

## CASE STUDY: NEW REASONING: ONE EMPLOYEE, TEN VOTES

**I: INTRODUCTION:** Working group of parliamentary dialogue of the Parliament of Montenegro, which was formed with the aim of preparing free elections, at the beginning of 2016, heard a large number of representatives of the institutions of the Government of Montenegro, who were suspected in the previous election cycles of having abused state resources for political purposes. Director of the Employment Agency of Montenegro (ZZZCG), Vukica Jelic, was also heard at one of the sessions. On that occasion, she openly stated that she was obliged to implement her party's policy in the field of employment.



*Vukica Jelic at one of the working group sessions*

Vukica Jelic was appointed director of the ZZZCG in March 2012<sup>1</sup> and succeeded her husband, Zoran Jelic, a member of the ruling Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS). It was Zoran Jelic who spoke before the party's political bodies on party employment according to the formula "one employed four voices", which was revealed during the famous "Tape Recording" affair.<sup>2</sup>

### **II: NEW REASONING: „ONE EMPLOYEE, TEN VOTES“:**

In the middle of January 2016, at the session of the Working Group of Parliamentary Dialogue, ZZZCG director Vukica Jelic responded to MP's questions with regard to the "Tape Recording" affair. Jelic then said that MPs were looking back to something that had happened in 2012 (when parliamentary snap elections were held) and that "the context in which all of that was happening should be known."

Jelic told MPs that she was not a politician per se, but she understood that DPS had won the elections based on an electoral program, due to which representatives of the legislative and executive authorities were obliged to implement the party program. "My task is to implement the program that the DPS promised to the citizens regarding employment," Jelic said.<sup>3</sup>

**ZZZCG Director Vukica Jelic:** *"I am not a politician per se, but somewhere I understand that the DPS has won elections because of an electoral program and that it is normal that the legislature and the executive authorities mostly consist of the DPS members and that they are obliged to implement the DPS policy and the program based on which the party has won the*

<sup>1</sup> Vukica Jelic was appointed at the government's session held on 8 March 2012; links:

[http://www.gov.me/sjednice\\_vlade\\_2010-2012/56](http://www.gov.me/sjednice_vlade_2010-2012/56)

[file:///C:/Users/Ines/Downloads/34\\_7\\_56\\_08\\_03\\_2012.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Ines/Downloads/34_7_56_08_03_2012.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The "Tape Recording" affair was launched at the beginning of 2013 and it refers to transcripts of conversations from the sessions of the highest party bodies of the ruling DPS, held on the eve of the parliamentary snap elections in 2012; highest DPS officials then revealed some of the mechanisms that the ruling party uses in pre-election periods, such as welfare payments, workers' severances, loans or employment.

<sup>3</sup> Transcript from the session of the Working Group of Parliamentary Dialogue on Preparing Free and Fair Elections, published in the daily Vijesti, 15 January 2016, link: <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/jednog-zaposlimo-10-glasa-za-dps-870182>

*elections. We are all obliged to implement the policy. I am obliged to implement the policy in the field of employment. Therefore, my task is to implement the program that the DPS promised to the citizens, as far as employment is concerned."*

At the session of the Working Group of Parliamentary Dialogue, Vukica Jelic also stated that unemployment was the most important issue in the elections, and assessed that the party that provides a single job would get not four, but 10 votes in the elections.

**ZZZCG Director Vukica Jelic:** *NATO is important, as well as all sorts of other things, but the most important issue for the citizens is employment and other existence related issues. The party that deals with it, that offers ideas and solutions to solve this problem, what to do to get people employed, will win the election. That party will win the election, for each such idea, for each employee, people will give not four votes, I can tell you that, but ten, because the citizens will trust those parties that know how to solve the problem. And this is the famous form "one to four." Our average family has four members, each family trust us when we employ its member, not in terms of abuse, but in terms of creating the idea of how to get someone employed."*

According to the Constitution and laws of Montenegro, everyone has the right of free employment under equal conditions and everyone has the right to work.

**III: EARLIER ELECTION EMPLOYMENT THROUGH ZZZCG:** MANS Investigation Center has pointed to the fact that the Employment Agency programs are used for short-term employment, which essentially does not solve the problem of unemployment in the country, but is an ideal way of abusing state resources and bribing in the pre-election period.

An ideal model for buying votes is the "Public Works" program, which is intended for employment of socially vulnerable categories of people, long-term unemployed and persons without occupation. The program is mainly implemented in cooperation with municipal utility companies, schools and non-governmental organizations. For example, in 2012, at a time when parliamentary snap elections were certain, the government decided to increase the number of jobs under the project "Let It Be Clean", which is part of the public works program, despite the fact that the funds for its implementation had not been provided at that moment.

In November 2013, the Employment Service published calls for four employment programs for 2014. The calls were announced in the run-up to the election campaign for local elections in Mojkovac, Cetinje and Petnjica, which was contrary to the Law on Financing of Political Parties, which banned employment in the pre-election period.

Another problem was that the Agency published the calls at a time while it was not yet known whether the amounts provided for employment in 2014 would be included in the state budget and local governments' budgets, as these laws were to be adopted at the end of December. This was a violation of the Law on Employment and Exercising the Right of Unemployment, which prescribes that the responsible Ministry adopt an action plan for employment for the next year no later than 30 November.

MANS raised suspicion that the Agency had hastened to announce the program primarily because of local elections, which had already been announced at that time for the spring of 2014.

ZZZCG has an annual budget of several million, based on various employment programs, mainly short-term ones, which are implemented independently, or in cooperation with other government

institutions, such as the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare or the Investment and Development Fund.

*Author: MANS Investigation Center  
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