

Connecting the **Western Balkans** and **Italian Administration**

#2

Opening Conference and Induction Day

15 April 2025

**Venue: Territorial Training Hub of SNA Teatro Kursaal Santalucia,
Kursaal Santalucia, Largo Adua 5, Bari, Italy**

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Introduction

The Opening Conference and Induction Day marks the official launch of the Public Servants' Capacity Building and Mobility Programme 2.0, an initiative designed to foster knowledge exchange, institutional cooperation, and administrative excellence between the Western Balkans and the Italian administration. Building on the success of the first programme, this initiative—supported by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFA) and implemented in partnership with the Italian National School of Administration (SNA)—aims to further strengthen administrative capacities in the Western Balkans.

This event will bring together high-level representatives from Italy, the Western Balkans, and the European Commission, alongside participants of the new cohort. The conference will provide a platform for strategic discussions on European integration, public sector modernization, and best practices in governance. Through insightful presentations, panel discussions, and interactive roundtables, participants will explore new opportunities for collaboration and professional growth.

By setting the stage for the programme's capacity-building modules, study visits, and mobility schemes, this Opening Conference will serve as a catalyst for empowering public servants with the skills, networks, and knowledge necessary to contribute to stronger, more innovative, and EU-aligned public administrations in the Western Balkans.

We look forward to a stimulating and fruitful exchange of ideas!

09:30 – 10:00	Registration of participants
10:00 – 10:30	Welcome Remarks & Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of Puglia Region • Representative of Italian MFA • Maja Handjiska Trendafilova, ReSPA Director • H.E. Ambassador Massimo Gaiani, Head of the European and International Affairs, Scuola Nazionale dell'Amministrazione (SNA)
10:30 – 10:35	The first cycle of the programme and the transition to the second Cycle– interactive video
10:35 – 10:45	Impulse Intervention from an alumna of the Programme (2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biljana Papovic, State Secretary, Ministry of European Affairs, Montenegro <p><i>This session will feature an inspiring intervention from a distinguished alumna of the Public Servants' Capacity Building and Mobility Programme (2024). She will share her personal experience, key learnings, and the impact of the programme on her professional journey. Biljana will reflect on how the exchange of knowledge and best practices with the Italian administration has influenced her work in European affairs and public administration reform. Her insights will serve as motivation for the new cohort, highlighting the tangible benefits of the programme in fostering regional cooperation, capacity building, and EU integration efforts.</i></p>
10:45 - 11:30	Innovative governance and public administration: best practices from the Puglia Region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of Puglia Region <p><i>This session will showcase successful governance and administrative reforms implemented in the Puglia Region, highlighting innovative approaches in public sector modernization, regional development, and administrative efficiency. The presentation will provide insights into digital transformation, citizen engagement, inter-institutional cooperation, and policy implementation strategies that have improved public service delivery in the region. Participants will gain valuable takeaways on how such practices can be adapted and applied in the Western Balkans' administrative context.</i></p>
11:30 - 12:00	Coffee break
12:00 – 12:30	Key EU instruments for public sector modernization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of European Commission or expert <p><i>This session will provide an overview of the key EU instruments and initiatives designed to support public sector modernization across Member States and aspiring EU countries. The session will highlight strategic funding mechanisms, reform support tools, and policy frameworks that drive innovation, efficiency, and good governance in public administration. Special focus will be given to the Technical Support Instrument (TSI), Digital Europe Programme, and best practices in public sector transformation, offering valuable insights on how these instruments can be leveraged by Western Balkans administrations to advance EU integration and administrative reforms.</i></p>
12:30 – 13:15	Roundtable Discussions – World Café Format <p>Three parallel discussions based on the programme's themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive discussions with experts and practitioners • Participants rotate between tables to exchange ideas
13:30	Brief conclusions and next steps
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch break
15:00 – 16:30	Bari Old City Walking Tour and free time <p><i>The Walking Tour offers participants a chance to explore the historical heart of Bari, showcasing its rich cultural heritage, ancient architecture, and vibrant local life. This guided tour will take you through narrow, cobbled streets, past historic landmarks, and iconic sites, providing a deeper understanding of Bari's unique history and traditions. Following the tour, enjoy some free time to further explore the heart of Bari.</i></p>