

OHR Announces Downsizing in line with BiH's Progress towards full Statehood

The High Representative announced to OHR staff today that the organisation is going to be restructured and downsized to reflect the progress that BiH has made towards full statehood and normalisation in recent years.

The reorganisation will involve a 25% reduction in staff, and a restructuring of OHR headquarters and regional and field offices to focus them on the priority tasks remaining in the OHR's Mission Implementation Plan. These are largely related to assisting the BiH authorities implement reforms that have been or are now being translated into legislation, rather than starting new initiatives.

Explaining the restructuring, the High Representative said:

"The fact that the OHR is able to downsize by nearly a quarter is a tribute to the progress that BiH has made in recent years towards full statehood. That has always been the OHR's mission: to put BiH irreversibly on the road to full statehood and Europe, and then leave. There is still a way to go, but increasingly it will be the EU that helps you get there. BiH wants to join the EU, and the EU is committed to helping you. That is why my own role as EU Special Representative is growing. That is why this office is increasingly becoming the Office of the EUSR as well as the Office of the High Representative. And that is why the EU are providing a military force to take over many of SFOR's Dayton tasks later this year. This transition in the international community will continue. The international community does not have an exit strategy here. It has an entry strategy for BiH to join Europe. And we will stay until the job is done."

The High Representative told OHR staff that he deeply regretted having to losing so many committed and talented staff as part of this restructuring. He told them that they were the best team he had every had the privilege of working with, and that he hoped that the State of BiH would find a way to use the skills and talents that these gifted people had honed and developed during that time in the OHR.