



NOVO
DRUŠTVO

UDRUGA ZA RAZVITAK
SOCIJALNE DEMOKRACIJE

Zagreb, Ilica 61 | www.novodrustvo.net

2007

Annual Report

Beginnings

Novo društvo (engl. New Society), Croatian Association For Development Of Social Democracy is the organization of citizens established in 1991, together with the development of the democratic processes in Croatia. Acting as a promoter of the democratic culture and political education, it is particularly dedicated to the ideas and values of the social democracy. During nineties, it organized a number of seminars, debates, conferences and exhibitions substantial for the development of the political and partisan life, especially in Social Democratic Party of Croatia.

New Society is thus a non-partisan organization operating within a wider space of social democracy, but is strongly affiliated with SDP Croatia. This is probably the main reason why its activity declined during the mandate of the social democratic government (2000 – 2003).

General Background

At the beginning of this decade the focus of the politics in Croatia changed. The positioning of the political parties together with their voters' preferences is not any more determined by the big political and prepolitical issues such as independence of the state, its political system or acceptance of the European values. The big political wars and fierce discussions – about the state, war or court – were replaced by the policy debates. Whose economic, education or healthcare policy is better and who is the more competent to implement it? - appeared as key questions. By providing more air for the political public, the social democratic government enabled such changes from 2000 to 2003, along with the implementation of the necessary reforms that – like the labour code reform – seemed sometimes to bring in question the identity of the social democracy.

Therefore, and especially after losing the elections at the end of 2003, a need to modernize the policies of the Croatian social democracy emerged along with a necessity to help the transition of its leadership and retain enough space for debating its values and identity. Concurrently with learning about the social democracy as the political doctrine and political practice, processes and actors of the political system it is operating in, and challenges of communication within it, we wanted to ensure the encouragement and context to the progressive social democrats at all levels of the party and its wider space.



2007 - The Year Of New Continuity

During election year in Croatia we continued our main projects of Political Academy New Society and Working Papers On Social Democracy with support of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and Alfred Mozer Stichting.

Political Academy established itself as recognized space of political education and debate introducing a number of issues that shaped Croatian political agenda: SDP's economic policy, healthcare policy, European integration policy, development of intra-party democracy... Our circle of lecturers have grown and braced the cooperation between social democratic politicians and academic community. Instead of conducting all of our sessions at the same venue, we gave more organizational effort to be present each month at the different part of the country, trying to involve more local party activists as guests at our Sunday debates. Social Democratic Party has accepted the strategy of direct communication with voters (presented at the last season of Political Academy by our lecturers from The Campaign Company, London) and developed education project within the party. The project involved more than 2,500 party activists and 40 Political Academy's alumni/participants as trainers and thereafter as regional campaign managers/key staff.

SDP haven't won the power despite winning 56 (instead of 34) seats in parliament, but we can be proud that 12 new MP's are our alumni (and 10 of them have visited the Academy as guest speakers).



Working Papers On Social Democracy

Two new papers have been published:

- Marius Busemeyer Andrej Stuchlik, Christian Kellerman and Alexander Petring:
European Economic And Social Model, Map Of Interests

- Christian Henkes, Christoph Egle and Alexander Petring:
Tipology Of The Policies Of Social Democratic Governments In Western Europe

Translated by Nenad Zakošek (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences).
With generous support of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung we continued to translate valuable policy analysis by European scholars. Each paper is sent across our mailing list of nearly 500 politicians and members of academic community, as well as given to participants of Political Academy and debated by them. Pdf versions of the papers available at the New Society website are downloaded also by the colleagues from sister parties in the region.



Political Academy New Society

Participants: 33 of 83 applicants selected.

(Approximately 1/3 of them are already established politicians: MP's, mayors, municipality mayors, town councillors, another 1/3 are party organizers with perspective: newly elected local party presidents or secretaries, and the rest of them are those with time on their side: young, well educated and promising, two members of respectable national NGO's, and even one from the Croatian Peasants' Party - haven't helped to build a coalition later that year.)

1st session

Venue: Vukovar, hotel Lav

Dates: March 2 -4, 2007

Speakers/Lecturers

Welcome and introductory notes:

Igor Dragovan (SDP secretary general)

Tijana Defar (FES project manager)

Antun Vujić (New Society president)

Social Democracy (2 x 90 minutes):

Antun Vujić: History, Goals and Values of Social Democracy

Tonči Kursar (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Five Dilemmas In Gidensses Third Way

Political System (2 x 90 minutes):

Ivan Grdešić (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): The Power Of The Agenda (2 lectures)

Political Communication (2 x 90 minutes):

Kent Collins (University of Missouri, Columbia): Responsible Media Relations

Dražen Lalić (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Introduction To The Political Communication

Sunday Debate (4 hours): Politics And Media: Who's Controlling Whom?

Introduction speeches by Kent S. Collins, Antun Vujić, Dražen Lalić and Nenad Stazić, MP.

In three main parts of curriculum we started with a general introduction in the fields - main terms, concepts and historical background - trying to create the common ground of different entry levels of participants' knowledge. Every session regularly consists of 45 minutes of introductory lecture, and the rest is Q & A discussion.

Thanks to the fact that American journalist and professor who educated many eminent journalists overseas, Kent S. Collins visited the region, we managed to hear from him what media expects from politicians and parties, as well as open the issue of multi-level relationship between media and politics which



sometimes - especially in the election years - seems to threaten the prospects of democracy.

This was the first time that any kind of political education programme took place in town of Vukovar on Danube river, still suffering the consequences of the war. The opportunity to hear about Vukovar ancient and recent history from the curator of Town Museum Ms Ruža Marić was really dramatic.

Around twenty party activists from the region joined the session, and three of them even stayed with us for the rest of the course.

Participants have answered evaluation questionnaires; 25% of them stated that this session partially fulfilled their expectations, while 75% were completely satisfied. Lecturers were informed on participants' comments of their parts of the programme and the course in general.



2nd session

Venue: Varaždin, hotel Turist

Dates: March 23 - 25, 2007

Speakers/Lecturers

Social Democracy (2 x 90 minutes):

Tonči Kursar (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Max Weber And The Ethics In Politics

Andrija Henjak (Central European University, Budapest): Comparative Policy Analysis

Night Owl Debate (90 minutes): Talk On Values with Antun Vujić

Political System (2 x 90 minutes):

Goran Čular (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Candidation Procedures In Political Parties (2 sessions)

Political Communication (2 x 90 minutes):

Dražen Lalić (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Campaign Planning (2 sessions)

Sunday Debate (4 hours): National Economy And Globalisation

Introduction speech by Ljubo Jurčić (Zagreb Faculty Of Economic Sciences, president of SDP's Council For Economy).

Continuing our curriculum at north of Croatia, in third electoral district, gave us an opportunity to meet Ljubo Jurčić, SDP's leading candidate there, and discuss with him the economic basis of SDP's election manifesto. More than twenty party organizers and entrepreneurs from the region, as well as the party's vice president joined the debate. Guided visit to architectural heritage of the baroque époque in Varaždin.



3rd session

Venue: Primošten, hotel Zora

Dates: April 27 - 29, 2007

Speakers/Lecturers

Social Democracy (2 x 90 minutes):

Andrija Henjak (Central European University, Budapest): Welfare State in The Era Of Globalization

Zdravko Petak (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Europeization And Policies

Night Owl Debate (90 minutes): Talk On Values with Antun Vujić

Political System (2 x 90 minutes):

Berto Šalaj (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Social Capital And Democracy

Berto Šalaj and Marko Grdešić (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Democracy And Civil Society

Political Communication (2 x 90 minutes):

Milan F. Živković (SDP's deputy campaign manager): Political Communication And Democratic Deficit

Milan F. Živković and Arsen Bauk (SDP's call centre director): Strategy And Tools Of Direct Communication

Sunday Debate (4 hours): Intra-party Democracy Today and candidation procedure for electing the SDP's new president.

Sunny weekend in Dalmatia and guided visit to rich cultural heritage of nearby town Šibenik. New lecturers joined, as well as many party organizers from Dalmatia. Intra-party campaign for electing the party president was open at the time, and we managed to host one of the leading candidates, Zoran Milanović, at our debate.



4th session

Venue: Rabac, hotel Valamar Bellevue and Rijeka, Teatro Fenice

Dates: May 25 - 27, 2007

Speakers/Lecturers

Social Democracy (2 x 90 minutes):

Tonči Kursar (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Globalization As Ideology

Andrija Henjak (Central European University, Budapest): Challenges To The Values Common Ground Of Social Democratic Models

Night Owl Debate (90 minutes): Talk On Party Systems And Candidation Procedures with Antun Vujić

Political System (2 x 90 minutes):

Ivan Grdešić (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Parliaments And Democracy

Ivan Grdešić (Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences): Indicators Of The Good Governance

Political Communication (90 minutes):

Milan F. Živković (SDP's deputy campaign manager): Challenges Of Modern Political Communication

Saturday Debate (4 hours): Education Policy And Consensus For The Knowledge Society

Introduction speeches by Gvozden Flego (Zagreb Faculty Of Philosophy, president of SDP's Council For Education), Vilim Ribić (president of Independent Labour Union Of The Science And High Education), Daniel Mondekar (member of the SDP's Executive Committee) and Marija Lugarić, MP.

Sunday Debate (4 hours): Debate with candidates for president of SDP, Željka Antunović, Milan Bandić, Tonino Picula and Zoran Milanović

Two campaigns were going at the time: one for the national elections, and another, within the party. In Rabac we discussed the education policy as very important part of SDP's election manifesto with its leading creators and labour union counterparts, and next day joined the presidential debate in Rijeka. We also found some extra time to visit historical site of coal mine in Labin and concluded our curriculum.



5th session

Venue: Zagreb, Kaptol

Date: June 16, 2007

Participants of the Academy accompanied by alumni and journalists

SDP's Election Manifesto: Safety, Solidarity and Prosperity

Speakers:

Tonči Kursar

Andrija Henjak

Goran Čular

Antun Vujić

Mirko Hempel

Ivan Grdešić

Zdravko Petak

Ivo Josipović

Zoran Milanović

As the Political Academy New Society was the space where basic ideas of the new social democratic policies were articulated, it was more than appropriate to present and analyse its Election Manifesto for November elections at the closing session of this year's Academy.

Newly elected party president awarded the diplomas to successful participants.



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