

Terms of Reference

Request for Services

Institute, School, College or Higher Education institution to support ReSPA in designing and delivering the “Executive Training on EU Integration”

1. Background

[The Regional School of Public Administration](#) (ReSPA) is a regional organization established in 2010 as a joint initiative supported by European Commission and Western Balkans (WB) administrations. It is managed and governed by five ReSPA Members: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, while Kosovo* is beneficiary. ReSPA's purpose is to assist governments in the region to develop better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses and prepare for the European Union membership.

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

The European Commission (EC) provides directly managed funds to support ReSPA activities in line with the EU accession process. Currently, ReSPA is implementing the fifth EC Grant Contract "Support to the Regional School of Public Administration for implementing PAR Agenda and facilitating EU accession process in the WBs" which is active as of January 2023.

ReSPA works primarily through regional networks which operate at three levels: Ministerial, Senior Officials, and thematic groups of experts and senior practitioners. More specifically, the Programme Committee is composed of the senior civil servants representing ministries responsible for the Public Administration reform, and institutions in charge of the European Integration process, and four regional thematic groups: (1) Policy planning, better regulation and coordination of Centre of Government, (2) European integration and accession negotiations; (3)

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Human Resources Management and Professional Development; (4) Service Delivery (digitalization and quality management).

These Terms of Reference aim to identify a renowned Institute, School, College or Higher Education institution to support ReSPA in designing and delivering the “Executive training on EU integration” which **will indicatively take place in October 2023**.

2. Problem statement and description of the assignment

ReSPA’s focus in the area of “EU integration and accession” is to further promote good governance and support administrative capacity of the administrations in the Western Balkans to **take on the obligations of the EU membership** in particular public administration reform (PAR) at all levels of government by reforming the administration and improving the knowledge and skills of public servants dealing with European Integration process (including accession negotiations). Reforming public sector remains fundamental for building resilient societies and economies in the region as well as for running successful countries but it is also an important priority reform for advancing in the EU accession process. The challenging accession negotiation process which is now a reality in four out of five ReSPA members requires knowledgeable and skilled public service which shall bring the process forward with a satisfactory pace. PAR challenges in the Western Balkans include, among others, lack of coordination capacities related to European Integration planning and implementation. All administrations in the region have established the critical functions for co-ordination of European Integration (EI) activities and processes as well as have developed required guidelines to support implementation of these critical EI functions.

Therefore, ReSPA aims to **enhance and promote regional co-operation and exchange of experiences and knowledge in the domain of European integration** and accession negotiations with specific reference to PAR and governance aspects. The overall goal of the work of ReSPA is to contribute to a more efficient implementation of the EU accession agenda in the region by networking the key officials responsible for European integration and accession negotiations process as well as officials in charge of coordination of EU pre-accession assistance, boosting exchange of their experiences.

ReSPA support in this domain, is concentrated in the following building blocks:

- Strengthening the capacities of public servants and relevant institutions **on the EU integration process, coordination, tools, methods** as well as on the accession negotiations process and skills (focused on specific clusters and chapters of the acquis as well as horizontal aspects);
- Supporting effective **alignment of national legislation with the EU acquis** and its implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- Enhancing **administrative and human capacities** in the WBs administrations for processing and managing EU funds and design mature projects;
- Improve **internal co-ordination of accession process** within the administrations of ReSPA Members (communicating the European integration process, improving reporting quality, etc.)

[The Western Balkans Strategy](#) (2018) as well as the **new enlargement methodology** [“Enhancing the accession process – A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans”](#) (2020) constitute important strategic documents, which aim to make the enlargement policy more comprehensive, inclusive, credible, dynamic and predictable. The EU and WBs constantly have **high-level Summits** reaffirming the EU membership perspective of the Region and the EU’s strategic partnership with the WBs. On the other hand, the **Economic and Investment Plan for WBs**, the **Green Agenda** for the WBs and the Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) are concrete initiatives and mechanisms to boost reform-driven change in the Region.

In terms of specific developments, the administrations of the Region are at different stages in their accession process, with **Montenegro** and **Serbia** in more advanced stages of membership talks, **Albania** and **North Macedonia** have launched the first intergovernmental conferences on accession negotiations and the screening process is underway, while **Bosnia and Herzegovina** has recently received the candidate status. Overall, while the EU remains committed to integrating the Western Balkans, progress has been relatively slow. Significant challenges must be addressed, particularly in improving the rule of law, fighting corruption, and strengthening democratic institutions.

The “Executive training on EU integration”, 2023 edition – the main parameters

ReSPA organizes a variety of capacity-building programmes that bring together public servants in charge of coordinating the EU integration process and leading/coordinating EU accession negotiations (where applicable) and those in charge of coordinating the EU pre-accession assistance.

The main indicative parameters of the 2023 edition of the Executive Training on EU integration are listed below:

- The programme is expected to be held in October (ideally 11-12 October 2023);
- The programme shall be entirely delivered in English language;
- The total number of attendees shall be up to 25, from ReSPA Member administrations;
- The programme shall last for 2 full days and shall be delivered in the premises of the Institute, School, College or Higher Education institution who shall be selected under these ToR.
- The sessions shall indicatively start at 09:00 and end at 17:00. The sessions shall be interactive, participatory where critical thinking and debating shall be encouraged;

² Selection of participants shall be organised by ReSPA.

3. Tasks and responsibilities

The Institute, School, College or Higher Education institution (the applicant) shall, indicatively, perform the following tasks:

- Familiarize with the latest developments as regards EU integration and accession negotiations in the Western Balkans;
- Develop and propose to ReSPA an indicative programme (agenda) for the Executive Training;
- Ensure the participation of renowned academics and lecturers (in-house and/or external) to deliver the sessions of the programme;
- Deliver the learning programme in line with the agreed agenda;
- Issue joint certificates with ReSPA to the attendees;
- Appoint a coordinator for liaising directly with ReSPA on the subject.

The abovementioned tasks and responsibilities represent the milestones of the assignment, but the applicant may propose slight changes/adaptations upon agreement with the ReSPA Programme Manager in charge.

4. Necessary qualifications and experience

The Institute, School, College or Higher Education institution (the applicant) needs to have a **diverse but compatible experience in delivering post-graduate capacity building programmes and/or Master Programmes** (preferably established in an EU Member state), on topics/themes related to EU affairs/studies, public administration, political/international studies. More specifically, the applicant shall have the following profile:

General criteria:

- At least 20 (twenty) years of experience in delivering post-graduate capacity-building programmes and/or Master Programmes in English language.

Specific criteria:

- At least 10 (ten) years of experience in delivering post-graduate capacity-building programmes and/or Master Programmes on topics/themes related to EU affairs/studies, as well as political/international studies in English language;
- Have at least 30 in-house academics/lecturers and administrative staff;
- Have a meaningful research profile;
- Own a campus;
- Have previous experience and interaction with the Western Balkans;
- Preferably be established in an EU member State.

The applicant shall submit the following documents:

- Copy of the founding document or any similar document that proves the establishment of the applicant as a specific learning organization;

- Organigramme of the applicant;
- A short methodology/proposal on how the programme will be delivered, including information on the certification modalities, information on the campus facilities, etc;
- A draft proposed programme of the Executive training, including topics and potential lecturers to deliver the sessions;
- Brief bios of the proposed lecturers;
- Financial offer.

5. Timing and Location

The assignment is expected to be performed tentatively during September-October while the Executive training **within the first two weeks of October 2023 (preferably 11-12 October), in the campus of the applicant.**

6. Remunerations

The assignment amounts **up to 15.000 EUR** for designing and delivering the academic programme (corresponding to tasks listed under Section 3 of these Terms of reference).

The payment will be done in one instalment upon completion of the assignment. The final outputs will be subject to approval from ReSPA before the execution of the payment.

Note: costs related to logistic aspects, such as utilization of the facilities of the campus, learning materials, coffee breaks, lunch breaks, IT support, etc., shall not be included in this financial offer. Those costs shall be agreed among the selected applicant and ReSPA at a later stage, based on market prices for similar services.

7. Reporting and Final Documentation

Upon completion of the assignment, the selected applicant will be requested to deliver the following documents before the payment is conducted:

Outputs

- The programme of the Executive training and short bios of the lecturers;
- Presentations held during the sessions of the Executive Training (after the programme is delivered);

Documents required for payment

- Invoice (e-signed);
- Timesheets (e-signed);
- One final report to ReSPA on the implementation/performance of the assignment (please see section 3 above).