

CONFERENCE

„EMPOWERING LEADERS: ADVANCING LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS “

3rd- 4th December 2024, at Hotel Dubrovnik, Zagreb, Croatia

Effective leadership is a cornerstone of resilient and forward-looking public administration, empowering individuals to navigate complex challenges and drive positive change. The conference is organised jointly by ReSPA and the National School of Public Administration of Croatia in partnership with the French National Institute of Public Service (INSP). It will bring together leaders, experts, and stakeholders from across the region to address the pressing needs and challenges in leadership training within public administration. Anchored in real-world experience from the Leadership Project implemented by the Croatian NSPA and the French Institute for Public Service (INSP), the conference will be a dynamic platform for knowledge-sharing and collaborative growth, offering insights into the transformative role of leadership development. It aims to provide insight into the scope of challenges facing the implementation of leadership training and exchange values, as well as the importance of strengthening the competencies of leaders in the Western Balkans. The conference should contribute to greater cooperation among peers in the region. With a focus set on networking and exchange of experiences, the conference will look at the topic of tailoring and implementing quality training for leaders in the public administration, thus bearing in mind various aspects – such as the changing environment (climate, demography, digitalisation and uprise of new technologies) and accession to/functioning within the EU. The agenda includes expert-led presentations and panel discussions that cover the implementation of the INSP/NSPA Leadership Program, with contributions from additional training initiatives, such as those by the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (EKKDA) and Center for Excellence in Finance (CEF). Interactive sessions, including world café-style group work, will allow participants to explore regulatory frameworks, competency models, and other essential elements of successful leadership training. On Day 1, attendees will hear from experts and former participants in the pilot Leadership program, offering a firsthand look at the successes and hurdles of such training initiatives. Day 2 will open with interactive group sessions designed to allow participants to work collaboratively on issues such as regulatory frameworks, competency models, and the specific needs for sustainable leadership training. The conference will contribute to developing a roadmap—a foundation for future initiatives and potential collaborations that will continue to be refined and developed beyond the conference.

This conference promises a unique, hands-on experience, as attendees not only learn from one another but also contribute directly to shaping the future of leadership in public administration across the Western Balkans. Additionally, the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) will play a pivotal role in fostering collaboration and strengthening leadership capacity within the Western Balkans.

TUESDAY, 3RD DECEMBER 2024

9:00 – 9:30	Registration of the participants
9:30-10:00	Welcome remarks and introductory speeches - Mr Damir Habijan, Minister of Justice, Public Administration and Digital Transformation (TBC) - Ms Anamarija Badovinac, Deputy Head of Legislation Office of the Government of Croatia - H.E. Mr Fabien Fieschi, Ambassador of France to Croatia - Mr Rudolf Vujevic, Director of the National School for Public Administration (NSPA) - Ms Maja Handjiska Trendafilova, Director of Regional School for Public Administration (ReSPA) - Mr Frédéric Rauser, Director of International Relations, Institut National du Service Public (INSP) - Mr Vassileios Exarchos, Vice-president of the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA), Greece
10:00 – 11:15	Session 1: Objectives and lessons learnt of the French-Croatian Leadership program Panelists: prof. Mr Jean- Michel Eymeri-Douzans, Deputy Director of PO Toulouse, Mr Jacques Skowron, senior expert on strategic and operational management, Mr Frederic Rauser, Director of International Relations, INSP, Ms Valentina Miličić, Assistant Director, NSPA, Moderator: Mr Philippe Sibeaud, Project manager, International Relations Directorate, INSP 1. General outline of the programme and administrative context 2. Presentation of the INSP approach to training of senior managers and correlation of INSP's senior management training activities implemented in the Western Balkans region, INSP experts 3. <i>Leadership</i> Project implementation, challenges, results achieved and lessons learnt, NSPA/INSP experts - Who was trained, how often and on which topics? - What were the main challenges in training?

	- Ideas for improvement of training syllabi? - Trainee testimony/ies <i>Followed by Q&A and discussion</i>
11.15-11.30	Coffee break
11.30– 13:00	Session 2: Presentation of models of Leadership training Panelists: Mr Athanasios Raptis, Director of the National School of Public Administration and Local Government (ESSDA), Greece, prof. Mr Jean- Michel Eymeri- Douzans, Deputy Director of PO Toulouse, Mr Jacques Skowron, senior expert on strategic and operational management, Ms Ajda Turk, Head of the Leadership and Learning Ecosystems Team, CEF Moderator: Ms Marija Grga, Head of International Relations and Projects Service, NSPA 1. EKDDA/ESSDA case study: Leadership training and the ongoing reform of the Greek public training system for civil servants, Mr Athanasios Raptis, EKDDA 2. INSP's Executive Programme (Cycle des hautes études de service public), Prof. Jean- Michel Eymeri Douzans and Mr Jacques Skowron, INSP 3. CEF Leadership for Managing Reforms Program: Enhancing leadership skills of young public officials in the Western Balkans through WeLead project, Ms Ajda Turk, CEF <i>Followed by Q&A and discussion</i>
13.00 – 14.30	Lunch

	Session 3 – Regional Leadership in a Globalized World: The Case of the Western Balkans – challenges and opportunities Panelists: Ms Arlinda Hoti, Director of Training and Communication, Albanian School of Public Administration Mr Refik Begic, Director of Civil Service Agency, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Ms Sonja Vojinović, Head of Sector for Implementation of Training Program, Human Resources Management Authority, Montenegro Mr Petar Fidanovski, Advisor for Technical support, Ministry of Public Administration, North Macedonia Ms Radmila Tomović, Head of International Cooperation Department, National Academy of Public Administration, Serbia Mr Hetem Idrizi, Senior Officer for Organizing Training in the Field of IT, Institute of Public Administration, Kosovo* Moderator: Ms Ranka Bartula- Mušikić, Programme Manager, ReSPA 1. Experience in training senior managers/leaders (administrative and legal context, roles of training institutes/schools/bodies) in the Western Balkans 2. Strengthening regional leadership in the Western Balkans in the face of global challenges by tackling the following questions: How could we prepare WB Leaders for facing global challenges? What competencies should be strengthened or built? <i>Followed by Q&A and discussion</i>
16.00 – 16.15	Wrap up
16.45-18.45	Guided tour in the city centre – Witches’ Walk (starting from the Ban Jelačić Square, right in front of the conference venue)
19.00-22.00	Dinner at restaurant Kaptolska klet (address: Kaptol 5, Zagreb – 5-minute walk from conference venue)

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

WEDNESDAY, 4TH DECEMBER 2024

9:30 – 10:00	Welcome coffee
10:00 – 10:15	Conclusions from Day 1
10:15 – 12:00	World Café: Advancing leadership excellence in the Western Balkans - Challenges in Implementing Leadership Training - Competencies for Leaders to Drive Reforms - Preparing Leaders for Future Challenges and the EU Environment - Designing the Format of Leadership Training - Enhancing Leadership Training Schools//Departments and Programs
12:00 – 12:30	Presentations by World café moderators
12:30 – 12:45	Coffee break
12:45 – 13:00	Wrap-up and closing remarks
12:35 – 14:00	Lunch