

Legal borders of financial autonomy in Vojvodina

Material independence of the province in theory and practice

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The parliament of Serbia has adopted law on competences of the country's single autonomous province, Vojvodina in 2009 and at the same time it has prescribed regulation of quantity and quality of provincial income by separate law in accordance with the constitution. Although adoption of this law is a constitutional duty, too, the parliament has been sitting on the fence about that still today, in contrast with law on financing of municipalities. Because of unclarified separation of powers between the state and the province, especially after decision of the Constitutional Court¹, amount of financial resources related to these competences and object of the duty raise more questions.

Notwithstanding that Vojvodina is one of the most attractive regions of Serbia in light of economic and investment aspects, and at the same time the only part of Serbia that is bounded by more member states of the European Union, it cannot exploit its financial autonomy guaranteed by domestic law in full. This situation without doubt sets back further successful decentralization, effective utilization of provincial economic capacities and Vojvodina's closing up in the region. Our aim – beside presentation of theoretical solutions by taking into account both the constitution and other valid legal acts – is to research realization of their relevant provisions in practice: for example which boundaries the provincial government is faced with during exercising its own property rights, or which mechanism can be used by the province to get the constitutionally guaranteed 7%.

Key words: Serbia, budget, province, financial autonomy, Vojvodina, separation of powers

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¹ Decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Serbia, No. IUz-353/2009, Official Herald of the Republic of Serbia, No. 67/12.