of the (charismatic) leader who is all-powerful and crucial for party’s functioning and survival.68 The identification of the party with the leader is in some cases so strong,

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66 Kristine Ann Herrmann-De Luca, Beyond Elections: Lessons in Democratization Assistance from Postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina, 111.
68 Ibid.
that the party is seen as mere extension of the leader: the case of “SNSD Milorad Dodik” which simply added the name of the leader thus making this the official name of the party best exemplifies this trend. Finally, this dominance of ethnic nationalist parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina poses a larger problem for the country:

…the more purely a party is ethnic, the less it will integrate the citizen into a nationwide polity and breed identification with it. The ethnic party’s particularistic, exclusivist, and often polarizing political appeals make its overall contribution to society divisive and even disintegrative.

This disintegrative effect of ethnic nationalist parties is apparent throughout the analysis of international party assistance and statebuilding in Bosnia-Herzegovina (chapter 5).

How do these parties interact with one another, and what are the effects of their interaction on the society? Ware’s useful classificatory scheme of party systems helps distill the characteristics of the BiH party system. The ethnicization of the political landscape in Bosnia-Herzegovina has given birth to a very complex party system. The extent to which parties penetrate society is very high. It is hard for new or small parties to emerge and compete with the older, established parties. Also, strong links between the dominant parties and the religious institutions suggest the extent of party penetration of the society. As one political analyst points out, “You breathe, eat, think, pray and dream politics in this country. There’s no escaping it.”

The ideologies of the parties are almost exclusively linked to ethnic basis, if that can even be called an ‘ideology’ in the sense of the word the way it is understood in the Western, developed party systems. The pre-Dayton emergence and post-Dayton entrenchment of ethnic (nationalist) parties as the sole legitimate carriers of interest articulating, aggregating and representative functions in the BiH society makes it very hard for multiethnic parties to emerge and establish themselves as such. Nationalism is always perceived as tilting to the right or towards extremism, so we could also state that the BiH party system as a whole is positioned more to the right on the ideological spectrum. The emergence and rise to power of parties based on social democratic values (SDP and SNSD) does not yet signal true reversal in the trend of ethnicization of parties because even these parties are perceived as having an ethnic denominator.

69 Or, as Robert Michels refers to this phenomenon, “Le parti c’est moi” [“I am the party”], in: Robert Michels, Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy (London: Jarrold & Sons, 1916), accessed through the University of Virginia Library Electronic Text Center.

70 Larry Diamond, Richard Gunther (eds.), Political Parties and Democracy, 24.

71 Alan Ware, Political Parties and Party Systems, 149.

72 Speech by a Sarajevan political analyst at the Summer University for Democracy, Strasbourg, France: July 02, 2007.

The stance of the parties towards the legitimacy of the regime is mixed. The difference in attitudes has been acutely present since the failure of April 2006 constitutional amendments, and the elections held in the same year. The lack of support for the system and presence of anti-systemic parties in general tend to paralyze the political system, and this is what we can see happening in BiH since 2006: SNDS, the dominant party in Republika Srpska, is firmly standing behind Dayton provisions and especially the status of the RS entity within that system. Its main opponent in the Bosniak side, SBiH, advocates Dayton’s dissolution and (re)unification of BiH and its administrative division alongside regional/economic lines, and not ethnic ones instituted in the aftermath of the war. Ironically enough, both parties see their opponent as anti-systemic because there is no united vision on what the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina should look like.

Finally, in terms of political culture, the dominance of historical and psychological legacy of both communism and conflict is indisputable. It has influenced both the electorate and the political parties founded in the aftermath of communism dissolution. The beginning of the multiparty system has its roots in communism, as many of the parties born in 1989 and 1990 were founded by former Communist Party members. These leaders may have put ‘democratic’ into their parties’ names, but changed little in their management and organization ways. It was these new ‘democratic’ parties that led the country to war. The nationalism and continuing antagonism between different ethnic groups, constructed and instrumentalized by political elites, coupled with the influence of organized crime, religious groups and the influx of international reconstruction and development funds without a functioning system of rule of law has further corroded the newly independent country’s chances for development of a democratic political party system. In general, parties in BiH are weakly institutionalized organizations; they are highly persona/leader-based, and it is doubtful that any single one of them would survive the removal of their current leaders from the political scene. Similarly, their internal democracy is low, if at all existent in some cases.

4.3.2 Political Parties: Kosovo

The international administration in Kosovo was, among other things, tasked with the job of creating a political system, rather than resurrecting one as was the case in BiH:

If political institution-building in BiH has been a process of design and reform, in Kosovo…it has been a more gradual one of staged development from consultation to co-government and finally to self-government…74

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Prior to the 1998-99 Kosovo crisis, there was no officially organized political parties in the province. The late President Ibrahim Rugova organized and led the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), a peaceful resistance movement – they organized parallel institutions of governance to the Serbian-dominated ones. Perhaps having learned a lesson from BiH case, the international administration waited with organizing the first general post-conflict elections – they were held in Kosovo two years after the intervention, in 2001.

From the very beginning, there was a parallel development of two multiparty systems: one composed of Kosovar Albanian (the majority population), and the other of Serbian and other minority parties. Reflecting the pre- and post-intervention division in society, the Albanian and Serbian parties always had starkly different visions of Kosovo, its past, present and future. Whilst the former saw the post-1999 period as the freedom of self-determination they had been long hoping and fighting for, the latter saw the post-1999 developments as an illegal international intervention violating the territorial and national sovereignty of their home country, Serbia. The international administration has not been able to bridge the continuing divide between the different realities these two ethnic groups inhabit.

The majority multi-party system is composed of several parties. The oldest one, LDK, reformed into a political party after the 1999 foreign intervention. Its founder and leader, Ibrahim Rugova, was the first President of Kosovo, and he stayed in this position until his death in 2006. Following an internal faction struggle in 2007, LDK’s breakaway splinter party LDD took some of the votes in 2007 elections and thus ensured LDK’s decline from the status of the strongest party in Kosovo. Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) and Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) both stem from the KLA, the former guerilla/military group. AAK’s leader Ramush Haradinaj was exonerated from charges during his trial at the ICTY for war crimes in 2008. His counterpart, Hashim Thaçi, became the Prime Minister – his party PDK won the most votes in the 2007 general elections. These elections saw two other major changes in the political scene – the Reformist Party ORA, previously represented in the Assembly, did not pass the 5% vote threshold, whilst the one year old New Kosovo Alliance (AKR), founded by the wealthy Kosovar diaspora businessman Behgjet Pacolli, surprised everyone by gaining 12% of the vote. The OSCE has been working through its Political Party Unit on strengthening the ideological profile of parties (also known as ‘party profilization’), steering them to dominant European party ideologies. Though not quite yet fully representative, the previously mentioned parties are identified with various European-level parties or are leaning towards certain ideologies. Thus, LDK is affiliated with the Centrist Democrat International; LDD sees itself as Liberal Conservative; ORA and PDK are flirting with Social-democratic ideology; AKR seems to be leaning Liberal.

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75 Both genuinely Kosovar Serb parties, and parties with headquarters in Belgrade and branch offices throughout Kosovo are included here.
The political landscape of the minority parties is less clear. In Kosovo Assembly, minority parties are allocated 20 (out of 120) seats – 10 for the representatives of Serbian minority, four for the representatives of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, three seats for Bosniaks, two for Turks and one seat for the representative of the Gorani minority group. Their respective political parties from which the representatives are elected represent the minority groups. The participation of Kosovo Serbs in the political system in post-1999 Kosovo has been highly problematic. Several political parties that are present in Serbia established or continued their branch involvement in Kosovo (Democratic Party of Serbia - DSS, Serbian Radical Party – SRS, Democratic Party – DS, and the Socialist Party of Serbia - SPS being the most notable ones). These parties boycott Kosovo institutions and elections, insisting that Kosovo is an integral part of Serbia. The international community in Kosovo has supported the development of Kosovar Serb parties independent from Belgrade. Examples are Autonomous Liberal Party (Samostalna Liberalna Stranka - SLS), Serbian People’s Party (Srpska Narodna Stranka - SNS), Kosovo Objective Party (KOS), Democratic Party (Demokratska Stranka - DS), Party for Democratic Integrations (Partija za Demokratske Integracije - PDI), New Democracy (Nova Demokratija - ND), Serbian Kosovo and Metohija Party (SKMP), Social Democratic Party (Socijaldemokratska Partija - SDP). All Kosovo Serb parties are generally leader-centric organizations with underdeveloped membership structures, incoherent party programs and inconsistent ideological foundations. The Serbian multi-party system in Kosovo is noticeably fragmented. The paradox here is that, despite the supposed wide choice of political options, Serbs from Kosovo have largely boycotted the elections. Political leadership in Belgrade has actively tried to obstruct the participation of Serb minority population in Kosovo elections. Through financial support of parallel governance structures, much like the Albanian ones that were operating in Kosovo during the 1990s, Serbian political leaders from Belgrade are keeping the loyalty of Serbian minority in Kosovo: they threaten with cutting the financial flow should Kosovar Serbs decide to take part in politics in independent Kosovo, and thus insist that they only cast their votes in elections held in Serbia-proper (which maintains Kosovo as part of its territory, refusing the recognize its independence).

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76 Civic Initiative of Gora (Gradanska Inicijativa Gora) for Gorani minority; the Democratic Ashkali Party of Kosovo (Partia Demokratike e Ashanlive te Kosovës); New Democratic Initiative of Kosovo (Inicijativa e re Demokrarih e Kosovës) representing Egyptian minority; Party of Democratic Action (Stranka Demokratske Akcije) representing Bosniak minority is affiliated with the SDA party from Bosnia-Herzegovina; Turkish Democratic Party of Kosovo (Kosova Demokratik Turk Partisi); United Roma Party of Kosovo (Partia Rome e Bashkuar e Kosovës).


78 Author interview with SLS party official in Mitrovica, Kosovo: November 28, 2007.
4.3.2.1 Kosovo’s Political Party System

While in Bosnia, ethnic nationalist parties exert a disintegrating effect on the political system owing to their inability for consensus politics and power-sharing. In Kosovo the two main ethnic groups – Albanian and Serbian – do not even seem to inhabit the same reality. Throughout the period under analysis (1999 – 2008), the majority Albanian population was living in a de facto state separate from Serbia, while its political elites were unified in their effort to achieve independence and self-determination de jure. For the Serbian minority in Kosovo, this same period was one of worsening living conditions in protected enclaves, with attempt of organizing parallel governance structures supported financially by Belgrade and in some areas by Kosovo PISG as well. The Kosovo Serbian political elites, unlike their Albanian counterparts, are fragmented: one group is loyal to Belgrade and continues to view Kosovo as Serbia’s integral part, while another group is making an effort to organize the remaining Serbs living in Kosovo and recognize the post-2008 reality of internationally-supervised independence of Serbia’s former province. Similar as in the case of BiH – the stance of the parties towards the legitimacy of the regime is mixed, simply because different parties hold vastly conflicting views under whose rule Kosovo belongs: its own, or Republic of Serbia’s. It is a zero-sum game with very few parties in the Serbian minority group attempting to bridge the gap between the different positions of majority Albanian parties and those Serbian parties still loyal to Belgrade.

In terms of interaction, parties in Kosovo have struck surprising coalitions on more than one occasion. First such instance came after general elections in 2004 when LDK secured a parliamentary majority by entering in coalition with the AAK, which resulted in Haradinaj being offered the post of the head of the provisional government:

The choice raised eyebrows, both because it was widely expected that Haradinaj would shortly be indicted at the ICTY and because his own brother had earlier been convicted and sentenced to five years’ imprisonment in connection with the 1999 murders of members of the armed wing of Rugova’s party (in a trial in which key witnesses tended to meet premature death).

The second example of eyebrow-raising coalition is more recent, as it occurred after the general elections held in 2007 when the most vociferous opponents – the LDK and the PDK parties – also entered into a governing coalition, with PDK’s Thaçi taking the prime minister post and LDK’s Sejdiu retaining the presidency. Within the Serbian group of parties, there is not that much interaction due to the fragmentation. Although select Serbian parties, most prominent of which is the SLS at the moment, take part in majority

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80 This coalition was considered unlikely but not impossible prior to the elections: Artan Mustafa, “Kosovo Parties Mull Post-Election Coalition,” *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network* (BIRN), November 2007.
governing coalitions and are awarded ministerial posts in return, there is no real public interaction and cooperation between Albanian and Serbian parties in Kosovo that would call for reconciliation among the two ethnic groups or that discuss the challenges facing all of Kosovo’s citizens. Aside from the difficult history and bad blood between the two ethnic groups, the element that makes this interaction and cooperation all the more difficult is the language barrier, as Serbian and Albanian are very different languages. The younger generations of Kosovar Albanians do not speak Serbian, and the Serbs from Kosovo were never taught Albanian.

Considering the fact that mere ten years ago, Kosovo did not have a truly functioning political party system, it should not come as a surprise that ideological profilization of parties is in its nascent stage. Up until the 2007 elections, all Albanian parties were single-issue parties – they all agreed in clamoring for Kosovo’s independence, or in other words the status resolution. With the proclamation of independence in 2008, parties now have a strong incentive as well as a need to come up with well defined policies, programs and distinctive party platforms that will distinguish them from one another and ensure popular support. International assistance in Kosovo from the side of OSCE was particularly focused on helping Kosovar parties identify their ideological stance and profile, and then affiliate themselves with European party networks. Finally, the fragmentation of existing parties, such as LDD’s break from LDK, as well as the appearance of new parties such as Pacolli’s AKR, point to the fact that the political space is not fully occupied and that voters are open to new choices.

In terms of the prevailing norms, values and attitudes of both people towards their political elites, and among politicians themselves, Kosovo’s political culture is directly influenced by decades of clandestine movement for independence which was closely linked with, if not synonymous with organized crime networks in both the Balkans and in Kosovo Albanian diaspora communities living abroad. Think-tank analysts, academics, military investigators and journalists tend to portray Kosovo as, “a clan-based society in which a handful of criminal leaders controls the population – and are tolerated by bureaucrats from Europe and the rest of the world…”81 According to the UN’s Directorate of Organized Crime, “It is assumed that a corporate structure of organized crime and corruption is behind every political party in Kosovo.”82 Germany’s foreign intelligence agency confirms this view in one of their reports:

The family clan structure in the Decani region from which Haradinaj derives his power is involved in a wide range of criminal, political and military activities that greatly influence the security situation throughout Kosovo. The group consists of about 100 members, and deals in the drug and weapons

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82 Ibid.
smuggling business, as well as in the illegal trade in dutiable goods.\textsuperscript{83}

Other analysts have pointed out that the international community’s effort of statebuilding in Kosovo is in a “state of denial” as Washington and Brussels are in fact “… ushering into existence [what] looks set to become a heavily criminalized state in the heart of Europe, with far-reaching implications.”\textsuperscript{84} The UN police spokesman in Kosovo is cited as saying that it “is not a society affected by organized crime, but a society founded on organized crime.”\textsuperscript{85} Similarly, local experts believe “it is more appropriate to speak of ‘state institutionalized crime’ than ‘organized crime’ in Kosovo.”\textsuperscript{86} The general perception that organized crime and corruption are endemic in Kosovar society is confirmed by several surveys and opinion polls of Kosovo’s citizens,\textsuperscript{87} as well as in Misha Glenny’s book on organized crime worldwide which features Kosovo whose political elites had “consolidated [it] as a new centre for the distribution of heroine from Turkey to the European Union.”\textsuperscript{88} This political culture in which parties were born in the post-1999 period was based on historical-cultural and psychological legacy of both communism and conflict. In this environment, the political parties are seen as,

Typically failing to represent the interests of their constituents in many areas…and are more correctly characterized as vehicles for patronage and advancement of their leaders and the extended families…\textsuperscript{89}

Faced with this widespread perception, a local think tank in Kosovo published a report on Kosovo’s bad image with the goal “to challenge the international clichés and conventional wisdoms about Kosovo,” simultaneously calling for unified effort in rebranding the nation.\textsuperscript{90} This report, however, fails to address political parties, their funding, patronage networks or links with organized crime.

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{90} Kosovar Stability Initiative (IKS), Image Matters! Deconstructing Kosovo’s Image Problem, prepared for Forum 2015 by IKS in Prishtina, November 2008: 15.
4.3.3 Major Political Developments

Having identified and described both countries’ main political parties and having characterized their political party systems, this section will provide an overview of the most significant political developments taking place during the time that parties were receiving international assistance by NDI, IRI, German Stiftungen and other democracy-promoting organizations. These political developments and most significant events are part of the context in which party aid was provided, and have in some cases influenced the type as well as the amount of assistance distributed to individual parties.

4.3.3.1 Bosnia-Herzegovina 1996 – 2008

The political climate in BiH remained fragile throughout the international community’s fifteen years long involvement. It is safe to say that political developments continue to be a crucial aspect of delayed democratization or incomplete statebuilding in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

As the Dayton Peace Agreement stipulated that the first post-conflict elections be held in 1996, the international community faithfully followed its text. In retrospective, these early elections in BiH now constitute a cautionary tale to other international post-conflict missions, as everyone generally agrees that they were premature and only exacerbated the obstacles to war-to-peace transition. Richard Holbrooke, the chief US negotiator of the DPA, also later acknowledged that, “the election strengthened the very separatists who had started the war.”\(^91\) HDZ, SDA and SDS getting hold of power also cemented their status as strongest parties in the country. They divided amongst themselves and their supporters jobs in the administration, executive and other staff positions in the few running state-owned companies and businesses, and thus ensured that employment, social welfare, healthcare and utilities access – all went through their party lines.\(^92\) The international administration and weak opposition parties were helpless and unable to stop this entrenchment of nationalist political parties that took place in the wake of first post-war elections.

It was not long before the implications of the 1996 elections and their results prompted the international community to action. In 1997, soon after the High Representative (Carl Bildt from Sweden at the time) realized that the international community would not be able to carry out its mandate of implementing the DPA thanks to the nationalist obstructionists who were now in government in both state and entity levels, the Peace Implementing Council (PIC) instituted the so-called “Bonn-powers.” This decision gave the High Representative the authorization to dismiss local representatives (i.e. officials of nationalist political parties) that were deemed obstructive to the implementation of the Dayton Agreement. Further reason that warranted removal

\(^92\) Author interview with NDI staff member, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: June 26, 2009.
from public office was indictment by the ICTY, which was established in 1993 and had by that time gathered sufficient evidence to start official prosecution proceedings.

OSCE, the international intergovernmental organization mandated with organization of elections, and with democratization portfolio of activities, was initially big in providing support to political parties. Its Political Party Development Department was busy with organizing Political Party Resource Centers (PPRCs) whose purpose was to provide information on registration process as well as technical aid in printing brochures, leaflets. OSCE in those early years (1996 – 1998) went as far as giving money to political parties for their organization needs and campaigning materials. This practice soon became a major blunder when it became apparent that – among the parties that they distributed funds to – there were extreme radicals, as well as Karadžić and Krajišnik supporters, two men on the list of sought war criminals by the Hague tribunal.93 Some believe that this practice of handing out money to political parties had contributed to flurry of registration activity and a proliferation of parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina.94

The nationalist parties were seen as obstructive to the peacebuilding process from the very beginning, and many international officials in retrospective regretted having allowed them to compete in elections. One former State Department official in charge of Bosnia-Herzegovina affairs at the time said that internal discord and differing views on the issue among the international officials was the reason why nationalist parties had not been banned right from the start of international administration of the country.95 The most prominent official lobbying against the abolition of nationalist parties was Robert H. Frowick, the first head of the OSCE mission in BiH. He reflects in his memoirs on his decisions made in that period and the struggle to organize the 1996 elections:

I was determined to ensure integrity in our Mission’s efforts.
But to generate adequate momentum, it was necessary to induce cooperation from ultranationalists associated with the most heinous crimes in Europe since World War II.96

However, soon after these first elections, the international community representatives in BiH changed their minds, and instead of abolishing the nationalist parties, they turned their energy towards removing from power the nationalist Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) leading Republika Srpska, widely perceived as the main culprit for the war and

93 Kristine Ann Herrmann-De Luca, *Beyond Elections*. Also, author interviews with former OSCE Democratization Unit official in Amsterdam, the Netherlands: April 25, 2007; with local political analyst in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: June 26, 2009.
95 Author interview with former State Department official in charge of Bosnia-Herzegovina affairs at the time, currently with National Democratic Institute in Washington D.C., United States: April 20, 2007.
96 Robert H. Frowick, *Toward a Peace with Justice: Launching the OSCE Mission in Bosnia & Herzegovina*, unpublished memoir/manuscript, 2005, preface xi. (Author access thanks to staff at the United States Institute of Peace, USIP, in Washington D.C., USA.)
major obstruction to the implementation of the peace agreement. As their chief partner in this mission, they sided with Biljana Plavšić, former as well as newly elected president of Republika Srpska. During the war, she was known as the Bosnian Serb ‘iron lady’ and was (in)famous for her extreme nationalist attitudes.\textsuperscript{97} Despite of her past, the international community embraced her as their key person in their mission to remove Radovan Karadžić from power. Supported\textsuperscript{98} by the OHR, OSCE, State Department officials as well as by SFOR (NATO’s troops in BiH), Plavšić took control by creating her own political party (the Serb People’s Alliance – SNS RS), effectively splitting the SDS. Furthermore, under international pressure,

Radovan Karadžić…reluctantly agreed in July 1996 to step down as president of the Serbian Republic, relinquishing that office to Biljana Plavšić… Karadžić also stepped down as president of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) – which was a precondition for that party’s being allowed to contest elections scheduled for mid-September of that year.\textsuperscript{99}

By gaining substantial success in 1997 elections, and by competing in a coalition with the Socialist Party of Republika Srpska (SPRS) and the Party of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) in general elections of 1998, the international community support to Plavšić helped them achieve the objective of removing nationalist SDS from power in that entity. Furthermore, Plavšić embraced the moderate SNSD leader Milorad Dodik as her partner, and the OHR “engineered the appointment of the moderate Serb Milorad Dodik, whose party [held] only two out of the 83 seats, as prime minister.\textsuperscript{100} This was the beginning of the international community’s intense support for Milorad Dodik, the

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\textsuperscript{97} A professor of biology with a successful academic career prior to the war’s breakout, Plavšić’s comments on the biological inferiority of Muslims and ethnic cleansing marked the policy of BiH Serbs throughout the war: “I would prefer completely to cleanse eastern Bosnia of Muslims.” As Slobodan Inić puts it, “The ‘natural phenomenon’ of ethnic cleansing, which Biljana Plavšić has so openly and unhesitatingly advocated throughout the war and to this day, is rooted in her conception of the Muslims as a ‘genetically deformed’ element.” As she stated in an interview, “That's true [i.e. that the Bosnian Muslims were originally Serbs]. But it was genetically deformed material that embraced Islam. And now, of course, with each successive generation this gene simply becomes concentrated. It gets worse and worse, it simply expresses itself and dictates their style of thinking and behaving, which is rooted in their genes...” (Svet, Novi Sad, 6 September 1993). In: Slobodan Inić, “Biljana Plavšić: geneticist in the service of a great crime,” Helsinki Charter, Belgrade, November 1996, available online at: www.barnsdlle.demon.co.uk/bosnia/plavsic.html (Accessed November 13, 2009).

\textsuperscript{98} Support entailed taking control of the media (television and radio stations) in Republika Srpska, with NATO troops assistance; removal of obstructionist SDS officials from power; providing her party and her coalition partners with assistance both material, professional consultative and financial; finally, after her coming to power in 1998, the US government was also able to provide a ‘cash injection’ to the Republika Srpska’s budget, as the departing SDS had taken all the funds with them when they left the office. Information gained through author interview with former State Department official working on the Balkans issues during the time in question, currently with the National Security Council, in Washington D.C., United States: April 20, 2007.


president of SNSD party, who was then identified as their ‘favorite’ or the most pragmatic, non-nationalist politician in the Republika Srpska entity.\textsuperscript{101}

In the first five years since the DPA was signed and the international administration took over, the citizens of BiH were able to cast their votes in three general elections (1996, 1998, 2000) and two local (municipal) ones (1997, 2000). Throughout this period, the international election staff in the OSCE as well as a flurry of experts brought from abroad, were given free-rein in devising an electoral system that would favor smaller, moderate parties over the larger, by now established nationalist ones. This free-reign experimentation resulted in, as Bosnian-Herzegovinian prominent election specialist, professor of political science and former Head of Central Election Commission (2004 – 2008) calls it – a decade of democratic chaos:

[in those ten years]…a lot was lost by experimenting with election models and short-term solutions for “single-use only,” instead of working on more permanent solutions in the election system… Many solutions, i.e. the registration of refugees and displaced persons (P2 form), two year mandates (1998, 2000, 2002), preferential voting for the President and Vice-President of Republika Srpska (1998), the financing of the campaign by the international community (1996), etc. were abandoned shortly after their introduction…\textsuperscript{102}

The result of this international experimentation was, “a combined, hybrid system dominated by the PR system in the election of the legislative bodies, and the plurality system in the election of presidents’ seats.”\textsuperscript{103} An additional element in the plethora of complex amendments to the already tangled Dayton-set political system was the BiH Constitutional Court “Constituent Peoples” decision, reached in 2000. This decision required the two entities to amend their constitutions to ensure the full equality of the country’s three constituent peoples throughout its territory.\textsuperscript{104} Hailed as the historic chance to dismantle the Dayton-set system, this decision – though it did provide legal basis for fighting discrimination – was not used to its full potential by either the international community or the local multiethnic-minded political elites to push back the ethnic segregation and nationalist grip over institutions of power.

\textsuperscript{101} Their previous ‘favorite’ Biljana Plavšić, who effectively introduced Milorad Dodik and his party to the political scene in RS and to international support, had in the meantime changed residence by voluntarily surrendering to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague, to stand trial for charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. After having served two thirds of her 11 years sentence in a Swedish prison, she was released on October 27, 2009 and received special treatment and welcome by the Prime Minister of Republika Srpska, her former protégé Milorad Dodik.

\textsuperscript{102} Suad Arnautović, Ten Years of Democratic Chaos: Electoral Processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1996 to 2006 (Sarajevo: Promocult, 2007), 253.

\textsuperscript{103} Suad Arnautović, Ten Years of Democratic Chaos, 216.

\textsuperscript{104} Until this decision was reached, the blatant discrimination of Serbs in the Federation, and Bosniaks and Croats in the RS entity were institutionalized within both entities’ constitutions. For more information: “Implementing Equality: The “Constituent Peoples” Decision in Bosnia & Herzegovina,” International Crisis Group Europe Report 128 (April 2002).
The international community had put all their efforts into ten moderate parties which came together in a coalition titled the Alliance for Change to compete in the 2000 general and municipal elections. Though they stood no chance in the RS entity, where SDS was still widely supported, the Alliance managed to scour enough votes to achieve majority in the Federation BiH. This also gave them enough votes to form the state-level government. Despite the tutelage of the international community, the Alliance was weak, internally divided, and in general unable to form a decisive and unified response to the nationalists now in opposition, and still holding the three seats of the Presidency. Owing to the amount of problems plaguing the BiH society, such as corruption, need for major economic reforms, regulation of pensions, near bankruptcy of the state, and HDZ proclaiming “Croatian self-rule” in 2001, the Alliance was short lived.

The political situation did not change significantly in the following couple of years. Despite optimism in international circles that a true multiparty system would develop in late 1990s, the dominant ethnic parties continued their grip over the political party system. The failure of the Alliance for Change coalition has led the international administration to reexamine their role within the political system in BiH: post-election voter analysis, among other things, determined that international community involvement hampers popular support for moderates. Disillusioned by the failure of coalition that they supported, the international community was at loss for new initiatives and strategies. This precarious atmosphere that had settled within the international administration welcomed British Lord Paddy Ashdown who became the new High Representative in May 2002.

Ashdown’s book on statebuilding, which includes a substantial section on his experiences as Bosnia-Herzegovina’s High Representative, shows how he tried to learn from his predecessors. In an interesting twist of events, Ashdown indicates how the international administrations in Kosovo and BiH got interlinked:

In designing the [Kosovo] mission, the UN took care to try to learn the lessons of Bosnia. It created a single unified command to implement the civilian aspects of post-conflict reconstruction. A structure was created in which there was efficient burden sharing between the agencies involved…

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105 Research on the victory of Alliance is now revealing indications this slim victory was achieved through rigging of the elections, by the international community: Author interview with local election specialist in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: June 27, 2009.

106 For more information, see “Bosnia’s Alliance for (Smallish) Change,” International Crisis Group Balkans Report 132 (August 2002).

107 Both the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) and Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ) had suffered splits within their parties, which was hailed as a possible indicator of a development of a true multi-party system. In: Florian Bieber, “Consociationalism – Prerequisite or Hurdle for Democratization in Bosnia?” South East Europe Review (1999): 86.

This was a model that we subsequently tried to copy in Bosnia.\footnote{Paddy Ashdown, \textit{Swords and Ploughshares: Bringing Peace to the 21st Century}, 37.}

The international community reconstruction, peace- and state-building effort in BiH gained momentum of coordination under Ashdown’s leadership. He felt that the country had by 2002 “become little more than an organized conspiracy to rob from its citizens,” \footnote{Ibid, 77.} therefore he focused his mandate on strengthening the rule of law. Bent on tackling corruption, he very soon started clashing with nationalists in power. Through auditing, cancelling, undoing and revising privatizations that had been carried out, Ashdown was imposing, revising and introducing legislation from his international office. At the same time, he was generously using his Bonn powers in dismissal of local officials. This led to high interest and criticism by both domestic media and international analysts, both of which were arguing that his leadership style reminded of British colonial rule,\footnote{For this debate, read: Gerhard Knaus, Felix Martin, “Travails of the European Raj,” \textit{Journal of Democracy}, 14:3 (July 2003): 60-74; Valery Perry, “Bosnia: An Intellectual Raj,” \textit{Transitions Online} (July 24, 2004); Florian Bieber, “Far from Raj,” \textit{Transitions Online} (July 31, 2003).} and was in general detrimental to the development of democracy in the country.\footnote{Roberto Belloni, “Dubious Democracy by Fiat,” \textit{Transitions Online} (August 20, 2003).} Ashdown is also known as the High Representative during whose reign not one, but two members of the tri-partite Presidency were forced to step down. Mirko Šarović, the Serb member from SDS party, decided to resign after Ashdown faced him with imminent dismissal once his involvement in arms sale to Iraq was uncovered.\footnote{Paddy Ashdown, \textit{Swords and Ploughshares}, 251.} Dragan Ćović, the HDZ Croat member of the Presidency, refused to step down when faced with charges for both fraud and corruption, and was removed from office by Ashdown in 2005.

Following the end of Ashdown’s mandate, all eyes in Bosnia-Herzegovina were turned to the new High Representative in January 2006. Germany’s Christian Schwarz-Schilling, during his welcome speech, left no room for speculation when it came to his planned strategy of engagement:

... Bosnia and Herzegovina must be fully sovereign. That means that I must step back. As High Representative, I may have the authority to impose legislation, but I cannot impose reconciliation, and I cannot impose prosperity. That is up to you and the leaders you will elect. Elections, later this year, are an opportunity to debate the way forward and to choose leaders who are best equipped to secure your country’s European future.\footnote{High Representative’s TV address to citizens of BiH, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina (January 31, 2006), available online at: http://www.ohr.int/ohr-dept/presso/pressssp/default.asp?content_id=36501 (Accessed November 14, 2009).}
This announcement left Schwarz-Schilling’s own staff in the OHR in shock.\textsuperscript{115} He had effectively annihilated their leverage in the domestic political arena, both executive and legislative one. The elections in 2006 became anyone’s game.

At the same time as Schwarz-Schilling was beginning to grapple with the difficulties of reforms and changes needed for the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement and NATO’s Partnership for Peace, having stripped himself and his office of executive powers, another development shook the BiH political scene. The US Ambassador Douglas McElhaney, together with the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) and former Deputy High Representative under Lord Ashdown Donald Hays, came together to initiate the long-awaited constitutional reform talks.\textsuperscript{116} This largely ad-hoc initiative which bypassed the OHR was an American project whose purpose was to get progress on the dismantling of the Dayton-set constitution. The initiative did not have the entire international community on board, and it sowed discord in the international ranks. McElhaney stands accused by some of wanting a ‘success’ story to accompany his planned departure from the embassy at the end of the year, and for thus initiating reform talks at an ill time – in the election year – without paying attention to or having any sensitivity towards the fragile domestic political situation.\textsuperscript{117}

The constitutional reform process, termed the April Package, was marked by bilateral meetings taking place behind closed doors, between the leaders of main political parties. The amendments included,

\ldots a new format for the election of the Presidency along with a reduction of its powers; new competences granted to the state; the creation of two new ministries, namely agriculture and technology; the strengthening of the Council of Ministers; and an increase in the number of MPs in both parliamentary chambers.\textsuperscript{118}

Some parties that opposed the reforms critiqued these talks for their exclusivity and elitism, lack of transparency and accountability, and hence democratic legitimacy. President of the SBiH Haris Silajdžić was the most vocal opponent of the April Package, arguing that the proposed amendments were insubstantial and that more competencies should be transferred from entity to state levels. Once the political elites agreed on a set of amendments, this was put to vote in the state Parliament. The April Package failed to pass, falling short of two votes for a 2/3 majority necessary to amend the Dayton-set constitution.

\textsuperscript{115} Author interviews with Office of the High Representative staff members in Sarajevo, BiH: June 2007.
\textsuperscript{116} “Bosnia: Constitutional Reform Falters,” Transitions Online, March 2006.
\textsuperscript{117} Author interview with international political analyst in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina (June 27, 2007); author interview with think-tank analyst and Balkans expert in Washington D.C., United States (April 02, 2008); author interview with high-level international official involved with the 2006 BiH constitutional reform talks in Washington D.C., United States (April 04, 2008).
The election campaign period launched in the wake of the failed constitutional amendment talks has been characterized by heated arguments between SBiH leader Haris Silajdžić and SNSD leader Milorad Dodik. This was an interesting development, because both parties, as well as their leaders, were not members of the mainstream nationalist political elite group. Silajdžić argued that Republika Srpska epitomized genocide which was used as means for its creation, and that as such it should not be allowed to continue as a separate entity within Bosnia-Herzegovina. Dodik’s party, on the other hand, had been supported by the international community as the reformist and moderate Serb party, without involvement in war crimes, and as such it steadily gained more support in the RS. When faced with the argument put forward by Silajžić that the RS should be abolished, however, SNSD’s leader stood resolute in entity’s defense.

The results of October 2006 general elections seemingly yielded hopeful results: SDS was pushed into opposition in the RS, where SNSD was the undisputable winner. In the Federation, SDA lost much support to SBiH on the rise, and HDZ lost some votes to its breakaway right-wing faction-turned-party HDZ1990. The biggest surprise, owed largely to this split within Croat ranks, was the victory of SDP’s Željko Komšić as the Croat member of the Presidency. The 2006 elections were historical in the fact that all of the post-war generation ethnicity-based nationalist parties were ousted from the Presidency, and the power relations were significantly stirred at both the state-level Parliament and entity-level assemblies. As professor of political science Mirko Pejanović explained, this development was not exactly as beneficial for the country as many had hoped it would be:

Opening up ethnic questions, in the sense of: “We’ll never give up Republika Srpska!” or “We will abolish Republika Srpska!” brought electoral victories to Party for BiH (SBiH) in Federation BiH and to SNSD in Republika Srpska.119

The local independent media bitterly named these newcomers ‘second generation nationalists,’ pointing to the fact that their voters, as well as member base, was still centered around ethnicity, rather than ideologies dominant in the European party spectrum.

In early 2007, more oil was added to the political fire already simmering in BiH by International Court of Justice (ICJ) decision in the case of Bosnia v. Serbia. Widely known as the ‘genocide case’, the several months long pleadings by both sides stirred more antagonism between Bosniaks and Serbs in BiH. The complex ICJ decision concluded that, though acts of genocide have indisputably occurred during the war, Serbia could not be held accountable for them.120 Serbs proclaimed it as victory, Bosniaks

120 Full decision can be seen at: http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&k=8d&p3=4&case=91
took it as defeat, but Silajdžić carried the issue forward, arguing that it had been proven and internationally acknowledged that genocide had been committed in the country, and – continuing the election campaign theme – that RS origins are based on genocidal politics and warfare. The Prime Minister of RS Milorad Dodik continued to backlash against Silajdžić, and this argument was eagerly taken on by the media and sensationalized ad nauseam.

In this volatile atmosphere, the welcomed arrival of the new High Representative in July of 2007 – Slovak Miroslav Lajčak – was imbued with hope. Decades younger than his predecessor, the first international High Representative fluent in BSH languages, he had the aura of determination which came with the full backing of the international community, Europeans and Americans alike. However, as with many before him, Lajčak too soon realized that the political deadlock and the Dayton-set constitution were a quagmire. The reforms he tried to initiate were blocked by all three sides taking turns. By the time of the municipal elections of October 2008, the political situation had deteriorated to the point where prominent international officials began warning of potential for renewal of warfare and hostilities. The election results only further strengthened the hold that SNSD party and its leader Milorad Dodik held over RS. This entity had effectively become a one-party system. Lajčak could not wait to leave once he was offered the chance to save face with a job of heading Slovakia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and left the country proclaiming he “didn’t want to be the rider on a dead horse.” This statement caused an uproar, and he was forced to clarify that “he was not referring to Bosnia itself but to the instruments which the international community was using in the country.” Having voiced the sentiment that many have struggled to come to terms with, Lajčak’s rule ended with a complete lack of direction and strategy in the international community.

4.3.3.2 Kosovo 1999 – 2008

The international humanitarian intervention in Kosovo came in 1999, when Bosnia-Herzegovina’s statebuilding and democratization processes were well underway. The main difference between the two cases, or the element standing out most acutely – was the attitude of the intervening international community towards their local counterparts, i.e. political/military elites. While in BiH, the international administration tried to undermine the local nationalist politicians whose origin and history were intertwined with the warring parties in the bloody conflict, in Kosovo they sided with the Albanian majority and the key groups representing it, thus conferring onto them the status of legitimate interlocutors and international community’s partners. The implications of this

(Accessed June 02, 2009).

122 Srećko Latal, “Western Bodies in Bosnia’s Dead Horse - Lajcak,” Balkan Insight (February 02, 2009).
attitude on party (system) development are evident throughout this section, which tells
the story of the main political developments in Kosovo during the 1999 – 2008 period.

The beginning of international administration deployment in Kosovo was marked
with disarray, no rule of law to speak of, and international staff utterly unprepared for the
reprisal violence (dubbed ‘reverse ethnic cleansing’) that was directed against Serb,
Roma and other non-Albanians:

This violence began as quickly as the rebuilding efforts,
during the first days in mid-June 1999 following NATO’s
entry into Kosovo. …as months went by, the attacks
continued and minorities were not the sole targets. Murder,
arson, robbery, beatings, and threats
were directed against Albanians.¹²³

Following the end of the Operation Allied Force, KLA essentially took control over
Kosovo by installing themselves in mayor’s offices, acting as the civilian authority, and
basically hijacking the institutions of governance.¹²⁴ This was largely unpopular with the
population of Kosovo, and by the time of the first municipal elections held in 2000,
citizens ‘punished’ the two parties stemming from the KLA (Haradinaj’s AAK and
Thaçi’s PDK) by giving overwhelming support to Rugova’s moderate party LDK. In
these first two years, several prominent LDK members were assassinated. It took a while
before international forces were able to demilitarize and retrain KLA units into the newly
founded civilian emergency service organization Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC).

LDK under Rugova’s leadership was recognized by the population as a
trustworthy political party, and rewarded with 45.7% votes in the first general elections
held in 2001. AAK and PDK did not do as well, as the electorate resented KLA’s
takeover of municipal town halls that occurred in the initial period. Thaçi and Haradinaj
(along with other former KLA commanders) were perceived to have the full backing of
the United States:

UNMIK, KFOR, and other major international players
reinforced this perception by constantly meeting with and
calling on Thaçi and Çeku, reinforcing the notion that they
were indispensable interlocutors. As UN official notes, ‘The
Americans told us that we must deal with Thaçi and Çeku,
that these are ‘our boys’ and to forget about Rugova because
he is a drunk.’¹²⁵

¹²⁵ William G. O’Neill, Kosovo: An Unfinished Peace, 47. UN official quoted from William G. O’Neill’s interview
This perception had widespread implications, most notable of which was the sense of impunity that surrounded former KLA commanders who were now in the business of politics, competing in elections and subscribing to democracy.

The distrust between the two main ethnic groups, Albanians and Serbs, marked the division of Kosovo’s political party (system) development: “…either prior to or after the conflict, each group experiences relative oppression, exclusion, and marginalization by the other.”\(^{126}\) Furthermore, this mistrust and bad blood were not alleviated by neighboring Serbia’s continuing interference in Kosovo’s internal affairs. Serbia continued to fund the parallel Serb structures by paying salaries to civil servants, which created the following development on the ground in Kosovo:

Employees of the “parallel structures” received for years…double civil service salaries (paid by both Belgrade and Prishtina), have permanent contracts with generous benefits …in effect enjoying higher living standards and job security than their counterparts employed in Kosovo institutions. Similarly, members of the Kosovo Serb community are eligible for double social benefits…Out of five Kosovo municipalities with the highest Human Development Index, four municipalities have “parallel structures”: Zvečan, Zubin Potok, Leposavić (Northern Kosovo) and Štrpce (an enclave).\(^{127}\)

This continuing funding and support from Belgrade was conditioned upon Kosovo Serbs’ ‘obedience’ and loyalty to Serbia, and it remained most clearly expressed in their boycott of elections held in Kosovo from year 2000 onwards. International community efforts to motivate, incentivize and encourage Kosovo Serb population to vote in elections held in Kosovo were largely unsuccessful, and Kosovo Serb political parties have experienced intra-ethnic political fragmentation between those showing willingness to compete in Kosovo elections (such as the SLS party), and others continuing their loyalty to Belgrade (DSS, SRS, DS, SPS). It needs to be noted, though, that Kosovo Serbs’ attitude towards Belgrade and Prishtina is influenced by the territory they inhabit in Kosovo:

In the North part of Kosovo (North of the Ibar River) where the influence the Serbian government is stronger and more direct both politically and financially, Belgrade based parties…advocate that Kosovo remain a part of Serbia and boycott any form of cooperation with Kosovo’s authorities. In other parts of Kosovo where Serbs live in enclaves, by reason


of decreased influence of Belgrade, different and new political options have evolved, those which advocate for Serbian participation in the government institutions in Kosovo…128

The position of Serbian minority in Kosovo remained unchanged and has continued to be influenced by politics in Belgrade. Meanwhile, during the period under analysis (1999 – 2008), a political battle was fought in Serbia proper. Though the 18-party coalition of democratic parties (Democratic Opposition of Serbia – DOS) succeeding in defeating Milošević’s Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) in 2000 elections, it was not strong enough to maintain the alliance, falling apart soon thereafter. Serbia’s politics in the post-2000 period is mostly characterized by precarious democratic coalition governments and steady electoral support for the far-right Serbian Radical Party (SRS) and its nationalist politics. It needs to be noted, though, that despite the fact that Serbian Democrats’ and Radicals’ platforms and politics differ significantly – both groups consider Kosovo to be an integral part of Serbia’s territory.129

In the fifth year of international administration, the weak seams holding Kosovar society together – came apart. On March 17, 2004 the territory exploded in anti-Serb and anti-UN riots:

By March 18 the violence mutated into the ethnic cleansing of entire minority villages and neighborhoods. ..The rampage left nineteen dead, nearly 900 injured, over 700 Serb, Ashkali and Roma homes, up to ten public buildings and 30 Serbian churches and two monasteries damaged or destroyed, and roughly 4,500 people displaced. The riots were more spontaneous than organized, with extremist and criminal gangs taking advantage...130

The March 2004 riots occurred after the drowning of three Kosovo Albanian boys in the Ibar River. The Albanian media in Kosovo widely reported the deaths as result of attack by a group of Serbs.131 The riots were a rude wake up call for the international community that had enjoyed close and cooperative relationship with the Kosovar Albanian leaders:

On the third day the spasm stopped, after the KFOR commander told both Thaci and AAK party leader Ramush Haradinaj to consider where their political credibility lay and to call off the militants. To many outsiders it seemed as if the

129 The only relevant party in Serbia whose leader acknowledges Kosovo’s claim for independence is Čedomir Jovanović’s Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).
politicians felt they could now stop the rampage because they had proved they could push the internationals around – especially since UNMIK disciplined no senior Albanians afterwards.  

The local political leaders, suspected of having incited and coordinated the riots, had accomplished their objective: the international community realized they could no longer postpone the decision on the final status of Kosovo. They pushed forward with the previously articulated ‘Standards before Status’ policy, which entailed a series of benchmarks that Kosovo’s PISG were expected to accomplish. The ‘Standards before Status’ also included the demand for special protection of Kosovo’s minorities, which was later a prominent part of Martti Ahtisaari’s Proposal for Kosovo Status Settlement.

The general elections that took place in October of 2004 gave birth to a peculiar coalition. Rugova’s LDK and Haradinaj’s AAK got enough votes to form a coalition without the PDK, and proceeded to do so. Many were surprised to see LDK enter into coalition with the party of the individual that was suspected of being behind some of the assassinations of LDK members in the 1999 – 2001 period. Nonetheless, Ramush Haradinaj became the Prime Minister of PISG. He enjoyed great support by the international community and some of its highest representatives, most prominent of which was Soren Jessen-Petersen – the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), head of UNMIK from 2004 till 2006:

…Haradinaj, his international admirers said, was something new on the political scene. After the war, he had taught himself English, he had attended day-long EU seminars that no other politician bothered with, and he had studied law at Prishtina University. He was the one party leader who was trying to modernize his organization away from a top-down patronage nexus and introduce significant grass-roots participation. …As prime minister, Haradinaj brought a younger, more pragmatic leadership to Kosovo.

International hopes for Haradinaj’s ability to affect change in Kosovo’s political scene sank with ICTY issuing an indictment against him in March of 2005, “charging him with command responsibility for the abduction, torture and murder of dozens of Serbs, Roma and Albanians in Dukagjini region.” Surprisingly for a Hague indictee, he resigned.


134 Elizabeth Pond, Endgame in the Balkans: Regime Change, European Style, 116 – 117.

135 Ibid.
from his post and surrendered to Hague’s jurisdiction voluntarily, confident that the court would prove his avowed innocence.

Kosovo’s political scene was shaken by another event in January the following year, when President Ibrahim Rugova passed away a few months after being diagnosed with lung cancer. His death at the time of pending status negotiations with Serbia left a political vacuum in Kosovo. Thanks to his nonviolent resistance policy against Milošević’s regime, he was known as the Gandhi of the Balkans and many felt there was no one of similar stature and authority left in Kosovo’s political scene to take his place in the upcoming negotiations.\(^{136}\) His party LDK, owing to its large membership and loose coordination structure, was always considered to be more of a movement than a political party and many felt that this, coupled with heavy reliance on Rugova’s leadership and popularity, were the biggest weaknesses of the party.\(^{137}\) Following Rugova’s death, an internal struggle came about within the LDK, represented by two factions – one led by Fatmir Sejdiu and the other by Nexhat Daci:

Two arrests, fist fights and a display of guns were some of the highlights of the congress of Kosovo’s largest party, the Democratic League of Kosovo, LDK, which met on December 9 to select a successor to Ibrahim Rugova. Winning 189 out of 349 valid votes, Fatmir Sejdiu, Kosovo’s current president, was chosen as next leader of the LDK, narrowly beating his rival, Nexhat Daci, former speaker of parliament.\(^{138}\)

Defeated Daci went on to form his own party, the Democratic League of Dardania (LDD), taking with him a significant amount of LDK members.

The parliamentary and local elections in Kosovo in November of 2007 took place in a rather special atmosphere. It was anticipated that the winning party’s leader would be the one to proclaim Kosovo’s independence, which constituted a special incentive for the competition. LDK’s position in Kosovo’s political scene was significantly weakened, making other parties’ chances at victory greater owing to the voter body fragmentation. Next to the newly formed LDK’s breakaway faction LDD, a new party entered the political competition: the New Kosovo Alliance (AKR). Organized and funded by prominent Kosovar-origin Swiss businessman Behgjet Pacolli, it shook the political scene profoundly due to its proactive business and employment-generation platform and owing to the popularity of its leader. PDK underwent reform by international political

\(^{136}\) Fatmire Terdevci, “Kosovo: Burying the Leader,” Transitions Online (January 27, 2006).

\(^{137}\) Author interviews with various political party members, international organizations’ staff, political analysts in Pristina, Kosovo: November 2007, May 2008.

consultants and was emerging as a better coordinated party. Its Hashim Thaçi also underwent extensive image-polishing reform, leaving his KLA past behind and portraying himself as a modern, progressive leader. Finally, it was remarkable to see that despite his being on trial, Ramush Haradinaj was allowed by UNMIK to run as a candidate in the 2007 elections for the Kosovo Assembly. Though his party, AAK, believed themselves to be disadvantaged by the leader’s absence from Kosovo, their fears did not translate into electoral results. AAK received more votes than in previous elections, a total of 9.6%. LDK’s split significantly affected the party, as was expected, and it received a mere 22.6% (while in 2004 it collected an overwhelming 45.4%) votes, while its breakaway faction LDD got 10.4% of the votes. PDK came out as the winner of these elections, with its reform and polished image of the leader getting them 34.3% of the votes. The newcomer party, AKR, was a big hit – in its first ever competition for votes, it received 12.3% of them, making it the third biggest party in Kosovo. Finally, another surprise of the 2007 elections was the demise of the ORA party, which failed to pass the threshold for which their leader Veton Surroi – ironically – lobbied to be set at 5%. They lost all of the seven seats they held in the Kosovo Assembly due to the fact that they managed to receive only 4.1% of the popular vote. It is important to note that the voter turnout in these general and local elections was Kosovo’s lowest yet, estimated at only 45% of the voters.

Hashim Thaçi proclaimed Kosovo’s independence from Serbia in the Kosovo Assembly on February 17, 2008:

We, the democratically elected leaders of our people, hereby declare Kosovo to be an independent and sovereign state. This declaration reflects the will of our people and it is in full accordance with the recommendations of UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari and his Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement. We declare Kosovo to be a democratic, secular and multi-ethnic republic, guided by the principles of non-discrimination and equal protection under the law.

139 Author interviews with international political consultant working with PDK in Vienna, Austria (February 04, 2007) and New York City, USA (April 15, 2007); author interviews with the same consultant in Pristina, Kosovo (November 2007, May 2008).

140 This continuing international support was believed to discredit both the peace-keeping international administration of Kosovo, as well as the process of internal law and justice that ICTY was set up to uphold. By allowing someone on trial for war crimes to take part in elections, UNMIK has instituted double standards and once again confirmed the perception that certain people were above law, or immune to it. For a useful analysis of implications that UNMIK’s support of Haradinaj’s political ambitions had on the ICTY and his trial: Majbritt Lyck, “International Peace Enforcers and Indicted War Criminals: The Case of Ramush Haradinaj,” International Peacekeeping 14:3 (June 2007): 418 – 432.

141 Author interviews with several OSCE election specialists disclosed that even this figure may have been inflated. Pristina, Kosovo: November, 2007.

This move was coordinated with major Western countries supporting Kosovo’s bid, such as the United States, France, United Kingdom and Germany. However, UNMIK remained present in Kosovo, together with the newly deployed International Civilian Office (ICO), European Union Special Representative (EUSR) and European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX). What ensued was confusion in international community ranks, owing to the lack of clarity of mandates of the respective organizations, and workload sharing and division between them, and UNMIK / OSCE who were based in Kosovo since the start of the international intervention. The new EU institutions found themselves in a particularly sensitive position:

The European Union's various roles accentuate its different priorities; in trying to appeal to everybody - from EU members which don't recognize Kosovo, to the Serbian government, Serbs in the enclaves and the Kosovo government - it risks living in contradiction.\(^\text{143}\)

This disarray does not surprise, especially when confronted with the fact that there was no agreement on recognition of Kosovo among the European Union member states: Slovakia, Greece, Romania, Cyprus and Spain withheld their recognition and have sided with Serbia on the matter. Looking at the Albanian-Serbian relations in Kosovo, Oisin Tansey points out that the proclamation of independence did not have an impact on the strain between them:

Although Kosovo now has many of the political structures necessary to achieve democracy in a plural society, the profound gulf between the Serb and Albanian populations means that sustainable political accommodation remains a distant goal.\(^\text{144}\)

Ramush Haradinaj’s trial at the ICTY also did little to help the relations between the two groups. Despite the fact that the trial proceeded in an atmosphere of extreme witness intimidation in Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj was exonerated by the ICTY in April 2008.\(^\text{145}\) He was given a hero’s welcome home by exuberant Albanians, while bitter Serbs saw the ‘not guilty’ verdict as yet another evidence of international community’s partiality to the Albanians’ side.


\(^{145}\) For a portrait of Ramush Haradinaj, his role in the KLA as well as information on the ICTY trial, read: William Langewiesche, “House of War,” *Vanity Fair* (December 2008).
4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the complexity of political developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. The analysis of political histories of both countries has provided insight into the deep-running trends of cross-border political party organization and the influence of diaspora communities, both of which played a role in the conflicts of the 1990s, as well as in the subsequent establishment of BiH and Kosovo’s post-conflict political systems. The investigation of the role that political parties played before, as well as during the conflicts, has illustrated political party development in time of war, whose tenets were introduced in the second chapter. The section outlining the involvement of the international administrations has shown how their mandate evolved over the years, without substantial handover of power to their local counterparts. Though they attempted to influence parties’ development through electoral system design and institution of party laws and regulations, international administrations failed to exert a substantial impact on them. This may be the result of either the imperviousness of political parties to outside influence, or insubstantial engagement from the side of the international administrators. In either case – this finding inspires further investigation on political parties and their susceptibility to outside influence.

It was in these fundamentally challenging and complex contexts, each accompanied by its own specific set of local conditions, that the international democracy promotion organizations began their work in the early months following the cessation of hostilities. How to start introducing democracy into areas fresh out of conflict, where the entire social fabric, institutions of governance, economy, and social services were in ruins? How to engage with the political elites in the country, most of whom had played a significant role in or during the conflict; many of whom had direct contact with military groups still waiting to be disarmed? In what ways did the persistent legacies of both communism and conflict influence the parties’ development and the work of party assistance organizations? These were just some of the questions these democracy promoters had to tackle once they initiated their activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo.

The following chapter focuses on the slightly older statebuilding case, Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the task of assisting democracy and political parties was imbued with greater sense of urgency, as the DPA scheduled the first postwar elections for 1996, less than a year from the time when the last bullets were fired in the country. Although the three individuals whose names are most often associated with the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina and whose signatures stand at the peace agreement all died in the next decade (Tuđman in 1999, Izetbegović in 2003, Milošević in 2006), the international community soon learned how hard it would be to institute changes in the political system set at Dayton. Though accepted as a great success in stopping the conflict, the DPA has been under increased attack for setting up an expensive, ineffective and ultimately paralyzing administrative structure. It was within this system that party aid organizations attempted to assist democracy through empowering political parties to become catalysts of democracy, rather than its obstacle, and the following chapter tells their story.
At the time of writing, the political situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina had succumbed to an all-time low since the international community began its post-conflict reconstruction, statebuilding and democratization processes in this country. The High Representative Valentin Inzko had failed to reign in Prime Minister of Republika Srpska Milorad Dodik, which resulted in RS National Assembly proclaiming void many of the previous HR decisions transferring executive powers from entity level to the state level.\(^2\) Since the failed constitutional amendments of 2006, threats of RS’ right to referendum have been on the rise. The international community, both in the country as embodied and represented by the Office of the High Representative and abroad, in Brussels and Washington D.C., has been struggling in coming up with a unified stance on what is to be done to prevent further deterioration of the already fragile political and economic situation.\(^3\) On one thing, however, the international actors agree. They are united in blaming the worrying status quo on the local political elites, their continuing use of nationalist rhetoric and lack of will and genuine commitment to democratic politics and policymaking.

Rather than focusing on political parties, the international administration mandated with reconstructing and democratizing BiH has focused its attention on other political and governance institutions, such as elections and the strengthening of state and entity-level parliaments. Representatives of this administration have attempted to remove nationalists

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1 [You’ve built castles for yourselves, and for us – ethnic nationalist sheepfolds.] Author translation.
3 See: United States Institute of Peace (USIP) reports on Bosnia-Herzegovina – Kurt Bassuener, James Lyon, “Unfinished Business in Bosnia-Herzegovina: What Is To Be Done?” (May 2009); Edward P. Joseph, “What To Do about Bosnia-Herzegovina?” (May 2009); Jim O’Brien, “A New Agenda for Bosnia and Herzegovina” (August 2009). Americans are divided between those advocating a return to a tougher, more involved US involvement in the Balkans and in Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular, which could be announced with appointment of new US President Special Envoy for the Balkans, and those arguing that it is no use forcing unity upon people, when the past fifteen years have proven that Dayton Peace Agreement cannot create a functional country. The latter group, most prominently represented by the former US ambassador to Croatia William Montgomery (see his article “Balkan Mess Redux,” *New York Times*, June 06, 2009) is openly stating that international community should be open to RS secession, and in general to changing of the borders in the Balkans. European Union is still –as it was in the early 1990s when the wars in former Yugoslavia erupted – lacking a unified position and a clear policy on Bosnia-Herzegovina.
from power through electoral system design, and through the use of so-called Bonn powers – the High Representative's mandate of removing from office local elected officials deemed to be obstructive to the peace-building process. While the activities of international administrations received a lot of media coverage in the form of attacks or praise for different High Representative’s decisions, the work of international political party assistance organizations remained far from the spotlight throughout their fifteen year-long engagement. This chapter deals with the party assistance provided in Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1996 until the municipal elections held in 2008.

When comparing politics in early 1996 with the atmosphere in the political arena in 2009, one finds little reason for optimism. The verdict on party aid effects at first glance seems straightforward: it failed to achieve what it set out to do – to moderate politics in BiH and remove nationalists from power. However, the story is too complex to be presented as such a straightforward black-and-white or failure-vs.-success type of dichotomy. The account of how international democracy-promoting organizations assisted political parties in BiH in their development since the end of the war is structured as follows: the first section details the provision of party assistance – its main principles, goals, strategies and implementation in the field in the 1996 – 2008 period. The evaluation section is divided into several parts: the first addresses party aid organizations goals and objectives, and their self-assessment. The second part focuses on the recipients and their appraisal of the assistance channeled to them. This is followed by an in-depth look at the biggest party assistance recipients in BiH, parties SDP and SNSD. The last section determines the extent of the role that party aid played in the general political (party) system-level democratization in the country, or in the lack thereof. The concluding section offers observations and a summary of the main effects of party assistance on political parties’ development as well as the reasons behind its disappointing track record in moderating politics in BiH.

5.1 Provision of Party Aid
Party assistance organizations have been an active factor in political party development in BiH from the very beginning of the international community involvement in the region following the cessation of hostilities. In describing their activities in BiH, this section will outline the specific goals that guided their work as well as discuss some of the strategies used in achieving those objectives and goals. The first part outlines the beginnings of party assistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996 – 2001), the second focuses on the consolidation of party aid activities (2001 – 2006) and the third describes the ensuing, unanticipated backlash of the assistance (2006 – 2008). Before delving into the description of party assistance in the field, however, it is necessary to introduce the main party assistance organizations and their local partner parties.

Since 1996, party assistance organizations have provided numerous trainings on party organization, voter outreach, electoral campaigning, intra-party democracy, media
relations and policymaking. Table 5 illustrates the pairings between different party assistance organizations and their domestic partners in BiH:

Table 5: Overview of Party Aid in post-Dayton BiH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Aid Organization</th>
<th>Political party partner / Assistance recipient</th>
<th>Active since:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NDI</td>
<td>At some point worked with all parties</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The ‘original’ nationalist parties excluded (SDA, HDZ, SDS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multipartisan approach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAS</td>
<td>HDZ, HDZ 1990, SDA, PDP</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bipartisan approach mostly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES</td>
<td>SDP, SNSD</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bipartisan approach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRI</td>
<td>SNSD, SDP, NSRzB, PDP</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multipartisan approach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNS</td>
<td>LDS, HSS, NHI, BOSS (small parties, usually not in the parliament)</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bipartisan and multipartisan approach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SBiH and SDS are the only relevant parties not partnered with any of the international party aid organizations. It is important to note that throughout the years, the funds for party aid in BiH have been decreasing, which has led to a parallel reduction in the scope of party aid provided on the ground. The aid organizations were thus more inclined to focus on the larger, established parties, rather than on the smaller parties with no seats in the state or entity-level legislatures. SDP and SNSD have thus emerged as the overall biggest recipients of party aid, as they received most assistance from multiple sources (NDI, IRI, FES).

It is difficult to discern the exact sums that funded party assistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1996 – 2008 period. Table 6 illustrates the overall funding for BiH distributed under the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Act Funding from 1996 until 2008. The table illustrates steady decrease in funding over the years.

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4 The SDS (Serbian Democratic Party) was considered nationalist and radical, and was thus not entitled to international party aid. SBiH (Party for BiH) was approached on several occasions and invited to party aid trainings, but no meaningful, continuous cooperation was born over the years between this party and various party aid organizations active in BiH.  
5 The following information will only refer to US party assistance activities, as the funding for German Stiftungen was not made available public, nor revealed during the interviews on account of its confidentiality.
Table 6: Funding for BiH distributed under SEED Act, 1996 – 2008 ($000s)\(^6\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>249,000</td>
<td>217,500</td>
<td>215,000</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>79,924</td>
<td>65,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>year</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>44,667</td>
<td>40,994</td>
<td>39,600</td>
<td>32,100</td>
<td>22,900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to stress that democratic reform programs (subset in which party assistance belongs) on average constituted 20% of all the democracy aid funding, while the remainder of assistance was geared towards supporting economic growth, peace and security initiatives and humanitarian assistance. Most of the funding-breakdown elements of the reports were deemed confidential and are thus not revealed to the public in the Annual Reports. However, access was gained for financial breakdown of expenditures per sector for the years 2006 and 2008,\(^7\) as presented in the following table:

Table 7: Request by Element, SEED funding, BiH ($ in Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governing Justly &amp; Democratically (overall funding program)</th>
<th>2006 Actual</th>
<th>2008 Request</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Parties</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Support (Political Competition)</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Competition and Consensus-Building</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,680</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subsection total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures demonstrate that in 2006 and 2008, from the overall funding for democracy-promotion activities under the SEED Act, political party assistance comprised on average 5% of the overall aid. If we assume the same percentage was allotted to party assistance throughout the time frame from 1996 until 2008, US party assistance activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina could be estimated to have cost around $69,000,000.\(^8\)

5.1.1 The Beginnings

Elections are arguably the most eventful, demanding and the most visible sphere of political party organization and activity in democratic systems. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that elections formed the basis of and constituted the most important assistance domain of American party institutes NDI and IRI in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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\(^6\) Information gathered from: United States Department of State, “U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Central and Eastern Europe,” submitted Pursuant to Section 704(c) of the SEED Act (Public Law 101-179), Annual Reports for Fiscal Years 1996 – 2008.

\(^7\) Addendum to the Annual SEED Reports, received at the Office of the Assistance Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia, US State Department, in Washington D.C. in March 2008.

\(^8\) It needs to be stressed that without access to detailed funding breakdowns for other years involved, this sum can only be treated as a very rough estimate. Also, this figure does not include NED funding.
NDI entered BiH soon after the conclusion of the peace agreement. The conditions were ripe: the DPA stipulated that first postwar elections be held within a year from its signing. NDI had been operating in neighboring Croatia since late 1994, and it was from here that first contacts with potential partner parties in BiH were established.\footnote{Author interview with Croatian Social Democratic Party (SDP) member in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina: June 24, 2007.} Seeing that the only parties that were organized and that had the infrastructure necessary for competing in elections were the nationalist parties that waged the war – HDZ, SDA and SDS – NDI’s entrance into the war torn country was seen primarily as the chance for moderation and leveling of the political party playing field. USAID, at the time NDI’s chief donor, explicitly prohibited work with nationalist parties in its official Political Party Assistance policy, and the interpretation of this policy in BiH context meant that HDZ, SDA and SDS were not eligible for aid. Though some interviewed NDI staff members expressed regret over this policy – believing that the nationalist parties could have been influenced through assistance to reform\footnote{Author interview with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 10, 2008.} – this prohibition remained in place from the beginning of assistance until the time of writing. At the same time, NDI’s working plan for year 1997/1998 states that, “NDI will not, however, ignore the three nationalist parties and will seek to work with elements within these parties that favor a more open and pluralistic system.”\footnote{NDI Working Plan, August 1997 – July 1998.} This revealed a contradiction between the party aid policy as it was set in Washington D.C. and its implementation on the ground in BiH.

Evaluating the launch of the NDI program in 1996, an internal NDI report mentions a quote by a senior Western diplomat voiced in the Washington Post in the run-up to the elections: “If they [the elections] can become a check on the crazy nationalism that brought war to Bosnia, then the elections are a success. If they are smashed completely by the nationalists, then we really have failed.”\footnote{John Pomfret, “Bosnian Opposition Woos War Weary Voters,” \textit{Washington Post}, September 12, 1996, as quoted in: \textit{Bosnia and Hercegovina (BiH): Strengthening Political Parties}, NDI Policy Brief, 1996.} As NDI policy brief explains further,

> Before the elections, Western analysts linked hopes for the country’s future with the success of opposition parties to gain presence in the national and regional parliaments. However, the political climate in early 1996 was characterized by… ethnically based nationalist parties that dominated a sectarian political environment in which indicted war criminals continued to exert considerable influence.\footnote{\textit{Bosnia and Hercegovina (BiH): Strengthening Political Parties}, NDI Policy Brief, 1996.}

Accordingly, NDI’s program goals became: to pluralize the political landscape in BiH, offer moderate parties tools for successful campaigning elements and education and empowerment of voters to monitor and participate in the elections. As the first working plan covering assistance efforts from June until December 1996 describes, “challenge
will be the development of a multi-party democracy where parties represent issues and not ethnic groups.”

Activities organized prior to the first elections included baseline assessment through formal seminars and intensive consultations as well as informal consultations. NDI developed twelve training manuals on communication, direct mailing, events and planning, running low budget campaigns, rural and regional organizing, get out the vote (GOTV), and media and dispersed more than 4,000 copies of these manuals throughout national party headquarters and local party branches of many smaller parties they were assisting at the time.

The results of the 1996 elections, which fortified the position of nationalists who started the war, came as a disappointment to the international community. The 1998 elections also resulted in nationalist parties keeping a stronghold on positions of power. Throughout this period, NDI continued to offer training of party candidates for local elections in 1997 and the increase in opposition parties’ voter base from 15 to 30% is hailed as one of the successes. They also focused their energies on improving parties’ contact with voters, strategic planning, internal party organization capacity and activating the youth within NDI’s partner parties. Later they concentrated in more depth on membership and volunteer recruitment, candidate identification, voter targeting, message development and delivery. NDI’s biggest assistance recipient party – the Communist Party successors SDP – got a brief stint in power as the leading party in the ten-party coalition ‘Alliance for Change.’ In government from 2000 till 2002, the Alliance failed to secure confidence from voters sufficient to get reelected, so nationalist parties came back to power in 2002.

Though elections were the key focus of these early years of engagements, initial steps were made towards strengthening the internal organization of the parties that were being assisted. Strengthening the party from within is believed to increase its institutionalization through formalization of procedures and decision-making processes. As NDI elaborates in its working plan for the year 2000, factors such as insular management and communication structures, a lack of leadership change and marginalized party members all compromise internal party democracy. Some of the activities that NDI organized for its partner parties under this domain were trainings on improving party infrastructure and internal communication, improving communication between the headquarters and local party branches. NDI also invested in educating local party trainers. The original vision was to have these trainers work within NDI’s partner parties on developing their infrastructure, communication flow, party policies. With time,

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however, it became apparent that parties were either not interested or highly suspicious of these individuals, as these local trainers could not get through to either party leadership or lower-level members. NDI ended up using these educated trainers as its own local staff. The initial period of party assistance in BiH was subsequently mostly used for trust building between NDI and its partner parties. As a local NDI staff member explained, the process of trust building took many years. The most frustrating element during this trust-building stage was that even though NDI did all the polling for its partner parties, it took several years before parties started taking NDI’s work seriously.\(^{21}\)

### 5.1.2 Consolidation of Party Aid

The crash of the Alliance in the 2002 elections signaled return to nationalist politics and disillusionment of party aid organizations working in the field. As working plans for the following years have been misplaced\(^{22}\) (March 2001 – March 2003), it is hard to determine whether NDI departed from their original strategy and objectives in that period. The final report for that period does suggest, however, that NDI’s faith in and reliance on elections was still strong: “The October 2002 general elections stood squarely as the most important target driving NDI’s work with political parties in BiH.”\(^{23}\)

While American party assistance organizations were barred from cooperating with nationalist parties, German Stiftungen had no such limitations. As one of the former directors of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung office in BiH explained, in the very beginnings the consensus in the international community not to support nationalist parties was strong. However, in 2001 Germans conducted an analysis which determined that nationalist parties would not disappear but instead would continue to influence the political system and culture in the country. As result of strategic discussion, a decision was brought to extend assistance to nationalist parties. Stiftungen approached the HDZ and SDA parties in 2001 with an offer to organize workshops, help parties strengthen their programs and improve their international relations by bringing them closer to European party networks. This process took years to develop.\(^{24}\)

The entry of IRI into Bosnia in 2003 indicates that there were abundant funds within the USAID democracy and governance section at the time, as well as plenty of backing from the side of the Support for East European Democracy Act (SEED) implemented through the State Department.\(^{25}\) An IRI staff member explained that IRI had

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\(^{21}\) Author interview with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 27, 2007.

\(^{22}\) As explained in the third chapter: USAID did not provide these working plans, despite their obligation to do so under the FOIA.


\(^{24}\) Author interview with high-level staff member of KAS, in Zagreb, Croatia: April 15, 2008.

\(^{25}\) More about the US Government Assistance to Eastern Europe under the Support for Eastern European Democracy Act can be found at: [http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/c10247.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/c10247.htm) (accessed: December 28, 2009). It is difficult to determine exact sums that were allocated to party assistance within the overall democracy-promotion activities section.
the opportunity from the beginning to get involved in BiH, but as smaller of the two US party institutes they chose not to. Not worried about overlap of activities or satiation, IRI and NDI both received funding by USAID demonstrating the belief that there was a lot of work in Bosnia-Herzegovina and that these two organizations could work alongside each other.

While their portfolio of activities was rather similar, the only major element that IRI took over from NDI upon its involvement in BiH was polling. IRI is best known for its polling and research of public opinion, and this forms a substantial portion of their party assistance activities worldwide. NDI’s polling in BiH at the time was basic, and they had only begun teaching their partners how to conduct public opinion surveys themselves. Once IRI took over, polling was transferred to its portfolio of competences, and this became its trademark activity among its local partner parties in BiH. One of IRI’s goals was to create local independent polling capacity, and they cooperated with several domestic organizations, most notable of which was the Prism Research agency.

It was in this ‘consolidation’ period of party assistance (2001 – 2006) that party assistance organizations began their emphasis on supporting women and youth within their partner political parties. Developing in sophistication over time, by 2005 the set of activities pertaining to ‘internal party organization’ fell under the objective of ‘party modernization.’ These included increasing member participation in decision-making, membership management and recruitment and stronger focus on strengthening and institutionalizing the position of women and youth inside political parties. Another strong element of NDI’s program was the parliamentary support that aided all the parties in entity and state parliaments on various policy issues, ranging from finance reform, to labor, education and defense. Finally, efforts were made to assist parties in creating ‘more efficient organization structures’, but bulk of the direct party aid nevertheless centered around elections in the form of constituent outreach, platform development and membership recruitment seminars.

By 2006 the party aid scene had become rather elaborate, with more organizations taking part, partnering with parties in BiH and aiding them in reaching their electoral goals. NDI provided multipartisan support but focused in greater part on assisting SDP and SNSD. German foundations remained faithful to their partisan approach and each cooperated with their ideological counterparts in the BiH political scene. KAS thus remained focused on providing assistance to SDA, HDZ and PDP; FES continued its cooperation with SDP and SNSD; FNS was still affiliated with the Liberal Party (LDS). IRI also focused on SDP and SNSD, as well as on NSRzB, and PDP.

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26 Author interview with IRI staff member in Washington D.C., USA: April 12, 2007.
27 Author interviews with Prism Research director in Sarajevo, BiH: July 16, 2007; IRI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 27, 2007. Interviewees expressed doubt in the viability of local polling services once the foreign donor money leaves the country. In other words, they doubted political parties’ willingness to pay on their own for the polling / public opinion research.
29 Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) is a small, conservative-leaning party in Republika Srpska entity led by Mladen Ivanić. For more information, visit party website: www.pdpinfo.net.
Over time, the European and the American party aid organizations began loose coordination of their projects, in order not to overlap with each other’s programs offered to the same partners. Since both SDP and SNSD cooperated with FES, NDI and IRI, this coordination became a necessity as party aid activities developed in BiH. At the same time, the general principles under which party aid was administered by the different organizations were not aligned. Prior to the 2006 elections, a major meeting between different party assistance organizations took place in the US embassy in Sarajevo. Organized by USAID, the main donor of the American party institutes NDI and IRI, its purpose was to coordinate activities and agree on a joint strategy for the elections that were deemed crucial for Bosnia and Herzegovina’s future. As one of the interviewees explained, the polls were showing decreasing amount of support for the nationalist parties, and polling research pointed to a guaranteed SNSD victory over SDS in Republika Srpska. This added a strong sense of ‘now or never’ for many of the participants in the meeting.\(^{30}\) Similarly, IRI’s Working Plan for the year 2006 states in the very beginning the belief that BiH’s fifth general election set for October of that year, “will prove to be the most politically critical in the country’s democratic development.”\(^{31}\)

Despite the agreement on the significance of the upcoming elections, this attempt to coordinate party aid efforts failed. The standpoints of different party aid organizations differed on the direction that this coordinated effort should take. The US organizations were strong supporters of coordinated ousting of the dominant ethnic parties (HDZ, SDA, SDS) from the political scene through offering exclusive support to the newer, arguably more moderate parties in different ethnic groups (SNSD in the Serb group, SDP in Bosniak, NSRzB/NHI in the Croat group). The Stiftungen on the other hand, expressed their reservations regarding this strategy, pointing out the fact that the former nationalists had grown increasingly moderate and open to consensus during their decade in power (citing Tihic-led SDA and Covic-led HDZ as examples), thus signaling their reform over the years. Also, they had reservations regarding the US-suggested approach since, in their opinion, it ignored the popular choice and electorate’s support within the country, which risked making the entire party effort void.\(^{32}\) In retrospective, as one KAS official explained, the belief in the international community that by supporting opposition parties the ground for nationalists would dry out was naïve. The German approach was that only by engaging with the nationalists could they work on deradicalization of these parties.\(^{33}\)

The party aid effort leading up to the 2006 general elections was largely derailed by several international community officials and the US ambassador’s introduction of constitutional reform talks in April of that year. Despite the warnings issued by the party aid organizations regarding the potential backlash of holding constitutional reform talks in the election year,\(^{34}\) the US embassy proceeded with its plans and launched the talks

\(^{30}\) Author interview with an IRI official in Sarajevo, BiH: June 22, 2007.
\(^{32}\) Author interview with a KAS representative in Sarajevo, BiH: June 28, 2007.
\(^{33}\) Author interview with KAS representative in Zagreb, Croatia: April 15, 2008.
\(^{34}\) Author interviews with NDI and IRI officials in Sarajevo as well as in Washington D.C. confirm this.
few months before the elections. The failure of the April Package of constitutional reforms incited and renewed ethnic animosities in the political arena, which is believed to have inspired a change in the general elections outcome. The parties defined by the media as ‘second generation nationalists’ i.e. SBiH and SNSD won the Presidency seats for Bosniak and Serb members respectively; SBiH strengthened its position in the state and Federation parliaments (but could not de-throne SDA); SNSD realized overwhelming victory in the RS National Assembly.\(^{35}\) NDI and IRI were working towards, rooting for and celebrating the victory of their biggest partner party, SNSD-Milorad Dodik. When faced with few cautious voices from the international community that were asking for their ‘insider info’ on Dodik’s increasing nationalist rhetoric launched in response to Silajdžić proclamations and demands, the NDI confidently responded, “Do not worry, we have Dodik under control.”\(^{36}\)

5.1.3 The Backlash

As 2006 drew to a close, USAID’s mission budget was cut in half as the US was busy with its protracted engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan and BiH was no longer seen as priority. The mission’s Democracy and Governance department advised Washington D.C. that, among other things, party assistance programs be extinguished, as they were not producing desired results during their ten-years-long existence.\(^{37}\) This decision was overthrown from Washington D.C. (an interviewee explained it as someone “pulling rank” over USAID mission in BiH)\(^{38}\) and funds were sent for another year of party assistance programs during which both NDI and IRI were set to phase out their activities.\(^{39}\)

Dodik’s continuing and increasingly worrisome nationalist rhetoric and uncooperative attitude towards the international administration elicited both condemnation and shock in the international circles. An American OSCE staff member inquiring what was going on with SNSD and its leader approached NDI for insider information. This time, their response was one of alarm, and the words: “We no longer have any control over him. He’s gone rogue!”\(^{40}\)

Around the same time that Milorad Dodik of SNSD was unleashing nationalist demagogy upon his unsuspecting former allies in the international circles, a rumor began surfacing in the party-assistance community. Several different party aid organizations’

\(^{35}\) Elections data from the Central Electoral Commission of Bosnia-Herzegovina, at: www.izbori.ba.

\(^{36}\) Author interview with high-positioned OSCE official at the time, in New York City, US: April 25, 2009. This NDI attitude of ‘having Dodik under control’ was confirmed through further interviews with NDI officials, in Sarajevo, BiH: June 24, 2007; in Banja Luka: June 18, 2008.

\(^{37}\) Author interviews with USAID Mission to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Democracy and Governance department staff member, in Sarajevo, BiH: June 25, 2009; with political analyst / international think tank staff member, in Sarajevo, BiH: June 27, 2007; with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 11, 2007.

\(^{38}\) Author interview with political analyst, over Skype: January 07, 2008.

\(^{39}\) Author interviews with USAID Mission to BiH, D&G department staff member, in Sarajevo, BiH: June 25, 2009; with NDI staff member, in Sarajevo, BiH: June 26, 2009.

\(^{40}\) Author interview with high-positioned OSCE official at the time, in New York City, US: April 25, 2009.
staff members talked about NDI arranging ‘special consultants’ for the SNSD, whose job was to make sure that the party won the 2006 elections, thus definitively ousting the nationalist SDS out of power. The story contained details on the methodology of those consultants: apparently, the SNSD party itself claimed that they were advised by internationals to up their nationalist rhetoric, in order to ‘outshine’ their biggest opponents in the RS, the SDS party. 

NDI categorically denies any such involvement in the SNSD’s demagogy-leaning campaign.

During this backlash period, NDI significantly reduced its elections-based activities, focusing in more detail on assistance to building internal party organization structures, which were still markedly weak in some of their partner parties. They also focused more on the parliamentary program, which did not have the restriction against cooperation with nationalist parties. The assistance to parties in parliament also involved the development of the constituency outreach program, where NDI financially supported the opening of constituency offices across BiH. The goal of this program was to increase the transparency of representatives and to make them more accessible to the electorate. As one of the NDI staff members explained, they were going after the “write to your congressperson” model present in the US.

The escalation of nationalist rhetoric and the growing hostility demonstrated by the RS Prime Minister Milorad Dodik towards both the international administration and the US in particular in the end led to State Department’s decision to withdraw party support for SNSD, one of its former biggest democratic reform success stories and greatest party assistance partners in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This took place after riots in Banja Luka during which the US consulate came under attack, and received little protection from the local RS authorities. These riots were held in the aftermath of Kosovo’s proclamation of independence and were encouraged rather than prevented by the RS leadership. In March 2008, State Department issued a statement that the aid flowing through the USAID party program would be withdrawn from the SNSD party, on account of the party ‘no longer fitting the aid criteria.’ NDI in the field expressed their regret at this taking place. At the same time, SNSD officials denied that this move signified American sanctions against the SNSD, publicly flaunting invitations they received from the NDI Belgrade office to attend a regional seminar on internal party organization.

Thirteen years after the launch of party assistance activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the US party assistance organizations NDI and IRI just about closed their doors. While German foundations carried on their activities as usual, IRI’s program had  

41 Author interviews with AMS staff member in Amsterdam, the Netherlands: May 14, 2007; with FNS staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 21, 2007; with SDP member, June 04, 2008.
42 Author interview with NDI staff member, in Sarajevo, BiH: June 26, 2009.
43 Interview with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 27, 2007.
44 Author interviews with NDI officials, Sarajevo and Banja Luka, BiH: May - June 2008.
funding until 2009 when it was expected to phase out its programs, while NDI was rescued by a NED grant sufficient for keeping a small part of the program afloat. NDI remained with radically reduced local staff and no international resident directors, working on a civil society support grant and a small parliamentary program. Their direct aid to political parties ended with the State Department’s ban on cooperation with the SNSD. Assisting their only remaining partner SDP would have made them openly partisan, which was also against the assistance policy. There has been no overarching, general evaluation of NDI and IRI’s activities, involvement in politics or impact they had on political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina during this period (1996 – 2008). The next section addresses this oversight.

5.2 Evaluation

This section will analyze the impact of party assistance on political party development and politics in BiH in the 1996 – 2008 period. The first part looks at party aid organizations’ self-evaluation in order to discern their own take on the work they did in BiH. The most important indicators here are the objectives and goals that party aid organizations themselves set forth in their working plans. The second part focuses on BiH political parties and details their judgment on the assistance channeled to them. This is subjective assessment from the front row viewers. The third part offers micro-level assessment of party aid through deeper analysis of two of its biggest recipients, the SDP and SNSD. Indicators constitute party electoral success, growth, and internal as well as external evaluation of their organization structures, internal democracy, position and role of youth and women, internal party communication. In the fourth part, attention focuses on the party-system level and general political system of BiH. The impact of assistance on party-system is distinguished through the analysis of cooperation between different parties, the changes in their ideological profiles and parties’ stance towards the regime. Determining the role that party assistance played in the overall democratization of Bosnia-Herzegovina rounds up the evaluation section through comparison between the political situation in the country in 1996 to the one in 2008.

5.2.1 Party Assistance Organizations’ Goals: Self-Assessment

IRI’s working plan lists some of the goals and objectives of US party assistance organizations active in BiH: “to help political parties become more responsive, accountable and connected with the people and civil society…through development of party institutional capacity, political identity and campaign capacity.”46 Indicators established for tracking the progress of accomplishing those objectives varied from

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parties’ creation of long-term strategies and working plans submitted to NDI and IRI for review, creation and integration of youth organizations into party structures, to creation and institutionalization of clear party leadership selection procedures. It is unclear whether the US party assistance organizations received those working plans that parties were expected to draft: when requested, party representatives interviewed for the purpose of this research were not able to produce evidence of such strategy documents existing. Comparing the initial working plans to those that were developed later, it can be deduced that the NDI entered BiH with a flurry of activities riding on high expectations and generous funding. They were forced to adjust these expectations with time, as it became apparent that parties were neither able to absorb the assistance offered to them, nor were they entirely willing to accept it. Accordingly, NDI committed to doing more of the same activities over a prolonged period.47

When asked to detail some of their biggest successes, without exception, both the US institutes and the German Stiftungen mentioned the strengthened position of youth branches and women organizations within their respective partner parties. While it is true that parties that received aid have separate women and youth organizations within their structures, it will be elaborated in detail later that the position of women and youth within those parties still leaves much to be desired.

Distilling further successes took more effort, as the official reports often cited information contradictory to information received during the interviews. For instance, NDI Final Report September 1996 – June 1999 cites,

To date the most important impact the political party program has had is in the area of voter contact. Following NDI training many local party branches initiated voter surveys using door to door canvassing techniques in order to identify issues of concern to the voters, an activity previously unknown to the parties or citizens.48

At the same time, getting party members to accept new techniques (such as the often discussed door-to-door canvassing) was habitually mentioned during interviews as the area in which party assistance organizations repeatedly failed.49 German foundations are united in their belief that one of their biggest successes was aiding the modernization of their partner parties, both internally, in the form of advising amendments to their statutes and regulations, as well as externally, by exposing and socializing the party leadership to

47 In the words of an NDI staff member, “We just decided to repeat and repeat some trainings, like those on internal party organization and communication – until they [the parties] got it.” Author interview with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 26, 2009.
49 As one interviewee from the NDI explained that the parties assumed the problematic ‘this-will-never-work-in-this-country’ attitude, refusing to follow NDI’s advice and recommendations. Author interview with (former) NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 10, 2008.
The way politics is done in European Union capitals. Their main method for accomplishing these goals was getting their partner parties from BiH closer to their European party family counterparts, that is, the European People’s Party (EPP), the Party of European Socialists (PES) and the European Liberal Democratic and Reform Party (ELDR). Parties who received assistance from German foundations confirm that this type of aid was invaluable for their move towards European party families.

What explanations did party assistance organizations offer to explain the absence of impact, or in other words their inability to influence certain aspects of party politics in Bosnia-Herzegovina? Thomas Carothers’s explanations laid out in Table 3 ‘Why does party assistance have limited effects?’ have been confirmed in the BiH case study. Staff from different party aid organizations repeatedly complained during the interviews about party leaders’ resistance to change: political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina are all leader-based, and programs attempting to introduce and strengthen internal party democracy were not received with open arms across the board. In some parties, statutes were amended to institute voting procedures with internal nominations and appointments, including leadership change. However, application or implementation of these by-laws or internal party regulations was harder to encourage from the outside, so they remain present in theory rather than instituted in practice. Party aid organizations blamed the lack of substantial impact of their work on the difficult local context. They felt that the underlying conditions of the BiH political system in which nationalism is always a strong undercurrent, and where the voters are overwhelmed with a sense of apathy and distrust in elites hark back to both the communist times and the conflict in the 1990s. As one interviewee put it, “Politicians’ salaries eat up as much as 65% of GDP, yet no one complains. There is no awareness, no critical mass that would change things.” Finally, when looking at these justifications for no change in the political parties functioning status quo, a political analyst from an international think tank explained:

> Reporting on ‘problematic politics’ and lack of democracy in Bosnia is absolutely imperative for [NDI’s and IRI’s] survival. As long as they maintain the existence of the problem while continuing to advocate the relevance of their work, they ensure continued funding for their programs.

This indeed was the most inconsistent element in NDI and IRI final reports in the period from 1996 until 2008: though they were reporting successes and closer cooperation with their partners, the problem statement remained almost unchanged. Parties were

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50 Author interviews with KAS staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: May 20, 2009; with KAS staff member in Zagreb, Croatia: April 15, 2008; with FNS staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 21, 2007; with FES staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: July 20, 2008.
51 Author interviews with NDI and IRI staff members in Sarajevo, BiH and in Washington D.C., US.
52 Author interviews with NDI and IRI staff in Sarajevo and Banja Luka, BiH and in Washington D.C., US. Also, author interviews with State Department officials, in Washington D.C., US.
53 Author interview with NDI staff member, in Banja Luka, BiH: June 18, 2008.
54 Author interview with political analyst from international think tank, via Skype: January 08, 2008.
throughout this period painted as self-interested, non-transparent, unaccountable, and nationalism-rather than issue-based organizations.

Bearing in mind these contradictions, it is important to take a closer look at both the programming and evaluation that US party institutes conducted of their own programs. Analysis of NDI and IRI working plans revealed rather loosely formulated objectives, many of which did not conform to the minimal S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound) standard. Similarly, the indicators that they used to measure progress often failed to meet the criteria of being 'objectively verifiable.'\(^5^5\) This observation was confirmed during the interview with a staff member from the USAID mission to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Democracy and Governance department:

The Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) was always tough on democracy promotion and democracy assistance activities. Attribution [of impact] was particularly hard in party assistance programs. However, NDI and IRI have always had privileged status in the US democracy/development aid community. As party institutes they are well connected in Congress, and are therefore not held up against same standards as other agencies or contractors. NDI and IRI are well known for having poor PMPs and measurement indicators.\(^5^6\)

This revelation does not come as a surprise, as this research has run into many of the same attribution roadblocks in trying to assess the impact of party assistance.

Evaluation of democracy assistance programs has traditionally been outsourced to private contractors, consulting companies, universities or think tanks. They have come under attack and have been criticized for lacking “an appropriate research design, measures of inputs and outputs, and controls for confounding variables to justify sound assessments of whether an intervention has accomplished its goals.”\(^5^7\) Furthermore, the close cooperation between USAID and private consulting companies in democracy promotion worldwide has further complicated the issue of outsourcing the evaluation of programs. In the past few years, such private companies – who are known by the label ‘Beltway bandits’ – have come under the scrutiny of investigative journalists, who exposed their rise in profits under the Bush administration.\(^5^8\)

\(^{5^5}\) OVI s, or objectively verifiable indicators, are standard components to Logical Framework planning matrix, typically used programming template in project writing and project cycle management.

\(^{5^6}\) Author interview with USAID Mission to BiH, Democracy and Governance department staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 25, 2009.


evaluation of various programs often running in hundreds of thousands of dollars\textsuperscript{59}, this raises the question of whether the evaluations of USAID democracy and governance assistance programs can be considered independent, unbiased or accurate. One such evaluation of party assistance, performed by private firm Democracy International Inc. in 2007, places most of the blame for lack of impact on the difficult local conditions in which party aid organizations operate, while at the same time arguing for “maintaining assistance to parties even in the face of daunting structural constraints.”\textsuperscript{60} By urging the continuance of party assistance without being critically reflective on the design or implementation of those programs, such evaluations have impeded rather than promoted learning inside party assistance organizations.

A staff member working in the Evaluation Unit of KAS explained that local offices at times exhibited a lot of resistance to recommendations that came from outsourced evaluations.\textsuperscript{61} During the time of this research, both NDI and KAS created staff positions for in-house monitoring and evaluation officers.\textsuperscript{62} This move signaled party assistance organizations’ awareness of the increased pressure by their donors to demonstrate tangible results and justify the existence of their programs.

As party assistance organizations base most of their evaluations on feedback from recipients, they are continuously on the lookout for instances of learning, which are most easily identifiable through qualitative methods, i.e. stories from party members.\textsuperscript{63} The following section therefore addresses the recipients of party aid, documenting their impressions of how their parties benefited from it.

\textbf{5.2.2 Recipients’ Appraisal}

Talking to staff and members of different parties about the foreign assistance they received was not as straightforward as initially expected. Interestingly, the subject of party assistance could barely fill some twenty minutes of a given interview: soon into the field research, it became apparent that party members did not give the subject much thought. The findings also revealed that none of the parties conducted an internal evaluation of the assistance that they received, or even a discussion on how to best use this free resource that was at their disposal. Furthermore, a large number of those interviewed seemed keener to discuss their opponents, than to reflect on the state of their own parties.

Asking interviewees to provide an example of an instance where a particular training or a recommendation from a party assistance organization directly led to a

\textsuperscript{59} An example of such a grant is the $ 685,000 grant awarded in January 2009 to the University of Pittsburgh by the USAID for a two year evaluation into the impact of USAID party development assistance programs.

\textsuperscript{60} Democracy International Inc., \textit{A Study of Political Party Assistance in Eastern Europe and Eurasia}, report prepared for USAID under Task Order #DFD-1-06-04-00229-00, June 2007: ix.

\textsuperscript{61} Marlene Spoerri’s interview with KAS Evaluation Unit staff member in Berlin, Germany: May 10, 2007.

\textsuperscript{62} The information on whether other party assistance organizations have done the same is unknown.

\textsuperscript{63} Author interview with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 10, 2008.
change instituted within their parties did not yield concrete results. The survey questionnaire generated more responses to the same question, though still none providing a concrete causal link between assistance and party change. The answers were wide in range:

- I can’t really tell. (SDP)
- Seminars gave birth to ideas good for our party. (SDP)
- New ideas, which at snail pace are turned into action. (SDP)
- Seminars attract new members because of opportunities to socialize. (SNSD)
- Thanks to assistance, we now have our own trainers. (SNSD)
- What we learned, we applied, and saw results. (SNSD)
- Adopting appropriate standards in campaigns. (HDZ)
- Party modernization. (HDZ)
- After introducing polling, we changed direction in our decision-making. (NSRzB)
- Development of culture of dialogue and adopting EU standards. (SDA)
- Improved interpersonal communication. (SDA)
- We didn’t use the trainings sufficiently to improve our party’s internal development. (LDS)

At the same time, some of the interviewed party staff members complained that no matter the quality of the ideas gained during the trainings and seminars organized by foreign assistance organizations, leadership of ‘old cronies’ in some parties was effectively blocking any and all initiatives for internal changes within the party.

Question 9 of the survey inquired into the state of internal democracy within parties, gender balance, voter/membership outreach, quality of party program and quality of internal party organization (statutes, bylaws, nomination and selection procedures, etc.). The next question investigated the opinion of party members on the impact that party assistance had these previously mentioned aspects of party organization. The results illustrated in Figure 6 indicate that most parties perceive themselves to have a relatively good internal democracy, which was not influenced substantially by external assistance. Gender balance is evaluated similarly positive by parties, while the assistance impact on it is believed not to have contributed much – despite the fact that this is where party assistance organizations believe to have had significant impact. Concerning the voter/membership outreach, we can note that respondents from HDZ seem overall more pessimistic than respondents from other parties, though all are generally satisfied with their parties’ performance on this issue. Assistance, once again, is seen as not having

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64 Survey questionnaire results to the open question 7, “Provide an example/describe of how a training/seminar/any form of external assistance had a (direct) impact on internal party development/change.”
65 Author interview with HDZ staff member in Mostar, BiH: June 09, 2009.
contributed much to parties’ voter/membership outreach, with exception of respondents from SDP and SNSD who believe it had a positive impact.

Figure 8 concerns the quality of party program, where it is once again visible that parties on average are rather satisfied with their programs. SDP, SNSD and SDA to a lesser extent believe the assistance contributed to it. The final figure shows that although parties – with the exception of LDS – are generally satisfied with their internal organization and protocols, assistance is not granted much credit for this.

While NDI and IRI working plans justify their activities and trainings by pointing to parties’ rudimentary organization, the lack of internal democracy and poorly developed programs, the survey questionnaire results on various aspects of party functioning confirm the observations yielded through interviews: the parties in BiH were reluctant to criticize and reflect on their own shortcomings.

Figure 5: BiH Parties - Internal Party Democracy

How would you evaluate your party’s state of internal democracy and the impact that party assistance had on it?
Note: 1=poor/5=excellent, 1=no effect/5=very much affected.
Figure 6: BiH Parties - Gender Balance

How would you evaluate gender balance inside your party and the impact of party assistance had on it?

Note: 1=poor/5=excellent, 1=no effect/5=very much affected.

Figure 7: BiH Parties – Voter and Membership Outreach

How would you evaluate your party’s voter/membership outreach, and the way external assistance influenced its quality?

Note: 1=poor/5=excellent, 1=no effect/5=very much affected.
Figure 8: BiH Parties – Quality of Party Program
How would you evaluate the quality of your party’s political program and the extent to which external assistance contributed to it?
Note: 1=poor/5=excellent, 1=no effect/5=very much affected.

Figure 9: BiH Parties – Internal Party Organization
How would you evaluate your party’s internal organization and the impact assistance has had on its development?
Note: 1=poor/5=excellent, 1=no effect/5=very much affected.
The survey questionnaire left the impression that parties were somewhat ambivalent about the effects of party aid on their internal organization. The tone of the interviews, however, was far more positive about the general usefulness of party assistance than the survey questionnaire results demonstrated. One interviewee, a member of the small LDP party, even went as far as to state that without external assistance, the liberals in Bosnia-Herzegovina would have completely disappeared. As a party not present in the state or entity parliaments, LDP’s budget was severely cut and the only serious financial contributions keeping the party afloat were, according to this interviewee, those coming from party assistance for organization of various seminars and trainings. Only one interviewee was flat out negative about the assistance, taking offense at the poorly prepared international trainers that were brought in to train their party over the years:

All the trainers and experts they brought focus too much on ‘how it’s done in our country’ and do not realize that BiH is a million light years away from their examples and their political reality. …it’s apparent immediately how little they know about our country and the political issues we are dealing with. These people that came to give us expert trainings… I often had the impression that they did not even read the Wikipedia entry on Bosnia-Herzegovina.

While this comment echoes the previously mentioned critique made by Kumar and Carothers on the need for greater expertise among party assisters and trainers, the rest of the interviewed party members were far more positive in their evaluation of party assistance and the impact it has had on the work of their parties. There was a general sense that cooperation with party assistance organizations granted parties legitimacy and prestige, and this was particularly evident when talking with representatives from HDZ, SDA and SDP in relation to their cooperation with Stiftungen.

Survey questionnaires also revealed the final recipients ‘verdict’ on the party assistance overall influence on their parties internally, as well as on the position of their parties in the BiH political scene. As Figure 10 demonstrates, HDZ and NSRzB respondents believe that the assistance impact on their party organization and party standing on the political scene was minimal. This is also in proportion with the amount of assistance received – HDZ was assisted only by KAS, while NSRzB received some assistance from IRI and NDI, but not as much as they would like to have received. SDA and SDP are the parties that gave high marks to external assistance and its impact on their parties’ position in the BiH political scene. Regarding SDA, this result could be interpreted to mean that the legitimacy-granting foreign assistance has improved the party’s image that was, prior to assistance, exclusively linked to Bosniak nationalism.

66 Author interview with LDP party member in Sarajevo, BiH: July 23, 2008.
67 Author interview with NSRzB staff member, over the phone: May 14, 2009.
68 Survey questionnaire, questions 5 and 6, see Appendix X.
69 Author interview with NSRzB staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: May 16, 2009.
### 5.2.3 Analysis of the Biggest Recipients

This section offers micro-level assessment of party aid through deeper analysis of its two biggest recipients in BiH, the SDP and SNSD. These two parties received assistance from both the American party institutes IRI and NDI, as well as from German foundation FES. Considering that the amount of assistance they have been exposed to is similar and that both parties are self-proclaimed Social Democrats, this allows further points of comparison. Looking at their evolution during the provision stage (1996 – 2008) helps shed more light on the effects of party aid. Both parties are evaluated by looking at several characteristics: ideology, image, relationship with other parties, membership growth, electoral success, the position of youth and women within the party, the changes in internal organization structure and finally, the party leadership.

#### 5.2.3.1 The Social Democratic Party of Bosnia-Herzegovina (SDP)

The biggest self-declared multiethnic party in BiH, the SDP bases its values and program on principles of social democracy. Party members view its young membership base and its policy on promoting multiethnic civic democracy as its biggest strengths.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) Survey questionnaire results, 19 SDP respondents.
highly reluctant to criticize their own party – twelve out of nineteen respondents failed to provide an answer to the question of what they saw as their party’s greatest weakness – they did mention ‘getting active only prior to elections,’ ‘poor communication between members’ and ‘deficient budget’ as problems the party suffers from. From the outside, the party is perceived as Bosniak rather than truly multiethnic, and polls have repeatedly shown that its leader, Zlatko Lagumdžija, is unpopular with the voters due to his perceived arrogance.

SDP’s only stint in power was from 2000 until 2002 when it existed in an uneasy ten-party coalition Alliance for Change:

> Theirs…was a marriage of convenience between parties of disparate size, ideological hue, history and national composition. It was also a shotgun wedding, presided over by the importunate British and American ambassadors…Unsurprisingly…the Alliance’s ability to hang together was to depend more on its parties’ relish of office than on their shared determination to push through coherent reforms.  

This Alliance broke up by the time of the next elections in 2002, and SDP has been a party in opposition ever since. SDP’s cooperation with other parties is rather weak and party assistance organizations have over time given up on trying to approximate the party to some of its ideological counterparts.

The position of youth in the party is increasingly stronger, according to some of the interviewees. On the other hand, according to NDI, the party leadership is unwilling to allow young, prospective politicians from its ranks to climb party ladder and is keeping them in the background by pushing down their names on candidate lists during elections. Participant observation has in fact revealed that though some younger party members are climbing the ranks of party hierarchy, this is the case only for those close to the inner circle of Zlatko Lagumdžija and known for never criticizing his leadership. Lacking official figures, it is difficult to determine whether party membership has grown during the period under which SDP received foreign assistance. In terms of electoral results, throughout much of the period under analysis, SDP has received approximately ten percent of votes in general elections, so assistance did not seem to have had an impact in this area.

As the successor party to the League of Communists of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the SDP inherited all the former party’s infrastructure as well as assets. This has been particularly handy, as a significant portion of SDP’s budget is generated through centrally located real estate throughout BiH that they lease for profit. Concerning party’s internal organization and regulations, NDI tried to institute statutory changes that would ensure

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72 Author interview with SDP staff / members in Sarajevo, BiH: June 04, June 11, 2008.
73 Author interview with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 11, 2007.
more transparent party leadership selection. However, they managed to get these instituted only on paper: these are yet to play a role in the practical functioning of the party. Leadership has repeatedly been described as the key problem in the SDP: even though polling results stated Lagumdžija was perceived as too hands-on, giving off the damaging one-man-party impression in the public, those party members who were presented with these results were too afraid to convey the message to him. The party leader’s resistance to change has been identified as the crucial reason behind SDP’s stagnation in the polls, as well as in stalled internal development. It is public knowledge that no one dares to run for party’s presidency in internal SDP elections, because Lagumdžija’s challengers are known to get kicked out of the party for doing so. IRI representative called SDP a stubborn party that hasn’t changed throughout the years and one that owes much of their good infrastructure base and well developed branches to their old communist party structures. This admission that much of SDP’s strong points can be credited to their old communist structure also points to foreign assistance as having had a very limited influence on this party.

5.2.3.2 The Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD)

The SNSD has been viewed throughout most of its existence as a moderate, pro-European party. Since the 2006 general elections, though, their moderateness has been brought under question due to their leader’s use of nationalist rhetoric. The SDP has, on basis of this, initiated Steering Committee discussions in the Socialist International in 2006, proposing a move that SNSD be expelled on account of its discriminatory and nationalism-inciting campaigning. Though Socialist International did not expel SNSD, but retained the party as a full member, most party assistance organizations that have assisted SNSD have since put a moratorium on the cooperation. The SNSD does not seem to have been affected by the message sent by its former international partners: if anything, the nationalist rhetoric in Milorad Dodik’s speeches and public appearances has been upped.

Party members believe the biggest strengths lie in the leader of the party, good internal infrastructure and the continuous education of its members. Not all respondents

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75 Author interview with IRI staff member in Washington D.C., US: August 07, 2007.
76 Local newspapers (mostly from Federation BiH) as well as international community have repeatedly analyzed his verbal outbursts as war-mongering, cruelly reminding the traumatized population of BiH of the kind of rhetoric that eventually led to the war in 1992. On repeated occasions he used profanities on television and during interviews.
77 Socialist International (SI) is the worldwide organization of social democratic, socialist and labour parties. For more information: www.socialistinternational.org
78 Author interview with AMS staff member in Amsterdam, the Netherlands: May 14, 2007.
79 At the time of writing (spring 2010), the following organizations have paused their cooperation with the SNSD: the Olof Palme Center (Sweden), the Westminster Foundation for Democracy / UK Labour Party, NDI/IRI (US). The organizations still assisting them are FES and the Alfred Mozer Stichting from the Netherlands (affiliated with the Dutch Labor Party), but this is also likely to stop prior to the 2010 general elections.
80 Survey questionnaire results, 12 SNSD respondents.
were equally eager to comment on the weaknesses of the party (5/12 declined to comment), but those who did named ‘hypocrisy,’ ‘infighting for functions,’ ‘we are too big’ and ‘interest groups within the party’ as some of the problems that SNSD deals with. In terms of relationship with other parties, the SNSD has shown self-restraint and ability to cooperate with other parliamentary parties – when it suits the interest of the RS entity. In general, this party has grown during the 1996 – 2008 period by, among other things, absorbing other parties. For example, in 2000 the Social Liberals of RS joined the SNSD, and two years later the Democratic Socialist Party of RS did the same. The position of both women’s organization and the Young Social Democrats association has been strengthened over time within the party. Much of the training and political education initiatives focus on these two groups.

SNSD membership has mushroomed in the past few years. The figure mentioned by both NDI and SNSD officials points to an astounding 130,000 members, which effectively means that every tenth inhabitant of the RS entity is a party member. The electoral success of the 2006 general elections during which they squeezed out their previously biggest opponent SDS from power has resulted in internal problems in the party, as they had by that time become a mass movement. NDI staff member explained that they expected to see “a sort of an implosion,” the party to suffer from its qualified staff members leaving the headquarters to occupy entity- and state-level parliamentary representative functions. However, such implosion has not taken place. The electoral success was significant: from 5.1% of the vote the party gained in the 2000 elections, they received 19.1% of the vote in the 2006 elections. During this time, SNSD was the biggest recipient of party aid in BiH, next to SDP. This suggests that party assistance has had a significant impact on SNSD’s electoral success.

Under the time of assistance, SNSD has not only grown exponentially in membership, but also in local branches organized in the RS entity as well as in the Federation of BiH. Capitalizing on the international administration’s support for decentralization and strengthening of municipal governance, SNSD made a parallel move to build up its local support bases throughout the country. The trainings as well as materials that NDI offered in the process further facilitated this process. Also following the advice provided by NDI, SNSD founded the Nenad Baštinac Foundation, an independent but closely affiliated institution with the goal of promoting ideals of social democracy and providing political education within the party. The Law on the Financing of Political Parties made it difficult to channel the funds for education and seminars that the party received from its foreign partners. By creating this foundation, SNSD was able to avoid the fines that the Central Electoral Commission imposed on SDP and other parties, for accepting donations in excess of the legally allowed amount, i.e. larger than eight average BiH salaries. In 2007, SNSD founded its own Center for

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81 Survey questionnaire results, 7 SNSD respondents.
82 Informal discussion with SNSD staff member during an AMS training in Drvar, BiH: June 06, 2009.
83 Author interview with NDI staff member in Banja Luka, BiH: June 18, 2008.
84 Author interview with Nenad Baštinac Foundation staff member in Banja Luka, BiH: July 09, 2008.
Training and Education [Centar za Trening i Obuku], with its own expert training staff who have extensively followed NDI and other party assistance organizations’ trainings in the past. By creating this in-house training facility, SNSD has effectively become the only party in Bosnia-Herzegovina that has become self-sufficient in the domain of continuing political education of its members and staff. Therefore, the fact that foreign assistance organizations withdrew their assistance in 2006 has not affected the party substantially.

Finally, unlike in the case of SDP whose members were reluctant to talk about the party leader, in SNSD this was their favorite interview subject, and one that they brought up recurrently without being prompted by a question. One SNSD’s member of parliament stated that the bulk of SNSD’s strength was in their leader and his personality; his courage and charisma which he has transferred onto the party and its members. This person also explained,

It is this love we feel for him that keeps the party strong. It is not good to have a party whose strength relies so heavily on the leader, and we are well aware of it. But at the same time, we know there is no other person who could gather all of us and create order... He was born with a talent for politics. It’s not something you can learn. 

Similarly, the party members do not view him as nationalistic, but rather as a valiant champion of Serb interests in Bosnia-Herzegovina and a defender of the Republika Srpska entity. His political acumen ensured his party a great deal of international support during SDS’s time in power in the RS. Once he got to power, ensuring SNSD the prevalent position in the RS entity, the mass growth of his party became reminiscent of the once-omnipresent Communist Party. Finally, not only did he then turn his back to his former international allies and supporters, but he began open rhetorical revolt against them, lobbying for OHR’s closure and the withdrawal of the international community from the country.

5.2.3.3 Conclusion

After this deeper insight into two biggest recipients of party aid in Bosnia-Herzegovina, it is time to account for the divergent outcomes in the two parties. Why was SDP stuck at the same popular support level, while the voters’ support for SNSD skyrocketed in the past twelve years? The fact that SDP is perceived as a Bosniak but is a self-proclaimed multiethnic party mostly vying for votes in the Federation, and the fact that SNSD is an increasingly nationalist but self-proclaimed moderate party competing for votes mostly in the RS entity surely played a role in this, as the two parties were not competing in equal

85 Author interview with SNSD representative in Sarajevo, BiH: June 11, 2008.
playing fields. In other words, SDP has more opponents and is competing in the more diverse and thus more complex multiethnic political arena that is the Federation BiH entity. However, in terms of party assistance and the role it played in these two parties’ internal development and electoral success, the key difference lies in the party leader’s openness to advice and reforms that NDI and IRI put forward. One NS party members illustrated the difference between SDP and SNSD’s leaders by the following comment: “Dodik scares me the most of all politicians in BiH because he knows very well what he doesn’t know, and he surrounds himself with consultants who do the job for him.”

Lagumđija on the other hand, is known to surround himself with yes-men. In conclusion, while SDP remained resistant to party assistance and the democratizing changes it advocated within their party, SNSD welcomed and applied most of the methods that party assistance organizations advised and trained them in. These ranged from membership strategy and registration, to voter outreach, setting up their internal think tank (the Nenad Baštinac Foundation), in-house training centre, and building up the local party branches in the municipalities. Under Milorad Dodik’s leadership, SNSD used the party assistance to get to power. Once that goal was accomplished and party aid outlived its purpose, Milorad Dodik became free to use nationalist rhetoric with impunity.

5.2.4 The Impact of Assistance on Party- and Political System

This impact is the most difficult one to distinguish, since next to foreign assistance, there is a myriad of other variables influencing party system development and general political system characteristics in a country. The impact of assistance on the party system of BiH will be distinguished by looking at cooperation and interaction between different parties, the changes in their ideological profiles, parties’ stance towards the regime and the number of parties in the system. Determining the role that party assistance played in the overall democratization of Bosnia-Herzegovina rounds up the evaluation section. The comparison between the political system in the country in 1996 to the one in 2008/2009 yields the general conclusion on the overall impact of party assistance on politics in BiH and the role it played in democratization of this country.

In terms of interaction between the parties, not much has changed in the 1996 – 2008 period. While in other countries party assistance organizations worked on creating democratic coalitions to counter totalitarian regimes – an example of this would be the foreign assistance to the Democratic Opposition of Serbia, an alliance of many political parties brought together to oust Slobodan Milošević from power – in BiH, there were

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86 Informal conversation with member of Naša Stranka [Our Party], newly founded multiethnic party, in Sarajevo, BiH: June 16, 2009.
87 The extent to which parties penetrate the society, another variable put forward by Alan Ware, was discussed earlier in this chapter as well as in the fourth chapter that analyzed extensively the depth of politicization of the BiH society. For the sake avoiding repetition, this variable will not be analyzed here.
88 Marlene Spoerri, “Crossing the line: partisan party assistance in post-Milosevic Serbia,” Democratization, 17:6 (December 2010), 1108-1131.
no similar attempts at fostering coalitions. The one success that did receive some assistance from party assistance organizations, but which was largely the project of international administration institutions in BiH, the SDP-led Alliance for Change, lasted in power only two years, from 2000 until 2002. The extensive assistance that both Social Democrat parties received over these twelve years did little to enhance the coalition potential between SDP and SNSD: those interviewed from NDI and FES admitted that they attempted to broach the subject of coalition formation on several occasions, but that both parties’ leadership shot down this proposal without hesitation. Inter-party interaction however did receive substantial attention from German foundations, and especially from the KAS. They organized thematic seminars and lectures, as well as informal networking meetings between all of their partner parties, namely the HDZ, SDA and PDP. KAS put emphasis on these multilateral meetings and thematic seminars for all the parties’ members with explicit purpose of bringing closer the centre-right BiH people’s parties. 

Looking at the ideological profile of BiH parties that were recipients of foreign assistance, one can see some changes between parties’ ideological profilization in 1996 and the one in 2008. Owing mostly to the work of Stiftungen, their partner parties in BiH either already are members or are on their way to becoming member parties in their respective European party families. Parties have done the work of amending their statutes to be in line with the principles of the respective European party whose membership they were aiming for, attended European party congresses and meetings, and established bilateral relations with their sister parties in various European Union member countries, most notably in Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and the UK, i.e. the countries active in offering party assistance within the democracy promotion framework. Furthermore, German party foundations were highly active in offering theme-based seminars, lectures, conferences and publications by local authors on various issues affecting the BiH society, such as social trust and reconciliation, women in politics, civic activism, multiethnic societies, freedom of media, gray economy, and so forth. Where appropriate, foreign parliamentarians, associated with parties linked to KAS, FES, or FNS foundations, would attend those seminars offering information on how these issues are tackled in their respective country or region. BiH political party members interviewed for the purpose of this research expressed highly positive evaluations on this type of meetings and seminars, which they found to be informative and stimulating. To conclude, though BiH parties are far from exhibiting clear ideologically aligned policy behavior, analysis of their statutes suggests that at a minimum they reformed on paper as result of European party assistance efforts.

It is harder to establish changes in parties’ stance toward the regime in terms of the impact of assistance. The bottom line problem here is that there is no agreement on what Bosnia-Herzegovina is, or should be like. Serbian parties advocate strong entity powers that would allow the RS to function as a de-facto state with SNSD even threatening a referendum on independence. Croatian parties have over time become more vocal on the

89 Author interview with KAS staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: May 20, 2009.
subject of creating a third entity that would have a dominant Croat population. Bosniak parties are internally divided with some supporting the Dayton-set status quo and others advocating centralization or regionalization, both of which would terminate the Dayton-set system. In this sense, little has changed since 1996 – different parties from the three ethnic groups, coupled with the multiethnic parties, all espouse diverging views on the country’s setup. While German Stiftungen attempted to organize several seminars and meetings on the highly controversial subject of constitutional reforms which were attended by most of the major parties, they did not generate any resolutions to the deadlock. The American party institutes, as part of their policy, did their best to stay outside of the content of politics, considering this was up to each party’s discretion.

The final assistance impact in the party-system domain to be assessed is the number of parties. Over the 1996 – 2008 period, many smaller parties either joined some of the bigger ones, or disappeared altogether. With party assistance organizations focusing only on the more relevant parties (with the exception of the FNS and Dutch liberal parties’ assistance to LDS, which was a minor party without state or entity-level representation throughout most of the period under analysis), they may have contributed to this process of contraction of the party system. At the same time, little has changed in the party-system trends from the early years of assistance: the party system of the Croat ethnic group continued its fragmentation, with the latest breakaway faction HDZ1990 taking place in 2006. Though its chief foreign partner, KAS, expressed its objection to this turn of events by continuing to offer support to both HDZ and HDZ1990, this did little to mend the bridges between the two parties. Finally, party assistance played a role in strengthening SNSD party to the point of it ousting SDS from power and gaining an absolute majority in the RS entity. As in the RS the opposition to SNSD is weak, one could conclude that party assistance contributed to the creation of dominant-party system in the Serbian ethnic group in BiH.

Looking at NDI mission goals, in BiH these objectives have not drastically changed over the years. Always revolving around moderation of the political landscape, leveling the political playing field and empowering moderate and multi-ethnic parties, all with the purpose of aiding democratization, these unchanged goals demonstrate that the political system of BiH did not change much in the 1996 – 2008/2009 period. As literature review in the second chapter demonstrated, it is difficult, if not impossible, to democratize a non-state, i.e. country whose process of state-formation has been interrupted or stalled, as was the case in Bosnia-Herzegovina due to the effect incurred by the Dayton Peace Agreement. The events in the political system since the DPA can be divided into three phases. The 1996 – 2000 beginning phase can be described as the post-conflict reconstruction phase, during which the international community focused on creating basic security and rebuilding the necessary infrastructure elements, including those in governance institutions. The following phase, roughly from 2000 – 2006 is best described by the word ‘stagnation.’ Although the High Representative Paddy Ashdown

90 Author interview with KAS staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 28, 2007.
spearheaded some reforms through the use of Bonn powers, the statebuilding process did not move forward as it became apparent that neither of the formerly warring parties were willing to engage in consociational power sharing that was mandated by the Dayton-set constitution. This stalemate was broken during the 2006 constitutional reform talks, and their subsequent failure marked the beginning of the third phase, one lasting from the second half of 2006 until present day. This final phase could be described as ‘deterioration’ since it is marked by renewed nationalist rhetoric, talk of referenda, and even war.

Throughout all of these phases, party assistance failed to unravel, or even make a dent in the Dayton-set political system. Designed to favor ethnic nationalist parties over civic, multiethnic ones, this system was counterproductive to international community’s goal of fostering democracy in Bosnia-Herzegovina. When asked, “Do you notice whether the work of your organization has made a difference in BiH politics?”, representative of the FNS explained that though at times it seems as though nothing they do can possibly change the nationalistic, destructive politics in BiH – he has to remind himself that the process of change takes time. It needs to be acknowledged that party assistance made a difference in the life and makeup of BiH political parties in the past thirteen years. Parties were professionalized in campaigning methods, educated in polling and research as well as voter outreach, and connections were established with their ideological counterparts in the EU. At the same time, the party that assistance organizations championed and assisted the most ended up becoming a part of the problem, rather than a solution to the BiH political crisis. The law of unintended consequences states that, “Any intervention in a complex system may or may not have the intended result, but will inevitably create unanticipated and often undesirable outcomes.” How party assistance unintentionally aided the birth of a nationalist party of the same type that assisters themselves sought to eradicate, is the subject of the seventh chapter, which discusses some general observations on party assistance in both BiH and Kosovo and hypothesizes how things could have been done differently. In order to have material for comparison, the following chapter analyzes the provision and effects of party assistance in Kosovo (1999 – 2008).

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91 The time of writing is winter 2009 – 2010.
92 Author interview with FNS staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 21, 2007.
93 This well known concept is most often associated with the work of the sociologist Robert K. Merton.
The proclamation of independence on February 17, 2008 in time proved to be more of a symbolic step than a true solution to some of Kosovo’s biggest problems. At the time of writing, eighty-nine UN member states had formally recognized Kosovo.\(^1\) The proclamation of independence was followed by consistent affirmations by both domestic political leaders and international supporters about Kosovo’s ‘European future.’ Yet, of the twenty-seven EU member states, only twenty-two provided the official recognition. Slovakia, Romania, Spain, Greece and Cyprus not only refused to recognize Kosovo, but have also offered supporting statements on behalf of Serbia at the International Court of Justice proceedings on determining the legality of Kosovo’s declaration of independence.\(^2\) The mandate deadlock that followed the proclamation of independence paralyzed the work of international administration institutions for more than a year. UNMIK was initially supposed to hand over power to the newly deployed ICO, EUSR and EULEX organizations, but owing to the lack of cooperation from Serb minority in Northern Kosovo, UNMIK stayed on. Finally, the proclamation of independence did little to exonerate Kosovo’s problematic image. In November of 2008, a high-profile political scandal erupted as Kosovo police apprehended three German citizens accused of planting an incendiary device in the European Union offices. It was later revealed that they were in fact officers with the German Federal Intelligence Service (BND) who were investigating links between organized crime and local politicians. One report by the BND concluded that, “The key players (including Haliti, Haradinaj, and Thaci) are intimately involved in inter-linkages between politics, business, and organized crime structures in Kosovo.”\(^3\) The same report also concluded that at the end of the 1990s, the current Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi was, “leading a criminal network operating throughout Kosovo.”\(^4\) In response to the scandal, a high-ranking BND official sharply spoke out against

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\(^1\) Up to date tracking of recognitions can be found at: “Who Recognized Kosova as an Independent State? The Kosovar people thank you!” website, www.kosovothanksyou.com (accessed: March 29, 2012).

\(^2\) “Accordance with International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government of Kosovo (Request for Advisory Opinion)”, ICJ website, submitted on October 10, 2008. The proceedings were closed in December of 2009, and the ICJ advisory opinion ruling declared Kosovo’s Declaration of Independence was not illegal in accordance with the international law. More information at: www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&p2=4&k=21&case=141&code=kos&p3=0 (accessed March 10, 2010).

\(^3\) “BND Kosovo affair: German spy affair might have been revenge,” Welt Online, translated by Jacob Comenetz: November 30, 2008.

\(^4\) Ibid.
Kosovo: “The German government had allowed itself to be dragged by the nose...by a country in which organized crime is the form of government.”

Kosovo’s international administration embodied by SRSG never dismissed any local officials, even those alleged for involvement in corruption and fraudulent activities. Learning from the way the enforcement of this mandate backfired on the OHR in Bosnia-Herzegovina, UNMIK “hoped that the electorate, opposition, civil society and the media would hold Kosovo politicians to account.” While in BiH, the OHR tried to remove nationalists from power, in Kosovo the international administration actively cooperated with all of the Kosovo Albanian political parties, including those whose leaders were allegedly heavily involved with organized crime. This cooperation went even further when in 2005, Prime Minister at the time Ramush Haradinaj got indicted by the ICTY for war crimes. He resigned from his post and went voluntarily to The Hague to stand trial, while the SRSG at the time Soren Jessen-Petersen lamented his departure, advocating for his release on bail while offering guarantees for ‘his good friend.’ UNMIK’s public support of an indicted war criminal left the Tribunal’s prosecution team shocked as they, “felt it gave Haradinaj international legitimacy and fostered a chilling effect that discouraged prosecution witnesses from testifying against him.” Haradinaj was subsequently exonerated by the ICTY and released back to Kosovo in 2008. The international administration support for Kosovo’s political elite extended to preventing investigation on them, and looking the other way when allegations of wrongdoing surfaced. This only reinforced the sense of their untouchability.

As in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the activities of international administration received a lot of media coverage, while the work of international party assistance organizations stayed away from the spotlight. This chapter tells the story of party assistance provided in Kosovo from the beginnings of international administration in 1999 until the proclamation of independence in February 2008. The account presented here is based on extensive interviews in the field with party assistance providers and recipients, both domestically (Prishtina, Mitrovica) and internationally (Washington D.C., Berlin, London). It also involves analysis of primary documents i.e. working plans of NDI, and reports.

The persisting image of elites’ involvement with organized crime suggests a pessimistic verdict on the work of democracy-promoting organizations and their impact on the domestic political scene. However, weeding out corruption from politics was never a goal of party aid organizations in Kosovo. Owing to Kosovo’s rather unique post-conflict situation, party assistance organizations found themselves working in a country with no real history of party organization and politics. Their task, therefore, was to build

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5 Ibid.
a multiparty system – essentially starting from scratch. In an informal discussion, one NDI staff member even referred to Kosovo as “party aid heaven” because they were starting with a blank slate. The story of how international democracy-promoting organizations assisted political parties in Kosovo in their development is structured as follows: the first section details the provision of party assistance – its main principles, goals, strategies and implementation in the field in the 1999-2008 period. The evaluation section is divided into four parts: the first looks at party aid organizations’ goals and objectives, and their self-assessment. The second part focuses on the recipients and their appraisal of the assistance channeled to them. Following this is an in-depth look at the most prominent party assistance recipients in Kosovo, parties LDK and PDK. The last section determines the extent of the role that party aid played in the general political (party) system democratization in the country.

6.1 Provision of Party Assistance

This section will outline the specific goals that guided the work of party aid organizations as well as describe some of the strategies used in achieving them. The first part outlines the beginnings of party assistance in Kosovo (1999 – 2004) and the second focuses on its consolidation (2004 – 2008). Before delving into the description of party assistance in the field, it is first necessary to introduce the main party assistance organizations and their local partner parties.

In the decade under analysis, party assistance organizations have provided numerous trainings on party organization, voter outreach, electoral campaigning, intra-party democracy, media relations and policymaking. While in BiH, the American party institutes were banned from assisting parties perceived as nationalist, in Kosovo there were no restrictions on party aid provision. Assistance was thus initially provided to all the parties that registered with the OSCE. Unlike in other countries, in Kosovo there were also no criteria for party viability/size in order to make it eligible for assistance. Table 8 illustrates the pairings between different party aid organizations and their most relevant domestic partners in Kosovo:

Table 8: Overview of Party Aid in Kosovo

10 Relevance here refers to the party’s subsequent performance in various municipal and general elections in Kosovo.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Aid Organization</th>
<th>Political party partner / Assistance recipient</th>
<th>Active since:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NDI</td>
<td>At some point worked with all parties LDK, PDK, AAK, LDD, ORA, AKR Minority parties (Serbian, other) Multipartisan approach</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAS</td>
<td>LDK, LDD Bipartisan approach mostly</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES</td>
<td>PDK, ORA Bipartisan approach mostly</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNS</td>
<td>AAK, PLK (some small parties, not represented in the Assembly) Bipartisan and multipartisan approach</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In time, party aid organizations began focusing its assistance on the larger, established and viable political parties, rather than on the smaller parties with no seats in the Assembly. Unlike in BiH where party assistance organizations did not cooperate with OSCE in their work, in Kosovo OSCE was the integral part of many party assistance activities. As the international organization mandated with democratization, OSCE set up an infrastructure that “captured and accounted for the political parties.”¹¹ Through its political party registration program and through providing party-centers throughout Kosovo (with office space for all parties), OSCE created the multi-party environment in which NDI – as the main party assistance organization active in the country – initially functioned.¹²

It is difficult to discern the exact sums that funded party assistance in Kosovo in the 1999 – 2008 period.¹³ The Table 9 illustrates the overall funding for Kosovo distributed under the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Act Funding from 1999 until 2008. Note that the increase in funding for the year in which independence was proclaimed (2008) is significant – almost a 100% increase from the previous year.

<p>| Table 9: Funding for Kosovo distributed under SEED Act, 1999 – 2008 ($000s)¹⁴ |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>year</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>year</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>82,618</td>
<td>168,000</td>
<td>149,670</td>
<td>118,000</td>
<td>85,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>79,046</td>
<td>79,601</td>
<td>77,700</td>
<td>77,700</td>
<td>151,246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹¹ Author interview with NDI official, over Skype: April 27, 2008.
¹² Ibid.
¹³ The following information will only refer to US party assistance activities, as the funding for German Stiftungen was not made available to public, nor revealed during the interviews on account of its confidentiality.
Democratic reform programs, the subset to which party assistance belongs, on average constituted 20 – 30% of all the funding, while the remainder of assistance was geared towards supporting economic growth, peace and security initiatives and humanitarian assistance. Most of the funding-breakdown elements of the reports were deemed confidential and are thus not revealed to the public in the Annual Reports. However, access was gained for financial breakdown of expenditures per sector for the years 2006 and 2008,\(^\text{15}\) as presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governing Justly &amp; Democratically (overall funding program)</th>
<th>2006 Actual</th>
<th>2008 Request</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consensus-Building Processes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elections and Political Processes</td>
<td>1,046</td>
<td>2,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Parties</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Support (Political Competition)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Competition and Consensus-Building</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsection total:</td>
<td>1,882</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this, it can be deduced that from the overall funding for democracy-promotion activities under the SEED Act, political party assistance comprised on average 2 – 3 % of the overall aid.

This means that in the period under evaluation, from 1999 until 2008, American party assistance activities in Kosovo could be estimated to have cost around $27,000,000.\(^\text{16}\)

### 6.1.1 The Beginnings (1999 – 2004)

NDI began its work in Kosovo in late 1999, and initially they worked both with political parties and civil society. During the first year, their work was a mix of basic civic forums, citizens talking to other citizens in an effort to solve problems coupled with work with political parties ahead of the 2000 local elections. NDI staff member explained it was very basic work, “basic campaigning, get out the vote, knocking on doors, getting local branches set up, lots of big trainings and multi-party interventions...huge trainings for hundreds of people.”\(^\text{17}\) Perhaps having learned from the BiH case, the international administration of Kosovo postponed the first general elections until November of 2001. This gave the NDI some time to organize many of these mass trainings, where they taught the basics of political party functioning and democratic political systems. The political system and political parties were being established with the help of the

\(^{15}\) Addendum to the Annual SEED Reports, received at the Office of the Assistance Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia, US State Department, in Washington D.C. in March 2008.

\(^{16}\) It needs to be stressed that without access to detailed funding breakdowns for other years involved, this sum can only be treated as a very rough estimate.

\(^{17}\) Author interview with NDI staff member in Washington D.C., USA: April 10, 2007.
international community following the end of the conflict: the OSCE was there to register them, and NDI was there to teach them what parties were supposed to do. As another NDI staff member recalls, parties in 2000 “were essentially groups of individuals that established a party but did not know what to do with it. Often, only the founders...knew the vision of these parties, the lower levels were totally clueless.”

Faced with these challenges, NDI focused on helping parties to develop their internal communication processes, to make the decision making process more transparent, to increase the platform base and strengthen it, to improve organizational management and to initiate policymaking based on needs and not on leadership ideas divorced from social reality.

The problem for party assisters in Kosovo was not that parties were resigned or closed to advice and assistance. On the contrary, Americans in particular were welcomed with open arms because throughout Kosovo, they were seen as protectors or liberators from Serbian oppression. The problem with politics from the beginning stemmed from political elites’ preoccupation with the issue of Kosovo’s status, which dominated the first general elections that took place on November 17, 2001. As Mason and King recall,

The election campaign itself had a dissonant, unreal quality as every party campaigned on promises which the election would never allow them to fulfill. Although the winner might be able to change education, revolutionize healthcare, or dramatically improve Kosovo’s third-world transport system, none of these issues was discussed during the campaign. The three main Kosovo-Albanian parties, each dominated by the personality of its leader, invested little energy in developing a distinctive political agenda. Instead, they all struck nuanced positions on how they would pursue the priority that had dominated Kosovo Albanian politics for over a decade: independence.

Owing largely to KLA’s violent seizure of power following the end of NATO’s intervention that alienated their supporters and potential voters, the party that emerged as winner of the first elections was LDK with 45.7% of the vote.

Little can be told about details of NDI’s working plans and their assessment of the local context in the initial 1999 – 2001 period, because these documents were reported missing. The focus in 2002 was on the municipal elections, and NDI’s work included developing party campaign strategy, internal party democratization, coordination between party headquarters and branch offices and constituent/membership outreach.

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18 Author interview with NDI staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: January 31, 2007.
19 Ibid.
21 Author’s FOIA request was granted for years 2002 onwards, but NDI’s initial working plans for years 1999, 2000 and 2001 were reported as ‘missing.’
the objectives of the Political Party program were to “work with relevant stakeholders in Kosovo to create a more representative and competitive multiparty political system in which party decision making and planning demonstrate increasingly organized and transparent structures and are increasingly inclusive of...women and youth.” Finally, parties were also expected to “improve their political communication with and representation of the electorate at both provincial and municipal levels, demonstrating outreach to civic groups.”

In 2002, NDI attempted to replicate the “Train the Trainers” (ToT) program that resulted in a pool of local trainers in its other country programs (Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina). A highly intensive training, it involved only ten participants from major political parties in Kosovo, and they received expert consultancy on party basics, leadership development, membership responsibilities, party structure, statute and program development, and convention organization tactics. The objective was for these individuals to become in-house trainers of their respective political parties and NDI funded their education knowing that parties had no funds to cover it themselves. However, this particular program proved unsuccessful in Kosovo’s case, as the most qualified trainers did get selected, and underwent the training, but soon thereafter they got posts in the government, and began working in ministries, which left them no time for the training. Also, some were employed by the international administration, which meant they had to distance themselves from local political processes. This brain drain within NDI’s ToT program was indicative of a general trend in post-conflict Kosovo, where the high demand for educated, English speaking and qualified staff often depleted the human resources from local organizations that could not offer salaries commensurate to those in international organizations. It also posed problems for long-term sustainability of certain programs implemented in the field, as well as for the highly desired yet elusive goal of achieving “local ownership” of the reform processes taking place in Kosovo.

Unlike in BiH, NDI from the beginning of its involvement in Kosovo struck a very cooperative relationship with the institutions of the international administration. They were an important component of the Assembly Support Initiative (ASI), a joint international endeavor supervised by the OSCE whose goal was to strengthen the parliamentary capacity of the Kosovo Assembly. NDI thus worked alongside other international partners in advancing “the capacity of individual MPs, committee chairpersons, parliamentary leaders, and political groups...to understand their roles as lawmakers and elected representatives in a democratic parliamentary body.” This kind of international cooperation was rather novel, because turf wars and tensions are a well known factor in the international development community. Organizational pride plays a big role in these contexts, and different institutions want to be seen as leading the way.

23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 Author interview with NDI staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: January 31, 2007.
27 Ibid.
However, party assistance organizations in that initial period recognized that their influence was in fact greater when OSCE was at the front, with one NDI staff member adding: “But make no mistake – we were helping shape that agenda 100%.”

Since OSCE was in charge of electoral processes from the beginning, it was natural that they would become “the traffic cop to all the different organizations wanting to get their hands on the parliament, like Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the German Stiftungen, NDI, etc.” Another reason NDI was open to cooperation was their recognition of benefits of coordination at a time when Kosovo was full of international organizations seeking local partners with whom they could implement their projects. As one NDI staff member recalled,

…the job was so big that you needed to just divide up the work. Because the redundancy struck me as crazy at times. There would be three trainings about gender sensitivity taking place in one week! And you know you have to think about the sanity of the people you are working with. You don’t want to bombard them with the training sessions.

Finally, unlike in BiH where different international organizations existed side by side often replicating different projects, in Kosovo NDI recognized that cooperation with other organizations was essential because having tensions between different internationals was counterproductive, and these tensions needed to be defused in any way possible, because otherwise, “it could be very confusing for the local partners.”

The beginnings of party assistance in Kosovo (1999 – 2004) were characterized by high hopes and optimism on both the assisters and recipients’ side. NDI staff members working in Kosovo were positively surprised by the popularity they automatically had on account of being an American organization. NDI’s institutional background in some other countries (neighboring Serbia, for example) was more of a liability than asset in their party assistance work. Another positive element of working in an area where political parties were just being born was the general atmosphere of high motivation and energy. As one NDI representative recalled, “Kosovo society was very forward looking and people were really motivated for change…they felt unhindered in their pursuits, probably for the first time in many years. There was an energy and passion for realizing their ambitions.”

This atmosphere stood out for experienced party assistance veterans who worked in other areas where apathy and resignation were dominant obstacles to democratization. As another NDI staff member explained,

Kosovo is not just an internationally administered zone, it is also a first-time for its Parliament, municipal assemblies, new

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29 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 02, 2008.
30 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 02, 2008.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: April 27, 2008.
34 Ibid.
political parties – all these things are happening for the first time, and people are very eager to learn, and they are not ashamed to ask for help.\textsuperscript{35}

However, as years went by, a different type of mood descended upon Kosovo – one of general stagnation and the sense that Kosovo went off the global political radar and that there was no political will left to address the issue of its unsettled status. Five years into the international administration, Kosovo was still an international protectorate rather than a sovereign country that the guerilla army KLA set out to create through fighting the Serbian regime few years earlier. As Kosovo’s people and political elites once again started losing their faith in the prospect of the future, the honeymoon period of energetic work alongside international organizations abruptly came to an end on March 17, 2004.\textsuperscript{36}

\section*{6.1.2 Consolidation of Party Aid (2004 – 2008)}

The March 2004 riots shook the international community to its core, especially the allegations that they were orchestrated and managed by the Kosovar Albanian leaders that cooperated so closely with the international administration and party assistance organizations.\textsuperscript{37} The international community shock in the aftermath of the riots led to soul-searching and (re)examination of the international role in Kosovo. As the International Crisis Group (ICG) report explained,

\begin{quote}
PISG and UNMIK are in states of denial, dangerously detached from reality. The violence revealed Kosovo Albanian society as dangerously unstable. Within hours, virtually all the domestic institutions built up over five years with international tutelage and money to act as bulwarks of "democratization" gave way and joined the baying pack.\textsuperscript{38}
\end{quote}

The international community thus became painfully aware of the fragility of their statebuilding efforts, recognizing that postponing the decision on Kosovo’s final status was no longer possible and that the riots put in motion steps towards the territory’s eventual independence. NDI also felt the need to analyze its work in the wake of the riots, so the organization’s working plan for January – December 2004 contains an addendum on post-March 2004 events. Their general political party program was amended, and it now contained several elements recognizing the altered political, legislative and civic

\begin{flushright}
35 Author interview with NDI staff member in Pristina, Kosovo: January 31, 2007.
36 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: April 27, 2008.
37 “In retrospect, most of us must have been asleep – this was a very well coordinated effort on the ground, not a spontaneous outburst as they made it appear to the media. Why? It was a premeditated action of the Albanians to blackmail the West to get the status resolution going, and they did it successfully.” Author interview with former high-level OSCE Kosovo official in The Hague, the Netherlands: March 21, 2008.
\end{flushright}
environment. The primary goals of this amended program became to “build trust” and “encourage better public relations” and the prominent element in this new strategy was “looking for stars”:

Promote through direct consultation, training and program support those who stand in opposition to those political and civic actors for whom ‘power’ has been a primary reason for cooperation in the past. Identify players who may not have that power now, but who can, through cooperative and constructive action, become a positive and productive force in opposition to the current political climate.39

The same addendum also contained the creation of a political party module in the Civic Forum education program on ‘What It Means to Be a Member of a Political Party,’ as well as purchasing TV time for those local politicians who “worked for peace during the crisis.”40

Another aspect present in NDI’s March 2004 addendum was the need to re-engage the Serbs in Kosovo. Due to the severe fragmentation present in the Serbian minority’s political arena, NDI from the beginning had difficulties in identifying parties that they could assist. As NDI staff member explained, working with Albanians was easier because they were able to do multilateral trainings as parties liked to exchange opinions once in the same room. With Serbs, it was different and NDI organized exclusively bilateral trainings on their request. At that time, NDI worked with two sets of parties, one set with headquarters in Belgrade (such as the Democratic Party – DS, Social Democratic Party SDP), and the other set of parties registered with OSCE in Kosovo (Serbian People’s Party SNS, Independent Liberal Party SLS, New Democracy ND). The reason for this divided work between the Serbian parties was because NDI did not want to influence the Belgrade-based parties to switch to UNMIK registration as NDI did not want to assume a public pro-Kosovo independence approach.41

Another difficulty in assisting Serb parties was the fact that the great majority of them refused to take part in elections organized in Kosovo by the international community. Official pressure on Serbs in Kosovo came from Belgrade and the Ministry of Interior, which issued various proclamations, warning Serbs in Kosovo that participating in “illegal elections organized by the international community”42 would result in loss of benefits such as pensions or salaries.43 At the same time, one NDI staff member expressed doubts about international efforts to support Serb parties in Kosovo:

40 Ibid.
41 Author interview with NDI staff member in Pristina, Kosovo: November 26, 2007.
42 Phrase used in the letter which bore official Ministry of Interior of Republic of Serbia stamp, issued to Serb individuals who attempted to cast their votes in the Kosovo elections 2007. (Author was presented with this letter during interview with SLS party representative in Mitrovica, Kosovo: November 28, 2007.)
43 In the economically impoverished Kosovo, Serb minority received salaries from Belgrade as well as pensions, which made their acceptance of the new reality of Kosovo’s pending independence all the more difficult.
“We’ve been trying to prop them up for some years now, and we can’t seem to get anywhere. SLS – the party that we have been cooperating with most closely in this last period – does not truly have a local constituency.” The same NDI representative explained that the support for Serbian parties that are open to cooperation with majority Albanian parties stems from international community’s desire to give legitimacy to the idea of multiethnic Kosovo, adding in the end, “But it’s not working.”

Another approach attempted in Kosovo was embedding foreign consultants within the major parties that NDI assisted. These consultants came from various Western countries and were themselves affiliated with political parties, and one of the goals of this particular approach was to help parties in Kosovo clarify their own ideologies and position on the left-right political spectrum. As one of its reports explains, “NDI provided the opportunity for parties to have individual consultants to assist with internal policy and platform development.” AAK thus ended up being assisted by a consultant from Ireland’s Fine Gael party; PDK requested a Labour-affiliated consultant because the party was negotiating for membership in the Socialist International; LDK had a Progressive Conservative consultant from Canada.

In 2005, not even a year after the riots, Kosovo witnessed another crisis-in-the-making. The elections in autumn of 2004 resulted in the somewhat surprising coalition between LDK and AAK, with Ramush Haradinaj as Prime Minister. Haradinaj soon established himself as a very active force, working on creating “a positive climate for returns with strong public statements.” Furthermore, the international community believed his government had accomplished “more in one hundred days than had been achieved in the previous three years.” When ICTY issued an indictment against Haradinaj, Kosovo’s Prime Minister readily turned himself in and flew to The Hague in March of 2005 to stand trial for war crimes. The fragile situation in Kosovo was shaken by this turn of events, and even the SRSG at the time, Soren Jessen-Petersen, “praised Haradinaj’s courageous and dignified response and said he was losing a valued ‘friend and partner.’” NDI feared Haradinaj’s departure would destabilize the political scene further, but since there were no major repercussions and the Assembly and PISG continued their work, NDI saw this as “reflecting an increased maturity among Kosovo’s citizens and leadership.”

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44 Author interview with NDI representative in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: June 26, 2009.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid, 213.
It was in this period as well that NDI’s civil society support program developed further in the area of compiling information and evaluating the work of elected officials and their parties. Stemming originally from NDI’s civil society program, the Kosovo Democratic Institute (KDI) registered officially as a non-governmental organization in 2005. Their main task was keeping a check on performance of governmental institutions. They developed a system of ‘scorecards’ which monitored and presented the results of parliament representatives’ attendance in meetings and committees, their participation in public debates, and number of legislative and regulatory initiatives. KDI has been able to see the impact of their work, as the number of scorecards with zero score has substantially decreased over the years.

As 2007 drew closer and status negotiations were on the horizon, NDI and German party foundations both made an effort to steer parties towards message and platform development, and away from potentially volatile question of independence from Serbia. NDI stressed that parties faced the challenge of “creating ideological foundations heretofore nonexistent” and that they needed to develop “substantive platforms that distinguish them from one another.”

FES, FNS and KAS cooperated with OSCE on ideological profilization of political parties, as “a lot of them were really confused and presented programs where you could not trace the line of whether they are left wing or right wing.” One of the ways they tried steering parties to clarify their ideological standpoints was through organizing a conference in Prishtina. In this conference, there were representatives from the three sides of Kosovar political parties, i.e. right wing, center and left wing together with party representatives from Brussels and Germany, who presented their ideological views without stating which party they were from. Then, Kosovo parties’ representatives had to identify themselves which foreign party’s ideology they felt their party line was most aligned with. An OSCE staff member working in the Political Party Unit expressed their doubt about the genuineness of this ideological profilization on behalf of the Kosovar parties, voicing the concern that it seemed that parties assessed which ideology they wished to be affiliated with on basis of perceived potential benefits:

At times, it felt like they were choosing European party families on basis of their respective strength in the European Parliament. Naturally, Social Democrats and Conservatives were perceived as the most ‘popular’ or best represented parties, and parties from Kosovo wanted to be affiliated with them. Liberal or Green parties

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51 Ibid: 12.
52 Author interview with KDI staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: January 31, 2007.
53 Ibid.
55 Author interview with FES staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: November 14, 2007.
56 Author interview with KAS staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 15, 2008.
did not find many local partners here in Kosovo.\textsuperscript{57}

Similarly, NDI’s working plan for 2007 also elaborates that parties in Kosovo continued to struggle “to develop substantive platforms that distinguish them from one another, but instead are distinguished by the party leader.”\textsuperscript{58}

In January of 2007, Kosovo’s biggest and oldest political party suffered a split as result of internal power struggle. Its breakaway faction Democratic League of Dardania (LDD) led by Nexhat Daci posed the thus far greatest challenge to LDK’s prominent position in Kosovo’s political scene. The November 2007 elections therefore witnessed a shuffle among the biggest parties in Kosovo, with Thaçi’s PDK emerging as the winning party with 34.3\% of the votes, followed by LDK with 22.6\% of the vote and LDD receiving 10.4\%. Two surprising developments were the newcomer New Kosovo Alliance (AKR) led by diaspora businessman Beghjet Pacolli winning 12.3\% of the votes and becoming overnight the third largest party in Kosovo, as well as the demise of the Reformist Party ORA which failed to pass the electoral threshold (having gained 4.1\% of the votes). The new Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi proclaimed Kosovo’s independence on February 17, 2008, and all the party assistance organizations continued their work in Kosovo, largely focusing on helping parties identify clear platforms, formulate party programs, strengthen the position of youth and women within the parties, and increase internal party democracy.

6.2 Evaluation

This section will analyze the impact of party assistance on political party development and politics in Kosovo in the 1999 – 2008 period. The first part looks at party aid organizations’ self-evaluation in order to discern their own take on the work they did in Kosovo. The most important indicators here are the objectives and goals that party assistance organizations themselves set forth in their working plans. The second part focuses on political parties in Kosovo and their impressions and evaluation of assistance channeled to them. This is a subjective assessment from the recipients themselves. The third part offers micro-level assessment of party aid through deeper analysis of two biggest recipients of party aid, the LDK and PDK parties. Indicators constitute party electoral success, growth, and internal as well as external evaluation of their organization structures, internal democracy, position and role of youth and women, communication channels. The fourth part focuses on the party-system level and general political system of Kosovo. The impact of assistance on party-system will be distinguished through the analysis of cooperation between different parties, the changes in their ideological profiles and parties’ stance towards the regime. Determining the role that party assistance played in the overall democratization of Kosovo rounds up the evaluation section through comparison between the political situation in the country in 1999 to the one in 2008.

\textsuperscript{57} Author interview with OSCE staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: November 09, 2007. \\
6.2.1 Party Assistance Organizations’ Goals: Self-Assessment

On more than one occasion interviewees expressed the sentiment that supporting democracy in areas administered by the international community came with a unique set of challenges.\(^5^9\) At the same time, NDI’s working plans rarely reflected these unique circumstances confronting their work in Kosovo. Political party program objectives in Kosovo were basic, including supporting representativeness and competition in the multiparty system, position of women and youth within political parties, communication between party headquarters and branches, strengthening parties’ election campaigning practices. The major noticeable difference between those early years of involvement and Kosovo’s post-independence period is the shift from aiding basic internal party organization and functions, to “_contributing to the ideological and participatory development of ethnic Albanian and Serb and non-Serb minority parties.” In the post-independence period, NDI also focused on challenging parties “to enhance voter and local branch outreach, define policy platforms...”\(^6^0\) The indicators identified to evaluate NDI’s impact ranged from parties producing membership lists, demonstrating independent capacity in training their own party activists, consulting relevant civic groups while defining their own political agendas, or increased number of women and youth at party meetings, to parties producing written planning documents and having transparent and competitive hiring process of party staff.\(^6^1\)

The context in which party assistance organizations in Kosovo operated was truly unique, and NDI staff members emphasized this in most of the interviews, comparing their work in Kosovo to their party aid experiences elsewhere. First, the question of access and general attitude was an extenuating circumstance in Kosovo, where American organizations were welcomed with open arms. As NDI staff member explained, “Madeleine Albright’s name [chairperson of NDI and US Secretary of State under Clinton during the NATO Operation Allied Force against Serbia] helped a lot to get on the good foot with parties from the start.”\(^6^2\) Also, this specific context of providing party assistance in a country with little previous history or tradition of political organization had a positively perceived impact on NDI’s work. One NDI staff member explained that in Kosovo they had a lot more freedom than they had in countries with established parties and party system. In Kosovo, there were no limitations on the kind of parties NDI was allowed to work with. For example, while in some other countries NDI would have been less inclined to work with parties evolving from a military past, in Kosovo they assisted

\(^5^9\) Author interview with staff member from the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Office, State Department in Washington D.C., USA: April 07, 2007. Several NDI representatives, as well as State Department staff.

\(^6^0\) NDI web site, Kosovo program information page, at www.ndi.org/kosovo (accessed: June 14, 2010).


\(^6^2\) Author interview with NDI staff member in Pristina, Kosovo: November 20, 2007. Another interview used Madeleine Albright’s chairmanship over NDI as the principal reason why NDI was active in Kosovo, and IRI was not: “Kosovo was always Clinton/Albright thing, this is why NDI dealt with it, and IRI was kept out.” Author interview with NDI staff member in Washington D.C., USA: April 04, 2008.
PDK and AAK: “There was a real recognition from our party partners that they needed to
demilitarize and that the way of the future was through political party work.”

As another NDI staff member explained, the flurry of international activity in
Kosovo also meant that there was little feeling of restraint: “I could always come up with
additional ideas on how to spend the money…we were very generously financed
program.” Furthermore, as the credibility of United States was not equaled by any other
country in Kosovo, NDI’s sponsorship by the US mission was considered “an incredible
asset” to NDI’s work. The general atmosphere was also conducive to NDI’s party aid
work, because local parties were very open to assistance. As another NDI representative
pointed out, “We had to even walk a fine line between getting too involved.”

Another extraordinary element of party aid work in Kosovo was the fact that this country has the
youngest population in Europe: the average age is estimated at twenty-five. NDI staff
repeatedly professed hope in the younger generations, hoping that through their work
with the internationalists, these young people would be exposed to a “different way of
goings things.”

To conclude, when asked in what areas NDI could see the most
direct impact of their work, everyone kept on returning to the uniqueness of the Kosovo
context, and the extent of the basic trainings that was necessary and welcomed by their
local partners.

In terms of explaining the lack of change in certain aspects of party politics, the
Kosovo case study also confirms some of Thomas Carothers’ findings laid out in Table 3,
‘Why does party assistance have limited effects?’ Party leadership was one of the
identified causes for parties’ resistance to reform. As one NDI representative lamented,
“We were trying to push the concept that party should have a policy program, and we
pushed this idea for years without it getting much traction... Generally speaking, parties
in Kosovo are identified with personality.” Similarly, this strong grip of leadership on
the decision-making within their parties also impeded the knowledge transfer and
implementation of some of the advice that NDI championed in their party trainings. Namely, NDI relied on parties’ recommendations for selecting participants, and parties
recommended some individuals on the basis of their popularity instead of on the basis of
their commitment to internal party reform. As result, NDI ended up with participants who
were not always capable of taking on an important role in their parties.

Furthermore, the underlying conditions and structures were also mentioned as an
impediment to democratizing party aid work. In relation to this, one of the NDI staff
members felt that international expectations needed to be managed, because at times, the

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63 Author interview with NDI staff member in Washington D.C., USA: April 10, 2007.
64 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 02, 2008.
65 Author interview with NDI staff member in Washington D.C., USA: April 10, 2007.
66 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 05, 2008.
67 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 05, 2008.
68 CEPSS/NDI Final Report, “Kosovo: Building a Democratic Political System through Sustainable Political Parties,
a Democratic Legislature, and Strengthened Citizen Political Participation,” USAID Associate Cooperative
international community “sometimes set themselves high for the disappointment that ensued”:

…the problem in Kosovo is that it is so small and you had access to everybody, so you start to believe you can change everything for the better. In many ways it was a blank slate, especially in the surface, in the institutional level. But at the level of social values… I mean, good God, you have no idea about that!69

As another NDI staff member elaborated, the relationships between political parties and clan structures in Kosovo run deep and “it all begins and ends with the Kanun.”70 Finally, a State Department official explained that there were contextual impediments to helping parties in Kosovo, because parties were blindly focused on independence ever since 1999, which has prevented the growth of a normal party system. Also, the “unfortunate message of international community to Kosovars was, ‘prepare for self-governance, then you will get independence,’ while Kosovar leaders’ attitude was, ‘ensure independence, then we will prepare for governance.’” To this State Department interviewee, this signaled a lack of political maturity among the elites.71 This lack of political maturity, as well as the highly fluid domestic political context that was predominantly focused on the issue of resolving Kosovo’s status were believed to have acted as obstacles to democratizing the political arena.

Finally, self-evaluation, as suggested earlier in BiH case study, was not one of the strengths of international party assistance organizations. Most of their evaluations and quarterly reports thus tend to reflect more on the political situation in the country, than on the nuts and bolts of their own democracy promotion work. Through this focus on their partners i.e. local parties, however, the organizations may be missing a bigger picture by not identifying the potential omissions and mistakes in their own work. The 2003 report is in that sense somewhat of an exception, because it admits to an oversight on NDI’s behalf:

Parties are beginning to develop membership lists and communication structures to gather and disseminate party information. Although NDI thought the dissemination of free membership tracking software would be the best method to help facilitate this, the Institute overestimated the resources that parties have, both technological and human. As a result,

69 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: may 05, 2008.
70 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 05, 2008. Note: The Kanun in force in Kosovo is the The Code of Lekë Dukagjini, which is best described as traditional Albanian legal code, passed down by generations. It is related to Italian vendetta laws, and is mostly associated with regulation of blood feuds.
71 Author interview with State Department official, in Washington D.C., USA: April 19, 2007.
database usage will not be widespread until the second quarter of 2004.72

The aforementioned membership database software was still in the process of early usage at the time of the interviews with party members in November 2007 and May 2008, pointing to the fact that even this corrected estimate was still not reflecting the reality of Kosovo’s political parties, their capacities and the organization of their membership.

Party assistance organizations tend to base most of their evaluations on observation and feedback from their recipients. The following section therefore addresses the local political parties that received international assistance, and documents their impressions on its impact.

### 6.2.2 Recipients’ Appraisal

Talking to political party members in Kosovo about their international supporters elicited enthusiastic responses. The general sentiment expressed in interviews was that the training the parties received from various international party assistance organizations was very useful, especially in the beginnings of party-building in Kosovo, and in particular for the youth members in different parties. As one LDK party member explained, the party assistance in Kosovo “was quite helpful for us, because Kosovo – a post-conflict, post-communist, post-Yugoslav, post-everything – needed the experience of democratic political parties.” NDI provided parties access to Western counterparts and an intimate view of their internal functioning: “They targeted different people inside our party, young people, women, senior politicians, all of whom had the opportunity to experience how political parties work in Germany, Netherlands, France, Austria, Slovenia.”73

When asked to imagine what political parties in Kosovo would look like, had it not been for this international assistance, politicians generally felt that the work of party aid organizations played a substantial role in political party development in their young country. One PDK member described it as follows:

I think they played a good role in making our political parties more modern, more contemporary. These assistance organizations didn’t have a crucial effect [on the content of politics] …because every party’s goal was independence, but they played an important role in improving parties in Kosovo.74

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73 Author interview with LDK party member and representative in Kosovo Assembly in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 08, 2008.

74 Author interview with PDK party member in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 07, 2008.
Some party members complained that despite the myriad of organizations that were providing assistance in Kosovo, they all used the same approach in their work: “The only difference at times was in the individuals who work for these organizations, i.e. NDI and OSCE staff is different, but the trainings, both in content and in approach – were pretty much the same.”  

Finally, several party members singled out during the interviews an appreciation of the FES approach and contribution to Kosovo’s political scene: “I think without FES our party would be much poorer... They do important research, publications about ideology of social democracy, and investigate issues about education, health and pensions. We are very grateful for their help to our party.”

This general sense of appreciation and gratitude was present in almost all interviews with party members regarding the assistance they received.

At the same time, it was difficult for party members to identify instances of learning from party assistance that they implemented in effort to reform their parties. This cause-and-effect gap was also tackled in the survey questionnaire by asking the question, “Provide an example / describe how a training/seminar/etc. had a direct impact on internal party development/change.” Once again, even in writing, party members were not able to identify clear benefits or changes implemented in their parties as result of specific party aid / trainings:

- Development of policies inside ORA. (ORA)
- Professionalization of participants in trainings. (ORA)
- It has influenced the development of a quality campaign. (PDK)
- PR trainings we had had direct influence in the form of cooperation of the party leadership with the public. (PDK)
- Owing to our lack of political experience, trainings very helpful. (AAK)
- Trainings helped party apply contemporary standards to party policy. (AAK)
- Yes, e.g. in one training or seminar regarding the democratic values in Western Europe. (LDK)
- Yes, we benefited a lot from knowledge from NDI, which we apply in practice. (AKR)

This general sense of party aid being beneficial, but not being able to identify particular instances of learning has been a consistently occurring element in the findings, in both interviews and in survey questionnaire. Several respondents were able to identify personal benefits from political party assistance, and singled these out as the cause-and-effect instance of changes or learning beneficial to their parties. For example, “I am now assistant to the head of PDK Parliamentary Group.”; “My PDK colleague who attended some trainings is now personal assistant to Kosovo’s PM.”; “Trainings helped me...”

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75 Author interview with LDD party member in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 20, 2008.
76 Author interview with ORA party member in Prishtina, Kosovo: July 04, 2008.
personally develop my ideas on youth participation and my party [LDD] in turn benefited from my knowledge.” One respondent in survey questionnaire clearly deduced the benefit of party assistance for his party: “[there was]…direct impact, because [party aid] resulted in qualified candidates, and there was no need to pay anyone for these trainings.” (AKR)

Finally, though in minority, the straight out negative evaluation of cause-and-effect instances of party learning came mostly from the LDK party respondents. When asked to identify direct instance of impact of party aid on their party/learning as result of a training, their members responded, “I don’t know there has been any till now.” and “Unfortunately, none so far.” This pessimism regarding party assistance and its effects on the LDK party will be discussed further in the next section when special attention is paid to this party.

Question 9 of the survey questionnaire investigated the state of internal democracy within parties, gender balance, voter/membership outreach, quality of party program and quality of internal party organization (statutes, bylaws, nomination and selection procedures, etc.). The next question inquired about the impact of party assistance on all those party aspects. The results presented in figures on the following pages indicate that most parties perceive themselves to have a relatively good internal democracy – with the exception of LDK party – which was substantially influenced by external assistance. Parties evaluate gender balance somewhat less positively, while the foreign assistance is believed to have contributed to increasing the gender balance inside parties. Concerning the voter/membership outreach, respondents from the LDK party seem overall more pessimistic than respondents from other parties. Figure 14 concerns the quality of party program, where it is once again visible that parties on average are rather satisfied with their programs and feel assistance has contributed to their quality. The final figure shows that parties are generally satisfied with their internal organization and protocols, and give assistance credit for it – especially the AAK party.
In general, parties were revealed to be rather closed institutions, and internal party democracy leaves much to be desired. In the effort to get interviews about the foreign assistance, it became apparent that communication channels were strictly controlled in several parties. When approaching a party member asking for an interview, it became customary to hear, “I cannot really talk to you, I have to talk to my boss about it and ask for a permission.” LDK party seemed to enforce this rule most strictly, as in this party the access was given only to the top of the party, while lower ranking members were not allowed to represent the party, i.e. offer their opinions on internal party functioning or assess the foreign assistance.

Talking about gender balance and presence of women in politics in Kosovo was generally met with some cynicism by the interviewed politicians, of which the predominant majority was male. Of the politicians interviewed in Kosovo, only one was a woman. The following exchange is illustrative of the type of response the interviewer received when trying to investigate the position of women in parties in Kosovo:

Q: Can you tell me a bit about the position of women in your party? Do you have many of them?
A: Of course we do. And they are very pretty, might I add.
Q: Interesting criteria.
A: Joke aside, we do have some women in the party, and we need to find a way to help them get to the top of the party.\(^{77}\)

Figure 12 illustrates that the LDK and PDK parties are not fully satisfied with position of women in their parties, while other parties are generally more positive on this issue.

Figure 12: Kosovo Parties – Gender Balance

How would you evaluate the gender balance inside your party state and the extent to which external party assistance contributed to it?

Note: 1=poor/5=excellent, 1=no effect/5=very much affected.

Kosovo Parties: Gender Balance

Similarly, the LDK party was least positive about its voter and membership outreach, while the other parties evaluated themselves as well as the impact of party assistance more positively.

\(^{77}\) Author interview with AKR party member in Prishtina, Kosovo: July 04, 2008.
Figure 13: Kosovo Parties – Voter and Membership Outreach
How would you evaluate your party’s voter and membership outreach, and the extent to which external assistance contributed to it?
Note: 1=poor/5=excellent, 1=no effect/5=very much affected.

Kosovo Parties: Voter & Membership Outreach

Figure 14: Kosovo Parties – Quality of Party Program
How would you evaluate the quality of your party’s program and the extent to which external assistance contributed to it?
Note: 1=poor/5=excellent, 1=no effect/5=very much affected.

Kosovo Parties: Quality of Party Program
Discussing programs with political party members was particularly interesting because this was the aspect identified by party assistance organizations as a sore spot in their work. As a local political analyst explained,

The problem is, PDK has a very good program. On paper. There was the case of printing program on energy, but if you would look inside there was nothing, all blank, just for show. Just one page for energy issues in Kosovo, I am not kidding. There is no program at all.\textsuperscript{78}

As mentioned before, internationals praised party assists for being short-sighted, focusing only on the resolution of Kosovo’s status and clamoring for independence, and neglecting instead the development of their programs and their own platforms. From the generally positive grades parties gave themselves on the quality of their programs, one can deduce that parties are not burdened by expert critique on their (non-existent/superficial) programs.

Asking parties to evaluate their internal party organization and the extent to which external assistance contributed to it (Figure 15) shows that parties are generally satisfied with the status quo, and all – with the exception of ORA – believe party assistance had contributed to the state of their internal party organization. This is the area of assistance that was generally positively evaluated by party assistance organizations themselves, and this was the area where they believed to have contributed substantially, in form of advice on party statutes, internal party conventions and election of party leadership, improving communication channels between headquarters and party branches, and so forth. The survey questionnaire also revealed the final recipients ‘verdict’ on the party assistance overall influence on their parties internally, as well as on the position of their parties in the Kosovo political scene.\textsuperscript{79} As Figure 16 demonstrates, most parties in Kosovo evaluate party assistance at 3,00 as having had reasonable impact on both their internal party development and the standing of their parties in the Kosovo political scene. While LDK and PDK give slightly higher grade for party assistance impact on their general standing in the political scene in Kosovo, the other parties value the impact of assistance on their internal party development higher.

During interviews, though interviewed party members were generally positive about the assistance and its impact, interviewees in Kosovo voiced more concerns regarding aid’s applicability to their context. One party member from AAK explained,

\ldots it was very helpful for us to see how they deal with policy and how they work. We are trying to accomplish that here in Kosovo. However, it is not easy to respect all the liberal

\textsuperscript{78}Author interview with local political analyst in Prishtina, Kosovo: July 03, 2008.  
\textsuperscript{79}Survey questionnaire, questions 5 and 6, see Appendix X.
theories because they are in the West, and we come from the Balkans. Balkans is Balkans.\textsuperscript{80}

Figure 15: Kosovo Parties – Internal Party Organization

How would you evaluate your party’s internal party organization and the extent to which external assistance contributed to it?

Note: 1=poor/5=excellent, 1=no effect/5=very much affected.

Kosovo Parties: Internal Party Organization

Implicit in this comment was that some of training received was not applicable to the local circumstances in the Balkans. Another interviewee pointed out that at time, training and new knowledge on how parties work abroad resulted in frustration on the part of those attending the training. This was because their party would not give them the chance to express those ideas and implement changes inside the party: “This resulted in one such group of people with capacity and ideas who in the end left our party and started their own.”\textsuperscript{81} One party member concluded that at times, assistance became problematic due to the sheer quantity of it present in Kosovo contrasted with parties’ lack of absorption capacity:

They come down here, they have designed very good trainings on how to be organized in the party, they even drafted job descriptions, positions in the party, organization

\textsuperscript{80} Author interview with AAK party member in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 06, 2008.

\textsuperscript{81} Author interview with LDK party member in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 06, 2008.
charts. But very little of that was implemented. I think it’s because of lack of capacities. Also there was [lacking] political will to implement. The leadership …resisted the changes.\textsuperscript{82}

Figure 16: \textit{General Evaluation of Party Assistance by Recipients in Kosovo}

Note: 1=no effect/5=very much affected.

Finally, regarding the assistance to Serbian minority parties in Kosovo, one respondent also explained how the context in which assistance was distributed came with severe constraints which prevented the assistance from having much impact. Namely, “the influence of Belgrade on Serb parties in Kosovo is huge, covering 85% of the electorate. Without autonomous political elite, everyone awaits for Belgrade politicians to make the decisions for them.”\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{82} Author interview with PDK party member in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 06, 2008.

\textsuperscript{83} Author interview with SLKM (Serb list for Kosovo-Metohija coalition) member in Mitrovica, Kosovo: November 28, 2007.
6.2.3 Analysis of the Biggest Recipients

This section offers micro-level assessment of party aid through deeper analysis of its most prominent recipients, the LDK and the PDK parties. These two parties received assistance from both the American NDI, as well as from German Stiftungen KAS and FES. The fact that both parties received similar levels of assistance allows for further comparison. Looking at their evolution during the provision stage (1999 – 2008) helps shed more light on the effects of party aid. Both parties will be evaluated by looking at several characteristics: ideology, image, relationship with other parties, membership growth, electoral success, the position of youth and women within the party, and changes in internal organization structure as well as party leadership.

6.2.3.1 The Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK)

It is a widespread perception that LDK was always more of a social movement than a political movement, and this was conveyed in almost all of the interviews that took place in Kosovo. Perceived as pacifists due to their leader’s pronounced engagement in non-violent resistance against Serbs, LDK’s origins lie in Prishtina’s intellectual circles. LDK is affiliated with the European People’s Party and adopts a centre-right conservative ideology, though the party profile is still evolving. Party members predominantly view its young membership base as the party’s biggest strength. LDK survey respondents were rather vocal in expressing their dissatisfaction with the party, and when asked to identify their party’s biggest weakness, they mentioned the following: poor communication with the voters as well as within the party; not involving the youth cadre sufficiently and poor cooperation between different levels of party organization.

Owing much of its popularity and support to its first leader, Kosovo’s first president Ibrahim Rugova, the party descended into crisis with his death in early 2006. After his departure, the party divided into two warring factions, one led by current President Fatmir Sejdiu and the other by Nexhat Daci. After internal elections at the party congress in September of 2006, the party divided and its breakaway faction, led by Daci, founded the LDD party. It is believed that the internal democracy procedures advocated by the international party assistance organizations in the end contributed to this split in LDK, as the party was simply not ready for this amount of internal democracy. Following the split, LDK further descended into a sort of identity crisis, as the November 2007 elections saw the emergence of PDK as the strongest and biggest party in Kosovo. LDK, dethroned, found itself contemplating internal party reforms advocated by many of its members and independent political analysts. As KAS staff member explained, “the elections woke LDK up from the sleep that they had been in for so many years. Now, they are trying to regain the electorate.”

84 Survey questionnaire results, 14 LDK respondents.
85 Author interview with KAS staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 15, 2008.
Also, due to the perceived rigidity and lack of willingness to reform, NDI at one point even withdrew assistance to the LDK party. Their involvement with LDK was significantly reduced because they weren’t making any progress on the things they agreed on institutionally. As one NDI staff member explained, “We had several conversations with various leaders within LDK saying – we are continuing to apply resources to you, but not seeing any sort of tangible outcomes on the things you claim you want to accomplish.” In the end, NDI told them they were ready to renegotiate their relationship whenever LDK became open to assistance.\(^*\) In addition, other NDI staff members described LDK as being “quite unwieldy and not so organized.”\(^*\) An independent local political analyst pointed out that “LDK’s spirit is killed, they need to reform” but that despite this need for reform, the party’s internal structure was still too closed, too leader-based and undemocratic to allow for any major internal change.\(^*\) One LDK party member explained that reform of the party is an ongoing process during which the party suffered from much fragmentation: “officially, out of LDK we have 30 political parties now. Many are already out of political life, or have joined other political parties.”\(^*\) Finally, one of LDK’s own party members acknowledged, “… reforming from the inside will be very hard because in 18 years LDK didn’t make any reforms.”\(^*\)

Throughout the period during which LDK received foreign assistance, the party remained rather set in its ways, its leadership closed to reform. Though the young party members received special attention by foreign assistance organizations, they were the ones most critical of the party for not letting them rise in the ranks and assume more decision-making positions.\(^*\) In terms of electoral results, throughout much of the period under analysis, LDK has fragmented and from the predominant party in Kosovo with 45.7% of votes in the first postwar elections in 2001 has fallen to 22.6% of votes in the 2007 elections. Party assistance, in other words, does not seem to have contributed to LDK’s electoral success; some have even argued that opening the party to internal elections during the party congress resulted in LDK’s electoral demise.\(^*\) Finally, regarding party’s leadership, one could view LDK’s internal confusion, power struggles and fragmentation as all resulting from the death of its founder and leader, Ibrahim Rugova. This cause was mentioned repeatedly during interviews with party aid providers, political analysts and members of other parties in Kosovo. Party assistance did not seem sufficient to help the party reform internally beyond this crisis in its leadership structure, and this is also evident in LDK’s evaluation of aid impact on its party – on average, LDK has evaluated the assistance less positively than other parties in Kosovo.

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\(^*\) Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 01, 2008.
\(^*\) Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 05, 2008.
\(^*\) Author interview with independent local political analyst in Pristina, Kosovo: July 03, 2008.
\(^*\) Author interview with LDK party member (executive) in Pristina, Kosovo: May 08, 2008.
\(^*\) Author interview with LDK party member (youth) in Pristina, Kosovo: May 08, 2008.
\(^*\) Survey questionnaire results; most of the respondents belong to the youth branch of LDK.
\(^*\) Author interview with independent local political analyst in Pristina, Kosovo: July 03, 2008.
6.2.3.2 The Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK)

The main difference between the LDK party and its biggest competitor the PDK is best summarized by the following statement given by a PDK party member:

…I didn’t like [Rugova’s] politics before the war, during the war, or after the war. It was too soft... We could never have gotten independent as we are now. He had only rhetoric and nothing else. We needed to have actions. The actions brought us here where we are now.  

PDK was one of the parties whose origin lies in the Kosovo Liberation Army, and the comment above perfectly captures the key distinction between the two parties, and their leaders. While LDK and Rugova advocated a policy of non-violent resistance, PDK’s leader Thaçi fought alongside other guerilla rebel leaders convinced that military struggle was the only way to achieve Kosovo’s independence from Serbia.

During the period of assistance (1999 – 2008), PDK has probably come the farthest out of all parties, considering its starting point. Founded in 1999 from KLA’s political wing, in the first elections in 2001 it won 25.8% of the vote and was thus beaten by LDK’s 45.7% of the votes. This defeat was taken very seriously by the party, and they set out to radically change both the party’s and its leader’s image – with ample foreign assistance in the process. PDK’s erstwhile problematic image stemmed from the period that immediately followed the international intervention, when KLA members forcefully possessed control of town halls and municipal buildings, as well as private houses and apartments throughout Kosovo, claiming legitimate right to power and establishing their authority as a de facto government. The international administration was not yet fully established, so in the security vacuum following Operation Allied Force, KLA took command of local governance structures. Their forceful thuggish manner, coupled with several assassinations and inter-clan fighting in the ensuing period proved highly unpopular with the voters in the first elections. PDK was thus incentivized by electoral results to reform, and their transformation was striking. As one FES representative commented, “PDK changed a lot. It used to be a radical party, having originated in the KLA and now you get the impression they are the most pacifist party! Even their leader all of a sudden seems even more pacifist than LDK people and most open to minorities.”

As one local political analyst put it, “PDK have polished themselves quite well.”

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93 Author interview with PDK party member in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 07, 2008.
96 Author interview with FES staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: November 14, 2007.
97 Author interview with local political analyst from UBO Consulting agency in Prishtina, Kosovo: November 27, 2007.
Regarding ideology, PDK positions itself centre-left and is associated with social democratic ideology. Respondents of the survey questionnaire mentioned leadership, internal party organization as well as party internal communication and external relations with the electorate as their biggest strengths.\textsuperscript{97} Though some claimed there were no weaknesses within the party, others mentioned lack of membership statistics, too many branches and lack of gender equality.\textsuperscript{98} PDK’s youth wing was presented as a vibrant, enthusiastic section of the party whose members rally to get the votes during election campaigns, but who in the period between elections work on addressing pressing social issues, organizing concerts and public events, etc.\textsuperscript{99}

PDK’s party leader had the reputation among party assistance organizations as “a very inconsistent individual and a highly suspicious guy.” As one NDI staff member explained, “Now, he had earned the right to be suspicious and paranoid because the international community had marginalized him, had treated him so poorly in the beginning.”\textsuperscript{100} This sense that he was somehow betrayed by the international community which oversaw Kosovo’s first elections in which his party was pushed into opposition, rather than rewarded with seats in the government, seemed to have played a role in foreign assistance given to PDK. As party officials acknowledged in several interviews, PDK received a lot of assistance, from different sides. The reason it is difficult to discern and evaluate the impact of party aid on PDK is the fact that they also received for-profit professional consultancy in the period leading up to the 2007 elections. The American consultant that was ‘embedded’ within the PDK party explained how he was assigned to the party in order to ensure their electoral victory in the 2007 elections.\textsuperscript{101} Though initially he complained about party’s lack of responsiveness to his advice, after the party won the 2007 elections he was more positive, staying on in Kosovo as Prime Minister Thaçi’s personal adviser. This for-profit consultant was very critical of NDI/Stiftungen-type of political assistance, calling them “primitive political consultancy” which takes people for study trips, the impact of which is impossible to identify. As he put it, “You can visit the 5th Avenue, shop here, even wear Ralph Lauren, but this does not make you sophisticated.”\textsuperscript{102} However, while it is difficult to discern the results of this for-profit consultancy from the impact of NDI’s and FES’ work with PDK, the final outcome was nevertheless a reformed party whose leader underwent a substantial image makeover during the assistance period.

\textsuperscript{97} Survey questionnaire results: 12 PDK respondents.
\textsuperscript{98} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{99} Author interview with PDK party member (youth wing) in Prishtina, Kosovo: May 07, 2008.
\textsuperscript{100} Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 05, 2008.
\textsuperscript{101} Author interview with for-profit American consultant in Vienna, Austria: February 04, 2007.
\textsuperscript{102} Author interview with for-profit American consultant in New York City, USA: April 15, 2007.
6.2.3.3. Conclusion

After this analysis of two most prominent recipients of party aid in Kosovo, it is time to compare their divergent trajectories of development. Similar to the BiH case, the parties in question were an older, monolithic party whose origins lie in the communist era on the one side (LDK) and a newcomer party on the other (PDK). LDK’s overwhelming reliance on their founder and leader Rugova proved highly detrimental when he passed away and left different factions fighting for control within the party. PDK’s biggest detriment, on the other hand, was their punishment in elections for their violent capture of control following the conclusion of the conflict in 1999. In other words, while LDK was faced with the challenge of reforming a mass-movement-turned-party, PDK’s trial was to change both the image and the ways of the party in order to regain electorate’s confidence. Looking at it this way, one could claim that party assistance and its tools were better equipped for assisting PDK, as it had a greater incentive for internal reform. LDK was a dominant party in Kosovo for a long time and this made the party too set in its ways and its leadership resistant to change. Once again, therefore, as in Bosnia-Herzegovina’s case, the key difference in parties’ divergent development during the time under which they were receiving assistance – was the party leaders’ openness to advice and reforms that NDI (as the main party assistance organization active in Kosovo) put forward.

6.2.4 The Impact of Assistance on Party- and Political System

This last section determines the extent of the role that party aid played in the general political and party system democratization in the country. The impact of assistance on the party system of Kosovo is analyzed by looking at cooperation and interaction between different parties, the changes in their ideological profiles, parties’ stance towards the regime and the number of parties in the system. Determining the role that party assistance played in the overall democratization of Kosovo rounds up the evaluation section. The comparison between the political system in the country in 1999 to the one in 2008/2009 yields the general conclusion on the overall impact of party assistance on politics in Kosovo and the role it played in democratization of this country.

In terms of interactions between the parties, in the 1999 – 2008 period some eyebrow-raising changes did take place. For example, the coalition between AAK and LDK following the elections in 2004, as well as the PDK/LDK coalition in the aftermath of 2007 general elections surprised everyone because LDK and the two parties stemming from KLA were known adversaries in Kosovar political scene. Analysts point out these coalitions were a result of LDK’s pragmatic desire to remain in power. Therefore, these coalitions cannot be attributed to party assistance impact, nor were they mentioned during interviews with NDI representatives as something for which they take credit. Where there has been no change in party interactions in the 1999 – 2008 period is between the
Albanian and Serbian parties. Most interlocutors recognized that lack of interaction between these two groups of political elites was problematic for Kosovo. However, after NDI’s initial efforts to bring the two sides together did not work, party assisters concluded it was too early for those types of initiatives.

Regarding the ideological profile of parties, today most major parties in Kosovo are in one way or another connected or affiliated with a European party family. Owing largely to the work of Stiftungen and OSCE in this area, but also to NDI’s Regional Political Party Initiative program, parties from Kosovo were given the opportunity to meet their ideological counterparts from Europe as well as from neighboring countries in various events and seminars. NDI’s program goals were “to help parties in the Balkans clarify their political identities, define their values along contemporary Social Democratic, Liberal and Center-Right ideologies and develop and communicate coherent policies consistent with European integration.”103 In this Initiative NDI actively cooperates with Stiftungen and smaller party assistance organizations from other European countries, e.g. the Netherlands. An example of a clear output of such coordinated party assistance initiative is the creation of Liberal Southeast European Network (LIBSEEN) that gathers liberally minded parties from across the region to discuss common issues and exchange strategies.104 Though the effect of such initiatives is in its infancy and cannot be concretely measured, participant observation events of like-minded ideological parties suggests that the networking also serves as a psychological support to parties, especially to those advancing ideas and values considered too liberal for the Balkans region.

Parties’ stance toward the regime was probably the most contentious political issue in the 1999 – 2008 period. Independence of Kosovo was a common goal of all the Albanian parties and they worked together with the international community toward achieving it in 2008. Parties representing the Serbs in Kosovo, on the other hand, remained fragmented with some reluctantly accepting the new realities on the ground in Kosovo and others refusing to acknowledge the secession from Serbia. Currently, the Serbian minority is represented in the Kosovo Assembly, though it has been nearly impossible to get Serbs to vote in elections organized in Kosovo. This raises questions of legitimacy of the Serbian representatives in the Kosovo Assembly, and casts a shadow over the international community’s project of building a multiethnic Kosovo. Party assistance organizations distanced themselves from these issues, not wanting to appear partial to either of the sides. By doing so, however, they did not exert any influence on parties’ stance towards the regime.

In terms of the number of parties, Kosovo’s party system stabilized relatively quickly after the initial boom in party registration with the OSCE. Several parties (those analyzed and interviewed for this research) came to the forefront in the early 2000s and

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104 For more information, go to LIBSEEN website, www.libseen.org (Accessed: September 12, 2010).
have remained there ever since. The originally biggest party LDK has fragmented over the years, and this process seems not to have ended yet as the party struggles to reform from within. Party assistance organizations were not affected by this fragmentation and they continued to support both LDK and its latest breakaway party LDD. The proof that Kosovo’s party system is still evolving, however, lies in the 2006 emergence of the AKR party and its subsequent success in the 2007 general elections. A new party gaining 13% of the votes signals that the appetite of voters is not satisfied by what is on offer in Kosovo’s political scene and that there is still some space for new parties to evolve. That said, one has to bear in mind that AKR’s case is rather unique in that its leader, millionaire Kosovar diaspora businessman Beghjet Pacolli, was able to fund the party’s creation and competition in elections. Without such strong private financial backing, it is not clear whether new parties would be able to arise and compete in Kosovo’s political space. Finally, one of the parties evaluated in this research, Reformist Party ORA, has in the meantime ceased to exist. Following their failure to enter Kosovo Assembly after the 2007 elections, the party experienced an identity crisis and was unable to recover from this electoral defeat. In February of 2010, ORA dissolved and most of its leadership and members joined the LDK.

Comparing the war-ravaged Serbian province of Kosovo in 1999 to the independent country in 2008 whose local governance structures were ruling alongside the international administration brings the straightforward conclusion that changes in the political system were profound in this relatively short time period. In the atmosphere of renewal, energy and high hopes, political elites embraced the assistance of their American ‘special friends’ as well as their European counterparts, eager to learn about democratic politics and policymaking. In this unique setting in which party politics was a new concept and political parties had organizations that needed to be built up from scratch, party assistance organizations provided a unique service that was sorely needed. By way of contrast with 1999, parties in Kosovo in 2008 had internal structures and branches; AAK and PDK had successfully transformed from the KLA military group into political organizations; and parties had developed the ability to run election campaigns and put forward representatives to serve in the Kosovo Assembly. Taking in consideration the starting point, one can conclude that party assistance has played a significant role in supporting political parties’ development in Kosovo.

Pushing further beneath the institutional surface, it becomes trickier to establish the impact of party assistance. As several interviewees have repeatedly emphasized, Kosovo’s political culture and attitudes have not changed despite party aid presence and activities in the country. Similarly, one of the key studies on the international administration in Kosovo published in 2006 concludes that,

…it was the efforts to turn Kosovo into a multi-ethnic democracy subject to the rule of law that failed so spectacularly. After six years as an international protectorate, Kosovo’s political culture remained largely unchanged. The OSCE was charged with democratization; as it contemplated
its departure, parties were neither internally democratic nor distinguished by a political philosophy, the amount of grassroots activism was minute and political violence was commonplace. ..In the realm of soft power, the mission barely dented the political culture underlying Kosovo’s instability.  

This political culture of Kosovo was often characterized by clans as well as organized crime groups vying for power. One State Department official described Kosovo as place of rampant corruption. A US National Security Council representative went further, stating first that in the Balkans, political parties are following the mafia model, then correcting himself and adding that in Kosovo, “political parties ARE the mafia.” Party assistance organizations’ representatives, on the other hand, assumed a neutral position, not wishing to pass judgment on their local partners. The implications of their attitude for both party aid and democratization of Kosovo as a whole are discussed in the next chapter.

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106 Author interview with State Department official in Washington D.C., USA: April 19, 2007.
7. COMPARISON & DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

*To educate a person in mind and not morals is to educate a menace to society.*

- Theodore Roosevelt

The previous two chapters described in detail party assistance programs and activities that took place in BiH and Kosovo, and provided evaluation from different perspectives of the quality and impact of those programs on parties in these two countries. This chapter goes further, comparing the two case studies, and discussing some of the main findings yielded from their analysis. The first part seeks to establish whether there were any lessons learned, transferred or shared between party assistance organizations in BiH and Kosovo. This is followed by a comparison and discussion of the overall results of the survey questionnaire in BiH and Kosovo. The third part seeks to explore similarities and differences between the European (or, mostly German and Dutch) and American type of party assistance. Finally, this chapter is concluded by several general observations on party assistance in BiH and Kosovo that hold some lessons for reconsidering or improving party assistance in post-conflict countries.

### 7.1 Lessons Learned, Experiences Transferred?

Considering that party assistance in BiH began four years earlier than in Kosovo, it is plausible to inquire whether there were any lessons taken from one case to the other in terms of party assistance activities. Both countries share the legacies of communism and of conflict, and face the challenge of organizing political parties operating under distinct ethnic denominators. To top all that, both countries are under international administration governance and therefore do not function as fully sovereign, independent countries. Considering all the similarities, this section questions the existence of coordination or learning between the party assistance organizations from the two countries.

While NDI held regional meetings between different offices active in the Western Balkans region, it could not be determined through interviews whether NDI from Kosovo explicitly decided for or against certain type of activities based on the experience of its sister office in BiH. One way they did try to capitalize on local knowledge in the region was by using its local staff members for cross-border trainings, e.g. trainers from NDI’s office in Serbia would go and hold trainings for Serbian parties in BiH, or Kosovo. There were also instances of local staff member from BiH going to work in NDI’s office in Macedonia, or one from BiH who spent time in Kosovo working with Serbian minority parties. In that sense, one could expect that some knowledge transfer did take place through these individuals who changed offices. However, beyond these tentative instances in NDI’s case, it seems that party assistance organizations operated independently.
As mentioned before, monitoring and evaluation of party aid activities is a nascent activity with no clearly set indicators for success or methods of measuring impact. Also, throughout this research party assistance organizations did not reveal themselves as highly self-introspective organizations. Instead of commenting on their own activities or programming, US party assistance organizations in particular seemed more inclined towards criticizing their local partners for their failure to adopt some of the advice they provided. An exemplary case of such attitude was a critique mentioned repeatedly by representatives of party assistance organizations representatives in reference to the local parties’ unwillingness to adopt door-to-door canvassing as a campaigning and membership strategy tool. It is striking, that not once did a representative in a party assistance organization suggest that parties, when saying “This would never work in our country.” - perhaps had justified reasons for making such a claim. Instead, as one NDI staff member explained, “We just decided to repeat and repeat some trainings…until they [the parties] got it.”¹ This kind of attitude hinted at the party aid organizations’ lack of innovation and openness to reinventing and adapting their own methods and activities to the local context and to the parties to which they offer assistance.

7.2 Quantitative Analysis Results

The survey questionnaire completed by 131 party officials in BiH and Kosovo yielded some interesting results. A total of 65 questionnaires came from six BiH parties, and 66 came from six parties in Kosovo, which means that on average there were eleven respondents per political party. Respondents from BiH parties were on average older than those coming from Kosovo, where the average age of respondents was 24.4, consistent with Kosovo’s general population average age (estimated at 25). The youngest respondents were from LDD and AKR, the youngest parties in Kosovo, while the oldest respondents on average came from Croatian parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina, HDZ and NSRzB. In terms of gender balance, SNSD, PDK, HDZ and SDP had almost an ideal 50/50 ratio of female and male respondents, while the party that scored lowest on gender balance was SDA (no female respondents). In general, it was useful to get the perspective of women through the questionnaires, because in face-to-face interviews, of the 39 politicians interviewed in both countries, only four were women (one from Kosovo’s LDK and ORA parties, one each from Bosnia-Herzegovina’s SNSD and NSRzB parties). Finally, in terms of the profile of the party members who filled out the questionnaire, mostly youth branch members ended up offering their views on party assistance. On average in both countries 30% of total respondents were staff members employed by the parties. Bosnia-Herzegovina’s parties had more executive position holders who filled the questionnaire, than did the parties in Kosovo.

Looking at the general evaluation of party aid impact on parties in BiH and Kosovo, Table 11 confirms the findings yielded through interviews, namely: parties from

¹ Author interview with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 26, 2009.
Kosovo evaluate party assistance more positively than parties in BiH. Also, it confirms the general positive evaluation by both countries’ parties of party assistance that they had been exposed to.

At the same time, in BiH case, party aid was seen as having more positively influenced parties’ positions in the political scene, than it had their internal party development. Since both parties in Kosovo and BiH presented their cooperation with international party aid organizations as a question of prestige and were proud to talk about their foreign supporters, this result is not surprising. Having already established that political parties were in a far more rudimentary state and had more need for assistance in Kosovo than in BiH, this also explains the quantitative results where parties from Kosovo give party assistance a higher grade than their counterparts in BiH.

Table 12 at the end of this chapter contains regression analysis of parties’ self-evaluation on several different party characteristics (internal party democracy, gender balance, voter/membership outreach, quality of party program, internal party organization) and parties’ evaluation of party assistance impact on each of those elements. It has been established previously that parties lacked self-criticism, ranking themselves highly on internal democracy and quality of their programs, while both local and foreign analysts critiqued these aspects of parties’ organization the most. Namely, journalists and analysts portray all parties as leader-based and not internally democratic, and too focused on issues such as nationalism (in BiH) and status/independence (in Kosovo), rather than on bread-and-butter issues that, according to research with focus groups, interest the electorate, such as unemployment, healthcare, visa liberalization. Table 12 shows that parties overall reported a positive impression of the impact of party aid, in relation to their self-assessment of internal party democracy, gender balance, and voter/membership outreach. At the same time, parties from Kosovo seem to be driving this positive impact impression, because their evaluations of party impact were significantly more positive than those of BiH parties, relative to their self-assessment.
Also, BiH parties on average evaluated themselves, i.e. their party characteristics more positively than parties in Kosovo. A potential explanation for this lies in the already discussed different starting points of party aid in the two countries: BiH had a history of party politics prior to the war and to the foreign intervention, while in Kosovo, the first parties were born under the guidance of the international community and with the help of foreign party aid organizations. In Kosovo, by starting from scratch, party aid organizations simply had more work, and the starting bar was very low. One interpretation of this could be that party aid may be useful in very unique contexts, i.e. in the earliest phases of democratization processes and birth of multiparty systems, when parties are nascent and need a lot of guidance and technical advice. Later on, when they are more established, the impact of party aid and its ability to exert substantial change is more limited.

7.3 European vs. American Party Assistance: Exploring the Differences

Interviews with different party assistance organizations in the field revealed different approaches to their local partners, i.e. political parties. This section will outline the main differences between the European and American party assistance principles and methods. Within the European group, a further distinction is made between German and Dutch aid to political parties in BiH and Kosovo.

That differences exist between European and American approaches was evident in talking to representatives from different party aid organizations, as well as to other members of the international community in BiH and Kosovo. A State Department official summed up the key difference between the general European and American assistance approaches by stating, “Europeans are more process-oriented, while we Americans are results-oriented.”² In terms of party assistance, one FES representative felt that the differences were systematic, stemming from the very origins of party aid foundations involved. While German foundations, different in ideological lines, choose their partners in a particular country on basis of those different ideologies, he felt American party aid organizations choose ‘their people’ or their friends, i.e. leaders within political parties to support. As he put it, “We do not bet all our money on one horse, we divide and develop strategies which hopefully create an equal level playing field, for e.g. KAS supports the so-called nationalist parties, but they do this with expectations to support the moderate factions…which is certainly very important.”³ The distinction that several representatives from Stiftungen made was that their approach was structural and more long-term, with a higher focus on the issues, while Americans have a much bigger focus on campaigns and elections.⁴ Americans would disagree with this assessment, as the USAID policy on party

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² Author interview with State Department official in Washington D.C., USA: April 19, 2007.
³ Author interview with FES representative in Sarajevo, BiH: July 20, 2007.
⁴ Author interviews with FES representative in Sarajevo, BiH: July 20, 2007; with KAS representative in Sarajevo, BiH: June 28, 2007; with FNS representative in Prishtina, Kosovo: November 27, 2007.
assistance claims its purpose is not “to determine electoral outcomes” but to support “representative, multiparty systems” and also demands that all party assistance activities get suspended thirty days prior to elections. At the same time, field research confirmed that American party aid organizations had a much higher focus on election campaigning trainings, while Stiftungen mostly shied away from elections campaign trainings and instead organized more thematic, or issue-based conferences and seminars, inviting party officials from BiH/Kosovo and abroad, as well as various academics and experts on a given topic.

It is useful to make a further distinction between German and Dutch approaches to party aid. While incomparable in financial terms – Dutch party foundations combined receive an annual total of approximately two million euros for their international activities, while German foundations’ funding runs into hundreds of millions of euros – there are also some differences in their characteristics. Dutch party aid is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Program of Aid to Political Parties, which mandates that all the projects and trainings provided to parties in new democracies are the result of a locally-driven demand. This means that parties in BiH and Kosovo had to come up with projects and apply for funding to their Dutch party foundations’ partners. In this sense, at least in theory, Dutch party assistance is demand-driven, while American party aid is more dictated where party institutes provide trainings that they believe their partner parties need, and German foundations are somewhere in the middle on this scale. However, in practice, when the Dutch demand-driven policy was put under the microscope, this research revealed that often, parties in BiH and Kosovo either did not come up with any projects that they put forward to their Dutch partners for funding, or they would ‘recycle’ the same projects over and over again, year after year. One example is BiH SDP’s request for the seminar “The ABC of the European Union.” Participant observation here has revealed that party aid suffers from poor needs-assessment analysis, both from the side of local parties as well as sometimes from the side of party aid providers. This could stem from poor or insufficient communication between the two sides: in most cases, party aid organizations communicate directly with a small number of party officials in the parties they are assisting. In some cases, this communication falls on the international secretary of the political party in question, or the president of the youth branch. While it is impossible to communicate directly to the entire body of a given party’s membership, designing party aid activities based on the input of just one or two of the party’s officials poses problems for several reasons that were already mentioned thus far. Superficial needs assessments and insufficient self-reflection on parties’ behalf risk marginalizing party aid activities and their impact on parties in new democracies. The impact, relevance or value of the aforementioned “The ABC of the European Union”-kind of seminar is a case in point.

5 USAID Political Party Assistance Policy, 2003: 1.
7.4 General Observations on Party Assistance in BiH and Kosovo

Certain deductions about party aid in BiH and Kosovo fall outside of the evaluation criteria used thus far. These elements were identified throughout the research as extraordinary findings that may bear far-reaching implications on both the potential for party assistance to make a difference in democratization processes in transitioning countries, and for the way this assistance is conceptualized and applied. In no particular order of relevance, this section discusses (1) the influence of emphasis on form over substance in party aid; (2) coordination issues between party assistance organizations; (3) the implications of misunderstanding local political scene; (4) the detriment of cookie-cutter approach in a unique context; (5) the divergence between the party assistance policy and its implementation; (6) the implication of personality-dependence in party assistance implementation; (7) the golden hour paradox.

7.4.1 Emphasis on Form over Substance

The analysis of working plans of the NDI and IRI organizations throughout the entire period of party assistance provision revealed an overall strong emphasis on ‘technical’ assistance to parties in terms of campaigning methods, building party internal organization, strengthening the membership base, improving communication channels between the headquarters and the branches, and so on. Somewhat surprisingly, despite the overarching goal of moderating politics in BiH and strengthening moderate political parties, the question of tackling nationalism and nationalist rhetoric is barely mentioned in the official party aid organizations’ manuals and policy briefs. Similarly, in Kosovo’s case, party assistance organizations never directly engaged with the issue of corruption that was and remains so closely connected to political parties in public perception.

Considering the intensification of nationalist rhetoric by the Republika Srpska PM Milorad Dodik in the run up to and aftermath of the 2006 elections when his party scored an overwhelming victory, one could have expect the American party assistance organizations to distance themselves from the SNSD. No such disaffection took place, however, despite the progressing political deadlock caused by the growing opposition between the Bosniak member of the Presidency Haris Silajdžić and the RS PM Milorad Dodik. The break between the US government and the assistance provided to SNSD by NDI and IRI came only in 2008, when Dodik did nothing to prevent (and was even accused of inciting) an attack on the US consulate in Banja Luka in the aftermath of Kosovo’s proclamation of independence. Even then, several interviewed NDI staff members admitted that the State Department move for cutting the assistance to SNSD came as a total surprise to them, lamenting the break of their working relationship with the party.6

6 Author interviews with NDI staff members in Washington D.C., USA: April 04, 2008 and in Banja Luka, BiH: June 18, 2008.
Emphasizing the organizational or institutional aspects of political parties, while paying little attention to the content of their messages and substance of their rhetoric, has created professionally organized electoral machines with no guarantees that this mechanism would be put into democratic service. A prime example of this is the SNSD party, the biggest recipient of party aid in BiH: built from a modest base into a party with the biggest following and best developed party organization, it is now a source of worry and obstacles, rather than optimism for the democratization of BiH. The substitution of ethnic differences in lieu of ideological differences has dangerously emptied the political arena of real choice for the voters. The only choice given to them was to either side with the political representatives of their own ethnic group, or to be “traitors” of their own people, and vote for the multiethnic SDP party. The content of politics in BiH was from the beginning the crux of the problem. Over the years, politicians continued to bicker over ethnic differences, war guilt or who was the bigger victim, rather than to listen to their electorate. NDI and IRI’s polls continuously revealed that people’s biggest concerns were bread-and-butter issues of everyday life, namely employment, health care, and the education of their children, and the institutes tried to steer parties into formulating policies that would address those issues. However, with each election, the nationalist ethnic rhetoric came back in full swing, preventing debate on those issues and pushing them into the background. This politics of fear continued to be the most potent political mobilization tool in post-conflict BiH, and party assistance organizations did little to disable it. In fact, it was the openly expressed frustration, and in some cases disbelief and shock on behalf of some of the NDI and IRI interviewees at each election results that illustrated their lack of understanding of the depth of this politics of fear and its underlying effect on the electorate of BiH.

Did party assistance organizations attempt to influence parties and their leaders in this qualitative, or normative element? By doing so they would have addressed the problematic content of BiH politics. This research has exposed a potential omission in American party aid, which is a result of the emphasis put on the form or procedural elements of political party functioning, at the expense of the neglected issue of content or values, i.e. the subject matter of politics. When probed about this subject, interviewees from NDI explained that, “it is not the job of NDI to call parties to order, or to scold them for being naughty. Our job is to make them stronger.”7 Another NDI staff member made clear that, “NDI explicitly avoids getting involved with the content of politics. We teach party members what types of messages work, how best to organize their party programs, but we steer clear from what should be written therein.”8 The US party institutes’ work in providing technical assistance far excelled in quantity the German foundations’ aid. Nevertheless, it needs to be noted that the Stiftungen, and to a lesser extent Dutch and UK party foundations, did try to engage with the issue of content of politics, by organizing the previously mentioned thematic seminars and lectures. Furthermore, the recipients of party aid themselves attested to the socialization effect of gaining access to

8 Author interview with NDI staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: November 26, 2007.
the European party families, which was also facilitated by the German Stiftungen. At the same time, however, this adaptation to European Union rules and policies, and European parties’ attitudes can pose problems of its own for the democratization processes in new democracies. As David Chandler explains, in post-conflict countries such as in the Western Balkans, the EU “sucks the political life from societies” by imposing the externally driven policy making process, whereby the political elites are more concerned in the end with lobbying EU actors and trying to adapt to their demands, in lieu of engaging with domestic issues and concerns of their citizens.9

Why did American party aid organizations fail to engage with the content of politics in BiH? Kristine Herrmann-De Luca in her PhD dissertation accuses them of getting swept up in the international administration’s persistent focus on elections.10 She believes this ‘paralysis of electoralism’ has led to party aid’s focus on election activities, at the expense of other elements of political party functioning and organization.11 By the early 2000s, however, it was clear that elections were neither the best nor the quickest way for Bosnia-Herzegovina’s transition to democracy. The international administration officials continued putting all hope in elections and this expectation proved to be based on a faulty premise – that the elected local political actors would be responsible, democratic and interested in working for the welfare of all the citizens. NDI itself pointed out in one report that, “The constant cycle of elections in Bosnia has not allowed a significant programmatic focus on internal party structure and development.”12 That elections do not equal democracy is a truism by now. Through emphasis on the form rather than content of politics, party aid failed to tackle two legacies most detrimental to the development of democratic values and norms in the BiH and Kosovo political spheres: the legacy of communism, and the nationalism-imbued legacy of war.

How can one teach the local political actors to act in the spirit of democracy? When a staff member from NDI was asked how their organization would, for example, go about addressing the problem of corruption in one of their party trainings, they explained:

We only talk about corruption in general terms, why it damages the democratic process and how it can damage an individual candidate’s reputation as well as his or her party’s success in the polls. All we have is talk – obviously, we do

11 Ibid.
not have a way of teaching our partners how not to be corrupt.¹³

This comment illustrates the difficulty in fostering development of democratic political culture. Whether on account of its difficulty, or due to an omission, the result is that while they were busy developing parties institutionally, the party aid organizations failed to engage their partners at the level of their political culture and undemocratic norms. Nationalism and corruption in particular were overlooked and unaddressed in the programmatic planning and assistance implementation.

### 7.4.2 Coordination Issues Between Party Assistance Organizations

In the early years of party assistance in BiH, different party assistance organizations had little contact with one another and did not attempt to coordinate their work. This soon led to a frequent overlap of activities, which had an adverse effect on the domestic recipients – they were being given the same workshops and trainings by different organizations.¹⁴ In addition, this lack of coordination in the early party aid activities led to a supply overload, which often not only exceeded the demand but also provided assistance that BiH political parties at the time had no capacity to absorb.

It became apparent after series of interviews in both Washington D.C. and Berlin, and in BiH, that different party aid organizations operating within the BiH political scene viewed each other as competitors, rather than as partners united in the same goals. They jealously protected their working plans, and guarded and nurtured ‘special relations’ with the recipients of their assistance programs, i.e. the local political parties. The story of the disgruntled NDI employee who took the description of the planned NDI’s parliamentary assistance program and ‘sold’ it to the OSCE by transferring to work for them is well known in the party assistance circle in BiH, and it illustrates well the lack of trust and cooperation present in that network. Similarly, the disagreement and ‘turf wars’ between USAID and OSCE officials on electoral law reform and differing attitudes on opening the party lists was mentioned in the interviews.¹⁵

It was in the atmosphere of high expectations leading up to the 2006 elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina that the acute differences between party aid providers became evident. During the meeting organized by USAID held in May of 2006, the Stiftungen, and KAS in particular, made an argument for providing assistance to nationalist parties, SDA and HDZ in specific. They argued that both parties were by now much more accommodating to consensus politics and had grown accustomed to bargaining throughout their time in power during which they had to negotiate extensively with the

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¹³ Author interview with an NDI official, Sarajevo, BiH, May 2007.
¹⁵ Author interview with USAID representative in Washington, D.C., USA: August 06, 2007.
The US party institutes NDI and IRI opposed this idea, mostly due to the principle laid out in USAID’s policy of party assistance provision which explicitly forbade cooperation with nationalist or ‘non-democratic’ parties. In retrospective, an NDI staff member regretted this decision: “Looking back, it seems that the KAS representative was right to urge caution…both SBiH and SNSD in the end proved to be even more nationalist than their predecessors SDA and SDS.”

The USAID meeting was concluded on a sour note and the German and American party aid organizations charted independent plans for assistance leading up to the 2006 elections.

This particular instance of lacking coordination and agreement on basic party aid principles points to a diffused rather than concentrated international effort at aiding parties in BiH. It also demonstrates how contradictory assessments of the domestic political situation can result in provision of conflicting types of assistance. In other words, while American party aid organizations attempted to undermine the original nationalist parties (HDZ, SDA, SDS) by strengthening their opponents, the German KAS felt that by cooperating with HDZ and SDA, they could assist them to reform from within and to de-radicalize their positions. Although all the organizations shared the goal of strengthening parties perceived as democratic and civic-minded, telling one group from another has proven rather tricky in BiH’s post-conflict political system. Finally, the differences in approaches between different party aid organizations have at times also issued a conflicting message to their local partners in terms of what constitutes, and what hampers democratic development of BiH political system. In other words, while SDS, HDZ and SDA were penalized for their political messages and nationalist ideologies by withdrawal of aid, SNSD – at least initially – got away with it, with the support of NDI.

7.4.3 Misunderstanding the Local Political Scene

Interviews as well as participant observation gave evidence of certain instances where party aid organizations misunderstood the local political scene, which affected the provision of assistance to local parties. The instances described in the following section demonstrate the repercussions of poor understanding of the local political situation by different party aid organizations and their staff. Whether this misunderstanding should be interpreted as straightforward miscalculation, hubris or naïveté on behalf of foreign party aid organizations remains unclear.

The first example concerns a domestic research organization commissioned by IRI to conduct focus groups polls. As the anecdote goes, during the presentation of the results, IRI staff expressed their surprise at the findings. The uncertain presenters from the domestic polling organization tried to reassure their clients with the following comment: “You didn’t expect this? Don’t worry, this is just the first presentation, we can

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16 Author interview with a KAS official in Sarajevo, BiH: June 24, 2007.
17 Author interview with a NDI official in Sarajevo, BiH: June 29, 2007.
tweak the results later on so that they are to your liking.’’\textsuperscript{18} The lesson on how to properly conduct polling research and, perhaps more importantly, what the use of polling is – seemed to have gotten lost in the communication between the international clients (IRI in this case) and the domestic research agency commissioned to produce the polling results.

The next example concerns a faux-pas committed by an expert NDI trainer, brought in from the US to train their favorite – the SNSD party – prior to the 2006 elections. Having arrived in the Balkans from the US and not extensively familiar with the problematic post-conflict political context in BiH, the NDI consultant analyzed the political situation using the information he was given. His understanding of the situation was interpreted as follows: the biggest opponent of ‘our guys’ (SNSD) is this SDS party, characterized as nationalists…our guys have a better economic plan, better volunteers’ base, they have us as their asset…what they need to do is beat their opponents at their own game.\textsuperscript{19} According to this story, the SNSD then received expert political advice by this foreign consultant on how to woo the Republika Srpska voters: by beating SDS at their own game, and upping the nationalist rhetoric. The 2006 elections effectively turned the RS entity into a one-party system, and SNSD only strengthened their hold through an overwhelming victory in the 2008 municipal elections. To clarify, this example does not claim that the NDI consultant ‘taught’ SNSD how to be nationalistic. It does, however, illustrate several points. First, the USAID party assistance policy is not fully respected in the field: one of its main elements is that “party assistance does not seek to influence outcomes of elections.”\textsuperscript{20} Secondly, the fact that the international consultant encouraged SNSD to use nationalism in their message and platform development, in order to beat SDS party, shows that – for electoral gains – even democracy promotion institutions are willing to look the other way when it comes to the means, as long as their end is achieved. Finally, the fact that NDI and IRI were honestly surprised at Dodik having turned nationalistic in the aftermath of the failed constitutional reform talks of 2006 demonstrates their miscalculating naïveté regarding their domestic political partner as well as their underestimation of the volatile context in which the party assistance was taking place. Thomas Carothers also identified this phenomenon in his party aid research, calling it a perception gap between party assistance organizations and the recipients of their aid:

\ldots[party assistance organizations’] representatives often reported having a direct influential line to the leader and other key figures in the recipient party. Yet when I asked senior people in the parties…about these same field representatives,

\textsuperscript{18} Author interview with an NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 11, 2007.
\textsuperscript{19} Story as told to the author by NDI representative in Sarajevo, BiH: May 11 2007; confirmed by another NDI representative in Banja Luka, BiH: June 18, 2008. USAID BiH staff member confirmed hearing of the same story during interview in Sarajevo, BiH: June 25, 2009, as did AMS staff member during interview in Amsterdam, the Netherlands: May 14, 2007. One interviewee from NDI defensively denied this allegation, author interview in Sarajevo, BiH: June 26, 2009.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Political Party Development Assistance}, policy brief published by the Center for Democracy and Governance, United States Agency for International Development, April 1999.
they tended to describe them as pleasant friends of the parties but distant outsiders to the real internal workings of the party.\textsuperscript{21}

In the BiH case this perception gap was best illustrated in the SNSD case, where NDI confidently believed they ‘had him under control’, only to admit few weeks later, shocked, that ‘he has gone rogue on them.’ NDI’s poor understanding of the domestic political context offers a cautionary tale for all those working in the party aid business: one can never be sure what kind of people and organizations are receiving these political consulting tools. In the end, the backlash can be graver than the original situation that party aid organizations set out to remedy in the first place.

\textbf{7.4.4 Cookie-Cutter Approach in a Unique Context}

One of the hypotheses of this research was that party aid in BiH and Kosovo had a different form from the type of party assistance provided in fully sovereign countries in transition. The expectation was to find evidence of assistance reflecting the unique context of post-conflict, internationally administered transition. The finding points to the contrary: party aid in BiH was no different than party aid provided in Serbia, which does not have international administration, or Ukraine, an example of a fully sovereign country that did not experience war in its recent past.\textsuperscript{22}

Looking back at the overall party aid effort in BiH and Kosovo, the most surprising element is perhaps the following: the assistance provided in these two countries was in no way different from the ‘standard toolbox’ or template of assistance approaches that Thomas Carothers describes in his book on party assistance.\textsuperscript{23} One of the biggest warnings in post-conflict peace- and state-building literature is against the ‘cookie-cutter approaches’, urging the intervening actors to tailor their strategy and solutions to the specific context of the society they are reconstructing or administering.\textsuperscript{24} Political party assistance organizations working on democratizing BiH and Kosovo party systems seemed to have missed this warning. It resulted in party assistance template provided in a highly unique and complex context.

The uniqueness of the context was recognized during the interviews, but only as a constraint to the party assistance activities: several interviewees felt that developing political parties in non-sovereign entities limited the impact of their work. For example, in Kosovo, the uncertainty regarding the final status of the area was considered

\textsuperscript{21} Thomas Carothers, \textit{The Weakest Link}, 121.
\textsuperscript{22} For information on party aid provided in Serbia, see: Marlene Spoerri (2010), “Crossing the line: partisan party assistance in post-Milosevic Serbia,” \textit{Democratization}, Vol.17, No.6, pp.1108-1131. For information on party aid provided in Georgia and Ukraine, see: Max Bader (2010) \textit{Against All Odds: Aiding Political Parties in Georgia and Ukraine}, PhD dissertation at University of Amsterdam (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press).
\textsuperscript{23} Thomas Carothers, \textit{The Weakest Link}.
problematic for party assistance activities because parties focused on the issue of independence rather than on building their internal organizations or developing their policies for targeting different social issues. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, party aid providers felt that arbitrary and essentially undemocratic interventions of the High Representative into the politics of the country prevented the development of independent political capacity in local political elites, thus exacerbating the problem beyond the reach of party aid.

What interviewees did not comment on, however, was the opportunity present in the fact that party aid organizations were operating in internationally-administered countries. The fact that the country was run by the international community opened up the possibility of greater influence for international democracy promoting organizations: through lobbying the institutions of international administration, party assistance organizations could have fought for a greater impact and coordinated policy between their work and the OHR/UNMIK missions. The international administrations and party aid organizations had the same goal, after all: moderating politics and empowering parties for independent functioning according to democratic principles. Credit needs to be given to NDI in Kosovo, which made an effort to influence OSCE regulations pertaining to parties as well as the electoral law – the kind of effort that went missing in the BiH case. However, overall, it is one of the conclusions of this research that party aid organizations did not maximize fully the potential for cooperating with the institutions of international administrations on party development activities and the legislation pertaining to the political system.

What could have been done differently? Benjamin Reilly suggests political parties can be influenced in various ways through “using institutional incentives and constraints”: party regulation (on party formation, financing, distribution of members), electoral law design, strengthening parties in the parliament (top-down approach aimed at building greater intra-party discipline) and international party assistance interventions.

Reilly and Nordlund’s book demonstrates that those in charge of designing political institutions have a large number of options in front of them, ranging from regulations that demand a nation-wide or multi-ethnic composition of party members in order to compete in elections; instituting high vote thresholds or gender quotas; providing financial or technical assistance to moderate or democratic parties as opposed to nationalist ones, etc. BiH’s international administration failed to recognize the existence of all these options, and instead organized frequent elections in the hope that moderate parties were somehow spontaneously going to score a victory over the nationalists. That party assistance organizations, supposed experts in party politics, failed to get involved in coming up with alternatives to BiH political system characteristics, election law and laws on party financing and organization, illustrates a short-sightedness that proved detrimental to fulfillment of their objectives in BiH.

25 Author interview with two NDI staff members in Washington D.C., USA: April 04, 2008.
26 Author interview with USAID staff member in Washington D.C., USA: April 18, 2007.
28 Ibid.
The Divergence Between Party Assistance Policy and Its Implementation

Another observation resulting from the evaluation of foreign party assistance in BiH concerns the divergences uncovered between the party assistance policy, as it was formulated in Washington D.C., and its implementation on the ground in cities across post-conflict Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The first such divergence could be found in the general assistance provided to SNSD party in Republika Srpska. One interviewee pointed out that US organizations had no place supporting any political party in the RS entity, since according to the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2005 as well as an earlier amendment to legislation in force since 1996, the US prohibited any political or institutional aid to the Republika Srpska until cooperation on war crimes suspects was improved. When looking at the overall implementation of this prohibition, it can be noted that it worked through most part: “Bosnian Serbs, from 1995 to 1997, experienced unemployment as high as 90 percent, but the Republika Srpska received only 2 percent of international aid while the Federation received the remaining 98 percent.” NDI, however, in its support to SNSD overlooked this particular legislation, which points to a discrepancy between what is decided and publically promoted in Washington D.C., and what is being implemented in the field. It also needs to be noted here that with Milorad Dodik’s rise to power, cooperation with the ICTY improved and funds previously unavailable to the RS began flowing freely into this entity, further strengthening Dodik’s power. This inconsistency between the official foreign policy of the US towards the Republika Srpska entity and its elites, and NDI’s on the ground heavy support provided to one political party in particular, SNSD, could be one of the causes behind the unfortunate result of this policy. SNSD under Milorad Dodik’s leadership had over the years transformed from the biggest ally of the US into their biggest political enemy and obstacle to continued BiH post-conflict democratization.

Another inconsistency was uncovered in the way the official party assistance policy as formulated and promulgated by the USAID, chief donor of NDI and IRI programs, explicitly forbade cooperation and assistance to ‘original’ nationalist parties in BiH, namely HDZ, SDA and SDS. At the same time, the interviewees from both US party institutes expressed regret over the existence of this policy, stating openly that they would have loved to have assisted these parties. These officials’ belief was that the USAID policy on party assistance and the forbiddance of assistance for nationalist parties failed to take into account that parties change over time, and that supporting the moderate wings of said parties could have aided their de-radicalization. Furthermore, despite the official USAID party aid policy, the analysis of the working plans uncovered that NDI

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31 Author interview with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 10, 2008; author interview with IRI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 22, 2008.
32 Ibid.
made continuous efforts to come in contact with HDZ and SDA parties, and establish a working relationship. One interviewee from NDI felt that the reason why this cooperation did not in the end happen was because HDZ and SDA simply were not interested in cooperating with the Americans.\textsuperscript{33}

Another contradiction also lies within the policy on party assistance, which sets forth as one of the key criteria supporting only those parties that are deemed ‘viable’ or capable of gaining sufficient support that would get them seats in the parliament. In BiH though, NDI initially assisted over years parties that did not make it even into the cantonal assemblies, such as the LDS. They only began focusing more consistently on SDP and SNSD, two major parties, starting in 2005, abandoning assistance for minor parties not represented in state or entity parliaments.

Finally, the party assistance policy also specifically claims that the work of NDI and IRI is not meant to influence elections and their outcomes in foreign countries. NDI also states that,

“The Institute will cease formal training of parties 30 days prior to elections. This is in accordance with NDI’s policy ensuring that NDI do not have an undue influence on the outcome of the elections.”\textsuperscript{34} At the same time, the work of American party institutes in BiH was explicitly geared towards changing the outcome of elections, i.e. supporting the moderate parties with the goal of getting the nationalist ones out of office.

This divergence between the official party aid policy and its implementation in BiH illustrates both the tensions within and the controversial nature of this type of democracy assistance. Though in theory it is meant to be impartial in its multipartisan approach, and to steer clear from influencing election outcomes, in practice it does play a role in the politics of the country in which the policy is implemented. The contradictions in its implementation expose US party assistance as an intrusive foreign policy tool and one that many established democracies would not tolerate on their own soil. In new democracies, and countries undergoing transition – this assistance is being used to influence and shape political elites to move in the direction which suits the US government. In BiH, however, the law of unintended consequences led to a backlash against the policy, and to the further entrenchment of divisive, detrimental nationalist politics that keep the country further away, rather than closer, to democratic governance.

\textsuperscript{33} Author interview with NDI staff member in Sarajevo, BiH: June 29, 2007.
\textsuperscript{34} NDI Working Plan May 2004 – April 2005.
7.4.6 The Implication of Personality-Dependence in Party Assistance Implementation

The Kosovo case study generated another observation important for understanding party assistance, revealing the subjectivity of the actors involved at its core. As NDI’s resident directors were usually American or Canadian nationals responsible for directing and leading the party assistance efforts in Kosovo, their different leadership styles and takes on the local situation invariably impacted the provision of party aid. While this research attempted to measure the policy’s formulation, underpinnings, interpretation and implementation in the field, it became obvious through interviews that party assistance was understood in different ways depending on the personality of its chief implementers in the field. In this case, different NDI resident directors in Kosovo demonstrated the highest divergence in their assessments of the local context, approach to party aid activities and finally, relationship or attitude towards the local political elites. This divergence warrants special attention and is illustrated next.

One of these high-ranking individuals stressed in the interview that he worked hard on developing friendships with political party leaders on a personal level. As he explained, “We would all be sitting drinking rakija till 3 in the morning.” This person felt that this type of approach, though unconventional, was necessary, because it boiled down to “understanding how to build relationship with Albanian political leaders.” This close personal relationship with local political elites, as well as inviting leaders from partner political parties into one’s home meant getting “more work done over food and rakija, than…over coffee and a meeting.” Now, another high-ranking individual from NDI who led party assistance activities expressed an entirely different view. Critical of some colleagues, he explained that one needs to limit the time they spend in a given country, in order to not to become a part of the political process. As he put it, “I think what happens on a personal level is that people doing democracy assistance can often begin to choose favorites in the process, they can potentially distort the amount of time we spend with certain leaders…” The same interviewee also lamented the mismatch between the role and influence that NDI’s had in political party development in Kosovo, and the inexperienced personnel sent out to do the job. In his eyes, the immaturity level of some of these NDI employees was most apparent and problematic when it came to cooperation with local political leaders, as overly close relationships occurred “when you got people who liked being around people with power.” Finally, the additional implication of this happening in Kosovo was that through close personal links with Albanian leaders, he felt NDI was sending out the message of partiality and pro-independence attitude to the Serb parties, and that this compromised NDI’s work and entire institution.

This personality-dependence in leadership of party assistance organizations made the activity more difficult to monitor and evaluate. It also pointed to a lack of consistency

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35 Local home brewed spirits drink, akin to brandy.
36 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 05, 2008.
37 Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: May 02, 2008.
and guidelines that direct the approaches of party assistance organizations’ staff. Looking at the professional background of directors of party assistance organizations, it was revealed that German foundations tended to employ academics, diplomats and political analysts as their resident directors in BiH and Kosovo, while American institutes required that directors of their programs have experience of working inside a political party, as party organizer or political consultant. This difference in background or profiles of directors could be one of the causes behind the divergence in attitudes and approaches towards local political elites. In other words, while former diplomats, or those with academic background as well as female directors of programs seemed to steer away from fostering too close links with leadership of parties that their institutes/foundations were assisting, the directors with political party background tended to form closer bonds and work on fostering personal, friendly links with local party leaders. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to point out that in Kosovo, all German foundations (at the time of research) employed local, female professionals as directors of their programs. In practice, this meant that these directors were highly familiar with the local context, nurtured a sense of professional discretion and distance from the local political elites with whom they were cooperating. One could even conceive that by appointing (local) women to the helm of their operations in Kosovo, the Stiftungen aided the promotion of gender balance in political parties in Kosovo and sensitized predominantly male political party members to cooperation with the opposite sex.

7.4.7 The Golden Hour Paradox

Studying the provision of party assistance in BiH and Kosovo also revealed the presence of what can best be named ‘the golden hour paradox’. The irony of the golden hour lies in the fact that in the early assistance phase, foreign organizations are in the best position for exerting substantial impact: they usually have the highest amount of funds and flexibility in spending them, while the recipients are in their most vulnerable position and thus most open to suggestions. However, at the same time, in this early phase the recipients are also least able to absorb the aid effectively, and external aid organizations find themselves stretched thin by trying to accomplish too much. The latter is the result of overconfidence, abundant funds, and insufficient planning and needs analysis performed by these intervening foreign organizations. As time goes by, this window of impact opportunity becomes smaller, as the donors’ funds decrease, and the local organizations being assisted are more empowered and have increased capacities.

The research revealed that with the passage of time, parties in both BiH and Kosovo grew weary of assistance efforts. The balance of powers between the aid

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38 The ‘golden hour’ concept originally stems from medicine, denoting the immediate period after a trauma/injury during which treatment significantly increases chances of recovery/surviving for the patient. However, it has also been used to describe the international development aid/intervention, for e.g.: James Stephenson, Losing the Golden Hour: An Insider’s View of Iraq’s Reconstruction (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2007).
providers and aid recipients switched, putting recipients in the more dominant position. When the party assistance organizations first became engaged in BiH and Kosovo, donor support and investment in these areas were very high, and securing funding for party aid programmes was not very difficult. Prior to their arrival, however, the organizations had not had sufficient time to assess the local situations and their local partner parties in detail, so they tended to provide assistance without much specific background knowledge. This resulted in the previously mentioned overload of training activities and repetition of certain types of assistance programs. This initial period in both BiH and Kosovo was marked by parties’ overall inability to absorb all the assistance that was on offer to them at the time. As the party assistance organizations rode high on the wave of international goodwill, cash and a mixture of naïveté and hubris, political parties in BiH and Kosovo welcomed them with open arms, eager to obtain their advice and learn about the workings of Western democracies. In time, however, as funding for party aid work decreased and parties grew stronger with each passing election, their enthusiasm for assistance withered, and the party aid organizations suddenly found that the tables had turned: now they were the ones depending on local parties for cooperation. In more than one case, party assistance organizations’ staff members complained of how difficult it became to ensure that parties sent their members to various trainings they organized. With this reversal of the balance of power between assisters and aid recipients, party assistance organizations felt less able to dictate the terms of cooperation and their leverage over the local political parties decreased. This was also the reason why NDI so eagerly embraced new and promising parties that entered the political scene, such as the AKR in Kosovo. While the party emerged in 2006 and had success already in the 2007 elections, NDI immediately jumped on board to support it without waiting to judge if the party would prove to be, as the assistance criteria demanded, viable and democratic. This party assistance organizations’ hasty keenness to embrace political newcomers also stands as evidence of the reversal of the balance of power between party aid providers and recipients. In addition, as one interviewee explained, party assistance also experiences a plateau effect over time, when certain lessons either get absorbed by the parties and no longer have relevance, or have been tried repeatedly to no effect.\footnote{Author interview with UNDP representative in New York City, USA: April 16, 2007.}

Finally, this brings us to the last observation about party assistance in BiH and Kosovo: the aid was unconditional. It was distributed indiscriminately (except to BiH nationalist parties, which received no aid); the political parties never had to ‘earn’ it. From the outset, party aid served its own purpose, and party assistance organizations depended on their local partner parties to continue providing the raison d’être for the continued funding of aid programmes. During our interviews, several staff members of party aid organizations tried to explain that building trust with their partners was of the utmost importance, arguing that it was a long-term and delicate process.\footnote{Author interview with party aid organization staff members (KAS, NDI, IRI, FES) in Sarajevo, BiH and Prishtina, Kosovo: November 2007, May 2008, June 2009.} For this reason,
the assisters felt that ‘it was not their business to preach to parties against corruption’ because this would alienate their partners and make cooperation impossible. The dependency of party aid organizations on their local partners was illustrated best in a conversation with a State Department official, who explained that one reason for NDI’s and IRI’s continued cooperation with SNSD political party, despite its leader’s progressively increasing nationalist rhetoric, was the lack of alternative parties to support. As he put it, “Who could we work with in Republika Srpska, if not with SNSD? Dodik says a lot of dumb things, but he is pragmatic and willing to support reforms. We need to work with someone, and in the RS, his party is our only possible ally.”

41 Author interview with NDI staff member in Prishtina, Kosovo: November 26, 2007.
42 Author interview with State Department official in Washington D.C., USA: April 19, 2007.
Table 12: *Impact of party aid on party characteristics*

(dependent variable: self-evaluation of party characteristics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Internal party democracy</th>
<th>Gender balance</th>
<th>Voter/membership outreach</th>
<th>Quality of party program</th>
<th>Internal party organization</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation of aid impact</td>
<td>0.36*</td>
<td>0.61*</td>
<td>0.48*</td>
<td>1.00*</td>
<td>0.41*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td>(0.17)</td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia-Herzegovina</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.37*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.23*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.67)</td>
<td>(0.73)</td>
<td>(0.67)</td>
<td>(0.73)</td>
<td>(0.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of aid impact</td>
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<td>-0.39*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.74*</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Bosnia-Herzegovina</em></td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>(0.20)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
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<td>115</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R squared</td>
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<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Ordered probit models. Standard errors in brackets; * indicates statistical significance at the 5% level or better. Evaluations are coded 1 to 5: parties' self-evaluation of different characteristics (e.g. internal party democracy), 1=poor, 5=excellent; party assistance impact on those characteristics, 1=none at all, 5=influenced very much.
8. CONCLUSION

No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government - except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.
-Winston Churchill

Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose.\(^1\)
– French proverb

Fifteen years of building democracy in Bosnia-Herzegovina and eleven years of the same effort in Kosovo have yielded unsatisfying results. In both countries, the physical peace has been maintained since the international interventions and agreements that concluded the conflicts. However, this peace has been of an uneasy, negative quality, signaling a mere absence of violence with conflict having moved from the battlefields into the political arena. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the divisive nationalist ideologies that gave birth to war in the early 1990s continue to rule in the political domain, and the power sharing political system instituted at Dayton prevents the country’s functioning. Kosovo, an internationally administered territory of unclear status at the beginning of this research has during its scope proclaimed independence and seems to be on the way towards achieving full international recognition.\(^2\) At the same time, in both countries international administrations continue their presence, warranting it by assessing the local political elites as immature and as of yet incapable of taking full control over governance institutions.

The initial appearance suggests that political party assistance, conducted in the wider framework of democracy promotion, had no effect on political elites or democratization processes of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. However, following Winston Churchill’s words, it is high time to accept and recognize democracy’s failings and imperfections. Expecting fully-fledged, sovereign, functional and consolidated democratic rule in two countries that experienced violent conflict less than two decades ago would be supremely naïve. Furthermore, one needs to bear in mind the constraining domestic context, imbued with both post-communist and post-conflict legacies, in which political parties developed. Political party assistance organizations provided aid to parties

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\(^1\) [The more things change, the more they stay the same.]

\(^2\) Serbia continues to lobby against Kosovo’s inclusion into international intergovernmental bodies, but the number of countries recognizing Kosovo is slowly but steadily increasing. The International Court of Justice issued an advisory opinion on Kosovo’s declaration of independence in 2010, following Serbia’s request, declaring that Kosovo did not violate general international law because international law contains no prohibition on declarations of independence. For more information, see the summary of the Advisory Opinion, issued on 22 July 2010, at: http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/141/16010.pdf (Accessed: January 28, 2012).
that were born after or already existed during the conflict: this meant having to deal with transforming a guerilla army into political organization, supporting moderate parties that faced ultra-nationalist and highly popular opponents and in general navigating in a rather volatile and undemocratic political arena. The continuing nationalism in BiH politics, as well as the lack of change in perception of Kosovo as state in which organized crime is a form of institutionalized political arrangement leads to the conclusion that flurry of international funds and assistance programs did little to transform politics or local elites in these two countries. In other words, the more things change, the more they seem to stay the same. But is that truly the case? In BiH, the original nationalist party in the RS entity has been ousted from power, and with the help of international party assistance organizations replaced with a (initially) moderate party. That SNSD, or its leader, resorted to nationalist rhetoric and inflammatory demagogy and is now one of the most worrying and destabilizing elements in the country is something party aid organizations did not anticipate. In Kosovo, international party aid organizations began from an almost clean slate, building parties from scratch. As a result, Kosovo now has political parties and a party system which, though still unstable and evolving, is a remarkable accomplishment in one decade’s time. At the same time, the institutionalization of corruption and patronage within this new political system is worrisome and reflects poorly on international efforts of building democracy there.

Building on these mixed results, this chapter revisits the major findings of research into effects of party assistance in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996 – 2008) and Kosovo (1999 – 2008). The first part recaps in what way assistance impacted parties in BiH and Kosovo. The next section looks at assistance within the post-conflict, internationally administered context in which it was provided. The final part hypothesizes on the value and potential of party assistance in post-conflict democratizations, drawing the lessons from BiH and Kosovo case studies.

8.1 The Influence of Party Assistance on Political Parties in BiH and Kosovo

Regardless of different methodologies used in this research, all arrived at the same conclusion: party aid was helpful towards parties in building their internal organization and improving their campaigning capacities as well as in fostering international linkages with ideologically like-minded parties. Interviews with as well as questionnaires from party officials from six parties (SDP, SNSD, HDZ, SDA, NSRzB and LDS) all revealed appreciation of cooperation, even though the overall attitude of those interlocutors was one of mostly mild interest. German KAS received especially positive reception by its partner parties HDZ and SDA, which were barred from receiving assistance from US party institutes on account of their nationalist politics and involvement in the conflict in BiH. Looking at these parties’ starting points in 1996, and their politics and leaders’ attitudes in 2008, one can deduce that parties did become more moderate over time. One cause behind this is the breaking away of radical factions, case exemplified by HDZ1990 leaving HDZ in 2006. Another cause lies in the radicalization in rhetoric and nationalist
demagogy by the parties formerly considered moderate, i.e. SBiH and SNSD. With former moderates winning the extremist nationalist rhetoric competition, the framework of reference simply shifted. The third reason for their moderation can be found in the years spent in governing coalitions under the international administration tight control, which meant getting accustomed to consensus politics. The final factor that played a role in HDZ and SDA becoming more moderate, as evidenced by the interviews with these parties’ officials, lies in their cooperation with KAS. Through the contacts it provided them with on the European political scene, the parties underwent the larger process of Europeanization in their ascendance to membership status in European People’s Party family. One deduction from this finding could be that in order to reform radical or undemocratic political parties, integration or cooperation works better than segregation, i.e. refusal of assistance. Finally, participant observation coupled with interviews pointed to some omissions in party assistance. The most significant one is the consequence of misunderstanding the local political scene or overestimating their influence or leverage over partner parties, or their leaders. By investing all their support in SNSD-Milorad Dodik, American party institutes and their funders from Washington D.C. received a rude wakeup call when this former ally and partner turned into an adversary who was championing divisive politics in the country, rather than building bridges towards reform and reconciliation in the post-conflict, ethnically divided country. The BiH case study also exposed the limitation of party assistance in engaging with the content of politics. While focusing on the form, or institutional building of political parties, party aid organizations did not succeed in altering the underlying nationalist tone of their politics nor did they influence parties’ policy making capacity or willingness to take on reform and bread-and-butter issues in lieu of antagonistic ethnic bickering.

The political parties interviewed in Kosovo (PDK, LDK, AAK, AKR, LDD, ORA) provided an overall more positive evaluation of party assistance than their counterparts in BiH. Supported by quantitative results of the survey questionnaire, it is believed party aid was evaluated more positively in Kosovo due to two reasons. The first lies in the fact that the starting point of party assistance in Kosovo was more rudimentary than that in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Namely, parties had to be built almost from scratch, and party assistance organizations proved particularly useful and valuable in such an unsophisticated democratic context. The second reason behind better reception of party aid in Kosovo lies in the higher appreciation of the source of that assistance. In other words, the fact that it was American and Western European governments that launched NATO’s Operation Allied Force that effectively ended Serbia’s rule over the province meant that (party aid) organizations affiliated with those foreign governments were welcomed with open arms in Kosovo, and cooperation with them was seen as question of prestige and honor. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, on the other hand, the international community was welcomed with a mixed response and party aid organizations operating there did not have the added benefit of being warmly received on the mere account of their being American or German. At the same time, while party aid organizations undoubtedly played an important role in assisting the development of Albanian majority
parties in Kosovo, their record of accomplishment in empowering Serbian minority parties is less clear. As in 1999, Serb parties in Kosovo continue to be fragmented and divided, largely boycotting the elections organized on Kosovo’s territory, with the majority of them unable to come to terms with the territory’s proclaimed independence in 2008. These parties, and the electorate they supposedly represent, remain stuck in a limbo of utter uncertainty of both present and the future. A party strong enough to unite diverging ideas on Kosovo’s status and one firmly linked to the Serbian minority electorate is yet to emerge, and NDI’s assistance to different Serbian parties over time has resulted mostly in frustration on the side of the aid providers.

In both case studies, a deeper analysis of the main recipients of party aid revealed that the key variable in the final impact of that assistance lay with those parties’ leaders’ openness to assistance and reform. PDK and SNSD were incentivized to reform owing to the fact they were both new parties whose support levels were outstripped by those of the ruling LDK and SDS. Party assistance organizations provided the trainings, expertise and advice on building their party organizations from within, increasing membership base and running more effective election campaigns. LDK and SDP, on the other hand, both ‘old guard’ parties with existing infrastructure and management ways proved impervious to assistance and reform, and both parties were over time surpassed by PDK and SNSD in electoral support. The lesson to take home here is that party assistance organizations should try and assess early on which parties and leaders were open to their assistance, as this has shown to greatly increase those parties’ absorption of aid and its potential for impact.

Lastly, in both cases, party assistance organizations throughout their time of engagement continued to paint the picture of local political arena as problematic. In Kosovo’s case, this was likely done to ensure the continued flow of funds to the party assistance programs. In this country namely, unlike in majority of others receiving aid, the amount of funds increased rather than decreased over time. In BiH, on the other hand, NDI’s program was nearly extinguished following the cessation of cooperation with its former biggest partner SNSD. However, the rationale of persisting detrimental post-conflict and post-communist legacies, coupled with dysfunctional and divisive politics born in the Dayton-set BiH political system, was used as justification for renewal of NDI’s activities in 2010, prior to that year’s general elections. Bearing in mind this constraining domestic context in which party aid was provided and its overall perceived debilitating influence on democracy assistance, the next section explores the implications of supporting political party development in post-conflict countries under international administration.

3 Proclamation of independence served as a renewed starting point of international intervention. In 2008, the funds allocated for democracy assistance programs doubled from the previous year.

4 National Democratic Institute, “Bosnia-Herzegovina Democracy Assessment Report,” September 2009: 1-17. The same report makes no reference to or analyzes the role that NDI played in the country throughout its twelve years long party assistance effort with local political elites.
8.2 Party Assistance in Post-Conflict, Internationally-Administered Context

Throughout this dissertation, evidence was presented on the deep legacy of conflict on the formation, development and functioning of political parties in BiH and Kosovo. Research suggests that ethnically diverse societies have a more difficult time democratizing, than homogenous ones. In the case of main BiH parties, and Serb parties in Kosovo, the question that dominated party discourse and electoral competition throughout the timeframe under research was, “Which party can best represent our ethnic group’s interests?” In BiH parties formed predominantly alongside ethnic cleavages and this made nationalism an inevitable part of political competition in the country. In Kosovo Serb and Albanian parties stayed firmly apart and there was no successful ‘mixed ethnicities’ party, and within each of the group there was further fragmentation. Albanian parties in Kosovo, furthermore, formed alongside clan cleavages. This made party competition, especially in the period immediately following the conclusion of hostilities with Serbia, particularly volatile. The assassinations against political opponents lasted for several years, until the international forces were able to get a better grip over the security situation in Kosovo. In this context of set ethnic/clan cleavages, party assistance efforts to align parties with dominant political ideologies (such as social democracy, liberalism, centre-right or conservative principles) seemed to have been destined to failure from their onset. However, most if not all parties covered by this research have aligned themselves with one or another European party family, and have begun identifying themselves and thinking about themselves as left, centre or right-leaning parties. This to a large extent can be credited to the work of party assistance organizations. While they did not succeed in one of their goals of moderating the political sphere, they nevertheless did introduce predominant ideologies and pushed parties to identify themselves alongside these criteria. It is too early to tell whether these developments are a true sign of countries’ party systems’ alignment on the left-right political spectrum. Time will show whether it is possible for nationalist, or ethnic/clan-based parties to transform into genuine social-democratic, liberal or conservative parties, or whether instead of one identity replacing the other, the two can exist side by side.

Adding to the explosive ethnic mix other factors that seem to be an inevitable occurrence during conflicts – an increase in organized crime and the strengthened power of religious groups in the society – this further cemented the unfavorable environment for development of democracy in BiH and Kosovo. Coupled with abundance of international funds for post-conflict reconstruction, injected into BiH and Kosovo in an atmosphere of near-absolute lack of rule law meant that organized crime groups, which were in some cases symbiotically linked to different political parties, were able to flourish. Party assistance organizations were ill equipped to deal with these problems. Whether out of oversight or due to genuine ignorance, the standard party aid toolbox employed in BiH and Kosovo did not address the issues of corruption, or parties’ close links with religious

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groups. Strengthening and empowering parties that were involved with (organized) criminal activities, or as in the case of Kosovo parties suspected of being criminal organizations – posed a big problem for democratization of the two countries in this research. The fact that party aid organizations did not scrutinize their partners more strictly, or ponder the effects of their aid to parties whose leaders were suspected of criminal activities has not only diminished party aid’s impact on democratization processes, but may in turn have created adverse effect on it.

Another constraining contextual element was the historical legacy of communism, which party aid organizations’ staff complained was hampering their work. This aspect seemed to influence most visibly the internal organization of parties, and the high level of personalization or leader-dependence that most parties exhibited throughout the period under analysis. Post-communist politics in BiH meant that the newly founded nationalist parties in the 1990s all had ‘democratic’ in their name, but their leaders were former communist party apparatchiks who changed little in their management and organization ways. This in turn was revealed as a big obstacle to party aid efforts to strengthen the position of youth and women organizations within parties or institute internal party leadership elections. However, while internal party democracy and strengthening thereof was a part of official NDI’s working plans, interviews revealed that in practice, party aid organizations accepted that their partners were leader-based and their parties internally autocratic. Moreover, interviewees from several party aid organizations explained that too much internal party democracy can prevent a party from functioning, and that political parties in established democracies often functioned in less-than-fully-democratic ways.

Working in countries that were placed under international administration meant that party aid organizations operated in highly unusual conditions. Supporting the development of political parties and strengthening their governance capacity in national legislatures, only to have them govern side by side to their more powerful, undemocratic counterparts in international administration institutions, meant that party aid organizations were a constituent part in what David Chandler called, ‘faking democracy.’ However, while this frustrated most party aid organizations’ staff members interviewed in this research, the example of Kosovo shows how they could turn this situation to their advantage. The international administration context overall implied a higher degree of capacity and freedom for party aid organizations, and in Kosovo party aid organizations took an active part in discussions and decisions of international administrations on the electoral law formulation, party financing legislation, etc. Why a similar approach was not attempted in BiH remains a mystery.

The positive side of working in internationally administered countries meant that party assistance organizations became a part of overall international engagement in assisting moderate parties at the expense of nationalist ones. The example of SNSD party in BiH shows that parallel engagement yields results: party assistance organizations

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offered extensive aid to SNSD, while international administration and High Representative used Bonn powers to dismiss and remove nationalist politicians from power. Had it not been for this active undermining of SDS in Republika Srpska, coupled with use of NATO forces for bringing Dodik’s predecessor Biljana Plavšić to power, party aid organizations would not have been able to assist Dodik into SNSD’s eventual overwhelming victory in 2006 general elections. However, this benefit of working in heavily internationalized context had its downside, too: party assistance organizations and their effort at times got sidetracked by the actions of the international community. A case in point is the launching of constitutional reform talks in 2006, few months prior to the elections in BiH. While party assistance organizations argued against this out of conviction that raising this explosive issue in election year would derail their effort of supporting moderate parties, the international officials (mostly US ones) nevertheless proceeded with the reform talks, which in the end failed and radicalized the election campaigns of several parties.

Finally, operating within the international administration context also meant that party aid organizations were susceptible to committing the same mistakes as international organizations, or at least acting as their accessory in crime. In charge of ‘high politics’, or the running of BiH and Kosovo, instituting legislation and overseeing post-conflict reconstruction process, international administrations professed a very high faith in elections as means of democratization in the two countries. One of the criticisms against political parties presented by Carothers in his ‘standard lament’ was that they only focused on elections and did nothing in the period between them. Party aid organizations, especially American ones, as was mentioned before, got caught up in the electoralism fever promoted by the international administrations. By doing so, they may have in fact emphasized parties’ focus on elections rather than their actual work and policies implementation in between elections.

8.3 The Role of Party Assistance in Post-Conflict Democratization

The findings on party assistance in BiH and Kosovo confirm the general wisdom on party assistance. The mythical or idealized party model/template that is being promoted, coupled with the standard toolbox of approaches and methods seemed poorly suited to addressing the key challenges facing democratization in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo: deeply seated nationalism and corruption, both of which were exacerbated by the countries’ conflicts and communist history. In Kosovo’s case, the aid had a definite effect, as its starting point was unusually low, i.e. parties were developing almost from scratch and assistance had more basic ground to cover. However, failing to penetrate the underlying political culture in BiH and Kosovo, party aid effects in both cases remained

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8 See Literature Review chapter.
on the surface level, evidenced only by parties’ increased professionalization in running election campaigns.

Carothers argues that one of the reason party aid fails to achieve transformative effects is because parties are hard organizations to help. This research has identified, however, that in certain contexts — such as the post-conflict, internationally administered cases studied here — party aid organizations could have seized upon the opportunity and used the international administrations to influence the formation of the political system/the design of electoral law in which their partner parties were to compete. Furthermore, better planning and more specialized knowledge of the political context could have aided party assistance organizations in maximizing on the golden hour effect, when they operated in heavily internationalized environments while receiving generous funding from their donors. Also, Kosovo’s unique acceptance of all things Western thanks to its history of NATO intervention in practice meant that party aid organizations operated in a favorable context which they, conceivably, could have used more strongly to push their partner parties for wider reforms.

Did party aid play a role in the socialization of political elites in BiH and Kosovo? While the literature suggests socialization effects of party aid are merely tentative, this research – especially in the case of German foundations and their assistance to HDZ and SDA parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina – concludes that Europeanization of these political parties did play a role in the de-radicalization of their attitudes and positions. Furthermore, the work of all party aid organizations, in cooperation with OSCE (in case of Kosovo) contributed to the emergence of the norm that parties should be affiliated with dominant political ideologies. While this identification is still in the superficial phase, with ethnic group and/or clan-belonging still playing the dominant role in party identification, the parties have over the course of this research began identifying themselves with main European party ideologies.

Another finding of both participant observation and analysis of working plans was that the very endeavor of democracy promotion is set in such a way that does not encourage or that cannot afford doubts and self-reflection in the practitioners’ community. Donors demand accountability and strong indicators of success, but party assistance is seldom able to provide them with satisfactory statistics or evidence of impact. Often, US party assistance fell prey to programming that made it easy to measure the number of people that attended certain trainings. What they took away from those trainings, if anything, could not be determined. That party assistance, like much of development aid and democracy promotion, is a self-serving activity could be evidenced in two areas: the organizations’ overhead expenses and absence of follow up to activities they were organizing. With funding for different party aid organizations kept secret, it was impossible to determine the exact level of overhead expenses. What one interview revealed, however, was that from each agreement/grant given by USAID to NDI, approximately 25% is automatically ‘reserved’ for NDI’s Washington D.C. office.\(^9\) The

\(^9\) Author interview with NDI staff member, over Skype: November 17, 2010.
remaining 75% of the grant is spent on the activities in country offices, however even from this sum, it can be anticipated that large amount goes towards paying (international) staff salaries. Regarding the absence of follow up, participant observation revealed that many of the party assistance events boiled down to coming together of local party members’ and international consultants or trainers, for talk and discussion, without any effort made to discern or develop a bigger purpose for that training to play in party’s development. With this being the rule of party aid, it is not surprising that party aid recipients were not able to identify cause-and-effect examples of a training leading to a change/reform within their parties, neither in face-to-face interviews nor in the anonymous survey questionnaire. These kind of events without follow up left the general feeling that they were being organized because there was money to do it, pointing to party aid’s self-serving character. Also, the internal organizational culture of independent evaluation and acknowledging of one’s mistakes should be fostered in party aid and democracy promotion in general. With the current ‘beautified’ two-weeks-in-the-field assessments performed by the ‘beltway bandits’ (private consulting companies), party aid organizations are not learning any lessons from their work in the field.

Having presented its shortcomings, is becomes clear that party assistance is the microcosm illustration of problems inherent in the promotion of liberal peace. The liberal peace critique warns against cookie cutter approaches, it rejects overemphasis of elections in the process of democratization and takes issue with the liberal democratic system that is promoted, doubting the ability of institutional modeling to impact cultural and societal change. Liberal peace critique also criticizes the hijacking of domestic issues and legitimacy by importing the Western agenda and imposing it on the local political elites, thus increasing the chasm between these local political leaders and their disillusioned and alienated voters. Finally, this body of literature explains that hybrid outcomes that are stuck somewhere in the space between the original (undemocratic) starting points of these societies and end goal of promotion programs, i.e. consolidated liberal democracy, are an inevitable result of faulty assumptions inherent in this exercise. Party assistance, to recap, has demonstrated that the standard method implemented in BiH and Kosovo failed to reflect on their unique post-conflict and internationally-administered context and was therefore unable to affect substantial change on parties or the political system in which they functioned. Party aid organizations focused on elections organized repeatedly by international administrations, thus getting carried away with the short-term and largely cosmetic reforms in parties’ functioning, at the expense of deeper ones that bear relevance in the long term (e.g. influencing the content of parties’ politics and messages). Party aid has also shown how institutional or technical aid is ‘easy’, while changing political culture or affecting substantial change is ‘tough’, and its instruments were revealed as inept for the latter task. As both BiH and Kosovo can be seen as ‘kleptocracies’, or institutionalized (ethnic) oligarchies with high levels of corruption and/or links to organized crime, it is a valid question whether party aid assisted democratization in these two countries, or instead – criminal capture of these state through legitimate electoral competition means?
What lesson, therefore, can be drawn from analysis of party assistance in post-conflict, internationally administered BiH and Kosovo? Perhaps more than anywhere else, ‘sequencing debate’ in democracy promotion should be revisited. BiH and Kosovo case have taught us that assisting parties in the aftermath of war – even if you do not directly assist the nationalists or ‘bad guys’ – can lead to undesired, unintended consequences. The example of SNSD-Milorad Dodik party has shown how despite of aid this party received, this party and its leader’s radicalization over time was not surprising when the following consideration is taken into account: the political competition in BiH takes place in the setting of flawed, temporary peace agreement that signals an unfinished process of state formation. As literature suggests and this research supports, promoting democracy in non-states is a counter-intuitive effort and one that not only does not yield desired results, but risks provoking the exact opposite. Therefore, bearing in mind the sequencing debate, perhaps the lesson to take home here is that rule of law and strong controls over the political arena in the form of vibrant civil society and independent media should be a prerequisite to allowing or introducing political competition into the post-conflict picture. Following this line of argument, even if international community insists on elections and local politics shortly after the conclusion of conflict, then perhaps party assistance organizations would be wiser to abstain from provision of aid to political parties, at least in the immediate post-conflict phase. By focusing instead in those early years on empowering and strengthening civic watch groups, investigative journalism and independent judiciary, all of which would play a role in controlling political parties, these democracy promotion organizations could perhaps stand to contribute positively, rather than adversely, to the overall democratization processes in countries such as BiH and Kosovo.

Epilogue

Even though the findings offer little solace to those with the hope that party assistance could be the panacea for (post-conflict) countries undergoing democratization, not all is bleak. This type of aid does have a role to play within the overall democracy promotion as well as within general political party development. In this section, I will outline some of the developments and innovations in party assistance that have taken place since the conclusion of the field research, offer some ideas for further research, and reflect on the need to (re)conceptualize and (re)contextualize democracy, and how we study it.

One of the biggest innovations in political party assistance that emerged just as I was wrapping up the data collection process was NDI’s Regional Political Party Initiative. It departs from the standard toolbox as it operates on integrative or inclusive principles, bringing together parties of similar ideological background from throughout the Western Balkans. Keeping in mind the recent history of the region, meetings of political elite – as well as youth and women sections of political parties – from all of the countries of former Yugoslavia can therefore be seen as also aiding reconciliation processes. Another thing that sets NDI’s Regional Political Party Initiative program apart from standard party aid is the cooperation with European party aid organizations. The NDI, as an American organization, regularly invites German and Dutch party institutes to offer trainers, experts and logistical assistance where possible in Regional Initiative seminars, conferences and trainings. By doing so, they not only expose the parties from the region to a variety of approaches and training styles, but also lead by example of positive partnership. Furthermore, the Regional Initiative conferences and meetings are almost exclusively content-based, and pay particular attention to (inclusive) policy development processes. By aiding parties of similar ideological background in developing their policies, but also in sharing experiences on similar issues, the Regional Initiative activities deal with the substance of politics in the Western Balkans region.

Even though the methodological chapter discussed constraints on evaluating the effects of party aid, the problematic element of assessment needs to be briefly mentioned here again. Multiple qualitative and quantitative methodologies have been used to determine the impact of party aid on political party development: however one thing that escapes evaluation and defies rigorous scientific method is precisely the ‘human factor’. In other words, what was visible in the participant observation and at actual conferences, trainings and seminars – is the growth of solidarity, familiarization, networking and friendship that was emerging among the people present at those trainings. It is hard, if not impossible, to quantify either the friendship between two people, or what implications it might hold for later cooperation and exchange of ideas between those individuals. Especially with small parties, e.g. liberal parties throughout the Western Balkans, the solidarity with their fellow liberals from neighboring countries seemed to provide comfort and to reenergize these political party members for what they perceived to be an uphill battle with their (conservative/nationalist) political opponents and the (illiberal) electorate back home. Party assistance, as a form of political and civic education, contributes to building networks and human capital in political parties – even though, for
us researchers, it is hard to trace this exact process. It is mission-impossible detective work, determining how a particular training led to a specific idea in a participant’s mind, who later on applied this idea into a concrete policy or activity within a party, and which over time generated a given change in that party’s internal functioning or programmatic content. Echoing one of the interviewees, who compared the American and European approaches to international politics and intervention attributing focus on results to the former and focus on the process to the latter, perhaps this lens also offers a more wholesome evaluation of the effects of party aid. Focusing blindly on concrete results and insisting on quantified and objectively verifiable indicators will give a skewed picture of party aid and fail to provide insight into individual stories and narratives of how the individual party members perceived the effect of that assistance on their parties, and on their lives overall. The process of aid provision matters as much as the results.

Another argument against consigning party aid to democracy promotion practices’ history is its potential for transmission of practices in the international domain. There is a rise in literature discussing the crisis of political parties, their demise and a general decline of trust in politics, and the implications of these perceived developments on the future of democracy. Party assistance has the potential to spur innovation inside political parties, mostly among those on the receiving end of the deal, but also for those on the provision or donor side – assuming they are open to the advice and wish to reform or evolve. The internationalization of politics and the close interaction of national elites at the EU level has created multiple agendas which political parties attempt to shape either directly at the national level, or indirectly through lobbying, networks and partnership in European party families. This cooperation and knowledge and practices exchange between parties in established democracies and parties in new (post-conflict) democracies could, if conducted and mediated consciously and intentionally, yield to self-reflection and reform measures that could transform parties. However, this potential remains only a hope until party assistance organizations take on the role of generators or at least facilitators of change and reform within their parties. In the status quo, party assistance organizations in the US, German, UK and Dutch contexts are all relatively marginalized institutions, somewhat removed from the mainstream politics and assigned into ‘special’ international departments, embodying the strange hybrid of politically affiliated establishments that function in many ways as non-profits that operate in the civil society sector. Until their role is recognized as having value for the parties themselves, as a source of learning, reform and important international networks – this potential will remain just that, and nothing more.

In terms of the standard lament and negativity that surrounds the discourse on political parties throughout Europe and not only in new democracies such as BiH and Kosovo, this dissertation calls for us to revisit the notion that parties are inevitable within

the democratic context. This notion has been so deeply embedded into the modern discourse as well as into our conceptualization of democratic politics that we find ourselves in a truly uncomfortable ‘with or without you’ dilemma when it comes to parties. They are distrusted, frowned upon and do not inspire positive change or confidence, yet there is this pervasive sense that they are the best we have, i.e. that democracies cannot function without them. This assumption has not been brought under scrutiny, and, if anything, it best illustrates the depth of the poverty of imagination that cripples our ability to conceive of a different system and advocate for the reforms of the current one based on a new set of assumptions. These new assumptions ought to be generated in line with the modern, current world we live in, which regularly exemplifies the limits of neo-liberalism. The economic crisis, growing disillusionment of the citizens with their political elites and the inertia of political parties and their functioning is a desperate call for a reform of parties as channels of democratic governance. With democracy in crisis, it is high time to question everything, including what we perceive as its foundational tenets, namely parties. Currently, party aid organizations promote, as Carothers put it, ‘the mythic model’, which is highly theoretical (e.g. parties with high internal democracy) and rarely, if ever, exists in practice. We should move away from promoting theory or party structures as they exist in the Western, established democracies – because in the West, too, parties are failing to generate high vote of confidence in the eyes of their electorate. Party aid organizations should therefore play an active role in this process of questioning, generating new assumptions and reforming parties in developing democracies to serve their citizens. Who knows, perhaps in this process of experimentation and ideas exchange a new hybrid of parties/civil society organizations will emerge, or independent candidates supported by grassroots movements, etc. The goal would be the strengthened, rejuvenated and healthier-functioning democracies with high citizen participation, and to achieve it we must follow Einstein’s logic: “We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” (In addition, strangely also fitting, “Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”)

Finally, a bit of reflection on democracy, its promotion, and on studying these processes. The two case studies under analyses have demonstrated that, despite the high level of international actor intervention, post-conflict statebuilding is an extremely complex and long-term endeavor. Bearing in mind the financial constraints (all the more emphasized in the times of global economic crisis), as well as the current ongoing international involvement in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and the ‘Arab Spring’ uprisings, it seems prudent to conclude that the international (democratic) community has reached its limits of imposing, generating or assisting democratic change outside of its borders. Moreover, the rise of right-wing parties to power and their strong presence in national parliaments throughout the European Union countries, warns of a new trend: that of a consistent shift to the right in the political and ideological spectrums. EU-skeptic, anti-immigrant, anti-Roma, anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, anti-system sentiments and rhetoric embodied by these parties hold the warning that democratic system of governance can, at
times of great uncertainty, give birth to highly undemocratic politics and rule. The current elites seem to hold the belief that the democratic system will somehow correct these views, and that these radical right and extremist parties’ membership will dissipate over time. However, this dissertation’s final editing was done in Budapest, where I had a front-row seat to the erosion of Hungary’s democracy. A democratically elected party that gained an unimaginable two-thirds majority in the Parliament as a result of profoundly divided and scorned opposition parties has, in scope of one year, dealt a devastating blow to the country’s democracy. In 2011 alone, through its parliamentary majority, the FIDESZ party has managed to gerrymander electoral districts, weaken the independence of the courts, severely limit the freedom of the media and in general undermine much, if not all the democratic reforms that were put into place during Hungary’s post-communist transition and that were meant to ensure the country’s democratic consolidation and eventual accession to the European Union. The same Union, alongside the United States, voiced weak protests against this corrosion of democratic checks and balances in this period. These events in Hungary point to several disturbing lessons. For Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, it seems that the European Union’s carrot of accession has not been strong enough to lure the countries (and the Western Balkans region on the whole) into a quicker pace of reforms. Hungary’s case shows, however, that after the accession the EU has little power to control further (un)democratic consolidation in its member states. This means that reforms, and general politics in a given country, rest largely on its political elites. As analyzed in this dissertation, this gives little hope to the people living in BiH and Kosovo. The second lesson to take from Hungary is that democracy promotion, no matter in how favorable a context it takes place (the fall of communism, reform-willing elites, the lure of EU accession) – comes with no guarantees of return on investment. Democratization, as well as democracy, is a two-way process, and Hungary – which was considered to have ‘graduated’ from foreign democracy aid programs having reached a satisfactory democratic governance standard – shows why we should not take anything for granted. The lesson here is that democracy promotion should actively take place within ‘established’ democracies as well. The hubris of dictating standards to other, ‘developing’ countries while suffering a corrosion of those same standards in your own is hypocritical in the least. It carries long-term consequences for the democracy promotion effort, as it risks not being taken seriously, or fueling a backlash from the side of its intended recipients, and thus further delaying and damaging the overall democratization process.

Maja Nenadović, Budapest, Hungary (January, 2012)
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire*

This questionnaire is for academic purposes only, and information revealed in it will be treated with utmost confidentiality. It is serving a PhD research on political party assistance effects in Kosovo, conducted by a PhD student of University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Thank you for your cooperation and help!

General Information

List your party: Sex: F / M Year of birth:

Your position within the party:
   a) youth branch member
   b) staff, active member
   c) Governing Board member, Member of Parliament, Presidency of the Party
   d) other: _______________________________________________________

How long have you been active in the party? List the year you assumed an active role:

1. To your knowledge, what type of international cooperation / assistance has your party received in the past 10 years? (Circle all applicable.)
   a. Trainings (campaign management, polling, media relations, etc.)
   b. Seminars / lectures
   c. Study trips abroad
   d. In-kind assistance (computers, administrative tools, office assistance)
   e. Financial assistance
   f. Other: explain

2. Which ones have you personally been involved in? Tick √ next to applicable items listed above.

3. How would you evaluate different types of assistance in terms of their usefulness/effectiveness? Grade each that your party received from 1 (not at all helpful) to 5 (very useful).

<table>
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<th>Trainings</th>
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<td>Study trips</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial assistance</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-kind assistance</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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4. Grade the frequency / rate at which your party received above noted types of assistance (1= hardly any, 5 = most frequent type of assistance)

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<th>Trainings</th>
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<td>In-kind assistance</td>
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<td>5</td>
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* Note: this here is the English translation of the survey questionnaire. The questionnaire itself was distributed in local languages (in Bosnia-Herzegovina in Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian and in Kosovo in Albanian).
5. To what extent has your party’s general internal development been influenced by foreign assistance? (1 = not very much, 5 = very influenced)  

6. To what extent has this external assistance helped your party’s position in the Kosovo political scene? (1 = not very much, 5 = very helpful)  

7. Provide an example/describe of how a training/seminar/any form of external assistance had a (direct) impact on internal party development/change:  

8. How are participants in trainings/lectures/study trips selected within your party? Explain.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>9. How would you personally evaluate your party’s state of: (1=poor, 5=excellent)</th>
<th>10. How has external assistance affected these particular aspects inside your party? (1 = not at all, 5 = very much)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal democracy</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender balance</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voter/membership outreach</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of party program</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Party organization</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>(statutes, party organs, clarity in roles, effectiveness, transparency in leader elections, etc.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (name):</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
11. Has your party ever declined cooperation/assistance? If so, why?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

12. Which associations have you cooperated with/provided you with this assistance? (Circle all applicable). Rate from 1 (not at all helpful) to 5 (very helpful) different organizations your party received assistance from / cooperated with.
   a. National Democratic Institute
e. Friedrich Naumann Stiftung
   b. International Republican Institute
   f. Heinrich Boll Stiftung
c. Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
   g. Other (list): _______________________
   d. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

13. Do you have any suggestions for improvement of international actors’ strategies and involvement with your party? What could they have done better? What types of assistance were not particularly helpful? Elaborate:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

14. What do you see as your party’s biggest strength? List one factor:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

15. What do you see as your party’s biggest weakness? List one factor:
________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP WITH THIS QUESTIONNAIRE
Appendix 2: BiH Constitutional/Administrative Political Setup after 1995

Figure 4: Bosnia-Herzegovina Constitutional/Administrative Political Setup

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Administration</th>
<th>OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE (OHR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislative</td>
<td>Executing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House of Representatives</td>
<td>Presidency 3 Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House of People</td>
<td>Council of Ministers 9 Ministers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Judiciary

Constitutional Court 9 Members (4 from F Bosnia, 2 from RS, 3 international judges)

State level

Parliamentary Assembly

Entity level

FEDERATION BIH (FBiH)

(Bosniak-Croat) *51% territory*

House of People 38 Members, 87 from each ethnic group + 7 others

President 2 Vice Presidents

Prime Minister Government (with ministries)

Constitutional Court FBiH

Supreme Court FBiH

REPUBLIKA SRPSKA (RS)

(Serb) *49% territory*

National Assembly 83 Members

President + 2 vice presidents

Prime Minister + Government (with ministries)

Constitutional Court RS

Cantonal level

10 Cantons

Cantonal Assemblies 30-50 Members

Canton Presidents + Governments

Cantonal Courts

Municipality level

74 municipalities

(Each municipality has a Governing Council, mayor, own administrative structures, municipal courts.)

Note: Arrows indicated source of nomination of candidates. Where no arrows are indicated, it stands for direct election of the representatives through national/entity/cantonal elections.

Appendix 3: List of Conducted Interviews

Note:

The numbering mostly follows the chronological order in which interviews were made; towards the end some interviews were supplemented into the list outside of the chronological order.

This list upholds the anonymity of the interviewees, listing only their professional affiliation, time and place of the interview. The anonymity was preferred by many of the interviewees: this choice is also further explained in the methodology chapter of the dissertation.

The interviews listed in parentheses are those conducted by team colleagues Max Bader or Marlene Spoerri – these interviews are counted as ‘general’ or joint interviews. While they were not conducted personally by the author, the author has had full access to transcripts and notes from these interviews, as they pertain to general party assistance topics rather than to specific case studies.

Finally, with some individuals repeated interviews were conducted, either in person or via Skype/telephone. These are counted as supplement to the original interview, rather than individual interviews.

Prishtina, Kosovo: January – February, 2007

1. Staff member from the Olof Palme International Center (for Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia), January 25, 2007.
2. PDK (Democratic Party of Kosovo) Officer for International Relations, January 26, 2007.
5. Staff member of the Prishtina Institute for Political Studies, January 31, 2007.
6. Staff member of the National Albanian American Council (NAAC), January 31, 2007.
8. Staff member of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), January 31, 2007.
10. Legal International Expert, Support to the Assembly of Kosovo, Implemented by the Consortium of Assemblee Nationale (France), Deutscher Bundestag (Germany), Chambre des Representants (Belgium), the National Assembly (Slovenia), February 02, 2007.
11. Staff member of the OSCE’s Mission Central Governance Unit, February 03, 2007.
12. Political consultant (consulting company from USA, unidentified) with PDK, informal interview on flight Prishtina - Vienna, February 04, 2007.
   a. 2nd interview: in New York, during USA research trip, April 15, 2007.
Washington D.C. & New York City, USA: April, 2007
   a. 2nd meeting, informal, Prishtina, April 24, 2008.
14. Staff member of the Political Parties Program at NDI, April 10, 2007.
15. (Staff member of the NDI Political Parties Program) interview by Max Bader, April 10, 2007.
16. NDI program officers for Bosnia and Herzegovina, April 10, 2007.
18. Staff member of IRI, South-eastern Europe division, April 12, 2007.
19. Staff member UNDP Western Balkans, New York City, April 13, 2007.
23. Staff member at the Office of Transition Initiatives USAID (based in Bosnia in late 1990s, Kosovo as well), April 17, 2007.
24. Former Special Representative of Secretary General, Kosovo (interviewed while at USIP), April 17, 2007.
25. USAID expert on political parties work, April 18, 2007.
   a. Accompanied by interview data collected in general interview, done by Max Bader and Marlene Spoerri jointly, April 10, 2007.
26. Staff member of the RAND corporation (special advisor under Clinton administration, experience in Balkans in general), April 18, 2007.
27. State Department Desk Officer for Kosovo, April 19, 2007.
28. State Department Desk Officer for Bosnia-Herzegovina, April 19, 2007.
29. NED Program Officers (Serbia, Bosnia, Kosovo), April 19, 2007.
30. USAID Program Officer for Bosnia-Herzegovina, April 20, 2007.
31. Staff member of NDI’s Central and Eastern Europe section, April 20, 2007.
32. Staff member of NDI’s Latin America Programs, formerly involved in the Balkans, April 20, 2007.
33. Former Head of OSCE in Bosnia-Herzegovina, currently L-3 consulting, April 20, 2007.

Berlin, Germany: May, 2007
35. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung staff member: phone interview (Skype), done jointly with Marlene Spoerri, May 04, 2007.
37. Friedrich Naumann Stiftung staff members with experience in/on the Balkans, team interview with Max Bader and Marlene Spoerri, May 07, 2007.
38. Former trainer/consultant of party aid programs for FNS in Bosnia, Kosovo, Serbia, May 08, 2007.
40. Staff member of the Division Southeast Europe, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, May 10, 2007.
41. Staff member of the Department of International Cooperation, KAS, joint interview conducted with Marlene Spoerri, May 10, 2007.
42. (Evaluation Officer for Konrad Adenauer Stiftung) interview done by Marlene Spoerri, May 10, 2007 + (staff member KAS) interview done by Max Bader and Marlene Spoerri, May 10, 2007.
43. (staff member FES), interview done by Max Bader and Marlene Spoerri, May 10, 2007.
44. International Relations Desk Officer Post Soviet Countries, Central and South East Europe, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, May 11, 2007.
45. Bundestag SDP parliamentarian, heading working group on South-eastern Europe in Bundestag, May 11, 2007.

Interviews in the Netherlands
47. Deputy Principal Attorney for BiH at ICJ, in case against Serbia, Amsterdam, May 15, 2007.

Bosnia-Herzegovina: June – July, 2007
48. NDI Parliamentary Program Officer (before 6 years with OSCE in Political Resources / Democratization department), Sarajevo, June 11, 2007.
49. OHR Political Advisor, Sarajevo, June 22, 2007.
   a. Informal interviews June 5, 6, 2007
   b. 2nd formal interview June 27, 2007.
50. Advisor to President Silajdžić (and colleagues), Sarajevo, June 13, 2007.
52. Former staff member of the PRISM polling agency, Sarajevo, June 20, 2007.
55. IRI Program Director, Sarajevo, June 22, 2007.
56. BH Dani journalist, Sarajevo, June 23, 2007.
57. SDP Croatia (assisted NDI in 1995 with planning entry to BiH), Mostar, June 24, 2007.
   a. 2nd interview, Zagreb, Croatia, April 15, 2008.
58. NDI local governance / party caucuses officer, Sarajevo, June 27, 2007.
59. IRI senior local coordinator, Sarajevo, June 27, 2007.
60. Political analyst/ formerly with OHR, Sarajevo, June 27, 2007.
   a. 2nd interview, Skype, January 7, 2008.
61. Director of KAS, Sarajevo, June 28, 2007.
62. DOSTA movement member, Sarajevo, June 28, 2007.
63. Staff member of PRISM research agency, Sarajevo, July 16, 2007.
64. OSCE Democratization department staff member, Sarajevo, July 19, 2007.
65. Political Science Faculty / CIPS employee, Sarajevo, July 19, 2007.
66. FES Director, Sarajevo, July 20, 2007.

68. USAID Electoral Processes staff member, formerly with OSCE in BiH, August 6, 2007.
71. Deputy Director of SEED, State Department, August 7, 2007.
72. Former DCM in BiH 2000-2003, currently Director of State Department’s South East Europe office, August 7, 2007.

Other Interviews
73. Formerly with UN in BiH, now SAIS, Leiden/Amsterdam, August 26, 2007.
74. Democratization Unit staff member, ODIHR, OSCE, Warsaw, interview with Max Bader, September 5, 2007.

Kosovo: November – December, 2007
75. Staff member with OSCE Gjilane, before in Bosnia with OHR, Gnjilane, November 05, 2007.
76. Assistance Democratisation Officer, OSCE OO Gnjilane, Gnjilane, November 06, 2007.
77. OSCE Political Affairs Department (joint interview with three staff members), Prishtina, November 08, 2007.
78. OSCE Political Party Support Unit program coordinator, Prishtina, November 09, 2007.
82. UNMIK staff member, Guardia di Finanza, Prishtina, November 19, 2007.
84. KIPRED think tank Deputy Director, Prishtina, November 21, 2007.
86. UBO consulting staff member, Prishtina, November 27, 2007.
87. FNS Director, Prishtina, November 27, 2007.
89. SLS party secretary, Mitrovica, November 28, 2007.
90. KIM radio host, Gracanica, November 28, 2007.

Interview in the Netherlands
91. Former head of OSCE in Mostar, Bosnia, Den Haag, March 21, 2008.

Washington D.C., USA: March – April, 2008.
92. Coordinator of U.S. assistance to Europe and Eurasia, State Department, March 27, 2008.
93. Bosnia-Herzegovina Desk Officer, State Department, April 01, 2008.
94. Former President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Board member of the National Endowment for Democracy, previous Balkans experience, April 01, 2008.
96. Senior Policy Adviser at Alston & Bird LLP, before US State Department Desk Officer for Yugoslavia, worked on lobby for Kosovars with Senator Bob Dole, April 03, 2008.
97. Former Deputy High Representative in BiH + leading role in Constitutional Reform Talks / April Package in 2006, April 04, 2008.
98. NDI Kosovo Program Managers (local and D.C.-based), April 04, 2008.
  a. 2nd informal meeting, Prishtina, April 24, 2008.
99. IRI Program Assistant for CEE/SEE region, April 04, 2008.
100. NDI Program Assistant & Officer for Bosnia-Herzegovina, April 04, 2008.
101. NDI former intern, April 04, 2008.

Interview in the Netherlands
102. VVD International Programs Manager, The Hague, April 08, 2008.

Zagreb, Croatia: April, 2008.
103. BBC journalist in Croatia, April 14, 2008.
104. Former KAS Director in Bosnia-Herzegovina office, April 15, 2008.
105. USAID Program Manager, April 16, 2008.
106. Political science professor, author on post-communist transitions and party development in new democracies, April 17, 2008.

107. Former Resident Director NDI Kosovo, Skype interview, May 1, 2008.
110. Former Resident Director NDI Kosovo, Skype interview, May 5, 2008.
111. PDK party official + advisor to PM, May 6, 2008.
112. LDK party Vice President, former Youth Branch President, May 6, 2008.
113. PDK party official (member of party presidency), May 6, 2008.
114. AAK party official (leadership), May 6, 2008.
115. PDK youth branch leader, May 7, 2008.
116. LDK party official (presidency), May 8, 2008.
117. LDK youth wing president, May 8, 2008.
118. KAS Director, May 15, 2008.
120. AKR youth wing president, May 20, 2008.

121. Formerly w/ NDI, political party program manager, Sarajevo, June 10, 2008.
122. SDP presidency member, former youth branch president, Sarajevo, June 11, 2008.
124. SDP official, Sarajevo, June 4, 2008.
125. SDP youth wing president, Sarajevo, June 4, 2008.
126. SNSD RS Assembly representative, former youth wing president, Banja Luka, June 18, 2008.
127. SNSD youth wing president, Banja Luka, June 18, 2008.
129. PDP vice president, Banja Luka, June 19, 2008.
130. SNSD training center leader, Banja Luka, July 9, 2008.
131. SNSD Fondacija Nenad Bastinac president, Banja Luka, July 9, 2008.
132. LDP youth wing president, Sarajevo, July 23, 2008.

Kosovo: July, 2008.
133. SLS Vice President and MP in Kosovo Assembly, Prishtina, July 4, 2008.
134. AAK member, Prishtina, July 3, 2008.
136. AKR member, Prishtina, July 4, 2008.
137. ORA party president, Prishtina, July 4, 2008.

London, UK: February, 2009

New York City, USA: April, 2009
142. Princeton University researcher (Deputy Director of Democratization Department OSCE BiH), April 25, 2009.

Bosnia-Herzegovina: May – June, 2009
145. NSRzB party leadership, Sarajevo, May 16, 2009.
146. NSRzB party official, Mostar, May 19, 2009.
147. HDZBiH youth wing president, Mostar, May 19, 2009.
148. KAS Program Manager, Sarajevo, May 20, 2009.
149. Formerly NDI Head of Banja Luka office/currently trainer in SNSD Training Centre, Banja Luka, May 27, 2009.
150. FES Banja Luka office head, Banja Luka, May 28, 2009.
151. Kalander Foundation staff member, Drvar, June 7, 2009.
152. HDZBiH party spokesperson, Mostar, June 9, 2009.
155. SDA secretary Youth Association, June 18, 2009.
156. Professor at Faculty Political Sciences, Sarajevo, June 22, 2009.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interview Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>159</td>
<td>Director of Democracy &amp; Governance Office, USAID, Sarajevo, June 25, 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160</td>
<td>Political science professor, former Head of Central Electoral Commission, Sarajevo, June 26, 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161</td>
<td>NDI Director of Bosnia-Herzegovina program, Sarajevo, June 26, 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>162</td>
<td>NDI Program Coordinator, Sarajevo, June 26, 2009.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Interviews**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interview Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>164</td>
<td>OSCE political advisor/KODI think tank researcher, Prishtina, November 30, 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td>D66/IDI International Program Manager, several meetings spread throughout 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>166</td>
<td>NIMD Knowledge Center Director, The Hague, May 06, 2010.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: List of Participant Observation Events


International Meeting on Kosovo Status, organized by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Berlin, Germany: May 10, 2007.

“Fighting human trafficking in the Western Balkans,” conference organized by the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, the Olof Palme Center and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: June 23, 2007.


Training on Municipal Elections Campaigning, organized by VVD party for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS), Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: June 14, 2008.


Working Visit of the Representatives of the Kosovo Assembly’s Committee for Budget and Finance to the Parliament of the Netherlands, in the framework of Parliamentary Oversight
of the Budget and Public Finances: A programme in support of the Assembly of Kosovo, organized by the East-West Parliamentary Practice Project (EWPPP), The Hague, the Netherlands: March 17 – 18, 2010.

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Fiscal Year 2003, January 2004, prepared by the Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, Department of State Publication 11148.

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Central Electoral Commission of Kosovo, www.cec-ko.org
Central Electoral Commission of Bosnia-Herzegovina, www.izbori.ba
Community of Democracies, www.community-democracies.org
European Stability Initiative, www.esiweb.org
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, www.fes.de
Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, www.freiheit.org
Heinrich Boell Stiftung, www.boell.de
International Crisis Group, www.crisisweb.org
International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, www.idea.int
International Republican Institute, www.iri.org
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, www.kas.de
National Endowment for Democracy, www.ned.org
National Democratic Institute, www.ndi.org
Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, www.nimd.org
Office of the High Representative, www.ohr.int
World Movement for Democracy, www.wmd.org

Political Parties Websites
Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (Dutch People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy), www.vvd.nl/over-de-vvd/13/internationaal

Bosnia-Herzegovina
Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), www.snsd.org
Croatian Democratic Party BiH (HDZ), www.hdzbih.org
Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina (SBiH), www.zabih.ba
Party of Democratic Action (SDA), www.sda.ba
People’s Party Work for Betterment (NSRzB), www.zaboljitak.ba
Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), www.sdsrs.com
Social Democratic Party (SDP), www.sdp.ba

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Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), www.ldk-kosova.eu
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work is a booming – and controversial – business,” Newsweek, 24 November.
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Samenvatting

De conflicten in Bosnië en Herzegovina en in Kosovo stonden op de voorpagina’s van alle kranten gedurende de jaren ’90. De twee uitzonderlijk bloedige episodes in de val van Joegoslavië eisten de aandacht van internationale organisaties, overheden (regeringen), de media en academische kringen. Vanwege een sterke betrokkenheid bij het stoppen van de oorlogen nam de internationale gemeenschap een actieve rol op zich in het wederopbouwen van het na-oorlogse Bosnië en Herzegovina en Kosovo. De gemeenschap nam als taak om de gebieden om te zetten in functionerende staten middels de creatie van democratische governance, rule of law, vrije markeconomie, civil society en een onafhankelijke media.

Democratietpromotie en -assistentie zijn in de afgelopen twee decennia een prominent onderdeel geworden van de buitenlandse politiek van vele westere landen. Democratie was definieerd als het gewenste einddoel van de na-oorlogse wederopbouw van de Balkan. Het vooruithelpen van de democratie werd één van de zuilen van de internationale administratie die voor deze taak was aangewezen. De democratisering van Bosnië en Herzegovina en Kosovo was zwaar beïnvloed door hun plaatsing onder een overgangsadministratie. Beide gebieden zijn een voorbeeld van ongekende invloed van een externe acteur tijdens het overgangs proces/ de invloed van een externe acteur in een gebied tijdens een overgangsproces is zonder precedent.

Eén van de manieren waarop internationale organisaties trachten om democratie te installeren in Bosnië en Herzegovina en en Kosovo was door middel van steun bij de ontwikkeling van diens politieke partijen. De ondersteuning van politieke partijen, als specifiek onderdeel van democratische assistentie, had als doel om de partijen sterker te maken, interne democratisering aan te sturen en in het algemeen de partijen dusdanig te organiseren dat ze als katalysator functioneerden, in plaats van obstructie, van het interne democratiseringsproces.

Dit onderzoek draagt bij aan het vullen van verschillende gaten in de hedendaagse literatuur. In het domein van democratisering en democratiepromotie studies is er vooralsnog onvoldoende onderzoek gedaan naar ondersteuning van politieke partijen van buitenaf. Hulp en ondersteuning aan politieke partijen is in zijn geheel buiten beschouwing van analyses over wederopbouw en staatsonbouw gelaten. Dezestudie geeft ook inzicht in het beperkt onderzochte onderwerp van ontwikkeling van politieke partijen na de oorlog. Ten slotte zet het de ontwikkeling van politieke partijen in Bosnië en Herzegovina en Kosovo uiteen, die tot nu toe weinig aandacht heeft gekregen van academische kringen. Uitgaande van originele plannen van

De complexiteit en spanningen in het proces van post-conflict democratisering worden zichtbaar door de uiteenzetting van de ondersteuning van politieke partijontwikkeling in deze twee landen tijdens het tijdperk van post-conflict opbouw en internationaal uitgevoerde staatsopbouw, en vervolgens door de evaluatie van de mate die de hulp aan politieke partijen heeft gespeeld in het proces van post-conflict democratisering. Onderzoek legt bloot dat in Bosnië en Herzegovina de hulp met name gericht was op het verwijderen van nationalistische politieke partijen van de macht en het installeren van meer gematigde geluiden, in de hoop dat dit een positieve bijdrage zou leveren aan democratisering. Het resultaat laat zich uitdrukken als de wet van onbedoelde gevolgen in actie: steun aan politieke partijen heeft geleid tot de versteviging van gematigde partijen die nationalistische trekken zijn gaan vertonen en die uiteindelijk obstructief zijn gebleken in het proces van democratisering en vredesopbouw. In Kosovo heeft steun aan politieke partijen effectief geholpen om politieke partijen op te bouwen waar ze, voorafgaand aan internationale interventie niet bestonden. Tegelijkertijd, ondanks verregaande hulp die de partijen kregen, worden deze politieke partijen in analyses en statistieken van publieke percepties genoemd als de meest corrupte instituties op het grondgebied van dit nieuwste Europese land. Ten slotte concludeert dit onderzoek dat in post-conflict landen zoals Bosnië en Herzegovina en Kosovo, de opbouw van politieke partijen komt met vele uitdagingen en risico’s, meer dan met kansen. De geleerde les is dan ook, dat in dergelijke contexten steun aan politieke partijen ineffectief kan blijken te zijn, of erger nog, potentiële kan hebben om de ontwikkeling van democratie in gevaar te brengen.
This photo was widely circulated in the wake of Arab Spring uprisings.

Source: the Internet.