

This study was prepared in the autumn of 2015, with subsequent assessments of the newest developments in the Region until the beginning of April 2016. The expert team of the Institute of Public Administration from Zagreb, Croatia was commissioned to prepare the study. The team consisted of researchers who have substantial experience in supporting, monitoring, assessing, and researching administrative modernization efforts in the Region. They are university professors and lecturers, with experience as international experts for administrative modernization and administrative procedural law development, and scientific research of public administration reforms. Other experts and staff of the Institute of Public Administration in Zagreb, as well as the ReSPA staff have supported the preparation of the study.

The expert team collected an impressive amount of information, data, and legislation from six Western Balkan countries and three countries whose experience seems particularly important for the Western Balkans – Austria, Slovenia, and Croatia, all three now the EU member states. Taking into account that legal remedies are the heart of the system of protecting citizens' rights in their relations with public administration bodies, the study presents and analyses the development of administrative procedural law framework, discusses widening the concept of protection of citizens' rights, analyses legal remedies and ex officio interventions into administrative acts, and concludes with alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Numerous recommendations have been developed from the analysis and presented in the study. The expert team hope that recommendations and lessons learned may significantly contribute to administrative improvements in the Region and beyond.

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