



Dear EPSA Friends,

As most of you will know by now, the European Public Sector Award - EPSA is not only about identifying, recognizing and awarding the best public sector performers in Europe. It is also a European network of public sector excellence in which Europe's public sector institutions can benchmark their achievements with their peers and at the same time learn from each other. Best practices identified by EPSA are a valuable source of inspiration for other public administrations across Europe and beyond.

Once the Award Ceremony is over, the EPSA - a biennial award scheme - goes on in-between two EPSA editions in order to share outstanding innovative and cost-efficient solutions for the benefit of as many public administrations as possible. With this in mind, we at EIPA are organising a series of knowledge-transfer activities that could be of interest to the whole EPSA Community since they are about creative solutions that address common concerns faced by most European public sector players.

In this framework, we would like to bring to your attention the following forthcoming EPSA knowledge-transfer activities:

[Tackling the Skills Gap - The Golden Key to Economic Growth, Maastricht, 26-27 May 2016](#)



Skills are a key factor in the prosperity and economic growth of the regions of the EU. Despite high unemployment, many employers report difficulties in recruiting staff with the right skills. There is an urgent need for better anticipation of the needs of employers, to make

better use of existing skills and for development of the skills that are needed by the labour market. Effective skills strategies are based on three main pillars: firstly, the availability of reliable and robust labour market data to identify and analyse current skills gaps; secondly, the anticipation of trends and of future needs for skills; and thirdly and most importantly, translating this information into actions through the better matching of the supply and demand for skills.

The seminar is developed in cooperation with the **European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Cedefop** (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) and the **Danish finalist project of the European Public Sector Award 2015 – ‘FREMKOM – Future Competencies of Region North Denmark’**.

The seminar is an opportunity to learn about the newest EU initiatives, trends and tools in relation to skills anticipation, and methodologies for skills foresight, as well as to gain practical insight from the EPSA finalist project FREMKOM on how to design and manage innovative methods for sustainable skills development strategies based on social dialogue and strong stakeholder involvement.

The seminar applies a practice-learning method. Participants will be actively involved during the two days in tailor-made exercises and will benefit from the EPSA 2015 finalist project FREMKOM to illustrate a successful methodology in tackling the skills gap through the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the joint development of regional skills strategies.

Save the date for the international EPSA Knowledge-Transfer Conference in Barcelona on 13-14 June 2016

The Provincial Council of Barcelona, winner of the EPSA 2015 cross-cutting award, and EIPA invite you to the **EPSA Knowledge-Transfer Conference** on “*Urban Development for Healthier Cities – A Cross-cutting Approach to Innovative Local Governance*” in Barcelona on 13-14 June 2016.

The high-level event will be held over two days, with an opening conference on the first day, four thematic sessions on green cities, urban planning and mobility, housing vulnerability and buildings contributing to healthy living as well as a final keynote speech and a wrap-up session on the second day.

Above all, participants will have the opportunity to learn from leading-edge public best practices and their insights on how to reach outstanding results. Thus, this major event will:

- Provide a space for knowledge exchange, debate and reflection between the innovators behind the internationally recognised best practices and various actors from academic and public sectors in the field of urban policies, planning and health.
- Provide a unique networking opportunity for participants and experts to meet peers and other decision-makers in this area, and will thus support and enhance the building of capacities within administrations.

Participation in this conference will be for free!

Keep on checking [EIPA seminars website](#) or [@EPSAawards](#) for updates.

And last but not least, two EPSA-related open seminars at EIPA Maastricht:

[Public Sector Budgeting for Service Delivery: What to Do and How to Do It - Maastricht, 18-19 May 2016](#)

Budgets are the means by which a public sector body expresses its priorities. Making budget choices which reflect objectives is vital for public officials, particularly in hard economic times.

This workshop uses several EPSA cases to share experiences about how choices can be made in public sector budgeting and how they are linked to the delivery of public services.

[Managing Risks in Public Finances – What to Do and How to Do It - Maastricht, 2-3 June 2016](#)

When resources available for public sector bodies are limited it is even more important to manage them effectively. Financial and operational risks can arise across the entire public financial management cycle i.e. budgeting, the execution of budgets and the delivery of services.

This workshop uses EPSA cases to share experiences about public sector budgeting, financial management and management of the delivery of public services.

Keep checking our website www.epsa2015.eu for new updates.

We look forward to welcoming you on the occasion of one of these activities.

The EPSA Team

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