



Strategic Planning and Developing of ReSPA Strategy 2019-2024



Participants of the Workshop on Strategy Development in Belgrade

Belgrade, 12-13 March 2018 – For the first time since its inception, the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) has convened key stakeholders for the purpose of strategic planning. The Workshop on Strategy Development gathered around 80 participants from ReSPA Members and Kosovo^{*1}; Governing Board members at Senior Officials' level, members of all ReSPA Working groups², and National Coordinators.

On this occasion, the stakeholders contributed to the development of ReSPA's 2019-2024 Strategy by identifying the key issues in their jurisdictions that could be addressed by this organisation in the mentioned period. The Workshop also contributed to improvements in coordination among the various national institutions, encouraged discussion on

the matters recognised as areas for ReSPA's bettering, and possible future interventions at the national and regional level.

ReSPA has achieved significant success in many aspects of implementation of its Strategic Framework for 2016-2020. Along with success came challenges during the implementation, as stated in the Ex-post Evaluation Report and Result Oriented Monitoring reports. Those challenges were manifold in fulfilling the requirements of member countries, as their capacities for development and progress significantly vary when it comes to the Public Administration Reform (PAR), progressing in the European Integration process, or the institutional capacities and specifics within the thematic areas that ReSPA works in.

These challenges inflicted a need to scrutinise the current Strategic Framework as an overture for development of a new strategic document, including all the main segments (organisational vision, mission, goals and strategic objectives). Therefore, the underpinning goal of the development of the new strategic document is to help ReSPA and its Members to redefine functions towards a higher level of responsiveness and accountability, and to propose new directions for the next period (2019-2024).

The new Strategy will refer to the ReSPA's achievements and challenges; the Western Balkans' context and its most relevant aspects for the ReSPA's work; strategic priorities, coordination and networking, mon-

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.

² ReSPA undertakes its activities primarily through regional networks of public administrators and public servants. These operate at three levels: Ministerial, Senior Officials', and Networks / Working Groups of professionals and senior practitioners. The main network is the Public Administration Reform (PAR) Network, which oversees activities of Working Groups developed according to the following thematic areas: (1) Human Resource Management and Development (HRMD); (2) e-Government; (3) Ethics and Integrity; (4) Public Procurement; (5) Public Private Partnership; (6) Administrative Procedures and Administrative Justice; (7) Better Regulation; (8) Quality Management; and (9) Public Internal Financial Control (PIFC).

itoring and evaluation; management and operational issues; overall assumptions, risks and mitigations.

The new Strategy should also establish the basis for a well-functioning monitoring and evaluation system. This will help ReSPA to achieve greater effectiveness, efficiency and visibility, and contribute to further spreading of the monitoring and evaluation culture among the ReSPA Members.

In preparation for the strategy development, the ReSPA team has come up with an activity plan entailing drafting of the content and identifying a methodology for development of programmatic section in the Strategy; organisation of a workshop for key stakeholders, as well as a meeting with the ReSPA Governing Board at Senior Officials' level and the newly established Advisory Board. The strategy development process and the monitoring and evaluation plan are to be finalised by early October 2018, and the new document is expected to be reviewed and adopted at the meeting of the ReSPA Governing Board at Ministerial level in November 2018.

The methodology used in the development of the Strategy's programmatic part consisted of the four steps needed to identify three strategic objectives, and the key areas of work for each strategic objective, as well as the indicators relevant for the key areas of work.

Step one: At the Workshop on Strategy Development held in Belgrade, the participants identified the issues and challenges within every set of Principles of Public Administration developed by the OECD/SIGMA. As part of preparations, the ReSPA Secretariat compiled more than hundred pages of the inputs for discussions, with a focus on findings and recommendations from the recent OECD/SIGMA monitoring reports, from the conclusions of the PAR Special Group meetings for the respective countries, and from the findings and recommendations from the ReSPA comparative regional studies. The workshop was based on the six horizontal core areas of Public Administration Reform, initially identified in the 2014-2015 Enlargement Strategy and further defined by the Principles of Public Administration and the related country PAR strategies.

The representatives of each ReSPA Member and Kosovo* presented the issues of importance that they would like the new ReSPA Strategy to take into consideration. In line with the recommendations from the previous Governing Board meetings, the workshop participants jointly concluded that ReSPA should sharpen its focus and narrow down the areas of intervention in order to ensure impact continues long after.

At the step two, the challenges identified at the national level were grouped and narrowed down to common regional challenges.

The step three in the process of strategy development was to further narrow down the challenges and to identify three major issues which were subsequently converted into the three strategic objectives. Under each objective, the key areas of work were identified.

In the framework of the step four, the indicators and sub-indicators are being developed in relation to the key areas of the potential ReSPA work. The new Strategy will contribute to their fulfilment.

Advisory Board Contributes to Development of New ReSPA Strategy

ReSPA, Danilovgrad, 20 April 2018 – On the occasion of the 34th Governing Board meeting at Senior Officials' level, ReSPA has convened its newly established Advisory Board for the first time.

Members of the ReSPA Advisory Board are: Mr. Gazmend Turdiu, Deputy Secretary General and Head of Programme Department, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC); Mr. Thomas Prorok, Deputy Managing Director, Centre for Public Administration Research (KDZ), Austria; Ms. Mirosława Borycz-

ka, OECD/SIGMA, Senior Advisor for Public Financial Management and IPA Regional Liaison; Ms. Jutta Gützkow, Head of Good Governance Division, Council of Europe (CoE), and Ms. Jana Repansek, Director, Centre of Excellence in Finance (CEF).

The main discussion at the inauguration meeting was related to the draft of the new ReSPA Strategy for the period 2019-2024. In providing comments and advise on the draft strategic document, members of the Advisory Board

commended the work done by ReSPA in supporting public administration reforms in the Western Balkans. The Advisory Board recommended to ReSPA to carefully map the ongoing projects of other organisations in the region in order to minimise overlapping and to ensure stronger synergy. It was suggested that the strategic document should include a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system, as well as the information on the organisation's sustainability.



ReSPA Advisory Board members, Governing Board at Senior Officials' level members and ReSPA Secretariat

The meeting of the ReSPA Governing Board at Senior Officials' level and the Advisory Board was concluded with a proposal for ReSPA Secretariat to make a preselection of indicators and sub-indicators based on the experience and achievements in identified key areas of work. The upgraded draft of the strategic document will be considered and

agreed with ReSPA members and Kosovo*, and then further discussed at the ReSPA Public Administration Reform (PAR) Network meeting in June 2018.

"The Advisory Board is set up with a mandate to support ReSPA's strategic commitments, help in development of strategic documents and defining of

programme areas, offer guidance on matters of importance for improving the organisation's development, bolster ReSPA's networking with relevant organisations, and encourage better understanding and coordination of donor activities relevant to our mandate," said Ms. Ratka Sekulovic, Director of ReSPA.

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Memorandum of Understanding between ReSPA and Centre of Excellence in Finance



Director of ReSPA Ms. Ratka Sekulovic and Director of CEF Ms. Jana Repansek

ReSPA, Danilovgrad, 20 April 2018 – On the margins of the 34th ReSPA Governing Board meeting at Senior Officials' level and the first meeting of the Advisory Board, Director of ReSPA Ms. Ratka Sekulovic and Director of the Centre of Excellence in Finance (CEF) Ms. Jana Repansek signed a Memorandum

of Understanding recognising the readiness of these two international organisations to continue cooperation and capitalise on each other's comparative strengths.

CEF is an international organisation with a mission to support capacity development for finance

officials in South East Europe. Through innovative, participatory, and practical learning solutions, CEF works with its constituency to support public financial management, tax policy and administration, and central banking reform efforts. As a knowledge hub for the region, CEF combines topical expertise and in-depth knowledge of countries in the region with a good comprehension of how reforms take place. The Memorandum of Understanding between CEF and ReSPA has formalised a valuable partnership in sharing commitment to the Western Balkan region's public administration reform efforts. Drawing up on both organisations' expertise and knowledge of the region's needs, this partnership will reinforce ReSPA's reach and impact in Public Finance Management.



Developing Regional Comparative Study on Public Service Delivery



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Given the growing importance of the quality of service delivery for the Western Balkans, with respect to previous initiatives of ReSPA Members and Kosovo*, a decision has been made to prepare a study on the latest developments and future orientation on Service Delivery in the region's public sectors. The first step towards the development of the Study was an expert group meeting, held on 6 February 2018 in Belgrade, with participation of representatives of OECD/SIGMA.

The objective set for the new regional comparative study on Public Service Delivery is to give an in-depth overview and increase understanding of Public Administration Reform processes in the Western Balkans, and to offer recommendations for improvement in three thematic areas: implementation of new general administrative procedures; digitalisation and eGovernment; and Quality Management of Service Delivery. Particular scope of the Study in these three key thematic areas is development and application of central government services.

The forthcoming Study, as a practice/implementation focused document, will also attempt to analyse and assess centrally managed services on a decentralized level/sub-national level. This distinctive and unique insight will be complemented by a comparative overview of practices developed and applied exclusively on a sub-national or local level.

Practitioner insights, analyses and comparative overviews are major added values of the future document. Specific complementary elements and information will additionally make this Study an important document.

The recommendations from OECD/SIGMA have also been taken into account, especially those regarding the Principles of Public Administration and the findings from SIGMA's 2017 monitoring reports. Consultations with partners from OECD/SIGMA and EC DG NEAR are expected to continue in June 2018, before the process of validation of findings. An important purpose of the regional comparative study on Public Service Delivery will be to provide the ba-

sis for planning of activities in the framework of ReSPA's new four-year programming period.

Focus Group Meetings on Public Service Delivery

The main objective for organising focus group meetings was to structure discussions on three core topics that are subject of the Service Delivery Study: assessment of implementation of new general administrative procedures; digitalisation and eGovernment implementation; and quality management and policies on Service Delivery. Focus group meetings convened public servants responsible for eGovernment and implementation of new general administrative procedures at central and local level, decision makers from various governmental institutions, representatives of civil society organisations dealing with issues of accessibility and equality, representatives of business sector, and relevant international organisations.



Between February and April 2018, ReSPA organised focus groups on seven central locations in the

Western Balkans: Tirana, Pristina, Podgorica, Belgrade, Skopje, Sarajevo and Banja Luka. Over 130

participants contributed to the formalisation and shaping of the future Study's most important ele-



Focus Group in Tirana



Focus Group in Pristina

ments by analysing existing policy frameworks, rethinking of strategic options for service delivery models, and exploring various approaches to user satisfaction measurement.

Related to the validation of best examples and practices in relevant jurisdictions, participants of focus group meetings discussed the existing practices in service delivery policy and management: legal and strategic framework, institutional

set-up, monitoring quality of service delivery, administrative simplification, the process of digitalisation and eGovernment implementation, quality of data, standardisation of processes, policy design and coordination, self-assess-

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Focus Group in Belgrade



Focus Group in Skopje

ment of implementation of new general administrative procedures, interoperability and measurement of client satisfaction - were among the most triggered questions and comments.

On multiple occasions it was emphasized that the reform of public administration is one of key priorities on the political agenda in the region. The overall objective of the

modernisation process is to adjust public administrations in order to rapidly reflect the needs of society and governments. Such a process is currently debated in many European countries, and in this political and social context, "Good Administration" has emerged as an inclusive concept indicating the principles and standards of contemporary public administration.

Based on predefined objectives for each core area, the outputs of discussions and consultations were integrated in a report containing a set of recommendations for the follow up in the context of identified "islands of excellence": Quality Management in Public Administration and Public Services, and a comprehensive tool for a client satisfaction survey.



Focus Group in Sarajevo



Focus Group in Banja Luka

In the following period, all country profiles will be finalised encompassing data mining, semi-structured interviews, and results of focus groups and online questionnaires. Further validation of findings is to be conducted in the upcoming period in collaboration with the stakeholders.

Regional Meeting on Better Regulation in Western Balkans

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Participants of the Regional Meeting on Better Regulation in Western Balkans

Sarajevo, 18-19 April 2018 – In cooperation with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), ReSPA organised a two-day meeting on Better Regulation efforts in the Western Balkans. Participants of the meeting were 20 senior public servants dealing with the oversight of Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and other aspects of Better Regulation in governmental institutions of ReSPA Members and Kosovo*.

During the first day of the meeting, participants shared up-to-date information on RIA regulatory frame-

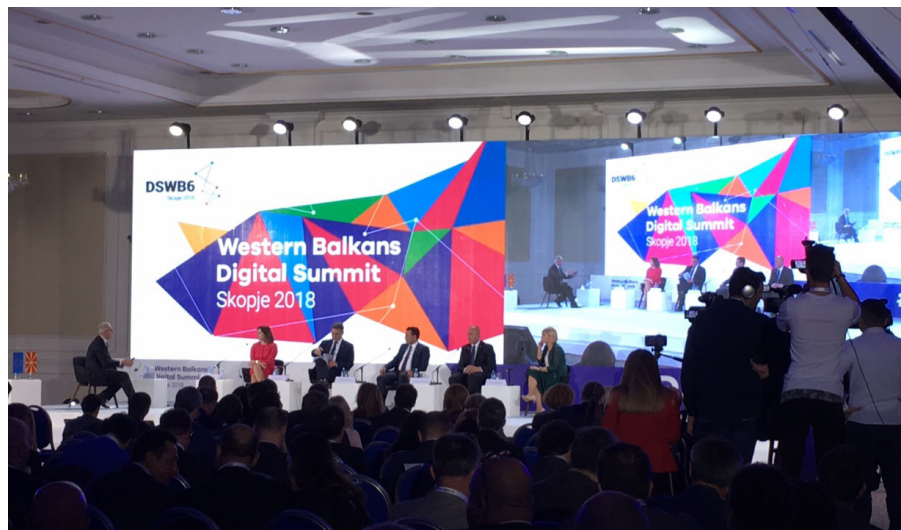
work and its implementation in their jurisdictions. The exchange of experiences among peers was evaluated as very useful and important practice.

On the second day of the meeting, participants discussed achievements and challenges in evidence-based policy making and public participation. SIGMA expert Mr. Timo Ligi presented a comparative analysis of SIGMA monitoring results and discussed with participants various options for enhancing evidence-based policy making. Regarding the area

of public participation, ReSPA and RCC are now following-up on the implementation of the Recommendation on public participation that was developed and endorsed in 2017. In order to support the implementation of this Recommendation, participants of the meeting discussed organisation of peer-missions and awareness raising events. One of the results of the ReSPA Regional Meeting on Better Regulation is the enhancement of regional cooperation in the field of Better Regulation.



ReSPA's Participation at the Western Balkans Digital Summit in Skopje



Western Balkans Digital Summit in Macedonia

Skopje, 18-19 April 2018 – The first Western Balkans Digital Summit gathered around 800 participants, representatives of 50 companies (IT industries and businesses), and more than 50 speakers, including prime ministers and ministers in charge of digital agenda in Western Balkan countries, representatives of the Berlin Process, European Commission, regional organisations, academia, and youth. As part of the Berlin Process, the Summit was hosted by the Government of Macedonia, and

co-organised by the Regional Cooperation Council in cooperation with the governments of the Western Balkans, European Commission and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy.

The Summit was a great opportunity to reconfirm ReSPA's commitment to devote time (since 2011) and energy to the issues of common importance for the Western Balkan region and the European Union: open data management, dig-

ital skills and digital transformation of the governments in the region with an emphasis on interoperability, once only principle, increase of quality of public services and cyber security.

During the Summit, prime ministers welcomed the European Commission's Digital Agenda Flagship Initiative, announced on 6 February 2018, which fulfils regional expectations and complements the actions agreed through the Multi-Annual Action Plan for Regional Economic Area. The conclusions endorsed at the end of the Summit reflected regional commitment to owning the processes of economic development, in order to ensure a prosperous and sustainable future for citizens, technological transformation and digitalisation of the Western Balkans that profoundly affects jobs, goods and services, industries, and education.

By remaining dedicated to eGovernment, particularly in domain of optimisation of public services and eServices, ReSPA will significantly contribute to the implementation of the Summit's Declaration.

ReSPA Training on Legal Alignment for Chapters 11 and 12

ReSPA, Danilovgrad, 11-13 April 2018 – With an aim to contribute to stronger administrative capacities for harmonisation of national legislations with the EU Acquis, ReSPA organised a training on legal alignment for 24 civil servants from the Western Balkans' administrations in charge of negotiating Chapter 11 – Agriculture and rural development, and/or Chapter 12 – Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy. The training enabled extensive elaboration of the two chapters, and focused on examples of legal transposition and preparations of candidate countries for negotiations related to these chapters.



Participants in the ReSPA Training on Legal Alignment for Chapters 11 and 12



Mobility Scheme: Working Visit of the Delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Serbia



Delegation from Bosnia and Herzegovina with their hosts in Belgrade

trative Procedure Act (GAPA) of the Republic of Serbia and to eventually replicate some legal solutions in BiH.

As part of the working visit, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government of the Republic of Serbia hosted a round-table discussion for peers and experts. The topics discussed included the process of drafting of the new GAPA in Serbia, Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on Draft GAPA, new legal institutes in GAPA of Serbia, and harmonisation of legislation with GAPA. On the second day of the visit, the Delegation from BiH visited the Administrative Inspectorate, the Delivery Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister, and the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia, where hosts shared their experiences in the implementation of the new GAPA of the Republic of Serbia.

8 Belgrade, 27-28 March 2018 – Due to its complex internal structure, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is currently the only Western Balkans' country that has not yet aligned its legislation in the field of general administrative procedure with the European principles and standards. In line with BiH's initiatives and efforts at various levels of government, ReSPA organised

a working visit for a delegation from this country to the counterparts in Serbia, with a goal to enable the experience exchange with peers and experts from Serbia regarding modernisation of general administrative procedures. The main purpose of the visit was to learn from Serbian experiences on drafting and implementation of the new General Adminis-

ReSPA at the World Summit Award

Vienna, 20-22 March 2018 – Initiated in the framework of the UN World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS) in 2003, with more than 180 countries actively involved, the World Summit Awards (WSA) is a unique awards system, a global hub for selecting and promoting local digital innovation with high impact on improving society. Combining international events and activities with a global network of start-ups, social entrepreneurs, mentors, assessors, speakers, experts, government leaders, representatives of academia and civil society, the WSA is an international platform for cut edge examples on how ICT can have an impact on society and contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.



World Summit Awards ceremony in Austria



The World Summit Award Global Congress 2018 featured social entrepreneurs and their digital innovations from more than 80 countries worldwide. The Congress gathered more than 200 delegates, leaders, innovators, government and business representatives, and young founders to network, exchange knowledge and get acquainted with the best innovative solutions organised in nine categories, including the areas of government and business.

Forty WSA winners and five WSA Young Innovators pitched their innovative solutions in front of an expert jury panel, with a representative of ReSPA as one of the jury members. The jury had a difficult task to choose the best project in each category, to award the most outstanding entrepreneurs, and to decide on the team that made the best pitch. Through a democratic process of joint decision making, the WSA Global Congress jury decided on the WSA Global Champi-

ons 2018 who were awarded at the WSA Global Congress gala event.

Throughout the year, the WSA leverages its global network of start-ups, mentors, entrepreneurs, assessors, representatives of governments, ICT experts and international organisations to ensure a global multi-stakeholder transfer of knowledge. ReSPA will continue to collaborate with the WSA team, and the next joint activity is foreseen for September 2018.

Meeting of Representatives of Centre of Government Institutions from Western Balkans



Speakers at the Meeting of representatives of
CoG Institutions

ReSPA, Danilovgrad, 5-6 March 2018 - The Meeting of representatives of Centre of Government (CoG) institutions gathered officials from CoG institutions and representatives of institutions responsible for the EU integration process from Western Balkan countries. The objective of the Meeting was to give an opportunity to participants to highlight similarities and differences in the experiences from the Western Balkans region, and to discuss concrete possibilities for a better linkage of govern-

ment priority planning, sectorial policy planning, and European Integration planning.

This Meeting was a follow-up of the Regional Conference held in ReSPA in June 2017, where the need to re-initialise the network of CoG institutions was recognised. Following the Regional Conference, the ReSPA Governing Board decided that ReSPA would further support this network to enhance the capacities of public administrations in the area of strategic

planning and policy coordination, in particular in light of the European integration process.

ReSPA organised this Meeting in cooperation with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the OECD/SIGMA. At the Meeting, participants discussed RCC's and ReSPA's Recommendation for improving public participation, as well as results of the SIGMA monitoring report concerning policy development and coordination.



Workshop of the Working Group on Human Resource Management and Development



Belgrade, 27 – 28 February 2018 – Organised by ReSPA, members of the Working Group on Human Resource Management and Development (HRMD) gathered to learn about the research initiatives regarding coaching, performance evaluation, civil service reform, public service employees' motivation, and integrity management.

The experience shared in the opening session by participants from Serbia served as the basis for discussion on the main issues that should be taken into consideration when introducing coaching in public administration in the Western Balkans. The results of this workshop are an outline for the comparative study on performance evaluation, and a set of recommendations for introduction of coaching in public administration institutions of the Western Balkans.

Regional Conference on Gender Equality and Public Administration Reform

Belgrade, 30-31 January 2018 - ReSPA and the Coordination Body for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Serbia organised a two-day Regional Conference on Gender Equality and Public Administration Reform in the Western Balkans, in order to promote regional cooperation of public administrations and experts in the field of Gender Equality and Public Administration Reform (PAR).

This Regional Conference brought together more than 50 public servants dealing with gender equality and PAR in 30 different governmental institutions, experts on gender equality and PAR from the Western Balkans region, and representatives of non-governmental organisations active in this field from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia.



High-level speakers at the Regional Conference on Gender Equality and PAR

The aim of the Regional Conference was to influence the development of gender equality policies, and to link these with the PAR efforts in ReSPA Members.

High level officials from the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and

Herzegovina, ambassadors of the European Union, the OSCE, and Montenegro in the Republic of Serbia, as well as the Head of the UN Women Office in Serbia, addressed the Regional Conference participants, thereby giving strong political support to the issues of



Photo 14A – Participants of the Regional Conference on Gender Equality and PAR

gender equality in the context of public administration reform.

At the Conference, there was a discussion on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB), and the results of the regional research on gender

equality in public administration were presented, with particular emphasis on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. This research, as well as the Regional Conference, was funded by the European Union.

All participants agreed that it is very important that the issue of gender equality was addressed in the context of public administration reform. ReSPA will continue its efforts to strengthen regional cooperation in this domain.

ReSPA is Implementing the Common Assessment Framework

ReSPA, Danilovgrad, 24-26 January 2018 – The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) internal training for the ReSPA Secretariat was supported by the CAF team from the Centre for Public Administration Research (KDZ) from Vienna, Austria. The training included the introduction to CAF and other Quality Management Instruments, and provided guidance for the initiation of CAF implementation in ReSPA.

The CAF internal training is part of the preparations for establishing of the Regional Quality Management Centre in ReSPA. Also, the ReSPA team will use CAF as one of the Quality Management tools to enhance its daily operations.



ReSPA Secretariat with CAF experts

Strengthening Collaboration and Partnerships

In the first quarter of 2018, ReSPA Director Ms. Ratka Sekulovic and her team had bilateral meetings with high-level representatives of three ReSPA Members and of two countries of important geostrategic relevance for the Western Balkan region.

The main purpose of these meetings was to discuss the new draft Strategy of ReSPA for the period 2019-2024, and the organisation of the Ministerial Conference on Good Governance in the Western Balkans



to be held in Mostar in June 2018. The key issues that will be discussed at the Ministerial Conference relate to the strategic frameworks for PAR, PAR's financial sustainability, qual-

ity of policy planning and coordination, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of PAR strategies, and EU financial assistance for supporting reforms. An important discussion framework for the bilateral meetings was further strengthening of partnerships, in the context of ReSPA's role in supporting the EU accession efforts of the governments

in the region, including development of better public administration, public services and overall governance systems.

Official Visit of ReSPA Representatives to Bujar Osmani, Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration of the Republic of Macedonia



*Meeting of ReSPA representatives with Deputy
Prime Minister of the Republic of Macedonia*

Skopje, 21 March 2018 – Ms. Ratka Sekulovic, ReSPA Director, Mr. Dragan Djuric, Programme Manager - Coordinator in ReSPA, and Mr. Jahi Jahija, State Secretary of the Ministry of Information Society and Administration of the Republic of Macedonia and ReSPA Governing Board Member at Senior Officials' Level, met with Mr. Bujar Osmani, Deputy Prime

Minister for European Integration of the Republic of Macedonia.

The representatives of ReSPA informed Deputy Prime Minister Osmani about ReSPA activity areas covering Public Administration Reform and European Integration in the framework of the current EC Grant, as well as about ReSPA's future

strategic directions that are currently under discussion. Deputy Prime Minister Osmani and Mr. Jahija underlined their strong commitment to regional cooperation and its importance for the Republic of Macedonia, as well as to further collaboration with ReSPA in building a professional and effective public administration aligned with the EU standards.



ReSPA Director Ratka Sekulovic Visited Senida Mesi, Deputy Prime Minister of Republic of Albania and Member of ReSPA Governing Board at Ministerial level

Tirana, 9 March 2018 – In a conversation with Ms. Senida Mesi, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania and Member of the ReSPA Governing Board at Ministerial level, Director of ReSPA Ms. Ratka Sekulovic shared information on ReSPA's activities planned for 2018, and on the process of drafting the new strategic framework for ReSPA. Deputy Prime Minister Mesi underlined her firm commitment to continued co-operation with ReSPA in building professional and effective public administration in the Western Balkans region.



Meeting of ReSPA Director with Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania

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ReSPA Secretariat Welcomed Boris Koprivnikar, Slovenian Minister of Public Administration



Meeting in ReSPA with delegation from Slovenia

ReSPA, Danilovgrad, 6 March 2018 – Mr. Boris Koprivnikar, Minister of Public Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, visited ReSPA with his team and met with Ms. Ratka Sekulovic, ReSPA Director and Mr. Dusko Glodic, Programme Manager – Legal in ReSPA, to exchange views

on the current process of public administration reforms in the Western Balkans.

Director Sekulovic informed Minister Koprivnikar on the current efforts made by ReSPA to support Western Balkan countries in the de-

velopment of public administration and successful conducting of the European integration process. Director Sekulovic especially emphasized the benefits of regional cooperation in terms of experience exchange among civil servants of the Western Balkans, and the overall aim of building better systems for service provision to citizens and businesses. Minister Koprivnikar pointed out some areas, such as public procurement and eGovernance, where the Slovenian administration has achieved significant progress. Officials agreed that the use of ICT would have substantial impact on public services delivery in the future.

It should be noted that in May 2017, ReSPA and the Ministry of Public Administration of Slovenia concluded a Memorandum of Understanding which provided for a structured framework for cooperation.

Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Montenegro Serhat Galip welcomed ReSPA Director Ratka Sekulovic

Podgorica, 15 February 2018 – ReSPA Director Ms. Ratka Sekulovic met H.E. Mr. Serhat Galip, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey in Montenegro at the premises of the Turkish Embassy in Podgorica. During the meeting, Director Sekulovic presented the results of ReSPA activities in supporting the regional cooperation and modernisation of public administrations throughout the Western Balkans.

Ambassador Galip positively assessed ReSPA's achievements in the region and its contribution to strengthening regional cooperation. At the meeting, it was agreed to explore the possibilities for deepening cooperation between Turkey and ReSPA, given that ReSPA offers a well-structured forum for the exchange of experiences and capacity development in a number of areas important for modern public administration.



Ambassador of Turkey with ReSPA Director

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Minister Grubesa and ReSPA Director

ReSPA Director Ratka Sekulovic met with Minister of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina Josip Grubesa

Sarajevo, 30 January 2018 - ReSPA Director Ms. Ratka Sekulovic had a meeting with Minister of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Chair of the ReSPA Governing Board at Ministerial level Mr. Josip Grubesa.

At the meeting, Director Sekulovic and Minister Grubesa discussed a need to organise a Ministerial Conference devoted to the financial sustainability of PAR. ReSPA is planning to organise this conference in June 2018 in Mostar. This high-level conference shall gather Ministers responsible for Public Administration and Ministers of Finance of the Western Balkans' countries, as well as National IPA Coordinators (NIPACs), with the aim to enhance the role of Ministries of Finance in the Public Administration Reform (PAR) agendas of the region.

During her visit in Sarajevo, Director Sekulovic also took part at the OECD/SIGMA meeting devoted to the presentation of the recently published 2017 SIGMA Monitoring report for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and at the PAR Special Group meeting for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

About ReSPA

The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is an inter-governmental organisation supporting regional cooperation of public administrations in the Western Balkans. Its activities are supported by the European Commission (EC) through directly managed funds, and co-funded through annual contributions of the ReSPA Members.

ReSPA Members are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, while public servants from Kosovo*¹ participate in ReSPA activities funded by the European Commission.

The Purpose of ReSPA is to support governments in the Western Balkan region develop better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses, and prepare them for membership in the European Union.

ReSPA serves as an **innovative regional hub** for policy research, knowledge sharing and networking programmes in the field of public administration in Western Balkans.

ReSPA's main achievements in 2014-2017: Over 150 networking and capacity building activities (seminars, workshops, conferences, study visits, seasonal schools, trainings, meetings) involving over 2,500 public servants from the Western Balkans, and more than 300 international and regional experts; 15 regional comparative research projects with policy recommendations for Public Administration Reform related solutions.

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



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