

BEYOND CLASSROOM LEARNING (BCL) STRATEGIC WORKING SESSION

Decision Leadership and The Next Chapter for National Training Institutions

National School for Public Administration, Zagreb, Croatia

24–25 September 2026

Background and rationale

Public administrations are operating in an environment of rising complexity, uncertainty, and stakeholder pressure. In practice, leadership and collaboration challenges rarely appear as isolated “skill gaps” (e.g., empathy, communication, inclusion). They show up as real workplace situations: appraisal/performance talks, conflict escalation, negotiation with stakeholders, decisions under ambiguity, or fairness and inclusion dilemmas. Traditional classroom-based training remains important, but transfer to the workplace is often limited. The well-known 10/20/70 logic is frequently referenced, yet the “70% on-the-job learning” is not systematically designed. Under real workload and constraints, participants often return to existing routines.

Leaders in public administrations need learning solutions that respond to the real situations they face at work, not only to broad competency labels. Beyond Classroom Learning (BCL) helps training institutions identify those situations, translate them into practical learning scenarios, and design support that can be applied directly in the workplace.

Purpose of the strategic working session

This third workshop in the series is designed to co-design, test, and package practical collaboration leadership micro-practices that can be piloted and then scaled across the Western Balkans via ReSPA.

The session brings together Directors and Deputy Directors of national public administration training institutions from the Western Balkans, Moldova and Croatia, accompanied where possible by a Deputy Director or senior leadership colleague. It combines direct experience of the BCL situation-based method with a closed peer conversation on the future role of national training institutions.

What participants will leave with

Participants will experience:

- the situation-based approach from the inside;
- form their own judgement on its relevance;
- clarify the direction and pace of change in their institution;
- identify the dependencies and enabling changes that matter most; and
- leave with one concrete next move supported by regional peer exchange.

Facilitation: Dr Osman Bayraktar (SwissMI), with the National School for Public Administration of Croatia and ReSPA.

Working language: English. No interpretation will be provided.

Wednesday, 24 September 2026

Inside the Workshop

Directors and Deputy Directors will take part in an experience that rarely occurs within public institutions: they will participate directly in a workshop. The day will focus on **difficult decisions**. The morning session will address the tension between an **exception and the rule**—a situation familiar to

almost every senior leader. The afternoon session will explore **changing priorities** and the challenges leaders face when required to make decisions without complete or reliable information.

Participants will not be expected to teach, deliver presentations or make institutional commitments. Instead, they will be invited to contribute the experience and judgement that come with senior leadership responsibility.

Dr Osman Bayraktar will facilitate the workshops. Training Managers will attend as observers, following the methodology and learning how it could later be applied within their own institutions. The role of Directors and Deputy Directors will be to participate fully, share their practical experience and contribute to an open and meaningful exchange.

By the end of Day 1, participants will have experienced the situation-based approach from the inside and will be able to form their own judgement about its value and potential application within their institutions.

What participants will leave with

1. First-hand experience of the situation-based approach through active participation, rather than through a presentation about the methodology.
2. A grounded understanding of whether the approach could be useful and worth developing further within their institution. Their professional judgement will be central to this assessment.

Time	Session	WHAT WE DO
09:00 – 09:30	Welcome · the joint frame	
09:30 – 09:45	Workshop 1 brief · exception vs. rule	Dr. Bayraktar introduces the situation and the workshop flow.
09:45 – 12:30	Workshop 1 · you work the situation	<i>A real moment: a leader pressed to make an exception that bends the rule. You bring your lived experience; Dr. Bayraktar facilitates. Together you shape what good leadership looks like.</i>
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 13:45	Workshop 2 brief · changing priorities	Brief introduction to the second situation.
13:45 – 15:15	Workshop 2 · you work the second situation	<i>A second situation: what happens when priorities shift mid-stream and leaders must choose without clean information. Same shape — Dr. Bayraktar facilitates, you participate.</i>
15:15 – 16:00	Close of Day 1 · reflection	What landed for you? What was different about being IN the workshop rather than reading about it?.

Thursday, 25 September 2026

Designing the Next Chapter -Together

This is a peer working session—not a training in the traditional sense. It offers Directors and Deputy Directors a rare opportunity to engage in a meaningful conversation with peers from other countries who carry comparable responsibilities and institutional expectations.

The morning will open with a short strategic awakening, presenting four evidence-based signals that the environment in which public administration training institutions operate has already shifted. From that point onward, all exercises will be conducted collaboratively. Participants will jointly build a

strategic canvas identifying key drivers and expected benefits. Directors and their Deputies will work in pairs to explore the organisational and operational changes required within their institutions. Short periods of individual preparation will be followed by collective work, peer dialogue and the gradual development of a shared strategic picture.

Participants will not leave with a fully developed transformation plan. They will leave with greater clarity regarding their institution's direction, the dependencies that may determine the pace of change, one concrete next step that can be implemented within 90 days, and the regional partnerships that can support its implementation.

What participants will leave with

1. Through peer dialogue, participants will assess where their institutions stand today and define what the next chapter could look like in their own institutional context.
2. Through paired and group work, participants will identify the key dependencies and enabling changes that will influence the pace of progress. Each institution will define one concrete 90-day action and consider the regional support needed to put it into practice.

TIME	SESSION
09:00 – 09:45	Welcome · peer check-in. The strategic awakening
09:45 – 10:30	Drivers and benefits · built together on the wall
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 12:00	Changes and enablers · paired and trio work
12:00 – 12:15	Break
12:15 – 13:30	Reflection & deciding on the next chapter · Regional alignment
13:30	Lunch