

SIGMA News

June 2017

25 years of SIGMA

Celebrating
25
years

2017 is the 25th anniversary of SIGMA and the successful partnership between the European Union (EU) and OECD. SIGMA has developed into a recognised centre of excellence of public administration reform (PAR), including public financial management (PFM), in EU Accession countries and, since 2008, European Neighbourhood countries. Working with 18 partner countries to establish professional public administrations, effective financial management and economic development, SIGMA assists countries in planning and delivering their own priority reforms.

SIGMA works with centre of government and key co-ordinating ministries, state agencies, independent oversight bodies and parliaments, providing assistance in six areas: strategic framework of public administration reform; policy development and co-ordination; public service and human resource management; accountability; service delivery and public financial management, including public procurement and external audit. [Read more.](#)

Monitoring reports



SIGMA conducted partial monitoring assessments against the Principles of Public Administration in key areas in the seven EU Accession countries in 2016. Full monitoring assessments in the countries are now being carried out to review progress in public administration reforms and provide recommendations to inform further reform activities. [Read more.](#)

Focus on Jordan



SIGMA is currently working with Jordan in a number of key areas. We are also finalising an assessment of service delivery against the Principles of Public Administration to help to prioritise reforms to improve administrative services to Jordanian citizens.



Our experts are also providing continued support to the Civil Service Bureau with the development of a competence model for the civil service and its pilot implementation in recruitment and training processes. In 2016, SIGMA reviewed the Public Procurement System to identify integrity risks and in the coming months we will support the Anti-corruption Agency and procurement authorities in designing reforms according to the conclusions of the review. We are also assisting the Audit Bureau to improve the effectiveness of its reporting. Finally, in 2016, SIGMA and the Ministry of Public Sector Development jointly developed the Governance Assessment and Improvement Tool to help to enhance the performance of public bodies.

Focus on SIGMA work with Supreme Audit Institutions



During 2016-17 SIGMA has continued to support the work of the Network of Supreme Audit Institutions of Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries and European Court of Auditors (the Network), representing the SAIs of all seven EU Accession countries. On 8 September 2016, a roundtable was held in Sarajevo to discuss SAI independence. The event enabled discussions about the issues and challenges the Network SAIs face in relation to their statutory, organisational and financial independence, and identified examples of good practice and potential solutions for strengthening their independence.



The roundtable was organised by SIGMA in co-operation with the SAI of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A conference for the Network was also organised by SIGMA in co-operation with the Turkish Court of Accounts on 8-9 November 2016 in Ankara. The event enabled discussion based on a draft paper developed by SIGMA on identifying opportunities for strengthening working relations between SAIs and parliaments, and consideration of how it could help them to develop and enhance their working relationships. It also provided an opportunity to present specific examples of good practice in EU Member States and Network countries.



In May 2017, **SIGMA Paper No. 54** was published on **Developing effective working relationships between supreme audit institutions and parliament**. The paper provides a comparative analysis of the working relationships between SAIs and parliaments in the EU and EU Accession countries and describes the expectations for such relationships and factors that influence them. It also offers guidance and a toolkit to assist with establishing effective working relationships.

SIGMA publications



SIGMA's **Procurement Briefs** are short introductions to the most relevant issues of public procurement, and have been successively published since 2010. All the Briefs have recently been updated to include developments and the new provisions of the 2014 public procurement EU Directives. Several new Briefs have been added on topics such as: market analysis, small and medium-sized enterprises in public procurement, life-cycle costing, abnormally low tenders, division of contracts into lots, subcontracting and contract modifications and in-house procurement. [Read more](#).



A well-functioning policy making system is a key pillar of a transparent and effective democratic public administration. It is also a crucial precondition for a country to make progress in the European integration process, as the capacity of national administrations to undertake the obligations linked with EU membership is critical to ensuring that the administration is capable of successfully dealing with complex policy issues. **SIGMA Paper No. 53, Functioning of the Centres of Government in the Western Balkans**, provides a comparative analysis of the functioning of the centres of government in the Western Balkan EU Accession countries. It takes stock of their organisational set up, regulatory framework and the practices of key centre of government functions, highlighting similarities and differences, and with examples from EU Member States.

SIGMA, the Regional School of Public Administration and the Regional Cooperation Council will organise a joint conference in June for representatives of the Western Balkan administrations to present and discuss country success stories, key challenges and international good practice in the functioning of the centres of government.

WeBER



The Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform ([WeBER](#)) is implemented by the Think for Europe Network ([TEN](#)), which gathers six think tanks from across the Western Balkans, with the European Policy Centre ([CEP](#)) as the project co-ordinator. WeBER aims to increase the relevance, participation and capacity of civil society and media in the Western Balkans to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of public administration reform (PAR). WeBER is funded by the European Union and co-financed by the Kingdom of the Netherlands. As part of the efforts to improve the knowledge of PAR within civil society, WeBER has produced a set of [explanatory videos](#) addressing all of the six PAR areas as defined by SIGMA.

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