

Higher Education Framework Law Requires No Competency Transfer



The *Republika Srpska* National Assembly's Constitutional and Legal Committee is tomorrow due to discuss the draft Law on Higher Education that is currently in parliamentary procedure at state level. Having reviewed the legislation, the Office of the High Representative is satisfied that, as it stands, there is no requirement in the Law to transfer competencies from Bosnia and Herzegovina's Entities to the State.

Republika Srpska has adopted its own Higher Education Law and the state-level Law takes nothing away from this.

An RSNA Constitutional and Legal Committee conclusion tomorrow to the effect that the state-level Law on Higher Education requires a formal transfer of competency would likely delay by many years recognition of this country's students' academic qualifications by European employers and higher education establishments.

At a special session last week on police reform, the RSNA announced that no further transfers of competency would be considered ahead of constitutional reform. Creating a false requirement for a competency transfer agreement punishes the students of this country until such time as constitutional reforms are agreed.

The state-level Law on Higher Education is a European Partnership requirement, part of the accession strategy agreed between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Union. Delaying adoption of this Law would therefore also undermine the work of the BiH government lead by Nikola Spiric.

European education ministers are set to meet in London on 17 May. If

the legislation is delayed, Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain the only member of the Bologna Process that has failed to pass a state-level higher-education law.

The respective levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina should focus on their own competencies. Why the RSNA's Constitutional and Legal Committee should even be discussing a state law is unclear, given that this legislation would, in any case, require the support of deputies from *Republika Srpska* in the BiH State Parliament, to be passed.