

Procurement Notice

Assignment name: Senior Expert in HRM for leading preparation of the study on competency frameworks in the Western Balkans, development of the self-assessment framework for competencies and career development working paper

Section 1. Introductory Information

1.1 Background information on the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA)

The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is the inter-governmental organization for enhancing regional cooperation, promoting shared learning and supporting the development of public administration in the Western Balkans. ReSPA Members are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, while Kosovo*¹ is a beneficiary. ReSPA's purpose is to help governments in the region develop better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses, and prepare for the membership of the European Union.

ReSPA establishes close co-operation with ministers, senior public servants and heads of function in Member countries. ReSPA also works in partnership with the European Union, specifically Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), other regional players such as OECD/SIGMA and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), as well as agencies and civil society organisations. Since its inception, ReSPA, as an international organisation and a key regional endeavor in Public Administration Reform, has contributed to capacity-building and networking activities through in-country support mechanisms, peering and the production of regional research material.

Given the preliminary work done by ReSPA Members, at the meeting of the HRMD Working group held in November 2021 in Tirana, it has been suggested that an analysis on competency-based frameworks and the development of a self-assessment framework is a short-term priority for the HRMD Working Group. The findings and recommendations will also be used for (re)defining the programme directions of ReSPA beyond 2022 since ReSPA is expecting a new four-year grant.

The study should give an overview of the different competency-based management (CBM) approaches and their main components. The overview should serve as a model for analysing the WB experience. The study should also map the requirements set for civil servants at different levels in the WB administrations and analyse them through the concept of CBM to understand their level of development in the area.

1.2 ReSPA now seeks to engage a senior expert in Human Resources Management who would lead development of the study on competency frameworks in the Western Balkans, development of the self-assessment framework and the working paper on career development.

¹ * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and ICJ Advisory opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of independence

1.3 Expected deliverables of the assignment are: as per Terms of Reference.

1.4 Tentative timeframe: the assignment is expected to be performed from March – June 2022.

1.5 NOTE: Any individual employed by a company or institution who would like to submit an offer in response to this Procurement Notice must do so in their individual capacity, even if they expect their employers to sign a contract with ReSPA. In such a case, the applicant shall notify ReSPA in the application which institution is his/her employer.

Section 2. Preparation of CVs and supporting documentation

2.1 Language of application:

The CVs (maximum 3 pages, Ariel 11) and supporting documentation shall be prepared in English.

2.2 The CVs should provide information on the qualifications and competencies of the applicant, her/his general track record and previous specific experience in similar assignments, as required by the Terms of Reference. The applicants should particularly state in their CVs:

- General professional experience;
- Specific professional experience, in line with ToR.

2.3 The required qualifications and skills: as per Terms of Reference

Section 3. Submission of CVs and supporting documentation

3.1 The interested candidates are invited to submit a proposal consisting of the following documentation:

- Proposal: explaining their experience related to the subject and how they intend to respond to the assignment;
- Personal CV including past experience in similar activities and particularly issues referred to under point 2.2 of this Procurement Notice;
- At least three contacts for references (name and position of referee, email address and phone number) which may be contacted by ReSPA. (NOTE: There is no need to submit reference letters; ReSPA will directly contact the referees).

3.2 The required documentation should be submitted in electronic format by e-mail to the following address: procurement@respaweb.eu by **01 March 2022** before 2 PM CET.

Late submissions will not be considered for evaluation.

The application should contain in the e-mail the Reference Number: 22040.

Public servants from ReSPA Members and Kosovo* are not eligible to apply.

Selection 4. Evaluation of offers

4.1 The offer will be evaluated against the required qualifications, experience, skills and competencies as defined in the Terms of Reference.

4.2 The applicant securing the highest final ranking will be invited to submit a financial proposal (the financial proposal shall specify a total sum amount in EURO for expert's daily fee) and negotiate the contract. If negotiations are successful, the selected candidate will be awarded the contract. Should the negotiations fail; the next ranked candidate will be invited to negotiations.

Section 5. Final Considerations

5.1 The payment will be done in installment, as explained in the Terms of Reference, following the submission and approval of the deliverables.

5.2 The following document is attached to this Procurement Notice: Terms of Reference

5.3 ReSPA reserves the right to cancel this procurement procedure at any moment without any compensation to the applicants. The cost of preparing a proposal and negotiating a contract, including any related travel, cannot be reimbursed by ReSPA under any circumstances nor can ReSPA be held liable for it, regardless the outcome of the procurement procedure.

5.4 Should you need any further clarifications with respect to this procurement notice, please contact: Ms. Ranka Bartula-Musikic, Programme Manager via e-mail: r.bartula@respaweb.eu, by **23 February 2022** (midnight), the latest. ReSPA will post the response, including an explanation of the query without identifying the source of inquiry, at its website (www.respaweb.eu) by **25 February 2022**.

Terms of Reference

Request for Services

Senior Expert in HRM for leading preparation of the study on competency frameworks in the Western Balkans, development of the self-assessment framework for competencies and career development working paper

Background

The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is the inter-governmental organization for enhancing regional cooperation, promoting shared learning and supporting the development of public administration in the Western Balkans. ReSPA Members are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, while Kosovo^{*2} is a beneficiary. ReSPA's purpose is to help governments in the region develop better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses and prepare for the membership of the European Union.

ReSPA establishes close co-operation with Ministers, senior public servants and heads of units in Member countries. ReSPA also works in partnership with the European Union, specifically Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), other regional actors such as OECD/SIGMA and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), as well as agencies and civil society organizations. Since its inception, ReSPA, as an international organization and a key regional endeavour in Public Administration Reform, has contributed to capacity-building and networking activities through in-country support mechanisms, peering and the production of regional research materials.

The European Commission (EC) provides directly managed funds for the support of the ReSPA activities (research, training and networking programmes) in line with the EU accession process. So far, three EC Grant Contracts have been implemented by ReSPA during the period 2010-2018. The current EC grant supports the implementation of the activities required for contribution to the achievement of the three strategic objectives during the period 2019-2022.

ReSPA works primarily through regional networks which operate at three levels: Ministerial, Senior Officials, and networks/working groups of experts and senior practitioners. There is one network – Programme Committee composed of the representatives of institutions in charge of PAR, Public Financial Management (PFM) and government policy planning and the European Integration (EI) coordination process and five Working groups: (1) Centre-of-Government Institutions; 2) Better Regulation; 3) Human Resource Management and Development; 4) E-Governance; and 5) Quality Management.

² * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and ICJ Advisory opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of independence.

Description of the Assignment

Competency frameworks are widely developed and applied in OECD countries. They have an important cross-cutting function informing recruitment and selection, professional development, performance appraisal and staff planning. Getting competency frameworks right is therefore of particular relevance. Over the last years, ReSPA has conducted several studies related to the HRM in the Western Balkans (WB) public services, and all of them have one way or another addressed the competency frameworks (The 2015 analysis on merit recruitment³, the 2019 evaluation report⁴ on merit base recruitment and the 2020 recruitment study⁵).

This shows that the competency topic has been on the agenda in the Western Balkans for years, however with a limited success as it keeps being pointed out also in more recent studies. In addition to that, the need for competency-based approach does not come up only in the recruitment related studies. The 2021 study on performance appraisals⁶ contains even a separate chapter (5. *Towards competency frameworks: Differentiating “hard” from “soft” objectives*) stressing that competencies are an important prerequisite for effective performance management.

Given the preliminary work done by ReSPA Members, at the meeting of the HRMD Working group held in November 2021 in Tirana, it has been suggested that an analysis on competency-based frameworks and the development of a self-assessment framework is a short-term priority for the HRMD Working Group. The findings and recommendations will also be used for (re)defining the programme directions of ReSPA beyond 2022 since ReSPA is expecting a new four-year grant.

The study should give an overview of the different competency-based management (CBM) approaches and their main components. The overview should serve as a model for analysing the WB experience. The study should also map the requirements set for civil servants at different levels in the WB administrations and analyse them through the concept of CBM to understand their level of development in the area.

The study will identify obstacles in development as well as the successful implementation of competency-based frameworks and propose strategies for overcoming those obstacles. The study will explicitly take into account the good practices from the EU as well as findings of the SIGMA assessment reports and the European principles of administration for the management of human resources as developed by SIGMA. It should be complemented by good practice examples from different EU countries that have introduced competency frameworks in the civil service that work well in practice.

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<https://respaweb.eu/download/doc/Improving+the+implementation+of+merit+recruitment+procedures+in+the+WB.pdf/c4c49f156f2bd13cea31ee15f399dcd6.pdf>

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<https://www.respaweb.eu/download/doc/Merit+based+recruitment+evaluation+report.pdf/d6a1b23800afbb393d6fd82319deb38a.pdf>

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https://www.respaweb.eu/download/doc/Making+Merit+Recruitment+Work_Lessons+from+and+for+the+WBs.pdf/77467aa94a0ed147ce90b1747143f850.pdf

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<https://www.respaweb.eu/download/doc/Towards+Effective+Performance+Appraisal+in+the+WBs.pdf/7b629959a17409fff11bdf2ad049345c.pdf>

The study should also serve for development of the self-assessment framework for competencies which would be used by the Western Balkan countries. The self-assessment will support the countries in assessing their state of art in using competencies in regard to various HR functions. The countries shall conduct their assessments with support of the experts. The study should also encompass the recommendations for improvement of the use of competencies in ReSPA members and at least two examples of good practice on the use of competencies in the EU countries.

In addition to the above stated needs, it has been voiced by the HRMD WG Members that career advancement procedures, practices and criteria tend to be under-developed and in need of improvement. Incentives for career advancement tend to be limited. Promotion procedures do not sufficiently reward good performance and fail to motivate civil servants in most Western Balkan countries. Interests in career development span across themes of promotions, talent management and, indeed, retention of staff in public administration. In the first instance, the WG proposed a scoping working paper to explore the models of career development that are applied across the OECD world. Good practice examples of career development in at least 2 countries should also be presented in the working paper

The findings of the study as well as the Working paper on career development will be presented at the three-day Workshop of the HRMD WG that is planned to be held in June 2022. Two days will be dedicated to competencies and one day to career development and presentation of the respective good case examples.

With this document, ReSPA is seeking for a senior expert in Human Resources Management who would lead development of the study on competency frameworks in the Western Balkans, development of the self-assessment framework and the working paper on career development.

Tasks and responsibilities

The Lead expert shall work closely with the regional experts and ReSPA in performing the foreseen tasks stated in this document:

1. Study on competency-based frameworks (16 days)

Preparation work (3 days)

- Conducting literature review (academic and studies of different international institutions)
- Conducting analysis of EU cases
- Conducting analysis of legal acts, manuals, guidelines, etc. of the Western Balkan experience
- Providing support to ReSPA in development of a concept note
- Developing the outline of the study

Implementation work (13 days)

- Designing the analytical framework (1 day)
- Cooperating with regional experts (online and via telepresence) in relation to their the information for the study and analysis of the obtained results (2 days)
- Analysing and synthesising of data and preparation of the draft study based on the qualitative material that shall include comparative findings and country-specific findings

and lessons. To derive specific, actionable recommendations for the more systematic use of skills, knowledge and competenc(i)es in managing the human resources (5 days);

- Obtaining inputs for the draft from other stakeholders (SIGMA, EC)
- Participating and presenting the main findings of the study to the ReSPA stakeholders at the workshop that will be held in the WB region in June 2022. Obtaining inputs from the stakeholders on the draft study and agreeing on the next steps. (2 days)
- Finalising of the study based on the comments obtained. (3 days)

2. Self-assessment framework for competencies (6 days)

- Based on the developed study, preparing a self-assessment questionnaire/framework for the countries to monitor their progress in regard to development of the competency frameworks and their use in practice.

3. Working paper on the career development (6 days)

- Providing support in development of the concept note
- Studying the EU and WB experiences in career development
- Preparation of the working paper on career development. The working paper should include at least two examples of good practice and recommendations for follow up activities on the career development in the region.
- Participating and presenting the working paper at the one-day workshop which will be held in the WB region in June.
- Finalisation of the working paper on career development, based on the comments obtained from the ReSPA HRMD WG during the workshop.

Throughout the duration of the assignment, the expert will collaborate closely with ReSPA Programme Manager in charge of the project. The expert will take into consideration the instructions received beforehand.

Necessary Qualifications, Experience and Skills

Educational background:

Qualifications and skills:

- At least Master degree in Public Policy and Management, Public Administration, or other related fields;

General professional experience:

- More than 15 years of professional experience in the field of public administration;

Specific professional experience:

- Specific experience in work related to HRMD;
- Prior experience in designing different studies, baselines;

Skills:

- High presentation and moderation skills;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English;
- Ability to write clear and coherent guidance documents;
- Ability to work with people of different nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds.

Timing and Location

The assignment foresees the work from home and participation in the workshop. The work will be performed during **March – June 2022**. The expert will participate in the workshop that is planned to be organised in **June 2022**.

Remunerations

The assignment foresees up to **28 (twenty-eight) expert days** including online consultations, if needed, with ReSPA Programme Manager in charge. The final outputs will be subject to approval from ReSPA before the payment is executed.

The daily fee shall be determined based on the assessed and evaluated expert's capacities, in line with ReSPA expert selection procedure adopted by the ReSPA Governing Board. The payment will be made in one instalment, following the submission of the final report.

Note: No other costs will be covered apart from the expert cost per day.

Reporting and Final Documentation

The Expert will be requested to deliver the following documents in English language before the payment is conducted:

Outputs

- Study the competency frameworks in the Western Balkans
- Self-assessment framework on competencies
- Working paper on career development.

Documents required for payment

- Invoice (original and signed);
- Timesheet (original and signed);
- Final report in English on the performed tasks. The report shall be submitted not later than 7 (seven) working days after the completion of the task. The report shall include relevant remarks, inputs and feedback related to the task performed and will be subject of approval by ReSPA.