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3rd European CAF Event

The CAF as an instrument for a bottom-up European quality approach in the public sector

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Overview



1. European standards of a reliable and efficient administration.
2. From Quality to organizational Management
3. Convergence in models of organizational improvement through Europe
4. Conclusion

N.THIJS & P.STAES. Quality management as an instrument for bottom-up European regulation. The second transatlantic dialogue, Leuven (Belgium), June 2006.



3rd European CAF Event **Lisbon 11-12 October 2007**

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1. European standards of a reliable and efficient administration (1).



- Why MS need standards of reliable and efficient administration:
 - to fulfil the “Copenhagen criteria” of democratic governance for EU membership (1993)
 - to apply *the Acquis communautaire* (existing legislation of the EU)
 - to meet “Madrid criteria” : adjustment of public administrations to ensure harmonious operation of Community policies (1995)
Guidelines remain very general in relation to administrative reform
- Cannes White paper: administrative reform higher level of priority (1998)
- But: no general body of European law in public administration sphere: individual MS are free to organise their own administration.

1. European standards of a reliable and efficient administration (2).



- The union is a chain of national administrations: a chain that is as strong as the weakest link
- Consensus on principles of governance (European Administrative Space) as a set of common standards of governance and public administrations for all MS:
 - reliability and predictability
 - openness and transparency
 - accountability
 - efficiency and effectiveness
- The European Commission doesn't provide a specific model for the organisation and functioning of public administrations

2. From quality to organizational management (1)

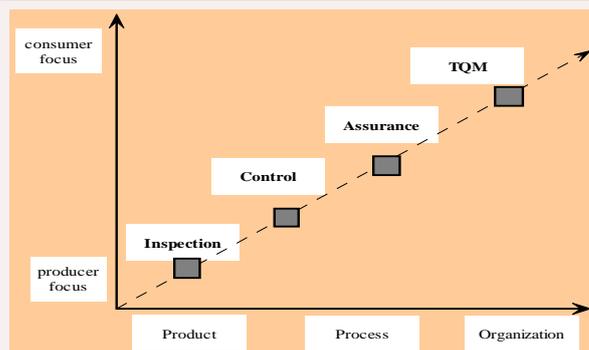
Since 1980 many public management reforms characterised by:

- the introducing new principles,
- a growing focus on efficiency and effectiveness,
- attention to transparency and accountability,
- awareness of public service delivery
- and the role of the citizen/customer.

Quality improvement was on top of the list of many European countries

Total Quality Management was introduced in the 1990's

2. From quality to organizational management (2)



TQM is characterized by the permanent mobilization of all the resources (especially the people) to improve in a continuous way: all the aspects of an organisation, the quality of goods and services delivered, the satisfaction of its stakeholders and its integration into the environment.

TQM models in the public sector: EFQM and CAF

3. Convergence in models of organizational improvement through Europe

Christopher Pollitt (2002) following Brunson (1989) :four levels of 'convergence'

1. **discursive convergence:** Is the quality management-rhetoric present and "hot" in the EU-countries and do these countries pay lip services to this evolution?"
2. **decisional convergence:** Is this "new speak also translated in concrete management plans and do the governements support TQM tools such as CAF?"
3. **practice convergence:** Do public organisations apply quality models and is CAF widely used in the EU countries?"
4. **results convergence:** Does the use of quality models improves the results of the different organisations

Studies from EIPA 2003/2005 and database 2007

3.1. Discursive convergence

- **13th Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Public Administration in the Member States of the European Union. Berlin, 22 June 2007**

An integrated strategy should be developed for the following areas: ensuring customer satisfaction, guaranteeing high-quality public services (Citizen Charters) and good practices. It should also serve as the basis for further developing the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and implementing it throughout Europe.

- **TQM tools and CAF and the political support in the MS (2005)**

No formal policy (1)	Decreasing (2)	Constant (9)	Increasing (12)
1 country	2 countries	9 countries	12 countries

Quality conferences	8 countries
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Quality awards / contests	7 countries
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The rhetoric of quality management certainly found its way into EU public services

3.2. Decisional convergence

- **Policy documents on CAF (2005)**

13 countries without a history of quality management had policy papers on quality management and quality management models in

- **The implementation of CAF: voluntary, recommended or obligatory (2005)**

Voluntary (9)	Recommended (15)	Obligatory (3)
9 countries	15 countries	3 countries

- **48th Meeting of the directors general responsible for public. Berlin, 20 and 21 June 2007**

The Directors General ask the Working Group to further develop CAF activities for 2007 and 2008 in order to bring the number of CAF users to 2010 by the year 2010

- **A European Action plan 2007-2008 and 22 national action plans**

There seems to be also a convergence at the decisional level

3.3. Practice convergence

***The use of CAF in different countries: October 2007:
1030 registered users in 33 countries***

More than 40 registered users	10 countries
Between 10 and 40 registered	8 countries
Fewer than 10 registered users	15 countries

CAF is more and more used in more and more countries but its use is not equally spread among the MS. There is more than a good start in practice convergence but the target remains and spreading is necessary.

3.4. Results convergence (1)

Reasons

- The organization wanted to identify strengths and areas for improvement
- To develop sensitivity to quality issues
- Intention to involve staff in managing the organization and to motivate them
- As an input into ongoing improvement activities, restructuring etc.
- The CAF was used as a first diagnosis in the start of a strategic planning process

Main benefits

- Identification of the need to share information and improve communication
- A clear identification of strengths and areas for improvement
- We were able to identify a number of important actions to be undertaken
- People developed a better understanding of the organizational issues/problems
- Self-assessment gave rise to new ideas and a new way of thinking

3.4. Results convergence (2)

- Did the use of CAF results in sustainable improvements? (2005)
Yes : 104 No : 12
- What were the most important type of Improvement activities?
 - Input into the strategic planning process of the organization
 - A full action plan (directly linked to the results of the CAF SA)
 - Implementation of surveys for the staff
 - Improvement of the process
 - Improvement of the quality of the leadership
- CAF Works 2006 : 29 good practices from 15 countries
- The CAF 2006 focuses more on the entire improvement cycle were self assessment is just the first step

4. Conclusion

Convergence at different levels:

- discursive convergence
- decisional convergence
- practice convergence
- results convergence

Quality management models as an instrument for bottom up European regulation providing standards for organizational (good) management is growing. To maintain and stimulate this evolution, sustainable efforts have to be made on the 4 levels of convergence.

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