

ReSPA NEWSLETTER

Winter Issue, January 2010

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Special points of interest:

- 4th Annual ReSPA Conference
- Learning Europe
- Upcoming Activities
- ReSPA Liaison Officers

Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro ratify International Agreement establishing ReSPA

BY SELMA DŽIHANOVIĆ-GRATZ and IVICA IVANOVIĆ

Since the publication of the summer issue of the ReSPA Newsletter, both Bosnia and Her-



Mr. Željko Komšić, Mr. Haris Silajdžić and Mr. Nebojša Radmanović at the 60th Session of the Presidency of BiH / Presidency website

zegovina (BiH) and Montenegro have ratified the International Agreement establishing ReSPA.

In the case of **BiH**, the ratification procedure was completed with the publication of the corresponding Decision of the Presidency in the country's Official Gazette on 3 September 2009.

As far as regards **Montenegro**, the Agreement was ratified by the Parliament of Montenegro in its session held on 13 October 2009.

SELMA DŽIHANOVIĆ-GRATZ and IVICA IVANOVIĆ are Liaison Officers for BiH and Montenegro, respectively.

Establishing ReSPA as a legal entity

The establishment of ReSPA as a physical and legal entity with its headquarters in Danilovgrad, Montenegro, is awaiting the ratification of just one more of the seven ReSPA Partners.



ReSPA venue, Danilovgrad. October 2009 / I. Ivanovic

"...[T]hanks for all the positive comments and good suggestions..."

Dear Reader...

Dear Reader,

The autumn of 2009 saw a number of important developments for ReSPA, including:

- the ratification of the International Agreement by two more ReSPA Partners
- the realisation of two important conferences, namely the Annual ReSPA Conference in Sarajevo, as well as the Learning Europe Conference in Plitvicka organised by the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration and co-sponsored by ReSPA
- the delivery of over ten training events, at the time of publication of this newsletter, covering a pallet of topics
- the ongoing work on updating and restructuring the ReSPA website, with the launch of the new website envisaged early this year.

In the following pages of this issue of the ReSPA Newsletter you will find, among other items, information about the ratification process, pictures and feedback from participants of a number of the training and conference events, as well as other institutional news.

We also take this opportunity to re-invite you to contribute to the Newsletter through the section entitled "Letters to the Editor".

Finally, we would like to give thanks for all the positive comments and good suggestions for improvement of the ReSPA Newsletter and the website which we have received.

We hope you will continue to enjoy the Newsletter and that we will meet in person at one of the upcoming ReSPA training or networking events.

Peter Goldschmidt

ReSPA Project Director
(Director, EIPA Luxembourg)

Harry List

ReSPA Project Manager
(Senior Expert, EIPA Maastricht)

ReSPA News - Headquarters

The construction of the headquarters of the Regional School has been completed.

Contractors have already been recruited and are on stand-by for the eventual furnishing and equipment of the ReSPA headquarters.



ReSPA Headquarters, October 2009 / I. Ivanovic

The 7th Annual Learning Europe Conference on Challenges of Training and Communicating in a European Context

A conference attended by nearly 60 officials from all levels of government, national schools of public administration and NGOs

The 7th Annual Learning Europe Conference, organised by the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and ReSPA, was held on 26-27 October 2009 at *Plitvička jezera*.

The conference was attended by nearly 60 officials from all levels of government as well as representatives from national schools of public administration and NGOs managing, delivering or in other ways responsible for training in public administration and European integration issues. The participants came from all the ReSPA Members, a number of EU Member States and Turkey.

This year's conference dealt with four important and highly relevant themes:

- Positioning of the state in a European context
- Preparations for EU competitions and working in the EU institutions
- Lifelong learning with emphasis on European integration as the driving force for modernisation of public administration

- National coordination of EU affairs

Each theme was the subject of separate workshops, with short presentations by three or four experts from national authorities, national schools of public administration, the European Commission and/or NGOs, which were followed by discussion and exchange of experiences between the participants and the expert panels.

The conference concluded with a plenary session during which the *rapporteurs* from each workshop summarised the conclusions drawn, after which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided a tour of the Plitvička lakes, combining walking, sailing and a train-ride.

At the time of writing, the four *rapporteurs* are in the process of writing up the conclusions from their respective workshops, which will be published on the websites of the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration and ReSPA.

Excellent planning makes for a splendid Strategic Management seminar

By PROF. DR HAB. ARTUR NOWAK-FAR

The 3-day seminar entitled "Strategic Management Training: From Strategic Objectives to Operational Planning" was held for the second time in mid-October 2009 in Skopje, having been first launched in April 2009.

A group of seasoned public sector strategic management practitioners representing all of the RESPA Partners was selected to participate in the seminar. Thanks to their highly professional profiles, extensive hands-on experience and strong drive to solve concrete problems arising in their own workplaces, the seminar soon became a 'demand-pulled' event, in the sense that it focused

mainly on practical issues pertaining to strategic management in public administration. This allowed the participants to discuss a variety of useful matters and to share their experiences with their peers. The representatives of the Serbian public administration even took the trouble to bring abundant written material to share with the other participants!

As one of the trainers, along with Mr Tomasz Szuba, I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to assist the participants in presenting their respective situations and moderating their eminent discussions in a relaxed and positive atmosphere. Having considerable experience in training public administration

officers, I believe that both the seminar organisers and the participants themselves ought to be credited for making the event such a dynamic and successful one, which will contribute significantly to the improvement of the quality of strategic management in the RESPA Partners.

"...[T]he seminar soon became a 'demand-pulled' event - it focused mainly on practical issues pertaining to strategic management in PA"

Strategic Management Training: From Strategic Objectives to Operational Planning.

Skopje, 21-23 April & 13-15 October, 2009.

Prof. dr hab. ARTUR NOWAK-FAR is professor at the Warsaw School of Economics (Socio-Economic Collegium).

The importance of Human Resource Management is ever-increasing

"...[W]hat seems critical...is whether the dialogue will be continued among the community of practitioners"

4th Annual ReSPA Conference "Challenges on Human Resource Management"

By SELMA DŽIHANOVIĆ-GRATZ AND SANJA GACO

The 4th Annual ReSPA Conference on "Challenges on Human Resource Management" was held in Sarajevo on 6 and 7 October 2009. The participants came from ReSPA Members and EU countries including Greece, the Netherlands, Slovakia and the United Kingdom.

The purpose of this Conference was to exchange and discuss concepts and experiences at regional and EU level related to the topical issue of Human Resource Management. Distinguished speakers from the aforementioned EU Member States provided the participants with key information regarding the recruitment and performance appraisal systems

and the management of human resources in their countries. Participants also had the opportunity to present their own national systems of recruitment, appraisal of the performance of and training for civil servants, as well as to share their experiences and discuss the similarities, differences, obstacles and possible solutions in these respects.

The main conclusion to be drawn from this Conference is that the importance of Human Resource Management is ever-increasing. Therefore managers in general and of Human Resource departments in particular need to have a sound under-

standing of this issue in order to be able to guide their human resources and to develop their capacities.

Overall, the Conference proved both useful and rewarding for all concerned, allowing them the possibility to use the knowledge acquired in their daily work.

The Annual Conference is one of the most important ReSPA events of the year. In order to inform interested parties of the results and successes of the Conference, and to further improve the quality of future ReSPA events, we have interviewed participants about their reactions and observations.

SELMA DŽIHANOVIĆ-GRATZ AND SANJA GACO
are Liaison Officers for BiH.

Interview: Niko Grubešić Assistant Minister, Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina

What were your expectations before attending this event?

I expected the institutions dealing with human resources (HR) as well as HR units of the countries of the region to exchange their experiences on the implementation of their domestic Civil Service legislation. But I also expected to hear the experiences of EU countries.

So far, to what extent would you say these expectations have been met?

I would say that my expectations have been met entirely. But what seems critical in my opinion is whether the dialogue will be continued among the community of practitioners.

How do you think the attendance to this event will influence your future work?

My knowledge regarding the systems of appointment and recruitment of civil servants has been improved and I will definitely use it in my future work – in particular when working in Commissions for the election of civil servants. With regard to the issue of training and appraisal of civil servants, during the Conference I gained some new ideas about the different possibilities for creating programmes of specialised training for the justice sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). At the Collegium meetings of the Ministry of Justice of BiH I will insist that the annual performance appraisal of civil servants in the Ministry be fully introduced and implemented, as is foreseen in the relevant laws and by-laws.

Will you keep in contact with the other participants?

Absolutely. I am already in contact with some of them and we have established good cooperation. I have also made some new acquaintances and we have exchanged our contact details with a view to cooperating in future.

Do you have any other comments/feedback regarding the event?

I certainly have some ideas for future events. Since I am a member of the Steering Committee of ReSPA, I will give my proposals for the draft of the new ReSPA annual workplan.



*N. Grubešić, Oct. 2009
/S. Gaco*

"The main advantage of ReSPA lies in the exchange of contacts and the improvement of cooperation between its members"

Interview: Metodija Dimovski

General Secretary, Civil Service Agency, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

What were your expectations before attending this event?

In principle, such an event should serve for exchange of information and experience. Knowledge is in this case secondary, because one can obtain general information about the various systems anywhere on the internet, but one cannot really meet people as on the occasion of events like this Conference. The main advantage of ReSPA lies in the exchange of contacts and the improvement of cooperation between its members. In formal presentations people are often reticent, so informal discussions and Q&A sessions about real problems that we face in our daily work is a key point.



M. Dimovski, October 2009 / S. Gaco

So far, to what extent would you say these expectations have been met?

My first impression was that this Conference would be more like a training event than a forum for exchange of information. It began initially with the presentations of the EU countries' experience, but the second day of the Conference was different, very much focused on the Balkans and the exchange of information and experience between the countries of the region. I think that this is the real format of the Conference.

How do you think the attendance to this event will influence your future work?

Good ideas are always retained. I always try to implement them in my work, in terms of improving legislation and procedures.

Will you keep in contact with the other participants?

Absolutely. The cooperation already exists. The communication is usually driven by real needs; the work-related cooperation and communication is job-driven.

Do you have any other comments/feedback regarding the event?

I think that we should move in the direction of establishing more permanent Working Groups or Task Forces to deal with particular issues. It is good to revisit such issues as the subject of this Conference. These "forces" would be network-oriented and would work throughout the whole year. ReSPA is a very good opportunity for real cooperation on the ground. In nearly 80% of the cases, the Human Resources procedures are the same and usually the problems are too, but the solutions may be different. Therefore, it needs to be a more permanent endeavour.

"The problems of the countries of this region are specific and there is a need to work together to find new ideas, principles and standards"

Interview: Petra Goran

Head of Human Resource Development Unit, Ministry of Administration of Croatia

What were your expectations before attending this event?

I expected to have a chance to discuss common problems and obstacles in the implementation of HR practices with colleagues in the region. I also expected to have a chance to brainstorm and to try to find some innovative answers, or at least some acceptable solutions.



P. Goran, October 2009 / S. Gaco

So far, to what extent would you say these expectations have been met?

Some regional experiences were presented and discussed and common problems identified, but unfortunately the limited time did not allow for enough discussion of our specific regional problems. I also think that the instructive example of Slovakia could have been used to a greater extent in order to learn some valuable lessons. The problems of the countries of this region are specific and there is a need to work together to find new ideas, principles and standards. The most relevant experience for us is the experience of new Member States.

How do you think the attendance to this event will influence your future work?

I will try to learn more from the experience of the new EU Member States, particularly their successes and mistakes, although I believe that there is not so much written analysis available. It will be useful to have contacts with colleagues in the region, for future information and comparison.

Will you keep in contact with the other participants?

I hope that we will stay in contact and that we will have the chance to meet again and exchange our experience.

Do you have any other comments/feedback regarding the event?

The issue of interpretation should have been taken care of in advance. The fact that there was consecutive interpretation was a bit frustrating for many of the participants, who came with the assumption that all communication would be in English (and it took up some of the time planned for group discussions). I think the focus should be on regional speakers. I strongly believe that there are now quite a few competent experts from academic and professional circles who can offer a comparative analysis. The involvement of experts from the new EU Member States is also very useful.

Seminar: EU law and methods for Translators and Interpreters

By WILLIAM BULL

This 5-day seminar was attended by translators and interpreters as well as persons responsible for the coordination of translation within the public administrations of the ReSPA Members. The seminar had two overarching objectives: first, to provide the participants with an understanding of the EU institutional, legislative and procedural frameworks with a view to improving their ability to find appropriate terminology when translating or interpreting EU political and legal concepts and; second, to present and discuss practical translation methods and good practices drawn from experiences of a new Member State as well as the EU institutions.

The programme began with an overview of the EU, including its institutions, decision-making procedures and sources of law. This was followed by an examination of the main procedures before the European Court of

Justice, and also the key policy area that is the internal market. The second part of the seminar was devoted specifically to the subject of translation and interpretation, drawing from the invaluable experience of an expert from both a relatively new Member State (namely Hungary), as well as from the European Parliament. Finally, the seminar concluded with a presentation of the practical aspects of EU law implementation, focusing in particular on the fundamental role of translation in this context.

The seminar was implemented by William Bull, Researcher, Nadja Long, Lecturer, Sofia Papoutsi, Researcher, Peter Goldschmidt, Senior Lecturer and Director, EIPA Luxembourg, as well as Réka Somssich, Head of Department of EU Law in the Hungarian Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement, and Kent Johanson of the Multilingualism and

External Relations Service, DG Translation, European Parliament. The methodology consisted of a combination of presentations, case studies and interactive workshops/exercises, with particular emphasis on multilateral exchanges of practical information, tips and advice. As regards the participants' evaluation of the seminar, both the contents and methodology were highly appreciated, although many participants did feel that more time could have been spent on translation. Nevertheless, the importance of studying legal concepts was clearly acknowledged and overall the seminar was very well-received indeed. □

Seminar: EU law and methods for Translators and Interpreters.

Podgorica, 5 - 9 October 2009

"Contents and methodology were highly appreciated, although many participants did feel that more time could have been spent on translation."

"The knowledge that I received during the training, I plan to transfer to the other members of the staff..."

Interview: Mr. Rrahmon Salihu,

Senior Officer for EU legislation, Agency for Coordination of Development and European Integration, Kosovo under UNSC Resolution 1244/89

What were your expectations when applying for the course?

I was expecting that this course would bring me new knowledge with regards to the tools of translation which will help me in fulfilling my daily tasks at the office. Another expectation I had was that of exchanging experiences with the other participants from the neighbouring region.

To what extent would you say these expectations were met?

I can say that my expectations have been met to a satisfactory level. The lecturers were very well prepared and very friendly which contributed to creating an environment where everybody could raise different questions on different topics and receive the answer immediately. The topics discussed were very interesting and useful, which I think will improve my performance in the office.

How has the attendance to the training influenced your work – how far has the knowledge you acquired during the course been transferable to or useful for your daily work?

The knowledge that I received during the training, I plan to transfer to the other members of the staff in planning the translation of documents which will be necessary to be translated during the next year in order to draft new legislation which is in line with the *Acquis*.

Have you kept in contact with the other participants?

Yes - in my opinion, that's one of the most important features of the training, for which I'm very happy.

Do you have any other comments or feedback regarding the course?

According to most of the participants, during our conversations, the training was highly appreciated. However it was a common opinion that a follow-up seminar more concentrated on the issues of translation would be welcome, as it was noted that this training was more concentrated on legal issues.

"I have encountered difficulties on many occasions which I could relate to during the course..."

Interview: Ms. Denada Kakeli, Project Coordinator, Ministry of Interior, Albania

What were your expectations when applying for the course?

I was expecting to gain some information on EU law as well as some practical tools and techniques in translating and interpreting EU law.

To what extent would you say these expectations were met?

I have encountered difficulties on many occasions which I could relate to during the course and I could learn from the practical advice we were given by the professional trainers. I also appreciated the knowledge and information I gained on EU law, institutions, instruments and practices, which I could also relate to in my everyday work.

How has the attendance to the training influenced your work – how far has the knowledge you acquired during the course been transferable to or useful for your daily work?

Much of the information I gained during the course, either related to EU law per se, or methods for translators and interpreters, I am finding very useful in my everyday work.

Have you kept in contact with the other participants?

Yes, I have continued to keep in contact with other participants (even from other ReSPA training events) because it is very important that at the same time as gaining knowledge and experience you have the chance to create a pool of professional experts and colleagues in the region, whom you may consult when needed.

Do you have any other comments or feedback regarding the course?

Besides the organisational part, which has always been more than satisfactory, the knowledge and experience of the trainers and their teaching methodologies needs to be mentioned as one of the best I have experienced so far. Congratulations to all the ReSPA staff and I wish you success in your further endeavours.

Seminar: Planning and Implementing Communications & Lobbying Campaigns

By EVIS TASKA

This 5-day seminar was attended by civil servants from different Ministries and agencies dealing with a variety of communications-oriented roles, from media and press officers to communications managers.

The overall aim was to provide a fresh and up-to-date insight into the dynamics of European communications. The programme began with an introduction to communication and important aspects of the work it entails, and this was followed by an account of the European Commission's Communication Policy, as well as guidance on designing and implementing a successful communications plan, 'making the web for you', lobbying the EU institutions etc. In addition, inter-cultural issues in communications were also considered. Finally, the seminar concluded with a discussion of good practices and lessons to be drawn from the different

systems.

The seminar was implemented by Tony Bass, Seconded Na-



Participants during the seminar / S. Gaco

tional Expert, and Alan Hardacre, Lecturer, EIPA, as well as Frank De Graeve, Journalist. Participants from all ReSPA Members but one attended the seminar. The methodology of the seminar was based on a highly interactive approach, combining the involvement of experienced media professionals with group participation in the form of targeted discussions, simulation exercises and feedback sessions. In particular,

this practical focus included drafting press releases, managing press conferences, conducting interviews, planning campaigns and using communication as a lobbying and crisis management tool. As regards the participants' evaluation of the seminar, both the contents and methodology were highly appreciated and found to be very relevant to their work.

"...[A] fresh and up-to-date insight into the dynamics of European communications..."

Seminar: Planning and Implementing Communications & Lobbying Campaigns.

Tirana, 28 September – 2 October, 2009.

ReSPA Past Activities

The following is a list of all ReSPA seminars, training events and other activities that have taken place since August 2009.

Meeting with the Liaison Officers	23 September	Maastricht
Planning and Implementing Communications and Lobbying Campaigns	28 September – 2 October	Tirana
EU Law and Methods for Translators	5 – 9 October	Podgorica
4th Annual ReSPA Conference	6 – 7 October	Sarajevo
12th Session of the Steering Committee Meeting	8 October	Sarajevo
Training on Strategic Management: From Strategic Objectives to Operational Planning	13 – 15 October	Skopje
Learning Europe: Challenges of Lifelong Learning in the European Context (Networking)	26 – 27 October	Plitvička lakes
Administrative Law	3 – 5 November	Zagreb
HRM Community of Practice in the Civil Service - Managing Performance in the Work of Civil Servants	17 – 18 November	Tirana
Theory and Practice of the Policy Cycle: From Drafting to Evaluating Policies	23 – 27 November	Pristina
Making Public Private Partnership Work for You	1 – 3 December	Zagreb
Participative Training Techniques	8 – 10 December	Podgorica

Upcoming ReSPA Activities

The following is a list of upcoming ReSPA seminars, training events and other activities that will take place in the first quarter of the year. The programmes, dates and locations will be announced in due course.

26 - 29 January	Drafting Legislation
2 February	13th Session of the Steering Committee Meeting
March	Application of HR Instruments
March	Approximation of Law

ReSPA - Liaison Officers

On 23 September 2009 an important meeting was held at EIPA Maastricht concerning the establishment of a new team of national ReSPA 'Liaison Officers' to assist the ReSPA Secretariat with the variety of activities in which ReSPA is engaged. The overall aim of this meeting was to agree on the substance and framework of such assistance, and in particular to:

- define the array of administrative tasks pertaining to the different ReSPA events, including training activities, conferences and meetings, and allocate these among the ReSPA Secretariat and the new team of Liaison Officers
- determine the different kinds of written contributions the Liaison Officers will make to the ReSPA Newsletter, website and Annual Publication.

The meeting was attended by the entire

ReSPA Secretariat and representatives of most of the ReSPA Members, with those not present being informed of the content of the meeting afterwards. Upon its conclusion all parties expressed their satisfaction with the progress made in the course of the meeting, and on the back of this general consensus a formal agreement constituting the basis for future collaboration between the different parties was signed.

The invaluable work of the Liaison Officers has now begun, and the ReSPA Secretariat is looking forward to a new era of effective and fruitful cooperation with them. Of course this will also be beneficial for participants of ReSPA events, not least because the Liaison Officers are the first point of contact for persons interested in attending ReSPA activities.

So it is with great pleasure that we introduce the new team of ReSPA Liaison Officers:

"The invaluable work of the Liaison Officers has now begun..."

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Reader,

Unfortunately this new section of the ReSPA Newsletter is unfilled in this current issue, for we are yet to receive any letters.

We have been sent a number of encouraging messages in support of our work on the Newsletter to date, but we would be very interested to hear your views also on other ReSPA-related matters, be it the process of ratification of the International Agreement, a particular training event, or indeed any issue pertaining to the field of public administration in the region.

So we would like to take this opportunity to invite you again to personally contribute to the Newsletter for the next issue. Do not hesitate - just send us your letter!

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