

# Poor Statistics Mean Poor Citizens

RS obstruction of efficient statistics gathering in Bosnia and Herzegovina is having a direct and substantial negative impact on efforts to attract investment and create jobs, Principal Deputy High Representative Larry Butler told business students participating today at a roundtable on the BiH business environment.

Ambassador Butler said the RS authorities must ensure that the memorandum of cooperation that has been drawn up under the terms of the Law on Statistics and that will ensure better cooperation and a harmonized system of statistics gathering, is signed by the RS representative without further delay.

“Good statistics gathering is a pillar of a functioning economy that can attract investment and generate new jobs,” Ambassador Butler said. However, he pointed out that the failure of the RS Statistical Institute to sign this agreement and thereby ensure better cooperation with the Federation Statistics Agency and the BiH Statistics Agency means that “the BiH economy – and the citizens who depend on that economy – must labour under a completely unnecessary burden.”

He added that RS obstructionism is now affecting future donor assistance. The EC would assist the statistical system in a twinning project worth 1.5 million KM and with 500,000 Euros for technical equipment as of 2006. This will be put on hold if the RS does not stop its obstructionism..

“We are not talking about State versus Entity here – we’re talking about a sensible system that will pool the resources of the various statistics gathering bodies so that they can provide the information that entrepreneurs, investors and government planners need,” Ambassador Butler said.

The roundtable was organized by the Sarajevo Graduate School of Business. The School has been refurbished with the help of funds from USAID and offers a postgraduate course affiliated to Delaware University in the US.