



ReSPA Continues to Support the Reform of Public Administration: Ministerial Conference about Good Governance in the Western Balkans



Participants and speakers at the Ministerial Conference in Mostar

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Ms. Ratka Sekulović, Director of ReSPA

At the opening of the Ministerial Conference, Ms. Ratka Sekulović, Director of ReSPA, said that although significant progress has been made over years, the Western Balkan region is still facing important challenges regarding PAR. “While all of ReSPA Members have new Public Administration Reform strategies (except for BiH), the strategic plans do not always transpose the reform in all its complexity. There is a particular need for further enhancement of capacities for implementation and monitoring. The transposition of the principles of Good Governance into everyday practice of our administrations is fundamentally important for the success of political and economic reforms and building a basis for implementing EU rules and standards,” Ms. Sekulović pointed out.

Mostar, 12-13 June 2018 - For the purpose of further strengthening of policy dialogue on public administration reform (PAR) as one of key priorities in the enlargement process, a two-day regional conference entitled „Good Governance in the Western Balkans” was held in Mostar, organised by the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Conference brought together 80 participants: ministers in charge of public administration; representatives of ministries of finances; national IPA Coordinators; high level representatives of state administrations dealing with PAR, Public Finance Management and European integration; representatives of the European Commission (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations - DG NEAR and European Union Delegation to BiH); OECD/SIGMA; Regional Cooperation Council (RCC); Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative (RAI); Centre for Security Cooperation (RACVIAC); CSOs and other partners.

Good Governance is a requirement of public administration reform which, together with the rule of law

and economic governance, remains a strategic priority in the Western Balkans. In this context, major themes discussed at the Conference were related to the strategic framework for PAR and its financial sustainability, quality of policy planning and coordination, and monitoring and reporting on implementation of PAR strategies, as well as adequate EU financial assistance for supporting reforms.

The primary goal of ReSPA is to support governments in the region to build stronger administrative capacities for successful implementation of the requirements related to the EU accession process and for development of modern, professional and competent public administration.



Mr. Khaldoun Sinno, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina emphasized that the EU has a strong belief that regional cooperation contributes to building a sustained long-term response to the challenges in the Western Balkans. “Strong governance and effective public administrations are the key for tackling all these regional priorities and addressing your reform priorities throughout your respective EU integration paths. There is also a strong link between economic development and growth and quality of governance,” said Mr. Sinno.

“Comparing good and bad experiences must take place at political and technical levels, regularly, and supported by research and training. ReSPA is the place to be for regional cooperation. EU sets important incentives through support, finance, and access. Exchange means primarily inspiration, not finding one-size-fits-all solutions. Once the Principles of Good Governance are agreed, it is all about implementation,” said **Mr. Rolf Alter, Senior Fellow of the Hertie School of Governance from Berlin**, in his keynote speech.



■ *Mr. Josip Grubeša, Minister of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chair of the ReSPA Governing Board at Ministerial level*

“In addition to adequate human resources, it is clear that the reform processes also require great financial resources, and we are aware that no country in the region has unlimited funds available. This is why we need to focus on financial planning and the management of public finances, because if we plan well, then we

will have an adequate basis for funding by the EU and other donor funds, to support the implementation of reform activities,” said **Mr. Josip Grubeša, Minister of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Chair of the ReSPA Governing Board at Ministerial level**

Conference conclusions and recommendations:

- Adherence to the concept of Good Governance, in relation to the preparation and adoption of the strategic framework for the public administration reform in the Western Balkans, requires the insertion of tools and modalities enabling constant modernization of public administration and improvement of public services.
- In terms of financial sustainability of public policies, the Conference underlined sound and effective management of public finances as an important part of public administration reform processes.
- Recognizing the importance of public scrutiny over implementation of strategies, the governments of the Western Balkans are recommended to ensure proactive publication of monitoring reports, and
- to enable more consistent inclusion of civil society in monitoring and reporting. Practices of inclusion of data provided by civil society in governments' monitoring reports and organisation of public debates on the implementation of the PAR and PFM strategies, initiated in some countries, should be more actively promoted across the Western Balkans as a model of good practice.
- It has been agreed to foster the exchange of experiences among the ReSPA Members in developing ICT solutions for planning systems, with the support of various donors.
- The introduction of the EU Budget Support as a new aid modality was assessed as beneficial for improved policy coordination and strategic planning and implementation of IPA funds. ■



Workshop on ReSPA's CAF Action Plan in the Framework of BACID 2 Project

ReSPA, 24 July 2018 - Supported by the Centre for Public Administration Research (KDZ) from Austria, a workshop on ReSPA's Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Action Plan was held for the ReSPA Secretariat. This was the first activity envisaged within the BACID 2 (Building Administrative Capacities in the Danube Region) project, that is supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).



ReSPA Secretariat with CAF experts

With the CAF Action Plan workshop, ReSPA continues to institutionalise the Common Assessment Framework, an instrument that is already functioning in terms of general and specific optimisation of the Organisation's performance.

Feedback from the workshop participants, conclusions and relevant elements of reports, plans and procedures have been taken into account for presentation in the next ReSPA Action Plan,

where generated knowledge, skills and lessons learned will be interwoven into measurable steps that should result in improved ReSPA's performance. ■

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ReSPA Panel at the 2018 Open Government Partnership Global Summit



ReSPA Panel at OGP Summit

Tbilisi, Georgia, 17-19 July 2018 – The guiding objective of the 5th Open Government Partnership¹ Global Summit was to explore and exchange the ideas on how to make governments more responsive to citizens, and how to empower people to take more active role in decision-making processes.

With the premise of putting people first and transforming the governance sys-

tems based on the principles of openness, accountability and engagement, the agenda for this year's Global Summit reflected the many related priorities of the 95+ OGP governments and hundreds of civil society organisations, international organisations and other open government advocates.

The representatives of ReSPA made a contribution to the OGP's Public

Service Delivery subject matter by organising a panel session "Regional Dialogue for Open Government Partnership". Together with representatives from partner organisations and institutions of the Western Balkan countries, they highlighted the regional aspects of important global issues relevant to the OGP.

¹ The Open Government Partnership was launched in 2011 as a multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance.



Ms. Ratka Sekulović, ReSPA Director, presented the strategic and operational support that ReSPA provides to its Members, and talked about the vision of the Western Balkans as an Open Government Region. **Mr. Paul Maassen, Director of Civil Society Engagement at the Open Government Partnership**, who also took part in the panel, spoke about the opportunities and challenges OGP sees for Europe, and specifically for the Western Balkans. **Ms. Aida Ajanović of Action SEE** presented the findings of this NGO's "Openness Index", a composite indicator that measures the degree to

which governments in the Western Balkan countries are open to citizens. The panel discussion then bifurcated in two directions: accessibility of public services and availability of open data, and public participation in the Western Balkans. Representatives from six regional administrations gave insight into their national challenges and visions.

Delegates from the ReSPA Members used their stay in Tbilisi to make a study visit to the Public Service Hall, designed according to the one-stop shop public service delivery model. The purpose of the visit was to acquire information

about the efficiency and effectiveness of back and front offices in the public service delivery chain.

General audience at the OGP Summit was energised with two interesting themes: blockchain development, and the use of artificial intelligence in different sectors. ReSPA will remain devoted to supporting the development of digitalisation and eGovernment by contributing with analytical papers, organising networking and capacity building events, and by taking an active part in the OGP and other similar initiatives. ■

ReSPA Summer School on Accession Negotiations with the European Union focusing on Chapters 23 and 24



Participants in the 2018 ReSPA Summer School

ReSPA, 2-6 July 2018 - The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) held its second, five-day Summer School on Accession Negotiations with the European Union (EU), with a special focus on Chapters 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights), and 24 (Justice, Freedom and Security).

The objectives of the ReSPA Summer School were multiple: to help participants deepen the understanding of the issues covered by Chapters 23 and 24 - background and finer points of the concepts, foreseeable challenges during the Chapters' negotiations and possible ways to overcome them; to inform participants of the state of

affairs in the region in particular thematic areas of Chapters 23 and 24; to derive common lessons from the various experiences, and to share good practices in terms of existing regional initiatives in the matters related to these Chapters.



In her welcome address, **Director of ReSPA Ms. Ratka Sekulović** emphasized ReSPA's commitment to supporting the Western Balkan governments in reform processes and European integration efforts, mainly by providing a multilateral framework for exchange and cooperation. "Our main focus is public administration reform, which has been defined as one of the three fundamental conditions for the successful integration of the Western Balkans in the EU. So, building better administration that is more professional, more transparent, and more oriented towards citizens and businesses, actually strongly contributes to the European integration process," Director Sekulović said.

More than fifteen speakers at the Summer School were high level professionals and ReSPA experts from Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Romania and the EU institutions. Their main objective was to improve and update participants' knowledge and understanding of the new EU Strategy for the Western Balkans and regional cooperation in the context of the accession process. The themes of the Summer School included the Croatian experiences in accession negotiations, impact of the civil sector on accession negotiations with a focus on Chapters 23 and 24, rule of law in the Western Balkans from the perspective of think tanks, the role of parliaments in promoting the progress regarding Chapters 23 and 24, as well as cross-border cooperation in matters related to the migrant crisis.

Drawing on the first-hand Croatian experience to depict accession negotiations, **Dr Vesna Pusić, Vice President of the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna, and former Minister of Foreign and European**

Affairs of Croatia explained to the participants that the institutions of the system, more than anything else, need longevity, tenure and stability. "If you have institutions and states that last less than an average human life, being brought down every few decades, you are facing a serious problem. It is very difficult to create something which these institutions must rely on - and that is trust - that people believe that these institutions will be predictable, that they will make transparent decisions and verdicts based on known and equal rules for all. That is what we need, and what we expect. For all of us in this region, European integration gives us a chance to build the institutions that will last, and that will gradually become transparent and trustworthy; that will hopefully create a culture of self-regulation in our societies, supported by institutions that work and perform the tasks we gave them," Dr Pusić pointed out.

In her expose, **Ms. Sabine Zwaenepoel, Co-ordinator of the Centre of Thematic Expertise on Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights, European Commission - DG NEAR** reiterated key messages from the EU Strategy for the Western Balkans published in February 2018. "The commitment of the European Commission towards the European future of the Western Balkan region is unequivocal, and for us it is important to stress that in principle the door remains wide open. From our perspective, not only with regard to the region itself but also for the EU as a whole, it is a crucial investment in the geopolitical safety, security and welfare of the entire continent. In the framework of the negotiation process, we open Chapters 23 and 24 among the first - and they will be the last to be closed, in order to leave the countries a maximum amount

of time for carrying out these very complex reforms, and for making sure that they result in concrete and sustainable track record, in order to make sure that the overall process is as irreversible as possible," Ms. Zwaenepoel said.

In a concluding address on transformation of the EU and the prospects for the Western Balkans, **Mr. Erwan Fouéré of the Centre for European Policy Studies, a think tank based in Brussels**, said that the network of relationships that ReSPA has developed over the recent years has played, and will play a critical role in the future for helping the countries aspiring to join the European Union. "The fact that you have chosen Chapters 23 and 24 as the main theme to guide your work at this Summer School is indeed very timely and very welcome. And, of course, you all know the reasons why these reforms lie at the heart of the accession process: genuine and sustained reforms in these areas will have a beneficial impact on all the other reform areas which each aspiring country is expected to address; and success and achieving those reforms will enable each country to have in place the necessary judicial and administrative capacity to properly apply the EU rules and standards, not only on the statute book but also in practice, and that is the critical aspect," said Mr. Fouéré.

The ReSPA Summer School brought together more than 30 senior and middle level professionals actively taking part in the European integration processes, from ministries in charge for European and foreign affairs, justice, internal affairs, public administration, and from the offices of Chiefs of the SAA/Accession Negotiation Teams.



Statements from participants in the ReSPA Summer School

„The lecturers were professional, focused on explanation of their themes and on transfer of knowledge from Chapters 23 and 24, which are currently very important for the Republic of Macedonia. The knowledge and experiences shared among participants from the Western Balkan countries will be very useful for the future of all of us. The Summer School was very well organised and structured, and everyone was so reachable when help was needed.“ *Ms. Sinela Agović-Bugarić, Secretariat for European Affairs, Government of the Republic of Macedonia*

„I think that the most useful issue at the Summer School was the expert discussion on understanding of Chapters 23 and 24. Also, the topic regarding the perspective of think tanks was very interesting. Due to the fact that the Ministry of Justice is a leading institution for Chapter 23 in Albania, I am sure that these issues will be very helpful for my future work.“ *Mr. Mirjon Brahimllari, Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Albania*

„It was a pleasure to hear Ms. Vesna Pusić's presentation on the Croatian experience in negotiation process as it gave a comprehensive picture on what needs to be done in a country aspiring to join the EU family. In a very similar manner, although from a different perspective, a clear guidance was provided by Ms. Sabine Zwaenepoel. In sum, all speakers were very competent in presenting their far-reaching lectures, and I am convinced that the knowledge and experience I've gained at this Summer School would be useful for my further professional engagement at the Office for EU Integration in Montenegro.“ *Ms. Svetlana Kumburović, Consultant for Negotiation Chapters 23 and 24, Office for EU Integration, Government of Montenegro* ■

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Academic Delegation from China Paid a Visit to ReSPA



Representatives of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and ReSPA hosts

ReSPA, 27 June 2018 – A delegation from the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS) paid an official visit to the ReSPA. This was a return visit of the academic team from the People's Republic of China after the

workshop on smart city building held in Shanghai in May this year. The talks highlighted the most prominent achievements in the Western Balkan region and ReSPA's plans for the future. The representatives of the

Ministry of Public Administration and the Human Resource Management Authority (HRMA) of Montenegro, who joined the ReSPA team in welcoming guests, presented their development priorities and current relevant needs.

The representatives of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, China's oldest institution for humanities and social sciences and country's second largest such institution, presented the most recent stage in the development of their establishment that includes 17 institutes and more than 20 interdisciplinary centres, while employing 760 staff members. The SASS has signed over 60 cooperative agreements with international partners, and has interest in transcontinental projects. At the meeting, a discussion was initiated on potentials for co-operation between ReSPA Members and SASS. ■



2018 United Nations Public Service Forum: ReSPA Presented the Achievements and Challenges in Public Administration Reform in the Western Balkans



The 2018 United Nations Public Service Forum

Marrakesh, Morocco, 21- 23 June 2018 – This year's United Nations Public Service Forum provided an opportunity for policy-makers to exchange good practices, experiences and lessons learned through collaboration and networking to improve

public service in all areas. The three-day Forum facilitated discussions on two intertwined themes, both being critical for the realisation of Sustainable Development Goals: governance transformation and public administration innovation.

The event was organised by the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

ReSPA contributed to the 2018 UN Public Service Forum with a panel session entitled “Achievements and Challenges in Public Administration - Reform in the Western Balkans to fulfil the 2030 Agenda”, in the context of Introduction of the Global Initiative and Regional Perspectives on Public Administration Readiness for the 2030 Agenda. Participants in the panel were distinguished representatives of the Western Balkan administrations, respective experts and discussants in the subject, and a representative of the SIGMA/OECD.



Participants in ReSPA's Panel at the 2018 UN Public Service Forum

Mr. Damjan Mančevski, Minister of Information Society and Administration of Macedonia, emphasized that the Western Balkans Digital Summit held in Skopje in April 2018 made a good start in a series of regional events with the purpose of fostering cooperation between leaders and civil servants. “Through involvement and cooperation with private sector, as well as with citizens, local governments will

identify success factors for pushing public administration reform forward,” Minister Mančevski said. Professional communities such as UN-DESA's Forum, that work to support an intense exchange among global networks, have been seen by participants in ReSPA's panel as a sustainable platform for sharing know-how, co-creation, co-design and co-production. The UN Public Service Forum benefit-

ed from the innovative practices of the 2018 winners of the United Nations Public Service Awards, who were recognised during the Awards Ceremony on the last day of this event. The Awards promote the role, professionalism and visibility of public service and governments' capacity to anticipate and respond to the challenges of the SDGs through creativity and innovation, especially in the delivery of services. ■



ReSPA Representative Participated in DISPA Semi-annual Meeting



Sofia, Bulgaria, 21-22 June 2018 - As part of the calendar of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU, the Institute of Public Administration of Bulgaria hosted a meeting of Directors of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration (DISPA²).

This meeting is organised twice a year, and the host is always the country holding presidency of the Council of the EU.

The main topic of the DISPA meeting was “Learning in the Digital Age: Intelligent assistance”. In a panel devoted to digital learning, ReSPA Director Ms. Ratka Sekulović presented the related case studies referring to ReSPA Members. She also exchanged experiences on the regional progress in public administration reform with a number of her counterparts. Participation in this event contributed to ReSPA’s visibility in sister institutions, as well as to strengthening synergies and links with directors of the institutes and schools of public administration in the Western Balkans and wider. ■

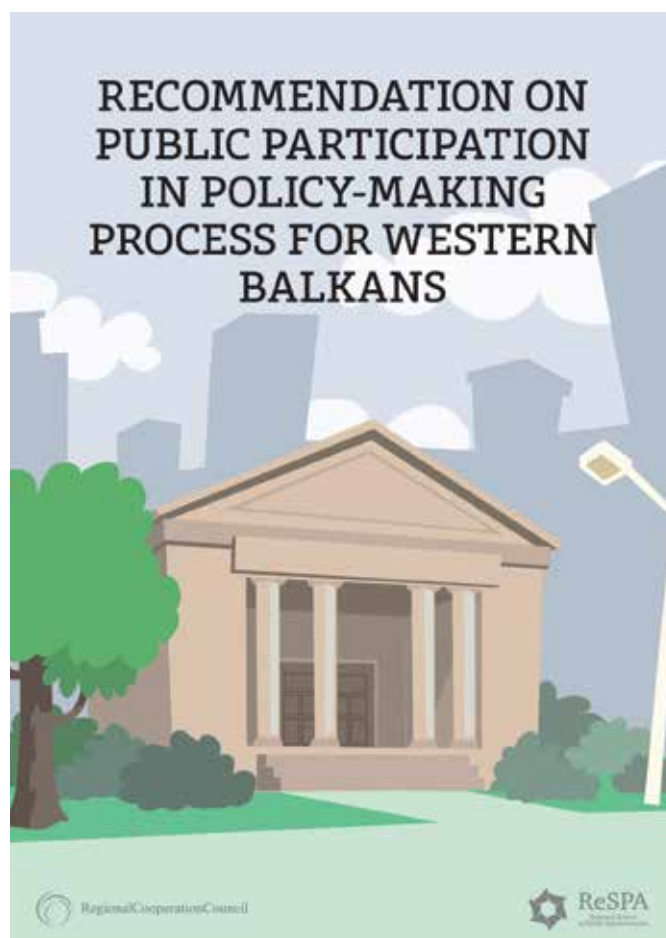
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Regional Conference “Unlocking Benefits of Public Participation in the Western Balkans”

Vienna, Austria, 11 June 2018 – The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), together with the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), and the Centre for Public Administration Research (KDZ) of Austria, organised a regional conference with an aim to raise awareness regarding regional standards in the field of public participation in policy-making processes in the Western Balkans.

The purpose of the Conference was also to highlight the significance of recently adopted Western Balkans Recommendation on Public Participation.

The Conference brought together 25 heads of units from ministries of justice, ministries in charge of public administration, ministries and governmental offices in charge of European Integration, as well as representatives of Centres of Government from all Western Balkan countries. Participants looked into all aspects of public participation, and the spotlight was on communication tools and on planning a targeted approach for an effective public campaign to get citizens and businesses engaged in policy-making processes.



² The purpose of DISPA is to exchange ideas and experiences and develop joint activities and tools which can contribute to greater efficiency and better problem solving in the public sectors in member countries.



Regional Conference "Unlocking Benefits of Public Participation in the Western Balkans"

A whole set of multilingual public information and awareness raising materials (the Recommendation leaflet, video and brochure) on participation

of public in policy-making in the Western Balkans, prepared by the RCC together with ReSPA, aimed at animating the public to get engaged in these pro-

cesses, were presented and distributed at the Conference. These materials are publicly available and free for further sharing and dissemination.

On behalf of ReSPA, **Ms. Zorana Gajić, ReSPA Programme Manager**, spoke at the conference about the role of public servants and governmental institutions in the process of public consultations. "Channels for consultations with public, during policy-making and legislative processes have to be open and modern, including online platforms that could enable easy communication of public administration with business associations, civil society organisations, academic community and public at large. Governments should ensure the existence of these channels and enable consultations with citizens and businesses," said Ms. Gajić. ■

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ReSPA Panel at the 26th NISPAcee Annual Conference

Iasi, Romania, 24-25 May 2018 – ReSPA representatives: Dr Selma Džihanović-Gratz, Chair of the ReSPA Governing Board at Senior Officials Level; Mr. Jahi Jahija, Member of the ReSPA Governing Board at Senior Officials Level, and Ms. Zorana Gajić, ReSPA Programme Manager, participated in the 26th NISPAcee³ Annual Conference organised under the theme "Public Administration for Well-being and Growth". This international conference gathered more than 150 researchers, academics and practitioners involved in public administration enhancement from over 30 countries.

As a NISPAcee's partner, ReSPA organised a panel session on supporting public administration reform (PAR) in the Western Balkans through regional cooperation. In addition to the presentation of ReSPA's achievements and



ReSPA panel at the 2018 NISPAcee Annual Conference

current activities, representatives of ReSPA presented a number of recent comparative studies at the panel. The audience was particularly interested in the Recommendation for Improving Public Participation in the Poli-

cy-Making Process, and in the Methodological Guide for Costing of Government Strategies. The ReSPA's panel was an excellent opportunity to present PAR efforts in the Western Balkans to a wider professional audience. ■



Meeting of ReSPA National Coordinators

Trebinje, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 24 - 25 May 2018 – The organisers of the meeting from ReSPA Secretariat highlighted the role of National Coordinators in the preparation of ReSPA's Annual Report, and in the implementation of all planned activities.

During the meeting, special attention was devoted to the discussion on National Coordinators' experience in collecting reports on the implementation of recommendations defined in ReSPA's regional comparative studies. Having in mind the latest conclusion of the Governing Board related to the reports on interconnection between recommendations from ReSPA studies and the



Meeting of ReSPA National Coordinators

In-country support mechanism, the discussion about the future role of National Coordinators in this area has also been raised.

National Coordinators also gave their opinions and suggestions regarding

the ongoing process of development of the new 2019-2024 ReSPA Strategy. In addition, meeting attendees exchanged their initial experiences concerning the online application system for participants in ReSPA's activities. ■

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The Workshop on Smart City Building in Shanghai Included Western Balkans Perspectives



ReSPA representative at the Workshop on Smart City Building in Shanghai

Shanghai, China, 21-23 May 2018 – At the invitation of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS), a representative of ReSPA participated in the workshop entitled "Smart City Building in the New Era: Governance, Sustainability and Culture". The workshop was symbolically organised at the 60th Anniversary of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and the Shanghai Institute of

Science & Technology. ReSPA contributed to the event with a presentation on Smart Governance as a prerequisite for the smart cities, with an emphasis on the important role of Quality Management in setting the organisational culture.

The presentation of **Mr. Goran Paštović, ReSPA Programme Manager**, captured the interest of audi-

ences. The other presentations at the workshop highlighted the importance of participatory governance at local level for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and global sustainable smart city cases in the context of Sustainable Development Goals. ■

Regional Conference on the Case-Law of the European Court of Human Rights Applicable in Administrative Disputes



Regional Conference on the Case-Law of the European Court of Human Rights Applicable in Administrative Disputes

Belgrade, Serbia, 17 May 2018 - The overall aim of this Regional Conference was to present the ReSPA's Study on the Case-Law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) Applicable in Administrative Disputes.

The event brought together more than 50 participants: judges of administrative and supreme courts, agents representing governments in front of the ECtHR, representatives of ministries of justice, represent-

atives of judiciary academies and experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. The participants were welcomed by the Dean of the hosting Union University Law School, the Chair of the ReSPA Governing Board at Senior Officials level, the President of the Administrative Court of the Republic of Serbia, and by the representative of the Council of Europe.

On this occasion, the authors of the Study, prof. Violeta Beširević, prof. Dragoljub Popović, and prof. Tanasije Marinković exchanged views with participants in a lively discussion which also included the cases related to the protection of property (Article 1 of Protocol no. 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights). ■

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SIGMA and ReSPA joint Regional Conference: Managerial Accountability and Professionalisation of Senior Civil Service for Better Performance and Accountability

ReSPA, May 16-17, 2018 - Although Western Balkans EU candidate countries and potential candidates continue to improve their public management as a crucial part of preparations for the EU accession, professionalisation of senior civil servants and managerial accountability remain challenging issues. According to 2017 SIGMA Monitoring Reports⁴, main weaknesses are related to merit-based recruitment and effectiveness of managerial accountability mechanisms. To emphasise the need for support to further reforms for better governance across the Western



Participants in the SIGMA and ReSPA joint Regional Conference

⁴ SIGMA is a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union for strengthening the foundations for improved public governance systems and public administration capacities



Balkan administrations, SIGMA and ReSPA co-hosted a two-day regional conference focusing on two key topics of public management – professionalisation of the senior civil service and managerial accountability.

Apart from representatives of the European Commission's DG BUDGET, SIGMA and the Republic of Estonia, participants in the Conference were 50 senior representatives of institutions responsible for public administration reform and state services, ministries of finance and institutions responsible for civil service management and training from ReSPA Members and Kosovo*⁵.

„Human Resources Management and Development (HRMD) stays as one of the most important areas, and many different activities organised by our institution for representatives of ReSPA HRMD Working Group have been conducted. They strongly contribute to the achievement of an overall goal: professional, transparent, accountable, and citizen and business oriented administration.“ **Director of ReSPA Ms. Ratka Sekulović** said at the opening of the Conference.

„The European integration process has conditioned Montenegrin administrative planning to conform to the standards, regulations and best practice of the European Union. Thus, the approach to managerial accountability is based on the European model of administration, which contains the recommended principles of the EU such as impartiality, professional integrity, coordination of human resource management, professional leadership, pub-

lic advertising of job vacancies, and to some extent legal responsibility,“ said **Ms. Suzana Pribilović, Minister of Public Administration in the Government of Montenegro**.

SIGMA has prepared two regional comparative papers on professionalisation of the senior civil service and managerial accountability, and this Regional Conference was an opportunity to disseminate the key findings and discuss the way forward.

Ms Annika Uudelepp, Senior Adviser, SIGMA, presented the report „Analysis of the Professionalisation of the Senior Civil Service and the Way Forward for the Western Balkans“. This report analyses and compares the practices of these Western Balkan administrations – and

distinguishes good practices from those that hinder the development of a more professional senior civil service (SCS) – to demonstrate to decision makers that a merit-based SCS is useful.

Mr. Klas Klaas, Senior Adviser, SIGMA, presented the report „Managerial Accountability in the Western Balkans“. Without managerial accountability, reforms to improve public internal financial control and public administration in general, will not succeed. This is why the European Commission (EC) is increasingly focusing on the current challenges for managerial accountability in the Western Balkans, and why the EC DG Budget invited SIGMA to prepare this regional paper. ■



■ *Mr. Raymond Hill, EC Directorate-General for Budget*

„On behalf of the European Commission we are delighted to see such a representation at this event today. I think that that is very important for not just managerial accountability, not just public internal financial control, but for public administration reform in general. Today's event about Managerial Accountability and Professionalization of Senior Civil Service is a clear demonstration of the importance that we work together to improve the conditions for the further course of the enlargement process,“ said **Mr. Raymond Hill, EC Directorate-General for Budget**, in conclusion of the Regional Conference on Managerial Accountability and Professionalisation of Senior Civil Service for Better Performance and Accountability.

5 *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



9th Meeting of the Programme Committee on European Integration



Meeting of the Programme Committee on European Integration

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 11 May 2018 - Bosnia and Herzegovina taking hold of chairmanship of the ReSPA for this calendar year, **Mr. Edin Dilberović, Director of the Directorate for European Integration of the Council of Ministers of BiH** officiated the Programme Committee meeting. At the meeting, the Secretariat of ReSPA reported on the activities

implemented in the framework of the European Integration Pillar and presented a plan of activities for the period before the end of 2018. The Programme Committee welcomed the efforts that ReSPA invests in supporting its Members in the area of utilisation of IPA funds and in terms of strengthening the capacities for accession negotiations. Particular focus

was placed on preparations of the new 2019 – 2024 ReSPA Strategy.

The Programme Committee positively evaluated the activities implemented since September 2017. They also endorsed the activities planned for the remaining period of implementation of the current European Commission Grant. ■

13

Second Phase of CAF Introduction to ReSPA

ReSPA, 8-9 May 2018 - Following the initial Common Assessment Framework (CAF) internal training held in January 2018, a two-day Self-assessment workshop was organised for the ReSPA Secretariat, generating many good ideas on the Organisation's strengths, areas of improvement and actions needed. The Self-assessment workshop was part of a transformation process of ReSPA in domain of institutionalisation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as Quality Management instrument. For that purpose, the ReSPA has designated a team to intensively work on the implementation of CAF and to engage in a discussion on internal



ReSPA Secretariat at the Self-assessment CAF workshop

strategic, operational, as well as programme, logistical and financial matters. The follow-up will be to use the in-house CAF experi-

ence for an efficient and effective upgrade of ReSPA to the Regional Centre of Excellence for Quality Management. ■



Minister of Public Administration of Kosovo* Visited ReSPA



Minister Yağcılar's visit to ReSPA

ReSPA, 4 May 2018 – Minister Mahir Yağcılar, who is in charge of public administration in Kosovo*, paid a visit to the ReSPA and met with Ms. Ratka

Sekulović, ReSPA Director. Mr Yagcilar was accompanied by representatives of the Ministry of Public Administration and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

Kosovo*. The main focus of the meeting was accession of Kosovo* to ReSPA.

Ms. Sekulović thanked Minister Yağcılar for the visit, and said that ReSPA would continue to support the governments in the Western Balkans in developing better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses, and help them in preparations for the European Union membership. Mr Yağcılar reiterated his administration's continued commitment to the necessary procedural aspects of completing the accession to ReSPA. Both sides agreed that 2018 should be a decisive year for resolving this issue. ■

ReSPA Mobility Scheme: Working Visit for Delegations from Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Republic of Serbia

Belgrade, 30-31 August 2018 – ReSPA organised a regional exchange of peer-experience through the Working Visit to the Public Policy Secretariat (PPS), the Office for Information Technologies and e-Government, and the National Academy of Public Administration of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Participants of the visit were senior public servants from the Ministry of Information Society and Administration from Macedonia, representatives of the Ministry of Justice and General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Assistant Minister of the Ministry of Economic Relations and Regional Cooperation of the Republic of Srpska, and representative of the General Secretariat of the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, from Bosnia and Herzegovina. This Working Visit was an excellent opportunity



Mobility Scheme: Representatives from Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina visiting counterparts in Serbia

for exchange of experiences among peers in processes related to simplification and digitalisation of administrative procedures, in monitoring implementation of the work

plans of government, in controlling quality of regulatory impact assessment (RIA), and in efforts related to capacity building of public administration. ■



ReSPA Secretariat's Workshop on Strategic Planning

Kolasin, Montenegro 22-24 August 2018 – ReSPA Secretariat held a Workshop for planning of activities for the period until the end of 2018. The period from September to December 2018 will be marked with a number of activities: regional conferences, seminars, workshops, peer-missions, meetings, and completion of several regional comparative studies. ReSPA's current grant from the European Commission will be finished in December this year, and therefore the plan of activities will coincide with the duration of the grant. ReSPA is currently developing its Strategy for the period 2019-2024, and the first day of the Workshop in Kolasin was dedicated to the discussion about the Draft Strategy. Also, the Secretariat made a detailed plan for consultations about



ReSPA Secretariat at the Workshop on Strategic Planning

the Draft Strategy, and the consultative workshops with stakeholders will be held on a country-by-country basis during September 2018. Finally, during this Workshop, ReSPA staff prepared the first draft of the Programme

of Work for the period 2019-2020. This draft document will be further discussed with stakeholders prior to its submission to the ReSPA Governing Board at Senior Officials level before the end of this year. ■

ReSPA Supports Trainings in Regulatory Impact Assessment



ReSPA Supports Trainings in Regulatory Impact Assessment

Podgorica, Montenegro, June - July 2018 – In close cooperation with the Directorate for Financial System and Improvement of Business Environment of the Ministry of Finance of Montenegro, ReSPA supports an Expert, Prof. Branko Radulovic, from the University of Belgrade, to provide trainings for Regulatory Impact

Assessment (RIA) for public servants in Montenegro. The RIA trainings are being implemented in modules, and over 30 participants from a number of regulatory bodies actively participate in the trainings. During the trainings, examples of RIA statements for various draft laws are being discussed and improved in cooperation with the

Expert. The Expert also prepared the RIA Quality Check-list that will be used for assessing the quality of RIAs submitted by line ministries and other regulatory authorities to the RIA Department in the Directorate for Financial System and Improvement of Business Environment of the Ministry of Finance of Montenegro. ■

About ReSPA

Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is an intergovernmental organisation for enhancing regional cooperation, promoting shared learning and supporting the development of public administration in the Western Balkans. It is financed by the European Union and administered with the subscriptions of its Members. **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 them for membership in the European Union.

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

ReSPA's main achievements in 2016–2018: Over 100 networking and capacity building activities (seminars, workshops, conferences, study visits, seasonal schools, trainings, meetings) involving over 2,000 public servants from the Western Balkans, and more than 200 international and regional experts; 10 regional comparative research projects with policy recommendations for Public Administration Reform related solutions.

* 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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