

# **Baseline Survey for *Our Town, Our Future*: A project about democratisation, good governance and the rule of law in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

## **About the baseline survey**

The baseline survey was commissioned by the BBC World Service Trust on behalf of the *Our Town, Our Future* project which is funded by the European Commission and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

The research for the baseline survey was undertaken by Dr. Colin Irwin of the Queens University of Belfast. The coordination was provided by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, Thessaloniki, with the assistance of BORAM, Sarajevo. The public opinion survey work was conducted by Prism Research, BiH between July 9 and July 23 to produce 1200 ‘face to face’ interviews of citizens and 300 interviews of municipal employees that represented a cross section of the adult population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in terms of age, gender, social background, political views, nationality and geographical area.

**Colin Irwin** reports on the findings of the research.

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## **About the *Our Town, Our Future* project**

The *Our Town, Our Future* project, commenced in April 2004 and will run for two years. The project endeavours to use radio drama, along with extensive outreach work, to strengthen democratisation, good governance and the rule of law in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project aims to raise awareness among municipal authorities of poor governance issues, underscoring malpractice and highlight best practice through popular radio drama.

The baseline survey was commissioned to inform on the development of the radio drama in order to reflect perceptions, attitudes and beliefs held by Bosnian and Herzegovinian citizens from all ethnic groups, including municipal workers about what is required to strengthen their social, economic and political situation.

The findings of the baseline survey will also be utilised to facilitate debate among 300 municipal workers at three conferences to be organised in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar by the BBC World Service Trust's partner, the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe.

Also, there will be extensive public relations work and a five-day study tour to Northern Ireland, which will allow Bosnian media managers and drama professionals to share experiences with another country which is equally politically complex with deep religious tensions. Furthermore, two additional opinion polls are planned before the end of the project.

The project will utilise local talent and develop local partnerships with broadcasters. The radio drama will be produced using Bosnian and Herzegovinian directors, writers and actors.

## **A People's Peace Process for Bosnia and Herzegovina?**

### **Background: Furthering democratisation, good governance and the rule of law**

Negotiating peace agreements that can stand the test of time is very difficult. But recent experience tells us that when the people and the politicians can bring a peace process and political process together, as one common enterprise, then the possibilities for success are greatly increased. In Northern Ireland most people believe 'the war is over' and although the Belfast Agreement has its problems it was endorsed by the people in a referendum and is accepted as the basis for any future political accommodation. In Bosnia and Herzegovina the Dayton Agreement brought an end to the war but the presence of an international force is still required to maintain the peace. The international community want to disengage but may not be able to do so until the peace process and political process are 'as one' and to do that they need policies and agreements that have wide popular support and legitimacy.

So what do the people believe are the most important issues that need to be addressed to overcome the devastating effects of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina? What are the most critical social, political and economic problems facing the people today? What could happen if these problems are not properly addressed and what do the people believe needs to be done to help achieve reconciliation, economic independence and effective government in the future?

Nine public opinion polls were run in support of the Northern Ireland peace process so that the people of Northern Ireland would have an opportunity to tell their politicians what they thought should be done. This public opinion poll uses the same methods as those used there so that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina can have an opportunity to express their views on the way ahead. The results are reviewed below and full comprehensive reports will be sent to all the parties who have been elected to government in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to the international community, their organisations, NGOs, IGOs, civil society and broadcasters.

## The problems

People from different communities often hold very different views about who was to blame for the war and the problems it has created. Firstly, with regards to blame and responsibility everyone interviewed was asked to indicate whose role they considered to be 'Very Significant', 'Significant', 'Of Some Significance', 'Of Little Significance' or 'Of No Significance' at all. Out of 12 possible options predictably Bosniaks placed Serbs at the top of their list at 68 per cent 'Very Significant'. After that they tended to blame the international community and placed themselves at the bottom of their list at only 8 per cent 'Very Significant'. Serbs blamed the US most of all at 66 per cent then NATO at 64 per cent and themselves, predictably at the bottom of their list, at 23 per cent 'Very Significant'. Croats seemed to blame the Serbs (60 per cent) and the international community (57 per cent) almost equally but then they also place themselves at the bottom of their list at only 14 per cent 'Very Significant'. So everyone blames everyone else more than they blame themselves. It was 'ever so' and in Northern Ireland we call this the 'blame game'. No one ever seems to win but still the game remains very popular. It is sometimes difficult to understand why.

But when it comes to the devastating effects of the war everyone agrees that the death of so many people should be placed at the top of the list at 84 per cent 'Very Significant' followed by '2 million refugees and displaced persons' at 82 per cent and then the 'Destruction of the country' at 78 per cent. With regards to politics and elections again there is much agreement with 'Nepotism' coming in first at 53 per cent 'Very Significant' followed by 'Young people "turned off" by politics' at 52 per cent and 'Political corruption of nationalists' at 51 per cent. So problems of devastation and political failure are considered most significant followed then by the fact that the 'Dayton Agreement stopped the war but imposed a political structure without consensus' at 47 per cent 'Very Significant'. After that problems of inter-ethnic relations become issues of some importance with the top three issues being 'Lack of financial support for returnees' at 43 per cent 'Very Significant', 'Ethnic stereotypes and prejudices are still very strong' at 40 per cent and 'Significant numbers of people do not feel BiH is their state or homeland' at 39 per cent.

Problems of corruption are considered no less significant than other political and electoral problems with 'Corruption of politicians' first at 57 per cent 'Very Significant' followed by hiring at 55 per cent, judges at 54 per cent, nepotism at 53 per cent, police at 52 per cent and so on. The related topic of police, courts and the law brings in very similar results with 'Hardly any corruption investigations and prosecutions' first on everyone's list at 57 per cent 'Very Significant' followed by 'No sanctions for mistakes made by the international community' at 51 per cent. Third in this list is 'Slow implementation of court decisions' at 48 per cent and fourth is 'Ineffective law' at 46 per cent. Clearly the people of Bosnia Herzegovina have serious misgivings about the quality of their criminal justice system, not only in terms of its effectiveness but also in terms of treating everyone the same including the international community.

The desperate state of the economy is considered to be the most serious problem that needs to be addressed second only to the devastating effects of the war. The fact that the 'War destroyed the economy' comes in first on this list at 80 per cent 'Very Significant' followed by 'High unemployment' at 77 per cent, 'Young people have few opportunities' at 76 per cent and then 'Best young people leaving BiH' at 74 per cent. There is, perhaps, a serious 'Catch 22' here. Unless the economy picks up the 'Best young people' will not stay, but if they do not stay then what are the prospects for the economy?

With regards to education the first concern is that there is 'No vision for the future' at 47 per cent 'Very Significant' followed by 'Low standards of education' at 43 per cent, 'No common curriculum for school' at 40 per cent and the 'Quality of university faculty' at 38 per cent. Problems relating to the costs of segregated schools and ethnic division in schools are also considered important at 33 and 32 per cent 'Very significant' respectively but questions of quality in education are clearly matters of greater concern.

Tragically 'The continuing effects of rape during the war' is considered to be the most difficult problem for women at 54 per cent 'Very Significant'. This breaks down at 61 per cent for Bosniaks, 54 per cent for Croats and 40 per cent for Serbs. After that the very practical issue that 'Society does not provide for child care' comes in at 53 per cent and 'No effective equality commission' at 38 per cent. The devastating effects of the war and economic considerations seem to effect women's issues just as much as any other matter reviewed here.

A 'Lack of professional standards' at 38 per cent 'Very Significant' and the 'Media segregated on ethnic lines' are considered to be the top two problems for journalism and the media in Bosnia Herzegovina followed by 'Too much gossip and unchecked stories' at 36 per cent and 'Not enough investigative journalism' at 34 per cent. People clearly want and can reasonably expect an effective, professional and impartial free press.

Out of a list of 26 items in the 'Government and Municipalities' question the top six problems were: 'High welfare costs and low employment' first at 64 per cent 'Very Significant', followed by a 'Lack of justice' at 63 per cent, then 'No one takes responsibility' at 60 per cent, and 'With 280 ministries and staff the constitution does not work', the 'Infrastructure requires repair' and 'Too many levels of government' all at 58 per cent. The list goes on but perhaps what is important to note here is that the war has not only done harm to the economy and various state services it has also done harm to the way in which the country now has to be run. Significantly these problems are considered more serious than the seventh item on the list, a 'Very wasteful and expensive civil service'. The civil service needs reform but without economic growth and constitutional reform such efforts may not produce the positive changes so many are hoping for.

Although Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a colony the relationship between the state, her people and the Office of the High Representative (OHR) is not all that different. Predictably then the problems that the people have with the international community and OHR are as follows: 'Paid very much more than local staff', 57 per cent 'Very Significant'; 'They do not pay tax', 53 per cent; 'Do not understand local issues', 52 per

cent; 'Lack of accountability', also 52 per cent; 'Inappropriate use of resources' 50 per cent, and so on, and so on. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina want to run their own state. That is very clear. Fortunately the international community share this ambition. But how can this be done. Do the people know?

However, before people were invited to say what they thought needed to be done all those interviewed were asked what might happen if the people of Bosnia and the international community fail to take the necessary steps needed to help secure reconciliation, economic independence and effective government? Seventy six per cent thought it 'Very Probable' that the country would become a 'Source of very cheap labour' although 67 per cent still thought they 'Will join the EU'. 'Withdrawal of international support' came in at 65 per cent, 'European "black hole"' at 60 per cent and the 'EU will give up and go elsewhere' at 59 per cent. The prospects of Bosnia and Herzegovina becoming a failed state seem very real indeed but the possibility that there might be a 'Return to war' or that the Serb entity and Croat cantons might join Serbia and Croatia leaving a residual Bosnia for the Bosniaks all came in at the bottom of this list at only 34 per cent 'Very Probable'. This is reassuring but how can the status of 'failed state' be avoided?

## The solutions

As steps needed to help secure a stable and better future people were asked to indicate which options they considered 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable'. With regards to the devastating effects of the war the top priority was 'Develop the economy' at 89 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' followed by 'Remove wealth of war criminals' at 84 per cent and 'Involve everyone in their future' at 85 per cent. 'Amnesty for telling the truth' came in at the bottom of this list at only 40 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' and 22 per cent 'Unacceptable' which broke down to 26 per cent for Bosniaks, 11 per cent for Serbs and 38 per cent for Croats. Amnesty remains a sensitive issue.

'Separate politics and religion' at 79 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' and 'Political leadership based on successful government' at 80 per cent were almost joint first on the 'Politics and Elections' list followed by 'Politicians should stay out of religious affairs' and 'Religious leaders should stay out of politics' both at 77 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable'. With regard to the related topic of inter-ethnic relations 'Become equal citizens of Bosnia' was first on this list at 90 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' followed by 'Religious leaders should work for peace' at 87 per cent and 'Become citizens of Europe' at 84 per cent. More positive suggestions were made on both of these lists and there was no significant disagreement over any of them.

Politics came in again at the top of the 'Public Corruption' list with 'Prosecute and jail corrupt politicians' at 87 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' followed by 'Prosecution of all corruption' also at 87 per cent and 'Build an efficient state to end corruption' at 86 per cent. The list went on in the same way through various types of corruption in various public services but at the bottom of this list the proposal for 'Better salaries for public officials' only received support at the 44 per cent level and 23 per cent found this proposal 'Unacceptable'. On the related topic of 'Police, courts and the law' the top two items were 'Public officials who take bribes should be prosecuted' and 'People who pay bribes should be prosecuted' at 87 and 88 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' respectively. Clearly, when it comes to problems of corruption and the law prosecutions are what people want to see.

Of course everyone wants to develop the economy and here are the top items from this list: 'Develop agriculture' 89 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable', 'Invest in education' 90 per cent, small business 88 per cent, heavy industry 84 per cent, 'EU standards of pollution control' 83 per cent, 'All social care responsibility of the state' 82 per cent, 'Organise state along economic not ethnic regions' 80 per cent and so on. Any good idea for economic development seems to be a good idea for everyone.

Education, however, is not quite so simple. Given people's views on nationalist politics it is not surprising that 'End upbringing in nationalist way through school programmes' comes in at the top of this list at 75 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' with 'Teach respect for own and other community' at 79 per cent and 'Curriculum for peace and reconciliation' at 73 per cent. A 'Common curriculum for universities' comes in at 69 per

cent with 'EU standards for university education' and 'Student exchange' both at 79 per cent. However, at the bottom of this list is 'No state funding for religious schools' at only 54 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable'. Fifteen per cent of the adult population find this option 'Unacceptable' and it breaks down at 9 per cent for Bosniaks, 16 per cent for Serbs and 35 per cent for Croats. This is clearly a sensitive issue for some Croats but they, and everyone else, also want high standards of education that do not promote narrow forms of nationalism.

It should also be emphasised that education that seeks to overcome the problems of nationalism were also suggested as being one of the best ways to deal with 'The continuing effects of rape during the war'. Other women's issues place 'Full state support for maternity leave' at the top of their list at 83 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' followed by 'Regular access to gynaecologists' at 81 per cent, 'Full state support for day care' 77 per cent and after school care 73 per cent and so on down the list. There were no significant objections to any reasonable suggestions for improving the position of women in society.

With regards to the media 'Courts must pursue corruption' at 73 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable', a 'Degree in journalism and qualifications' at 78 per cent and a 'Code of good practice for journalists' at 77 per cent were all at the top of this list. People see effective journalists working to professional standards as the solution to the problems in the media.

In looking over the options for reform of 'Government and Municipalities' and relations with the 'International Community' there seem to be two very distinctive groups of common concerns. One set of issues relate to better efficiency and management while the other focuses on constitutional reform and international relations. We will look at the efficiency and management options first. High on the government and municipalities list are 'Hire top professionals for projects' at 85 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable', 'Give money to good projects' at 81 per cent, 'Civil service responsible to public' at 83 per cent, 'Clear lines of responsibility' also at 83 per cent and 'Ask the users of Municipal services about improvements that could be made' at 84 per cent. In addition to wanting the international community to 'Give hope to the people' at a high of 91 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable', the people also want the international community to 'Restrict activities to key issues' at 84 per cent, 'Maximum per cent to solving problems' at 85 per cent, 'Give resources for economic and not ethnic reasons' 81 per cent and 'Independent auditing' at 79 per cent. The list goes on with 'Respond to local needs' at 78 per cent and 'Include local people in key positions' at 74 per cent. A consistent theme clearly runs through all these examples. People want greater efficiency and transparency and to be more involved in the decision making process at all levels of government and, equally, in all their dealings with the international community and Office of the High Representative (OHR). Double standards are not acceptable.

With regard to constitutional reform people want government to 'Spend money on projects not levels of government' at 83 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable', 'Smaller and effective system of government' 81 per cent, 'Fewer levels of government' 78 per cent

and 'Do not duplicate services in entities, cantons and municipalities' also at 78 per cent. To resolve these questions the people would like the government or perhaps the OHR to 'Establish a Constitutional Commission to advise on reform' at 77 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' and 'Reform the Constitution through Parliament' at 73 per cent. On the international front the people do not want Belgrade or Zagreb to interfere in BiH affairs at 74 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable' but rather 'Zagreb, Belgrade and Sarajevo should cooperate to join the EU together' at 78 per cent and to this end they want an 'EU programme to explain the 16 entry criteria to the people of BiH' at 74 per cent 'Essential' or 'Desirable'.

A number of constitutional proposals were then tested against public opinion. Consistent with other questions asked in this poll suggestions that Bosnia and Herzegovina should be broken up had the least support. The status quo established by the Dayton Agreement only came in fourth on the list and this option was preceded by a return to the way things were before the war, more powers to the municipalities and 'Bosnia and Herzegovina with decentralised regions in accordance with European standards'. If this proposal, or something like it, could be combined more clearly with proposals for a simplified system of government and membership of the EU in partnership with her neighbours then, perhaps, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina could find again the sense of vision and hope they so much desire - a peace process and political process that they could call their own. Finally then, with this point in mind, everyone interviewed was asked 'Do you want the people of Bosnia and the international community to negotiate, agree and implement a programme of political, social and economic reform from all the options reviewed here? Ninety four per cent said 'Yes'.

## **Municipal workers are citizens too**

Municipal workers are citizens too and, for the most part, the concerns and important issues, the problems and their solutions that can make Bosnia and Herzegovina a better place tomorrow than it is today are the same for them as they are for their fellow countrymen and women. But they do feel more or less strongly about certain options put on offer in this poll. Here are some interesting examples.

When it comes to responsibility for the war they strongly feel ‘The international community did not act impartially’ at 59 per cent ‘Very Significant’ compared to 49 per cent for citizens in general, a difference of +11 points. They also take a stronger view that the ‘Dayton agreement stopped the war but imposed a political structure without consensus’ at 57 per cent ‘Very Significant’ compared to 47 per cent for citizens, a difference of +10 points. They do not think political corruption at -5 points and nepotism at -7 points is quite as bad as their fellow citizens. Municipal employees take a more serious view of the lack of financial support for returnees at +6 points and less serious view of the idea that they are not allowed to return to their homes at -8 points. When it comes to public corruption they do not believe they are nearly so bad as the general public think (Table 1) and they also believe the poor salary for the police is a part of the problem at +16 points.

Table 1. Citizens and municipal employees views on problems of public corruption

| Per cent<br>Very Significant                                       | Citizens | Municipal<br>Employees | Difference |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------|------------|
| Corruption of international community                              | 36       | 38                     | 2          |
| Corruption of international donor nations                          | 34       | 31                     | -3         |
| Newspapers connected to corrupt politicians                        | 34       | 29                     | -5         |
| Donors influence on the media                                      | 31       | 26                     | -5         |
| No professional standards for jobs                                 | 46       | 41                     | -6         |
| Corrupt journalists paid for stories                               | 35       | 29                     | -6         |
| Politicians pay news papers, magazines, journalists and editors    | 33       | 28                     | -6         |
| Corruption is not considered wrong                                 | 53       | 46                     | -7         |
| Local and state political influence on the international community | 31       | 24                     | -7         |
| Promotion not on merit                                             | 47       | 39                     | -8         |
| Corruption in the health service                                   | 48       | 40                     | -8         |
| Media can not remove corrupt politicians                           | 38       | 30                     | -8         |
| Corruption is a part of life                                       | 46       | 37                     | -9         |
| Corruption of politicians                                          | 57       | 48                     | -9         |
| Corruption of judges                                               | 54       | 46                     | -9         |
| Corruption of public services                                      | 46       | 36                     | -10        |
| No transparent hiring                                              | 55       | 44                     | -11        |
| Corruption in education                                            | 44       | 32                     | -12        |
| Nepotism                                                           | 53       | 39                     | -14        |
| Corruption of police                                               | 52       | 35                     | -16        |
| Municipal officials giving jobs                                    | 44       | 25                     | -19        |
| Municipal officials giving documents                               | 45       | 24                     | -21        |
| Municipal officials giving licenses                                | 44       | 22                     | -22        |

With regards to the economy municipal employees place more emphasis on a lack of investment at +10 points and old industry at +6 points. They also place less blame on the international community for introducing religious schools than do their fellow citizens at -8 points and think young women have better access to contraception also at -8 points. They are more sceptical about journalists not checking their facts at +5 points and there are, as would be expected, considerable differences of strength of opinion when it comes to the problems of government and the municipalities and how well they think they are doing their job. Here differences run as high as -22 points for 'Very slow service' and -23 points for 'The citizens are not considered more important' (Table 2).

Table 2. Citizens and municipal employees views on problems of government

| Per cent<br>Very Significant                                 | Citizens | Municipal<br>Employees | Difference |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------|------------|
| No ecological responsibility                                 | 51       | 59                     | 8          |
| Infrastructure requires repair                               | 58       | 65                     | 7          |
| High welfare costs and low employment                        | 64       | 66                     | 2          |
| No information about the state locally                       | 38       | 40                     | 2          |
| Top managers poorly paid                                     | 30       | 31                     | 1          |
| Income not distributed                                       | 52       | 52                     | 0          |
| Welfare costs for veterans and families of deceased soldiers | 56       | 55                     | -1         |
| Very centralised control                                     | 35       | 34                     | -1         |
| State level of government not properly developed             | 47       | 42                     | -5         |
| Poor expertise                                               | 40       | 34                     | -7         |
| Too many levels of government                                | 58       | 50                     | -8         |
| Slow to implement laws of municipal self management          | 43       | 36                     | -8         |
| Poor management of projects                                  | 44       | 36                     | -8         |
| With 280 ministries and staff the constitution does not work | 58       | 50                     | -9         |
| Municipal workers opposed to reform                          | 34       | 23                     | -10        |
| Some issues fall between levels                              | 56       | 45                     | -11        |
| Lack of transparency                                         | 40       | 25                     | -14        |
| No one takes responsibility                                  | 60       | 45                     | -15        |
| Arrogant civil service                                       | 48       | 31                     | -17        |
| Very wasteful and expensive civil service                    | 57       | 41                     | -17        |
| Poor use of international resources                          | 53       | 36                     | -17        |
| No culture of public service                                 | 50       | 31                     | -18        |
| Lack of justice                                              | 63       | 43                     | -19        |
| Too complicated                                              | 52       | 32                     | -20        |
| Very slow service                                            | 52       | 31                     | -22        |
| The citizens are not considered more important               | 54       | 32                     | -23        |

When it comes to the work of the international community and international relations they are slightly less critical than the average citizen at, for example, -8 points for 'Too much spent on donors' and also -8 points for Zagreb and Belgrade politicians still wanting a greater Croatia and Serbia. But municipal employees are more concerned about the future than the average citizen. They are more inclined to believe Bosnia will break up at +5 points 'Very Probable' and that the prospects of joining the EU are less at -6 points 'Very Probable'.

When it comes to the solutions municipal employees are harder on the international community not taking sides and developing the economy at +10 points more ‘Essential’ and less inclined to offer amnesty at –9 points less ‘Essential’. Municipal employees are stronger on matters of political and electoral reform at +12 points for ‘Minimum standards for political candidates’ and +9 points for ‘Political leadership based on successful government’. They are also much stronger on all measures needed to deal with the problems of corruption. For example ‘Computerise public services’ comes in at +22 points and ‘Transparency’ at +15 points (Table 3).

Table 3. Citizens and municipal employees views of public corruption and reform

| Per cent<br>Essential                       | Citizens | Municipal<br>Employees | Difference |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------|------------|
| Better salaries for public officials        | 20       | 50                     | 30         |
| Computerise public services                 | 41       | 63                     | 22         |
| Transparency                                | 39       | 54                     | 15         |
| Promotion on merit not just time in job     | 35       | 48                     | 13         |
| Hiring on merit                             | 37       | 48                     | 10         |
| Better salaries for managers                | 28       | 38                     | 10         |
| Universities responsible for honest degrees | 56       | 65                     | 9          |
| Build an efficient state to end corruption  | 57       | 66                     | 9          |
| Prosecution of all corruption               | 61       | 66                     | 6          |
| Cut funding from corrupt faculties          | 51       | 57                     | 6          |
| Reform of public administration             | 45       | 49                     | 5          |
| End corruption of donor states              | 54       | 58                     | 5          |
| Use employees better - better managers      | 36       | 40                     | 4          |
| Student unions expose corrupt professors    | 49       | 53                     | 4          |
| Prosecute and jail corrupt politicians      | 62       | 64                     | 2          |

Similarly the municipal employees are stronger on reforming the police, courts and law at +13 points for ‘Establish confidence in the rule of law’ and ‘Effective tax collection’ at +17 points. Municipal employees also want stronger incentives for the economy than the average citizen at +10 points for ‘Stimulate international partnerships with tax breaks’ and +9 points for ‘Develop small business’. When it comes to education they want the ‘State to monitor and set standards’ at +8 points, ‘Train teachers in reconciliation’ at +9 points and ‘Education programmes for teachers’ at +12 points. Municipal employees are more proactive than the average citizen when it comes to all of the women’s issues and suggestions for improving the media. For example they are +14 points up on citizens for

‘Effective regulatory body for the print media’ and ‘Code of good practice for journalists’. They are also more proactive when it comes to reform of government and the municipalities (Table 4).

Table 4. Citizens and municipal employees views of government and reform

| Per cent<br>Essential                                                       | Citizens | Municipal<br>Employees | Difference |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------|------------|
| Give more jurisdiction locally                                              | 37       | 52                     | 15         |
| Give more money locally                                                     | 43       | 55                     | 13         |
| Professional qualifications for managers                                    | 34       | 46                     | 12         |
| Head of municipality should delegate                                        | 44       | 56                     | 12         |
| Civil service responsible to public                                         | 49       | 61                     | 12         |
| Transparency in decisions                                                   | 44       | 54                     | 10         |
| Good managers should be rewarded                                            | 30       | 38                     | 9          |
| Re-education of civil service                                               | 34       | 44                     | 9          |
| Clear lines of responsibility                                               | 49       | 58                     | 9          |
| Explain new freedom of information laws                                     | 40       | 47                     | 7          |
| Hire top professionals for projects                                         | 52       | 59                     | 7          |
| Ask citizens what projects they want                                        | 45       | 52                     | 7          |
| Do not duplicate services in entities, cantons and municipalities           | 44       | 51                     | 7          |
| Ask the users of municipal services about improvements that could be made   | 48       | 55                     | 6          |
| State laws for local management                                             | 38       | 42                     | 4          |
| Give money to good projects                                                 | 51       | 55                     | 4          |
| Simplify government services to municipal level                             | 44       | 48                     | 4          |
| Spend money on projects not levels of government                            | 53       | 56                     | 3          |
| State laws for local budgets                                                | 38       | 41                     | 2          |
| Implement EU standards for state and municipal responsibilities and control | 41       | 43                     | 2          |
| Smaller and effective system of government                                  | 49       | 50                     | 1          |
| Fewer levels of government                                                  | 47       | 46                     | -1         |
| Reform the constitution through parliament                                  | 41       | 41                     | -1         |
| Establish a constitutional commission to advise on reform                   | 45       | 44                     | -1         |
| Move entity functions to the state level like other EU states               | 44       | 41                     | -3         |

Similarly they want more 'Transparency' for the international community at +11 points, 'Independent auditing' of the international community at +9 points and 'Train local people to be part of management' at +5 points. Finally when it comes to constitutional reform they are far less inclined to want to go back to the way things were before the war at only 14 per cent 'Essential' for municipal employees compared with 31 per cent 'Essential' for all other citizens. Perhaps the simple conclusion to draw from all of this is that municipal employees welcome opportunities for reform but they do not think they are as bad as most citizens believe they are. And then, again, they are citizens too.

## **Summary of findings**

Perhaps the most significant conclusion that can be drawn from this poll is that most people in Bosnia and Herzegovina share a common understanding of what the major problems are and what needs to be done to achieve a better future. There are some exceptions. Who was to blame for the war but then most people also agree that this issue needs to be put to one side so that the economy can be rebuilt, corruption brought to an end, standards of education improved and the institutions of the state made more effective. Although municipal employees are often thought of as inefficient and unresponsive to the public's needs they share these same ambitions for the future and welcome the prospect of reforms that can help them achieve these goals. Reaching a consensus on constitutional change is not going to be easy but most people want it simplified and want to join the EU along with their neighbours. With strong leadership and a sense of vision all of this has the prospect of restoring a sense of hope and this, above all else, is the people's greatest desire.