

ReSPA NEWSLETTER

Special issue

The official opening

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Special Issue

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In this special edition of the ReSPA Newsletter, we celebrate the official opening of ReSPA's facilities in Danilovgrad, Montenegro.

The opening took place on 11 November 2010 in the presence of the Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, Mr. Štefan Füle, and the Prime Minister of Montenegro, Mr. Milo Đukanović.



Source: Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Croatia, Nov. 2010

Although heavy rains at one stage threatened to dampen the extravagant event organised by the Montenegrin authorities to celebrate the opening (a stage had been erected allowing those present to see the choir of young people singing and Commissioner Füle and Prime Minister Đukanović during their speeches), the weather abated just at the right moment, allowing the attendants to hear not only words of praise and congratulations for the opening of ReSPA, but also the good news of the Commission's recommendation that Montenegro should be granted Candidate Country status.

The list of attendants for the opening almost read as a "Who's Who" in government and public administration not only in Montenegro, but also throughout the Western Balkans region, with official representatives at ministerial and/or senior officials level from all the ReSPA member countries. Ambassadors from a number of EU Member States as well as senior representatives from European and international organisations and institutes for public administration also attended the event.



The new premises in Danilovgrad / Nov. 2010

Special points of interest:

- Official opening
- Interview with the ReSPA Director



Prof. Dr. Marga Pröhl, Director-General of EIPA, and Peter Goldschmidt, Director EIPA Antenna Luxembourg / Nov. 2010

Apart from poring over photographs from the event, this extra edition of the ReSPA Newsletter contains interviews with Governing Board members at both ministerial and senior officials level (Minister Ivan Brajovic, Mr. Pavle Sazdov and Mrs. Tatjana Čorlija) and the Director of ReSPA, Mr. Suad Musić.

On behalf of Mr. Musić and the whole ReSPA Team at EIPA, I wish you enjoyable reading,

Peter Goldschmidt
ReSPA Project Director
(Director, EIPA Luxembourg)

**“ReSPA is changing
the face of the
Western Balkan
region”**

Interview with Suad Musič, Director of ReSPA

1) Mr Musič, you have been newly appointed as the Director of ReSPA. Could you tell us a little bit about yourself and your background?

“Whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do it well; whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself completely; in great aims and in small I have always thoroughly been in earnest”. I wish I could describe myself like Charles Dickens did himself. But he is a famous writer and I am simply a technocrat.



Suad Musič, Dec. 2010

2) ReSPA is a very exciting project for the Western Balkans region. What do you personally expect from this?

ReSPA is far more than just another of the Western Balkan projects. Fundamentally, ReSPA is developed not only on the idea but also the actual need for regional cooperation. Today, ReSPA is changing the face of the Western Balkan region that has been identified with conflicts and animosities. ReSPA is a common institution or common organisation of the countries in the region, jointly managed and jointly funded. That is the lost but not forgotten face of the region I would like to see in the coming years.

3) What are the next big steps in 2011?

The first big steps have been taken even before 2011.

The Grant Agreement between the EU and ReSPA for €2.4 m was signed on 30 November 2010. Over the last few years EU financial support to ReSPA has been provided indirectly through the technical assistance and support of our colleagues from the EU. After its formal establishment we ensured that all conditions are in place for ReSPA to use EU assistance directly.

In addition, the first contributions from the ReSPA Member States have already been transferred to ReSPA's core budget, starting with Albania, which is chairing ReSPA's Governing Board.

We expect to sign the Host Country Agreement with the Government of Montenegro soon, which would provide additional impetus for ReSPA's activities.

Finally, we expect to have the first colleagues from the region employed at ReSPA early in spring next year.

As you can see, we are missing no commitment from any of our partners in the region or the EU.

4) What are your objectives for ReSPA in the next few years?

- The ownership that has already been achieved to some extent by taking over the management of the Governing Board from the EU representatives and the shared funding of ReSPA
- Complementarity with the efforts of ReSPA's Member States at the national level towards modernisation of the public administration and its alignment with the basic principles of the European Administrative Space, but also complementarity with the activities of similar instruments such as OECD SIGMA, TAIEX etc.
- Partnership with national- and EU-level institutions for public administration
- Sustainability in the sense of ensuring the long-term perspective of ReSPA
- Excellence in terms of the quality of ReSPA's services
- ReSPA as a new instrument of EU pre-accession assistance

**ReSPA is currently recruiting! See all current
vacancies at www.respaweb.eu**

Interview with Minister Ivan Brajovic, Montenegro

Mr. Ivan Brajovic is Minister of Interior and Public Administration, Montenegro, and ReSPA Governing Board member at Ministerial level.

Dear Minister, the Regional School of Public Administration has formally opened and started its work. In your opinion, will ReSPA contribute to the overall public administration reform in Montenegro, as well as to improving the skills of civil servants in our country?

ReSPA is designed in such a way that I am sure it will contribute to the overall reform of public administration, by selecting topics and lecturers from the region and the European Union, as many of our civil servants will take part in education through appropriate programmes and profes-

**“...our commitment
is now greater”**

sional development. As soon as you are able to hear experiences of others and to compare them with your own, changes must occur. Civil servants have already participated in various training activities, through the Human Resources Management Authority programmes, as well as through the cooperation with international organisations which have their offices in Montenegro. The Regional School in Danilovgrad will make a full contribution to the education of our civil servants.

Will ReSPA, as a first international institution with its headquarters in Montenegro, have a positive impact on the European integration of Montenegro and contribute to accelerating Montenegro's membership of the EU?

The process of accession to the European Union has lasted for several years and it is a very difficult test for all our capacities. With a recommendation for candidate status, we have received a list of additional conditions that will require the involvement of all segments of government and society. In this sense, ReSPA is certainly a positive step for Montenegro, particularly as regards regional cooperation.



Ivan Brajovic/I.Ivanovic, Nov. 2010



I.Ivanovic, Nov. 2010

As a regional institution, ReSPA is very important for the entire region. In your opinion, will ReSPA have a positive political impact on its member states?

Every country in the region would be honoured to be the headquarters of such a regional school. We won in the face of difficult competition but our commitment is now greater. The objective is to prove that we are able to become a regional leader in this field through the overall work programme and selection of staff. Can it have political influence? Certainly, but even more through cooperation and meetings with colleagues from the region.

With regard to your professional experience and the political importance you have in Montenegro and in the region, would you accept to transfer this experience in the context of a future ReSPA training activity, as a symbolic gesture?

Of course it would be a pleasure for me to inform young people about what we have done together all these years and how we try to develop Montenegro as a member state of a modern and successful world, while respecting all the special and national traditions we have as a country with a long history.

IVICA IVANOVIC
is Liaison Officer for Montenegro.

**See all Governing Board members at
www.respaweb.eu**

Interview with Mr. Pavle Sazdov, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Mr. Pavle Sazdov is State Secretary of the Ministry of Information Society and ReSPA Governing Board Member at Senior Official Level.

Mr. Sazdov, what is your opinion regarding the inauguration ceremony of the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) held in Danilovgrad on 11 November 2010?

It was an honour and a pleasure to be present at the official inauguration ceremony of ReSPA in Danilovgrad. The ceremony was well organised, and the presence of high-level Government officials including the Prime Minister of Montenegro gave this event a certain credence. It definitely exceeded my expectations.

How do you evaluate the significance of this event?

The ceremony was a milestone of long and hard work in shaping, formulating and implementing the project that will enhance the reputation and success of ReSPA. It was a culmination of all the joint efforts of the ReSPA partners and European Commission over a period of more than five years. This event also provided a unique opportunity to share future plans and experiences and propose best practices.

What is your opinion on the conditions of the ReSPA premises in Danilovgrad? Does ReSPA meet all of the standards of a good training centre? Do you think something needs to be changed?

The construction and launching of the ReSPA training centre represents a step forward in fulfilling the main objectives. In my opinion, the premises completely satisfy all necessary standards to host a wide range of events, training activities and conferences. I particularly appreciate the fact that there are no distractions around the school. This is crucial for good concentration both during and after the training sessions.

“...promot[ing] collaboration both between countries in the region and EU Member States...”

Interview with Mr. Pavle Sazdov, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Continued)

Finally, what are your expectations regarding the future work of ReSPA?

I certainly consider that ReSPA, as an international organisation, has a very important mission in boosting regional cooperation in the field of public administration in the Western Balkan countries. The establishment of the Regional School of Public Administration will have a positive impact on general development within the region, and will promote collaboration both between countries in the region and EU Member States. Ultimately, I expect productive and long-term cooperation in creating effective and professional public administration.



Mr. Pavle Sazdov/I. Stameska, Nov. 2010

IRENA STAMESKA
is Liaison Officer for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Interview with Mrs. Tatjana Čorlija, Croatia



V. Miličić, Nov. 2010

The ReSPA premises in Danilovgrad were officially opened on 11 November 2010. Among the attendees was Mrs. Tatjana Čorlija, Head of the Department for Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects and Public Relations, Ministry of Public Administration of Croatia. Mrs Čorlija has been involved in the process of shaping ReSPA from the very beginning. In her opinion it is a pleasure to see focused, solid and sustainable results coming from an unformulated and unstructured regional initiative based on a general framework of regional cooperation.

“...active political, operational and financial involvement in regional cooperation”

Dear Mrs. Čorlija, could you please look back to the beginning of the ReSPA process itself and share with us what it means to you?

When I look back, I remember such an enormous effort in terms of the time and financial resources which have been invested in this unique project.

It is important to mention that apart from the main actors, huge efforts have been undertaken by the facilitator and/or leading institutions involved in implementing this project – the European Commission (the EU Member States), OECD SIGMA, EIPA as well as other institutions or bodies that have been more or less directly involved in shaping the legal framework, structure, scope, activities and general positioning of ReSPA in the wider context of educational institutions and international relations.

ReSPA represents a form of formalised framework for active political, operational and financial involvement in regional cooperation targeting the 'driving force' – namely the strengthening of administrative capacities across the region through knowledge transfer.

How do you see ReSPA?

I personally see ReSPA as an institution in which I can upgrade existing competencies, become familiar with certain new approaches as far as public administration structure, processes or human resources are concerned, and experiment with different methods of knowledge transfer.

VALENTINA MILIČIĆ
is Liaison Officer for Croatia.

**Contact the editor of the ReSPA newsletter at
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