

# STATE CAPTURE INDEX

OVERALL SCORE: 2

## KEY FINDINGS

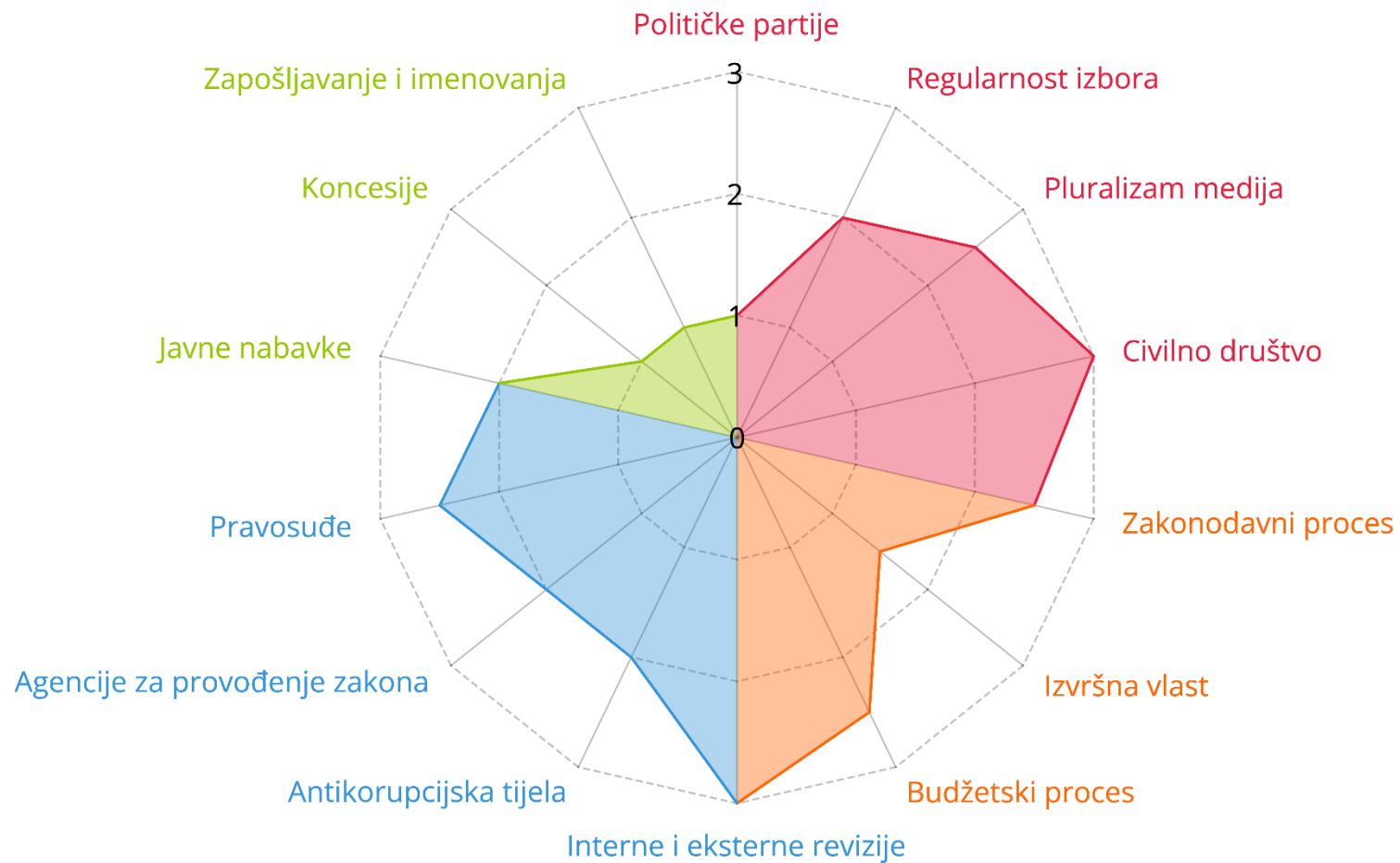
State capture in BiH exhibits systemic and multidimensional characteristics, primarily manifested through entrenched political clientelism. Political parties, as the principal drivers of state capture, exert effective control over the **distribution of public resources**, thereby undermining the functionality of the core mechanism of political accountability – **the electoral process**.

Decision-making is largely exclusionary, lacking a strategic foundation and supported only to a limited extent by relevant indicators. It frequently serves as a **merely formal and procedural framework** through which the particularistic interests of political parties are translated into official decisions.

The dominance of political parties is further reflected in the instrumentalisation and dysfunction of the accountability system, which hinders the effective prevention, detection prevention and sanctioning of misconduct, resulting in **pervasive impunity**.

Overall, BiH operates as **a hybrid regime** in which democratic forms and accountability mechanisms formally exist, yet the functioning of all four dimensions – the **democratic process**, the **decision-making process**, the **accountability system** and the **distribution of public resources** – remains heavily constrained by particularistic interests.

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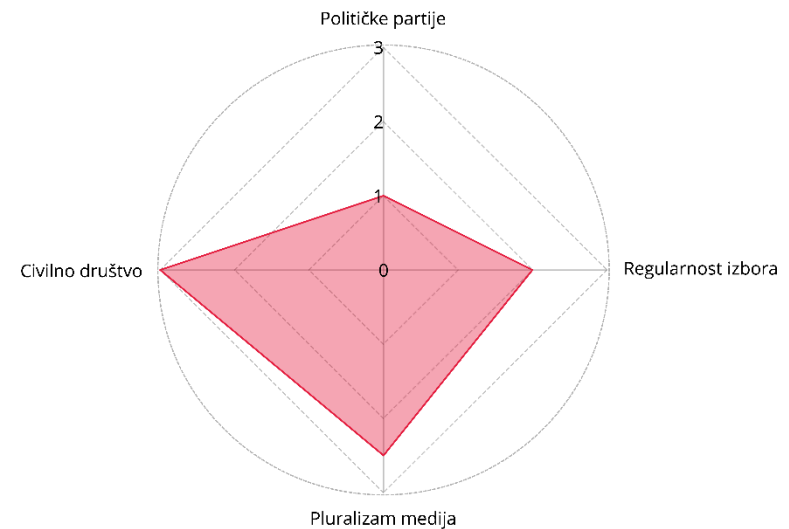


## 1. DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

**SCORE: 2**

**Summary finding:** The democratic process in BiH is compromised by the overwhelming **dominance of political parties**, which is strongly reflected in the dysfunction of elections as the key mechanism of political accountability.

Media pluralism and the role of civil society are considerably diminished by the **unfavourable environment** in which they operate, an environment largely shaped by the particularistic interests of political parties and actors under their effective control.



The democratic framework is formally in place, but genuine competition is substantially weakened and political accountability remains **limited**.

## **POLITICAL PARTIES**

### **SCORE: 1**

As the principal drivers of state capture, political parties – predominantly centralised, hierarchical and clientelistic – operate with minimal internal democracy and weak programmatic orientation. Their activities are largely grounded in clientelistic

practices, positioning them as key intermediaries in the (re)distribution of public resources. This serves to preserve political power, instrumentalise accountability mechanisms and enable illicit enrichment.

## **ELECTORAL INTEGRITY**

### **SCORE: 2**

The electoral process is characterised by systemic irregularities, undue influence and pervasive control, including extensive misuse of public resources to shape voter preferences. These

practices seriously compromise electoral integrity. Technical reforms have failed to deliver meaningful improvements to the process.

## **MEDIA PLURALISM**

### **SCORE: 2.5**

The media landscape is highly fragmented and subject to strong political and economic pressures, exacerbated by opaque ownership structures and insufficiently robust protections for journalists. The role of public service broadcasters remains

inadequately developed, while in Republika Srpska the public service has been transformed into an instrument of political propaganda.

## **CIVIL SOCIETY**

### **SCORE: 3**

Civic space is steadily contracting, and existing consultative mechanisms are largely formalistic and ineffective. Political

pressures, uncertainty and non-transparent funding significantly constrain its overall influence.

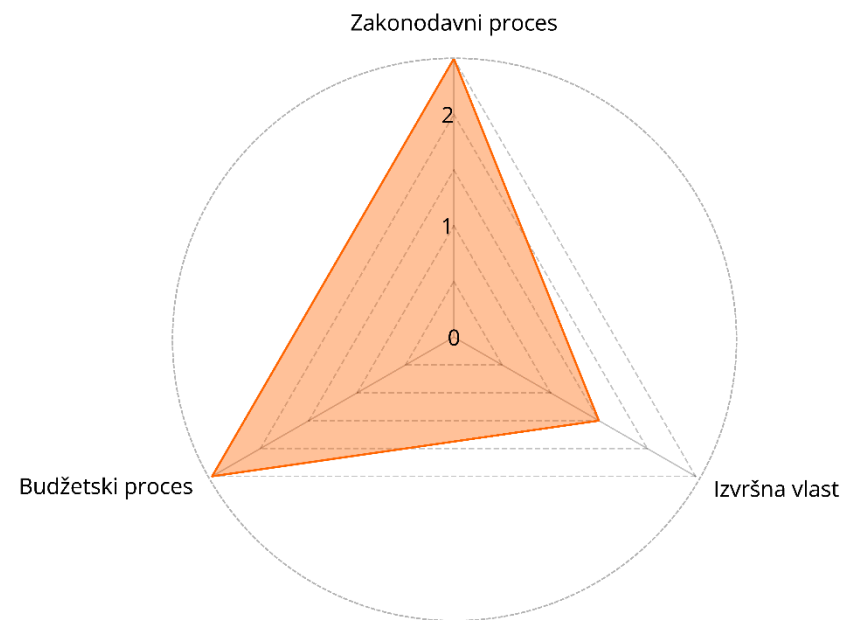
## 2. DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

SCORE: 2.5

**Summary finding:** The undue influence of political parties on the decision-making process results in the **neglect of strategic planning**, the absence of indicator-based justification, limited inclusivity and insufficient oversight.

Institutional decision-making processes are frequently reduced to the **formal endorsement** of pre-arranged agreements.

The dominance of the executive over the legislature **weakens** both horizontal and vertical accountability mechanisms.



## **LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**

### **SCORE: 2.5**

Legislation is frequently shaped to serve particularistic interests, relying heavily on fast-tracked procedures and lacking genuine consultation.

The legislative process is closed, non-transparent and subject to strong political control.

## **THE EXECUTIVE**

### **SCORE: 1.5**

The dominance of the executive over the legislature creates significant scope for arbitrary decision-making. Decisions are often taken informally, outside institutional channels and without

any form of impact analysis. The predominance of party interests and the politicisation of the public administration effectively exclude the public interest from the decision-making process.

## **BUDGET PROCESS**

### **SCORE: 2.5**

Despite an otherwise adequate legal framework, the budget process remains opaque, characterised by frequent delays and limited parliamentary scrutiny. Low levels of budget transparency

and political interference significantly weaken fiscal responsibility.

### 3. ACCOUNTABILITY ECOSYSTEM

**SCORE: 2.5**

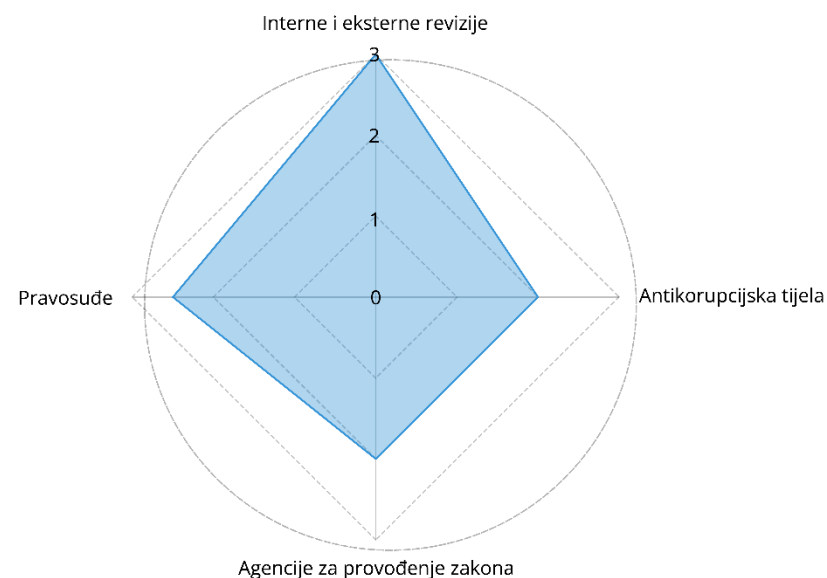
**Summary findings:** Overall, the accountability system displays numerous **signs of dysfunction**, significantly undermining its capacity to achieve its intended purpose.

In BiH, the accountability system exists formally but **lacks substantive effectiveness**.

Supervisory, audit, judicial and police institutions operate selectively and under **political influence**.

Weak oversight and prevailing impunity **perpetuate corruption**.

The accountability ecosystem **does not function** as a mechanism for safeguarding the public interest.



### **INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDITS:**

#### **SCORE: 3**

A regulatory framework exists, yet its implementation remains weak and largely formalistic.

Audit recommendations are seldom acted upon and parliamentary oversight is superficial.

### **ANTI-CORRUPTION BODIES:**

#### **SCORE: 2**

These bodies are fragmented, lack independence and capacity, and deliver minimal results.

APIK does not fulfil a proactive or coordinating function.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES:**

#### **SCORE: 2**

Law enforcement structures are politically influenced, fragmented and ineffective in addressing high-level corruption.

A lack of integrity and inadequate coordination hinder any form of proactive engagement.

### **JUDICIARY:**

#### **SCORE: 2.5**

The judiciary is weakened by political interference, slow and protracted proceedings and low levels of public trust. A key challenge lies in the prosecutors' broad discretionary powers and

their absence of proactive action. Insufficient independence and accountability prevent the prosecution of high-level corruption.



## 4. RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION

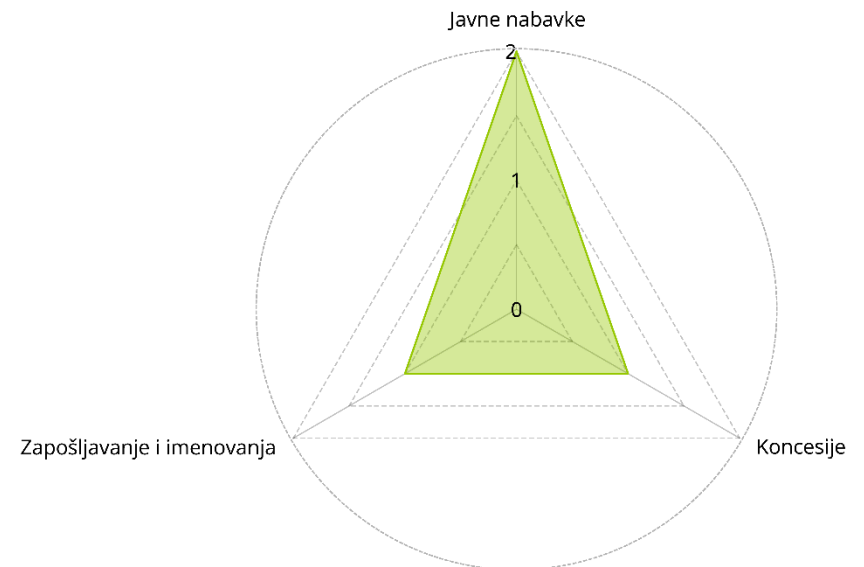
SCORE: 1.5

**Summary findings:** The distribution of public resources represents a key **manifestation** of political influence and state capture.

Public procurement, concessions and public sector recruitment based on cronyism and clientelism serve particular interests aimed at **maintaining power** and facilitating illicit enrichment.

Transparency and competition are **minimal**, while control mechanisms remain insufficient.

Such practices deepen economic inequalities and **weaken reform efforts**.



## **PUBLIC PROCUREMENT:**

### **SCORE: 2**

Although a solid legal framework exists, its practical application faces numerous challenges, including low competition, the tailoring of conditions to favour predetermined suppliers and various other forms of abuse. Half of all calls for tenders receive

only a single bid, pointing to systemic weaknesses. Through a range of exemptions – applied without adherence to the core principles of transparency, competition and equal treatment – more than BAM 2 billion were spent across two years.

## **CONCESSIONS:**

### **SCORE: 1**

The legal framework governing concessions is fragmented and procedures for awarding them are non-transparent and frequently lack competition. Oversight and record-keeping are

ineffective, allowing for almost unrestricted discretionary decision-making and heightened corruption risks.

## **RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENTS:**

### **SCORE: 1**

Political loyalty and clientelistic networks consistently supersede merit, despite the existence of formal procedures. This trend is

particularly pronounced in institutions outside the narrow public administration and within public enterprises.



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