

Alleviating the Sufferings of BiH Citizens

Unemployment and poverty in Bosnia and Herzegovina are a direct result of political leaders ignoring and delaying reforms ; State authorities must have the resources they need to perform their task, High Representative and EU Special Representative Valentin Inzko wrote in an editorial that appeared in today's issue of *Nezavisne Novine*.

"Putting Bosnia and Herzegovina back on the road to prosperity and EU integration is the number-one issue of the election, and the only way to turn the economy around is to unblock reforms that must be implemented by the state authorities," the HR/EUSR wrote, adding that "these reforms would deliver prosperity to the whole country."

"The BiH authorities have to take the same steps that have worked in other transition countries – pursuing a coherent economic development strategy, an industrial strategy, an export strategy, and an energy strategy, enacting a Law on Obligations and modernising the banking supervision system."

"The real solution to Bosnia and Herzegovina's devastating economic situation is to implement long-delayed economic reforms," he wrote.

"The way to ensure that the Entities have enough money is to get the economy moving," he concluded, "and the way to get the economy moving is to ensure that the State authorities, which are responsible for all of the core economic reforms, have the resources they need in order to do their job."

"The issue before the BiH electorate is not, first and foremost, about fulfilling European integration requirements – it's about alleviating the suffering of citizens. Those who have been loudest in opposing reforms (and in criticising the international community) have presided over an era of rising unemployment and deepening hardship. That fact alone cries out for greater public debate."

The full text of the HR/EUSR's editorial can be accessed at www.ohr.int and www.eusrbih.eu