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## North Oaks' Miksic in last month of Croatian presidential campaign

by **Michelle Miron**  
 Managing Editor

ZAGREB, CROATIA — North Oaks entrepreneur Boris Miksic has fewer than three weeks before he learns whether he has won the Croatian presidency.

The owner of White Bear Township's Cortec Corp. left Oct. 16 for his native land to finish campaigning for the position in this, his second run at the post since officially coming in third in the 2004 race.

In his bid to replace President Stipe Mesic he'll face 12 other candidates, all of whom were allowed to start campaigning one month before Dec. 27 elections. When he ran five years ago, he alleged in an

interview with the Press last year, a corrupt voting process impeded the final count, which should have ranked him runner-up.

"My opponents are pretty weak this time," said Miksic, 60. "They really don't have any major names running for this office, so the competition is much weaker than when I was up against an incumbent."

While he could not be reached for comment in Croatia by press time, the AP reported that key issues in this year's election will include the fight against corruption and Croatia's bid to join the European



Miksic

Union. A newspaper called "The Croatian Chronicle" also printed an interview with the candidate Nov. 11.

"Croatians are well-informed and they realize that the present political establishment and political elites are only about rhetoric," he was quoted as telling the Chronicle. "Rooting out corruption is not in their

interest because they are a part of the problem. Croatia ranks 73rd in the world when it comes to corruption, that's simply unacceptable.

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Some 4.4 million people are eligible to vote in the elections, including more than 400,000 living abroad, the story said. Most of the latter live in neighboring Bosnia. The presidential vote will be the fifth since Croatia claimed independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1991.

According to [www.allexperts.com](http://www.allexperts.com), the main executive power of Croatia is the government, which is presided over by the prime minister. The president "has limited executive powers but acts as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, cooperates in formulation and execution of foreign policy and national security policy, represents Croatia at home and abroad, convenes Parliament and can bring issues at government. The main duty of the president is that he is granted power to issue decrees with the force of law during war time."

Mesic has served his maximum terms as the country's third president. For previous stories about Miksic and his bids for the presidency, see [www.presspubs.com](http://www.presspubs.com) and search archives.

"I'm not aligned with any political party, I'm an independent, I have the money I need, I can't be bought. I've decided to use my lifelong experience in business and negotiation to help the citizens of Croatia have a better life."

A Nov. 9 story in Croatian online news source [www.javnost.com](http://www.javnost.com) pointed to a Nov. 3 opinion poll that placed Social Democratic Party candidate Josipovic in the lead at 17.1 percent, followed closely by populist Zagreb mayor Milan Bandic, another independent, with 15.2 percent. If one candidate does not secure at least 50 percent of the vote, the story said, a runoff election will be held Jan. 10.

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