

Hercergovina since the spring of 1996. NDI has field offices in Zagreb, Croatia; within the Bosnia Federation in Sarajevo and Tuzula and in the Republic of Srpska in Banja Luka.

NDI's political party programs in Croatia and Bosnia were designed to strengthen the political parties and to assist them to reach out to citizens. The purpose of the party outreach was to restore the populace's credibility in the electoral system and provide citizens with an avenue to express themselves in a free and democratic society.

NDI's political party program in Croatia over the last year has focused on working with the parties at the local level to reach out to citizens and include them in the work of their party. Using tools such as citizen questionnaires and party newsletters, party volunteers have gone door to door to develop party membership and to position the parties as political activists who are interested in and responsive to the needs of their voters.

The NDI political party field training program in Bosnia Hercergovina was developed to train six local people to become political party organizers. These Regional Field Coordinators (RFC's) are presently undergoing a comprehensive training in political organizing and general democratic development. After this training is complete the RFC's will work with the political parties as field organisers.

Selection of Delegates:

The Croatian team was made up of local party leaders who had participated in the NDI training program and one journalist. The political party leaders were selected as a result of the hard work they had done in their respective branch offices to design and locally organize a door knocking campaign. These young people sent out party volunteers with a citizens questionnaire to seek citizens opinions on local and national issues. In many areas of the country this was the first time that political parties had ever gone door to door and directly talked to voters, notwithstanding each party had competed in at least four elections.

The Bosina team was comprised of the six Regional Field Coordinators plus a journalist from Banja Luka. Given that the work of the Regional Field coordinators would be political organising it was felt that they would have the most to gain from the proposed trip to Ottawa.

Complete list of the Delegation can be found at page 16 of this report.

Reflections and experiences

Karen Gainer and Sarah Jenkins as trip leaders asked the participants to report on their experiences of the trip to Canada and what follows is their diary, plus personal observation made by individual participants.