Enhancing the contribution of research to policy making in the Western Balkans – lessons from practice
Policy Conference and Orientation meeting for the Policy Bridging Initiative¹
#research2policy
Belgrade, November 19-20, 2014

Aim of the event:
To enable RRPP researchers to make informed decisions on bringing research evidence into the policy making process in the Western Balkans

Objectives:
- Build up a picture of successes and challenges in bringing research into policy making in the Western Balkans
- Develop a cross sectoral perspective of the issue from NGOs, universities and governments
- Consider how to create a more enabling environment to institutionalise bridging practices
- Facilitate networking between the current round of RRPP researchers and invited guests from other sectors and countries of the region.

Agenda – Day 1 – Conference Day – Wednesday, Nov 19th

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Room</th>
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<tr>
<td>09.00</td>
<td>Welcome and session opening</td>
<td>Zira Central, 1st floor</td>
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<td>09.45</td>
<td>Keynote/Opening session</td>
<td>Zira Central, 1st floor</td>
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<td>9.45</td>
<td>Enabling the research to policy link</td>
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Speakers
1. Jean-Daniel Ruch, Swiss Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia and to Montenegro
2. Jasmina Opardija, Programme Manager, Regional Research Promotion Programme in the Western Balkans
3. Lisa Quinn, Director, International Centre for Policy Advocacy

Introduction and discussant:
- Daniela Koleva, St Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia & RRPP Steering Board

Speaker:
- Goran Buldioski, Director, Think Tank Fund & Acting Co-director, International Higher Education Support Program, Open Society Foundations

¹ http://www.icpolicyadvocacy.org/programmes/researcher-apprenticeship/pbi
Session focus: The keynote speaker will be asked to address the following questions:

- Evidence-informed policymaking in theory and practice in WB: what is it and how is it supposed to work?
- Roles think tanks and universities should adopt and approaches for each in influencing policy decisions?
- What are the enabling conditions for research to influence policy decisions? How to work towards institutionalising these conditions in practice?

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee Break, Hall, 2nd floor

11.30 – 13.00 Session 2
Room: Zira Central, 1st floor
Cross-sectoral policy link perspectives panel

Moderator: Eóin Young, Programme Director, International Centre for Policy Advocacy

1. Sonja Stojanovic-Gajic, Director, Belgrade Centre for Security Policy
2. Tanik Jusic, Executive Director, Analitika, BiH
3. Aisa Telalovic, Senior Expert Associate, Department of Diaspora, Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, Bosnia and Herzegovina.
4. Lucian Ciolan, Dean of Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Bucharest & ICPA Senior Trainer
5. Lidia Vujicic, Swiss Cooperation Office, Serbia

Session focus: Taking a ‘talk show’ format, the panelists will be asked to respond to the points made in the keynote presentations, bringing examples from across the sectors which will support, challenge and add to the points made in the opening session.

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch Break, Restaurant, 2nd floor

14.00 – 15.30 Session 3
Room: Zira Central, 1st floor
Supporting and building regional policy advocacy networks

Moderator: Goran Buldioski, Director, Think Tank Fund & Acting Co-director, International Higher Education Support Program, Open Society Foundations

Speakers:

- Jasmina Opardija, Programme Manager, Regional Research Promotion Programme
- Igor Bandovic, Senior Programme Manager, European Fund for the Balkans
- Elda Bagaviki, Swiss Embassy in Albania
- Representative of Regional Cooperation Council (TBC)

The current round of RRPP research seeks to encourage the development of regional perspectives and also to push for policy change through regional networks. Such a regionally networked approach is on the mind of many partners, but what are the challenges of operating as a group at the regional level? In this panel, we will seek to draw on the experience of practitioners to address two core issues of running such policy advocacy groups: management and funding/sustainability. Starting with the experiences of two regional networks at different levels of development (the Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group -
BIEPAG\textsuperscript{2} and the Regional Cooperation Council\textsuperscript{3}) and then adding the perspectives of those who have supported such networks, the panel will seek to address the following questions:

- How do regional research-based advocacy networks start?
- What are reasonable/feasible objectives for a regional initiative?
- What are the challenges of working as a group?
- What are the strengths of working as a group?
- Who funds such regional initiatives? And how are they normally funded?
- Should regional initiatives be over when they reach their first stated goal? Or have an organisational sustainability view?

15.30 – 16.00 Coffee Break, Hall, 2\textsuperscript{nd} floor

16.00 – 17.00 | Session 4 | National level Bridging Case Studies– 4 in Parallel

Four parallel tracks with four moderators from ICPA: Katarina Staronova, Lisa Quinn, Vladimir Pavlovic \& Lucian Ciolan

Case 1 - Migration and Diaspora Issues – Bosnia and Herzegovina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researchers</th>
<th>Government Partners</th>
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<tr>
<td>Emina Cosic &amp; Nermin Oruc, Center for Economic Development and Research (CEDAR), Bosnia and Herzegovina.</td>
<td>Aisa Telalovic, Senior Expert Associate, Department of Diaspora, Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, Bosnia and Herzegovina.</td>
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Case 2 – Informing parliamentary decision making – Kosovo

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<th>Researchers</th>
<th>Government Partners</th>
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<tr>
<td>Agron Demi, GAP Institute, Pristina, Kosovo</td>
<td>Arben Loshi, Director of the Research Department at Kosovo Assembly</td>
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Case 3 – Social Policy – Macedonia

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<th>Researchers</th>
<th>Government Partners</th>
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<tr>
<td>Neda Korunovska, Reactor, Macedonia</td>
<td>Jovana Trencevska, Co-ordinator of the Inter-ministerial Group on Gender Equality, Department for Gender Equality, Ministry of Social Affairs, Macedonia</td>
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Case 4 – Social Inclusion & Poverty Reduction - Serbia

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Session focus: Focusing on the national level, this session will offer four parallel sessions which will feature a researcher or research group that has built a working relationship a government institution. The focus of the discussion should be a two-way reflection on how such relationships are built, how long

\textsuperscript{2} \url{http://www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at/biepag/node/7}  
\textsuperscript{3} \url{http://www.rcc.int/}
they last, how political leadership change affects them and what ends these connections. Lastly, speakers will be asked to give advice on institutionalising such research input to the policy making process.

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<th>17.00 – 18.00</th>
<th>Session 5</th>
<th>Consolidation Poster Session</th>
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<tr>
<td>Room: Zira Central, 1st floor</td>
<td><strong>Main Question</strong> – What are your takeaways in terms of opportunities and lessons in bridging research to policy making in the western Balkans?</td>
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<td>Two big posters on the wall – one for opportunities and the other for lessons</td>
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<td>We will ask teams to come up with one suggestion for each and put it up on the posters</td>
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<td>ICPA facilitators group the submitted suggestions on the posters in thematic clusters and discuss as they do</td>
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<td>Thematic clusters will be noted and posted on a blog and shared with the group.</td>
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Aim of the event:

To help PBI participants to make an informed decision on which PBI stream to choose, i.e. type and extent of capacity development support required by the research team.

Objectives:

- Introduce the PBI, the stream choice and commitment needed
- Clarify the focus of the programme, and how it fits with RRPP
- Clarify the differences in roles between the PBI team, LCUs, Mentors and RRPP
- Illustrate the elements of support that PBI will provide
- Allow teams the space to make plans based on the PBI stream they choose
- Give teams the chance to clarify all elements of the PBI with a member of the PBI team
- Teams will make their final PBI stream choice and identify the people who will take part in the PBI work.

9.30 – 11.00 Session 1

Opening session – Introduction to PBI

Room: Zira Central, 1st floor

2 facilitators:
1. Eóin Young, Programme Director, ICPA
2. Lisa Quinn, Director, ICPA

Session focus: This session aims to:

- To present the PBI, the two streams, focus and commitment needed
- To discuss how it fits into RRPP and what RRPP want out of it
- Start clarifying the differences in roles between ICPA, RRPP, LCUs and Mentors
- To allow for a long period of questions and discussion on the programme.

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee Break, Hall, 2nd floor

11.30 – 13.00 Session 2

Illustrating PBI Support Elements – Training, feedback and resources

Room: Zira Central, 1st floor

5 Facilitators:
1. Eóin Young, Programme Director, ICPA  
2. Lisa Quinn, Director, ICPA  
3. Lucian Ciolan, Senior Trainer, ICPA  
4. Katarina Staronova, Senior Trainer, ICPA  
5. Vladimir Pavlovic, Trainer, ICPA  

**Session focus:** This session aims to:  
- To give participants an idea of the support elements of the PBI  
- To show examples of training, the kind of feedback we give and an online resource  
- Let researchers play around with each, ask questions

| 13.00 – 14.00 Lunch Break, Restaurant, 2nd floor |

| 14.00 – 15.30 | Session 3 | Team Planning and discussion  
*Room: Zira Central, 1st floor* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Eóin Young, Programme Director, Opening facilitator  
2. Group work for most of the time |

**Session focus:** This session aims to:  
- To give teams the time to discuss the streams  
- And to plan the fit of their chosen stream timeline with their existing plans  
- Allow them to make a decision on who would commit to the PBI work

| 15.30 – 16.00 Coffee Break, Hall, 2nd floor |

| 16.00 – 17.30 | Session 4 | Team Tutorials with PBI team  
*Room: Zira Central, 1st floor* |
|---|---|---|
| PBI Team as tutors  
1. Eóin Young, Programme Director  
2. Lisa Quinn, Director, ICPA  
3. Katarina Staronova, Senior Trainer, ICPA  
4. Lucian Ciolan, Senior Trainer, ICPA  
5. Vladimir Pavlovic, Trainer, ICPA |

**Ideas for the session:**  
- Each team has a tutorial with a member of the PBI team  
- They can ask any and all questions  
- They make a final decision on their stream choice and inform us.
This day will be an opportunity for you to reflect on progress so far and make further plans about next steps. We will also attempt to get some of the group mentors to come to the session to deepen the discussion and planning. The RRPP team will also be there to input in your discussions.