



ReSPA

Regional School
of Public Administration

BUILDING TOGETHER
GOVERNANCE FOR THE FUTURE

METHODOLOGY

On-demand support mechanism for ReSPA Members

Application procedure: Rules and steps



Revised in January 2023



ReSPA activities are funded
by the European Union

ON-DEMAND SUPPORT MECHANISM FOR ReSPA MEMBERS

METHODOLOGY

Background

ReSPA is an international inter-governmental organization and a key regional endeavor in the area of PAR, in Western Balkans. Through the implementation of its activities, ReSPA has become recognized as the leading regional organization for public administration development. The strategic goal of ReSPA defined in the ReSPA Strategy 2019-2024¹ is to contribute to the effective response of the public administrations of ReSPA members to the needs of citizens and businesses. It will be achieved through strengthened regional cooperation in the area of PAR and EU Integration. In meeting this strategic goal in the Western Balkans, ReSPA will work on the further improvement of the implementation of PAR strategies, the professionalization and depoliticization of the senior civil service, and the improvement of the quality of public services. ReSPA will achieve its strategic objectives through the organization of high-level political dialogues, conferences, networking events, working visits, mobility schemes, delivery of capacity-building activities (workshops, seminars, training, seasonal schools), development of analytical papers, studies and research, followed by policy recommendations based on the best regional, European and international practice, and other innovative methodologies. Through this kind of activity, ReSPA will transfer new knowledge and skills, as well as facilitate the exchange of experiences and best-practice examples both within the region and between the Western Balkans administrations and the EU Member States. ReSPA provides a unique framework for networking and peer -to-peer learning. Therefore, the mutual exchange of experiences and practices in the area of PAR will be an important segment of all further actions.

The “on-demand support mechanism” – a brief introduction

The model for direct on-demand support was introduced in July 2014, recognized as a “new mechanism for urgent limited needs” targeting the specific demand-driven topics defined by ReSPA members. In the meantime, the methodology for the application process, as well as guidelines and application forms, have been continually improved and ReSPA Members significantly enhanced the strategic importance of proposals. **The on-demand support mechanism** is an instrument through which ReSPA provides expert support to its members for addressing specific needs related to PAR and the reform agenda. This instrument will be implemented in accordance with this specific Methodology.

Who is the instrument for?

ReSPA mechanism of on-demand support targets ReSPA members (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia). Besides regionally organized activities that cover the common interests of its Members, ReSPA will, **through the on-demand support mechanism**, target the specific demand-driven topics and needs defined by its Members. On their path towards reforming public administration, particular administrations face different significant challenges, and ReSPA will support activities for overcoming them.

What is the instrument aimed at?

The instrument aims to **address the specific needs of various public institutions in ReSPA Members** by influencing the work of public administrations respectively compliant with the ReSPA ReSPA Strategy and mandate as well as the annual Programmes of Work.

¹ Adopted in November 2018 and revised in July 2022. See: <https://www.respaweb.eu/download/doc/Revised+ReSPA+Strategy+2019-2024%2CJuly+2024.pdf/d83cf243bbc60fb4976eab3eb9f99317.pdf>

Proposals/Applications for the on-demand support mechanisms are expected to be raised and inspired by the following:

- the **operational conclusions from the PAR Special Group meetings**;
- the **needs and priorities identified in the action documents for the implementation of PAR strategies**;
- the **findings of the European Commission** on PAR in the periodic EC Enlargement package;
- the **SIGMA monitoring** reports;
- the findings of the bilateral **screening reports** and other documents stemming from the EU accession and negotiations process;
- or **policy recommendations emerging from the ReSPA regional studies and other international renowned PAR relevant studies** or during the ReSPA regional thematic groups meetings.

Guidelines and the Application Process

The On-demand support mechanism pertains to providing assistance to each ReSPA Member in terms of engagement and delivery of necessary expertise for carrying out the requested activities which address the identified specific needs in the field of PAR.

Each ReSPA Member has an opportunity to swiftly address a specific need(s) and make a direct impact by requesting a provision of expertise in an identified field within the scope of the ReSPA Programme of Work.

Few general parameters:

- The on-demand support mechanism is financed by the EC Grant; therefore, all the activities should be implemented and completed within the EC Grant implementation period and related cost eligibility criteria (December 2025);
- The identified needs have to fall within the domains of the ReSPA Strategy and the ReSPA Programme of Work uploaded on the ReSPA website;
- The financial resources - per each ReSPA Member – (that can be allocated annually) are available for around 60 expert days (indicative). ReSPA will monitor the usage of the available allocated days per ReSPA Member and at the end of each year, ReSPA Secretariat will review the remaining unused days and relocate them for the next year;
- Applications with more than 30 expert days shall not be accepted unless in duly exceptional cases;
- The instrument is open throughout the year for receiving applications.

Criteria and Conditions for Implementation of the assistance provided through this mechanism

The Applicant

- Each interested institution from any of the ReSPA Members should fill out the Application Form (attached) with a detailed plan of the proposed activity(-ies);
- The activities proposed by the applicants shall contain the following budget lines:
 - Expertise costs (number of expert days) fee for experts and/or trainers who will deliver the assistance);
 - Other eligible costs that are indispensable or significantly contribute to the result of the received expertise, such as organization of workshop, round table or promotional events. The eligible costs are rent of conference room, production of visibility materials and refreshment.

- ReSPA shall review the proposed budgets and reserves the right to change them, informing the applicant of any potential changes. In doing so, ReSPA considers the type of action, its impact and replicability;
- Each applicant commits to use the assistance in the most rational and reasonable manner;
- The applicant shall clearly define the Unit within the beneficiary institution which shall be in charge of coordinating and facilitating the assistance, as well as specify the name and contact details of a focal point within this unit, which will communicate with ReSPA and the expert operationally;
- In cases requiring the engagement of more than one expert, the applicant should provide a table with tasks for each expert and their tasks should not overlap;
- The activities requested in the application form should be organized solely in ReSPA Members ensuring the availability of institutional capacities for providing the necessary facilities and/or required logistics for the organization of the envisaged activity(s) and/or expertise;
- For delivery of the requested assistance, each Applicant may recommend/propose **up to three (3) experts** per required expert engagement. ReSPA Secretariat will organize the expert selection process in accordance with the enacted procurement procedures and make the final selection, approval and appointment of a relevant expert;
- If deemed necessary, the ReSPA Secretariat has the right to request submission of the additional information and/or clarification from each ReSPA Member, and to reject any of the submitted requests if the request for On-demand support mechanism is not compliant with the ReSPA Strategy and annual Programme of Work. In case of rejection of the application, the ReSPA Secretariat will provide written notice to the applicant;
- The application/request is submitted via e-mail to ReSPA by the respective Liaison Officer with prior written endorsement and signature by the relevant Governing Board member;
- The applicant may require in the application form that specific deliverables of the requested assistance can be in the national language, provided that the beneficiary submits an unofficial translation to ReSPA Secretariat.

The ReSPA Secretariat

- The entire process is managed and coordinated by the ReSPA Secretariat;
- Prior to the final approval of applications, ReSPA shall forward all applications to the European Commission;
- The received applications for the assistance will be examined and evaluated by an assessment team established by the ReSPA Secretariat, in cooperation with European Commission. The ReSPA assessment team reviews the scope of the assistance, proposed budgets and may recommend improvements, informing the applicant of any potential changes. In doing so, ReSPA takes into account the type of action, its impact and replicability;
- All proposed activities submitted by the applicants will be assessed according to the information provided in the application form;
- If deemed necessary, the ReSPA Secretariat has the right to request submission of the additional information and/or clarification from each applicant (through the LO), and to reject any of the submitted requests if they do not comply with the ReSPA mandate, objectives, priorities, Programme of Work and provisions stipulated in the Grant Contract. In case of rejection of an application, the ReSPA Secretariat will provide written notice to the applicant;

- In case of approval of the application also by the EC services, ReSPA Secretariat will organize the process of selection of the expert in accordance with the enacted procurement procedures and make the final selection, approval and appointment of a relevant expert;
- All payments to third parties (such as expert/s, service providers, etc.), shall be effectuated by ReSPA, in accordance with the approved budget of the action.

European Commission / EUD in respective countries

- After receiving the applications from ReSPA, the EC reserves the right to:
 - make comments and suggestions that shall be reflected by the applicant;
 - approve the application or
 - reject the submitted request (application).
- In order to speed up the application process, ReSPA advises all applicants of the On-demand support mechanism **to consult their draft applications with the respective EU Delegations**, before submitting them to the ReSPA Secretariat.

Submission of the Request for Assistance

- Each ReSPA Member should submit the request for assistance using the Application form attached to this methodology and in accordance with the criteria outlined above;
- As stated above, all applications must be submitted by the respective Liaison officer, upon the endorsement of the relevant Governing Board member at Senior Level (GB SL);
- Applications must be submitted in English.

Cancellation of the assistance by the beneficiary institution

- Applicants can withdraw their applications through the LO anytime before launching the procurement process for experts. The LO shall immediately inform ReSPA Secretariat about the withdrawal;
- A contracted assistance can be cancelled only upon a duly justified request sent by the beneficiary institution (designated contact point), who shall preliminarily inform the GB Member of this decision. The GB member shall provide a written response acknowledging this request.

Other Implementation arrangements

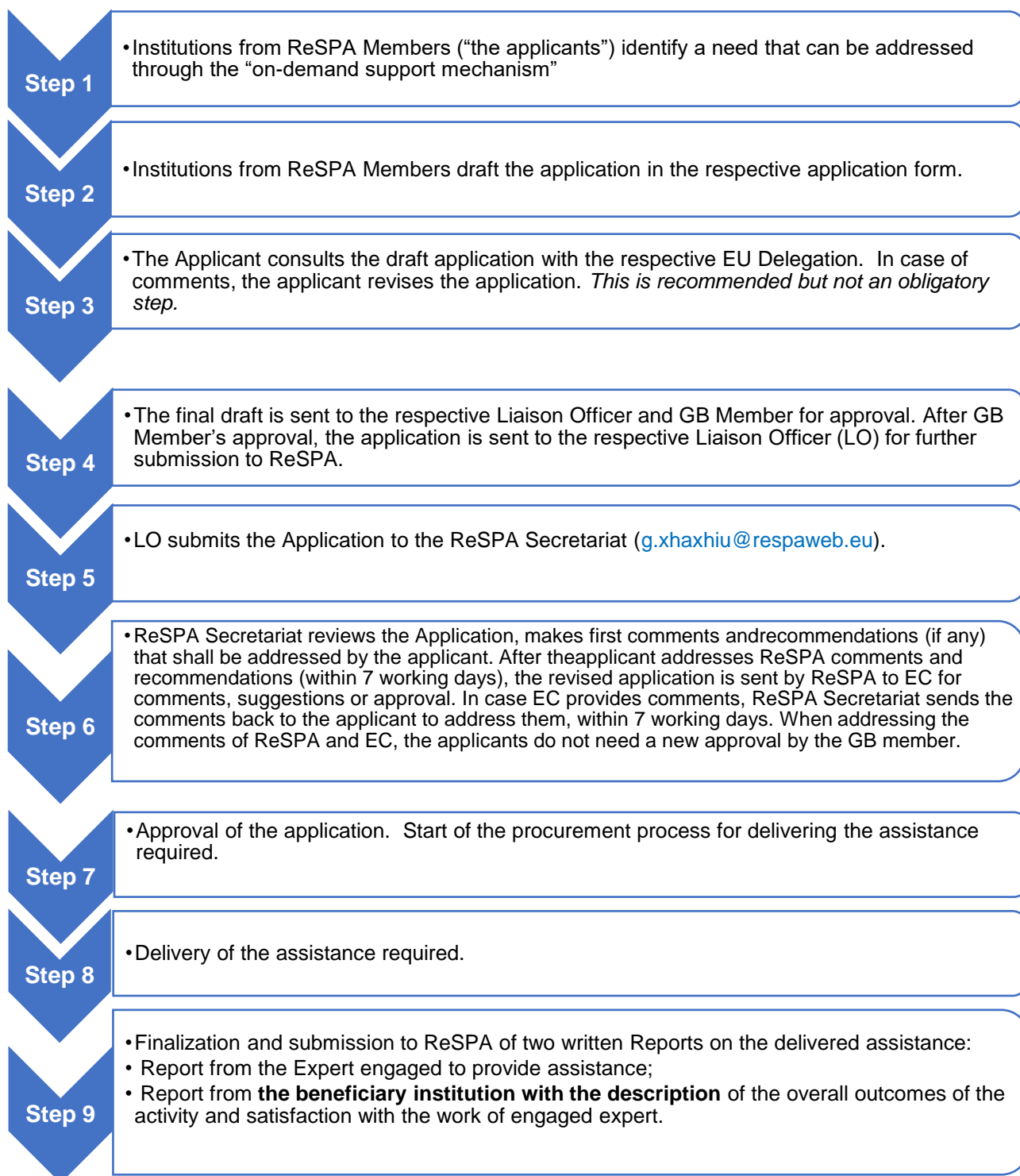
- Follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the supported activity will be the responsibility of the ReSPA Secretariat and the responsible unit within the beneficiary institution;
- The ReSPA Secretariat may participate in the activities during its implementation in order to perform monitoring of activities;
- After finalization of envisaged activities through the On-demand support mechanism, the **selected expert will provide to the ReSPA Secretariat a written report** on the implemented activity. The report should be focused on the action undertaken i.e.:
 - ✓ **outputs** – the activities undertaken within the action and documents produced (please see below the list of potential outputs.);
 - ✓ **outcomes** - main achievement according to tasks defined in the ToR;
 - ✓ **sustainability** of the conducted activities, including the potential for replication at the local, national and regional levels.
- After the finalization of the activities, **the beneficiary institution is obligated to provide to the ReSPA Secretariat a written report** on the satisfaction with the work of the engaged expert and overall outcomes of the activity, as well as send to ReSPA any tangible output funded by the

action, such as: list of participants, presentations of the expert/s, the paper/s produces, minutes of meetings, curricula of the training, conclusions of the event, analytical papers, etc;

- Through the already established reporting mechanism, the ReSPA Secretariat will inform the ReSPA Governing Board on a quarterly and annual basis about the outcomes of the undertaken activities under the “on-demand support mechanism”, referring to the set results from the application.

The Application process, in brief steps

Following the detailed explanations above, this section provides a brief description, in clear steps, of the application and implementation process of the on-demand support mechanism:



If you have questions during the application process, please write to: respa-info@respaweb.eu.