



ReSPA

Regional School
of Public Administration

THE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2015



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Abbreviations used in text

EC	European Commission
EI	European Integration
EU	European Union
EUI	European Union Integration
EUPAN	European Union Public Administration Network
GAPA	General Administrative Procedures Act
GB	Governing Board
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resource Management
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
NALAS	Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe
NIPAC	National Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance Co-ordinator
PA	Public Administration
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PoW	Programme of Work
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PP	Public Procurement
QPS	Quality Public Service
RCC	Regional Co-operation Council
ReSPA	Regional School of Public Administration
RePAN	Regional Public Administration Network
SEE	South-East Europe
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
SO	Senior Officials
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers

1 Summary - Programme of Work 2015

1.1 Innovations – new ways to support excellence

Our 2015 programme brings new concepts to our programmes. These stem from our continuous contacts with member countries, the EU commission and other stakeholders in the region and an extensive consultation process with ReSPA stakeholders. The Ministerial meeting in Skopje last year guided much of our thinking in this area and the initiatives described reflect these.

1.2 The RePAN approach

The Ministerial meeting adopted a revised structural approach to ReSPA's work – namely RePAN (Regional Public Administration) which is modelled on the EU Public Administration Network (*and the tradition of Working Groups within the EU Council of Ministers and EC Comitology type committees*). This innovation will also feature the development of a "Presidency" concept. Combined, these changes will also aDeveloping standards

1.3 Principles of Public Administration

Benchmarking the region's public administrations against objective, recognised standards for best practice allows governments themselves and others to measure how well they are performing. Standards are a prerequisite for monitoring and this work will form part of our support for the establishment of a regional monitoring system of PAR and Governance as set out in the fourth result in ReSPA's grant contract. The "Principles of Public Administration" published by SIGMA are important from various perspectives and ReSPA will work with that organisation to help put these principles into practice.

1.4 Working with others

ReSPA not only works with its members but also closely cooperates with key partners such as the European Union through the provision of our activities grant and the close support and guidance of DG NEAR in Brussels. This will be enhanced through more active engagement with PAR managers in in EU Delegations and Offices in the region, attendance at Special PAR groups in each member, close communications with relevant PAR desks in Brussels and other initiatives reflecting the new thematic approach to EU integration and IPA programming.

We will also continue to work closely with the RCC in Sarajevo in the context of implementing the SEE2020 strategy and the "Governance for Growth" dimension which we share responsibility for driving with NALAS.

ReSPA is required under the terms of our EC Grant to form an interim advisory board. We will work with the EC to invite key high-level people from the EU and the region to participate in this Board. It will help guide our activities and give a fresh, objective perspective on our work in relation to international developments in PAR. We plan to present proposals for this in the second quarter of 2015.

1.5 Highlights for the year ahead

ReSPA aims to deliver a multi-faceted ambitious programme of activities in 2015. The include some highlights and a range of other activities which are designed to help ReSPA members focus and deliver on their PAE agendas and assist them in developing their pathways to EU integration.

1.5.1 Pilot Programme on bilateral aid

We continue with our pilot programme providing individual countries with 10 expert days' consultancy on four occasions to help them address immediate specific issues in reforming their

administration. The programme will deliver 40 expert days per member in 2015 in a highly targeted needs driven manner

1.5.2 Recognising achievement in public services

ReSPA believes in promoting public service excellence and that good practices should be recognised and rewarded. With the assistance of the QPS project we will thoroughly examine whether and how an awards system, and/or completion can be developed for the region including the potential to disseminate good practices and learning.

1.5.3 Developing leadership skills – Leaders’ development programme

The Quality Public Service (QPS) project, will also on behalf of ReSPA, examine how best to implement the decision by Ministers to introduce a high-level leaders development programme for decision-makers in the region. Part of this study will discussions with national schools and regional providers to explore potential for cooperation and possible joint delivery of components of a programme.

1.5.4. Training programme on Sector Budget Support, delivered at ReSPA Members

The need for enhancement of the knowledge and skills related to the Sector Budget Support programmes have been identified both by the NIPACs from ReSPA Members and the EC. In order to reach more participants in each ReSPA Member, training programme will be co-designed by ReSPA and external experts and delivered in each member state.

1.6 Other highlights from our Programme of Work for 2015

ReSPA is ambitious and wants to deliver real activities that lead to real results and ultimately real change in the region.

However, we have been hampered by a lack of adequate human resources in the past year. This is now being addressed and we expect to be able to deliver more tangible results in 2015. The additional resources have enabled us to begin to develop both a revised programming approach for 2015 and a greater focus on the goals and objectives we need to address.

In this PoW, we have initiated a new approach which sees us take the high-level goals established by our mission and Ministerial decisions, enhanced and divided into high-level objectives by our cooperation structures (networks). This approach allows us to produce specific objectives for programmes across our thematic areas. These can then be further developed in the context of designing activities in terms of how they deliver on meeting these objectives.

Each specific objective therefore contains details of the activities that will occur, the specific target group it is addressed to, the expected outputs and outcomes, budgets assigned and risks to achieving the objective and linkages to Public Administration Principles and SEE2020 requirements as well as the other high-level strategic objectives.

The table below indicated the outputs from our main programme activities and our work programmes in Appendix A describe the activities in more detail however in future years this approach will be more fully developed. This is a learning process for the organisation and in the light of available resources improving over the coming months, as staff begin to focus on the policy and programming cycle, future year’s PoWs will feature more analysis and specific indicators/budgets.

This approach is in the process of development and the aim is to have it fully operational for the beginning of the programme planning cycle for 2016 which will commence in mid-year 2015.

It is likely that the contents of this PoW may be over ambitious and thus a degree of prioritisation by the Governing Board would be welcomed before final adoption.

Table 1: Summary of quantitative outputs¹ from 2015 Programme of Work².

Type of Activity	Year 2 TOTAL	No. of Participants	No. of Experts
Standard Training Event - ReSPA	1	18	3
EUI Training Event in ReSPA	9	234	24
Workshop & Seminars in ReSPA Region	2	300	6
Training of Trainers	1	18	3
Working Group in ReSPA	3	54	6
Working Group in ReSPA Region	9	162	18
Working Group in EU	6	108	12
Season School - Abroad	2	36	0
ReSPA Conference	2	130	15
Comparative Study	5	0	45
Mobility schemes	4	48	0
Bilateral Mechanisms for Urgent Needs	4	0	8
Liaison Officers Event	2	18	0
Subtotal Core Activities	50	1126	140
Liaison Officers Fees	12	0	0
Visibility & Publications	5	0	0
Expenditure Verification	2	0	0
Subtotal Supportive Activities	19	0	0
TOTAL	69	1126	140

Our detailed work programmes in Appendix A describe these activities in more detail.

¹ Indicative figures only.

² This excludes organisational operational activities. These together with governance activities are covered separately in the PoW.

2 2014 Highlights and lessons learned

2014 was a year of transition and change in ReSPA. We increasingly focused on networking activities and exchanging peer learning a further developed collaborative regional structures and mechanisms of cooperation towards the goal of ensuring that ReSPA became a Regional Public Administration Platform. These included:-

- Peer learning, transfer of knowledge and exchange of good practices through facilitation of regional networks and training activities in the areas of common regional interest;
- Policy recommendations for improvements in different areas of Governance and enabling access to knowhow from the EU and the region through comparative regional studies;
- Learning and development in different administrative contexts in the region by enabling mobility of the civil servants between our Members, 14 public officials benefitted from the programme and provided valuable feedback for future evolution of the scheme;
- Enhanced approach to EU accession related knowledge and skills transfer through establishment of EU Integration Programme Committee.
- Preparation of regional comparative studies on *Methodologies used for Preparation of PAR Strategies in the Western Balkans*, which was requested by members and *IT Corruption*.which involved two networks working together.

ReSPA was also recognized in the region as the leading regional coordinator of the “Governance for Growth” component of the SEE 2020 Strategy. In this capacity ReSPA identified regional stakeholders and launched an initial meeting of the high-level PAR Network where the draft Regional Action Plan for the Effective Governance was presented and further consultations with stakeholders.

22 activities were delivered in the reporting period:

Thematic area	Types of activities
European Integration	1 EU Integration Network meeting 1 Summer School 1 Mobility Scheme Program
Public Administration Reform	1 PAR Network meeting 1 Regional comparative study
Human Resource Management / Development	1 Meeting of the CoP on HRM Network 5 Workshops
Ethics and Integrity	2 Ethics and Integrity Network meetings 1 Accredited training
eGovernment	1 eGovernment Network meeting 1 Regional comparative study 3 Workshops/Seminars
Public Procurement	1 PP Network meeting
Public-Private Partnership	1 PPP Network meeting 1 ToT on PPP
General Administrative Procedures Act	2 GAPA Network meetings

22 International and 24 regional experts supported the implementation of the above activities.

There were 322 participants in the activities from six ReSPA members and Kosovo* who participated in the activities.

No of participants per countries	Male	Female	TOTAL
Albania	17	24	41
Bosnia and Herzegovina	26	24	50
Croatia	14	28	42
Kosovo*	33	13	46
Macedonia	22	24	46
Montenegro	21	32	53*
Serbia	14	30	44
TOTAL	147	175	322

- *When late cancellations received - places at training events were offered to MNE officials at short notice*

Arising from these activities we have identified a number of challenges going forward, amongst these are:-

- Information flow and in-country coordination – participants were not consulting other ministries and agencies with shared/overlapping responsibilities;
- Streamlining of PAR and economic reforms including strategic and operational plans – there are a proliferation of strategies, programmes and plans with insufficient focus on implementation and evaluation;
- Ensuring that the “right” people participate in ReSPA events & activities – often we discovered that participants were either too junior or did not have responsibility in areas concerned;
- Whilst the thematic “Networks” carried out much useful work, their agendas were often different and difficult to immediately link to high-level objectives of PAR/EUI.

An analysis of these factors led to the proposal of working methods based on many years of experience with similar structures in the EU. This resulted in the presentation and endorsement of the RePAN & Presidency concepts at the Ministerial Governing Board meeting in Oct. 2014.

In terms of our organizational capacities and institutional development ReSPA has made significant improvements in its internal structures and pay policy that will enable it to focus on its core business, providing better quality and more efficient services, while optimizing the resources provided by its Members.

These changes included a move to a “flat” organisational structure of Director, 6 x programme Managers and various assistants. A new pay policy, recruitment procedure based on a competency approach and other innovations including agreement on a secondment policy for officials of members.

However there were various gaps and inconsistencies that are impeding Governance efficiency. These were identified through a comprehensive Legal Gap Analysis of its regulatory framework.

Most of the relevant recommendations have been dealt with in the draft Rules of Procedures of the Governing Board, which is approaching finalisation and guidelines for the members of governance structures – Code of Conduct.

However, changing regulations will not in itself achieve much if changes in attitude and approach of members do not result in more streamlined governance and decision-making. More attention needs to be paid to:-

- Enhanced preparation of the meetings through preliminary and informal meetings and discussion;
- Clarity in roles and responsibilities of our governance layer and operational management;
- Consistent building of Members positions' through enhanced in-country coordination – consultation with relevant authorities;
- Improving decision-making mechanisms that may reduce delays and prevent impediments to regular operations etc.

Other issues which consumed a lot of internal capacity were the management of, and discussions in relation to, the Campus facilities and a long-term strategy for securing/tendering of required services. When finally resolved these matters will reduce the operational burden associated with same.

Finally, the single most significant factor affecting delivery of the 2014 PoW was the lack of requisite resources. With only one Training Manager during the year, it was simply impossible to deliver what the approved five Programme Managers will be able to do in the future. However with some new appointments just in place and two more positions to be filled, it will be late summer/autumn before we reach full capacity and this is likely to impact on results achieved.

3 Introduction - Our strategic context and approach

3.1 ReSPAs Mission - driving the work programme for 2015

ReSPA is committed to helping regional public services in the Western Balkans strive for excellence. Our strategic direction comes from the member countries and the European Union (EU) and at its centre is these countries future accession to the EU. Our 2014-2017 business plan sets out our vision, our mission and objectives, our corporate values, our development strategy and our internal institutional development programme. Our mission is to:

“Improve regional co-operation, promote shared learning and support the development of public administration within member countries and through this, support integration into the European Union.”

In essence, our role is to promote and foster **public service excellence** throughout the region. This drives our work programme and determines our priorities.

3.2 The European Union as a central partner

Our European Union Grant Contract gives further focus to our strategic approach. The contract sets out key four result areas for ReSPA. These reflect the general and specific objectives delineated in that document. The four result areas are:

- **Networking and training** – the efficient and effective delivery of training, networks and other tailored-made capacity-building activities
- **Good EU and Regional Practices in the Field of Public Governance and Public Administration** to be identified and promoted regionally
- Effective coordination of the implementation of the **Governance for Growth pillar under the SEE 2020 strategy**
- Support to the establishment of a **regional monitoring system of Public Administration Reform (PAR) and Governance**.

3.3 Ministerial support for ReSPA

Two significant developments in October/November 2014 gave further impetus to our strategic direction. The first is the conclusions of the Ministerial meeting agreed in Skopje on the 31st of October 2013. The Ministerial Governing Board agreed these guidelines for the Programme of Work's development:

1. To recall ReSPA's objectives, as set out by Article 4 of the Agreement establishing ReSPA, and the role of ReSPA as a platform for regional cooperation, and to support further development on an informal Regional Public Administration network on the levels of ministers, highest-ranking officials and working groups;
2. To undertake to strengthen internal (national) coordination of activities under Agreement on establishing ReSPA and South-East Europe 2020 (SEE 2020);
3. To set out the following priorities, aligned with the existing strategic documents (ReSPA Business Plan, SEE 2020) as an input for the ReSPA Programme of Work for 2015
 - Strengthening the regional public administration network on all levels with the aim to exchange experience and develop innovative solutions,
 - Strengthening cooperation in EU integration processes
 - Presentation of best practices in the region, particularly in the areas of e-government, administrative simplification, Human Resource Management (HRM) and better regulation

- Training focused on HRM (competencies-based recruitment and motivation, e-government solutions, streamlining of processes (removal of administrative burden) and regulatory impact assessment,
- Striking a proper balance between regional and EU trainers
- Connecting with European Union Public Administration Network (EUPAN)
- Clearly separating strategic and operational governance of ReSPA pursuant to the Agreement establishing ReSPA including staff appointments
- Firmly support strengthening RESPAS's human resources strictly through merit-based recruitment
- Undertake to ensure strict national selection of participants to ReSPA trainings with the aim to maximise positive impacts of trainings on national public administration; call upon ReSPA to prepare an adequate methodology
- Agree to meet again before expiry of the Montenegro chairmanship of the ReSPA Governing Board.

The Ministerial meeting's conclusions also help guide ReSPA's priorities for 2015. These are:

- To develop ReSPA as a contact point for regional applications to EU funded projects
- To develop ReSPA as a contact point to access relevant regional and European expertise and advice
- To develop training modules for high level senior civil servants
- To develop general and country-specific training for targeted audiences in individual member States.

3.4 Regional Public Administration Network – bringing coherence to different processes

ReSPA, besides being a high-quality training institution, offers with its facilities and resources an efficient platform for building a Regional Public Administration Network (RePAN). The Ministerial meeting decided to pursue this approach and thus strengthen the degree of networking that already takes place. This network will operate on three levels – Ministerial, senior/high officials and working groups in specific areas of Public Administration (PA) reform (civil service and HRM, better regulation, e- government, administrative procedures and simplifications etc.), as well as in the area of EU integration.

The meeting also agreed the concept of a “Presidency” for ReSPA. Each country will rotate the presidency annually. The country with the Presidency will normally chair network and any other meetings in the period. The Presidency will work with ReSPA to develop a specific theme for its year in the chair.

Going forward, ReSPA will need to work on strengthening and embedding the both the RePAN & Presidency approaches to our work.

3.5 New Administration Principles create benchmarks

The second important development is SIGMA's publication of “The Principles of Public Administration” late in 2014. These principles define what good governance entails in practice and outline the main requirements that countries must follow during the EU integration process. The publication sees general good governance criteria as universal but produced these principles for countries seeking to accede to the European Union and who, as a consequence, receive EU help through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). This document is extensive and presents 49 principles addressing:

- The Strategic Framework of Public Administration Reform

- Policy Development and Co-ordination
- Public Service and Human Resource Management
- Accountability
- Service Delivery
- Public Financial Management

ReSPA will work closely with SIGMA and ReSPA Members to put these principles into practice. Specifically, we will examine the need for and organise, if required, events and activities targeted at helping Members to implement the principles and improve their performance. As a first step, ReSPA will seek to meet the SIGMA secretariat and the EC to identify those actions which ReSPA may undertake to support member's implementation of the Principles and associated indicators.

In the relevant sections below, we have identified how many of proposed ReSPA activities are likely to contribute to the achievement of these Principles.

3.6 Co-operating with other organisations for greater effectiveness

It is critically important that ReSPA maintains its relevance regionally. Our approach is a co-operative one where we apply our limited resources to achieve synergies or act as a catalyst for change. In this context, the work of the Regional Cooperative Council in producing the SEE 2020 strategy is of importance. In addressing regional economic and social development in its document "Jobs and Prosperity in a European Perspective" it identifies, in Pillar 5 – "Governance for Growth," key strategy measures, instruments, activities and programmes that correlate with actions essential for integration into the European Union as well as promoting social and economic growth and development.

SEE 2020 identifies a need to introduce a set of criteria aimed at achieving certified excellence in public procurement procedure and implementation. It stresses the importance of providing a forum for sharing experience and building a mutually supportive network of public-sector and private-sector professionals working on aspects of anti-corruption, contributing to the building of a culture of integrity.

Specifically, it states that governments should:

- Rely on e-governance at the local, national and regional levels to ensure efficiency and a lack of bias (modernisation)
- Introduce a procedure for continuous improvement of the competence of public officials (professionalization)
- Improve the quality of public services
- Upgrade policy and regulatory capacities
- Review the relations between various levels of government to ensure full respect of the principle of subsidiarity

It recognises that closer and stronger regional cooperation and coordination will be a key factor in the successful implementation of the policy measures and instruments envisaged. By enhancing even further their joint efforts in pursuing their national and regional priorities, SEE countries will generate synergies and positive spill-over effects, thus amplifying the overall positive effect of the joint action and ReSPA will use its existing networks and specific interventions to achieve these aims.

In the relevant sections below, we have identified how many of proposed ReSPA activities are likely to contribute to the achievement of the "Governance for Growth" agenda of the SEE2020 strategy.

3.7 Strong agreement on direction and focus

There is now a strong agreement on the region's direction in terms of policy and public service development and the road to EU integration for each Member. This clarifies ReSPA's role and identifies how it will contribute effectively to this development process. Our work programme will show how we will deliver on our role in 2015.

3.8 Technical Assistance & capacity building

The Quality of Public Services (QPS) project has supported ReSPA in 2014 and will do so again in 2015. During the year, the project which operates as a "service contract" to the EC was re-framed to operate principally in terms of providing technical assistance & capacity building to ReSPA. This allowed the project to provide (and it will further) support development of ReSPA's institutional capacity in areas such as governance reform, recruitment procedures, performance management and employee development. The QPS project will assist in reviewing, simplifying and documenting a range of internal procedures, protocols and codes with the objective of creating 'fit for purpose' operating principles and guidelines.

In addition, the project will aid ReSPA in further developing programme activities and policy cycle tools. This will include examining the feasibility and/or further development of innovations such as a leadership development programme, seasonal schools, a stakeholder engagement programme and public service award competition.

3.9 Guidance for our work

ReSPA is required under the terms of our EC Grant to form an interim advisory board. We will work with the EC to invite key high-level people from the EU and the region to participate in this Board. It will help guide our activities and give a fresh, objective perspective on our work in relation to international developments in PAR. We plan to present proposals for this in the second quarter of 2015.

3.10 Pilot Programme on bilateral assistance

We continue with our pilot programme (based on the experience of a pilot in 2014) offering individual countries aid in addressing specific challenges that they face. This bilateral mechanism will provide individual countries with 10 expert days' consultancy to help them overcome immediate, specific problems that they face in reforming their administration. There will be an 11th day set aside for the expert to report to ReSPA. The results will be disseminated to all member states.

The programme's success depends upon countries identifying specific issues and presenting these for consideration. There will be four rounds of this mechanism – one in each quarter – in 2015. All countries will be able to apply in each round. Thus the programme will deliver 40 expert days per member in 2015 in a highly targeted needs driven manner

3.11 Developing leaders skills – Leaders' development programme

The Quality Public Service (QPS) project, on behalf of ReSPA, following the decision by Ministers, will conduct a feasibility study on the potential for a modular high-level leaders development programme for decision-makers in the region. Part of this study will involve surveying national schools and regional providers to explore modalities for cooperation and possible joint delivery of components of a programme.

3.12 Training programme on Sector Budget Support, delivered at ReSPA Members

The new approach to IPA programming and grants requires new skills and awareness on the part of ReSPA members. Therefore, on the basis of responding to member's needs for enhancing knowledge

and upskilling officials which have been identified both by the NIPACs from ReSPA Members and the EC, we will respond to identified need relating to the Sector Budget Support programmes. In order to reach more participants in each ReSPA Member, training programme will be co-designed by ReSPA and external experts and delivered in each member state. This initiative is also likely to include ToT approaches and close interaction with EU Delegations/Office.

3.13 Recognising achievement in public services

Excellence should be recognised and rewarded. ReSPA will conduct a feasibility study to examine the organisation of a best practice competition in the region. This will identify and award performance deemed to be best practice. Associated with our work on standards and monitoring, we will draft a proposal for an annual best practice awards scheme. This will aim to recognise regional good practice and award the best practices in different areas of public administration. The award winning practices will become role models for others and thus propagate these practices further and disseminate them through a regional roadshow. We will present our proposal in the second half of the year.

4 ReSPA's operating structures & methods - How we work

ReSPA's work divides into the following broad categories:

- Ministerial dialogues
- High level networks
- Expert Networks/Working Groups

These are facilitated by the use of:-

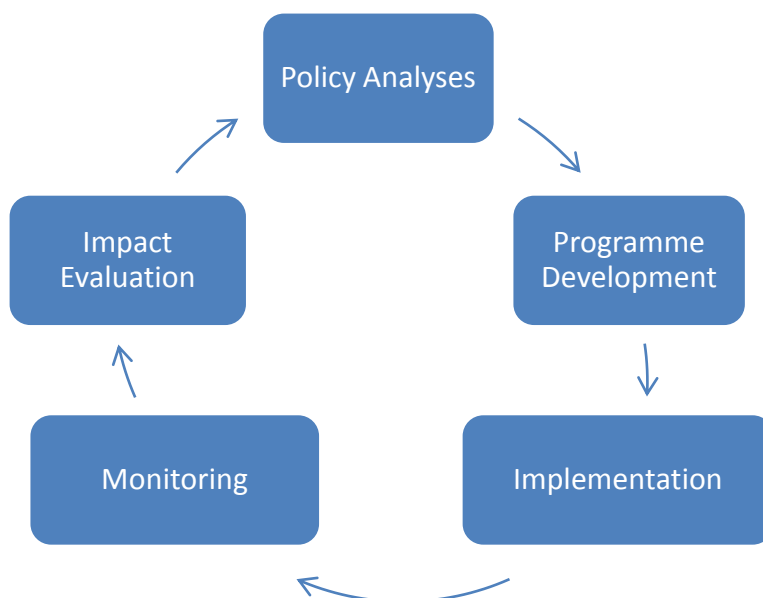
- Face-to face meetings and exchange of information, practices and problems
- Comparative studies
- Training including Summer Schools
- Mobility schemes
- Thematic Annual Conference
- Other methodologies

In addition, ReSPA provides operational and governance support to the Ministerial Board, the Senior Officials Governing Board, the Budget Committee, Liaison Officers and the EU Integration Network (Programme Committee). ReSPA also undergoes an annual external audit and periodic evaluations. These activities form an important part of our work and require significant resources.

However, they also represent a significant burden and we will review their operation and the supporting activities required to service them. This review will also examine various rules and aim to simplify procedures and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens – just as we expect governments to streamline procedures so we must do ourselves.

Our programme of work will describe the activities under each of these headings. Before this we explain briefly what the categories mean and their significance to our work.

We use the methodology shown in the following diagram to plan and programme our work. Each step is important and contributes to our achieving quality analysis and plans for action.



The ReSPA pyramid below illustrates how the levels on which we work and how they are currently interlinked.

Utilising this policy & programme development cycle, this PoW has been developed (within available resources) to address the strategic imperatives arising from various policy analysis and extensive consultations. The next phase will be the implementation of various activities linked to both high-level and specific objectives.

Monitoring results will be enabled by the development of outputs (mainly quantitative) and outcomes (primarily qualitative) indicators. Further evaluation of impacts will then feed into the development of succeeding programmes and overall evaluation of ReSPA overall.

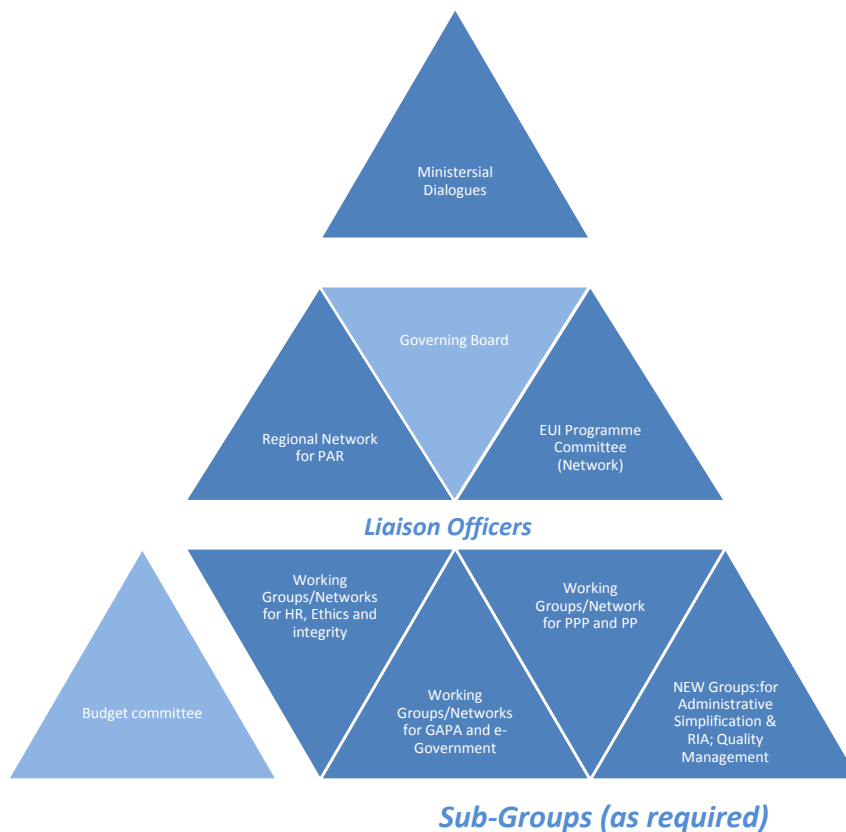
4.1 Networks – a critical component

Networks are central to our work. They connect specific public servants and experts to foster the exchange of experience and best practice. Ministers (political Dialogues); European Integration; Public Administration Reform.

In addition we have operated the following “Regional Networks” – working groups up to now.

- Human Resource Management; E-Government; Ethics and Integrity; Public Procurement; Public-Private Partnerships; General Administrative Procedures Act

This diagram reflects our current structure and decisions from the last Ministerial meeting but we may need to revise it as our new staff structure and staffing complement becomes a reality.



The networks operate on three levels:

Level 1 – Ministerial	The most senior level responsible for political dialogues, decision making and general strategic direction of ReSPA
Level 2 – Networks	This corresponds to EUPAN Directors-General level, and these groups would normally be composed of very senior officials. Their role is take the strategic guidance (goals) from Ministers, and using their knowledge and experience, translate and prioritise this into practical guidance and operational tasks (objectives) for the working group (Level 2) levels.
Level 3 – Working Groups	Working groups comprising mid-senior managerial-level civil servants working flexibly and adapting to the priorities within the objectives set by the Level 2 Networks. They will carry out activities and tasks and report back to the Level 2 networks.

The form that network meetings and activities take changes with each level. Broadly, all meet at least annually but those, particularly at Level 2, biannually or more frequently if required.

In future we will refer to the Level 3 groups as “expert working groups” to reflect more closely the nature of their activities and their membership. These groups will meet as required, however if no tasks are being undertaken then they will not be required to meet, whilst busier groups will have multiple meetings (both face-to-face and/or via video-conferencing. In some cases, these groups will require sub-groups (*with members chosen to reflect their particular responsibilities*) to work on specific themes.

Whilst it is primarily a matter for the members, ReSPA will continually review the membership of all networks and groups tasks in order to ensure the right people, in terms of both roles and responsibilities, are present and both contributing to, and benefitting from, their interactions and findings.

4.2 Comparative studies – informing best practice

Regional comparative studies address specific research topics that networks deem of sufficient importance to merit regional examination. They are an opportunity to:

- Present best practice
- Draw country specific or regional conclusions
- Make recommendations based on examples of best practice in the region or internationally
- Link to network themes and multi-annual activity programmes.

4.3 Training – building strong public services

ReSPA is recognised as centre for training excellence regionally. We will continue to deliver high quality training meeting to address needs identified through our networks. We target our training carefully and address topics that other supported training does not address. We draw our trainers

from our newly established online trainers' database and other sources. These are organised in six expert clusters.

The seasonal schools have proven highly successful. An example of these is the three week training that takes place in the College of Europe in Bruges. These activities will continue and be expanded in our Programme of Work (PoW) in 2015 with some being delivered in our own premises and/or in member states.

During the consultation phase of preparing this PoW, all members highlighted to the need to equip and upskill key senior officials and decision-makers with leadership skills and attributes to ensure that public administration reform remains to the fore of governance and reform agendas. ReSPA will therefore carry out a feasibility study to ascertain the need for such a programme and the most relevant content and delivery methodologies for delivering such a programme in conjunction with national schools.

4.4 Thematic Conferences – bringing critical issues centre stage

The ReSPA Annual Conference is a high-level event attracting key participants from the region as well as from the EU and further afield. The ReSPA secretariat will work with the Governing Board to determine the theme and then bring this to reality. However, the consultation phase has also highlighted the need to consider the thematic conference approach to other issues that emerge from time to time and these issues will be examined to see if there is value in holding such conferences perhaps jointly a member state that has taken the lead in a particular area.

4.5 Mobility schemes – learning from each other

The exchange programmes give public servants the opportunity to work for a short period in another administration, either in the region or the EU, and learn how others approach similar work. These are short-term interventions, up to five working days, and allow participants to learn directly from their hosts. The scheme promotes learning by doing, experience exchange, coaching and the transfer of best practice.

4.6 Developing ReSPA and supporting its good governance

ReSPA has completed the recruitment process for two programme managers. We anticipate them joining the organisation in the first quarter of 2015. They will begin an induction programme immediately with the intent of them attaining a high level of performance in the second quarter.

ReSPA will advertise to fill a further two position and will use the Secondment programme to ensure we have sufficient human resources to meet our programming and institutional responsibilities. We expect these recruitment process to be completed by June 2015.

Our internal operations and governance work programme is significant and the following table gives an overview of the actions planned.

4.7 Communication and visibility

Much progress has been made in establishing the ReSPA "brand" with a corporate identity implemented and a social media strategy being rolled-out. Various branded goods were sourced, the website updated and publications such as newsletters and reports produced.

However, the association of the name "**SCHOOL**" with members and regional officials perception of the likely activities of a school i.e "training" is something which will need to be addressed. The Secretariat will bring forward proposals, most likely to be based around the use of the "RePAN" brand and an associated tagline such as "*promoting excellence in public administration*"

In addition, the role of ReSPA Liaison Officers will require fundamental review to see if this method is the most effective way for ReSPA to communicate with and disseminate information to officials across various Ministries and agencies in ReSPA members.

ReSPA Governance Activities

Ensuring fulfillment of ReSPA responsibilities and activities through governance structures

Monitoring and Evaluation							
	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s) and duration	Budget (€)	Resources
1	Extraordinary Senior Officials Governing Board Meeting	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	1 meeting, 7 participants, 1 Observer, 1 EC representative, PoW 2015 adopted	Enabling ReSPA to fulfill its mandate through the implementation of the PoW	February 2015, 1 day	€ 3,900.00	D, PM, OM, PAD
2	Annual Liaison Officers Meeting	Liaison Officers	1 meeting, 6 participants, contracts concluded, PoW 2015 presented, ToR for Los explained	Enabling ReSPA to achieve communication with the national public administrations and to successfully implement the PoW	February 2015, 1 day	EC Grant	D, PM, OM, PA
3	1st Budget Committee Meeting	GB Appointees - Representatives of Ministries of Finances, or Finance Departments of relevant ministries	1 meeting, 5 participants, budget related documents approved, financial reports adopted	Ensured financial and budgetary operations of ReSPA, including directly managed funds, donor and contractor managed funds	March 2015, 2 days	€ 4,360.00	OM, FA
4	1st Senior Officials Governing Board meeting	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	1 meeting, 7 participants, 1 Observer, 1 EC representative, Quarterly Report approved, Rules of Procedure for Selection of Director adopted, Establishment of the Appeal Board, Annual Financial Report, Addendum to the Budget, Nomination of Independent Auditor, New EC Grant considered	Regular steering performed	April 2015, 2 days	€ 5,350.00	D, PM, OM, PAD
	1st Quarterly Report on PoW	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	Report prepared and submitted	Stakeholders informed on the implementation of the PoW	March 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA
	Annual Financial Report, Addendum to the Budget, Nomination of Independent Auditor	Governing Board SL, Budget Committee	Reports prepared and submitted, Independent Auditor nominated	Ensured regular financial management of ReSPA	March - April 2015	N/A	OM, FA

5	1st EU Integration Programme Committee meeting	Heads of EUI central coordinating institutions of ReSPA Members	1 meeting, 6 participants, programming recommendations given	Regional cooperation improved, Programming priorities in line with EU requirements identified	April 2015, 2 days	€ 4,360.00	2PMS, PA
6	Informal Ministerial meeting	Ministers	1 meeting, 6 participants,	Ensured policy dialogue	May - June 2015	QPS	D, PM, OM, PAD
	Presidency concept, RePAN structure, EU Horizon Programmes,	Ministers, Senior Officials, Observers, EC	Documents prepared and disseminated	Enabled consultations on political and technical level	April 2015	QPS	D, PM, OM, PAD
	Extension of ReSPA Agreement	Ministers, Senior Officials, Observers, EC	Info on extension prepared and disseminated, Decision on Extension adopted by Ministers	Enabled consultations on political and technical level	by the end of July 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD
7.	Amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board	Ministers, Senior Officials, Observers, EC	Amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board adopted	Increase of quality of management and decision making process within the GB improved,	February – May 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD
8	2nd Budget Committee meeting	GB Appointees - Representatives of Ministries of Finances, or Finance Departments of relevant ministries	1 meeting, 5 participants, budget related documents approved, financial reports adopted	Ensured financial and budgetary operations of ReSPA, including directly managed funds, donor and contractor managed funds	June 2015, 2 days	€ 4,360.00	OM, FA
9	2nd Senior Officials Governing Board meeting	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	1 meeting, 7 participants, 1 Observer, 1 EC representative, Quarterly Report approved, decision-making performed, New EC Grant considered	Regular steering performed	July 2015, 2 days	€ 5,350.00	D, PM, OM, PAD
	2nd Quarterly Report on PoW	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	Report prepared and submitted	Stakeholders informed on the implementation of the PoW	June 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA
	Independent Auditor Report	ReSPA Secretariat	Auditor Meetings, review of operations documentation resulted in Independent Annual Audit Report and Management Letter	GB Decision for Discharge of Director of the administrative responsibility from the previous Year	April - May 2015	€ 8,000.00	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA, IT, GS

10	3rd Budget Committee meeting	GB Appointees - Representatives of Ministries of Finances, or Finance Departments of relevant ministries	1 meeting, 5 participants, budget related documents approved, financial reports adopted	Ensured financial and budgetary operations of ReSPA, including directly managed funds, donor and contractor managed funds	September 2015, 2 days	€ 4,360.00	OM, FA
11	2nd EU Integration Programme Committee meeting	Heads of EUI central coordinating institutions of ReSPA Members	1 meeting, 6 participants, programming recommendations given	Regional cooperation improved, Programming priorities in line with EU requirements identified	September 2015, 2 days	€ 4,360.00	2PM, OM, PA
12	3rd Senior Officials Governing Board meeting	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	1 meeting, 7 participants, 1 Observer, 1 EC representative, Quarterly report approved, decision-making performed, New EC Grant considered	Regular steering performed	October 2015, 2 days	€ 5,350.00	D, PM, OM, PAD
	3rd Quarterly Report on PoW	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	Report prepared and submitted	Stakeholders informed on the implementation of the PoW	September 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA
	Programme of Work 2016	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	consultations with stakeholders held, PoW prepared and submitted	Enabled functioning of ReSPA in accordance with ReSPA members needs	May - September 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA, FA
	Interim Financial Report	ReSPA Secretariat	Timely preparation of report	Adoption of the report by Budget Committee/Governing Board	June - September 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA, IT, GS
13	Ministerial Governing Board meeting	Ministers, Senior Officials, Observers, EC	1 meeting, 13 participants, observer, EC, decision-making performed	Performed political guidance of ReSPA	November 2015, 2 days	€ 20,000.00	D, PM, OM, PAD
	Annual Report on ReSPA Operations and Implementation of Programme of Work	ReSPA Secretariat	Annual Report on ReSPA Operations and Implementation of Programme of Work approved	Performed political guidance of ReSPA	September - November 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD
	ReSPA Envelope for 2016	ReSPA Secretariat	Setting the amount of country Envelope for 2016	Financial sustainability of ReSPA ensured	September - November 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA, IT, GS

14	4th Senior Officials Governing Board meeting	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	1 meeting, 7 participants, 1 Observer, 1 EC representative, Quarterly Report approved, decision-making performed, PoW 2016 adopted	Performed regular steering	December 2015, 2 days	€ 5,350.00	D, PM, OM, PAD
	Draft ReSPA Budget for 2016	ReSPA Secretariat	Draft version of the budget	Adoption of the ReSPA Budget for 2016	July - December 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA, IT, GS
	4th Quarterly Report on PoW	Senior Officials, Observer, EC	Report prepared and submitted	Stakeholders informed on the implementation of the PoW	November 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA

ReSPA Operations Activities

Ensuring fulfilment of ReSPA responsibilities and activities through operations structures

Monitoring and Evaluation							
	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s) and duration	Budget (€)	Resources
1	Implementation of New Mechanism for Bilateral Assistance to ReSPA Members	ReSPA Members	Utilized 40 expert days per ReSPA Member in 2015	Implementation of ReSPA PoW 2015 Specific Objectives in the applicant ReSPA Member	January - December 2015	EC Grant	D, OM, PM, PA,
2	Recruitment of additional Staff (PM's *2)	ReSPA Members	Selection of winning candidates	Increase of Human Resources enabling increase of program activities	Mart - June 2015	€ 2,500	D,PM (L), OM,PAD, Ext. Expert, QPS
3	Selection of Seconded National Experts - 2	Employees of PA in ReSPA Members	Selection of winning candidates	Increase of Human Capacities enabling increase of program activities	Mart - June 2015	€ 2,500	D,PM (L), OM,PAD, Ext. Expert, QPS
4	Update of the Forms supporting the Rules of procedures for selection, appointment, fee profiling and evaluation of experts	ReSPA Secretariat	Updated forms	Simplified/computerized preparation of the documentation in support of the selection procedure	March - July 2015	N/A	D, OM, PM, FA,PA,PAD,I T, D&GS
5	Improvements of Financial regulations	ReSPA Secretariat	Draft Version of the improved Financial Regulations and internal practices	BC Recommendation and adoption of the Improved Financial Regulations by the GB	April - July 2015	QPS	D, OM, QPS, Ext. Experts
6	Interim Financial and Narrative Report on Grant implementation	ReSPA Secretariat	Interim financial and narrative report on Grant implementation	Adoption of the report by European Commission and submitting payment request for the second instalment	Jan/March 2015	N/A	D, OM, PM, FA,PA,PAD,I T, D&GS
7	Interim EC Grant Expenditure Verification	ReSPA Secretariat	Auditor Meetings, review of related documentation	Affirmative Interim Expenditure Verification Report	February - March 2015	€ 10,000	D, OM, PM, FA,PA,PAD,I T, D&GS
8	Final Financial and Narrative Report on Grant implementation	ReSPA Secretariat	Interim financial and narrative report on Grant implementation	Adoption of the report by European Commission and submitting payment request for the second instalment	Jan/March 2015	N/A	D, OM, PM, FA,PA,PAD,I T, D&GS
9	Final EC Grant Expenditure Verification	ReSPA Secretariat	Auditor Meetings, review of related documentation	Affirmative Final Expenditure Verification Report	November - December 2015	€ 10,000	D, OM, PM, FA,PA,PAD,I T, D&GS

10	EC Grant Implementation and projections revision of planned versus actual	ReSPA Secretariat	Regular program/ operations meetings	Timely collection and recording of financial documentation; Tangible Insight in the actual versus budget expenditures: Optimal use of financial resources and flexible projection of future activities	April - November 2015	N/A	D, OM, PM, FA, PA, PAD, IT, D&GS
11	Preparation for the new EC Grant	ReSPA Secretariat	First Draft Submitted to GB	Ensured financial support to ReSPA's activities	April - Jul 2015	N/A	D, PM, OM, PA, FA
12	Update of New EC Grant Application	Senior Officials, EC, ReSPA Secretariat	Improvements and update of initial draft Grant Application	Ensured financing of ReSPA's programme activities	July - September 2015	€ 5,000	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA, FA, Ext. Expert
13	Finalisation of New EC Grant Contract	Senior Officials, EC, ReSPA Secretariat	Improvements and update of initial draft Grant Application	Ensured financing of ReSPA's programme activities	September - December 2015	€ 5,000	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA, FA, Ext. Expert
14	Alignment of the Budgetary Cart of Accounts with the IFRS Chart of accounts	ReSPA Secretariat, Finance Plus	Set limited amount of inputs for chart of the accounts for each budget item	Increased realibility and efficiency of bookeeping, accountancy, controlling and reporting	April - June 2015	N/A	OM, PA, FP
15	Transition of GAAP in Financial Reporting form IFRS to IPSAS	GAAP	Set dynamic of regular meetings with the selected Big 4 Audit Company (PWC, KPMG, E&Y; Deloitte - not eligible as current Auditor)	Amendment of Accounting Manual; Update of Chart of Accounts; Comparative presentation of IPSAS/IFRS Standard applications and financial outcomes for setting the comparison year; Accreditation and certification; Re-booking of existent general ledger in 2015 and preparation of IPSAS Interim and Annual Financial Statements; Staff Enrolment Double Standard reporting in 2015 and transition in IPSAS in 2016	May 2015 - May 2016	€ 15,000	OM, FA, Selected Big 4 Audit Companies (Deloitte - not eligible as current Auditor)
16	Addendum to Core Budget 2015 and payment to the Capital Savings Fund	ReSPA Secretariat	Preparation of Core Budget Addendum and proposal for Payment in to Capital Savings Fund	Recommendation from BC and Adoption of GB of the Addendum to Core Budget 2015 - as well as follow-up implementation	February - March 2015; April - December 2015	N/A	D, OM, PM, FA, PA, PAD, IT, D&GS
17	ReSPA Liquidity and projection of efficient cash management and short term deposits	ReSPA Secretariat	Setting the amount of free funds to be placed in short term deposit up to 3 months	Earned interest as result of Efficient cash management,	Continuous	N/A	OM, FA

18	Ensure overdraft Loan for the balance payment from the EC Grant	ReSPA Secretariat	Overdraft Loan Contract	Uninterrupted implementation of the EC Grant in the final stage	April - November 2015	2400+10% interest on used loan amount	OM, FA
19	Implementation of reliable reporting in EDOPS	ReSPA Secretariat/ EDOPS/FP	Available Report generated by EDOPS	Reliable Reporting outcome with minor interventions	April - December 2015	Maintenance fee - 290 euro/month	OM, FA, EDOPS, FP
20	Development of IT Platform for selection of Experts from the ReSPA Database of Experts	ReSPA Secretariat	IT Platform for selection of experts	Increased efficiency of the procedure for selection of experts	June - December 2015	€ 10,000	D, OM, PM, PA, IT
21	Maintenance of the Water tank for sprinkler system	ReSPA Secretariat	Construction of water proof layer in the tank	Functional Sprinkler System for Fire Protection	February - March 2015	€ 2,000	OM, IT, GS
22	Annual Maintenance service of the Cooling / Heating system	ReSPA Secretariat	Completion of the maintenance service	Improved quality of the Cooling / Heating System	March - April & October 2015	€ 3,750	OM, IT, GS
23	Handover of the Campus facilities	Host Country Authorities	Preparation of contract agreement for handover of the Campus Facilities	Regular Functioning of ReSPA Campus; Compliance with the GAAP in EU	ASAP	N/A	MNEA, D, OM, PM (L), FA, PAD
24	Settlement on delivery of accommodation and catering services at ReSPA Campus	Local Entities	Selection of catering services provide for ReSPA	Quality catering service; Simplification of operation activities	February - April 2015	up to 90,000	OM, FA
25	Outsourcing Labour Services for Cleaning	ReSPA Service Employees	Engaged company for outsourcing labour services	Ensuring quality, security, reliability and continuity in cleaning services of ReSPA Campus	February - April 2015	€ 2,500	D, OM, PM (L)
26	Preparation and launching of Tender for ReSPA travel Services	ReSPA Secretariat	Lunching of the Tender	Quality of provided travel services	December 2014 - April 2015	€ 3,600	D, PM, OM, PAD, PA, FA, Ext. Expert
27	Procurement: EU visibility tenders	ReSPA Secretariat	Selection of winning bidder	Increase of ReSPA Visibility	July - October 2015	115,000	D, OM, PM, FA, PA, PAD, IT, D&GS

28	Procurement: ReSPA Addendum related tenders	ReSPA Secretariat	Selection of winning bidder	Services/ supplies provided in quality and timely manner	April - October 2015	TBC	D, OM, PM, FA,PA,PAD, IT, D&GS
29	Improved memory resources/capability of the servers	ReSPA Campus	Equipment installation	Extension of systems lifetime	January - March 2015	€ 500	OM, IT
30	Developing of IT software development plan - as per Independent Audit Request	Audit Agency	Document development	Document development	January - April 2015	N/A	OM, IT
31	Annual Licencing for Server Platforms	ReSPA Server Pool	License renewal	License renewal	February - March 2015	50,00	OM, IT
32	Installing of the newly purchased equipment(Smart Tables, Video Conf system)	Training Rooms	Equipment installation and programming	Improvement of training facilities	February - March 2015	€ 19,000	OM, IT
33	Upgrading of existing system,(Video and audio system, projector and audio mixer replacing	Training Rooms	Equipment mounting	Improvement of training facilities	February - March 2015	€ 4,000	OM, IT
34	Work on analysis and creating additional workspace for new colleagues	GB Room	Discussions, analysis and preparation for project	Improvement of working space quality	March - July 2015	N/A	D,OM,IT, GS
35	Implementation of technical resources for new workspace(network, IT devices, phone and mobile lines)	GB Room	Planning and implementing	Improvement of working conditions	March - July 2015	N/A	OM, IT, GS
36	The annual big equipment service(MFP,)	IT Devices	Preparing the budget and spare parts purchasing	Extension of systems lifetime	April-June 2015	€ 2,000	OM, IT
37	Replacement of Server infrastructure and Firewall appliance	It Server Pool	Analysing and defining the couple of possible best solutions for ReSPA server and FW environment	Resolving situation regarding equipment which is in 24 h work mode for more than 5 years	March-July 2015	€ 30,000	OM, IT
38	Purchasing of new AC system for the Server Rooms	Server Rooms	AC units purchasing	Resolving the AC units failures in the server rooms	March-May 2015	€ 2,000	OM, IT, GS

5 Risks to achieving our objectives

ReSPA is ambitious but we are also realistic and recognise that there certain risks which may affect our real results. Some examples of these risks are outlined below whilst others have been addressed under specific headings elsewhere in this PoW.

Our member's commitment in a variety of forms ranges from timely payment of subscriptions to the dissemination of ReSPA communications to relevant officials in administrations.

We are very aware of the need to spread our communications beyond Ministries and agencies responsible for public administration out to other Ministries and institutions. This is not only necessary to ensure that the right people are involved in and benefit from our activities but that a "joined-up government" approach is utilised across the region. The majority of our programme activities have horizontal and/or cross-cutting elements essential to real public administration reform and satisfying the EU integration agenda. This also impacts on the correct identification, selection and nomination of the right personnel to participate in ReSPA activities.

The development of the RePAN structures will require some time to "bed-in" and lead to a variety of ne working methods such as the circulation and adoption of "draft" conclusions at Ministerial and Network levels. Participants will need to focus more on their internal preparation for such meetings and signal their contributions, changes and new items well in advance of meetings – adopting the same practices as other international organisations. Any lack of preparation and advance notification of issues/amendments will significantly reduce the potential for delivery on meeting objectives.

We also need to ensure that the EU is confident that their support for our activities is being used in an effective manner and not duplicating other donor initiatives. This creates complex and sometimes time-consuming coordination requirements which sometimes impact on the timing and delivery of activities. In addition, we need to spread our engagement with the EU beyond the regional unit in Brussels and work with EU Delegations and Offices. This will require a host of new communication channels and operating procedures that may take time to evolve.

Of course any organisation requires both the personnel and policies and procedures to carry out its activities. We are refining our approach to programming, which in itself is a distinct burden but we are also aware that over defining planned activities reduces flexibility and the capacity to meet the emerging needs of our stakeholders. Thus we need to continually adapt our procedures and planning instruments and we will need real inputs, and most of all, actual prioritisation from our stakeholders.

The internal capacity of the organisation has been in a source of concern for some considerable time but has been partially addressed by structural changes and new recruitment. Further recruitment and secondments are planned but they will only come on-stream during the course of this PoW. New staff will take some time to induct and to become fully operational and this may impact to some extent on the delivery of planned activities. Any changes in a small secretariat such as people leaving or even prolonged illness, has a disproportionately high impact and is a significant risk factor.

During the course of 2015, ReSPA needs to continue to develop a range of internal policies and procedures which are not always visible but require certain internal resources.

Stakeholders are a key source of inspiration and ideas for ReSPA but the further development of key guidelines separating organisational governance and operations will be an overhead with the potential to significantly distract resources form delivering on programme activities.

6 THEMATIC AREAS

ReSPA Program of Work has been conceptualized on the basis of broad discussions and consultations with the various stakeholders, the main recommendations of the EC progress reports, related SIGMA, OECD and World Bank reports as well as the obligations derived from SEE2020 Strategy. The thematic areas of all ReSPA mainstream activities in 2015 are: European Integration, Public Administration Reform, Human Resources Management and Development (HRM/HRD), e-Government, Ethics and Integrity and Public Procurement. In addition to these thematic areas, the broad segment of Economic Governance (EG) will be incorporated in almost all thematic areas as their integral and very important part. Although it is a cross cutting issue, the EG will be the most specifically and robustly integrated in the PAR thematic area.

In addition to two high-level networks on EUI and PAR, ReSPA manages six expert networks), each dedicated to a specific thematic area related to the assisting its Member states in reforming their public administration on the path towards EU membership.

The chart below illustrates the structure and areas of ReSPA programme activities.



6.1 European Integration

Overview

All ReSPA Members are focused on European integration as a process which changes the entire society, and in which the public administration is a driving force. Necessary reforms in the area of public administration are strongly inter-connected with European integration process. Although the Western Balkan countries are not at the same stage in the EU integration process, they have very similar challenges in transformation of their societies. For some of ReSPA beneficiaries the improvement of the quality of their public services in line with EU standards is an immediate accession negotiation objective, and for some others their future obligation. The European Commission's Enlargement strategy for 2014-2015 has underlined the importance of Public

Administration Reform as one of the three pillars of the integration process on which particular emphasis will be put in the coming period³.

Past activities and structures

During 2014 ReSPA successfully established new governance structure - EI Programme Committee, as a consultative subsidiary body whose overall mandate is to ensure the complementarities and synergy of ReSPA activities in the area of Public Administration Reform with the requirements arising from the EI process. This new structure, composed of senior government officials from national EI coordinating institutions, will have continuing influence on stronger synergies between PAR and EI demands in programming and implementation cycle of ReSPA activities in 2015, as well as the coming years.

Consultations process and relevance of the regional dimension

In the preparation of the Program of Work 2015, members of the EI Programme Committee provided valuable inputs and reached a general consensus on most pressing issues for the entire region in the area of EI which need to be addressed in the coming period. Though at different stages of the EI process, the members of the Committee recognized interlinked and overlapping issues which could be successfully addressed through regional cooperation and activities provided by ReSPA. Although many existing financial and technical support mechanisms for the EI process are provided in all ReSPA members, the regional perspective of cooperation within ReSPA in that regard represents a unique and valuable added value.

ReSPA objectives 2015 and indication of key activities that will contribute to the goals

1. Establishing strategic coordination of the EI process

EI Programme Committee will ensure strategic coordination of the EI process at the regional level by providing comprehensive inputs for improvement of ReSPA programme and activity plans and/or streamlining the activities in line with the EU integration requirements. In addition, EI Programme Committee will provide specific recommendations and guidelines to ReSPA for further improvement of the work in certain subareas of intervention, such as: Legal harmonization of national legislation with EU acquis, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, Development of national version of EU acquis, Negotiations techniques, etc. 2 meetings of the EI Programme Committee will be held in 2015.

2. Increasing institutional capacities for the successful IPA programming and utilization of EU funds

One of the major challenges for all ReSPA Members is to strengthen the administrative capacities, not only in National IPA Coordinators (NIPAC) offices, but also in all line ministries, for applying a sector wide and integrated planning approach in designing relevant, well targeted and articulated sector programmes and specific actions/projects, meeting strategic needs of the EU accession process and thus supporting an effective use of the available EU financial assistance. In 2015 ReSPA will organize a number of specific activities in order to enhance regional cooperation of NIPAC offices and mutual learning from the successful practices, as well as to increase national capacities

³ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2014/20141008-strategy-paper_en.pdf

for effective use of available EU funds which will include organizing specific seminars and/or workshops for IPA II programming and monitoring, execution of mobility scheme programme as well as in-country trainings on Sector Budget Support.

3. Supporting efforts of national institutions for successful harmonization of national legislation with the EU acquis

All ReSPA members determined them self for gradual harmonization of its current laws and future legislation with the legal system of EU, including the adequate enforcement and implementation of current and future legislation. Namely, with signing the Stabilization and Association Agreements, all ReSPA members⁴ committed them self to approximation of national legislation to EU acquis and especially to proper implementation of (gradually) compatible legislation. Above all, every candidate country for membership into the EU is obliged to prepare the specific strategic document National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA). It is necessary to provide sufficient knowledge to practitioners and law-drafters on the use of legal alignment tools and to exchange experience on adequate prioritisation of harmonisation process. In line with above said, in 2015 ReSPA will organize 2 workshops, a summer school and a mobility scheme programme with the goal to increase institutional capacities for the successful conduct of this complex process.

4. Strengthening institutional capacities for quality translation and development of national version of the acquis

Translation of national legislation harmonized with the acquis and, in parallel, translation of the overall EU acquis into national official language is necessary for timely harmonization of national legislation, but it is also a prerequisite for membership in the EU. The translation of the acquis is a complex process, involving the collaboration of a high number of jurists, trained translators and interpreters, linguists, terminologists and proof-readers professionally trained in legal studies. Despite existing language differences among ReSPA members, there are many issues which are common, such as: institutional and organizational set up of Translation Coordination Units, capacity needs assessment and capacity development activities, legal, technical and linguistic revisions and proofreading of translation, creation and management of terminology data bases, etc.

ReSPA PoW 2015 envisages numerous activities in field of establishing and promoting deeper cooperation in field of EU acquis translation. Networking of experts is among the most pressing needs, but ReSPA will in addition focus on the organization of events such as workshops on creation of the National version of the acquis, training on translation techniques, and the mobility scheme programme.

5. Improving negotiation skills for the successful conduct of the EI process

The accession negotiations are a coherent activity performed by a candidate country's administration. This process has been gradually evolving in terms of procedural and substantial requirements. Every round of enlargement generated a new approach from EU side. Therefore,

⁴ On 25 of July 2014 Kosovo initialled its Stabilization and Association Agreement with EU, and it can be expected that will be signed in 2015.

there is a need to prepare public administrations from the ReSPA Members to accommodate to the new approach in enlargement negotiations. Furthermore, assessment of the progress of a country in the EU integration substantially depends on the quality of reports prepared by national administrations. ReSPA PoW 2015 envisages 2 workshops on the negotiation skills with the EU, one workshop on written communication and reporting to the EU and a Summer School on Negotiation Techniques to be held.

Resources

Being one of the two core thematic areas with a considerable number of various activities, 2 Programme Managers will be assigned to manage this area, with the support of Programme Assistant and Operations unit, as well as short-term experts, as needed.

Risks and opportunities

- Constantly changing requirements in terms of substance, timeframe, procedures and methodologies which makes it hard to identify experts with the most up-to-date knowledge and experience;
- Due to overbooked schedules of senior officials in charge of the EI process, there is a challenge to ensure their presence and active involvement in the meetings;
- Very tight and strict schedules in some of the subareas such as IPA programming which impose highly intensive plan of activities;
- Difficulty in designing the programs which would be adequately relevant to all beneficiaries taking into account the different stages of the EI process;
- Moodle platform as a tool for exchange of most relevant national documents and strategies, exchange of opinions should be more frequently used.

6.2 Public Administration Reform (PAR) – PAR Network

Overview

The key objective of ReSPA is facilitation of cooperation among ReSPA members and exchange of experience in Public Administration Reform (PAR), as well as strengthening administrative capacities as expected by the European integration process. European integration as strategic goal of all ReSPA members, poses the need for an accelerated professionalization, de-politicization and modernization of public administration and its enabling to respond to the challenges of the EU accession process, following the principles recognized in the European Administrative Space (EAS). As the EU enlargement agenda has put PAR amongst the key pillars of its strategy, ReSPA will work towards more integrated approach to PAR from the EU accession perspective.

To contribute to this objective, ReSPA's role is:

- To ensure possibilities for sharing information on the current PAR activities in ReSPA members and at the regional level;
- To identify areas where regional exchange and cooperation would clearly complement national actions and overall objectives;
- To implement various modalities of activities within PAR area through network meetings, seminars, studies, trainings, conferences etc.

Past activities and structures

In 2014, ReSPA supported creation of the Network of senior PAR managers in the region. The aim of establishing this Network was to exchange experience amongst ReSPA members, but also with counterparts from the EU Member states and especially from the last EU entrants.

In the past year, ReSPA organized comprehensive research effort and publication of the Regional Comparative Study on Methodologies Used for Preparation of PAR Strategies in Western Balkans. The study was published and distributed across the region, and it was presented and discussed at the PAR Network meeting held in Sarajevo on January 26-27, 2015.

Consultative process

In addition to contributions by all ReSPA members regarding potential activities under PAR, ReSPA consulted the PAR Network members as well. At the second meeting of the ReSPA PAR Network, held in January 2015, the members of the Network (high officials responsible for public administration reform), have agreed on the following:

1. The PAR Network members will, according with the conclusions of the ReSPA Ministerial Governing Board meeting held in Skopje on 31 October 2014, contribute, within their responsibilities, to strengthening regional cooperation and networking in the field of public administration and European integration.
2. The PAR Network will steer the work of specialized working groups operating in different fields of public administration reform, by identifying the most relevant and challenging topics for their work, taking into account the state of play and developments of public administration reforms in the region.
3. The PAR Network will consider whether and how the lessons learned and recommendations from the Regional Comparative Study on Methodologies Used for Preparation of PAR Strategies in Western Balkans may complement and support PAR efforts in their administrative context. Based on the responses and comments that will be collected from the Network members, ReSPA will prepare proposals on potential follow up support on this topic.
4. The PAR Network agreed that ReSPA should ensure continuity of its programme activities for 2015, in particular with reference to research activities (comparative studies) that have been discussed and agreed with the stakeholders gathered in the thematic networks in the course of 2014 (i.e. GAPA, HRMD, etc.).
5. The PAR Network acknowledged list of suggested topics for discussions, exchange of experiences, comparative regional studies and trainings, as possible input for the ReSPA Programme of Work 2015.
6. The PAR Network supports the initiative that ReSPA in 2015 should also address Better Regulation and Reduction of Administrative Burdens. Based on the objectives that will be set up in this area, modalities, purpose and the structure of the regional working group will be discussed at the next session of the PAR Network.
7. The PAR Network welcomes further Regional Cooperation Council's initiatives to review quantitative and qualitative indicators of all five pillars of the SEE 2020 Strategy, including 5th pillar "Governance for Growth", such as to adjust headline targets and proposed measures under NAPs and regional action plans. In spite of replacement of NAPs with National Economic Reform

Programmes (NERPs) in January 2015, the Network members expect that PAR area will be more integrated in further development of NERPs and reporting to the EC in this format of document (development of a light Western Balkans European Semester).

ReSPA objectives for 2015

The overall objective is to support PAR efforts in ReSPA members, and to strengthen regional cooperation and networking in the field of public administration related to European integrations.

The specific objective is to support strategic coordination and exchange of experience on PAR among ReSPA members.

For 2015, PAR Network will have two meetings in addition to the one held in Sarajevo in January this year. The second meeting is planned for May in Skopje, and the following topics are envisaged for discussion: quality management, regulatory impact assessment (RIA), SIGMA principles of public administration (PAR principles), and legislation in the field of public administration. The third meeting which is planned for late September should discuss the progress in implementation of SIGMA principles of public administration (PAR principles). It is planned that after the first day of this meeting, the PAR Network will be joined by the ReSPA European Integrations Programming Committee, and that the two groups will discuss EC progress reports together. It is also expected that these two groups will decide about follow up activities and give input for ReSPA's Plan of Work 2016.

The synergy between European integrations, PAR processes and implementation of specific segments of SEE 2020 Strategy will be ensured through activities of this Network.

ReSPA is planning to organize Annual Conference on the topic: Towards Measuring Public Administration Performance – Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies on November 11-12, 2015 in ReSPA premises in Danilovgrad. It is expected that the outcome of this Conference will be promotion of best practices and recommendation for concrete steps in the area of monitoring and evaluation of public administration policies.

Resources

The following resources are envisaged in order to implement the proposed activities: adequate financial resources, ReSPA Director, two program managers, three program assistants, up to 12 short-term experts, cooperation with ReSPA liaison officers, support by the ReSPA finance department, ReSPA hotel, teaching facilities, translators and interpreting services, and Moodle – ReSPA's platform for exchange of information and knowledge.

6.3 Human Resources Management and Development (HRMD)

Overview

Strategic human resources management and development (HRMD) is essential to the governance and management of public administration. Human resources capacity building and development is critically needed both horizontally and vertically. The first focuses on national capacity building strategies, while the latter stresses capacity development in international relations, in particular, in effective functioning in the EU integration process.

Past activities and structures

In 2014, ReSPA established a Community of Practitioners (CoP) in HRMD. The target audiences of the CoP in HRMD issues are heads of Human Resources Management departments and respective officers/associates, experts and policy developers on HR issues. The main areas of interest and the priorities were discussed and elaborated during networking meetings of the CoP in HRMD in April and in December 2014. CoP discussed topics of common interest and decided to undertake a comparative study related to recruitment procedures based on merit.

Consultative process

In addition to consultations with the CoP in HRMD, ReSPA held consultative meetings and gathered input from all ReSPA members in January 2015. The experience and good practices with regard to already applied mechanisms and tools are considered a valuable asset.

ReSPA objectives for 2015

Overall objective is to enhance professionalization and competence in public administration by implementing modern human resources management systems.

Specific objectives:

1. Strengthening regional co-operation and exchange of good practices among ReSPA members through Community of Practitioners (CoP) in the field of Human Resources Management and Development (HRMD) – two meetings planned for 2015, one in May and the other one in October.
2. Improving recruitment and retention policies and practices – with the planned activity: comparative study on recruitment procedures based on merit.
3. Contributing to de-politicization by organizing a thematic conference “Civil Service between Politics and Administration” that is planned for October 2015.
4. Strengthening cooperation with national training centres in joint development of a Programme on Leadership and Change Management, with support of the QPS project.
5. Strengthening cooperation between ReSPA members by improving HRM information systems – Working Group meeting is planned for September 2015, and it is expected that outcome of the meeting will be a proposal for joint procurement of information systems and other forms of cooperation.

Resources

The following resources are envisaged in order to implement the proposed activities: adequate financial resources, two program managers, one seconded expert, three program assistants, up to 12 short-term experts, cooperation with ReSPA liaison officers, support by the ReSPA finance department, ReSPA hotel, teaching facilities, translators and interpreting services, and Moodle – ReSPA’s platform for exchange of information and knowledge.

6.4 eGovernment

Overview

The eGovernment initiatives have been implemented to closely reflect the specific needs of the West Balkan region in light of global developments. The OECD is focusing strongly on public sector reform and innovation in order to move beyond the crisis and how to support prosperity and welfare, for example through its principles for digital government strategies⁵, due to be launched in September 2014.

The United Nations in its eGovernment Survey 2014⁶ shows how even countries with tight budgets can significantly improve services, and thereby increase prosperity and welfare, through focusing on a whole-of-government collaborative approach across the public sector, by building eParticipation and publishing open government data, as well as targeting disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The United Nations also sees eGovernment as essential for promoting good governance in the form of building capacity in the public sector for implementing the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals shortly to be agreed.⁷ The World Bank, which deploys eGovernment as part of its wider so-called 'e-transform' and 'e-development' work, focuses on strategy, policy, regulation and institutional frameworks to support prosperity and welfare. This is based on a whole-of-government approach by sharing infrastructures and services, as well as public-private-partnerships and collaboration with civil society, and especially mobile, cloud computing and open data.⁸

European developments (EU) in eGovernment are highly complementary to these global trends and in particular focus on new visions for public services and public sector innovation and transformation.⁹ There is also strong prioritisation of administrative burden reduction through the whole-of-government approach, interoperability, building base registries and moving towards 'digital-by-default' strategies which compel users (both businesses and citizens) to use the digital channel unless there are good reasons not to do so, or they are unable. Massive cost savings can be made using such strategies¹⁰ that can, in turn, support tackling Europe's societal challenges like the need to promote prosperity and welfare more strongly and address increasing poverty. In the next few years, Europe will also move towards renewing in some way the current eGovernment Action Plan, 2011-2015, based on these strategies. Through the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme and other instruments, Europe is also likely in future to focus increasingly on open governance systems enabled by ICT where user engagement, transparency and services based on design thinking approaches will probably be prioritised. Important components of this approach are

⁵ <http://www.oecd.org/governance/eleaders/Communique-2013.pdf>

⁶ <http://unpan3.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2014>

⁷ <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>

⁸ <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTINFORMATIONANDCOMMUNICATION/EXTTECHNOLOGIES/EXTGOVERNMENT/0,,menuPK:702592~pagePK:149018~piPK:149093~theSitePK:702586,00.html>

⁹ <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/vision-public-services>

¹⁰ <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/final-report-study-egovernment-and-reduction-administrative-burden-smart-20120061>

expected to include social and inclusive innovation, and greater focus on efforts to promote co-creation, reverse inequalities and further increase cooperation with non EU Member States.¹¹

The entire eGovernment thematic area with the proposed related ReSPA activities is linked with the SEE 2020 (5th pillar) and EU PAR principles i.e. SIGMA (more precisely, 4 Accountability principles which are related to anti-corruption efforts and 5.3 Mechanism for ensuring the quality of public service are in place) and SEE 2020 (2.3 Combating corruption through eGovernment in SEE, 2.4 e-Governance Model for SEE Local Governments, 4.4 e-Academy for Local Governments and PAR exchange platform).

Past activities and structures

Coordinated by ReSPA, the Western Balkan eGovernment leaders have over the last few years undertaken a number of initiatives that need to be built upon and further developed and exploited. ReSPA Regional Comparative eGovernment Study, which examined the status of eGovernment development in the West Balkan countries and, drawing on European and global experience, proposed future topics for focus and modalities of cooperation to align the region increasingly with European developments. The overall activities in domain of eGovernment have been comprised of: Seminar on eGovernment and mGovernment and Strategic Planning in the PA. Visit of ReSPA to the OECD in Paris, Seminar on Strategic Planning and implementing eGovernment projects; and Study¹² on Anti-Corruption supported by eGovernment. Structure - ReSPA has founded three years ago the network on eGovernment nowadays called working group on eGovernment. It is composed of senior professionals and decision makers who have exceptional experience and knowledge therefore it is envisaged to sustain a group of core members who may during consultative meetings with the PAR network and EU Programming Committee conclude and design strategic objectives of the eGovernment working group. The members of the Working Group will be composed of senior practitioners.

Consultations process and relevance of the regional dimension – ReSPA has used networking meetings during 2014 as well as the consultative process in January 2015 to collect valuable information from the regional stakeholders. In addition it has been secured that EU and global context and the most important trends are taken into account while designing the related programme for 2015 (meetings and / or email communication with the representatives from the OECD, SIGMA, UN, etc). Since eGovernment serves as a cross cutting element it is expected to provide variety of tools that may contribute to the specific needs of the West Balkan (e.g. eHealth, eJustice, eProcurement, etc). Due to its cross-cutting nature, eGovernment is expected to provide variety of tools that may contribute to the specific needs of the Western Balkans (e.g. eHealth, eJustice, eProcurement, etc). It is important that ReSPA's continues support to eGovernment development taking into account the needs of the region as reflected in ReSPA's activities over the last few years, and which are aligned as much as possible to global and especially European developments, as outlined above.

¹¹Unpublished European Commission background papers preparing for the Horizon 2020 Work Programme for 2016-2017.

¹² ICT Abuse of Information Technology (IT) for Corruption

ReSPA objectives for 2015

Overall objective:

- To strengthen regional co-operation in deploying eGovernment to build trust and collaboration across government and with end users

Specific objectives:

- Strengthening the use of prevention measures to fight against corruption in eGovernment sector for building trust and collaboration across government and with end users;
- Support to improving collaboration across government institutions interlinking eGovernment with other ReSPA working groups.

The 2014 Regional Comparative ICT Abuse of Information Technology (IT) for Corruption study showed that many Western Balkan governments have strong potential to design prevention system for corruption in domain of ICT. This particularly important area has to be dealt and ReSPA will on request of its stakeholders (eGovernment working group and Ethics and Integrity working group) design and conduct the following activities: pilot check list on corruption prevention, Workshop on methodology design for Corruption prevention in domain of ICT, hopefully aiming g to produce recommendations for the implementation of related methodology / specifications, etc.

Jointly with GAPA working group a study visit to Austria will be conducted with the overall aim to get acquainted with the one-stop shop principle. For this particular event the e-Government working group will be specifically designed and will be composed of civil servants responsible for the process of establishment of the e-Government system in the context of the public administration reform process and will involve representatives of central government i.e. ministries of justice, ministries responsible for public administration, and other relevant ministries and government agencies. The follow-up event will be organized by GAPA working group, and the activity is reflected in its activity plan.

This joint initiative has multiple goals: to learn about best practices in implementation of one-stop shop principle, and map the progress in that respect in the region, connecting it with Austrian experiences and best practices, and ultimately to develop a set of recommendations for future cooperation and activities between ReSPA's GAPA and e-Government working groups.

The next working group meeting is planned to take place at the end of April 2015 jointly with the Ethics and Integrity (E&I) working group. In addition to this back-to-back event, main findings will be discussed also by the Public Procurement (PP) working group, since PP is one of the main challenges in terms of preventing corruption, also when it comes to procuring ICT. Additional topics that are expected to be discussed during the PP working groups are in particular: separation of design and implementation of tender procedures, etc. As far as eProcurement is concerned, eGovernment working groups will join the discussion. The E&I working group can contribute from the general perspective of anti-corruption (such as conflicts of interest). Links may be made to European PP initiatives and standards, such as the OpenPEPPOL platform¹³.

¹³ OpenPEPPOL platform - (http://www.peppol.eu/about_peppol/about-openpeppol-1) established in September 2012 after successful completion of the Pan-European Public Procurement Online (PEPPOL) project which saw PEPPOL specifications being implemented in several European countries solving interoperability issues for

Another group of activities will aim to support development of common platform between eGovernment working group and other ReSPA working groups such as E&I and PPP aiming to detect areas of common interest and potentially leading towards design of first draft proposal for regional projects in related areas. All abovementioned activities are oriented towards providing inputs both at the country as well as the regional level. Mobility Scheme programme will support exchange of know-how and further networking.

Mobility Scheme programme will enable senior professionals to gain knowledge in real life cases, and it will contribute to networking between the institutions, countries and region as a whole. The identified practice in this specific area will reflect the best in the region. It is important that the mobility programme also takes account of best practice and main trends outside the region, especially in the areas of forthcoming European and EU initiatives as outlined above.

Expected follow up activities

- Checklist (methodological tool) for detecting risks of ICT corruption designed and piloted in several institutions
- Recommendations for amending existing Anticorruption- or eGovernment strategies with sections on preventing risks of ICT corruption are available
- Common areas of interest between eGovernment and Public Private Partnership working groups and / or other working groups identified and 1st proposals for joint projects initiated

In addition, the overall follow-up will be devoted to investigating the scope for aligning ReSPA activities with forthcoming European and EU initiatives, especially in the areas of participative policy making; the role of the public sector in boosting co-creation and innovation across society; the co-creation of a new generation of public services and policies and testing and scaling up of new solutions; the role of eGovernment in promoting fairness and tackling inequalities; and reducing the administrative burden of public administration

Resources

The respective working group on eGovernment will be supported by Programme Manager and Programme assistant/s (especially the PA with IT skills) as well external expert/s.

Risks

Potential lack of satisfaction with the working group results expressed by the beneficiaries. Latter mentioned is linked with one of the biggest risks in respective area since at the moment not having opportunity to implement all concrete recommendations (such as cloud computing - design of software, etc) evolved either from previous meetings and/or regional comparative studies that require additional financial resources. Another risk is not having the possibility to retain previous core team of senior professionals and/or decision makers if not being kept sustained in any of the available structures (mitigation measure is to keep them on board at least once – twice a year for consultative meetings of strategic orientation). The last observed risk is limited possibilities to transpose in the national context proposed recommendations and/or solutions without strong

electronic procurement. Also relevant are current EU efforts in the area of administrative burden reduction (see above), as well as to areas of future focus such as reversing inequalities and ensuring fairness and accountability (European Council (2014) Strategic Agenda for the Union in Times of Change, 26-27 June 2014: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/143477.pdf)

commitment and support of the ReSPA Governing structures (GB at all levels, PAR network, EU Programming Committee) and final beneficiary institutions.

Opportunities

The observed opportunities are in domain of retaining old members, also representatives from respective Croatian institutions (important experience for the WB region), continuation of joint platforms design with other working groups (E&I, PPP, etc). Use of Moodle platform may be an opportunity to confirm the readiness of target audiences to share knowledge and best practices in continuum.

6.5 Ethics and Integrity

Overview

The working group on ethics and integrity has been created to support the establishment of the accountable, transparent, effective, efficient, and citizens oriented Public Administration and Good Governance. It provides the communication platform and exchange of know-how of the most important institutions dealing with anticorruption measures in the Western Balkans.

Anticorruption and Conflict of interest have repeatedly been an issue of concern for the region in the past monitoring reports of **OECD, Sigma**, EU Progress Reports, and Evaluation Reports of the **Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)**. Further improvement of regulations and setting up of verification mechanisms are on the strategic or political agenda of several countries in the region. The overall thematic area as well proposed activities contribute in wider and specific context to the implementation of the EU PAR principles as well as SEE 2020 strategy (SIGMA - 3.7 i.e. Measures for promoting integrity, and preventing corruption and ensuring discipline in the public service are in place, 4 i.e. Accountability, 6 i.e. Public Finance Management) and SEE2020 (5th Pillar Strategy for Growth, sub-dimension Effective Public Services, Key Strategy Action 2: Improving the quality of public services).

Past activities and structures

As a result of working group activities, ReSPA produced a comparative Study on "Income and Asset Declarations in Practice" in 2013 and provided the basis for achieving relevant and substantial impact on: reform measures in several countries which is being underway; adoption of the international standard, which includes conflict of interest aspects, that will serve as a benchmark for future monitoring of reforms in the region and beyond; adoption of a template for an international agreement facilitating data exchange in the region.

Consultation process and relevance of the regional dimension

In 2014 the meetings of the E&I working group initiated the production of the comparative study on *Abuse of Information Technology (IT) for Corruption*. For the first time in ReSPA one comparative study was a joint initiative of two working groups/working groups, eGovernment and the E&I. ReSPA's work continued to be directed by the working group members who, during 2014, also identified prevention of conflict of interest (production of comparative study) and prevention of corruption in ICT sector (developing methodology for conducting of assessment of risks posed by the abuse of ICT), as future steps in ReSPA work in the area of ethics and integrity. While designing the related

objectives of the working group for 2015, communication with the representatives from the OECD, SIGMA, UN, was also taken into consideration. Corruption has also been recognised as one of the priorities of the EC. It is sensitive by its nature and requires the engagement of all institutions.

ReSPA objectives 2015

Overall objective:

- Providing support to ReSPA members in designing prevention mechanisms for fighting corruption.

Specific objectives:

- Providing support in prevention of conflict of interest
- Providing support in prevention of ICT corruption
- Providing support to asset declaration process in the region

The target audiences of the Ethics and integrity as intervention area are senior officials of the relevant state institutions in ReSPA members responsible for the issues related to the process of prevention and corruption combat (heads/ deputy heads of anticorruption agencies, ministries, etc.) and, possibly, special units in the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior or Ministry of Justice and other related institutions.

ICT Corruption

In order to work on prevention of the ICT corruption, it has been agreed by the working group members to develop methodology for conducting assessment of the risk of ICT corruption.

ReSPA will facilitate the compilation of methodologies that already exist in the region. Serbia has already designed and piloted the methodology for assessing the ICT risks which was presented to ReSPA working group members in 2012. At the last joint working group meeting the working group members from Serbia presented the results of two-year implementation of their pilot project. The working group members agreed to pilot the draft methodology in selected institutions of ReSPA member countries (BiH, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia) and Kosovo*. Following the piloting, the methodology will be finalised, and presented for discussion/adoption of both working groups in spring 2015. Once the methodology has been adopted, a monitoring and impact assessment mechanism will be developed to measure impact over a period of 2-3 years. It will be at the disposal for use by ReSPA members. Next working group meeting is planned to take place at the end of April 2015, jointly with the eGovernment working group. In addition to this back to back event, main findings will be discussed at the Public Procurement working group, since PP is one of the main challenges in terms of preventing corruption and ICT procurement. Additional topics expected to be discussed during the PP working group meeting are in particular: separation of design and implementation of tender procedures, centralized procurement, etc. As far as e-Procurement is concerned, eGovernment working groups will join the discussion. The E&I working group can contribute from the general perspective of anti-corruption (such as conflicts of interest).

Conflict of interest

The conflict of interest was also identified as an area of work by the working group members. An outline of the comparative study has been developed with support of the working group and it will be developed in the course of 2015. The comparative study shall address real life cases that will allow

for an in-depth analysis of the legal and organizational framework of ReSPA members through addressing cases and challenges on conflict of interest. It will allow recommendations for reform, which are not based on abstract principles, but drawn on real life cases and ethical dilemmas.

The comparative study on conflicts of interest will be the kick-off for supporting in-country reforms in the region. Depending on the study's results and recommendations, the working group might adopt an international standard on conflicts of interest, support setting up of verification mechanisms, and provide concrete guidance for improving legislation and organisational frameworks for conflicts of interest. All above stated will be commended on the working group meeting in October which will as well serve as the launching event of the study.

Income and asset declaration

Considering that promoting the adoption of common standards can contribute to protecting society against corruption and recognizing the fact that transparency in public governance is one of the main tools in fighting corruption and increasing public confidence in politics - the members of the ethics and integrity working group recommend that governments of member states establish and implement a coherent and comprehensive framework for income and asset declaration.. Therefore assets standards i.e. Western Balkans Recommendation on Disclosure of Finances and Interests by Public Officials¹⁴ were designed. The respected ReSPA regional study on Income and Asset Declarations in practice has set a basis latter mentioned ReSPA "product". At the same time following study's recommendations, with the technical support from the QPS project, Action Plan for the Implementation of Recommendations of Comparative Study on Income and Asset Declarations in Practice for each of the ReSPA beneficiary country has been designed. ReSPA will conduct monitoring in domain of respective activities (implementation of the action plans) with the support of the QPS.

Expected follow up activities

- Conflict of interest study and subsequently design of tools for following up on recommendations of the study (such as methodology for verifying conflicts of interest, benchmark for monitoring compliance, etc.)
- ICT corruption risk-detecting check-list (methodological tool designed and piloted in several institutions)
- Recommendations for amending existing anti-corruption or eGovernment strategies with sections on preventing risks of ICT-corruption

Resources

The activities planned within this thematic area will be supported by 1 Programme Manager who will be assigned to manage this area, with the support of Programme Assistant, Operations unit, as well as short-term experts, as needed.

¹⁴<http://www.respaweb.eu/download/doc/Asset+Standard+FIN+14+12+10.pdf/45571feb5cde81505de6e2e67b566b3b.pdf>

Risks and opportunities

The activities planned should be fully supported by the institutions identified for piloting.

Limited possibilities to transpose in the national context proposed recommendations and/or solutions without strong commitment and support of the ReSPA Governing structures (GB at all levels, PAR working group, EU Programming Committee) and final beneficiary institutions.

In order to ensure the adequate results of the working group, adequate participants should be identified for participation in the working groups; preferable the ones who possess good English language skills who could use the moodle platform for exchange of experience and ideas.

6.6 Public Procurement

Overview

Public Procurement Working Group was established in the summer of 2014, with the aim to assist ReSPA's members in developing a sound and transparent public procurement system which will be harmonised with the *acquis communautaire* and the relevant EU standards. This working group has been established to ensure sustainability of the previous activities taking into account OECD/SIGMA Assessment reports for 2013 and EC Progress reports, "Europe 2020 A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" goals, as well ReSPA mandate to contribute to the PAR and EUI processes of the Western Balkans focusing on strategic and operational level.

Past activities and structure

Activities in 2014 on PP covered establishment of the Regional PP Working Group, platform for dissemination of information and experience on various PP aspects, with emphasis on relevant EU framework and its transposition and implementation in national PP systems. The first ReSPA PP Working Group was attended by high level civil servant managing the national PP Offices/Directorates/Bureau among the ReSPA members.

Consultation process

During the first exchange of information among the working group members it was commonly agreed that the management of irregularities in PP and e – procurement are two relevant and demand driven subject areas, on which ReSPA should focus its program activities in the following period, within the PP thematic area. In this regards consultative process has been initiated using both desk research and consultation with the relevant international institutions as SIGMA/OECD and CEFTA has been carried out, including the direct consultations with the end beneficiaries – PP working group members. In this regards design of the PP programme is based on recommendations of held working group events and needs expressed by its members, focusing on models, policies and legislative development, strengthening implementation capacities including cooperation mechanisms.

Abstract will be given to focused – demand driven and tailor made activities, in a form of study visits, working groups – networks, supported by regional comparative studies in the subject areas, which recommendations will be tailored and disseminated to the identified stakeholders with a view of development of best practices delivered by managerial workshops and tailored regional training

events. Important emphasis will be given to correlation of development of PP policies with developments in other sectors, such as budgetary planning, public finance controls, post procurement phase – managing contract implementation, as well as e-government and anticorruption commitments.

The second meeting of ReSPA Public Procurement (PP) Working group, held on 15 and 16 January 2015 in Warsaw, Poland, was organized as a combination of both study visit of Public Procurement Office in Poland, and working group meeting for benchmarking the applied principles and mechanisms in the visiting country for the identified two relevant topics – management of irregularities in the PP procedure (without the review procedure) and e-procurement. The combination of study visit and working group meeting was organized with a purpose to ease the identification of tangible inputs and benchmarks for launching and development of the upcoming Regional Comparative Study in the selected topics. The selected topics are correspondent with the requirements stipulated in Chapter 5, in correlation with Chapters 23 & 24 of the Negotiation for Accession of Western Balkan Countries to EU, and are in line with the need for synchronization with the new PP EC Directives.

Upon recommendation the ReSPA Governing Board the target audience of this working group will be expanded with wider stakeholders, among which the ReSPA working groups e- Government and Ethics and Integrity were identified as complementary to the area of PP. The purpose of this is to ensure the need for development of Comparative study on the initially identified two subject areas, or to include additional areas.

RESPA objectives 2015

Direct exchange of experience and identification of good practices is one of the most appreciated cooperation models in order to deal with significant challenges faced by policy makers in this sector. The objective of ReSPA in the area of PP will be to increase the capacity and assist development of sound and transparent national Public Procurement systems and Public Finance Management in line with relevant EU acquis. The major topics to which ReSPA will focus in 2015 and beyond, are managing irregularities in Public Procurement (aside the review procedure), e-procurement, separation of design and implementation of tender procedures, centralised procurement models, archiving challenges and models in e-procurement, along with the requirements imposed by the new EU PP Directives from 2014. In this regards the specific objective is the following:

- Support of the implementation of harmonized public procurement legal framework, in line with the national programs for accession to the EU and EU requirements for membership

The Specific Objective is designed to be reached through several activities among which the first will provide the opportunity to widen the scope of participants from other working groups. This will be enabled by organising a back to back event at the end of April 2015 jointly with the Ethics and Integrity (E&I) and E-government (E-Gov) working groups. In addition to this back-to-back event, main findings will be discussed about the main challenges in terms of preventing corruption, among other when it comes to the challenge of procuring ICT. Additional topics that are expected to be discussed during the PP working groups are in particular: separation of design and implementation of tender procedures, centralised procurement models, archiving challenges and models in e-procurement, etc. As far as e-procurement is concerned, e-government working groups will join the discussion. The E&I working group can contribute from the general perspective of anti-corruption, such as conflicts of interest – subject matter in the review of ex-ante and ex post control models in

the management of irregularities in PP (aside the review procedure). Furthermore links may be made to European PP initiatives and standards, such as the OpenPEPPOL platform¹⁵.

Based on the conclusions from the back to back working group meetings, referring to the need for commitment of Regional Comparative Study in the identified areas will be organised in the follow-up period. The study will focus on the commonly agreed areas and needs. It is intended to analyse the current developments in PP related to the selected areas and should identify good practices, mechanisms, systems in order to conclude in several recommendations, which adoption and implementation would fulfil the requirements stipulated in Chapter 5, and its correlation with Chapters 23 & 24 of the Negotiation for Accession of Western Balkan Countries to EU, including the needs for synchronization with the new PP EC Directives. The study is will be developed by direct support of local experts and lead by international experts in the selected subject matter. It is important to emphasise that the local experts will be recommended by the back to back working group members, which will provide additional ownership and accountability for the anticipated study results.

Recommendations and conclusions from the Comparative study will be presented to the working group members. This will be carried out by organisation of combined Managers Workshop/study tour in order to identify the specific areas that are required to be tailored to the national specific - correlated with the recommendations of the study and implications of the new PP directives. At the event will be presented 3 days training curriculum for the wider national professional audience intended to be delivered in the region.

In line with the commitments of SIGMA/OECD regarding the new EU Directives in PP and upgrading the PP manual – ReSPA will encompass the conclusions and demand for training on the organised managerial workshop and will provide tailor made curriculum for 3 days training in the region related to the identified subject areas, which are complementary with the new Directives in PP and the work done by the SIGMA/ OECD in this regards.

The following outcome and output indicators are envisaged in this regards:

Indicators:

Outcome indicators

- Recommendations for further activities and trainings adopted by the members/ Confirmed need and topics of the Regional Comparative Study among wither audience
- At least one of the recommendations from the Regional Comparative study adopted / implemented by members
- Increased level of knowledge and skills referred to the national specific for transposition of the new PP Directives in the identified subject areas

Output indicators

- Identification of good practices and recommendations for improvement of national systems in the identified areas of particular interest

¹⁵ OpenPEPPOL platform - (http://www.peppol.eu/about_peppol/about-openpeppol-1) established in September 2012 after successful completion of the Pan-European Public Procurement Online (PEPPOL) project which saw PEPPOL specifications being implemented in several European countries solving interoperability issues for electronic procurement. Also relevant are current EU efforts in the area of administrative burden reduction (see above), as well as to areas of future focus such as reversing inequalities and ensuring fairness and accountability (European Council (2014) Strategic Agenda for the Union in Times of Change, 26-27 June 2014: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/143477.pdf)

- Tailored training programme in line with the recommendations from wither stakeholders, regional manager Workshop and new EU PP Directives for PP organised for 150 participants in ReSPA members
- Number of recommendations for the legal and institutional upgrade in the domain of PP submitted to the related national institutions and commented with them
- Number of workshops/seminars/training
- Number of engaged members of working group

Resources

The fulfilment of the set objectives will utilize the in house capacities, Operations Manager which will provide general policy and process coordination, provide inputs and approve individual development steps and overall organisation of the process. The Operations – Finance Assistant will assist in this process which includes among the other the logistical and administrative activities.

The in-house capacity will be upgraded with the consultations and communication with the external parties SIGMA/OECD and CEFTA, in order to provide complementarity of the program. External expertise specialised in development of regional study, management of irregularities, e-procurement and training curriculum development will be engaged to support the achievement of the objectives.

Risks

Risk is identified in regards to the potential unavailability of the working group members to qualitatively participate in the envisaged events, including their low involvement in the process and lack of inclusivity and cooperation. Readiness of the decision makers to ensure political commitment for adoption and implementation of agreed good practices and models in to practice as well as limited possibilities to transpose in the national context proposed recommendations and/or solutions without strong commitment and support of the ReSPA Governing structures (GB at all levels, PAR network, EU Programming Committee) and final beneficiary institutions

6.7 Public Private Partnership

Overview

Public Private Partnership (PPP) model in the Western Balkan countries is considered as an attractive way to leverage the resources available from EU Funds (IPA II) including WBIF (Western Balkans Investment Framework) and respective International Financial Institutions and bilateral donors. Although it is beneficial to attract private investment into public infrastructure and services traditionally procured by government (public sector) accelerating the implementation of the priority infrastructure, PPP is even now challenging governments in the WB region to improve national institutional and legal framework for efficient PPP model implementation. Besides, given that a significant number of projects funded from IPA have regional dimension (national – 36%, multi-beneficiary 43%) EC invigorates regional cooperation to foster homogeneous good practice. Based on the full analysis of the PPP environment in WB countries, in EIB¹⁶'s European PPP Expertise

¹⁶ European Investment Bank

Centre's overview¹⁷ it is stated that there is a great heterogeneity in the type and size of PPP projects and although the Western Balkan countries have made serious progress in recent years towards setting up regulatory and institutional frameworks to implement PPPs, success in achieving actual PPPs has been so far limited if not elusive. Although the experience in the Western Balkans is rather limited, a few PPPs success stories are encouraging as they suggest that well-designed PPPs can greatly improve project efficiency and achieve value for money in delivering of public services. Besides, considering key principles of public administration related to public financial management, by providing the PPP learning platform and PPP network activities, ReSPA will contribute to enhancement of institutional and administrative capacity for enforcement of public procurement policies and procedures including PPP and concessions¹⁸. In doing so, ReSPA will collaborate with the relevant institutions with similar goals to increase the effectiveness of its operations. The foreseen ReSPA activities in the domain of PPP are closely linked with the PAR Principles (Public Financial Management) and with the SEE 2020 strategy (1.3 Reinforcing consultations and public private dialogue in SEE).

Past activities and structures

In fulfilling its role, ReSPA has earlier recognized the needs of its member states in the PPP field and introduced the PPP workshops in 2011 with subsequent in 2012 and 2013 and a follow-up training and visit to PPP projects successfully implemented in Croatia. Based on the feedback from the participants, and the recommendation from the stated reports, ReSPA envisages establishment of PPP expert's network and conduction of the comparative study on PPP. By establishing the network of PPP expert nowadays called working group on PPP, ReSPA creates and facilitates the platform bringing together senior official and/or decision makers from related institutions. Two regional meetings have happened so far, one at ReSPA premises and the last one at Luxembourg hosted by EPEC¹⁹ institution. With its significant role PPP working group is interlinked with all other thematic areas that ReSPA is focusing on.

Consultation process and relevance of the regional dimension

All abovementioned activities have provided an opportunity to obtain inputs for the activities that ReSPA has undertaken and is planning to conduct in the future in domain of PPP. Equally important process was consultation with all available resources of information (OECD / SIGMA reports, EU reports) and direct communication with the credible institutions (EPEC, RCC, etc). Since PPP is strong contribution to the Economic Governance it is considered to be of inevitable importance for the whole EU integration process of the WB regional and aligned PAR process.

Since PPP preparation, evaluation and monitoring require specific skills which many Western Balkans countries do not possess, the regulatory framework for PPPs harmonised at the certain level with EU regulations still has to be complemented by the building of institutional capacities for undertaking investment projects.

¹⁷ The report available at EPEC web page: http://www.eib.europa.eu/epec/resources/publications/epec_wbif_overview_ppp_institutional_arrangements_institutional_frameworks See page 30, chapter 5.3. PPP Unit Collaboration at the Regional level.

¹⁸ OECD/SIGMA „The Principles of Public Administration“, November 2014 available at: <http://www.sigmaxweb.org/publications/Principles-Public-Administration-Nov2014.pdf>

¹⁹ The European PPP Expertise Centre (EPEC)

ReSPA objectives 2015

Overall objective:

To assist the development of sound and transparent national PPP systems

Specific objective:

Enhancement of administrative capacity and knowledge in PPP project management area support to exchange of experience and good practices in PPP in the Western Balkan region increasing efficiency of ReSPA PPP initiatives by initiating synergies with other related areas given that level of knowledge and experience in structuring and negotiating PPPs amongst public officials is still estimated low across the entire Western Balkan region and that much of the institutional skills requirements are common, ReSPA intends to provide learning platform and facilitate the activities contributing in stimulating overall interest in PPPs in the region. Therefore ReSPA has designed set of activities that will encompass the following:

- Facilitating the PPP working group focusing on identified priorities and further alignment with other ReSPA working groups (e.g. eGovernment – identification of common areas and detection of “project” spots -related know-how – reviewing PPP projects that have been implemented in the Region and those that have failed to identify their strengths, weaknesses and lessons learned and designing possible new ones)
- Conducting Comparative analysis of lessons learned from recent developments in implementation of PPP projects in Western Balkans region as confirmed by the PPP working group Mobility Scheme programme is intended to provide to the participants gaining direct experience and further networking
- Based on the comparative analysis findings, designing two module ToT as per need assessment fully in line with the related strategic priorities (IPA II addressing competitiveness and growth, SEE 2020 Strategy goals and WBIF recommendation for the possibility of introducing PPPs under WBIF20)

The abovementioned comparative study will focus on: “Comparative analysis of lessons learned from recent developments in implementation of PPP projects in Western Balkans region”. The rationale of the comparative study is to increase the exposure of PPP public stakeholders to the practicalities of PPP projects. Representative data on PPP contracts in force is envisaged to be collected and compared in order to identify and share findings on practicalities of PPP projects implementation as well as lessons learned and recommendations. It is also planned to identify sectors relevant to launch PPP projects’ pipelines with regional dimension. The general objective of the comparative study is to foster PPP market development in WB and to encourage development of common PPP practice in the WB region as well as regional PPP projects.

Resources

General description of the required resources – One programme manager and one Programme assistant will be devoted to manage the related PPP activities of ReSPA and engaged external experts.

²⁰ WBIF: „Potential for Promoting PPPs under the WBIF“, Draft report for Task Force on Evolution of the WBIF, June, 2014, available at: www.wbif.eu. On the page 9 explicitly stated that ReSPA „could be provider of services“ concerning technical assistance to promote PPPs in WB.

Risks

Potential risks may be interlinked with the practical experience in the region that PPP projects / initiatives have low rate of successful implementation, so the challenge would be to detect the niche areas where related activities can contribute with the real added value.

Opportunities

Exploring the possibilities to make the joint activities with other ReSPA working groups such as eGovernment and PP. Sustaining core members from the previous PPP ReSPA structure (PPP network) to serve as “strategic unit” is seen as advantage as well retaining members from Croatia having valuable experience and contacts to share. Further exchange of ideas through Moodle platform and sustaining further discussion is also seen as an opportunity. Last but not least possibility to identify area of common interest of the Western Balkan in domain of PPP and design of related project proposal.

6.8 General Administrative Procedure Acts (GAPA)

Overview

The General Administrative Procedure Acts (GAPA) as one of the main legal tools for fostering changes in administrative procedures, and for reforming public administration functioning in general, are under modernisation in almost all countries in the Western Balkan region. Widening legal protection in line with the standards of European conventions and regulations, case law of European courts and soft law developing under the influence of various European actors, is one direction of changing GAPAs in the region. The other one is reduction of formalities, enabling and developing e-government solutions, reducing administrative burdens and striving for maximum administrative efficiency under the general framework of the rule of law. Some of the new drafts of GAPA in the region have been prepared with the support of the OECD-SIGMA, under conditionality policy of EU. In some ReSPA members, revisions and drafting of amendments to or new GAPAs is currently underway.

Administrative procedures are just one of the elements of the whole system of protection of citizens’ rights. Administrative justice is another important element. Administrative procedures and administrative justice have to be thoroughly coordinated and interconnected, in order to ensure quality legal protection. The domain of general administrative procedure and administrative justice is of special importance for ReSPA members, for the EU, OECD-SIGMA and other institutions, for it represents an overarching tool for achieving the standards of good administration. In particular, for the Western Balkan area, an additional impetus should be dedicated to modernisation of the general administrative procedure legal framework, innovative institutes and their implementation in everyday administrative practice. E-government with its various components (e-communication, e-administration, etc.), one-stop shop principle and administrative simplification are among such new, powerful, principles and tools of administrative modernization.

Previous activities

The General Administrative Procedure Act (GAPA) Working Group has been initiated by ReSPA in order to develop holistic and more tangible reform results and enhance regional cooperation in the Western Balkan area in order to introduce European standards of good administration.

The first GAPA Working Group meeting was held in Belgrade in June 2013, and was titled “Europeanization of the Western Balkan Laws on General Administrative Procedure”. The networking workshop in Zagreb in January 2014 titled “Efficiency and Simplifications of Administrative Procedure and Administrative Justice” was devoted to identification of ongoing trends in fostering efficiency and simplifications in administrative procedures and administrative justice in the Western Balkans. The third meeting took place on 23-24 June 2014 in Danilovgrad, and coincided with the UN Civil Services Day in Montenegro.

Following consultations and expressed interest of the ReSPA members and earlier experiences in networking in this field, it has been decided that ReSPA should organize further regional events and expand GAPA networking activities in the region.

Consultative process

During the consultative process with ReSPA members in January 2015, there was a support for proposals coming from the GAPA Working Group listed in the draft Plan of Work 2015. It was noted that in Albania, there is a need for trainings for judicial administrative staff working in administrative courts, but it was decided to undertake this activity under the ReSPA Bilateral Support Mechanism framework, since Albania was the only country expressing this need.

ReSPA objectives for 2015

Overall objective of the GAPA Working Group is to support ReSPA members in assessment and application of European principles and standards in administrative procedures and administrative justice.

The first specific objective is to support efficiency and simplification of administrative procedures and administrative justice. Intervention planned under this specific objective is a Study Visit to be organized jointly for GAPA and e-Government working groups. The event will take place in Vienna on March 26-27, 2015, and is devoted to introduction to the Austrian legal framework, organization, and practice of e-government, one-stop shop (Digital Austria, HELP.gv.at) and administrative simplification. It especially follows the GAPA Working Group meeting held in Zagreb in January 2014, when the participants expressed the wish to learn more about the best practices of improving efficiency of administrative procedures and simplification of administrative services.

This initiative has several goals: to learn about best practices in implementation of one-stop shop principle, and map the progress in that respect in the region, connect it with Austrian experiences and best practices, and develop a set of recommendations for future cooperation and activities between ReSPA’s GAPA and e-Government working groups.

The Study Visit will be followed by a Joint meeting between GAPA and e-Government working groups scheduled for October 2015 at ReSPA, where participants will agree on an outline of a manual for e-services and one-stop shops for the region. Furthermore, they will decide on further activities in the area of e-services and ReSPA’s Plan of Work for 2016.

In addition to the Joint meeting between GAPA and e-Government working groups, there are two more activities under the specific objective of improving administrative procedures. The first is a

comparative study on Legal Remedies in Administrative Procedures. The second activity is a GAPA Working Group meeting on Administrative Contracts and Administrative Guarantee. Both activities are expected to result in policy recommendations and suggestions for follow up activities.

Resources

The following resources are envisaged in order to implement the proposed activities: Adequate financial resources, two programme managers, one seconded expert, one program assistant, up to 12 short-term experts, cooperation with ReSPA liaison officers, support by the ReSPA finance department, ReSPA hotel, teaching facilities, translators and interpreting services, and Moodle – ReSPA’s platform for exchange of information and knowledge.

Appendix A – Programme of work - tables

1. Thematic area:		European Integration							
	Overall objective	To increase the capacity of public administration in the Western Balkan countries necessary for the successful continuation of the European Integration process							
						Monitoring and Evaluation			
Specific Objectives	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s) and duration	Budget (€)	Resources	Links to SEE2020 /PA Principles	
1.	Establishing strategic coordination of the EI process	EI Programme Committee Network Meeting	Senior government officials from national coordinating institutions	Policy recommendations for ReSPA program activities; 2 meetings held for 6 participants at each	Improved regional cooperation; EUI related programme streamlined in line with current priorities; exchange of experience; ReSPA visibility enhanced	April and September (one day joint with the PAR network) 2015 2x2 days	CORE		
2.	Increasing institutional capacities for the successful IPA programming and utilization of EU funds	Workshop on Multi-country programming	Senior to mid Practitioners from departments in charge of IPA coordination	Experience and knowledge transferred; 2 workshops held for 24 participants each	Improved capacities for developing IPA II national and multi-beneficiary programmes in line with recent requirements	April 2015 3 days	28.861 €		
		Workshop on Single project pipeline and NICs				September 2015 3 days	28.861 €		
		Mobility scheme programme for NIPAC offices				June-August 2015 2-5 days	12.600 €		
		In-country workshops on Sector Budget Support	Senior to mid level Practitioners in charge of budgeting (MoF, EUI inst.)	Experience and knowledge transferred, 6 in-country workshops held for 2025 participants each	Increased national capacities and skills for use of Sector Budget Support through IPA II	March - May 2015 6x3 days	110.080 €		
3.	Supporting efforts of national institutions for successful harmonization of national legislation with the EU acquis	2 Workshops	Practitioners from Departments for Legal Alignment, and/or those in charge of law drafting from line Ministries	Experience and knowledge transferred, 2 workshops held for 24 participants each;	Improved knowledge on harmonization techniques and institutions enabled to improve national existing procedures and instruments	March and July 2015 2x3 days	57.772 €	2 PMs, PA, Operations unit, S/T Expert	
		Summer school on EU law and its Approximation	Senior to mid level Practitioners from Departments for Legal Alignment	Identification of good practices, increased skills of 12 officials		June-July 2015 11 days	120.570 €		
		Mobility Scheme programme		12 participants visiting counterpart institutions. Experience exchanged, learning from best practices		September-November 2015 2-5 days	12.600 €		
4.	Strengthening institutional capacities for quality translation and development of national version of the acquis	2 working group meetings	Senior to mid Practitioners from departments in charge of translation/development of national version of the acquis	Identification of good practices, exchange of knowledge, 2 working groups organized with 12 participants in each	Acquired newest standards and techniques of quality translation of EU legal acts enabling improvement of national existing procedures and instruments;	April and November 2015 2x2 days	64.560 €		
		Seminar on creation of National version of the acquis		Exchange of knowledge and increase of skills of 24 participants at each seminar/training		March 2015 3 days	28.861 €		
		Training on translation techniques		Exchange of knowledge and best practices, 12 participants trained		October 2015 3 days	28.861 €		
		Mobility scheme programme				May - June 2015 2-5 days	12.600 €		
5.	Improving negotiation skills for the successful conduct of the EI process	Workshop on written communication and reporting	Senior to mid Practitioners involved in negotiation process and/or following issues relating to Chapters 23 and 24	Experience and knowledge transferred, 3 workshops held, for 30 participants each;	Established administrative capacity to cope with requirements inherent to the new approach	May 2015, 4 days	86.583 €		
		2 Workshops on negotiation skills with the EU				June and October 2015, 2x4 days			
		Summer school on Negotiation Techniques	Senior to mid Practitioners involved in negotiation process	Experience and knowledge transferred, 12 officials trained	Increased administrative capacity through implementation of acquired negotiating skills and techniques	June 2015 14 days	120.570 €		

PAR Principles:
1) Strategic Framework of Public Administration Reform
2) Policy Development and Co-ordination

SEE 2020
1.1 Enhancing coordination and increasing consistency of public policies
3.3 Building local capacity to use EU funds

Thematic area:		Network : Public Administration Reform (PAR)							
Overall objective		Supporting public administration reform (PAR) efforts in ReSPA members, and strengthening regional cooperation and networking in the field of public administration related to European integrations							
				Monitoring and Evaluation					
	Specific Objective	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s), duration, location	Budget (€)	Resources	Links to SEE 2020 Strategy /SIGMA PAR Principles
1	Supporting strategic coordination and exchange of experience on PAR among ReSPA members	PAR Network meeting: Presentation of comparative study on methodologies used for PAR strategies preparation, discussions on PAR strategies and implementation, SEE 2020 Strategy, NERPs and ReSPA Plan of Work 2015	Senior PAR officials, decision makers and experts	Presentation of the comparative study; Input to ReSPA PoW 2015 and recommendations for further activities	Improved regional cooperation; PAR related knowledge transfer; exchange of experience; definition of policy recommendations; ReSPA visibility increased; follow up plan agreed; recommendations for further ReSPA activities, and consensus regarding ReSPA Plan of Work reached	January 26-27, 2015 (2 days) Sarajevo	32,000	2 PMs, 1 PA, Director, 2 ST experts	SEE 2020 Strategy, Dimension N - Key Strategic Action 1.1. and 4.4. B - Support to PAR monitoring; All PAR principles, in particular principle 1: Strategic Framework of PAR; and 2. Policy development and coordination
2		PAR Network meeting: Discussions on quality management, regulatory impact assessment (RIA), SIGMA Principles of Public Administration (PAR principles) and legislation in the field of public administration	Senior PAR officials, decision makers and experts	Policy recommendations and priorities related to quality management, RIA, PAR principles and legislation in the field of public administration identified for further action		May 2015 (2 days) Skopje	32,000	2 PMs, 1 PA, Director, 2 ST experts	
3		PAR Network meeting: Discussion on increasing the capability for implementation of SIGMA Principles of Public Administration and review of implementation of PAR principles in ReSPA members	Senior PAR officials, decision makers and experts	Defining criteria for increasing the capability for implementation of SIGMA Principles of Public Administration		September 28-29, 2015 (2 days) location TBD	34,000	2 PMs, 1 PA, Director, 2 ST experts	
4		Networking event: PAR Network and EUI Programming Committee - Topic: EC Progress reports regarding PAR and defining the follow up plan	Senior officials, experts, senior decision makers, NIPACs	Networking event organized; EC progress reports discussed and compared; follow up plan defined; input for ReSPA PoW 2016		September 29, 2015 (1 day) location TBD	CORE	3 PMs, 3 PAs, Director, 3 ST experts	
5		Annual Conference: Towards Measuring Public Administration Performance - Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies	Senior practitioners, experts, senior public servants, decision makers	Conference presentations and proceedings compiled and distributed to at least 100 people		Follow up based on recommendations of the PAR comparative study on methodologies used for PAR strategies preparation; PAR related knowledge transfer; promotion of best practices and recommendations for concrete steps in the area of monitoring and evaluation of PA policies agreed; ReSPA visibility and regional cooperation increased;	November 11-12, 2015 (2 days) ReSPA	90,000	

Thematic area:

Working Group: Human Resources Management and Development (HRMD)

Overall objective

Enhancing professionalization and competence in public administration by implementing modern human resources management systems

			Monitoring and Evaluation						
Specific Objectives	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s)	Budget (€)	Resources	Links to SEE 2020 Strategy /SIGMA PAR Principles	
1.	Strengthening regional cooperation and exchange of good practices among ReSPA members	Community of Practitioners (CoP) meetings (2)	Community of Practitioners / HRM professionals	2 meetings of CoP held; networking and improved information exchange	Knowledge transfer, networking, increased ReSPA visibility and regional cooperation	May and October 2015 (2 x 2 days)	2 x 32,500	1 PM, 1 PA, 1 Seconded expert	SEE 2020 Strategy: Key Strategic Action 4: Professionalism of public servants (points 1, 2 and 3); PAR principle 3: Public Service and Human Resource Management
2.	Improving recruitment and retention policies and practices	Comparative study on Merit Recruitment Procedures	Experts, Senior practitioners	Comparative study with policy guidelines and recommendations	Knowledge transfer; recommendations for future ReSPA activities	March - September 2015	62,500	1 PM, 1 PA, 7 ST experts	
3.	Contributing to de-politicization: Thematic conference: Civil Service between Politics and Administration	Thematic conference	Senior practitioners, experts, senior public servants, decision makers	One regional conference organized, conference proceedings compiled and distributed to at least 100 people; policy recommendations for the Ministerial meeting; press release, media attention attracted	Raised public awareness on de-politicization of public administration; increased ReSPA visibility; conclusions and recommendations for the Ministerial meeting prepared; regional cooperation improved	October 2015, (1 day) Skopje - TBC	45,000	2 PM, 3 PA, 2 ST experts, 1 Seconded expert	
4.	Strengthening cooperation with national training centres: Developing a Programme on Leadership and Change Management	Consultative process for programme development	Experts, Community of Practitioners / HRM professionals	Report on the consultative process; draft Programme	Training programme on Leadership and Change Management for senior public administrators in the Western Balkans	April - November 2015	QPS	QPS consultants	
5.	Strengthening cooperation between ReSPA members: improving HRM information systems (HRMIS)	Working Group meeting	Senior practitioners, Experts	Proposal for improving HRM information systems and exchange of information on software customization	Proposal for joint procurement of information systems, networking, identification of next steps, upgrade of content and /or target audiences, increased ReSPA visibility	September 2015 (2 days) ReSPA	18,800	1 PM, 1 PA, 2 ST experts, 1 Seconded expert	

A Thematic area: e-Government									
Overall objective: To strengthen regional co-operation in deploying eGovernment to build trust and collaboration across government and with end users									
				Monitoring and evaluation					
	Specific Objectives	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s)	Budget (€)	Resources	Links to SEE2020 /PA Principles
A.1	Strengthening the use of prevention measures to fight against corruption in eGovernment sector for building accountability, trust and collaboration across government and with end users;	Working Group meeting - ICT corruption Exchange of the results obtained (2) Relation and collaboration with crosscutting working groups GAPA and Ethic and Integrity	Experts, senior practitioners in the domain of ethics and integrity	Results on self assessment obtained from Working Group as a basis for methodology design	Methodology for self assessment (preventive measure for detection of corruption in domain of ICT sector) designed and implemented.	April 2015 4 days	32,280.00	PM, PA, S/T Expert	SIGMA (5.3 Mechanism for ensuring the quality of public service are in place) SEE 2020 2.3 Combating corruption through eGovernment in SEE, 2.4 e-Governance Model for SEE Local Governments, 4.4 e-Academy for Local Governments and PAR exchange platform
		Mobility scheme (1)	Senior/mid practitioners in the domain of ethics and integrity	12 participants conducted MSP programme	Gained knowledge / best practices implemented on the job within home Institution related to eGovernment	May-July 2015 2-5 days	12,600.00	PM, PA, S/T Expert	
		Study visit to Austria jointly with GAPA (one stop shop)	Assistant ministers, heads of departments/units	18 senior professionals / decision makers from respective institutions (related to eGovernment and One-stop-shop) exposed to positive practice and networked	Knowledge transfer, in domain of one-stop-shop concept with an emphasis on delivery of administrative documents and follow up activity identified	March 2015	33,200.00	PM, PA, ST expert	
A.2	Support to improving collaboration across government institutions interlinking eGovernment with other ReSPA working groups.	Working group meeting - Development of common platform between eGovernment working group and PPP working group in the domain of possible joint initiatives	Senior experts in the area of eGovernment and PPP	Identification of common challenges and exchange of ideas	Design of possible joint initiatives in the domain of PPP with a special focus on eGovernment solution in domain of e-services	September 2015 2 days	33,200.00	PM, PA, S/T Expert	

A Thematic area: Ethics and Integrity									
Overall objectives 1. Supporting ReSPA members in designing prevention mechanisms for fighting corruption.									
				Monitoring and evaluation					
	Specific Objectives	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s) and Duration Days	Budget (€)	Resources	Links to SEE2020 /PA Principles
1	Providing support in prevention of conflict of interest	Comparative study on "Conflict of interest" (1)	Experts, senior practitioners in the domain of ethics and integrity	Comparative study developed	At least one of the recommendations of the comparative study implemented in practice;	April-September 2015	62,320.00	PM/PA/Experts	(SIGMA - 3.7 i.e. Measures for promoting integrity, and preventing corruption and ensuring discipline in the public service are in place, 4 i.e. Accountability, 6 i.e. Public Finance Management) and SEE2020 (5th Pillar Strategy for Growth, sub-dimension Effective Public Services, Key Strategy Action 2: Improving the quality of public services).
		Working Group meeting - conflict of interest	Experts, senior practitioners in the domain of ethics and integrity	Comparative study launching	Recommendations of the comparative study commented and the follow activities agreed;	October 2015	32,280.00	PM/PA/Experts	
2	Providing support in prevention of corruption in ICT	Working Group meeting - ICT corruption Exchange of the results obtained (2) Relation and collaboration with crosscutting working groups GAPA and Ethic and Integrity	Experts, senior practitioners in the domain of ethics and integrity	42 participants Methodology for self assessment developed.	Check-list (methodological tool) for detecting risks of ICT-corruption designed and piloted in at least three ReSPA members	April 2015 (4 days)	32,280.00	PM/PA/Experts	
3	Providing support to asset declaration process in the region	Monitoring process	related stakeholders (E&I working group members, central government	20 participants	Detected level of use of assets standards i.e. Western Balkan Recommendation on Disclosure	July - October 2015	QPS	QPS	

A Thematic area:		Public Procurement							
Overall objectives		1. To increase the capacity and assist development of sound and transparent national Public Procurement systems and Public Finance Management in line with relevant EU acquis							
Specific Objectives	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s) and duration	Budget (€)	Resources	Links to SEE2020 /PA Principles	
Support of the implementation of harmonized public procurement legal framework, in line with the national programs for accession to the EU and EU requirements for membership	Joint Working Group with PPP, E-Gov and PP	Senior officials and Heads of National Directorates/ Offices/ Bureaus/ Department of PP, PPP, E-Gov	Exchange and identification of good practices from EU and in the region among with stakeholders in the subject area regarding but not limited to management of irregularities and e-procurement, separation of design and implementation of tender procedures, centralized procurement models, archiving challenges and models in e-procurement, along with the requirements imposed by the new EU PP Directives from 2014 / Identifying the need for launching of Regional Comparative Study analysis and related policy recommendations in the set areas of common interest; 18 participants per each target group	Recommendations for further activities and trainings adopted by the members/ Confirmed need and topics of the Regional Comparative Study among wither audience	Apr. 2015 2 days	€ 32,280	OM, FA/PA, S/T Experts	SEE 2020: 2 - Smart, sustainable and Inclusive growth and 3 - Missing Links and Bottle necks SIGMA Principles: 4 Accountability 6 Public Finance Management	
	Regional Comparative Study - TBC	ReSPA Member Countries	Identification of good practices and recommendations for improvement of national systems in the identified areas of particular interest	At least one of the recommendations from the Regional Comparative study adopted / implemented by members	June-November 2015	€ 62,320	OM, FA/PA, S/T International and Local Experts		
	PP Working Group - Regional Manager's Meeting	Senior officials and Heads of National Directorates/ Offices/ Bureaus/ Department of PP	Presentation of Case studies and good practices regarding the identified specific areas in PP, and presentation of the envisaged Training in the ReSPA Members regarding the sinchronisation of New EU PP directives; 18 participants	Recommendations adopted/implemented by members trough the follow-up training in ReSPA Members	Sep. 2015 2 days	€ 33,200	OM, FA/PA, S/T Experts		

		Training in ReSPA Members	Senior officials, Heads of National PP and mid level managers of Directorates/ Offices/ Bureaus/ Department of PP	Tailored training programme in line with the recommendations from wither stakeholders, regional manager Workshop and new EU PP Directives for PP; 150 participants (25*6)	Increased level of knowledge and skils referd to the national specific for transposition of the new PP Directives in the identified subject areas	Oct-Nov 2015 6x3 days	€ 110,080	OM, FA/PA, S/T Experts	
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A Thematic area: Public Private Partnership

Overall objective									
To assist the development of sound and transparent national PPP systems									
Monitoring and Evaluation									
	Specific Objectives	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s)	Resources	Budget (€)	Links to SEE2020 /PA Principles
1.	Enhancement of administrative capacity and knowledge in PPP project management area	2 - Module ToT	Senior to mid Practitioners from PPP departments	Experience and knowledge transferred on programming, identification, preparation and monitoring of the projects; National trainers on PPP (18 participants)	Increase of national and institutional capacities for application and dissemination of knowledge on PPP project cycle management	September 2105 3 x 2 days	PM, PA, S/T Expert	30,826.00	PAR Principles: 6) Public Financial Management SEE 2020 1.3 Reinforcing consultations and public private dialogue in SEE
1.1		Study "Comparative analysis of lessons learned from recent developments in implementation of PPP projects in Western Balkans region"	Experts in PPP / PPP Departments	Comparative study on the situation in the region with Practical guide on implementation on PPP projects with the examples of best practices	Comparative regional study prepared with practical guidelines on how to prepare, procure, implement and monitor PPP projects; Policy recommendations	March - September 2015 N/A	PM, PA, S/T Expert	62,320.00	
2.	Support to exchange of experience and good practices in PPP in the Western Balkan region	Working group meeting	Senior experts from PPP related central institution	Identification of common challenges in PPP area; Experience and knowledge transferred in (18 Participants)	Gained insight into first findings of the PPP regional study and enhanced regional cooperation and exchange of best practice in domain of PPP	May 2015 2 days	PM, PA, S/T Expert	32,280.00	
3.	Increasing efficiency of ReSPA PPP initiatives by initiating synergies with other related areas	Working group meeting	Senior experts in the area of PPP and eGovernment	Identification of common challenges and exchange of ideas between PPP and eGovernment network members (36 participants)	Design of possible projects in the domain of PPP with a special focus on eGovernment i.e. e-services	September 2015 2 days	PM, PA, S/T Expert	33,200.00	

Thematic area:

Working Group: General Administrative Procedure Acts (GAPA)

Overall objective

Supporting ReSPA Members in assessment and application of European principles and standards in administrative procedures and administrative justice

		Monitoring and Evaluation								
	Specific Objectives	Activity/Intervention	Target group	Outputs	Outcomes (Qualitative)	Target Date(s), duration and location	Budget (€)	Resources	Links to SEE 2020 Strategy /SIGMA PAR Principles	
1.	Supporting Efficiency and Simplification of Administrative Procedures and Administrative Justice	One-stop shop and e-services - Joint activity btw/ e-Gov and GAPA Working Groups - Study Visit to Austria	Assistant ministers, heads of departments/units/agencies, senior practitioners, experts	Decision makers exposed to positive practice and networked; recommendations for further in-country activities	Knowledge transfer in domain of one-stop shop concept with emphasis on delivery of administrative documents and e-services; follow-up for GAPA Working Group agreed	March 26-27, 2015 Vienna, Austria	33,200	2 PM, 1 PA, 2 ST expert	SEE 2020 Strategy: Key Strategic Action 2: Improving the quality of public services (2.1. Re-engineering administrative procedures); PAR principle 5: Service delivery	
2.	Improving administrative procedures	Legal Remedies in Administrative Procedures	Comparative study	Experts, Senior practitioners	Comparative study	Knowledge transfer; Policy recommendations; Recommendations for concrete follow-up activities	March - October 2015	62,500		1 PM, 1 PA, 7 ST experts
3.		Administrative Contracts and Administrative Guarantee	Working Group meeting	Experts, Senior practitioners	Exchange of best practices and policy recommendations	October 2015 (1 day) ReSPA	18,800	1 PM, 1 PA, 2 ST experts		
4.		Joint meeting with e-Gov Working Group - Follow up on opportunities for one-stop shop solutions	Seminar / Workshop	Experts, Senior practitioners	Outline of a manual for e-services and one-stop shops; Proposal for further activities and ReSPA Plan of Work 2016	Based on the lessons learned and results shared and discussed, further interventions in the area of e-services agreed	October 2015 (2 days) ReSPA	26,200		2 PM, 1 PA, 1 ST experts, 1 Seconded expert

Appendix B – Risk identification and mitigation table

General risks

Identified risk	Mitigation strategy	Comments/details regarding mitigations measures
A. Delays in membership payments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Careful management of cash flow 2. Continuous engagement with members including reminders and personal contacts 3. Suspension of membership by GB decision 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring that reserves for normal functioning of the Institution are kept in the working capital fund 2. Programme of reminders being issued on monthly basis; phone call to BC member 14 days after reminder; contact with GB member 21days after reminder 3. Letter indicating proposal for suspension issues 120 days after payment due
B. Non-dissemination of activities to relevant officials/officials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Instructions to ReSPA Liaison Officers 5. Engagement with GB members 6. Direct circulation to Network/Working Group members 7. Direct communication with relevant institutions 8. Direct communications to previous participants 9. Use of ReSPA website and social media channels 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ensuring continuous communication and regular meetings (2 times a year) 5. Provision of concise inputs to the GB and addressing their agreed inputs on ReSPA activities 6. Using Moodle platform, etc. 7. Design of ReSPA contact point list for different purposes (thematic areas, etc) 8. Establishment of ReSPA alumni database 9. Better involvement of each ReSPA staff, including LOs
C. Wrong selection, nomination and attendance of the participants in ReSPA activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Clear and timely instructions to ReSPA Liaison Officers 11. Engagement of the GB members 12. Direct circulation to ReSPA participants 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Ensuring continuous communication / precise description of the profile of the participants required for each of the thematic areas 11. Input from the GB members on precise profile description of the participants 12. Dissemination of information (reports, etc.) within and between the networks / working groups

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Direct communication with relevant institutions 14. Direct communications with previous participants 15. Clear specification of participant profile 16. Monitoring of nomination forms 17. Query/refuse of inappropriate nominations 18. Nominate deputies for members of networks & working groups (who will also be circulated with advance materials and results of meetings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Share of information directly with the relevant institutions with support of LOs / announcement on ReSPA website 14. Engaging them when possible and / or informing them on the follow up / M&E process / needs assesment process 15. Specific topic of the event/s identified 16. Application form precisely designed 17. Eligibility criteria punctually formulated 18. Terms of Reference for the members of networks & working groups adequately formulated including job profile (duties and responsibilities), etc.
D. Lack of participant preparation for meetings & activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Sufficient advance notice for the event / timely circulation of materials 20. Requirement for advance supply of comments/presentations/inputs 21. Requirement for written comments 22. Advance notification of issues to be raised e.g. AOB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Programme of Work for the forthcoming year designed as early as possible and endorsed by the GB with identified / formulated topics within each thematic area accompanied with the activity time line 20. Pre-event questionnaire designed and disseminated among participants with deadline to react 21. Selection of adequate and motivated participants 22. Pre-event questionnaire designed and disseminated among participants with deadline to react
E. Lack of support and engagement by stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23. Regular stakeholder engagement e.g. individual consultation with Ministers in advance of Ministerial meetings 24. More engagement with EC in Brussels, EU Delegations/Offices circulated with information/materials; requests for comments on activities/proposals 25. Regular newsletters/social media engagement, and information dissemination 26. Increased visibility efforts including more in-country briefing/activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23. ReSPA presence in the region – directors visits, PMs and PAs visits / consultative meetings 24. Regular coordination with the Task Manager, announcing events to EC Delegations (once placed in the region), disseminating info (studies, etc) on a regular basis 25. ReSPA staff in full capacity / designation of duty to one individual who will be supported by the others 26. Upgraded Communication and media plan with clearly identifies target audiences, messages, “products” and means of the “product” implementation; Accordingly list of specific individuals/ institutions / media houses

	27. Participant follow-up activities including post-activity evaluation; focus groups and questionnaires	27. established ReSPA presence in the region – directors visits, PMs and PAs visits / consultative meetings following Upgraded Communication and media plan
F. Avoidance of overlap with other donors/ organisations/programmes	28. Regular engagement with other donors/ organisations/programmes 29. Reviewing relevant documentation	28. Consultative meetings with all relevant stakeholders (also elaborated in Communication and media plan), use of already established communication platforms (ReSPA networks / workshops), LOs providing on monthly basis info on in country relevant initiatives, RCC network i.e. communication with the regional stakeholders responsible for SEE 2020, etc. 29. Be up to date with other donors/organisations papers and studies
G. Lack of adequate human resources or relevant skills	30. Realistic planning 31. Assignment of responsibility for PoW actions 32. Regular review of PoW implementation 33. Performance management 34. Early identification of HR requirements 35. Manpower planning & recruitment strategy implemented & regularly reviewed 36. Personal Development Plans for each staff member 37. Targeted usage of Secondees 38. Gap identification and use of external contractors/experts where feasible	30. ReSPA is fully staffed, in the case of still being under staffed adequate external support provided / reduction of activities 31. Ensuring team work spirit and joint initiatives, feeling for joint success and failure 32. M&E plan designed and implemented, defined roles of ReSPA staff in its implementation 33. Performance Evaluation according to pre-defined PMD system 34. Alignment of ReSPA business plan, POW and ReSPA Human resources 35. Alignment of ReSPA business plan, POW and ReSPA Human resources 36. Done in accordance with the PoW and needs of the Institution 37. Punctual ToR with specified duties and responsibilities in related area 38. In-house capacity estimated and need for external support clearly defined

	<p>39. Internal coaching, mentoring and in-service training</p> <p>40. Temporary technical staff replacement</p> <p>41. Engagement of volunteers/interns</p>	<p>39. Done in parallel with the PoW and PDP</p> <p>40. Ongoing process based on the current situation and needs of the Institution</p> <p>41. Specific internship programme designed</p>
H. Over complicated internal procedures	<p>42. Systematic reviews of procedures through internal systems review and procedure simplification</p> <p>43. Encouragement and support for staff suggestions on simplifying systems</p> <p>44. Team-based brainstorming</p> <p>45. External experts reviews and supports</p> <p>46. Examination of best practices from other similar organisations</p> <p>47. Results based orientation encouraged rather than rule based systems (where appropriate)</p>	<p>42. Change in ReSPA internal documents (financial and staff regulations)</p> <p>43. Regular meetings / openness for suggestions and innovative solutions</p> <p>44. Planning regular team sessions (e.g. Plan of Work requires among all consultative processes internal discussion each year with full focus, etc)</p> <p>45. Focusing more on findings and practical recommendations (result driven approach – output / outcome / impact)</p> <p>46. Regular meetings / time allocation for analysis / personal development may include the aspect of learning about best practices from other similar organisations</p> <p>47. Flexibility/ support for both team and individual spirit and work / imposing positive relationships and communication</p>
I. Planning and programming deficiencies	<p>48. Development of coherent planning and programming cycle</p> <p>49. Rolling reviews of objectives</p> <p>50. Updating of methodologies</p>	<p>48. Planning regular team sessions to ensure all the other important processes aligned (HR plan, M&E, consultative meetings, etc)</p> <p>49. Flexibility</p> <p>50. More time to identify the need and focus on engagement of appropriate external expert/institutional support (expertise in related methodological area)</p>
J. Lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation of activity/programme impact/implementation	<p>51. Regular reporting on outputs/outcomes</p> <p>52. Development of appropriate M&E strategies/systems dependent on nature of</p>	<p>51. M&E plan designed, responsibilities shared, where needed external support provided (independent evaluator engaged)</p> <p>52. Alignment of POW and M&E plan</p>

	<p>programme /activity</p> <p>53. Piloting of different approaches to M&E</p> <p>54. Implementation of findings from EC ROM reports</p>	<p>53. Needs assessment / Impact assessment / following – piloting ReSPA publications findings / networks and working groups recommendations once reflecting specific methodological use</p> <p>54. Alignment of the EC ROM report with the POW wherever applicable (midterm review of goals and activities, etc.)</p>
K. Lack of definition of governance and operational roles	<p>55. Increasing use of Networks to define/review policy & programming</p> <p>56. Increasing support for GB governance role</p> <p>57. Development of ‘manuals’ for different roles / responsibilities</p> <p>58. External review of separation of roles</p>	<p>55. Narrowing the focus of networks / working groups on specific common challenges / potentials;</p> <p>56. Identifying possibilities to materialize conclusions / recommendations (networks, publications, etc)</p> <p>57. Ensuring clear guidelines on how to react in different situations</p> <p>58. Engaging independent expert to provide assessment from the outer perspective</p>

Risks identified in context of thematic areas

1. Often and substantial strategic changes (changing concepts in a relatively short periods) along with potential burn out of ReSPA staff and high turnover rate of the staff (lack of institutional memory which can be threat to sustainability of the institution)
2. Difficulty in designing the programs which would be adequately relevant to all beneficiaries taking into account the different stages of the EI process in the each member country
3. Very tight and strict schedules in some of the sub-areas such as IPA programming which impose highly intensive plan of activities
4. Lack of possibility to implement recommendations that require additional financial resources
5. Moodle platform as a tool for exchange of most relevant national documents and strategies is not frequently used due to language barrier and/or ICT literacy
6. Identification/selection of appropriate experts and quality of their inputs/outputs including transposable recommendations because of constantly changing requirements in terms of substance, timeframe, procedures and methodologies ,
7. Unavailability of the working group members to constantly attend the envisaged events including their low involvement in the work process, lack of inclusivity and cooperation

Appendix C – Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring – ReSPA will follow on the progress of implementation of the Program of Work 2015 through the monitoring mechanisms that will ensure that comparative overview is provided periodically. Progress monitoring should be understood as a learning process that should enable better insight into the context where changes are supposed to be applied and ultimately program improved. Within the program for thematic areas, a range of activities have been combined to contribute to the overall goal (e.g. network meetings, seminars, workshops, training of trainers or other training activities, study visits, comparative research, conferences, mobility schemes, etc.). Synergies between various activities and different thematic areas are envisaged based on the experience and lessons learned¹. Activities are designed to generate output (e.g. identification of the good practices, preparation of policy recommendations or policy guidelines, methodology tools etc.), that will contribute to the overall objectives in a thematic area. Timeline for implementation of each activity is indicated in the Plan of Work as well.

A monitoring plan has been developed in order to ensure monitoring of the ReSPA 2015 PoW implementation. Monitoring will be conducted through monitoring of:

- budget (budget spent against budget planned for each activity);
- activity timeline (activities implemented against activities planned);
- outputs and evaluation of the short term results (results of questionnaires' analysis after each event²).

Information on monitoring will be included in the quarterly reports which will be sent prior to each meeting to the Governing Board members, in line with the procedures.

Monitoring timeline

		2015											
Quarterly reports	Monitoring	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
Quarterly report 1 (GB meeting)	Budget monitoring												
	Activity timeline monitoring												
Quarterly report 2 (GB meeting)	Monitoring of the outputs and												

¹As an example of recent ReSPA activities and synergies, the e-Government network's brainstorming has led to the publication of a comparative study that directly influenced the establishment of the first specially designed seminar for e- and m-Government, and in addition, it has identified the need for an anti-corruption ICT strategy at the regional level. The latter is directly linked to the Ethics and Integrity Working Group and, in a broader sense, with both the European Integration and Public Administration Reforms networks.

² List of activities in excell table with evaluation results will be attached to the quarterly report

C. EXCEL TABLE³

1	Title activities and objective s	Dates	Place	Trainers	Number of registered participants, number of actual participants, number of participants' days									Evaluation results						Remarks
					(by region and gender):			(by region and gender):			(by region and gender):			excellent:	good:	average:	fair:	poor:	comments:	
					Total	M:	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F							

³ This excell table has been used for reporting to European Commission

Evaluation - Evaluation process for ReSPA activities is maintained throughout the year on a short term basis (anonymous evaluations by participants and resource persons after each event), midterm (mid-year evaluation), and long term basis (annually, external evaluation). Evaluation of each ReSPA event - anonymous evaluation by questionnaires - will be made after implementation of each activity. Evaluation questionnaires from the Impact Assessment Toolkit (IATK) developed last year will be used. The results of each evaluation will be entered into the excel sheet table and data will be sent to the experts/ resource persons, to be included in the report for each activity/event. Mid-term evaluation will be conducted in April-May 2015, in line with the proposed techniques in the IATK (focus groups, questionnaires, etc.). Impact evaluation of all activities will be conducted at the end of the year by an external evaluator and in line with the IATK. The results will be used for improvement of the programme and they will be shared with the ReSPA Governing Board and European Commission.

The chart bellow presents the timing of evaluation activities.

Activity	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1. Evaluation of each ReSPA event												
2. Mid-term evaluation												
3. Impact evaluation												