

HDZ Fails to Implement Education Reforms

Due to the failure by BiH Education Minister Nikola Lovrinovic (HDZ) to respect the deadline for the issuance of the Instructions to commence the rationalization of school administrations in Central Bosnia Canton, the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, today issued a Directive which reduces party funding for the HDZ at the State and Federation level and in Central Bosnia Canton.

Rationalization of school administrations will end costly duplication, and it will free up money to be spent on giving teachers and pupils the resources they need to improve educational system.

The High Representative's Directive means that the HDZ BiH budgetary allocation for the 2004 fiscal year (which is paid to those political parties in the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Parliament of the Federation, and the Cantonal Assembly of Central Bosnia Canton) will be reduced by five percent. The High Representative takes the view that the obstruction which has been witnessed in HDZ educational policy in Central Bosnia Canton is the product of close coordination between Central Bosnia Canton HDZ and HDZ officials at the Federation and State levels.

Commenting on this obstruction, the High Representative said, "I view the ending of administrative duplication as a litmus test for BiH's commitment to Europe and HDZ's commitment to education reform. These reforms will free up desperately needed resources to be spent on teachers and children, not on bureaucracy." He added that "the reforms will not affect the curriculum and teaching in the Croatian language," and he described them as "a test of the HDZ's seriousness about European-standard reforms."