



Terms of Reference

Request for Services

Institute, School, College or Higher Education institution to support ReSPA in implementing the “executive training” and “strategic masterclass” components of the Regional Public Administration Mobility Programme “Shaping the Future of Public Service – Together”

1. Background

The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is a regional organization established in 2010 as a joint initiative supported by the European Commission and Western Balkans (WB) administrations. It is managed and governed by five ReSPA Members: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, while Kosovo* is a Beneficiary. As of January 2026, ReSPA activities also involve civil servants from Armenia, Moldova, and Ukraine. ReSPA's purpose is to assist governments in the two regions to develop better public administrations, public services, and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses, and to prepare for European Union membership.

Since its inception, ReSPA, as an international organization and a key regional knowledge hub for Public Administration Reform, has contributed to capacity-building and networking through regional training, workshops, conferences, seasonal schools, and on-demand support mechanisms, peering, and development of regional research materials. ReSPA maintains close cooperation with Governments, Ministers, and senior public servants in its members and beneficiaries.

ReSPA also works in partnership with the European Union, specifically the European Commission's Directorate General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST), other regional actors such as OECD/SIGMA, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), CEFTA, as well as other agencies and civil society organizations.

The European Commission (EC) provides financial support for ReSPA activities in line with the EU accession process. As of January 2026, ReSPA is implementing the sixth EC Grant Contract *"Enhancing Public Governance and EU Integration in the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership Region: Support to ReSPA for Advancing the Public Administration Reform Agenda"*.

* 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

ReSPA works primarily through regional networks, which operate at three levels: (i) Ministerial, (ii) Senior Officials, and (iii) thematic groups of experts and senior practitioners. More specifically, the Programme Committee is composed of senior civil servants representing ministries responsible for public administration reform, and institutions in charge of the European integration process.

These Terms of Reference aim to identify a prominent Institute, School, College, or Higher Education institution, to support ReSPA in **designing, delivering, and organizing the “Executive Training” and “Strategic Masterclass” components of the ReSPA Regional Public Administration Mobility Programme: “Shaping the Future of Public Service – Together”**. The capacity building programme is intended to start at the end of June 2026 with an “Executive Training”, and then to hold the “Strategic Masterclass” in early September 2026.

2. Problem statement and description of the assignment

Inspired by *“Erasmus for Civil Servants”* and with an aim to contribute to the development of a shared regional administrative space aligned with European standards of public administration for civil servants in the Western Balkans, Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia, ReSPA designed this Regional Public Administration Mobility Programme *“Shaping the Future of Public Service – Together”*. The goal is to strengthen cooperation, institutional capacities, and mutual trust among public administrations in the Western Balkans and Eastern Neighbourhood through structured peer learning and professional mobility.

The programme seeks to: strengthen regional cooperation and mutual understanding among the public administrations; enhance professional competencies in key areas of public administration reform; promote peer learning through direct exposure to institutional practices across the region and EU Member States; support alignment with EU accession requirements and European governance standards; foster a sustainable network of reform-oriented public servants in the Western Balkans and Eastern Neighbourhood; as well as political networking.

The Regional Public Administration Mobility Programme *“Shaping the Future of Public Service – Together”* is composed of four components:

1. **Induction and Preparatory Session** – (*online*) at which the selected participants will be convened online by ReSPA to present the Programme, its objectives, and logistical arrangements, as well as to jointly discuss participants’ expectations (2 hours);
2. **Executive Training** – (*in-person*) at a renowned School/Institute established in an EU Member State to ensure a shared knowledge base and prepare participants for the mobility exchange (2 days);
3. **Strategic Masterclass** – (*online*) to serve as a transition component between the executive training and the mobility exchange, resulting in a participant-level mobility learning plan (objectives, stakeholder mapping, and priority questions), which will serve as the basis for matching and developing hosting programmes (half day);
4. **Mobility Exchange** – the actual civil servants’ job-shadowing placement will take place in: a) Ministries responsible for Public Administration or European Affairs in the Western Balkans; b) Regional organizations in the WBs, and 3) Relevant institutions in selected EU Member States that support the initiative (4 days).

The subject of these Terms of Reference is points 2) and 3) of the described programme.

The “Executive Training” and “Strategic Masterclass” components – the main parameters

The main indicative parameters of the two components are listed below:

- The Executive Training is expected to be held at the end of June 2026;
- The Executive Training will last for 2 days;
- The Executive Training shall be delivered in-person;
- The programme shall be delivered entirely in English language. Considering the diverse typology of participants, the following main topics can be considered (indicatively): EU integration and policy implementation; strategic policy development; financial management and budget analysis; public administration and governance reforms; European integration and regional cooperation; effective leadership in the public sector, etc. Consider possibility of having a half-day of training/exercise on soft skills (e.g.: negotiation skills or leadership skills);
- **The total number of attendees shall be up to 23**, representing the administrations of Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine;
- The sessions for the Executive Training shall indicatively start at 09:00 and end at 16:30;
- The sessions shall be interactive, participatory where critical thinking and debating shall be encouraged;
- The Strategic Masterclass is expected to be held in early September 2026 as an online event;
- The Strategic Masterclass will last approximately 4 hours;
- The specific topic for the Strategic Masterclass *“Leading Public Administration Reform in Practice”* will be determined at a later stage;
- Part of the Strategic Masterclass will be used to support participants in creating a personal mobility learning plan (objectives, stakeholder map, and priority questions), which will serve as the basis for matching and the host agenda.

3. Tasks and responsibilities

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

- The administrative team and proposed lecturers shall familiarize themselves with the latest developments as regards EU integration and accession negotiations, as well as Western Balkans and Eastern Neighbourhood regions’ political, economic and social context;
- Develop and propose to ReSPA a training programme (agenda) for the Executive Training and Strategic Masterclass components;

- Ensure in-person participation of renowned academics, lecturers and practitioners (in-house and/or external) to deliver the sessions of the programme;
- Organize and cover the costs of travel and accommodation of the academics, lecturers and practitioners (in-house and/or external) to deliver the sessions of the programme, including fees for their involvement;
- Deliver the learning programme and provide learning materials in line with the agreed agendas;
- Issue joint certificates with ReSPA to the attendees – exact content and design to be agreed at a later stage;
- Appoint a coordinator to liaise 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 responsible ReSPA Programme Manager.

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, Executive Trainings, 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/executive 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;
- Possess a campus;
- Have previous experience and interaction with the Western Balkans and Eastern Neighbourhood;
- 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, title of the certificate, information on the campus facilities, etc;
- A draft proposed programme of the Executive Training and Strategic Masterclass, 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 **June 2026** for the in-person **Executive Training**, and in **early September 2026** for the **Strategic Masterclass** to be organized online.

6. Remuneration

The assignment amounts **up to 15.000 EUR** for designing and delivering the assignment.

The payment will be made in one instalment upon completion of the assignment. The final outputs will be subject to ReSPA's approval before payment is executed.

Travel and accommodation for participants, the training venue for the Executive Training, and the Zoom link for the Strategic Masterclass will be organized directly by ReSPA.

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 made:

Outputs

- The programme of the Executive Training and Strategic Masterclass, and short bios of the lecturers;
- Presentations held during the sessions of the Executive Training and Strategic Masterclass to be published on the ReSPA Knowledge Management Platform (after the programme is delivered);
- A summary executive report containing recommendations for refinement of the Programme in the future.

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).