**Seventh IPA Regional**

**Public Procurement Conference**

**Agenda**

**9 – 10 September 2014**

**Vlora International Hotel**

**Vlora, Albania**

**I. Purpose of the Conference**

The purpose of the conference is twofold:

* to promote and increase knowledge about the new European Union public procurement legislative and policy framework;
* to provide an opportunity for information sharing and networking for the central procurement authorities and procurement review bodies of the countries in the IPA region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo[[1]](#footnote-1) and Turkey.

Three new Directives were adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in 2014 within the framework of the modernisation of the European Union procurement legislation. The Member States of the European Union will now have to transpose the provisions of the new Directives into national legislation by April 2016 (except for provisions on e-procurement, where the deadline is September 2018). Nevertheless, the implementation process has already started and will need to be followed through also in the candidate countries and the potential candidates. All IPA countries – irrespective of their positions in the EU accession process – are in the process of harmonising their public procurement legislation and practice with the EU standards and good practices.

The conference will provide a comprehensive overview of the new Directives and a platform to discuss how the new regulatory framework may affect existing procurement legislation and practice in the IPA countries. The conference will focus on the most important changes and facilitative measures introduced by the new Directives. The Directives will be explained and examined from various perspectives by a representative from the European Commission, as well as from the point of view of a Member State and of other experts. The conference will provide a platform for the participants to familiarise themselves with the new Directives and the transposition requirements, whilst sharing and exchanging their views regarding procurement modernisation and transposition planning. Central public procurement offices play a key role in the public procurement reform process while Procurement Review Bodies play a key role in the enforcement of procurement rules. The conference will provide a forum for these bodies to share IPA practical experiences in implementing and enforcing public procurement rules.

**II. Format of the Conference**

The Conference will be interactive and based on case presentations. Experts from IPA countries and EU Member States as well as representatives of the European Commission will provide information about the EU policy framework and the new Directives, and provide examples of good practice. Participants will be asked to briefly present their plans for transposing the new Directives into their national legislation, to present recent developments in their own public procurement system, and to share experiences from their countries. The meeting will also provide all participants with the opportunity to meet informally and compare national experiences and discuss specific issues among peers, and to establish a network for more regular exchanges in the future. The working languages of the conference will be English, Albanian, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, Macedonian and Turkish, with simultaneous interpretation during all scheduled sessions. SIGMA will distribute its new public procurement briefs describing the three new Directives in English.

**III. Participants**

The conference will be attended by senior officials from IPA countries who are responsible, in their respective countries, for designing and implementing public procurement reforms: usually heads of PPOs and PRBs and their key staff. Participation of DG MARKT and a number of national experts from EU Member States is also envisaged. Representatives of other international organisations active in the region (World Bank, EBRD, EIB, ReSPA, OECD Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate) will be invited as observers. Participation is by invitation only. Each IPA country will have five official delegates at the conference (three from the Public Procurement Office and two from the Procurement Review Body). Their travel and accommodation costs will be covered by SIGMA. Additional participants from the host country may attend at their own cost (not financed by SIGMA).

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| **Monday, 8 September 2014** |
| **18.30 - 20.00** |  | **Welcome Cocktail offered by SIGMA (Vlora International Hotel)** |
| **Tuesday, 9 September 2014** |
| **New European Union Policy and Legislative Framework for Public Procurement – Approaches to Public Procurement Modernization in the Region** |
| **08.30 - 09.00** |  | **REGISTRATION AND WELCOME COFFEE** |
| **09.00 - 09.15** | **1.** | **WELCOME REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION** |
|  |  | * ***Mr Marian Lemke,*** *Senior Advisor, SIGMA*
* ***Mr Eduard Ahmeti****, General Director, Public Procurement Agency, Albania*
* ***Mr Denar Biba****, Head, Public Procurement Commission, Albania*
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| **09.15 - 09.30** |  | **Key note address by representative of the Government of Albania** |
| **09.30 – 09.40** |  | **PARTICIPANTS INTRODUCTIONS** |
|  |  | **Tour de Table for brief introduction of each participant** |
| **09.40 - 12.00** | **2.** | **NEW EUROPEAN UNION POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC PROCUREMENT – MAJOR CHALLENGES IN TRANSPOSITION PROCESS**  |
| **09.40 – 10.40** |  | **New European Union Policy and Legal Framework for Public Procurement*****Mr Niels Schuster****,* Policy Officer*, European Commission, DG Internal Market and Services** policy background for modernisation of the EU legislative framework for public procurement
* the most important changes and facilitative measures introduced by the new Directives
* major challenges during the transposition of the new Directives
* outlook to future plans of DG Markt: new challenges to be addressed and key priorities ***for the European*** Union public procurement policy
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| **10.40 - 11.00** |  | **Coffee Break** |
| **11.00 - 12.00** |  | **Public Procurement Reform: the UK Experience*****Mr Peter Bennett****, Senior Policy Adviser, Cabinet Office, United Kingdom** how the UK’s negotiating position had been developed
* the UK’s approach to the new Directives: key issues and outcomes for UK
* why the UK welcomes the new rules
* UK implementation plan (engagement with stakeholders)
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| **12.00 - 13.00** |  | **Lunch** |
| **13.00 – 17.00** | **3.** | **DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS – APPROACHES IN THE REGION****Chair: Marian Lemke, SIGMA** |
| **13.00 - 14.15** |  | **Regulatory Development in the Context of the European Integration Process: the Croatian Experience*****Ms Teja Kolar****, SIGMA expert, Croatia** major challenges of legislative development within the EU integration process and accession negotiation
* how to establish the required track record on development of the legislative framework and an adequate level of implementation and enforcement
* recommendations on steps to be taken in order to achieve efficient legislative development within EU accession process
* correlation of legislative development with other key elements of public procurement system reform
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| **14.15 - 14.30** |  | **Coffee Break** |
| **14.30 - 16.30** |  | **Public procurement legislative experiences in the region and needs/plans for development of the legislative framework for medium and short term** *Brief Country Presentations* |
| **20.00 - 22.30** |  | **Dinner offered by the Public Procurement Agency of Albania** |

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| **Wednesday, 10 September 2014** |
| **Practical Experiences in Implementing and Enforcing Public Procurement Rules in IPA Region**  |
| **09.00 – 11.00** | **4.** | **CENTRAL PUBLIC PROCUREMENT INSTITUTIONS IN THE REGION – PROBLEMS, CHALLENGES, SUCCESSES AND FUTURE PLANS****Chair: Erika Bozzay, SIGMA** |
| **09.00 – 9.45** |  | **The role of central public procurement institutions in the national public procurement system** ***Ms Małgorzata Stachowiak,*** *SIGMA Expert, Poland** model of organising the central public procurement functions – division of roles, consistency of policy messages
* monitoring of public procurement – e-procurement as an opportunity to simplify data gathering and analysis, using the data in the process of shaping/changing the system
* professional skills of employees of PPO and other agencies involved – project oriented attitude, focus on economic, environmental, social effects
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| **9.45 - 11.00** |  | **Practical experiences in designing procurement reforms and in implementing public procurement rules – different models of institutional set-ups (current situation + lessons learnt + plans)***Brief Country Presentations: speakers t.b.c.* |
| **11.00 – 11.15** |  | **Coffee Break** |
| **11.15 – 12.00** | **5.** | **CURRENT PRACTICES IN COMPLAINTS REVIEW: EXAMPLES FROM THE REGION AND THE EU****Chair: Daniel Ivarsson, SIGMA** |
|  |  | **Review and remedies procedure in practice – Experiences of Croatia*****Mr Zoran Blazevic****, SIGMA Expert, Croatia** *Latest practice in the review of the procurement procedures*
* *Importance of the PRB's case law in education of contracting authorities and private sector*
* *Visibility and independence of PRB’s daily work*
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| **12.00 - 13.00** |  | **Lunch** |
| **13.00 – 14.15** |  | **Practical experiences in enforcement of procurement rules in the region – problems, challenges in the operation of the Review Bodies, lessons learnt, plans for the future***Brief Country Presentations: speakers t.b.c.* |
| **14.15 - 15.00** |  | **Current Priorities and Coming Activities: Reform ambitions for 2015 and Beyond** |
| ***Daniel Ivarsson,*** *SIGMA**Contributions from Participants* |
| **15.00 - 15.30** |  | **Coffee Break** |
| **15.30 - 16.15** |  | **Future of Public Procurement Training**  |
| * ***Mr Vlatko Naumovski,*** *Head of Finance, Regional Public school of Administration (REsPA)*
* ***Mr Marian Lemke****, Senior Advisor, SIGMA*
* *Contributions from Participants*
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| **16.15 - 16.45** |  | **Conference Organisation: Lessons Learned and Proposals for Next Year** |
| * ***Mr Marian Lemke,*** *Senior Advisor, SIGMA*
* ***Ms Aleksandra Bogusz*** and ***Ms Maggie Redmond****, Project Co-ordinators, SIGMA*
* *Contributions from Participants*
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| **16.45 - 17.00** |  | **Concluding Remarks** |
| * ***Mr Eduard Ahmeti****, General Director, Public Procurement Agency*
* ***Mr Denar Biba,*** *Head, Public Procurement Commission*
* ***Mr Daniel Ivarsson****, SIGMA*
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1. This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence [↑](#footnote-ref-1)