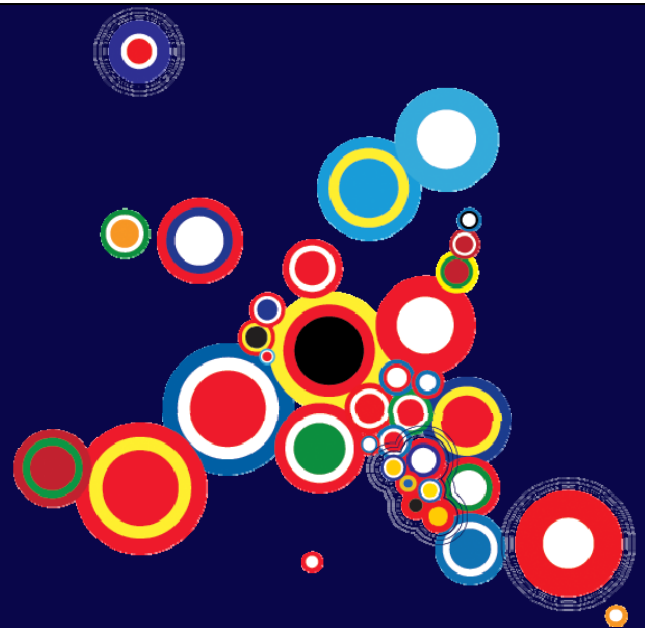




INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

MULTI-COUNTRY

Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA)



Action summary

ReSPA's principal aim is to improve regional cooperation in the field of public administration, to strengthen administrative capacities as required by the European Integration process and to develop civil services in line with the principles of public administration in the Western Balkans, hence supporting its member countries to create an accountable, effective and professional public administration system towards their EU membership.

The action will help to improve beneficiaries' administration and performance.

Action Identification	
Action Programme Title	IPA II Annual Multi-country Action Programme 2015
Action Title	Regional School of Public Administration
Action ID	IPA 2015/031-609.06/MC/ReSPA
Sector Information	
IPA II Sector(s)	9. Regional and territorial cooperation
DAC Sector	15110
Budget	
Total cost	EUR 3.5 million
EU contribution	EUR 3.5 million
Management and Implementation	
Method of implementation	Direct management
<i>Direct management:</i>	Headquarters
Implementation responsibilities	DG NEAR/A.3
Location	
Zone benefiting from the action	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia
Specific implementation area(s)	N/A
Timeline	
Deadline for conclusion of the Financing Agreement	N/A
Contracting deadline	31/12/2016
End of operational implementation period	31/12/2019

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

1. RATIONALE

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

IPA II beneficiaries preparing for accession need to meet the political and economic membership criteria, to align their national legislation to the *acquis* and gradually adapt to the Union standards and practices. Western Balkans and Turkey are facing common challenges although to a varying degree.

In the area of **democracy and the rule of law** challenges include the functioning and independence of institutions guaranteeing democracy which remain fragile in a number of beneficiaries.

A good public administration is a pre-condition for EU membership and it is essential that policies of the IPA II beneficiaries are supported by corruption-free institutions and decision-making processes.

Good **neighbourly relations** and **regional cooperation** are essential elements of the **Stabilisation and Association process**. Further progress is required regarding reconciliation, overcoming the legacy of the past and resolving bilateral problems.

All of the above priorities are common to all beneficiaries. Hence it is important to address them in a consistent and coordinated manner through a joint initiative like the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA).

ReSPA's main aim is to improve regional cooperation in the field of public administration, to strengthen administrative capacities as required by the European Integration process and to develop civil services in line with the principles of public administration in the Western Balkans, hence supporting its members to create an accountable, effective and professional public administration system towards their path to EU membership.

ReSPA seeks to achieve this mission through the organisation and delivery of training activities, high level conferences, networking events, political dialogues, summer schools, study tours, publications and other innovative methodologies, the overall objectives of which are to transfer new knowledge and skills as well as to facilitate the exchange of experiences both within the region and between the IPA II beneficiary countries and the EU Member States.

In particular in the field of Democracy and Governance, ReSPA provides a unique framework for networking and peer-to-peer learning. It comprises networks of experts who develop regional comparative studies on specific governance related issues including the fight against corruption. It also has a governance structure with Ministers who could ensure the necessary national follow-up. The operational budget of ReSPA is financed by the IPA beneficiaries, whereas EU funding is required for training and networking activities.

RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II INDICATIVE MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES

The Multi-Country Indicative Strategy Paper (hereinafter referred as the Strategy Paper) states that regional cooperation remains a catalyst for the enlargement process. One of the lessons learnt from the 5th enlargement is that countries working closely together in preparing

for accession are more successful and substantially shorten the road to accession. The beneficiaries face a number of common problems which they could more efficiently address through peer review and sharing of good practices. **Peer learning** is an important element in the process of preparing for EU membership. In this way, beneficiaries do not need to explore all possible solutions and can benefit from lessons learnt by the others.

The Strategy Paper clearly refers to ReSPA as a unique framework for networking and learning in the field of public administration reform.

The Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2014-2015 states that Public Administration Reform (PAR) is one of the three pillars of the enlargement strategy together with rule of law and economic governance. A well-functioning public administration directly impacts governments' ability to provide public services and to foster competitiveness and growth. Public administration reform aims at enhancing transparency, accountability, effectiveness and greater focus on the needs of citizens and business. Adequate management of human resources, better policy planning, coordination and development, sound administrative procedures and improved public financial management are of fundamental importance for the functioning of the state and for implementing the reforms needed for EU integration.

The EU has strengthened its approach to PAR through identifying six key reform areas and better integrating PAR in the accession process through PAR Special Groups following recent developments of the Principles of Public Administration which define what good governance entails in practice and outline the main requirements to be followed by counties during the EU integration process. The principles also feature a monitoring framework enabling regular analysis of the progress made in applying the Principles and setting benchmarks. ReSPA could play a significant role in discussing good practices and progress among beneficiaries on implementing the PAR principles.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Action takes into account findings from the 2013 Evaluation of IPA Multi-Beneficiary Programmes. Since its establishment ReSPA has operated mostly as regional training institution. However, the potential impact of ReSPA to drive and support PAR and facilitate EU accession was limited as for any other training institution. The most important problems and recommendations for addressing them have been identified and reflected in an internal Commission review.

The main problems and suggestions of that note are summarised below:

- ✓ Overall ReSPA should improve its usefulness (added value and impact) and its efficiency. Its role should be upgraded beyond training institution.
- ✓ Networking activities and peer reviews based on clear national needs should be the core element of the work of ReSPA. ReSPA should focus more on senior level seminars instead of training courses. Topics should focus on EU integration and the accession process.
- ✓ More activities should be organised throughout the region, rather than mainly in Danilovgrad.
- ✓ ReSPA needs to interact more with the national administrations of its members. ReSPA should ensure that the policy issues and the most important findings stemming from its relevant networks are followed up nationally.

- ✓ Likewise, ReSPA should interact more with other regional structures and initiatives, such as e.g. Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), OECD/SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management), etc.
- ✓ The annual Summer School should be transformed into a senior/high-profile political event.
- ✓ ReSPA should also use seconded national experts from its members to further strengthen its core functions as well as to improve the interaction with national administrations.

Overall, both the Governing Board as well as the ReSPA management have confirmed that they fully support the recommendations of the review and committed to the new orientation of ReSPA on the basis of which the current direct grant for ReSPA was signed.

The intervention design of this direct grant was based on the assumptions that ReSPA had the capacity to restructure itself and deliver the planned results without external help and that the governing boards would facilitate this restructuring process.

None of the above has proved to be the case. ReSPA needed external support not only to deliver the planned activities but also to guide it through a restructuring process to be able to meet its planned results and its revised strategic focus. Moreover the role of the governing boards needed to be enhanced so that they would more pro-actively facilitate the restructuring process.

In addition to the grant, a service contract was signed and initially the contractor was engaged to mainly develop a new portfolio of services for ReSPA. But in recognition of the above the service contract was slightly revised in the inception phase and its focus of assistance reoriented to these critical areas.

The main purpose of the service contract was to strengthen ReSPA's internal structures and working methods in order to fulfil its potential as a key regional coordination platform for PAR and better governance in the Western Balkans region.

The Action was trying to address issues as the following:

- ✓ Refocusing the role of the Governing Board (GB). In particular, the GB needs to have a more clearly defined role related to governance and strategic vision rather than micro managing the ReSPA Secretariat. For example, according to the existing regulations the GB is responsible for the recruitment process for ReSPA staff instead of the Director who should be responsible. Moreover the recruitment of new staff was based mostly on the regional representation criteria than on a merit base. In addition there was not a clear link between the countries' Government priorities and ReSPA Secretariat Programme of Work. However it is evident that the change process cannot be done without more country interest and ownership.
- ✓ Legal and organisational changes of ReSPA are necessary, including amendments to staff and financial regulations. In addition new role profiles and secondment rules will be drafted in order to assist ReSPA to recruit the most suitable and talented persons.
- ✓ Further develop and deepen the work of the existing networks in order to be able to follow-up nationally with action plans the most important findings/ recommendations identified through the relevant networks. The most proper structure to endorse these findings was the Ministerial Governing Board Meeting. In particular at the 5th

Ministerial Meeting in Skopje in 2014, for the first time, Ministers signed a statement of intent that the key policy recommendations proposed in the comparative study on “income and asset declarations in practice” and the suggested concrete activities presented in draft national action plans would be important parts of future Government annual work programmes, as well as part of the anti-corruption strategy.

ReSPA has not yet delivered but it is expected to improve and get a better focus with the help of the above mentioned IPA TA project during the year. Internal changes have begun and more good signs were visible at the Ministerial meeting in October 2014 in Skopje. This was evidenced by the introduction of new organisational structures; a revised pay and grading system which created additional posts; a new recruitment and secondment procedure, an increased focus on strategic policy led Programme of Work; more active engagement by Ministers.

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
Strengthening public governance in the IPA II beneficiaries as required by the European integration process.	Increase (rank) of Government effectiveness by 2020 (following World Bank Institute – WBI)	Indexes of World Bank Doing Business in South East Europe World Bank SIGMA annual assessments, European Commission progress reports, Regional Cooperation Councils (RCC) reports and other international country assessment reports National reports on PAR ReSPA regional comparative studies and- peer reviews	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Improving regional cooperation in the field of public administration and EU integration and strengthening administrative capacities in the beneficiaries	Number of policy recommendations endorsed by the beneficiary countries and enforced by the end of the Action	ReSPA Assessments European Commission Progress Reports SIGMA assessments	Awareness amongst the decision makers on the need for PAR improvements and regional cooperation, recognised and reaffirmed Strong commitment of the beneficiary countries through their Governing Board Members to support the ReSPA secretariat in all phases of the action implementation (including commitment for financial contribution) and non-interference in operational matters
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p>R1. – ReSPA has become a regional hub and delivers efficient and effective training and networking activities to address national needs and priorities on PAR and EU Integration</p> <p>R2. – Identified and promoted good practices (both EU and Regional) and recommendations on PAR and EU integration related issues and facilitated their integration and endorsement/adoption from national administrations.</p> <p>R3. – ResPA contributed to coordination of the 5th Pillar</p>	<p>Level of consistency between ReSPA's annual work programmes and national priorities for EU</p> <p>Percentage of participants that used the knowledge they acquired during the seminar/ training/ event in their national administrations within 6 months after the completion of the event.</p> <p>Level of seniority of participants in the training courses/networking activities (at least 80% of seniority on the overall number of participants)</p> <p>Number of good practices, models and success stories</p>	<p>ReSPA annual Work Programmes National PAR and sector strategies and action plans Impact assessment reports from the beneficiaries within six months after the completion of the training programme/ network event Participants / trainees evaluations; trainings and networking events reports - Post activity reports from participants as well as follow-up sample surveys, focus groups and stakeholder feedback ReSPA progress reports Reports on SEE 2020 Strategy</p>	<p>Closer cooperation and interaction with stakeholders and national authorities especially those dealing with PAR and EU integration related issues Better integration with other regional initiatives and existing networks such as the EUPAN (EU Public Administration Network) and RCC ReSPA Secretariat has the capacity to prepare the ground by reviewing its network recommendations and promoting the main findings. Better use of its governance structures and in particular the Ministerial Governing Board</p>

<p>of South East Europe (SEE) 2020 implementation</p>	<p>identified and promoted</p> <p>Percentage of suggested recommendations endorsed and enforced by national administrations</p> <p>Number of measures identified in the SEE 2020 Strategy that have been adopted by the beneficiaries in the field of effective public services, anti-corruption and justice</p>		<p>meetings</p> <p>Co-ordination and commitment of all stakeholders in the SEE 2020 Strategy</p> <p>Complementarity and alignment of national action plans for governance for growth to regional action plans and the Economic Reform Programmes</p> <p>Ownership of national action plans</p> <p>Risks:</p> <p>Lack of political will and commitment on PAR issues</p> <p>Slow PAR reforms</p> <p>Possibility that the beneficiaries may want to withdraw from ReSPA if they do not see the added value of the work</p>
ACTIVITIES	MEANS	OVERALL COST	ASSUMPTIONS
<p>A.1 Training and networking activities for R1</p> <p>–Identify national needs that should be addressed regionally through the Regional Public Administration Network (RePAN), the NIPACs (National IPA Coordinators), and ReSPA's Advisory Board and select the most suitable method to address it (training, networking activity, comparative study)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare, manage and deliver training and other capacity building programmes in cooperation with the National Training Institutions in the member counties. - Impact assessment of training and networking activities -Follow up and analysis as regards program improvements - Annual Conference -Technical assistance to support ReSPA Director and address gaps in internal capacity <p>A.2 Good practices and recommendations on PAR and EU integration issues for R2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify key priorities in the area of PAR and EU Integration through the RePAN, the NIPACs and ReSPA's Advisory Board - Ensure that the discussions and lessons learned at regional level through the networking activities and the comparative studies are translated into concrete actions nationally 	<p>1 grant agreement with ReSPA</p>	<p>EUR 3.5 million</p>	

- Support national authorities for endorsement of the good practices into national administrative framework through political declaration at Ministerial level meetings
- introduce a mechanism to track the progress adopting recommendations.
- ReSPA to be used as a regional repository for the written outputs of country-specific EU IPA and other regional programmes. These should be stored electronically, filed and classified to allow member states access them
- Organise promotional events aimed at promoting and sharing of good practices including the evaluation and dissemination of the results of the short limited activities under the mechanism of bilateral supports in the member countries.
- Introduce and support a regional public administration excellence awards programme to recognise achievement in promoting excellence in the public services in the member states and regionally.

A.3 Effective coordination of the implementation of the governance for growth pillar under the SEE 2020 strategy for R3

- Monitoring the implementation of the Governance for Growth pillar within SEE 2020 strategy in accordance with the respective Action Plan
- Organize meetings, forums and workshops with relevant stakeholders in order to improve 5th pillar SEE 2020 Strategy measures
- Support the institutions in the region to align the measures aiming to improve 5th pillar SEE 2020 Strategy
- Produce regional overview of the SEE 2020 implementation regularly

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ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

The overall objective of the Action is to strengthen the public governance systems in the enlargement countries as required by the European integration process, in line with the principles of public administration.

More specifically the Action aims to improve regional cooperation in the field of public administration and EU integration, strengthening administrative capacities and enhancing the overall quality, reliability, integrity, transparency and accountability of public institutions in the beneficiaries.

There is a clear need for regional cooperation in order to achieve results that a beneficiary is less likely or even unable to achieve alone. **ReSPA** will be the **key regional coordination platform** for PAR in relation to the EU integration process.

ReSPA will address genuine national needs and priorities on PAR as they have been identified by the beneficiaries. Furthermore, it will agree on complementary methodologies that would best support the counties in implementing their national action programmes.

ReSPA as a regional hub will organise and deliver training and networking activities, high-level political dialogues, conferences, seminars, summer schools, mobility schemes or study tours according to the needs of the beneficiaries in cooperation with their national Training Institutions.

In order to have successful training and networking activities it is essential that ReSPA understands the key challenges of the region by taking part in the political and institutional dialogue with national administrations and in particular with the EU integration offices and the National IPA Coordinators (NIPACs). In addition ReSPA will establish a Regional Public Administration Network (RePAN) which will adopt similar structures and operational procedures from the EU Public Administration Network (EUPAN). These structures will include a ministerial level political forum, thematic networks of senior officials focusing on key themes of PAR and European Integration including the implementation of the PAR principles, and ad-hoc working groups of experts and officials. A ReSPA Advisory Board needs also to be established with the objective of assisting in identifying training and capacity development activities and providing guidance on ways to improve management and governance. These would lead to a better understanding of the needs and a stronger ownership by the beneficiaries.

Moreover, ReSPA will identify and promote good practices and recommendations on PAR and European Integration issues through its extensive networks and training programmes, awards for public service excellence and, in particular, through the preparation of thematic regional comparative studies which identify best practices and proposals on how to address specific issues such as making asset declarations systems more effective and thus be able to fight corruption at national level. In addition, ReSPA will support national administrations to adopt and integrate these recommendations into relevant strategies, policies and actions. Moreover, ReSPA will facilitate the exchange of good practices and discuss the progress among countries on implementing the PAR principles. This would also include ensuring better policy coordination systems and structures. Finally, ReSPA could be used as a regional repository for the written outputs of country-specific IPA and other regional programmes. These should be stored electronically, filed and classified to allow member states to access them supporting dissemination of learning from other relevant national IPA II actions.

Finally, ReSPA will provide effective coordination and relevant capacity building interventions for the implementation of the 5th Pillar (“Governance for Growth”) under the SEE 2020 Strategy as this is related to and complementary to ReSPA’s objectives and existing activities. Institutions, particularly those involved with governance, contribute significantly to development and growth. Regional cooperation in this area is important in terms of mutual learning and adoption of best practices as well as in terms of long-term stability. There are three main dimensions for good governance considered by the strategy: Effective governance, Anti-corruption and Justice. Cooperation with the RCC in domain

of implementing activities relevant to the 5th pillar of the SEE 2020 strategy – Governance for Growth, will enhance the alignment and integration of the national measures related to competitiveness increase within the overall SEE 2020 objectives.

The first assumption for the success of the Action is to ensure that political and administrative leaders within national administrations are committed to good governance and PAR. It is essential to continuously raise awareness of PAR importance and support high-level policy dialogue with the PAR Special Groups.

To this aim ReSPA needs to target a broader range of stakeholders that can support and encourage reform to take effect. It needs to successfully meet beneficiaries' needs and demand for assistance and ensure high coherence and complementarity with countries' national action plans for public administration reform. Moreover it needs to cooperate closer with other regional and EU initiatives like RCC and SIGMA.

A second assumption is that ReSPA will have managed to put in place services that provide added value, build internal capacity, enhance its role as key regional platform for PAR and raise awareness among its target groups at the end of the 2015 with the help of the TA project. A third key assumption is that ReSPA takes part in the political and institutional dialogue in the region having a strong interaction with national administrations and in particular with the EU integration offices and NIPACs in order to synchronise and firmly link its work programme with the national reform priorities of the beneficiaries.

A fourth assumption is that the right participants for ReSPA activities are selected. Participants should be high-level senior officials which increases the possibilities for meaningful exchanges of lessons learned and further institutional follow-up. ReSPA will endeavour to involve both politicians and practitioners in its networking activities to ensure both the expertise necessary to provide excellence, and to have impact on decision making process. Furthermore, the beneficiaries should be responsible for selecting and nominating highly qualified participants (levels/responsibility) who will actively participate in ReSPA training/networking events and ensure linkage with the competent authorities.

Nevertheless, a potential risk involves the regional networks not being able **to identify the key priorities** and/or not ensuring that the lessons learned at regional level will be translated into concrete actions nationally. This risk can be addressed by focusing on impact and results and requesting all networks to report on concrete results of their work rather than merely looking at inputs such as meetings organized.

Finally the beneficiaries may not want to endorse and support the recommendations steaming from the networks. In this case ReSPA should support them in adopting the measures highlighting the benefits.

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities are shared between DG NEAR and ReSPA. The Action will be implemented by the ReSPA secretariat in Danilovgrad under the guidance of the ReSPA Governing Board (GB), which is made up of representatives by all six ReSPA members. The European Commission participates in the GB meetings at both levels as observer ex officio.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD(S) AND TYPE(S) OF FINANCING

The Action will be financed through a direct grant to ReSPA for a value of EUR 3.5 million. The EU will finance the Action up to 100% of the total amount. It is proposed to directly award the Grant to ReSPA on the basis of Article 190 (1)(c) of the Rules of Application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No.

966/2012, based on a de jure or de facto monopoly as ReSPA is the only, genuinely regional institution created by all beneficiaries to deliver training and networking activities in the area of public administration reform and European integration in the Western Balkans.

4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)

ReSPA should perform effective and regular monitoring of ReSPA Action by assessing progress, identify problems and areas of failure, and take immediate actions to address them and improve further programme performance.

ReSPA will provide quarterly progress reports of the Action, based on objectives envisaged in the ReSPA Action Document covering achieved results, difficulties in implementing the action, correction actions taken to address difficulties, outputs outcomes and future actions.

ReSPA will ensure that the relevant European Commission services are kept informed of all developments.

DG NEAR will evaluate progress in the achievement of expected results on the basis of indicators outlined in the Action Document and submitted progress reports.

The European Commission may carry out a [mid-term][final][ex-post] evaluation for this action or its components [via independent consultants][through a joint mission][via an implementing partner]. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the DG NEAR guidelines for evaluations. In addition, the Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing agreement.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Baseline (year) (2)	Milestone 2017(3)	Target 2020 (4)	Final Target (year) (5)	Source of information
Government Effectiveness (rank)			20% increase		
Increase (rank) of Government effectiveness by 2020 (following World Bank Institute – WBI) ¹	2.3		2.76		WB index
Number of policy recommendations endorsed by the beneficiaries and enforced by the end of the Action ²	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	National Reform Strategies ReSPA Assessments European Commission Progress Reports SIGMA assessments (new assessment framework)

¹ This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; the respect for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them (WB definition), it is measured in absolute numbers

² This indicator measures to what extent the beneficiaries endorse and use ReSPA recommendations to improve their national reform agenda. There is not a baseline for the moment

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

Not applicable

ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY (AND IF RELEVANT OTHER NON-STATE STAKEHOLDERS)

ReSPA is an International Organisation whose members are the IPA II beneficiaries for this action, thus ensuring ownership and participation at grassroots level.

The Action shall make every effort to encourage national reform teams to consult widely, recognising the role of civil society in stimulating Public Administration reforms and ensuring that it remains close to the citizens and business. The Action shall coordinate with other relevant initiatives such as the IPA Civil Society Facility, which aims to strengthen the capacity of civil society to monitor and engage in dialogue on key public sector reforms.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The principles and practice of equal opportunity will be guaranteed to ensure equitable gender participation in the action. The principle of equal opportunity shall apply also in relation to the trainees coming from the different national administrations.

Especially in relation with Civil Service and HR Management, gender mainstreaming shall be discussed as a fundamental cross-cutting issue of PAR to be integrated in policy making processes and in the regular functioning of Public Administrations. Following senior level discussion, positive actions shall be considered to strengthen the understanding of gender related issues and relevant capacity building of officials to enhance gender mainstreaming into national policies and programmes.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

Minority and vulnerable groups' concerns will be reflected in all activities of the project, in particular when it concerns participation in the training activities and institutional development of ReSPA.

The same considerations as for gender mainstreaming apply to minorities and vulnerable groups

6. SUSTAINABILITY

There are two conditions for sustainability:

The first one is that ReSPA's Members continue to pay their annual contributions to cover its operational costs.

The second condition is that ReSPA's Members agree on the extension of ReSPA's international agreement. Finally ReSPA Governing Board and Secretariat must focus on their respective strategic and operational roles and responsibilities able to take strategic decisions and move things forward by delivering results.

The above mentioned conditions depend also on the capacity of ReSPA to respond to its members' needs and to provide them added value.

The European Commission provides funds for training and networking activities to support the implementation of reforms.

7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action. All necessary measures will be taken to make public the fact that the Action has received funding from the EU in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions. Additional Visibility Guidelines developed by the European Commission (DG NEAR) will have to be followed.

The implementation of the communication activities shall be the responsibility of ReSPA, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated in the Action.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed action programme objectives and the accession process. Actions shall be undertaken to strengthen general public awareness and promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

The European Commission shall be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities. In addition to the ReSPA logo, the flag of the European Union will appear on the cover of each ReSPA publication, promotional activity, event and official correspondence.

ReSPA staff is committed to spreading awareness of efforts made by the European Union in the field of public administration reform in the beneficiaries. On all occasions, staff will properly recognise the relationship between ReSPA and the European Union.

In particular:

- The regular update of the ReSPA website will be used as the main tool for information dissemination and exchanges between beneficiaries, resource centre, e-library, internet forum for exchange and communication among communities of practitioners.
- ReSPA will continue the quarterly publication of the Newsletter.
- ReSPA members' success stories and good practices will be identified, followed, disseminated and promoted.
- The promotion of ReSPA will be ensured in the regional, EU and worldwide meetings, conferences, events as well as documenting the importance of each event.