

ReSPA

Regional School of Public Administration (Phase 1)

A Joint Initiative of the European Union
and the OECD, principally financed by the EU



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Progress Report 2007

The Steering Committee is invited to

- **Take note** of the implementation of the 2007 programme of work;
- **Commit** to meet deadlines for registering participants to ReSPA activities;
- **Take note** of the difficulties encountered by some participants in getting visa;
- **Take note** of the difficulties encountered by some countries and entities to implement option B;
- **Recall** the responsibilities of the Steering Committee members to ensure that the contracted resources are used effectively.

In its third session, held in Podgorica, in January 2007, the Steering Committee approved the work programme 2007. The programme was further developed following the Meeting with EU Schools of PA and the decision of the 4th Steering Committee, held in Brussels in April 2007.

Overview of 2007 implementation of training and networking activities

The first Meeting of the ReSPA Schools and Institutes of Public Administration took place in Ljubljana in June. The meeting introduced ReSPA to a wider audience and gathered feedback for further ReSPA activities.

The first three EIPA modules of training of trainers on Negotiation Techniques in a European environment took place in Skopje (May 2007), Podgorica (July 2007) and Pristina (24-25 October). The remaining fourth module will take place in Belgrade (5-6 December).

The 2007 Dubrovnik Diplomatic Summer School was co-organised by Croatia, Denmark and ReSPA in June. It addressed economic diplomacy and was attended by representatives of Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Economy.

In cooperation with NISPAcee, training on How to be a Better Policy Advisor took place in Sarajevo in September 2007.

Second Annual Conference of ReSPA was organised in cooperation with the Albanian TIPa and the Ministry of Interior in Durres, on 3-4 October. Following the first conference on Regulatory Management held in Skopje in November 2006, it explored the ways of Making Strategies Work.

Additional training developed in cooperation with partners in the EU included:

- a week-long training on Management of Training Programmes delivered by the Greek School of PA in September 2007 in Athens;
- a training on Expenditure Management for high level public finance officials provided by the French ENA on 15-19 October in Paris;
- an invitation extended to ReSPA participants to attend the European Civil Servant training organised by the Italian School of PA on 26-30 November in Caserta;
- a module on Public Procurement jointly developed with the ILO-ITC and Sigma, including a seminar for practitioners on 19-23 November in Turin.

Representatives of ReSPA also participated in meetings of prominent professional networks, including: NISPAcee Annual Conference (Kiev, May 2007), NSPSA Conference on the Impact of Europeanisation on the Public Administration (Bucharest, May 2007), XIX International Conference on Training and Development of Senior Civil Servants (Tallinn, June 2007), International Congress of Administrative Sciences (Abu Dhabi, July 2007) and EGPA Annual Conference (Madrid, September 2007).

The Schedule of 2007 Steering Committee meetings provided for three sessions: The 3rd SC meeting in Podgorica in January, the 4th in Brussels in April and the 5th in November in Pristina.

The activities, contributions and tasks described under the ReSPA Protocol of Cooperation, the Rules of Procedure, as well as developed in course of the ReSPA Steering Committee proceedings, are the responsibility of the country/entity Steering Committee members. Having considered though, the needs to further the ReSPA institutionalisation, training delivery and networking agendas, it has been decided to deploy additional in-country/entity resources.

To this end, appropriate arrangements have so far been made in (in the chronological order):

- Bosnia and Herzegovina, as of July 2007 – Mr. Toni Santic, Aid Coordination Associate, Ministry of Justice;
- Albania, as of August 2007 – Ms. Emira Mitrushi, Head of the General Training Centre, TIPa;

- Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), as of August 2007 – Mr. Berat Jashari, Head of the Division of General Coordination of International Cooperation Activities of the Government, Office of the Prime Minister of PISG Kosovo;
- Montenegro, as of mid August 2007 – Ms. Mina Vojinovic, Contractor, Civil Service Agency;
- the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as of mid September 2007 – Ms. Izabela Radevska-Kufalovska proposed as a resource person but not engaged, replaced by Ms. Anamarija Andreska, Junior Associate on analytical issues (professional development) Civil Servants Agency, as of November;
- Serbia, as of beginning of November 2007 – Ms. Milana Lazarovic, Special Adviser to the Minister, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government;
- Croatia, as of November 2007 (contracting not finalised at the time of writing of this report).

In Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia contracts are with the respective Civil Service Agencies, whereas others have opted for contracts with individual experts.

2007 Implementation issues

Visas for participants of the ReSPA regional events have proven an important formal obstacle to this regional initiative. As demonstrated in the table appended to this report, at this stage only Montenegro and Kosovo do not have visa regimes with any of the countries in the region, while others maintain different forms of entry restrictions vis-à-vis certain other jurisdictions of the region. In addition, embassies and consulates are not always present on location and participants have to make an additional trip abroad only to obtain a visa for their participation in a regional training.

It should be noted that the information in the table is only a snap-shot showing the status as of October 2007, as the arrangements tend to evolve, notably in the direction of facilitation. ReSPA is not in a position to change the current visa situation; the issue however should be noted by the participating countries/entities and the European Commission as an example of obstacles faced in implementation of a regional project for which important prerequisites are not in place.

Meanwhile, the following steps can be taken to minimise the risks stemming from this problem: (a) the SC Members to make sure they submit their applications for trainings as early as possible and respect the deadlines so that enough time is allowed for visa processing, (b) the host SC Member to contact the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Embassies to provide up-to-date information on visa requirements for all participants and to support their visa applications/facilitate/expedite visa delivery.

Timely and appropriate applications for participation in the training events deserve a separate point in the discussion. It has been the experience of the ReSPA team at the OECD throughout the project implementation so far, that the applications are submitted late and often require several reminders; the participants are not always carefully selected to benefit from the training in terms of their professional qualifications and the ability to effectively communicate in English; cases of last minute changes and cancellations are numerous and selected participants are not always responsive to requests for information.

The difficulties may partially stem from the ReSPA training programme itself or from specific training contents: Given the candidate profiles agreed with the training providers, on some occasions it proved difficult to identify appropriate trainees. It may happen that the number of potential participants for certain modules may not be sufficient in all ReSPA countries/entities. The requirement for the participants to speak English is also an important constraint. It is to be

noted that ReSPA may be contributing to the “competition” for these participants who can benefit by numerous training events supplied by different donors.

Interest in the ReSPA training agenda will then heavily depend on the selection of training modules/providers to make the selection of candidates to our events easier for the countries/entities. ReSPA will strive to further adjust the training proposals to the needs of the trainees from the region in terms of the contents and approach, also to target the population that is already there and in need of immediate support (given the reform/transformation/EU approximation processes that are ongoing and masses of civil servants are involved).

On the other hand, it is the responsibility of the SC Members, once the agreement on the training programme is reached, to ensure timely and appropriate candidatures for training. Trainees will clearly be able to benefit better from the training if they form more balanced (in terms of professional and language skills) groups. The quality of trainees sent to the ReSPA training will contribute to the quality of training itself and further to building of the reputation of ReSPA as a high-quality professional and prestigious undertaking.

Last minute organisational problems will be avoided also to the benefit of the participants themselves (visas, travel arrangements) if applications are timely and last minute changes are avoided. No show-ups create unjustified costs for the ReSPA project (hotel booking, lost plane tickets). It should also be made clear to the participants of the trainings that, except for special circumstances, they are expected to treat participation in all sessions of the training they enrolled for as obligatory and respect the time schedule.

Support and contributions by Option B resources have been mobilised though with significant delays and limited effectiveness and efficiency. The persons identified by the SC Members as ReSPA resources have all demonstrated interest in the cooperation; it seems however that their capacities and professional skills do not always match the requirements of the ReSPA/OECD contracts. Only one Option B resource has so far been meeting all contractual obligations at a satisfactory level. All other resources, to a different extent, are also experiencing difficulties in effectively communicating and contributing to the project in English. Responsiveness to requests for information also seems problematic.

The experts have been intensively coached by the ReSPA team at the OECD throughout the induction period during which the contractors could learn about the methods of work and expected quality of contributions. It was also noted that most of them were contracted during the summer and they have possibly encountered difficulties related to lack of interlocutors within their administrations due to the summer break. In a more forward looking perspective however, training the experts on the job should become more balanced with their increased support and productivity, especially in view of the expected phasing out of the OECD support to the project over the coming year.

Thought should also be given to the contracting/organisational solutions adopted by the countries/entities. It seems that most of the resources so far are finding it difficult to combine their obligations deriving from the ReSPA/OECD contracts with their other work obligations. The issue may need to be explored further to find in-country/entity solutions which would simplify the current arrangements and free the resources to provide a more substantial support to the SC Members.

In summary, further stock should be taken of the effectiveness of implementation of Option B by the end of the year/early 2009 as a basis for further decisions on the contract extensions, the modalities of operation of Option B and the choice of tasks.

The resulting progress in implementation of the intended ReSPA tasks has been patchy and none of them has been completed successfully by the end of October as originally planned (apart from launching one of the two issues of the ReSPA Newsletter foreseen for this year). Taking note of different starting dates of the contracts, the summer break and a period of induction of the resources into ReSPA and its modalities of work, it is necessary to extend the deadlines for the deliverables until 31 December 2007. This will also provide an opportunity for the resources in

Serbia and Croatia to catch up with some contributions, so that by the end of year the list of tasks for all countries/entities in the region will have been completed.

This extension of delivery deadlines of the tasks does not bear any implications for the current Option B contracts.

Implementation of the tasks so far is as follows:*10-20 pages contribution to the Civil Service Training Systems publication*

- Albania has finalized its contribution
- Contributions of other resources/responses to the template pending by the end of October

2 contributions to the 2 issues of the Electronic Newsletter (1 in case of Macedonian resource)

- One issue of the Newsletter published with contributions received from Albania and Montenegro
- Contributions from other resources expected for the next issue, which will be the last one this year

4 contributions to the ReSPA website (3 from Albanian and Kosovo resources, 2 from Macedonian)

- Contributions received so far from Montenegrin (2), Albanian (2), BiH (1) and Kosovo (1) resources
- Further contributions pending up to the number specified in your contracts, all to be delivered by end of year at the latest

Coordination tasks*Research and synthesis to the ReSPA publication on the Civil Service training systems*

- This task is coordinated by Albania and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)
- No regional level synthesis and research have been provided so far, to an important extent due to the fact that the individual contributions are pending
- Due to the delays implementation of this activity is to be completed by the end of the year
- New resources in Serbia and Croatia should be able to supplement their contributions to this publication when their contracts are launched

Production of two ReSPA Electronic Newsletters

- This task is coordinated by Montenegro
- contributions due till the end of October for the second and last issue this year
- Croatia and Serbia will not be able to catch up on this activity and their contributions can be submitted for the subsequent 2008 issues

4 regular regional updates of the ReSPA website

- This task is coordinated by BiH, with support upcoming from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- BiH has so far delivered one combined contribution for the region, with a couple of further individual contributions being subsequently submitted to us directly
- Due to the delays so far completion of this activity has been rescheduled until the end of year
- Croatia and Serbia will be able to catch up with their monthly updates/contributions once their contracts are launched

Option B resources have also supported the logistical preparations to the meetings:

- in Sarajevo, the NISPAcee training in September,
- in Durrës, the Annual Conference of ReSPA,
- in Pristina, the EIPA module in October.

Visa regimes in the region

GOING TO:	COMING FROM:						
	Albania	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Croatia	Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)	the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia
Albania		Visa regime temporarily lifted	Not required	Not required	Visa at the border	Visa at the border	Visa regime temporarily lifted
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Visa required		Not required	Visa required	Not required	Not required	Not required
Croatia	Visa required	Not required		Visa required (except for Yugoslav p)	Not required	Not required	Visa regime temporarily lifted
Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)	Not required	Not required	Not required		Not required	Not required	Not required
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Visa required	Not required	Not required	Not required		Not required	Not required
Montenegro	Not required	Not required	Not required	Not required	Not required		Not required
Serbia	Visa required	Not required	Not required	Only Yugoslav passports honoured	Not required	Not required	