



ReSPA

Regional School
of Public Administration

**BUILDING TOGETHER
GOVERNANCE FOR THE FUTURE**

**10th
Anniversary**

Vision:

We are an intergovernmental innovative regional hub for policy research, knowledge sharing, regional cooperation and networking in the field of public administration.

Mission:

We improve regional cooperation, promote shared learning and support the development of public administrations within the Western Balkans, and support the integration of the countries in the region into the EU.

Motto:

Building Together Governance
for the Future!



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10th Anniversary

of joint endeavour of the

European Commission

and the

Western Balkans governments

The ReSPA story began in June 2003 with the Thessaloniki Agenda, long before it was officially opened in November 2010 and has been fully self-managed since October 2011.

Established as a joint endeavour between the European Commission and the Western Balkans governments, ReSPA is a regional organisation governed by the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Serbia, while Kosovo* is a beneficiary.

ReSPA supports Public Administration Reform (PAR) and European Integration in the Western Balkans by promoting effective governance that contribute to modernising economies, creating jobs and attracting investors.

During the first four years, ReSPA operated as a regional in-service training centre to empower the public servants from the region. In 2014, ReSPA made a strategic shift and became a regional hub to support its members in developing their public administration capacities (individually and collectively), focusing on quality management, capacity development and networking.

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



Opening ceremony, Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy and Milo Đukanović, Prime Minister of Montenegro



Today, ReSPA plays a crucial role as a partner of the European Union, and the Western Balkans governments, developing the quality of public administration in the Western Balkans and, as such, is a cornerstone of resilience and democracy in the region.

“Over the decade, ReSPA has been supporting the Western Balkans in pushing through public administration reform and assisting the governments to advance their European aspirations. These include effective leadership of reforms, well-functioning enforcement mechanisms, clearly defined accountability and strong political will. The aim is to provide the basis for a merit-based EU accession process built on trust, confidence, and clear commitments by the European Union and the Western Balkans. This is essential for further development of the region, which is even more salient in these challenging times.

Being aware of the complexity and inter-connectivity of those two processes, by both assisting in fostering PAR and EU integration in the region, we pave the way for steady reforms and creation of transparent, accountable, professional and citizen-oriented public administration institutions.

The Western Balkans governments’ response to the Covid-19 pandemic proved their flexibility and readiness to kick-start a new phase of the citizen-centred reforms by focusing on digitalisation, better service delivery and improved transparency.

With a clear perspective for further EU support beyond 2023, we will continue to vigorously support the governments in delivering innovative solutions to build effective governance in service of our citizens and businesses.”

Ms Ratka Sekulović
ReSPA Director

P u b l i c A d m i n i s t r a t i o n R e f o r m

a prerequisite for accession to the European Union

The European Union considers public administration reform one of the fundamental prerequisites for European Union enlargement in the Western Balkans.

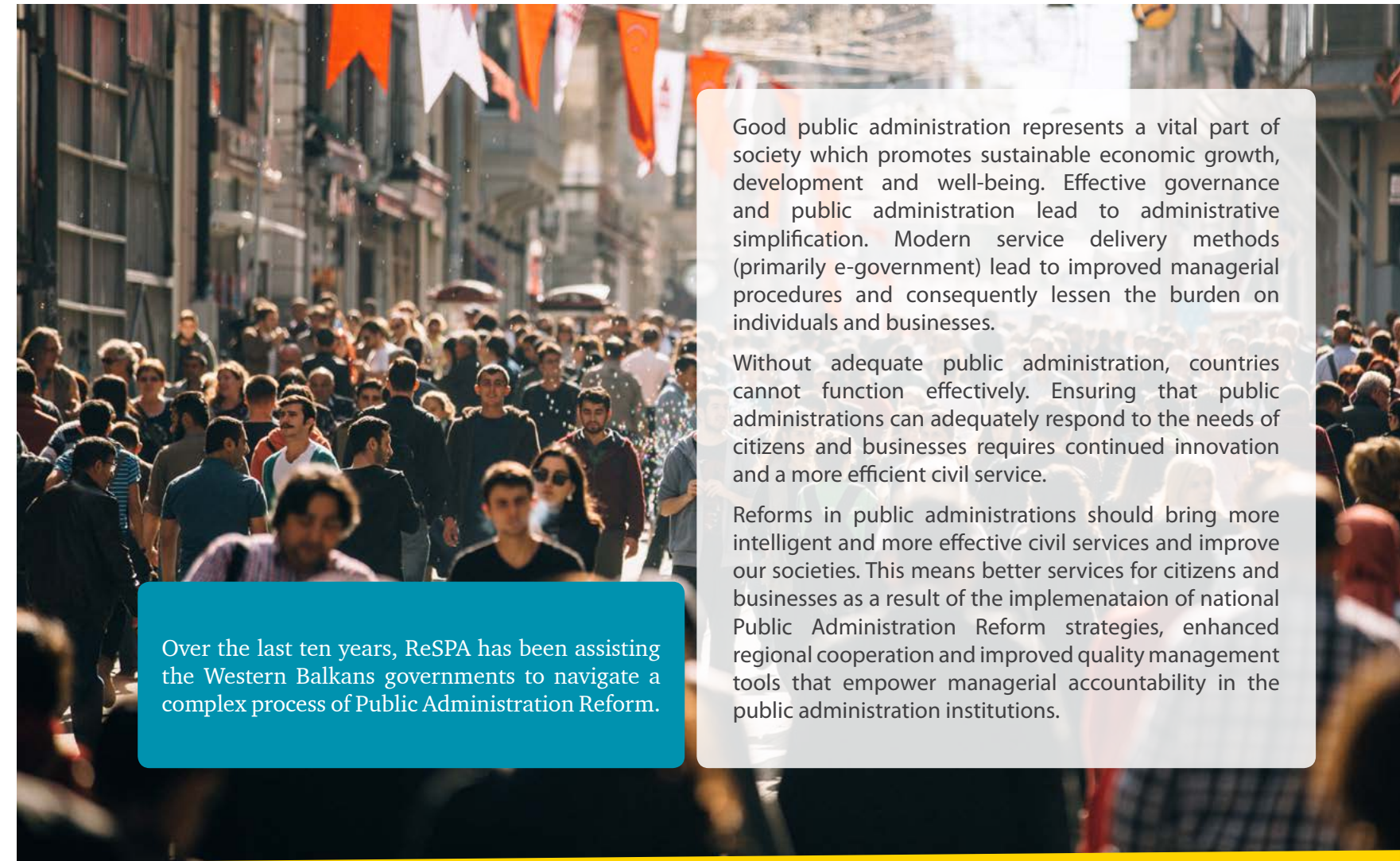
Progress in public administration reform strengthens governance at all levels. It directly impacts on better services for citizens and businesses, the visible growth of civil society, and a better standard of life.

In other words, reform in public administration means:

- ★ **An enhanced role for public administration in the improvement of the quality of public policies;**
- ★ **Improved professionalism and reduced politicisation of the civil servants** as a result of transparent and merit-based recruitment procedures;
- ★ **Reduced queues in public service receptions** as a result of simplified organisational processes and improved service delivery for the citizens;
- ★ **More transparent and effective businesses** as a result of improved electronic services to companies;
- ★ **Better overall performance of the governments** as a result of better policy development and coordination;
- ★ **Better monitoring of accessibility for all citizens** as a result of systematic collection of evidence-based data (especially for persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups).



a prerequisite for prosperous Western Balkans' societies



Over the last ten years, ReSPA has been assisting the Western Balkans governments to navigate a complex process of Public Administration Reform.

Good public administration represents a vital part of society which promotes sustainable economic growth, development and well-being. Effective governance and public administration lead to administrative simplification. Modern service delivery methods (primarily e-government) lead to improved managerial procedures and consequently lessen the burden on individuals and businesses.

Without adequate public administration, countries cannot function effectively. Ensuring that public administrations can adequately respond to the needs of citizens and businesses requires continued innovation and a more efficient civil service.

Reforms in public administrations should bring more intelligent and more effective civil services and improve our societies. This means better services for citizens and businesses as a result of the implementation of national Public Administration Reform strategies, enhanced regional cooperation and improved quality management tools that empower managerial accountability in the public administration institutions.

The European Commission has had an increasing influence on the Western Balkans public administration and its reform since opening accession negotiation with Montenegro (2012), Serbia (2014), North Macedonia and Albania (2020), while Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo* are potential candidates.

The EU accession and Public Administration Reform require significant efforts from all Western Balkans governments. In this respect, the European Union has strongly supported the region over the decade.

- ★ **The EU is the biggest donor in the region** with over €12 billion in grants and loans so far.
- ★ **The EU is the major trading partner in the region** accounting for 69.4% of the region's total trade in 2019.
- ★ **EU companies are the most significant investors** (accounting for approximately 65.5% of total foreign direct investment in stocks in the region in 2018).
- ★ In April 2020, **the EU supported the Western Balkan region with over €3.3 billion** to tackle coronavirus-related health needs & post-pandemic socio-economic recovery.
- ★ **The New Economic and Investment Plan (2020) supports the region with up to €9 billion** to spur the long-term economic recovery in the region and foster regional economic integration and the implementation of reforms to conform with the EU and the EU Single Market.
- ★ **The Enlargement methodology for the Western Balkans (2020)** has made the accession process more predictable, more credible, and more dynamic. This should help the Western Balkans to meet reform priorities and increase funding and investments through a performance-based and reform-oriented 'Instrument for Pre-accession'.
- ★ **The EU is the largest and most successful trading bloc in history, with a strong commitment to human rights, rule of law and innovation.**



"The European Commission has been a strong supporter of ReSPA since its inception and the Commission has witnessed the considerable efforts made by all ReSPA members in finding ways to cooperate and build strong relations with each other over the last ten years."

By introducing the Enlargement package and the Economic and Investment Plan for the region, the European Commission aims to accelerate the Western Balkans long-term economic recovery by boosting competitiveness, inclusive growth, and sustainable connectivity. In this effort, we strongly rely on ReSPA as a valuable partner in helping the Western Balkans governments join forces to tackle the challenges they face and and finding ways to efficiently address them."

Ms Genoveva Ruiz Calavera
the Director for the Western Balkans,
Directorate-General for Neighborhood
and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR),
European Commission



"The Economic and Investment Plan should help transform the Western Balkans into one of the most attractive regions for investments in the world"

Mr Olivér Várhelyi
– EC Commissioner
for Neighbourhood and Enlargement



ReSPA is a proven Public Administration Reform partner for the Western Balkan governments

To address the Western Balkan governments' needs to meet the growing requirements of Public Administration Reform, we jointly identify the most critical public administration areas that need improvement and **we provide tailor-made, effective and sustainable solutions to enhance PAR's reform processes in the Western Balkans along with the necessary measures, systems, and approaches.**



Ministerial Conference Devoted to the Digitalization, QM and HRM, 12-13 November 2019, Skopje, North Macedonia



ReSPA 8th Governing Board Meeting at Ministerial Level, 6 November 2017, Tirana, Republic of Albania



Regional Conference on Gender Equality and Public Administration Reform in the Western Balkans, 30-31 January 2018, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia



Ms Ratka Sekulović, ReSPA Director, at 8th Governing Board Meeting at Ministerial Level, 6 November 2017, Tirana, Republic of Albania



ReSPA 10th Governing Board Meeting at Ministerial Level, 12 November 2019, Skopje, North Macedonia



ReSPA Ministerial Conference on Good Governance, 12-13 June 2018, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina



ReSPA and OECD/SIGMA Conference, 16 - 17 May 2018, ReSPA Campus, Danilovgrad, Montenegro



The Conference “Public Service delivery across the Western Balkans”, 18-19 May 2017, Tirana, Republic of Albania

ReSPA 10th Governing Board Meeting at Ministerial Level, 12 November 2019, Skopje, North Macedonia



5th Governing Board Meeting at Ministerial Level, 31 October 2014, Skopje, Macedonia



A word from our stakeholders



I take this opportunity to thank all colleagues and partners of ReSPA countries for their trust, institutional cooperation, and always constructive exchange of experiences.

ReSPA has proven to be a useful mechanism for regional co-operation in strengthening the public administrations of the Western Balkans, but also a constructive partner. I believe that in the previous period, through these forums and the exchange of experiences, we have greatly contributed to making public administration better and at the service of our citizens. In the end, that's the only thing that matters. That our citizen is satisfied with the services provided by the Public Administration and that each of our employees is aware that "Public Administration - Citizen Service".

Ms Suzana Pribilović

Minister of Public Administration, Montenegro (2019)



"Serbia for years now has Digitalization and Public Administration Reform high on the Government's Agenda. In light of the current COVID-19 crisis, Serbia supports the proposed Ministerial Declaration in the field of digital transformation of Public Administration in the crisis situation of the Western Balkan region.

ReSPA's "Declaration on digital transformation" will certainly give us an additional motive to continue with investing in digitalisation and public administration reforms even more strongly in the future.

All stated is one more reason why we need regional cooperation and the MPALSG will propose to authorities in Serbia that the focus of Serbia during the presidency next year will be improvement of the process of digitalisation with the support of quality management and crisis management, in order for governments to adapt to the new situation."

Mr Branko Ružić

Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, Republic of Serbia (2019)



"The Republic of Srpska Government is strongly committed and dedicated to regional cooperation and we welcome ReSPA's initiative to develop and publish "Comparative study on service delivery", demonstrating not only the positive public administration practices in the region, but giving us concrete recommendations on how to improve the everyday lives of our citizens as well."

Ms Željka Cvijanović

Prime Minister of Republic of Srpska (2018)



"We welcome ReSPA's initiative to develop and publish "Comparative study on service delivery", which does not only highlight the shiniest stars of public administration, but gives specific recommendations as well."

Mr Fadil Novalić

Prime Minister of the BiH Federation (2018)



"ReSPA, EC and other international stakeholders have significantly invested in improving service delivery in BiH and now it is time for BiH, entity, cantonal and local institutions to take action. The region should use "Comparative study on service delivery" to replicate and share inspiring practices, such as e. g. Albania's e-services, wherever possible, and thus save resources and achieve concrete results faster."

Mr Josip Grubeša

BiH Minister of Justice (2018)



ReSPA's mechanism of intervention in the area of regulatory impact assessment proved very useful

"Our cooperation with ReSPA focuses on some of the key areas of work of the Ministry of Economy and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Srpska, especially in regulatory impact assessment.

In particularly, the exchange of experience with individual countries on specific topics (e.g. the Mobility Scheme) proved very useful. Our cooperation with the Secretariat for Public Policies of the Government of the Republic of Srpska, where we exchanged experiences on how to reduce administrative procedures also proved very fruitful.

The Government of the Republika Srpska has recently adopted the initiatives contained in the 'Decision on the implementation of the project of optimisation of administrative procedures'. The experience provided by ReSPA will be used in the implementation of this project."

Ms Slobodanka Dubravac

Assistant Minister for Economic Relations and Cooperation, Ministry of Economy and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Srpska (2018)

ReSPA team drives changes in public administration in the region



In enhancing PAR's reform processes in the Western Balkans we make available our vast experience, generated jointly with our partner institutions and more than 100 prominent experts, focusing on five key areas:



Centre of Governments

This aspects of our work helps the various public administrations of the region better coordinate public policies through establishing regional networks and fostering professional cooperation among senior officials in charge of policy development.

We aim to help develop the administrative capacities for policy planning, adjusted to the EU Integration Agenda, which should gradually bring prosperity for citizens and businesses in the region.



Better Regulation

This area of our work supports policy development and the quality of policy planning by providing a strategic framework that leads to better economic performance.

In particular, we aim to ensure open and transparent decision-making, that the 'voice' of citizens and other stakeholders are taken into account throughout the policy and law-making process, that government actions are evidence-based and that regulatory burdens on businesses and citizens are reduced as much as possible.



Quality Management

This aspect of our work focuses on the further development and efficiency of the public sector.

We are committed to the development of quality control and the use of quality management tools that are essential for improving the quality of public services.



Human Resources Management and Development

Our work in this area supports merit-based recruitment that is trusted, legitimate and results in the appointment of competent people.

We produce studies and guidelines to shed light on why merit recruitment procedures in the Western Balkans do not always work as intended and we identify measures which can be adopted to improve the quality of implementation of such precedures. We also support the strengthening and development of career systems, and we advocate for promotion based on professional merit.



e-Government

This aspect addresses issues of digital transformation of governments by enhancing the development of e-services, making government data more accessible, and using evolving new IT technologies for the benefit of citizens and businesses. Digitalisation is the core driver for achieving more efficient and widely available public services, and this inevitably changes the way society functions.



“The public administration reforms are a never-ending process. Even though reforms such as the stricter rule of law, more efficient procedures for improved service delivery, merit-based recruitment, etc., might sound abstract, they help attract more business, improve standards of life and slow the brain drain. We are working on creating conditions for more success in the region. The ultimate goal is to build a prosperous Western Balkan region for our citizens and businesses. We are continuously working on building an upward trajectory toward European Union membership, so we can all benefit from the stability, prosperity, and higher living standards that are the hallmarks of European democracies.”

Mr Dragan Đurić
ReSPA Programme Manager – Coordinator

Our goal is to empower public servants of the Western Balkan governments by providing them with critical insights, knowledge, tools and connections needed to establish efficient services to the benefit of citizens and business.

RESPA has been a meaningful partner to the public administration in Montenegro for many years



"I recognise it as an organisation that primarily provides expertise in public administration reform and digital transformation and an organisation which connects people from different areas of public administration to enable the exchange of experience and good practice among the region's countries.

As an e-Government Working Group member, I had the opportunity to participate in events, workshops and panels, organised by ReSPA. I also got a chance to share many years of public administration experience and

digitalisation with associates within various RESPA programs. In addition, I had the opportunity to develop skills in my professional field and these have strengthened and improved my project management competencies, people management, and organisation of daily work.

When it comes to ReSPA support to the Ministry of Public Administration, Digital Society and Media, I must point out that support programs such as the In-country support mechanism were crucial because these enabled us to cooperate with experts from different countries.

This assistance has undoubtedly improved the quality of our work and results. Moreover, information and recommendations obtained from various research and studies conducted by RESPA are valuable tools for developing policies and strategic goals in public administration.

Finally, I would like to emphasise ReSPA's efforts in helping to create a transparent, open and accountable public administration that works for the benefit of citizens and businesses and strengthens the Western Balkans' common goal to become a stable and developed region on its path to European integration."

Ms Mirjana Begović

*Chief of Directorate for e-Government Development,
Ministry of Public Administration, Digital Society and Media of Montenegro*



ReSPA e-Government Working Group joint work is beneficial for all of us

"I joined the ReSPA e-Government Working Group in 2014, at the request of colleagues who were already members of this network. My motivation to join the ReSPA e-Government Working Group was to exchange experiences with other colleagues from the region and to share ideas and support each other by working together. Because the different public administrations in our region, more or less, have the same problems, and similar needs, all within the framework of raising the level of public administration and establishing modern technological solutions. Each meeting of the working group, or visit to EU institutions, helps us see where we are, and what solutions we can apply in our institution.

I can freely say that my work and participation in the various ReSPA meetings helped me improve my institution's working practices. Digitalisation and modernisation are in line with world standards, with positive examples from practice in the region.

The pandemic also showed that the e-Government group knows no borders or barriers and that we are all like one big family."

Mr Vladan Kojanić

Head of Information Technology Group, Secretariat of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Republic of Serbia



ReSPA provided me and many other Albanian colleagues with the opportunity to network with peers from around the region and beyond

"My professional relationship with the Regional School of Public Administration began in 2015, when I was appointed to the Budget Committee of the ReSPA. I knew right away that working with such a talented and qualified group of people would be a highlight of my career. Being appointed as ReSPA's Liaison Officer for Albania in 2018, allowed me to continue working with ReSPA in a more active and relevant capacity, as the person in charge of coordinating and promoting ReSPA activities in Albania.

During our years of collaboration, I've had the privilege of working with outstanding ReSPA colleagues from whom I've learned a great deal about the important areas in which ReSPA contributes to the development of our public administration, with a particular emphasis on Human Resources Management and Public Administration Reform. ReSPA provided me and many other Albanian colleagues with the opportunity to network with peers from around the region and beyond, as well as learn from their experiences and best practices. My almost 6-year journey with ReSPA has had a significant positive effect on both my professional and personal growth. It's been enlightening to be a part of their multicultural and diverse working climate and community."

Ms Arvena Deda

Head of the Good Governance Programmes and Delivery Unit Department of Public Administration of Republic of Albania



ReSPA Director signed of MoU with the Ministry of Public Administration of the Republic of Slovenia in May 2017.



The directors of ReSPA and DISPA signed the Memorandum of Understanding in June 2018.



Directors of ReSPA and Centre of Excellence in Finance from Slovenia signed the Memorandum of Understanding on 11 April 2018.



The leaders of ReSPA and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 10 November 2017.



Signing of MoU between ReSPA and SASS, 2 October 2018, Budva, Montenegro

The European Commission/DG NEAR, OECD/SIGMA, KDZ, RCC, EUPAN, UNPAN, EIPA and many other institutions trust our work



"We are a reliable partner to international organisations, the European Union, EU Member States' partner institutions, government bodies, universities, think tanks and NGOs and we encourage exchange and cooperation between such institutions and the Western Balkans."

Ms Ratka Sekulović,
ReSPA Director

Through strong partnerships and memberships in various networks, we have opportunities to exchange our knowledge, experience and good practice, which allows us to be of better service to our citizens and businesses.

What Our Partners Say About Us



“ReSPA is our key partner for the implementation of Common Assessment Framework (CAF) in the Western Balkans and to improve the quality of public administration.

CAF is the driver for the European integration of the Western Balkans region.

KDZ and ReSPA together have implemented CAF programs in 15 ministries, agencies and municipalities through the BACID program. Their improvement results with CAF are impressive.

We are looking forward to many more CAF initiatives and effective governances with ReSPA.”

Mr Thomas Prorok

*Deputy Managing Director of the KDZ,
Centre for Public Administration Research and Head of the Austrian CAF-Center*



“The partnership between ReSPA and SIGMA is very natural. We work in the same professional area of public administration reform and in the same region, just with different mandates. While SIGMA is the “guardian” of the Principles of Public Administration, the assessor of progress and the provider of professional support to EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood administrations, ReSPA plays an important role as a hub for regional cooperation and networking.

In SIGMA, we see ReSPA as an agile and highly relevant regional organisation. We appreciate our partnership and cooperation and are genuinely interested in ReSPA’s training activities, regional studies, meetings of networks and conferences, and we gladly participate in these events to share our knowledge and experience.

Recently, we have developed a joint initiative – the Western Balkans Public Administration Award. The idea is to collect good public governance practices in the region, to reward the outstanding ones and to disseminate them so that they can inspire others. We hope this will become a tradition, encouraging innovativeness and healthy competition between institutions of public administration in the region.”

Dr Gregor Virant

Head of SIGMA Programme



“ReSPA plays a crucial role as the European Union’s partner for building quality of public administration in the Western Balkans region.

The European Commission is aware of how important and at the same time challenging, the process of public administration reform is. Public administration, in many countries, has struggled even before the crisis caused by COVID-19. Still, this pandemic shows us that in crisis can also lie opportunity, for example to accelerate government digitalization or to make public administrations more agile. Ensuring that public administrations can properly respond to the needs of the citizens and businesses requires continued efforts to build a smarter and more effective civil service.

ReSPA’s major strength relies on establishing effective collaboration and communication among its Members. ReSPA’s peer-to-peer activities and good practice sharing among its members supports them in the implementation of their public administration reform priorities and helps them build efficient and stable administrative systems, structures, and processes that deliver high quality policies and services, based on transparency and integrity. To this end, ReSPA will continue to have the support of the European Commission.”

Mr Florian Hauser

Team Leader at Unit A3, DG NEAR, European Commission



“At the time when ReSPA was established as school, it was significant partner to all of us as there were no national schools for public administration. With the changing world and teaching paradigms, it became even more important as hub of national networks, a place where it is possible to meet peers, exchange knowledge, share mutual challenges and find solutions in the direct peer-to-peer communication.

We hope that this good practice and a continuous window to new trends in public administration will continue in the years to come.”

Ms Ljiljana Uzelac

*Head of Strategic Planning Department,
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self Government of the Republic of Serbia*

“Building together governance for the future” - the power of networking and shared learning is at the heart of ReSPA’s ethos

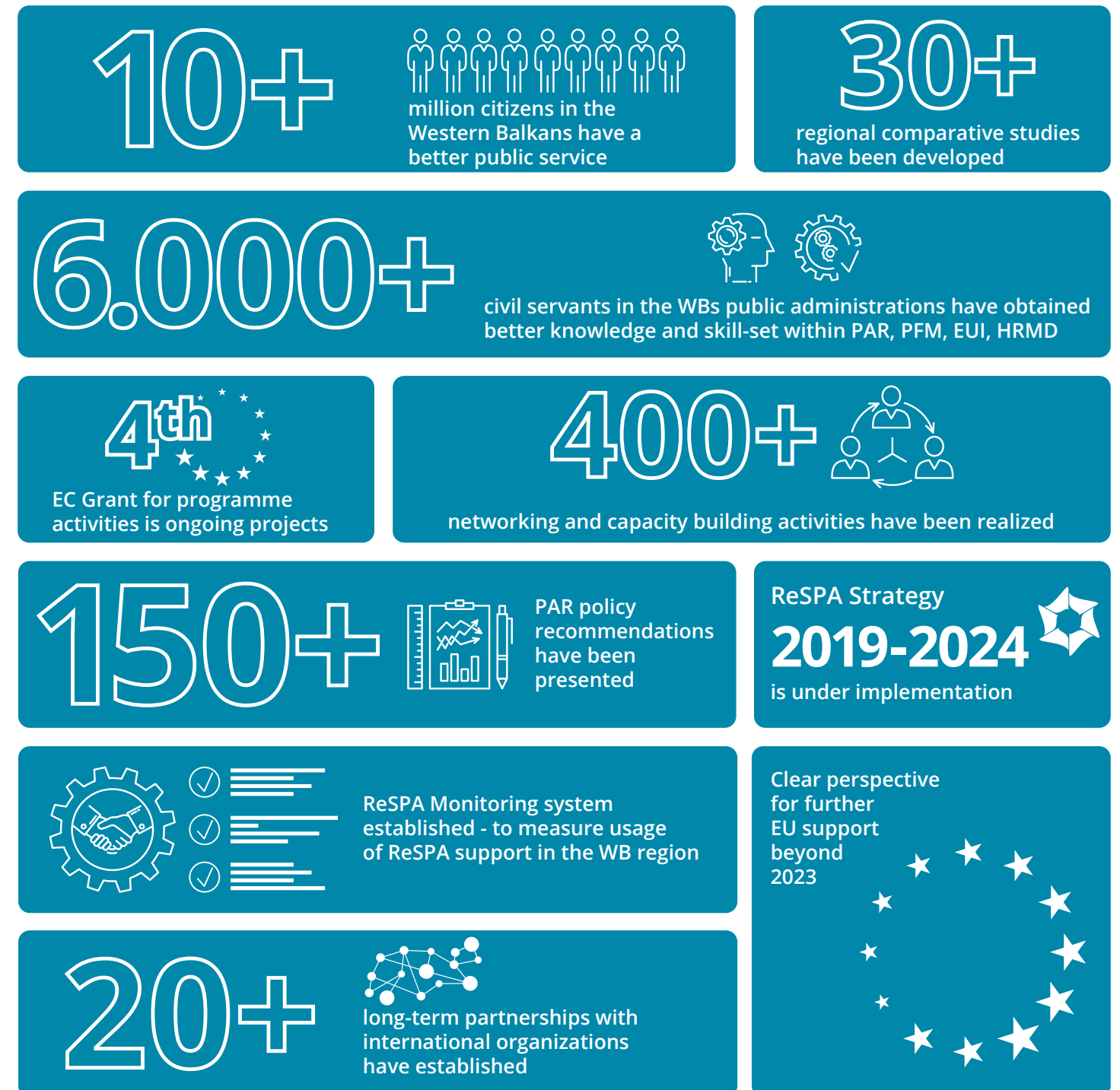
Our unique strength is the power of regional networking. We bring together ministers, government representatives, and civil servants with globally prominent experts and partners to share best practice, learn from, and support one another.

Hence, we create a regional thinking process for PAR implementation and empower PAR actors with critical insights, skills, knowledge, tools, and connections needed for the public administration reform process.

Such peer regional networking has allowed common issues to be identified, common lessons to be learned, and joint actions to be carried out at the regional level, which multiplies the ReSPA Members’ capacities to identify and address weaknesses while highlighting the success stories to build general lessons.

We give our attendees an active role in all events we organise. By nurturing this collaborative approach, we draw on our partner’s comments and suggestions to better inform our the research studies and publications.

We have organized more than 400 networking and capacity development activities. More than 6.000 civil servants in the Western Balkans administrations have had their knowledge and skillsets empowered. These activities facilitate exchange and sharing of knowledge, enable learning from best case examples and from the most credible experts.



Capacity Development Events

We enhance the overarching political readiness for PAR in the region through **High-Level Policy Dialogues**. By enabling direct exchange among respective ministers, we provide them with an opportunity to discuss and explore modalities for further collaboration with their counterparts and institutions in the region and to consult with high ranking representatives of the European Commission, OECD/SIGMA, CEF and others.



9th Governing Board Meeting at Ministerial Level,
21 November 2018, Bruxelles, Kingdom of Belgium

Thematic High-Level Ministerial Conferences bring together highranking officials responsible for implementing administrative reforms, academics, participants from civil society, and think-tanks, to discuss and analyse lessons learned in innovation, service optimisation, and other related topics envisaged within PAR.



Regional Thematic Conferences/Working Group Meetings/Workshops/Training cover a wide range of topics related to particular issues in public administration. Depending on the context, they include high-level or senior-official level civil servants, representatives of the European Commission, our partner institutions, various international organisations and experts. These events consider key challenges and good practice, offer key findings or knowledge transfer between professionals through practical examples and exercises (allowing participants to learn from distinguished experts) and, finally, provide a space for brainstorming about the way forward. Usually, the main issues are policy development, quality management, human resource management or other areas critical to improving PAR action plans in the Western Balkans.



Summer/Seasonal Schools provide educational activities for civil servants to expand their knowledge of EU related fields and studies or issues related to digital transformation.



Working visits provide an opportunity for civil servants from the region to meet colleagues from EU member countries (who already have applied EU standards in their daily work) and to familiarise with specific aspects of their colleagues' work.



Mobility Scheme and Peer-to-Peer programmes allow civil servants to gain and share regional knowledge and successful experience within PAR and EU integration through the regional collaboration of public administration institutions.



In-country support mechanism assists each ReSPA Member to find the necessary expertise to address their identified specific needs in the field of PAR. Those needs are usually related to the PAR special group meetings' operational conclusions or the deficiencies identified in the action documents for the implementation of PAR strategies and recommendations in ReSPA's policy documents.



Statements from participants of various ReSPA's activities

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“As the Director of the CHHS Office of Innovation, we face a lot of challenges and getting people to adjust the mindset, so, a lot of the philosophy behind how we do things is getting state workers and, when I was previously in the federal space, getting them to approach problems in a way that they're more likely to reach success.”

Mr Chaeny Emanavin
Director of the CHHS

Seasonal School on Digital Transformation, ReSPA 2019.

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“My final message is that I wish that all people who participated in the School can go back and become propagandist. No, that's a bad word. Evangelists for change, evangelists for creativity, innovation and the form of innovation that is most important for us now - we call it digital transformation. But we all know it comes together with a quite deep culture change, so I hope everybody who participated in the Seasonal School will take these messages and figure out how to transform them into action.”

Mr Dimis Michaelides
Expert on Leadership, Creativity and Innovation, Cyprus

Seasonal School on Digital Transformation, ReSPA 2019.

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“I came to the ReSPA Seasonal School on Digital Transformation with some scepticism about non-IT guys telling us about digital transformation, but this week, although we started with a “yes but” behaviour and attitude, we changed ourselves into “yes and” persons and we believe and we are convinced now that digital transformation is not only about the digital, but it's also mainly about the transformation of how we think, how we look at things, how we are doing things and how the public administration should change in the future.”

Ms Rozalinda Stojova
Head of the Development and Promotion of Information Society Unit, MISA, North Macedonia

Seasonal School on Digital Transformation, ReSPA 2019.

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“The lecturers were professional, focused on explanation of their themes and on transfer of knowledge from Chapters 23 and 24, which are currently very important for the Republic of Macedonia. The knowledge and experiences shared among participants from the Western Balkan countries will be very useful for the future of all of us. The Summer School was very well organised and structured, and everyone was so reachable when help was needed.”

Ms Sinela Agović-Bugarić, Secretariat for European Affairs
Government of the Republic of North Macedonia

Summer School on EU Integration, ReSPA 2019.

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“I think that the most useful issue at the Summer School was the expert discussion on understanding of Chapters 23 and 24. Also, the topic regarding the perspective of think tanks was very interesting. Due to the fact that the Ministry of Justice is a leading institution for Chapter 23 in Albania, I am sure that these issues will be very helpful for my future work.”

Mr Mirjon Brahimllari
Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Albania

Summer School on EU Integration, ReSPA 2019.

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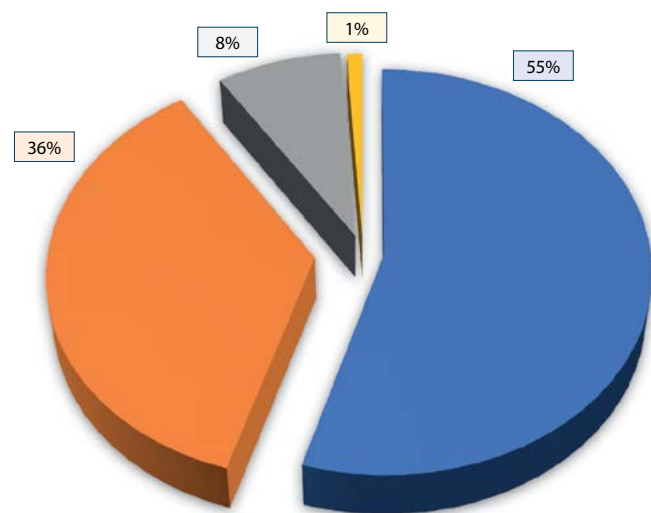
“The “ReSPA's workshop in Ljubljana was an excellent opportunity to share our experiences in the field of e-procurement. These events are always valuable, not only to hear the presenters, but also to network with colleagues from around the region. Macedonia has invested a lot of time and resources in developing its e-procurement system and we are glad ReSPA organized this forum to present what we have learned to the participants. We encourage ReSPA to continue its support to the activities related to e-procurement given the fact that the new EU Procurement Directives envisage 2018 as a milestone year for introducing fully fledged use of e-procurement in all EU Member States. We should use our comparative advantage to show that the Western Balkan countries are capable of following innovative and progressive solutions in procurement just like the Member States”.

Mr Aleksandar Argirovski
Acting Director of Public Procurement Bureau, Macedonia

Workshop on Collaboration of Internal and External Auditors, 2018, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Results of surveys on the effectiveness of ReSPA's initiatives

Percentage of participants in ReSPA's activities who have enhanced their skills, knowledge, awareness in ReSPA's thematic areas for development *



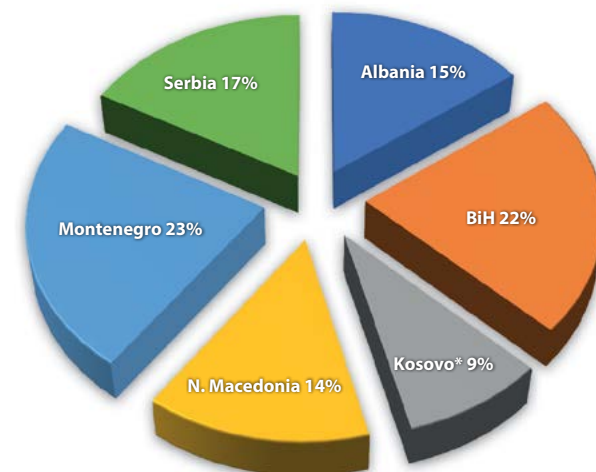
General evaluation

91% of all participants evaluated the overall organisation of ReSPA actions as excellent / good

■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Average ■ Fair Poor

Participants

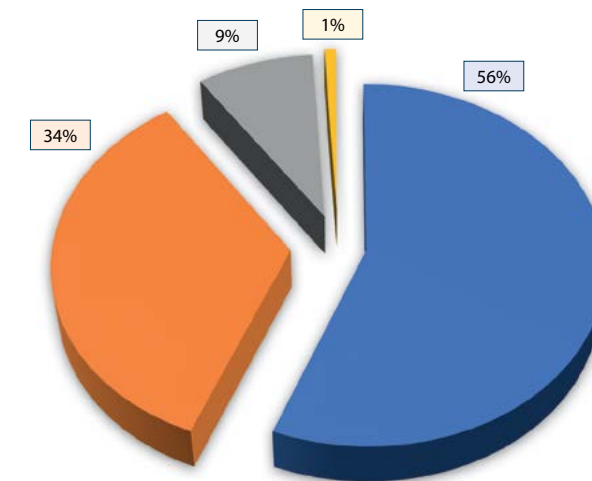
Representatives of more than 80 institutions in the region participated in the regional networking events: 15% from Albania, 22% from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 14% from North Macedonia, 23% from Montenegro, 17% from Serbia and 9% from Kosovo*.



* Consolidated data on number of participants for the period, November 2013 - December 2020.

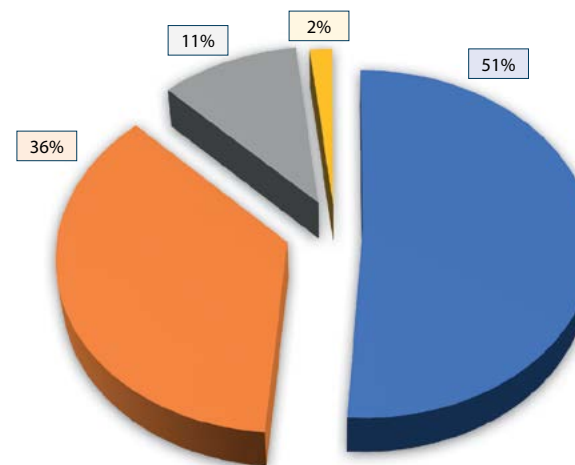
Content

90% of all participants, evaluated the content of ReSPA actions as excellent / good



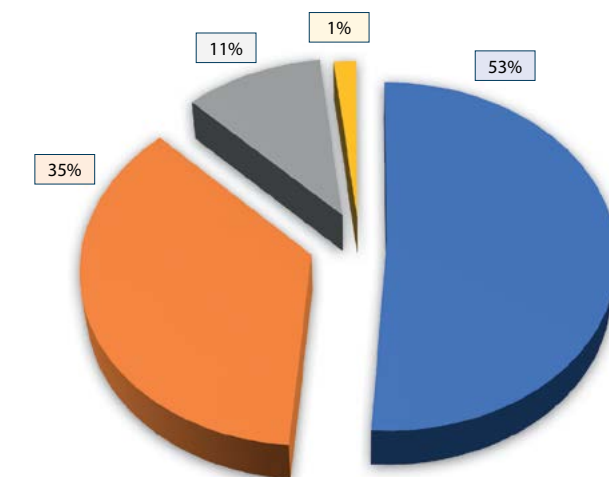
Methodology

87% of all participants, evaluated the applied methodology as excellent/ good



Relevance

88% of all participants evaluated the relevance of the ReSPA actions as excellent / good



■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Average ■ Fair Poor

Analytical paper on Managing Process of Implementation Public Administration Reform Strategies in ReSPA Members

Integrity and
Good Governances
in the Western Balkans

Regional Comparative Study on
Management of Irregularities
in Public Procurement

Zero
open
data
guidelines

Better Regulation
in Western Balkan

**Comparative study
on service delivery**

**Quality Management
in Public Administration and
Public Services in Western Balkans**

e-Govrenmnet
Comparative
Study

Abuse of IT for corruption

Public-Private Partnership
Project-Comparative
Analyses

The Optimisation of Public
Administration in Western Balkans

Legal remedies in
Administrative
Procedure

**Merit-based
recruitment
evaluation**

**Analysis of economic and social
consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic
in the Western Balkans administrations**



ReSPA policy papers provide valuable recommendations for implementing PAR and EU integration

We conduct various types of research and produce policy papers on different aspects of PAR and European Integration. These provide regional and country-specific PAR policy recommendations to help the Western Balkans governments implement their reform strategies.

In light of the fact that the political and social framework plays a crucial role in ensuring effective and sustainable reforms, we focus on developing recommendations that facilitate policy development, professionalisation and public service improvements in the Western Balkans.

We have produced more than 30 studies such as policy analysis and comparative studies and produced over 150 regional and country-specific policy recommendations concerning Public Administration Reform and European Integration.



The Way Forward

“Public Administration Reform leads to more effective governance through the simplification of administrative processes, the modernisation of service delivery and economies, which attracts investors and creates jobs. Such reforms are a way of reforming the entire system of public administration. It is a story of in-depth change within society and constant development and a story of devotion, hard work and political commitment.

This path is not easy at all and cannot be completed overnight. The European Commission and the Western Balkans governments have been with us at every point in this road. We all know that regional collaboration is the key to overcoming national challenges in different public administrations in the region.

When I look back, I can proudly see ReSPA has played a key role in fostering regional cooperation for strengthening public administrations and has been a constructive partner for the Western Balkans governments.

I am proud that we have made visible strides in implementing national reforms and, jointly with the Western Balkans governments, achieved results at a steady pace. The digitalisation of business processes, the increased number of electronic services, the optimisation of public administration, the improvement of quality management in civil service systems, merit-based recruitment and professional development of civil servants are just some of the areas where improvements have been made. I believe we have contributed significantly to making public administration better for serving our citizens.



In a rapidly changing digital world with societal challenges such as citizen engagement in shaping governments, we try to address the Western Balkans governments' most urgent needs and support them in bettering public administration.

If our civil servants are empowered and equipped for the challenges ahead and for improving citizen-centred service delivery, we can say that we have done our job well. That is why at ReSPA we often say, “People work with people for the people”.



ReSPA still has a lot of work to do, and there are many challenges ahead for the Western Balkans governments and us. We remain committed to supporting the reform process in the various public administrations in the region to help achieve EU accession, being aware that full implementation of the PAR means enhanced policy development, depoliticisation, professionalisation and improved public services.

ReSPA aims to continue strengthening its internal capacities. We continuously invest in our staff and business intelligence. With the European Commission's support, we will continue to provide new, innovative initiatives and deliver tailor-made solutions to develop more efficient governance and improved public services for citizens and businesses.

I take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues, ReSPA Members and partners for their trust, institutional cooperation, and the constructive exchange of experiences during our first ten years of existence which I expect to continue in the years to come”

Ms Ratka Sekulović
ReSPA Director

ReSPA continues to provide tailor-made solutions to strengthen the public administration capacity of its Members

Regional Quality Management Centre

- the cornerstone for improved quality management and better, citizen-oriented service delivery

The systematic efforts of ReSPA in the Quality Management (QM) area have resulted in the establishment of the Regional Quality Management Centre (RQMC). Over the last five years, we have been promoting Quality Management and implementing the CAF (Common Assessment Framework) as a QM tool for public administration.

The RQMC provides regional expertise in implementing the Total Quality Management tools. These tools should help to improve the quality management of public administration, simplify organisational processes, and design & deliver better, user-centred public services.



The RQMC also acts as the CAF Resource Centre and provides training programmes and consultancy for CAF implementation while hosting the regional CAF network (composed of CAF national contact points) and PEF network (composed of EFACs - External CAF Feedback Actors).



Regional Quality Management Centre

The Centre will be authorised to be able to issue “Effective CAF User” certificates to public administration institutions that successfully implement quality management using CAF as the quality management tool. Implementation of CAF should eventually improve service delivery and contribute to public administration reforms in the Western Balkans.

The Centre aims to build the capacities and expertise in CAF throughout the region by promoting CAF and organising CAF projects, training for trainers, CAF events, etc.

In this significant endeavour, ReSPA is leading by example. **In June 2020, ReSPA was accredited as an “Effective CAF-USER”, which proves our devotion to excellence in work and strengthened our position as host of the Regional Quality Management Centre.**



“We are making considerable efforts to fully operationalise the RQM Centre so that it gradually influences the level of performance in the institutions from the different WB public administrations. Through better performance and consistent quality control and management, public administrations will inevitably provide better services to their citizens and businesses.

The RQMC will support institutions and organisations to implement CAF and consequently raise the level of services they provide other government bodies, civil servants, and taxpayers. At the same time, we shall consistently raise the capacities in the public sector so that the resources for expertise in CAF and quality management become available in their administrations over time.”

Ms Olivera Damjanović
ReSPA Programme Manager

Regional Network of Policy Coordination

– an instrument for enhanced public policy coordination

Government-formulated policies play an important role in the growth and development of the nation. The public administration (by implementing laws, policies and programs) attempts to ensure the impact of these policies on citizens is positive. Therefore, systematic policy planning and coordination in the region (especially those related to their public administration reform frameworks) is a key area of interest for ReSPA.



We assist the Western Balkans governments in identifying the areas for improvement in policy monitoring and evaluation through the Regional Network of Policy Coordinators' activities. These aim to support improvements in the quality of policy planning processes, according to the needs of the governments of the Western Balkans.



"The development of high-quality evidence-based policies and policy cycles are essential, especially for those offices of public administration, which have a coordination role in the central government institutions."

Mr Dragan Đurić
ReSPA Programme Manager-Coordinator

Seasonal School on EU Integration

– connecting Western Balkans teams dealing with EU accession negotiations



ReSPA Seasonal School on Accession Negotiations is a unique opportunity for Western Balkans teams dealing with EU accession negotiations to connect, network, and discuss current and future challenges related to accession negotiations. The School offers a comprehensive analysis of the European Union's institutional and decision-making framework and the EU enlargement process. ReSPA, therefore, empowers civil servants in the Western Balkans public administrations with the knowledge and professional skills needed in the process of negotiating accession.

In addition, the Seasonal School aims to empower the civil servants in the Western Balkans administrations with knowledge and professional skills but also to provide them with a platform to convene, talk to and learn from EC civil servants, best experts but also each other.



"The School's importance has increased since the European Commission introduced a revised Enlargement Methodology, reinvigorating the accession process by making it more predictable, credible and dynamic. We are analysing and explaining the new technicality of the accession negotiations: the clustering of the accession chapters, aiming to make this process more comprehensive and overarching."

Mr Gentian Xhaxhiu
ReSPA Programme Manager

The Western Balkans Public Administration Awards

- promoting innovative practices in public administration



This unique awards system, initiated jointly with the OECD/SIGMA, recognises initiatives that promote and implement innovative, effective, inclusive and adaptable tools and systems in the Western Balkans public administrations.

In 2020, the Awards focused on successful responses by the Western Balkans administrations to the Covid-19 pandemic. The response to the crisis clearly shows how governments were forced to be inventive and responsive and effectively deal with public health and economic issues. The great effort demonstrated by the WB governments in overcoming the crisis motivated the jury to give awards to eleven 'champions' divided into four categories: Digital Government, e-Economy, e-Learning, e-Health and Social Innovation. The winners were awarded certified training in Agile management. The most successful winning cases were promoted globally at the "Think fast...act faster" panel hosted by ReSPA and OECD/SIGMA at the "Government AfterShock" virtual event coordinated by the OECD's Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI).

The quantity and quality of received submissions suggest that the next PA Awards should motivate many public institutions in the region to apply and present successful cases within the defined categories, it should also boost competitiveness and motivate others to follow their examples.



PA Award Champions in 2020

ReSPA and OECD/SIGMA decided to award eleven champions divided into four categories: Digital Government, e-Economy, e-Learning, e-Health and Social Innovation due to the great effort showed by the WB governments in overcoming the crisis caused by the pandemic.

The most winning cases came from the Republic of Serbia, and the same institution - the Office for Information Technologies and e-Government (the Office of the Prime Minister of Serbia) which was awarded for four projects: e-Government response (Improving service delivery during the pandemic), Ensuring communication and targeted information provision mechanisms, Deployment of Infection Control and Tracking Mechanisms, and Countering grey economy and Ensuring business continuity during the crisis (e-Inspector Contact Center and e-Greenmarket).

Three winning cases came from Montenegro's institutions: the Ministry of Economy, the Department of Public Revenues and the Ministry of Finance (in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Administration for Inspection) with the project "Application for financial aid to the companies in Montenegro and their employees for the COVID-19 subsidy", Health Insurance Fund of Montenegro with the project "Electronic services for citizens (eHealth)" and the Municipality of Tuzi for the project "Municipality for citizens - locals for locals".

Two winners came from the Republic of Albania's institutions: the National Agency for Information Society with the project e-Albania governmental platform and Albanian School of Public Administration (Public Agency under the Prime Minister's Office) with the project Together despite being apart.

One winner each came from Bosnia and Herzegovina: Civil Service Agency with the project "Training during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic" and the Republic of North Macedonia: Secretariat of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, Cabinet of the Deputy President of the Government in charge of economic affairs with the project "Online communication platform/ Contact centre for economic and other measures for mitigation of the Covid-19 outbreak."



Open Government Partnership (OGP) and Open Data

- from the partnership between state and citizens to improving access to government data for mutual benefit



A democratic government needs to be as transparent as possible. This means those who administer and enforce the rules and regulations must work with those communities affected by such policies.

The OGP is the initiative that all the Western Balkans have accepted and signed. This initiative entails the principle of partnership between Government and citizens through which governments can show their commitment to increasing efforts to make public institutions open, transparent, accountable and efficient. Each country is required to develop a biannual OGP National Plan of Action, and in this plan, it is mandatory to include CSOs.

ReSPA is assisting relevant bodies in Western Balkans countries to learn about the specific process of developing the OGP National Plans. Exposure to good practice so far has given insights into this process. In addition, the OGP tackles the area of open data, and through regional meetings, ReSPA provides an opportunity for relevant governmental representatives to exchange their views on different aspects of data opening. One of these is developing the appropriate methodological approaches to data opening. ReSPA will support the Western Balkans public institutions by providing methodological tools to facilitate open data. They are aimed to assist the policy level when deciding about data opening and when assessing the impact of already opened data.

Seasonal School on Digitalisation

– delivers modules and topics to support innovative digital practices



It has become clear the world needs technology and digital tools to solve many challenges, especially those caused by global pandemics. Governments in the Western Balkans have been challenged by the COVID-19 crisis to respond to citizens' needs for quicker and more accessible services. The digitalisation of services placed many demands on governments in the region, especially concerning digital service design.

ReSPA has introduced a Seasonal School to provide intensive training programs in different areas of the digital service design, such as design thinking, agile project and product management, human-centred design and many others.

The School is an opportunity for practitioners and experts from the Western Balkans and other countries to share experiences and methodologies regarding re-inventing services in digitalised format. The accompanying issue of optimising processes around e-services is another topic of considerable interest.

The global crisis also showed how the Western Balkans digital teams efficiently responded to the crisis by developing user-friendly IT solutions, which resolved many of the challenges that arose and helped governments stabilise the crisis. In this light, as in previous years, we plan to develop modules and topics based on the Working Group public service teams' needs assessments so they can more easily adopt critical aspects of digitalisation.



Regional Survey on civil servants satisfaction

- for further development of public personnel management in the region

The European Union has fully recognised the importance of developing public personnel management for European integration by making the professionalisation of the civil service a condition for the Western Balkan's countries accession.

Civil service reforms are intended to increase the productivity of civil servants, their performance and

integrity. However, the European Commission and national governments often lack evidence about the quality of human resources management in public administration in practice. Despite well-intentioned reform efforts, it remains challenging for national governments to effectively and reliably monitor individual institutions' quality of implementation, identify any compliance gaps, and differences in management practices across institutions and groups of civil servants.

In the near future, jointly with OECD/SIGMA, we want to explore the possibilities for further improvements in the public administrations in the Western Balkans, based on identified issues, needs and expectations of civil servants working in public administration in the region.



"If we want professional and good quality public administrations in the Western Balkans, in addition to introducing reforms that are aimed at increasing productivity of civil servants, we have to ask the civil servants about their opinion on the issues that concern them."

Ms Ranka Bartula Mušikić
ReSPA Programme Manager

e-Gov Pilots

- boost future orientation in public administrations by piloting new processes

E-Government pilots aim to increase the Digital Capacities of the Western Balkans public administrations. Through piloting new processes, technologies and tools, we help individual institutions to adopt different aspects of digitalisation to better serve citizens and businesses. Additionally, we aim to increase digital skills and collaboration among administrations by stimulating the development of new e-services through the agile management concept, simultaneously in several cities across the Western Balkans.

E-Government pilot initiative will introduce the model for improving the practices related to digitalization of public services, serving as the applicable standardized model in the Western Balkans public administrations. Experiences and lessons learned from pilot projects will inform the development of a model that will be offered to public administrations to improve the design and delivery of digitized public services and policies.



ReSPathon

- developing new digital solutions through competition

To highlight the government initiatives that promote innovative, inclusive, and adaptable tools and systems, ReSPA is designing a ReSPathon – a hackathon for the Western Balkans administrations. It is a sprint-like event that lasts for 48 hours, in which several teams of computer programmers, graphic designers, or other subject-matter experts collaborate intensively to develop software solutions for specific issues.

The ReSPathon competition themes are shaped around the findings from other ReSPA activities, and the outputs are such things as software solutions, smartphone applications, 3D printed products, etc.



ReSPA Monitoring system

- tracking outcomes and outputs of regional Programmes of Work

The monitoring system assists organisations in achieving greater effectiveness, efficiency and visibility. The ReSPA monitoring system consists of a monitoring framework and a monitoring toolkit that can be used to evaluate the impact of ReSPA’s activities in the region.

Ultimate impacts (same as country PAR)	Public administration in the Western Balkan countries have improved their services to citizens and businesses to ensure growth, security and welfare			
Intermediate impacts (level of country PAR outcomes – S.O. of ReSPA Strategy)	Improved policy development and implementation of public policies in WB	Strengthened professionalization and depoliticisation of PA	Improved management and delivery of public services	
Outcomes (level of national PAR outputs)	Approaches, policy measures, institutional mechanisms and systems have been adopted and implemented in the Western Balkans at regional and country levels in accordance with the Principles of PA and the EI agenda, aimed at ensuring:			
	Improved <u>PAR programming and implementation</u>	Improved <u>coordination and coherence</u> of the processes in PAR, PFM and the European Integration agenda	Strengthened consideration of merit and performance in PA <u>recruitment and careers</u>	Improved <u>quality of services</u> delivered to citizens, including greater accessibility and digitalization
Outputs, corresponding to ReSPA operational structure, based on Working Groups	Regional Networks and Exchanges built and consolidated in view of learning lessons, identifying recommendations and enhancing skills to improve PAR implementation process, including the ability of Governments to adjust to unexpected situations, in the following areas:			
	Policy planning, development and coordination, M&E, in Centers of Government	Regulatory reform and Regulatory Impact Assessment	Improved frameworks and implementation procedures for merit-based recruitment and careers	e-Government for enhanced efficiency, flexibility, transparency and participation, and ICT security
Activities (by thematic area)	1. Internal governance: meetings of the GB, BC; Execution of the Programme Activities by the ReSPA Secretariat; M&E system 2. Programme Committee for coordination and streamlining of the outputs and Liaison Officers; Working groups including Centers of Government representatives covering the output areas 3. Capacity development actions: training, conferences, seminars, workshops, WG meetings, working visits, provision of expertise (in-country support, mobility scheme) 4. Recommendations from policy papers			
Assumptions and risks, related to context	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Political assumption: national political commitment toward EU accession and PAR and EU priority for enlargement are high (Outcome level and above)Regional cooperation assumption: the push toward regional cooperation, networking and harmonization is high and there is no fragmentation of the regional accession process (Output level and below)Capacity assumption: EU and the WB countries invest in regional networking adequate financial and technical resources (input level and above)Management assumption: the internal governance of ReSPA is representative, independent, effective and quality controlled			

“The monitoring system will help ReSPA to ensure that the work we do is effective by checking that activities are implemented, measuring progress towards objectives, identifying problems as they arise, identifying strengths that can be built upon, and adapting to changing circumstances. The information obtained through the monitoring process will assist ReSPA in making timely decisions to improve the quality of its work. The results of monitoring will feed directly back into the planning process to enable any necessary changes to be made.”

Ms Ranka Bartula – Muškić
ReSPA Programme Manager



ReSPA Secretariat 2021



Ms Ratka Sekulović
ReSPA Director

Ms Sekulović was appointed at the position of Director of Regional School of Public Administration in July 2016, after she passed as the most successful candidate in the region the EPSO (European Personnel Selection Office) testing.

Before her engagement in ReSPA, she spent more than 15 years in public administration, and almost ten years dealing with the management of EU funds at the position of Deputy Minister for European Integration and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration in the Government of Montenegro. During her intensive work in the public sector, she managed and coordinated complex and demanding tasks in terms of establishment of first IPA (Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance) and Cross border structures with the neighbouring countries but also with EU members through the participation of Montenegro in Adriatic, Mediterranean and South-East Europe Programmes. Also, she was Head of the Operating Structure for Regional development and coordinated the development and realization of the most significant infrastructure EU projects in Montenegro in the environment and transport sectors.

During her carrier, she was an expert of the Delegation of the European Union in Montenegro and Council of Europe for result-oriented monitoring.

Ratka Sekulović is an engineer of technology and has a master in European Economic Integrations from the University of Montenegro.



Mr Dragan Đurić
ReSPA Programme Manager-Coordinator

During his professional career, Mr Đurić covered several highly responsible positions (Head of Department for International Relations, Information and Education in Trade Union Confederation of Montenegro, Deputy Minister for European Integration in Government of Montenegro, Secretary of the Negotiation Team of Government of Montenegro for Stabilization and Association Agreement, Secretary of Governmental Commission for Coordination of European Integration, and others). He also worked for more than eight years as Core Technical Adviser in Capacity Development Programme, a joint initiative of Government of Montenegro and UNDP.

Mr Đurić is a graduated political scientist, also having, PhD in the area of European Integration.



Mr Borislav Orechovski
Operations and Finance Manager

Mr Orechovski has 18 years of experience in auditing, finance management and internal control/compliance in the private sector. The first 5 years as auditor, gave him strong knowledge in International auditing standards (IAS) and International financial reporting standards (IFRS). In 2007 he started working in a Telekom company progressing to the position of Head of finance.

Mr Orechovski graduated from the Faculty of Economy, University of Skopje and later became a Certified Public auditor (CPA).



Ms Ranka Bartula – Mušikić
Programme Manager

Ms Bartula-Mušikić joined ReSPA in 2011. After working for 5 years as a Programme Assistant, in 2016 she started working as a programme Manager, managing HRMD thematic area and, until recently, procurement and ethics and integrity. She was a lead manager in development of ReSPA Strategy and ReSPA monitoring and evaluation system.

Ms Bartula-Mušikić graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo and obtained university degree in English language and literature.



Ms Olivera Damjanović
Programme Manager

Ms Damjanović joined ReSPA in November 2020 on the position of Programme Manager for the intervention areas of Quality management and e-Government. Before joining ReSPA Olivera has gained more than 15 years of experience at senior management level in the public administration of BiH. As a member or representative in inter-ministerial and EU working groups and subcommittee, she gave her contribution in the area of concessions/ public procurement, public administration reform and Energy Community. The work in public administration was preceded with ten years of work in UK and US international organizations and managing of the programmes dealing with access to justice and public finances.

Olivera has graduated at the Faculty of Economics, University of Banja Luka, BiH.



Mr Gentian Xhaxhiu
Programme Manager (Legal)

Mr Xhaxhiu joined ReSPA in July 2020. Prior to that, he has been engaged for more than 10 years in the Albanian public administration, mainly dealing with European Integration, regional cooperation, coordination of IPA Programmes, etc. He has been also engaged as lecturer in the School of Public Administration of Albania, delivering the modules related to EU funding, team building and public speaking.

Mr Xhaxhiu studied Law at the University of Tirana (Albania) as well as holds an Executive Master Degree in EU Studies by the Centre International de Formation Européenne (Berlin). He has also received a number of qualifications in Harvard University, University of Virginia and Sciences Po (Paris).



Ms Ivana Bajo
Personal Assistant to the Director

Prior to joining the ReSPA in 2011, Ms Bajo gained work experience in both public and private sector. As a public servant, she served in the Cabinet of the State Secretary in the Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination of EU Funds of the Republic of Croatia and Office for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Croatia. She also worked as an assistant in the Law Service in Croatia Records and private company Orfej, Zagreb.

In addition to providing support to the ReSPA Director in the effective discharge of the duties, since the arrival to ReSPA in 2011, Ivana is also in charge of providing assistance to the efficient operation of the ReSPA governance structures at the Ministerial and Senior Officials' level, as well as the organization of the high-level activities.

Ms Bajo studied Public Administration (bacc. admin. publ.) at the University of Zagreb, Croatia, as well as holds a Specialists degree (Spec.Sci) in EU Studies from the Faculty of Social Science, University of Montenegro.



Ms Nataša Kuč
Finance/Operations Assistant

Nataša's working experience before joining ReSPA team relates to her engagement in the various UN agencies: UNFAO, IOM, UNICEF, and UNDP where she worked in the field of finance, administration, HR, procurement, fundraising, and other tasks related to the operations.

Ms Kuč holds a BSc in Marketing and Business Administration from the Northern Kentucky University (NKU) in the USA. She obtained the certificate for Accounting technician from the Institute of Accountants and Auditors of Montenegro.



Mr Milutin Rašović
IT Technician

Mr Rašović has joined ReSPA from the very beginning. By covering the position of IT Technician, he made a significant contribution towards implementing new technologies, installation, and maintenance of ReSPA's IT system.

Prior to joining ReSPA in 2010, Mr Rašović served for ten years as the IT Engineer in Telenor Montenegro, a member of the global Telenor group - one of the leaders in the mobile communications sector globally. During his work in Telenor, he was in charge of providing support of IT hardware, security, software, and networks; administration of servers and different IT systems and managing IT strategy and planning.

Mr Rasović graduated from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering in Podgorica (University of Montenegro) with Ba. Degree in Applied Computer Science.



Ms Marija Orović
Programme Assistant

Ms Orović has been at ReSPA since 2011. In the capacity of ReSPA Programme Assistant, she was involved in the implementation of a number of high-level activities related to Public Administration Reform and Programme Committee of ReSPA, created to boost interregional cooperation among the ReSPA Members. Besides, she was a Member of ReSPA CAF Self-assessment team.

Ms Orović completed Master of Business Psychology and Management at the Faculty of International Economics, Finance and Business, Podgorica, Montenegro.



Ms Vanja Ivanović
Programme Assistant

Ms Ivanović has been the Programme Assistant at ReSPA since 2014 and had an active role in each organisational phase (preparation, implementation and follow up) of the various ReSPA activities with the special focus on the area of Human Resource Management and Development, Public-Private Partnership and Administrative Procedures and Administrative Justice.

Ms Ivanović graduated from the Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management, University of Montenegro, and obtained a degree in tourism.



Mr Vladimir Nikolić
Programme Assistant

Mr Nikolić has been the Programme Assistant at ReSPA since 2015. He has a strong interest in all areas of public-sector governance including cooperation and exchange of experience within thematic areas of the Centre of Governments and Better Regulation. Vladimir's comprehensive professional experience includes also EU financed project related to the quality of public service, CSO's and works within the local self-government.

Vladimir graduated from the Academy of Diplomacy and Security in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia.



Mr Slaven Bukarica
Programme Assistant

Since 2017 Mr Bukarica has been working as a Programme Assistant at ReSPA and being actively involved in improving regional cooperation, especially in the area of Quality Management and e-Government. Previously he worked in the private sector as an Event Manager for almost ten years.

Mr Bukarica graduated from the Faculty of Philology, University of Montenegro and obtained a degree in English language and literature.



Mr Janko Rovčanin
Driver and General Services

Mr Rovčanin is the Driver and General Services, at ReSPA (Regional School of Public Administration), the innovative centre of interregional cooperation among the Balkan States and a centre of excellence for training and capacity building in the public administration reform.

ReSPA Project Staff



Ms Jovana Popović
Administrative Assistant

Ms Popović was engaged at ReSPA in different capacities. Starting from the position of Volunteer related to institutional and legal affairs, then as a Programme Assistant, and as a Coordinator for the preparation and delivery of the Regional Public Administration Capacity building Programme, jointly organized between ReSPA and British Council.

Ms Popović owns the Degree of Specialist of International Law at the University of Donja Gorica, in Podgorica and currently studying the Master of European Union Law and international law at the same university.



Ms Milena Drača
Communication & Visibility Officer

Before joining ReSPA in March 2020, Ms Drača has gained more than 20 years of experience in Public Relations and Marketing field which can be summarised in three stages. The first stage lasted for more than ten years, during her work in a marketing agency where she was in charge of the most prominent clients and climbed up to the Executive position. The second stage started when she moved to the client-side and worked as the Marketing and PR Director in a few companies from different industries. Her becoming the Communication & Visibility Expert and Media Consultant on the UNDP and EU projects has started the third stage of her career.

Ms Drača graduated from the Faculty of Economy, University of Niš and obtained a Master's degree in Economic science.

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ReSPA

Regional School
of Public Administration

BUILDING TOGETHER
GOVERNANCE FOR THE FUTURE

Regional School of Public Administration

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