



Difference in Development Priorities of Male versus Female Politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Issue Brief — Early Findings

MEASURE-BiH, September 2016

Study Background

This issue brief explores preliminary findings based on survey data collected from municipal/city party boards and political candidates for 2016 local elections across 19 municipalities in BiH for the study “*Difference in Development Priorities of Male Versus Female Politicians*” between August and September, 2016. The study is funded by the USAID Democracy, Rights and Governance (DRG) Center, specifically the Elections and Political Processes (EPP) Fund. For information on the study, see www.measurebih.com

Women’s participation in political processes and policy decision-making is fundamental to effective governance and improved human development outcomes. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to key principles of gender equality and women’s empowerment as full inclusion of women from across society is imperative for economic growth and stability.

Through the USAID/BiH Monitoring and Evaluation Support Activity (MEASURE-BiH), USAID commissioned the study *Difference in Development Priorities of Male versus Female Politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina* to expand the knowledge base to understand gender differences in development priorities in BiH and provide empirical evidence to advance women’s and men’s equal participation in decision-making. This issue brief provides voters with timely information on development priorities as perceived by male and female candidates for the municipality/city councils/assemblies in the 2016 BiH local elections and how they differ from the official development priorities set forth by the municipal/city boards of the political parties that nominated them. Using data from surveys of BiH municipal/city party boards and political candidates from six parties in 19 municipalities/cities

across BiH, the brief presents preliminary findings on gender differences in a wide variety of characteristics, including personality traits among political candidates that might contribute to the gender difference in development priorities. These findings provide the civil society, donors, researchers, and government agencies evidence to tailor the approaches to political party democratization and better integration of both men’s and women’s priorities in the policy-making. Moreover, the findings provide the political parties evidence on the need for their increased efforts to better integrate both men’s and women’s priorities in their party priorities.

METHODOLOGY

Working with experts from universities, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH, MEASURE-BiH developed comprehensive survey instruments for political candidates to gather information of their development priorities, their social, economic, and political characteristics, and personality traits relevant for political participation. The data collection and analysis of political candidates’ personality traits were guided by the CLASP¹ (Credibility, Legitimacy, Accountability, Service-orientedness, and Power), five policy influencing principles developed by the Western Balkans and Turkey Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organizations (TACSO) project. Relying on the Five Factor Model (FFM),² MEASURE-BiH developed separate but correlated aspects within each principle and used many items from the Big Five Inventory (BFI)³ and International Personality Item Pool (IPIP)⁴ to capture CLASP. Specifically, the CLASP principles include: 1) Credibility (which we measured using questions on integrity and competence); 2) Legitimacy (sincerity, fairness, and

¹ TACSO. (2011). *Advocacy and policy influencing for social change*. Sarajevo, BiH: Roebeling and de Vries. CLASP principles have been used for CSO training on advocacy and policy change, but not in examining political candidates or gender differences.

² The Five Factor Model of personality is a hierarchical organization of personality traits in terms of five basic dimensions: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience. See Digman, J. M. (1990). Personality structure: Emergence of the five-factor model. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 41, 417-440 and Goldberg, L.R. (1993). The structure of phenotypic personality traits. *American Psychologist*, 48, 26-34.

³ John, O.P. & Srivastava, S. (1999). The Big-Five trait taxonomy: History, measurement, and theoretical perspectives, In Pervin and John (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 102-138), New York: Guilford Press.

⁴ Goldberg, L.R. (1999). A broad-bandwidth, public domain, personality inventory measuring the lower-level facets of several five-factor models. In Mervielde, Dearly, De Fruyt, and Ostendorf (Eds.), *Personality psychology in Europe* (pp. 7-28). Tilburg, Netherlands: Tilburg University Press.



traditionalism); 3) Accountability (responsibility and teamwork); 4) Service-orientedness (diligence and organization); and 5) Power (boldness, conformity, docility, dominance, drive, leadership, locus of control, and forcefulness).

In order to examine the differences between parties' development priorities and those of the individual candidates for the municipality/city councils/assemblies, MEASURE-BiH also surveyed municipal/city party boards to solicit party's official development priorities for those municipalities/cities. The study sample of 19 municipalities/cities was selected through a two-stage sampling procedure from the list of municipalities/cities enumerated by the BiH Central Election Commission (CEC). The two-stage sampling combined simple random sampling (first stage) and purposive replacement (second stage) to ensure the sample coverage of: 1) both BiH entities and Brcko District; 2) variability between rural and urban areas; 3) variability between municipalities/cities in representativeness of political parties; and 4) other variables that may affect women's and men's political position within parties (such as unemployment and inactivity rates for men and women). Within each study municipality/city, MEASURE-BiH used the results of the 2012 local elections to identify top political party which has the most representatives in the municipality/city council/assembly composition. This approach ensures that the parties selected are largely representative of the voter preferences in the study municipalities/cities. Following this sampling approach, six political parties were identified for further sampling of politicians: i) Party of Democratic Action (SDA); ii) Social Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SDP BiH); iii) Croat Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HDZ BiH); iv) Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD); v) Serb Democratic Party (SDS); and vi) Democratic National Alliance (DNS).

To sample the political candidates within the study sample of municipalities/cities and parties, MEASURE-BiH selected the top 5 male and the top 5 female candidates from each party's list of candidates for the 19 selected municipality/city councils/assemblies. In total, the analysis sample includes 185 political candidates, 96 of them are females.

KEY FINDINGS

Gender Difference in Social, Economic, and Political Characteristics

Female candidates are younger (average age of 39) compared to male candidates (average age of 43). On

average, female political candidates are more educated (75% with higher education) than male candidates (67% with higher education), less likely to hold a full-time job (female 69% vs. male 74%), and more likely to be employed part-time (female 5% vs. male 1%). Conditional on being employed, female candidates are slightly more likely to work in the government institutions (female 49% vs. male 45%). In addition, male candidates have significantly higher party tenure than female candidates (male 13 years versus female 9 years). A significant higher fraction of female candidates (female 27% vs. male 17%) think that they do not have any influence on the party's development priorities. On average, only 30% of party municipal/city board members are female.

Difference between Parties' Official Development Priorities and Candidates' Development Priorities

When asked to list their top five development priorities for their municipality/city, 60% of political candidates used only their party priorities. Among the remaining 40% who listed priorities that are not on the list of party priorities, female candidates are slightly more likely to add their own priorities than male candidates.

Furthermore, female candidates' priorities and their ranking differ more from their party's priorities and ranking compared to male candidates. Meanwhile, candidates' priorities and ranking differ more from the parties' priorities in FBiH than in RS.

Gender Difference in Development Priorities

There is no significant difference between what male and female politicians identified as their top five development priorities. When listed priorities are grouped in broad categories/sectors, business environment improvement for job creation is by far the most frequent development priority for both male and female candidates (93% of female candidates listed priorities in this category within their five priorities versus 89% of male candidates). This is followed by transport, including infrastructure and communications (58% for female candidates and 69% for male candidates); agriculture and rural development (48% for female candidates and 58% for male candidates); general public services, including general administration and operations, and fiscal and external affairs; (40% for female candidates and 39% for male candidates); and housing and community amenities (26% for female candidates and 30% for male candidates). Thus, contrary to stereotype which typically asserts that female politicians prioritize social protection



over economic affairs⁵, the study found that overall, both male and female candidates prioritize social protection and economic affairs similarly.

Female candidates are more likely to prioritize health and youth issues higher than male candidates, while male candidates are more likely to prioritize defense issues higher than female candidates, although on average none of these issues fall into the five most frequent priorities chosen by either male or female candidates.

Gender Difference in Personality Traits

MEASURE-BiH analyzed the personality traits of all candidates in the sample to assess their political capacity to influence their parties' development priorities and the associated gender gaps. There is no significant gender difference in personality traits for any of the CLASP dimensions (Credibility, Legitimacy, Accountability, Service-orientedness and Power) except in the credibility dimension. The assessments indicate that female candidates on average have higher credibility than male candidates. Among the two sub-dimensions related to credibility, competence and integrity, it is integrity that is consistently higher for female candidates than male candidates; no significant difference in competence has been noted across gender. We find no evidence of gender stereotype that traits related to power dimension differ across gender.

⁵ For example, see Taylor, P., Morin, R., Cohn, D., Clark, A., & Wang, W. (2008). *A paradox in public attitudes – Men or women: Who's the better leader?* Washington, DC: Pew Research Center and Dolan, K. & Sanbonmatsu, K. (2007). *Gender stereotypes and gender preferences on the*

2006 American National Election Studies (ANES) Pilot Study. Ann Arbor: MI: American National Election Studies.