

Newsletter 2015/3

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INTRO

In this edition we present a report on the 8th European Quality Conference, the Norwegian experience of combining CAF self-assessment and external evaluation and we invite you to co-design our CAF Masterclass of December 2016.



I. 8TH EUROPEAN QUALITY CONFERENCE

The 8th European Quality Conference was organised under the presidency of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in cooperation with the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN) members and the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA). The 8QC took place on 1-2 October 2015 in the outstanding location of Esch-Belval, which used to be Luxembourg's biggest steel-works, now converted into a modern research district. The main theme was on "Strengthening the capacity of public administration in tackling current and future challenges – Public administration as part of the solution".



During the 11 parallel sessions and the 31 in depth working sessions, speakers from 26 countries had the opportunity to share their experience, views and best practices on five main topics:

1. Public administration in the cycle of policy design, implementation and evaluation
2. Strategic thinking in a future-oriented and innovative public administration
3. Strengthening professionalism in building an innovative public administration
4. Innovative service provisions through stakeholders and citizen – user involvement
5. Enhancing societal responsible public administration

Some success stories of the conference was the discovery of design thinking, presented and facilitated by the Danish Design Centre. The keynote presentation and the practical hands-on workshop demonstrated this interactive approach to share, co-define, co-produce innovative solutions for the future. The figure below highlights the key messages of the conference.

The conference saw a high attendance bringing together 300 participants from all over Europe. Furthermore, the live broadcast on the EUPAN website of the 6 keynote sessions, made it possible to reach an even bigger audience. More than 300 people gratefully made use of this new facility and followed the conference online. The overall success of the 8QC is also demonstrated by the results of a satisfaction survey carried out in the aftermath. Indeed, an average of 98% of participants rated positively the quality of the organisation, the methodology and format implemented as well as the actual contents of the 8QC.

How would you rate the content of the conference as a whole?

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
35%	51%	12%	1%	

27% of participants (82 persons on 300 participants)

All [presentations](#) and [videos](#) from the plenary sessions are available on the Luxembourg Presidency website – www.eu2015lu.eu

We look forward to the 9th quality conference in 2017!

II. A NEW CAF MASTERCLASS IN 2016 – TAKING QUALITY TO THE NEXT LEVEL

With more than 4000 CAF users registered in our database, 7 European CAF Users Events organised since 2003 and the start-up of different new CAF Resource centres in and outside the EU, the European CAF RC considered the time right to develop a new kind of CAF training. It is time to deepen our practice of CAF and enhance its effectiveness on the improvement of public sector organisations performance.

Different topics can be discussed but this time we want to involve all the CAF users we know in the design of this CAF Masterclass. We launch an appeal to all of you to let us know what issues regarding the use of CAF you would like to deepen out in the CAF Masterclass of December next year. This might be aspects related to the content of the model, the process of implementation of the self-assessment, effective improvement actions etc. Elements of success or failure can be the source for enriching interventions and discussions. They can come from CAF National correspondents, CAF coaches, CAF External Feedback Actors, CAF Users and CAF non-Users.



Please send us your ideas a.s.a.p. so that we can turn them into relevant building blocks for an inspiring Masterclass.

III. SELF-ASSESSMENT AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION – A VALUABLE COMBINATION

Since many years, the CAF community discusses about the link between self-assessment and external evaluation. Even in the last study on the impact of CAF, in preparation of the 6th European CAF Users Event in Rome in 2014, and during the event itself, this point was on the agenda. As the Procedure on External Feedback (PEF), proper to CAF, focusses on the quality of implementation of self-assessment and the improvement plan as well as on the impact on the principles of excellence, CAF cannot be considered as an external evaluation of the organisation. It serves other purposes. Norway does not implement the PEF but has a very interesting experience of the combination of self-assessment and external evaluation that we are happy to share with our readers.

At the end of last year, the Agency for Public Management and eGovernment¹ (Difi) was commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Research to evaluate the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training². Difi suggested to combine the external evaluation with a self-assessment.

Both the Ministry and Education Directorate responded positively to Difi's request, and thus the Education Directorate conducted the CAF self-assessment with assistance from Difi at the year-end. Following this, Difi conducted the external evaluation during the spring and summer 2015. The external evaluation had a broader perspective on a longer term, but the results from the two evaluations were comparable and turned out to have a very good match as they both supported each other practically and content-wise.

From Difi's point of view, the desired achievements of this combination was to reduce the data collection and especially the amount of interviews needed. Whereas the Education Directorate envisaged the following benefits:

- They are in a better position to ensure a sound knowledge base for the evaluation.
- Their own participation would give greater ownership of the results.
- Increasing their chances in having the results followed up
- Self-assessment would provide learning within the Education Directorate.

¹ **The Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (Difi)**

Difi reports to the Ministry of Local Government and Modernization and aims to improve the organization and efficiency of government administration in Norway. One of its main tasks is to conduct external evaluations on request. Difi has also taken the national responsibility for disseminate knowledge about CAF.

² **The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training**

Within a framework of statutes and national curricula, the municipalities are responsible for running primary and lower secondary schools in Norway, while county authorities have responsibility for upper secondary schools. The Ministry of Education and Research is the highest public administrative authority for educational matters. The Directorate is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research with responsibility for the development of kindergarten and primary and secondary education.

Now that both the self-evaluation and the external evaluation are completed, Difi concluded that this combination was a success. Indeed, Difi benefited from being able to listen to the plenary discussions in the Education Directorate and getting access to all the documents gathered for the self-assessment as well as the CAF-report itself. This gave Difi important knowledge and a good starting point for conducting the external evaluation.

In addition, the feedback from the Education Directorate was also very positive. At the beginning, some were a bit sceptical about the representativeness of the self-assessment groups and the assessor's ability to be objective. However the scepticism disappeared when the results were submitted. When the findings were compared with other studies, such

as an employee survey conducted after the CAF, many similar results were found in most areas of the organisation.

One of the most useful results of the CAF was that the Education Directorate started to prepare a new strategy before the external evaluation was finalised, and thus during this process, the impact of CAF was augmented. The Education Directorate particularly benefited from the bottom-up perspective of CAF and reported that both leaders and employees were involved in the CAF-process. This consequently increased the staff commitment and motivation in further improving the organisation.

(Credit to Gudrun Vik from DIFI, CAF National Correspondent of Norway)

IV. AGENDA 2015-2016

Choose from the following CAF-related activities and trainings:

The Social Responsibility of the Public Administration of the Future

Maastricht (NL), 10-11 December 2015

For more information click [here](#).

Performance Management in Public Sector Organisations – The contribution of the CAF

Maastricht (NL), 17-19 February 2016

(1 day intro CAF + 2 days)

Risk Management in the Context of CAF and TQM

Maastricht (NL), 25-27 May 2016

Strengthening the performance of your organisation with the CAF

Barcelona (ES), 5-7 October 2016

CAF Master Class

Maastricht (NL), 7-9 December 2016

The Social Responsibility of the Public Administration of the Future

Join us in Maastricht (NL), 10-11 December 2015

The Common Assessment Framework CAF, the TQM tool for the public sector, attaches a lot of importance to social responsibility. One of the 9 criteria, criterion 8, is completely dedicated to it. To help public organisations to take significant steps forward in this field, this seminar will provide them with a social responsibility self-assessment tool named SORAF (Social Responsibility Assessment Framework). The focus will be on adopting a socially responsible behaviour by integrating it into the decision-making processes as well as into the organisations' culture, strategy and management plans.

For more information click [here](#).

* Registrations are welcomed until **27 November 2015**, or for as long as places are available

By the end of the seminar, the participants should have a clear understanding of:

- the importance of SR in the public sector;
- the process of integrating SR into the decision-making and strategy of the organisation;
- how to foster the right organisational culture in order to improve staff motivation and commitment while attracting new and maintaining current employees;
- the implementation and evaluation of SR in the public sector;
- how to build strong stakeholder and community engagement in developing win-win situations for increased social and environmental impact;
- how to improve image by integrating principles of SR: accountability, transparency and ethical behaviour.

Innovation capacities in the Public Sector: Strategic Linkages between Leadership, HRM and Innovation

Join us in Maastricht (NL), 9-10 December 2015

The challenge for European public administrations is to develop the ability to master innovation processes. They need to accelerate the strategic use of innovation processes and to build the necessary organisational environments which can authorise innovation in practice.

Innovation often involves new approaches to cooperation with external institutions (public or private) and citizens as well as coordination of activities with other service providers. Furthermore, innovation requires new skills of staff, e.g. entrepreneurship, new ways of cooperation with other institutions and clients.

Leaders who want to drive their organisations to successfully implement and coordinate innovation approaches to new service delivery need to strategically strengthen the linkages of HRM and innovation policies. It is necessary for the HRM system to develop staff innovation cultures and to develop the new required skills that are needed to master innovation processes and at the same time to establish new organisational

structures that enable new solutions, new processes and better results in the public service delivery.

The seminar is based on a practice-oriented learning methodology where key messages are explained through the presentation of European best practice examples and cases from EIPA's European Public Sector Award (EPSA) that illustrate the different aspects of organisational change, new leadership approaches and HRM models and their linkages for successful public sector innovation.

The objective of the seminar is provide an insight and inspiration from best practices and to equip the participants with concrete tools for ensuring successful innovation in public service delivery and change in the public administration.

For more information click [here](#).

* Registrations are welcomed until **26 November 2015**, or for as long as places are available



Learning & Development

Visit the website of CAF at EIPA (www.eipa.eu/CAF) to see for yourself and find out what the CAF 2013 model might bring to you. For more information and updates on translations into other languages you can also contact your CAF National Correspondent.

HELP US INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF #CAF ON TWITTER

Via our Twitter account, we keep you informed about events, initiatives and other relevant developments. Follow us here: @CAF_RC_EIPA and use #CAF Common Assessment Framework in your tweets

TO REGISTER YOUR ORGANISATION AS A CAF USER

Visit this page: <http://caf.eipa.eu/3/107/&for=new>, register yourself and find out which organisations in your country or sector are also using the CAF.

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