

Effects of the Bulldozer Committee work in BiH

One Economic Reform Every Four Days

List of 50 adopted amendments to regulations does not include some of the key macroeconomic reforms (such as the tax policy). Therefore, some politicians already proclaimed the amendments to be cosmetic

By: Eldar Dizdarevic

The International Community High Representative in BiH, Paddy Ashdown last week congratulated Bulldozer Committee members and their partners in state and entity governments for passing averagely one economic reform every four days. On this occasion, he emphasized that in the past in BiH there had been no quicker implementation of any reforms as in the case of the Bulldozer Committee, because in little longer than 150 days, 49 amendments to law regulations that had been slowing down business development in BiH went through the parliamentary procedure.

The Bulldozer Committee was formed in November last year, after the initiative of the High Representative. Consisted of BiH businesspeople and representatives of the main international financial institutions, the committee was to identify concrete regulations in BiH legislation that had prevented expansion of operations of BiH companies. Not to leave everything on paper only, as in many cases before in BiH, the Bulldozer Committee took a task to implement all of them within 150 days since the moment when the problem was identified.

150 DAYS

In the end of February this year, Bulldozer Committee had a written proposed plan for amending 50 concrete law regulations, crystallized based on proposals of businesspeople from the whole of BiH. On March 12, committee representatives submitted reform proposals to the state prime minister, and the countdown started. Of course, Adnan Terzic, Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers forwarded Bulldozer proposals to entity governments that reacted with unusual speed and appointed special coordinators for reform supervision. It was quickly defined who should do what, and 50 proposals were distributed on the following principle: 13 amendments to regulations that block businesses to be adopted on the state level, 28 in FBiH, 19 in the RS and 6 in Brcko District.

The above-mentioned 150-day deadline for adoption of legal regulations was a bit extended, and only one proposal was not adopted in the end of the first phase. The 50th reform deals with abolishing monopoly of the RS Administration for geodesy and legal-property affairs in land survey.

However, it is expected that the RS National Assembly will adopt the reform by the end of this month.

“Complexity of often contradictory law regulations practically makes impossible to do a profitable business in this country. Thanks to the Bulldozer Initiative, many regulations that disable creation of new jobs have been removed,” Paddy Ashdown said, without hiding his pleasure with what was achieved.

CRITICISMS

The list of proposed and adopted amendments is really impressive and versatile. It contains, among other things, abolishment of double taxation of company profit, abolishment of compulsory fees for construction of shelters in FBiH and the RS, simplifying registration procedure for direct foreign investments in both entities and abolishing of compulsory membership in chambers of commerce, amending regulations in protection of fruit trees and walnut tree and liberalization of bus schedules in FBiH.

Due to all this, certain BiH politicians (small number, to be precise) said that Bulldozer proposals were cosmetic and had nothing to do with the real economic reforms. Former BiH foreign trade minister, currently a representative at the FBiH Parliament, Azra Hadziahmetovic publicly wondered if “harmonization of bus schedule is really within the scope of economic reforms”, while others warned about the fact that proposals did not deal with key issues at all, such as tax policy. “Before we finalized our document, we really received many requests for salary tax reduction for employees in local companies.

However, amendments of such regulations would interfere in the state fiscal policy and we did not include them in our proposals,” Benjamin Herzberg, OHR senior economic advisor and the Bulldozer Committee member.

EXPORT IS TO BE INCREASED

Although the Bulldozer Committee really avoided some of the key macroeconomic segments, many people think that it had good results because “a thousand-mile road starts with a small step.” “I think that the Bulldozer Committee had a great success. Firstly, businesspeople in BiH finally

spoke and said what were roadblocks for their businesses and media paid a lot of attention to this. Second, politicians recognized sectors that they are responsible for and did their best so that the proposals are adopted,” Donald Hays, the Principal Deputy of the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown and the head of OHR Economic Department said.

In the meantime, the international community initiated the so-called second phase of economic reforms in BiH. The priority is to increase export of BiH goods abroad and, accordingly, reducing the huge foreign trade deficit, which threatens to suffocate the country, and which reached the unbelievable amount of 2/3 of BiH gross domestic product (six billion KM.)

WHAT WAS AMENDED

Amended laws and regulations

- **New minimum foundation capital in limited liability companies**
- **Avoiding double taxation of a company profit**
- **Law on privatization of the state capital in the RS**
- **Law on company reform in FBiH**
- **Conditions for RS auditor general**
- **Abolishing compulsory atomic shelter fees**
- **Abolishing monopoly of the RS Administration for geodesy and legal-property affairs**
- **Law on lawyers’ practice in FBiH**
- **Conditions for issuing bar codes in publishing**
- **Abolishing double taxation in forestry in FBiH**
- **New water standards**
- **Protection of fruit trees in BiH**
- **Promotion of recycling and environmental protection in FBiH**
- **Less contributions of tourist companies and tourist tax in FBiH**
- **Simpler visa system for foreigners**
- **Joining of BiH with the InterRail Pass program**
- **RS Craft law**
- **Provisions on training and volunteering**
- **Conditions for passing the bar exam**
- **Conditions for registering companies**
- **Transfer of sales tax collection**
- **Facilitating export of drugs and medicines**
- **Issuing phyto-sanitary certificates**
- **Free-zone operations**
- **Harmonizing trade mechanisms in BiH**
- **Removing the need for registration of foreign representative offices**
- **Simpler procedure of direct foreign investments**
- **Enabling company de-registration**
- **Abolishing compulsory membership in chambers of commerce, trade and craft chambers**
- **Capital in federal laws and practice**
- **Enabling usual use of bills of exchange**
- **Simplifying procedures for conveying shareholders assembly in FBiH banks**
- **Executing claims on bank accounts**
- **Easing collateral transferability**
- **Shortening procedures for capital increase in banks**
- **Liberalization of bus schedules in FBiH**
- **Abolishing reciprocity in inter-entity transport**
- **Easier obtaining of CEMT licenses for trucks**
- **Simpler regulations for oversized truck loads**
- **Abolishing too high transport fees in the RS**

EFEKTI RADA "BULDOŽER KOMISIJE" U BiH

Svaka četiri dana jedna reforma

Lista 50 prihvaćenih izmjena propisa ne uključuje neke od ključnih makroekonomskih reformi (poput porezne politike). Stoga su neki političari promjene već proglasili kozmetičkima

Piše: ELON DZDAREVIĆ

Visoki predstavnik međunarodne zajednice za Bosnu i Hercegovinu Paddy Ashdown čestitao je prošloga tjedna članovima tzv. Buldožer komisije i njihovim partnerima u državnim i entitetskim vladama i parlamentima na donošenju u prosjeku jedne ekonomske reforme svaka četiri dana. Tom je prigodom istaknuo i da dosad u BiH nije zabilježeno brže provođenje bilo kakvih reformi kao u slučaju Buldožer komisije, jer je za nešto više od 150 dana kroz parlamentarnu proceduru prošlo 49 promjena zakonskih propisa koji su usporavali razvoj biznisa u BiH.

Buldožer komisija nastala je u sudbonaše prošle godine na inicijativu visokog predstavnika. Sastavljena od bosanskohercegovačkih poslovnih ljudi, zaštićena predstavnicima glavnih međunarodnih finansijskih institucija, ta je komisija trebala identificirati konkretne propise u BiH legislativi koji su sprječavali širenje poslovanja bosanskohercegovačkih tvrtki. No, da sve ne bi ostalo tek puko slovo na papiru, kao u mnogo slučajeva dosad u BiH, Buldožer komisija sebi je postavila i zadatak da se sve provede u djelo u roku 150 dana od trenutka identifikiranja problema.

150 DANA Potkraj veljače ove godine Buldožer komisija imala je na papiru prijedlog plana promjene 50 konkretnih zakonskih propisa, iskristaliziranih na osnovi prijedloga poslovnih ljudi iz cijele Bosne i Herce-

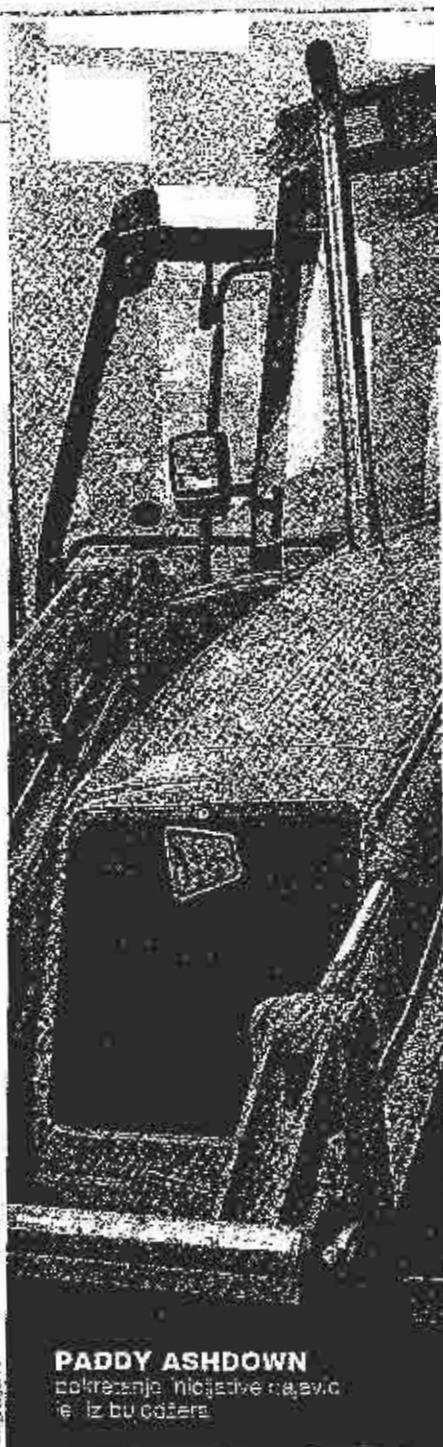
govine. Dvanaestoga ožujka predstavnici komisije dostavili su državnom premijeru prijedlog tih reformi i potom je počelo odbrojavanje.

Naravno, Adnan Terzić, predsjedatelj Vijeća ministara BiH, prosljedio je prijedloge Buldožer komisije entitetskim vladama, koje su reagirale neuobičajeno brzo i imenovale posebne koordinateure za nadgledanje reformi. Brzo je utvrđeno i tko što treba uraditi, te je 50 prijedloga promjene propisa podijeljeno prema sljedećem načelu: na razini države trebalo je prihvatiti promjene 13 propisa, u Federaciji BiH 28, Republici Srpskoj 19 te u distriktu Brčko šest promjena zakonskih propisa koji koče poslovanje. No, kako su se pojedini prijedlozi odnosili i na entitete, i na distrikt, i na državu, kada se sve zbroji, dobije se 50 prijedloga.

Spomenuti rok 150 dana tijekom prihvatanja zakonskih propisa ipak je malo prekoračen, a na kraju prve taze nije prihvaćen samo jedan prijedlog. Pedeseta reforma vezana je uz ukidanje monopola Uprave za geodeziju i imovinsko-pravne poslove RS koji se tiče izmjere zemljišta.

Očekuje se, međutim, da će Narodna skupština manjeg BiH entiteta prihvatiti tu reformu do kraja ovoga mjeseca.

"Zamršenost česta međusobno kontradiktornih poslovnih propisa čini gotovo nemogućim profitabilno poslovanje u ovoj državi. Zahvaljujući Buldožer inicijativi, mnogi od propisa koji su onemogućavali otvaranje novih radnih mjesta sada su uklonjeni", rekao je



PADDY ASHDOWN
pokretanje inicijative najavio je iz bu dožera

Foto: AFP

Paddy Ashdown, ne skrivajući zadovoljstvo postignutim.

KRIKKE Popis predloženih i prihvaćenih promjena propisa zista je impresivan i raznolik. Na njemu su, među ostalim, ukidanje dvostrukoga oporezivanja dobiti podzeca, ali i ukidanje obavezne naknade za gradnju skloništa u FBiH i RS, pojednostavljenje postupka registracije izravnih stranih ulaganja u oba entiteta i ukidanje obaveznog članstva u privrednim komorama, ali i promjene propisa u zaštiti stabala voćki i orašova drveta, te liberalizacija autobusnog reda vožnje u Federaciji BiH.

Zbog svega toga pojedini bosanskohercegovački političari, istini za volju ipak malo-brojni, prijedloge Buldožer komisije nazvali su kozmetičkim promjenama koje sa stvarnim ekonomskim reformama nemaju ništa zajedničko. Bivša ministrica vanjske trgovine BiH, a danas zastupnica u Federalnom

Uvođenje PDV-a za 12 do 18 mjeseci

Uvođenje PDV-a u BiH, prema planu, trebalo bi biti završeno u roku od 12 do 18 mjeseci. Ovo je jedna od ključnih reformi koje su predložile međunarodne institucije. Međutim, neki političari smatraju da će uvođenje PDV-a biti teško zbog trenutne ekonomske situacije u BiH. Također, postoji i pitanje kako će se prihodi od PDV-a koristiti. Neki predlažu da se dio prihoda koristi za smanjenje poreza na dohodak, dok drugi predlažu da se koristi za povećanje izdatka na obrazovanje i zdravstvo. Ovo je jedna od najviše diskutiranih reformi u BiH.

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