

ReSPA

Regional School of Public Administration (Phase 2)

This project is financed by the EU



RESPA/SC(2009)1/001

Introduction of EIPA as new contractor for the ReSPA programme phase II

Dear SC members,

As the ReSPA project moves from phase 1 to phase 2 and the responsibility for the ReSPA Secretariat has been transferred from the OECD to EIPA as of the 1st of January 2009, we would like to use this opportunity to share with you some intentions and draw your attention to some practical points, which we believe are important to ensure a smooth transition towards the new regime, i.e. a fully functioning and self-sustainable ReSPA.

Open Communication

First of all, we hope for good and close cooperation with you in order to make ReSPA a successful project.

Our experience is that the success of projects like ReSPA, involving multiple parties and sometimes differing interests and needs, is highly dependent on open and direct communication. By reacting promptly and directly to events, which may not happen as expected, we can avoid misunderstandings and complications in the long run. So under the principle “let’s play the ball and not the player” (meaning let’s solve the problem and not blame a person), we invite all of you to communicate any critical and constructive feedback, which you feel is relevant and necessary, and to do so as early as possible, in order to consider – and if possible adjust – any unhelpful consequences of any such events.

Co-ordination and Communication

In the region, many initiatives and projects have taken – and will be taking – place in different institutions, managed by different organisations and institutes, and financed by different donors, etc., in support of the modernisation of public administrations and the European Integration process.

For our ReSPA project, an important challenge will be to avoid duplication of training activities, which are taking place under other projects. Hence, it will be useful if members of the SC can communicate any such possible overlaps to us in order not only to avoid duplication, but also so we – the SC, EIPA and ReSPA – can do our utmost to ensure that the ReSPA activities are as unique in both contents and approach as possible.

Among other things, this means that we need to be flexible in our approach and to adapt and change whenever this is needed and possible, and we would like to discuss regularly with you, how ReSPA can provide this added value to its beneficiaries. Also to this end, it is important to have close and constant communication, informing each other of things that can support the development of ReSPA.

Training Activities: Approach and Methodologies

Training is ultimately a means to improve the performance of the individual, the organisation in which (s)he works and, finally, the overall administration. We therefore feel it is important to ensure that the ReSPA activities transfer not only knowledge, but also directly applicable know-how. This requires three things:

- Firstly, that the training activities provide an appropriate balance between concept/theories, on the one hand, and practical experiences on the other.
- Secondly, that the training activities become a forum for not only transfer of information and know-how, but also for an exchange of practical experience and development of good practice solutions to (common) problems.
- Thirdly, that a high level of participation of the participants in the training programmes is encouraged by both the trainers and the administrations, from where the trainees come.

In view of the underlying EU Integration aspect of ReSPA's *raison d'être*, from the side of EIPA, we will explore co-operation with and involve to the highest possible degree institutes, experts and administrations from different sides and levels of the EU.

As already discussed in the previous SC meeting, it is projected that delivery of training activities can start in Danilovgrad in the middle of this year. Until then, we will carry out the activities in the region, although with an emphasis on Montenegro.

Logistical Issues

Keeping in mind the final establishment of ReSPA in Danilovgrad, and taking into account the project budget, we will introduce the following system for the payment of accommodation and subsistence allowances:

- The hotels will be paid in advance.
- As much as possible, we will try to make full arrangements including the meals.
- Where this is not possible participants will receive an amount to cover the costs for meals that are not served.
- For other expenses, participants will receive a subsistence allowance of €25 per night¹.

Website and Newsletter

As regards the website and the newsletter, we would like to explore with you, if and how we can use these means of communication for other/additional purposes than they have been used so far, e.g. as a platform or depository for course materials, relevant research papers, interviews with course participants, etc.

Liaison Officers

It appears to us that the so-called "Option-B" initiative has been valuable for ReSPA, and we would like – with some modifications – to continue with these contacts.

One of our suggestions is, besides the activities for which they have been responsible so far, to also contact the Option B resource persons for some logistical and organisational support. We believe this will be useful not only for EIPA, but also for the SC members, in particular in view of the considerably increased number of participants attending ReSPA training activities in the coming years compared to the past.

¹ The indicated amount is subject to the overall amount falling within the EC subsistence allowance rates.

In view of the increased scope and nature of activities, which the Option B resource persons are proposed to undertake, another suggestion is to change the name from “Option B Resources” to Liaison Officers.

A third change, which has been necessitated by the fact that ReSPA will be working with a new contractor with a different contract and a different budget regime than the OECD had, affects the contractual and financial relationship with the Liaison Officers. Henceforth, the Liaison Officers should be

1. Directly contracted by EIPA
2. All contracts will be subject to the same financial regime:
 - 30% of the financial compensation will be the base to be paid for being at our/ReSPA's disposal for – and provide – logistical, etc., support services
 - the remaining part will be paid based on the number of specified deliverables, as was also done in the previous years.

Annual ReSPA Conference

Last, but not least, we may already start to think about the theme of the annual ReSPA conference with a view to agreeing upon this at the next SC meeting.

With the confidence in a good co-operation,

Peter Goldschmidt
Harry List