



Apr-May-Jun 2020

The UNPAN Partners Newsletter

Strengthening Institutions for the SDGs



UN DESA is working to strengthen the capacities of public institutions and public servants to deliver good quality public services to everyone – key to the achievement of all the 17 SDGs and the key principle of leaving no one behind. Never have the necessity of effective and accountable institutions, inclusive public service delivery and the critical role of public servants been more evident than during the Covid-19 pandemic. UN DESA has brought together 23 world renowned experts to examine how to promote effective governance and institutional reform to accelerate delivery of the SDGs with particular reference to the Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery at the 19th session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration. It has also raised awareness of SDG 16 and of its critical importance for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through its analytical work and over 100 capacity-development activities, as well as paid homage to public servants and the lifesaving work they have undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic during the United Nations Public Service Day event.

19th Session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administrations Administration



At the 19th Session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administrations, which took place in a virtual format in May due to Covid-19, UN DESA supported the experts to consider ways to promote effective governance and institutional reform to accelerate the delivery of the SDGs with particular reference to the Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery. The Committee adopted an input to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development with key messages and recommendations for accelerating progress and moving on transformative pathways for realizing the Decade of Action through promoting effective governance and institutional reform. It also adopted a draft resolution for the ECOSOC. The Committee noted that the 11 Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development, adopted by ECOSOC, had been put to test in the pandemic and proven useful to improving future public governance. It also underscored the ability of governments to take steps in response to the pandemic, underlining their renewed commitment to achieve the SDGs by the year 2030. The Committee further stressed the importance of strengthening the capacity of State institutions and re-establishing credible governance and public administration institutions in countries affected by conflict. It also stressed the important role of sub-national and local governments in delivering the SDGs and drew attention to the negative impact of unbalanced budgeting on delivery of the SDGs.



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Building Capacity for Effective Governance

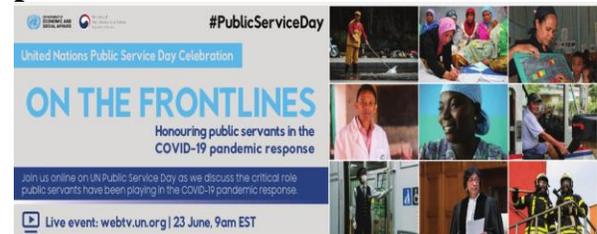


UN DESA continued to support Member States in strengthening their governance and public institutions' capacities. It facilitated over 100 capacity building activities in the areas of transformational leadership and equipping public servants with the capacities to implement the SDGs; governance and institutions; innovation for public service delivery; digital government, and public accountability in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America. Participants from 161 countries took part.

The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the critical role of responsive and effective institutions and public service delivery and the critical role of public servants. To rapidly address some demands of the Member States, UN DESA launched a Capacity Development Webinar series on leveraging public governance and innovative solutions to address Covid-19 in May and June 2020. The first webinar had over 400 participants from 82 countries via Webex and over 3,300 views on Facebook Live. One of the outcomes of the webinar series will be a governance checklist to address Covid-19 with a set of actionable measures. Analysis was presented in Policy Briefs on Covid-19 in the areas of digital governance, resilient institutions in times of crisis: transparency, accountability and participation at the national level key to effective response to COVID-19, state-people relationship for managing a nation-wide crisis and the role of public servants in the crisis.

The Department delivered capacity development support to 57 institutes and schools of public administration from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Central Asia and Latin America through the Global initiative on Building Capacities of Public Servants for SDGs Implementation. This contributed to equipping public servants with knowledge to implement the SDGs. UN DESA also developed a Curriculum on Governance for Implementing the SDGs. The Curriculum is co-created together with 21 schools of public administration from Africa and 12 from Asia as well as schools from Latin America in collaboration with the Latin American Centre for Development Administration to provide public servants with knowledge and skills on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and helps them respond to the needs of transforming institutions and public service delivery.

Celebrating public servants during a pandemic



Since 2003, UN DESA has been rewarding innovation and excellence in public service with the United Nations Public Service Awards. The Awards are conferred at the annual United Nations Public Service Forum (UNPSF), which offers an opportunity for public servants from different countries to come together and share challenges and strategies for better delivery of public services. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 Forum took place for the first time in a virtual format on the UN Public Service Day, 23 June 2020. This event celebrated the critical role of public services and public servants during a pandemic. It paid homage to public servants and the lifesaving work they have undertaken during the pandemic. It also examined the approaches countries have taken during the pandemic while looking at



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what measures they are undertaking to better mitigate such challenges going forward, including through enhancing public service provision in key areas such as health care, social welfare provision and education, and the role of technology and e-government.

COVID-19 Western Balkans Digital Collaborative - ReSPA's response to the pandemic, Zoom Meeting on 16 April 2020



ReSPA organised its first Zoom meeting to share information and provide channels for communication for senior public professionals with the focus on data, new IT technologies, digital transformation, crisis management and innovation in government during the COVID-19 pandemic. We gathered all WB6 IT professionals within ReSPA eGovernment group and the participants of ReSPA Seasonal School on Digital transformation 2019, while in the next stage we would aim to include representatives of other very important sectors for the current situation. Through COVID-19 Western Balkans Digital Collaborative, we wanted to find ways to support our government teams and communities working openly and collaboratively, sharing best practices, and helping each other respond to capacity challenges, infrastructure breakdowns, or other needs by using COVID-19 Western Balkans Digital Collaborative once or twice a month. This was a closed, invite-only meeting, coordinated by

ReSPA and California state government i.e. CHHS, with support Digitalizuj.me platform.

ReSPA website link:

<https://respaweb.eu/0/news/342/covid-19-western-balkans-digital-collaborative--respas-response-to-the-pandemic>

Second COVID-19 Western Balkan Digital Collaboration Platform meeting, Zoom Meeting on 4 May 2020



During the meeting held on Monday, 04 May 2020, more than 40 WB IT professionals within our eGovernment group discussed the most appropriate forms for intervention as ReSPA's response to their needs in overcoming the pandemic. Also, they have informed about OECD, CEFTA, RCC and CHHS experiences related to the situation with the pandemic.

Survey analysis - a guideline on detecting the needs and forms for intervention

ReSPA has launched the online survey aimed to emphasize priorities in the resolving of detected institutional challenges in public administrations and public services among WB governments. It included representatives of the Public sector management-PA, Civil service agency, Budget, ICT, etc. (90%) and Home affairs sector (10%) among Western Balkan public administrations.



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Survey participants detected the biggest challenges, main obstacles and the most needed forms for intervention in overcoming the identified challenges: Five institutional challenges according to priority are: optimization of the internal processes in the institutions (56.52%), creating a public administration web platform for collaboration (52.17%), notifying the citizens about the status of the administrative procedures (47.83%), defining online platforms to be used in different situations (43.48%) and teleworking for the public administration (43.48%).

The main obstacles in resolving the identified challenges are: inadequate budget (27.27%), lack of knowledge and experience (18.18%), lack of intra-institutional communication (13.64%) and lack of adequate inter-institutional coordination (13.64%). More than 47% of survey participants consider their organizations don't have a policy and procedures in place to initiate and implement the required changes. The most needed forms for intervention as ReSPA's support in overcoming the identified challenges are: mentoring (40.91%), webinars (18.18%), video conference meetings (13.64%), coaching (13.64%) and hackathon (9.09%).

Priorities in resolving detected challenges and needed forms for intervention highlighted during the meeting

The priorities that attendees highlighted are the insufficient capacity to enable faster helpdesk support (related to thousands of complaints of the users who couldn't access their e-government accounts), creating a collaboration public administration web platform, teleworking for the public administration and define online platforms to be used in different situations. The potential of the COVID-19 Collaborative Platform in supporting WB countries to overcoming the identified challenge was summarized through several forms for interventions such as coaching, mentoring, webinars, in-country supports and hackathons.

OECD, CEFTA, Regional Cooperation Council and CHHS experiences related to the situation with the pandemic

ReSPA website link:
<https://respaweb.eu/0/news/346/second-covid-19-western-balkan-digital-collaboration-platform-meeting>

ReSPA supports Western Balkan countries in teleworking, Zoom meeting on 13 May 2020



ReSPA and the Public One GmbH from Berlin organized for the first time an online workshop "How to become an effective Remote Manager" on 13 May 2020. Aimed to present remote management opportunities to our Governing Board members at senior level and HRM professionals to cope better amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the workshop gathered more than 20 senior civil servant professionals from the WB countries. They were introduced to many important aspects of managing workforce remotely, which has become one of the main topics worldwide in these challenging times.

Human Resource Management needs and challenges among WB countries caused by the pandemic

At the beginning of the working meeting, we presented the COVID-19 Western Balkans Digital Collaborative platform as ReSPA's unique response to the pandemic. This time, the HRMD WG members



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pointed out some common key issues, challenges and needs related to human resource management that need to be addressed.

Merit-based recruitment during emergencies, challenges in organizing work from home and conducting performance appraisal, potential shifts in training needs and organization of professional development events were the main topics. During the meeting, human resource management professionals underlined that most of the existing HR procedures require physical contact, which is not possible in situations like COVID-19 or any other crisis situation. All that requires a change in the procedures. Some other WB countries' issues discussed were: need for changes in legislative frameworks (they need to be modified and adopted with a focus on e-recruitment procedure), active involvement of employees who resist to changes and online work caused by this situation, use of proper tools and methods for motivating employees to finalize tasks successfully, etc.

ReSPA's support for human resource management in public administration as a solution to move WB countries forward during and post the pandemic period

The countries exchanged their experience in overcoming some of the identified problems and informed about the initiatives undertaken. A need for further exchange of good practices was recognized as important, as well as ReSPA's role in facilitating this process.

In the upcoming days, ReSPA will prepare a document that will summarise the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic that were presented at all relevant ReSPA meetings organized so far, including today's meeting related to HR issues. The participants were invited to use ReSPA mechanisms of support to address the issues.

"Through these kinds of events, we want to support the human resource teams in WB countries in overcoming challenges by sharing best practices related to remote management and providing tailored-made support to cope with the pandemic, recover fast and make visible progress in the years to come. ReSPA will continue to support WB countries to overcome detected challenges, through ReSPA mechanisms of support: in-country support mechanism, mobility scheme and peer to peer learning" highlighted Ranka Bartula-Musikic, ReSPA Programme Manager at the end of the meeting.

ReSPA website link:
<https://respaweb.eu/0/news/323/respa-programme-committee-meeting>



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Distributed and Open Digital team concept turns obstacles into potential for improvement, Zoom Meeting on 28 May 2020



World-known expert John O'Duinn introduced the idea and philosophy of Distributed and Open Digital team concept to IT professionals within our eGovernment group on a webinar held May 28 2020.

This webinar was the third consecutive meeting within the Covid-19 Western Balkan Digital Collaboration Platform which aims to support the region in overcoming the pandemic.

This time, the participants found out why digital "distributed teams" concept is relevant to public administrations (especially during emergencies such as the global pandemic) and what the novelties and tips are for working together while humans are physically apart. O'Duinn recommended all the webinar participants ask themselves what could go wrong if they switch from Government offices to working from home anytime. They should explore how to fix things and manage to work remotely, taking care of security issues.

Also, O'Duinn exposed that the peoples' mindset has shifted generally, and the situation has changed globally. The reality is that people don't have steady jobs anymore, the expenses for the offices and the IT systems are high. At the same time, offices are

continually shrinking and are not for humans anymore. The pandemic just made the situation much worse because of health issues. The discussion during the webinar revealed that the WB countries share a few striking similarities. It was confirmed that people don't want to change and to shift their minds into the new reality. Changes come with fear even though people don't realise it directly. Also, they like to work from the office within a typical "9 to 5" public administration working set counting on each other in some urgent situations. Although most public servants have experienced remote work for the first time, and they consider it as a less-productive replacement for office work, there is still space for turning the obstacles caused by the pandemic into opportunities, i.e, the remote work into improved practice even after the situation of urgency. It is all about the mindset and flexibility.

Explaining the possibility of setting and sustaining agile distributed teams in public administration, O'Duinn pointed out that WB institutions can move forward with the work schedule effectively and sustainably even in the period of crisis by defining and accepting new communication norms.

ReSPA website link:

<https://respaweb.eu/0/news/348/distributed-and-open-digital-team-concept-turns-obstacles-into-potential-for-improvement>

Webinar: “Sharing COVID-19 measures with local governments, smart tech solution providers and healthcare professionals”.





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WeGO held its first webinar as a part of the Smart Health Responder, an online initiative highlighting successful policies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and aiming to support members and partners.

WeGO's president and mayor of Seoul, and the mayors of Makati City and Wellington expressed their support for WeGO's new webinars and the importance of international cooperation in the current situation. High-ranking public officials from Bangkok, Seoul, and Vladivostok shared their best practices and expressed how in their cities, on top of prompt responses and citizen-centered policies, digital solutions have been key to handle the pandemic efficiently. Private companies from Bulgaria and Italy described how their ICT solutions have helped assist local governments in coping with the virus. Ending the webinar, a representative from the medical community explained what could be done going forward from a medical perspective and the new behaviors individuals, organizations, and governments will have to adopt to cope with the "new normal".

readiness and responses of local governments, corporations, and institutions in the Americas.

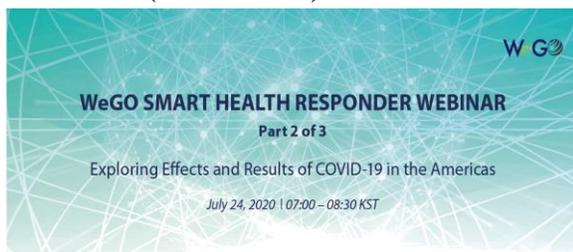
Cities will share their experiences in dealing with quarantine regulations, their opinions on working and studying from home, the policy changes they instituted as a result of the pandemic, and best practice that can be replicated in the region. Smart tech solution providers will share insight on how to prepare for a second wave, along with predictions for the post-COVID-19 era.

With efforts to develop a vaccine predicted to go on until at least the second half of 2021, this session will highlight the steps cities are taking in the meantime to allow their citizens to get back to normal life. It seeks to share COVID-19-related challenges, policies, and solutions in enabling economies and schools to restart, such as testing, tracing, and digital delivery of services.

Link to the event: <http://we-gov.org/wego-smart-health-responder/wego-smart-health-responder-webinar/>

For more information: <http://we-gov.org/news-2020/wego-holds-first-webinar-on-covid-19-best-practice/>

WeGO Smart Health Responder Webinar (Part 2 of 3)



This webinar explores issues and challenges raised by the COVID-19 outbreak, with a specific focus on the



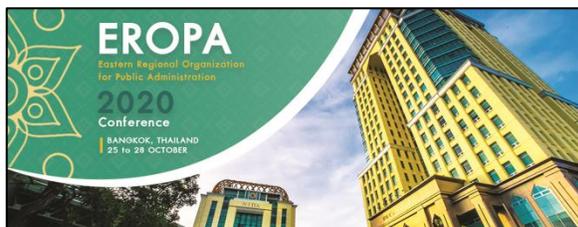
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Upcoming Events

ReSPA Public Administration Awards in the Western Balkan Region

Over the last ten years, ReSPA have been supporting the WB governments in making complex public administration more effective, innovative and people-oriented. The idea to establish PA Award in Western Balkans was well recognized by the OECD/SIGMA who joined this initiative. In the light of the global pandemic, the PA Awards ceremony is expected to be tentatively executed in November 2020 and will have the main focus on adaptability of government in extraordinary situations. Such a decision is a consequence of many online consultative meetings held in the previous months between ReSPA and SIGMA. The exact timeline of the activity will be framed following the COVID-19 situation.

2020 EROPA Conference Postponed to August 2021



Due to the pandemic, the 2020 EROPA Conference that was originally scheduled for 25 to 28 October 2020 has been postponed to 1 to 4 August 2021. The theme on “Public Governance for Inclusive Growth: Accountability, Engagement, and Digital Transformation” will still hold. The event is organized by the National Institute of Development Administration, Kingdom of Thailand.

Despite being faced with a bright economic growth prospect, many nations all over the world are facing rising inequality. This has led to a global consensus on the need for a more inclusive and sustainable model

of growth and development that promotes higher living standards for all. Central to the policy debate on the issue of inclusive growth is the ability of governments to put in place policies that deliver economic growth together with better sharing of the benefits among social groups. Thus, the theme for the 2020 EROPA Conference focuses on the centrality of the promotion of inclusive growth and development across the region in public governance. Individuals who are interested in engaging in dialogues on the following topics: (a) Promoting Government Accountability for Inclusive Growth; (b) Stakeholder Engagement for Inclusive Policy Making; (c) Making Service Delivery Inclusive through Digital Transformation; (d) Improving Public Sector Performance through Employee Engagement are welcome to participate. Present a paper or attend as a regular conference participant! For more information, visit the official conference website or message us at th2020@eropa.co.



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NEW PROJECTS AND REPORTS

Recent Release of EROPA Bulletin Vol. 41, No. 2 (April 2020) Issue



EROPA released the April 2020 Issue of its quarterly newsletter, the EROPA Bulletin, last April 15 2020.

Each issue of the EROPA Bulletin provides news article focusing on activities as well as other developments in the region related to Public Administration.

Past and present issues of the EROPA Bulletin are accessible at <https://www.eropa.co/eropa-bulletin.html>.

Recent Release of New #TAG Dialogue Videos on Rethinking the Meaning of Public Finance and Social Equity and the Working Class in South Korea

#TAG Dialogue, a digital project of EROPA, released two new videos on its YouTube Channel – adding to the curated videos of the organization on the topic of Public Administration. The videos posted were filmed

during the plenary sessions of the 2019 EROPA Conference.

Speakers, Dr. Mah Hui Lim (an International Banker and former Professor from Malaysia) and Dr. Rosa Minhyo Cho (a Professor from Sungkyunkwan University, South Korea) agreed to have their lectures filmed, post-produced, and posted online. Dr. Lim spoke on redefining the meaning of public finance to better fit/solve the mega challenges of our time today and Dr. Cho discussed the Korean government's efforts on lengthening the retirement age of Korean elderly and her team's findings on the elderly's work capacity.

Subscribe to the Thinking about Governance YouTube Channel by accessing it via this link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCogri2JcAWB0BlobGx0J5xg>