



EMPLOYMENT PARTY

Physiognomy of Political Patronage in Kosovo

Besnik Boletini and Besa Kalaja

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Kosovo Centre for Investigative Journalism - Preportr, has found that 249 senior public officials with clear political party background have been/are employed in senior decision-making positions in public institutions. The data gathered by Preportr, show that political patronage is widespread, has penetrated all institutions and has affected all senior public positions. PDK holds the lead in this aspect, followed by LDK and AAK, and other smaller parties. In the Patronage Index, Kosovo scores among the highest in Europe.

BESNIK BOLETINI AND BESA KALAJA

Currently, the establishment of institutions is being held hostage by the two major political parties which are struggling to trade off their future privileges. Political parties, groups and individuals within them perceive being part of the Government of Kosovo, as an ideal opportunity for consolidating their positions. This appears to be the only way to survive, particularly for parties that for years have not been part of the central government.

In a country where the public sector is the largest employer with approximately 84 thousand employees and when the government plays a crucial role in the economy, control over the reins of government represents very valuable bait for political parties. Employment opportunities in state institutions and distribution of public goods, according to the unwritten rule are used for rewarding members and political militants, but also of party-affiliated businesses.

Political Patronage - or politicization of public institutions through the employment of party members and support-

ers in high public positions - has been and persists to be a rule of thumb for political power in Kosovo. Two major reasons underlie expansion and consolidation of political patronage: reward and control. Through this approach, political parties have managed to consolidate their organizations, strengthen businesses and certain economic and interest groups, but also maintain links with their constituents. This has been detrimental to fair competition, impartiality and professionalism in recruiting personnel for the administration and new public institutions of the country.

Kosovo Centre for Investigative Journalism - Preportr, undertook this research to provide empirical data on the extent of political patronage in public institutions. The data analysed indicates that employment of individuals linked with political parties is high, spreads across all public institutions and affects all decision-making positions in these institutions. The findings of the research also testify that the link between the volume of placements in public institutions of individuals with party affil-

iation is proportional to the power of the governing party or coalition at the central level. The research confirms that the trend of politicization of public institutions in the period 2010-2014 has been marked with constant growth, with a slight decline in 2014.

A study on political patronage completed by D4D Insti-

GENERAL DATA ON POLITICAL PATRONAGE:

- 250 HIGH LEVEL PUBLIC OFFICIALS EMPLOYED IN SENIOR POSITIONS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, ARE SIMULTANEOUSLY MEMBERS/MILITANTS OF POLITICAL PARTIES.
- TODAY, 184 OF THESE OFFICIALS REMAIN EMPLOYED IN THOSE POSITIONS.

tute, sets the Patronage Index for Kosovo at 0.928. This score ranks Kosovo higher than all 15 European countries surveyed and much higher than the average of 0.34 for these countries.

PHYSIOGNOMY OF POLITICAL PATRONAGE

Methodology:

This research carried out by Kosovo Centre for Investigative Journalism - Preportr, aims to demonstrate the level and range of political patronage - the politicization of public institutions with political parties' militants. The research has focused only on the high level public positions - as per definitions provided in the Law on Declaration of Assets. The research did not include other public officials who are not obliged to declare their wealth.

Preportr, has reviewed the asset declaration records of 2,132 senior public officials, employed through public announcements. The research does not include judges and prosecutors. Of over two thousand files reviewed, factual evidence has been found connecting 249 senior public officials to political parties.

Of 2,132 senior public officials whose records have been reviewed, 1,247 were employees of ministries and the Office of the Prime Minister. Of these, links to political parties have been found for 138 persons. Of 885 officials in decision-making positions in independent institutions and public enterprises, 112 have links with political parties. These statistics do not include public officials who have family ties (nepotism) with political party officials or other public officials.

The three criteria on the basis of which political affiliation of a senior public official with a political party was determined were: a) the public official has competed in local and/or parliamentary elections for a political entity; b) the public official has held positions in political parties' structures at central or branch level in municipalities, or that; c) officials have held political positions in the past, i.e. political advisers, and later they have taken public positions through public announcements.

In assessing the ties between senior public officials and political parties, Preportr, has screened the names 249 officials in: a) local and national election lists of 2007; b) national election lists of 2010; c) local election lists of 2013; d) national election lists of 2014 (in some cases); e) official information obtained from the websites of political parties, with respect to members of governing councils and branches of political parties.

Preportr has researched the employment of officials related to political parties since 1999. However, it should be noted that the data evidencing links to political parties of 250 senior public officials are referenced from 2010 onwards, when the same began declaring assets with the Anti-Corruption Agency. So, the number of 249 senior public officials with political party background that this research identifies only applies to officials who have taken positions since 1999 and have continued serving at least until 2010. Due to the lack of information, senior public officials with political party background that were employed in the period 1999 - 2009, were impossible to be identified and included in this research. This is primarily because of the impossibility of verifying the names of officials employed in equivalent positions, since the records on senior public officials' assets before 2010 are not available.

Research subject to this report, leads to several conclusions regarding political patronage.

First, the data derived from the survey indicate that public institutions, especially high level decision-making positions, are overly politicized. Preportr research, spread over the period 2010-2014 found that 249 senior public officials employed in decision-making positions in state institutions were/or are members of political parties. Of them, 185 senior public officials are currently working in the public institutions.

Secondly, the evidence

The range of political patronage according to the power of political parties:

Of 250 senior public officials found to be linked with political parties:

- 120 come from PDK;
- 72 from LDK;
- 25 from AAK;
- 12 from AKR,
- 9 from LDD;
- 5 from former political party ORA;
- 3 from PD;
- 1 from PSHDK,
- 1 from NISMA,
- 1 from Turkish Democratic Party,
- 1 official that has been member of another political party, but in the last election has run for Vetëvendosje!

shows that political patronage is broad-ranged both horizontally - present in all institutions (central and local) - as well as vertically - affecting numerous decision-making positions within the hierarchy of public institutions.

Thirdly, the influence of political parties in terms of employment of their members and supporters in public institutions fully reflects the strength of the respective parties at the central level. The evidence from the materials reviewed brings PDK at the forefront of political patronage with 120 senior public officials affiliated to it holding high positions in public institutions, followed by LDK with 72, AAK with 25, AKR with 12, LDD with 9, followed by the other small-

Appointment of high public officials with clear political party background in years:

1999 1 from AAK, 1 from LDK	2002 2 from LDK, 1 from PDK	2003 2 from LDK	2004 1 from PDK, 1 from AAK
2005 3 from LDK, 2 from PDK, 1 from AAK, 1 from LDD	2006 1 from PDK, 1 from LDD	2007 2 from LDK, 2 from PDK	2008 21 from PDK, 8 from LDK, 2 from AAK, 1 from LDD, 1 from ORA, 1 nga AKR
2009 8 from PDK, 16 from LDK, 1 from AAK, 1 from AKR, 1 from Partia Demokratike Turke, 1 from PSHDK	2010 17 from PDK, 14 from LDK, 5 from AAK, 2 from LDD, 1 from ORA, 1 from PD	2011 21 from PDK, 10 from LDK, 5 from AAK, 2 from AKR, 1 from LDD, 1 from ORA, 1 from VV,	2012 25 from PDK, 6 from LDK, 7 from AKR, 5 from AAK, 2 from NISMA, 2 from ORA, 1 from LDD, 1 from PD
2013 10 from PDK, 3 from AAK, 2 from LDK, 2 from AKR, 1 from PD, from Independent Serbian Initiative	2014 2 from PDK		

er parties. (See table with the names and positions at the end of the article).

Fourth, the research shows that the trend of employment of individuals with political party affiliation in public positions from 2010, has marked a steady growth, with a slight decline in 2014.

POLITICAL PATRONAGE, SEGREGATION BY INSTITUTION

The highest ranking position in the Kosovo civil administration is that of permanent secretary. Seizure of the position of Permanent Secretary is considered to be one of the main tools for extending political patronage, considering the extended competencies of this position in terms of employment and termination of ministry staff.

Preportr, has managed to identify nine (9) permanent secretaries with clear political party background. Of them, four continue to exercise the function and all have links with the PDK. According to the D4D study, recruitment of Permanent Secretaries on political affiliation grounds, paves the way for a process that creates the possibility of replicating itself, as through this position, appointment of senior, middle and low level civil servants will be continued along the same line, hence, extending the political patronage in state institutions.

This conclusion is founded

on the data derived by the research carried out by Preportr. The findings show that of the 249 public officials, who have been identified to have clear partisan background, 117 work in ministries and are employed in different positions, including here: 65 directors in ministries, 9 chief of staff, or even positions of head inspectors and internal auditors.

Of the 117 officials noted above, 85 of them are still working in the respective positions, while the remaining portion has changed. The replacement of these officials have also

Horizontal and Vertical spread of political patronage:

Of the 250 senior public officials found to be linked with political parties, 117 work in ministries. Of them:

- 65 are directors;
- 9 permanent secretaries;
- 9 chiefs of staff;
- 8 ambassadors;
- 3 division heads;
- 3 dpty. directors;
- 2 managers;
- 3 counsels;
- 2 first secretaries in embassies (Japan - Skopje);
- 2 coordinators;
- 2 chief inspectors;
- 1 general secretary at UPZ;
- 1 internal auditor;
- 1 national board director - MoH;
- 1 Chief of Cabinet for Diabetology - MoH;
- 1 dpty. counsel;
- 1 legal officer;
- 1 financial officer, and;
- 1 procurement official;
- 1 official for driving license.

28 FROM PDK;
24 FROM LDK;
7 FROM AAK;
4 FROM LDD;
1 FROM AKR;
1 FROM NISMA

6 FROM PDK;
2 FROM LDK;
(ARE NOT PERFORMING THEIR DUTY)
1 FROM NISMA.

REFLECTION OF POLITICAL PARTY POWER IN EMPLOYING INDIVIDUALS IN DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES:

117 high level public officials that work within ministries are also members of political parties;

- 54 come from PDK;
- 37 from LDK;
- 9 from AAK;
- 7 from LDD;
- 4 from AKR;
- 2 from the former party ORA;
- 2 from PD;
- 2 from NISMA

POLITICAL PATRONAGE IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER:

4 high officials with direct links to political parties;

- 2 directors;
- 1 coordinators, and;
- 1 chiefs of staffs.

2 from them are from PDK, 1 from LDK and 1 from Turkish Democratic Party.

Employment trend and exercising of public functions in the period 2010-2014, for 250 high public officials with political affiliation:

2010 - 136
2011 - 170
2012 - 216
2013 - 218
2014 - 185

(The number 185 refers to high public officials with evidenced political backgrounds in 2014 that have obtained positions in previous years and that have remained in office. Officials employed in 2014 have not been included in the research. This is primarily because at the time of the research the registry of asset declaration for 2014 had not been published by AKK. The lack of data about the hiring in 2014 can potentially explain the decreasing trend in political employment during this year.

The trend of appointment and continuity of exercising public office by high public officials that Kosovo Center for Investigative Journalism – KCIJ, has gathered evidences that belong to a political party.

Years	LDK	PDK	AAK	LDD	ORA	VV	PD	AKR	Iniciativa Serbe	NISMA	PDT	PSHDK	TOTAL:
1999	1		1										2
2000													0
2001													0
2002	2	1											3
2003	2			1									3
2004	1		1										2
2005	3	2	1	1									7
2006		1		1									2
2007	2	2				1							5
2008	8	21	2	1	1			1					34
2009	15	18	1					1			1	1	37
2010	14	17	5	2	1		1						40
2011	10	21	5	1	1	1		2					41
2012	6	26	5	1	2		1	7		2			50
2013	2	9	3	1			1	2	1				19
2014		2											2
No date	2	1											3
Total	68	121	24	9	5	2	3	13	1	2	1	1	250

occurred due to the change of ministers and permanent secretaries that are from other political entities or even the same parties.

Preportr, has also researched the new officials who replaced them in the same positions and in some cases it has been observed that some of the new arrivals in these positions are also politically affiliated. From a sample of 26 new coming officials, six (6) of them have links with political parties, namely, five (5) are affiliated to the PDK, and one (1) to the LDK.

There are cases of some ministry departments being closed after the departure of director of the department, and the same have been placed in other public institutions. One such case is that of the Director of the Diaspora Policy Department, who was employed as Minister Counselor in the Embassy in Switzerland after closing of the department. This proves the use of public institutions to accommodate politically linked individuals.

Within the Office of the Prime Minister, although most of the staff is political in nature, in some positions that are apolitical, four (4) senior officials who have direct links

with political parties are employed. These officials continued to work in these positions at the time when the data was collected.

With year 2010 being a reference point, the research results indicate that there is an increasing trend (especially in the three years after 2010) of officials who are employed in senior public offices on party basis. A slight decline in the trend of partisan employment in public positions is observed

HIGH PUBLIC OFFICIALS THAT WORK IN INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS AND HAVE POLITICAL TIES:

- 1 head supervisor at the Agency for protection of Personal Data;
- 2 chiefs;
- 1 dpty. directors at KPA;
- 1 dpty. head of Kosovo Competition Authority and
- 1 head of OSHP;

28 HIGH PUBLIC OFFICIALS IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS WORK IN INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS;

- 6 board members;
- 1 board member of KPM;
- 1 member of the Commission at KPM; ;
- 4 directors;
- 1 governor;
- 4 heads of departments;
- 2 Presidents of Independent Media Commission (one dismissed);
- 3 board chairmen;

in 2014. It should be noted that this decline may be due to the lack of data about new employments during 2014, because at the time when this research was carried out, asset declaration records for 2014 have not been

published by the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA).

INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS IN THE HANDS OF PARTY

There are 28 officials with decision-making positions for which Preportr has found evidence that link them to political parties work in independent institutions.

Preportr research has shown that the politicization of senior positions in public institutions aside from affecting public ad-

OF THESE 28 OFFICIALS IN PUBLIC OFFICIALS IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS IN INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS:

- 16 are from PDK;
- 7 from LDK;
- 2 from AAK;
- 1 from AKR;
- 1 from former political party ORA;
- 1 from Serbian Civic Initiative for Partesh.

ministration, it also extends to independent institutions such as agencies, various regulatory bodies and public enterprises.

However, unlike in other institutions where there is high turnover of officials, in inde-

pendent institutions they do not move as frequently. Of the 28 senior officials with decision-making positions identified, 25 were still in those positions.

When independent institutions are analyzed, it must be emphasized that the PDK has influence over major institutions related to public procurement in Kosovo. The Chairman of the ‘Court of Tenders’ - OSHP has been an assembly representative of PDK in Prizren, while the Chairman of the Board of KRPP served as PDK assembly member in Suhareke.

To better understand and create a broader perspective of the importance of institutions responsible in the field of public procurement, the value of this procurement should be considered. Only in the period after the declaration of independence in 2008 and until 2013, contracting from public authorities has reached close to 3.6 billion Euros. The figure does not include the public spending on “Ibrahim Rugova” highway, which in the period 2010 - 2013 has cost the Kosovo Budget a total of 789 million.

Placement of individuals with clear party affiliation in main institutions of public procurement represents not only an important factor in the estab-

lishment and consolidation of political patronage, but also in the creation and expansion of a clientelistic culture within political parties. Earlier research of Preportr, noted that the extent of clientelism to political parties has worrisome proportions. It has shown that only in the period 2008-2010, and only through two ministries – Ministry of Transportation (now Infrastructure) and that of Education - around 100 million euros have been distributed to sponsors of the largest political party - PDK. Preportr research has evidenced that clientelism - the award of tenders to sponsors of political parties - is also present at the municipal level, where other parties like LDK and AAK have been governing.

This politicization of public institutions aside from serving as reward, also seems to be used for the purposes of establishing control over the quantity and quality of official data that are made public. One such case has been recorded when the Head of the State Agency for the Protection of Personal Data and former Chairman of the Municipal Assembly of Sh-time from PDK, had initiated the idea of removing the asset registry of public officials

from the internet under the justification of personal data protection.

RANGE OF POLITICAL PATRONAGE IN PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

Political patronage is also very prevalent in public enterprises. Preportr, has managed to identify 84 officials with decision-making powers that are employed in public enterprises (central and local) who have direct links with political parties.

Appointment of party persons in the leading boards positions of public enterprises happens due to two major interests of political parties. Firstly, it serves as a solicitation or reward from the party for its members. Secondly, it serves to attract new people in the party, since the party is considered to be “taking care of its members and voters”.

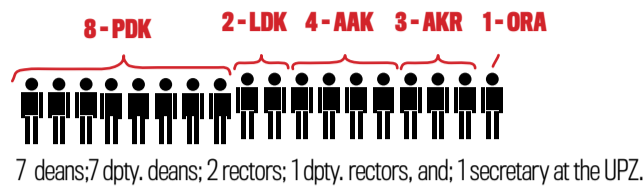
On the other hand, the appointment of party members in management boards of public enterprises enables political parties to influence these companies and push their policies, hence, extending political patronage and achieving their private and party interests.

The biggest outlier to this end is the most profitable public company in the country, Post and Telecommunications of Kosovo - PTK. This company, until October 1, 2014, was led by a CEO which was a PDK member, and continues to have as chairman of its supervisory board another member of PDK.

As part of this research, Preportr has investigated upon higher managerial positions and found that 11 of the senior officials who manage PTK have a direct link with politics. Of these eight (8) are affiliated with PDK, one (1) with the LDK and one (1) with AKR. All these PTK officials continue to be employed.

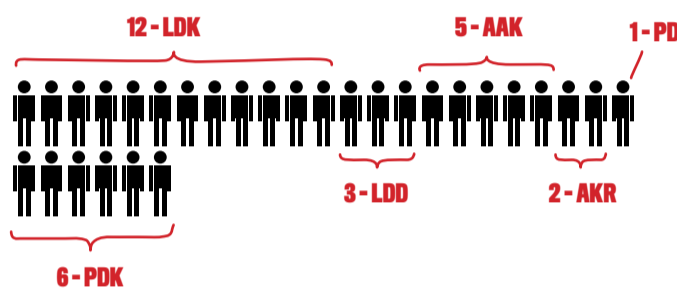
Political patronage's range in the UP

18 persons holding decision-making positions in faculties are directly linked to political parties:



Political patronage in healthcare institutions::

29 officials that are linked to political parties hold managerial positions in clinics of QKUK and regional hospitals:



21 directors; 5 chiefs of staffs; 1 head of national board at a regional hospital; 1 head of Cabinet of Diabetology, and 1 dpty. director.

Meanwhile, 25 of them are still working.

Range of political patronage in public enterprises:

84 officials with decision-making power that have clear political linkages, are employed in public enterprises:

- 26 board members;
 - 25 directors;
 - 10 board chairmen;
 - 9 chief financial officers;
 - 7 chiefs of staffs;
 - 2 dpty. chiefs of staffs;
 - 2 procurement officials;
 - 2 internal auditors, and;
 - 1 regional manager.
- 42 are from PDK;
 - 22 from LDK;
 - 11 from AAK;
 - 4 from AKR;
 - 2 from LDD;
 - 1 from former political party ORA;
 - 1 from PD;
 - 1 from PSHDK.

Out of 84 high public officials with decision making powers:



POLITICIZED UNIVERSITIES

Party affiliation also appears to be a condition to take positions in public universities. Preportr has managed to verify that 18 persons who have decision-making positions in the faculties are directly linked to political parties. Of them, 13 of them are currently working.

It should be noted that the figures above refer only to senior positions in public universities because there is a significant number of professors with links to political parties that were even part of their electoral lists. An earlier research of Preportr indicated that 102 politicians and senior public officials are engaged as professors at the University of Prishtina, but also in private colleges.

PARTY HEALTHCARE

Kosovo health institutions have failed to foster immunity to political patronage. Preportr research shows that 29 officials (most of them doctors) who are in management positions across QKUK clinics, regional hospitals, etc., are directly linked to political parties. Of this number, 25 still hold those positions. Unlike in other institutions, the flagship for partisan employment in health institutions seems to be with LDK.

The evidence above confirms the tendency of political parties to control health institutions which resembles with the situation found in all other public institutions.

Such a broad scope of political patronage that has been saturated across the public institutional infrastructure which affects almost all decision-making positions has cemented the perception that employment, but also professional advance-

ment in public service, is hostage to the will of political parties.

LAWS ALLOW POLITICIZATION OF INSTITUTIONS

The legal framework regulating employment in public administration, ranging from general secretaries of up to one that regulates employment agencies, independent regulators, including public enterprises, appears to be allowing the politicization of public institutions.

The Civil Service Law, Article 11, specifies that “employment in the Kosovo Civil Service is made in accordance with the principles of merit, professional competence, impartiality, equal opportunities, non-discrimination and equal representation through public competition and after verifying candidates’ ability of action”. This however, has been insufficient to prevent the politicization of public administration.

Legal provisions specify that boards need to be professional and without criminal record or personal interests. However, laws on agencies make no reference to the prior political affiliation of these directors. Consequently, the directors of these important independent agencies can be members of the highest decision-making bodies of political parties or appointed politically.

In regards to the process of selection of boards, the law on public enterprises provides that members of these boards need to be politically impartial. More precisely, a candidate at least 36 months before the application, should have not held an elected public office, a political appointee position or hold a leadership or decision making position within a political party.

