

Quality Management in Public Sector: Perspectives of Common Assessment Framework Model in the European Union

Management kvality ve veřejném sektoru: perspektivy modelu Common Assessment Framework v Evropské unii

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Abstract

The paper deals with a particular quality management problems of the public sector. Organisations implement quality management by means of specific models and tools within the Total Quality Management concept. Common Assessment Framework represents one of these public sector models. The purpose of the paper deals with origin, growth and application within the member countries of the European Union. The aim is to evaluate perspectives of the Common Assessment Framework within the public sector of EU countries, mainly aspects such as conditions and structure of the Common Assessment Framework Users in 2008 and 2012. Evaluation of the Common Assessment Framework Users conditions results from CAF Resource Centre. In the paper, growth of the number of the Common Assessment Framework Users in the European countries in 2008 and 2012 is assessed. Further, the paper deals with evaluation of launching the Common Assessment Framework in the specified countries of the European Union and its Users structure within the specified public sector spheres. Results of the evaluation clearly indicate the high potential of the Common Assessment Framework as a tool Total Quality Management in Public Administration, as well as in other areas of the public sector in EU countries.

Keywords

CAF Users, EU states, model Common Assessment Framework, public sector, Total Quality Management

JEL Codes

H50, H70

Abstrakt

Příspěvek je orientován na dílčí problematiku managementu kvality v podmínkách veřejného sektoru. Organizace uplatňují management kvality ve smyslu koncepce Total Quality Management prostřednictvím specifických modelů a nástrojů. Ve veřejném sektoru k těmto modelům patří model Common Assessment Framework. Jeho vznik, rozšíření a míra uplatňování v podmínkách zemí Evropské unie je předmětem tohoto příspěvku. Cílem příspěvku je vyhodnotit perspektivy modelu Common Assessment Framework ve veřejném sektoru zemí EU, a to z hlediska stavu a struktury uživatelů modelu Common Assessment Framework v roce 2008 a 2012. Hodnocení stavu uživatelů modelu Common Assessment Framework vychází z údajů poskytnutých CAF Resource. Příspěvek hodnotí

vývoj počtu uživatelů modelu Common Assessment Framework v členských státech EU v roce 2008 a 2012. Dále se zabývá zhodnocením zavedení modelu Common Assessment Framework v jednotlivých státech EU a struktury uživatelů tohoto modelu dle stanovených oblastí veřejného sektoru. Výsledky hodnocení jasně ukazují na vysoký potenciál modelu Common Assessment Framework, jakožto nástroje komplexního řízení kvality jak ve veřejné správě, tak i dalších oblastech veřejného sektoru zemí EU.

Klíčová slova

uživatelé modelu CAF, státy EU, model Common Assessment Framework, veřejný sektor, komplexní řízení kvality

Introduction

An important part of whatever organisation's management system is a present quality management concept applied within Total Quality Management (hereafter TQM). No matter what is the company size (small or large), or if is profit-making or non-profit-making, manufacturing or trading company. According to Robbins&Coulter (2008), the principle of TQM consists in complex and perpetual improving of all organisation activities with respect to customer's needs. Imler (2006), supporting the above mentioned statement, submits that the effective quality system of the specified organisation presents an infinite process with customers, their requirements and needs.

In 20th century, since the second half of the 80s, propensity for quality management in the public sector has been obvious in connection with New Public Management (hereafter NPM) concept, according to Ferlie, Lynn and Pollitt (2005). Lane (2000) describes NPM as a modern management concept of the public sector aimed at improving the public service efficiency and quality. In fact, the NPM concept was inspired by the best private sector management procedures. Caddy&Vintar (2004) as well as Christensen&Laegreid (2007) see reasons for NPM implementation in increasing demand for public services with no equivalent resources growth, providing and increasing public service quality for their users, strengthening transparent public affairs administration or in an effective utilization of the public funds.

According to Bovaird&Löffler, development of quality management implemented in the public sector led into integration between the system and strategic management and lawful customers'/citizens' requirements. Specific methods or models enabling planning, organising, evaluating and improving quality play very significant role at management quality implementation. Besides ISO 9000, ISO 14 001, ISO 27 001, Excellence European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), Balanced Scorecard, bench-marking, Citizen's Charters and Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), Six Sigma and, in particular, Common Assessment Framework¹ (hereafter CAF) can be found within the range of such tools.

The CAF model, the tool of TQM philosophy, is a complex method improving quality of the public sector organisations. As said in the theories, the main impetus to modernize,

¹ See details by ENGEL (2003).

manage public affairs effectively, improve efficiency and practice customer-oriented activities within the public sector institutions, which contributed to the origin of the CAF, was given by activities and cooperation among EU ministers responsible for Public Sector. Similarly, in the 20th century, since the beginning of the 90s, quality management tools, which found their implementation in the private sector but were disunited and unsuitable for public organisations, penetrated into the public sector institutions in Europe. Since 2000, the CAF has been the original European quality improvement tool for the public sector.

Development and implementation of the CAF are to be studied by the European Institute of Public Administration (hereafter EIPA). Studies done by Staes&Thijs (2010), Staes, Thijs, Stoffels and Geldof (2011) are the latest ones.

The aim of this paper is evaluating perspectives of the CAF within the public sector of EU countries in terms of CAF implementation rate in 2008 and 2012.

In the first chapter of this paper, descriptive analysis represents development and perspectives of the CAF, quality-improvement tool for public sector. Conditions and development of the CAF Users of EU member countries are analysed carefully in the second chapter. Conclusion deals with merging the given results and questions for discussion about perspectives of the CAF within EU conditions.

Assessment of the CAF Users conditions is based on the data by CAF Resource Centre, the information institution of EIPA, which operates the public-accessible web application about the CAF as well. Within this application, the CAF² Users (hereafter Users) Database is operated as well. The data about Users obtained were classified, assorted, compared and analysed statistically.

Assessment of the Users conditions and structure is based on the following:

- Comparing development of the number of CAF Users in the member countries of EU in 2008 and 2012.
- Stating the CAF implementation rate in the particular EU member countries and its comparing depending on the country size measured by number of inhabitants.
- Analysing the structure of Users according to the specified spheres of the public sector.

2 *Registration upon the CAF Resource Centre Database is not compulsory for organisations (the CAF Users). Nevertheless, the CAF Resource Centre is initiative itself or by means of national informants (representatives in all 27 EU countries) in appealing the CAF Users to register upon this Database. When being registered into the CAF Resource Centre, the CAF User fills in the following data - name, type and size of the company based on the number of employees. All active CAF Users from all countries around the world can be registered in this Database.*

1 Perspectives of the CAF

1.1 Development of the CAF

The CAF has been existed for 12 years now (see Table 1). Preparations for the CAF launching were based on ministerial declaration from November 1998 in which general principles for improving the public services quality for customers were defined (Staas, Thijs, 2011).

Innovative Public Services Group³ (hereafter IPSG), being inspired by Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (hereafter EFQM) and model by Speyer, the German University (The Model of the German University of Administrative Sciences in Speyer), gave the final form to the CAF. The CAF has been designed for use in all parts of the public sector applicable to public organisations at national/federal, regional or local level. The model can be applied under a wide variety of circumstances, such as a part of a systematic programme of reform or as a basis for improvement targeting in the specific public service organisations. Providing that company is very large, the CAF is allowed to be applied only in some parts of the company, e.g. selected section or department.

Development and application of the CAF on the European level has been associated with regular activities nowadays (see Table 1):

- European Conference of the Public Administration Quality.
- Conferences and workshops of the CAF Users.
- Publication and assessment by the CAF Resource Centre (publications, presentations and studies).

Since 2001, the European Institute of Public Administration, through the CAF Resource Centre, has been acting as an information resource centre for the CAF to support its usage. Operating the web sites about the CAF on the European level represents another activity of the CAF Resource Centre. On the web sites⁴ (see note below), the CAF can be found in the number of European languages. Moreover, the database of all organizations in which the CAF was applied and the results were registered at EIPA, can be found here as well.

A pilot version of the CAF was presented in May 2000 at the First European Public Administration Quality Conference in Lisbon. While being used and experienced, the CAF became necessary to be revised for the first time. The first revised version, the CAF 2002, was launched in 2002 at the Second European Public Administration Quality Conference in Copenhagen.

3 IPSG represents a part of the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN) which is informal association of General Directors responsible for public administration in the member states of EU, nominees and other European countries and Council of Europe.

4 The web sites: <http://www.eipa.eu/en/topic/show/&tid=191>.

Table 1: 12-years CAF timeline

1998	Agreement on the construction of the Common Assessment Framework within the EUPAN Network
2000	Launch of the CAF at the 1st European Quality Conference in Portugal
2001	Creation of the European CAF Resource Centre at EIPA Maastricht
2002	Launch of the reviewed CAF 2002 model at the 2nd European Quality Conference in Denmark
2003	1st European CAF Users Event in Italy; 1st European study on the use of CAF
2004	CAF Master Class at the 3rd European Quality Conference in Netherlands
2005	2nd European CAF Users Event in Luxembourg; 2nd European study on the use of CAF
2006	„CAF Works“ publication; Launch of the reviewed CAF 2006 model at the 4th European Quality Conference in Finland.
2007	3rd European CAF Users Event in Portugal; CAF movie
2008	CAF Center at the 5th European Quality Conference in France
2009	Presentation of the Procedure on External Feedback
2010	Celebration of 2000 CAF Users; Launch of the CAF and Education vision; 4th European CAF Users Event in Romania
2011	6th European Quality Conference in Poland; 3rd European study on the use of CAF – "Growing Towards Excellence in the European Public Sector. A decade of European collaboration with CAF."
2012	5th European CAF Users Event in Norway

Source: ammended according to Staes, Thijs (2011). Filling in years 2011 and 2012.

The next revision of the CAF (i. e. revision of the CAF 2002), presented as the CAF 2006 at the Fourth European Public Administration Quality Conference in Tampere, in September 2006, was based, among others, on the results of the CAF usage surveys within the member states of EU provided by the CAF Resource Centre, the information institution of EIPA. Such surveys were done at the CAF Users Event in Rome in 2003 and Luxembourg in 2005.

As compared to the CAF 2002, the CAF 2006⁵ version has brought new perspectives and criteria, for example as follows:

- Stronger emphasis on modernization and innovation (changes obvious especially in criteria 1, 2 and 5).
- New examples of assessment contributing to so-called good governance.
- Extension⁶ and specification⁷ of the scoring system aimed at improving actions (CAF 2006).

By 2012, the third revision of the CAF, the CAF 2012, will have been finished and presented at the CAF Users Event in Oslo.

5 Note: In the Czech Republic, a Czech version of the CAF 2002 model was published for the public sector institutions in 2003. The next version, the CAF 2006 (named as „Společný hodnotící rámec CAF 2006“), was published in the Czech language in 2007 and adapted version named as „Společný hodnotící rámec - CAF CZ 2009“ in 2009.

6 Scoring system was extended from score between 0 and 5 up to the score between 0 to 100.

7 The so-called Finetuned CAF Scoring.

CAF External Feedback from 2010 as the latest designed tool based on analysing the CAF Users' needs and requirements promises further development in the matter of the public sector quality improvement.

1.2 Basic Features of the CAF and External Feedback

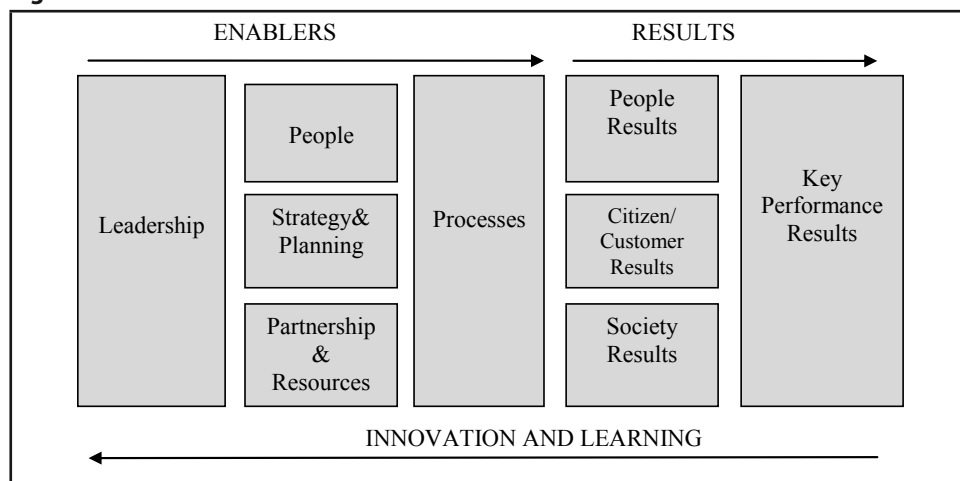
The CAF, as well as Excellence by EFQM, is aimed on the results, customer, clear-goals management, management by means of processes and facts, active work of employees, continual improvement and innovation, mutually profitable partnership and social liability. The main purpose comes in improving the public institutions efficiency.

Here are the main purposes of the CAF model:

- To introduce the public sector to the principles of TQM and advantages of self-assessment and progressively guide them to apply the improving principles through the sequence of activities PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act).
- To facilitate the self-assessment of public sector institutions in order to obtain an analysis and improvement activities for the given organization.
- To act as a bridge across the various tools used in quality management.
- To facilitate bench marking and bench learning between public sector institutions, (CAF 2006).

In principle, according to the CAF, there are two existing methods of the self-assessment. The first of them, presented as "Speyer" (Deutsche Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften Speyer – University of Administrative Sciences in Speyer cooperated with EIPA to modify the Excellence tool by EFQM in order to be applicable to the public institutions), is based on the assessment of 260 examples within the structure of 9 criteria and 28 sub criteria of the CAF (see Figure 1). The second method, recommended by EIPA workmen, assesses strengths and weaknesses of the particular sub criteria. This model does not deal with examples in details and is called "EIPA".

Figure 1: Structure of the Common Assessment Framework



Source: CAF 2006, p.3.

The CAF External feedback represents common results of the CAF Users who implemented the CAF within of the EU member countries on national levels or CAF Resource Centre.

The main task of the CAF External feedback is providing the external objective evaluation of the following:

- Detachment and level of the CAF self-assessment procedure.
- Organisation work with results of the self-assessment - elaboration and implementation of the improvement plan.
- Growth and level of the quality management in the specified organisation.

The CAF External Feedback (2010) is built upon three pillars. The first pillar serves as an assesment of planning, performing and results of the self-assessment process in the specified organisation. The second pillar qualifies how the improvement plan is implemented by organisation. The third pillar of the CAF External Feedback is based on the eight fundamental Principles of Excellence (these principles framed the CAF body) and refers to the results of the first two pillars.

Within the third pillar the organisation maturity is assessed (in terms of TQM – Total Quality Management) as a result of the self-assessment process and improvement plan.

Pursuant to the assessment results according to the CAF External Feedback, the organisation can be awarded an Effective CAF User label.

2 Assessment of the Users Conditions and Structure and the CAF Implementation in the European Union

2.1 Comparison of the Users in the Member States of EU in 2008 and 2012

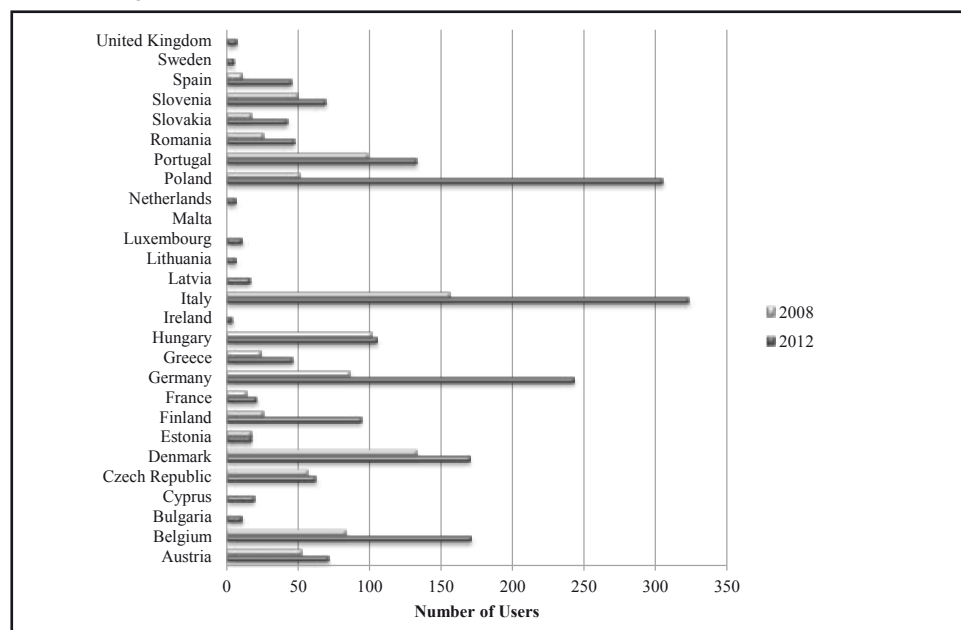
In 2008, 1,136 CAF Users were registered within the European Union. Figure 2 presents shares of the particular EU member countries. On April 30, 2012 there were 2,407 CAF Users registered in the CAF Resource Centre Database. By dividing the Users according to the country, types and number, numerous duplicate registrations in the Database were found out. Such duplicate registrations have been deleted and the actual number of the CAF Users decreased of 359 records. Therefore, the survey works with 2,048 Users for 2012 (see Figure 2).

By comparing the number of Users in 2008 (1,136) and 2012 (2,048), 55% rising between these years is obvious. Likewise, it must be empasized that the growth represents not only the number of Users increase but, in particular, growth of the CAF utilization in another member countries of EU. Based on the CAF Users registered in 2008, the tool was implemented in 17 member countries while in 2012 there are already 26 countries performing the CAF.

In period under the survey, the highest increase of Users was recorded in Poland, Italy, Germany and Denmark. The registrations here increased of 190 Users on an average. To be more specific, the highest increase from 51 up to 311 Users, i.e. sixfold growth, was registered in Poland. On the contrary, number of Users in Estonia between 2008 and 2012 stayed unchanged.

The Figure 2 shows the greatest shares of Users represented by Italy, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Belgium and Portugal (countries in alphabetic order). On the average, 75 users fall on one member country of EU. Moreover, it is obvious that the CAF has been applied and used in all member countries of EU, except for Malta.

Figure 2: Growth of the CAF Users in 2008 and 2012 within the member countries of the EU



Source: interpretation based on the CAF Resource Centre (2012).

2.2 The CAF Implementation Rate

It is impossible to specify the CAF implementation rate in the EU member countries based only on their number of inhabitants. To know the size of the country specified by the number of inhabitants⁸ is also very important. Hence, for analysing the phase of the CAF implementation in the countries two indexes are used, as follows:

- Index 1 represents number of inhabitants of the country in proportion to the total EU number of inhabitants (on January 1st, 2012, there were 503,492,041 inhabitants recorder).
- Index 2 shows the number of Users in the specified country in proportion to the total number of Users (on April 30th, 2012 there were 2,048 Users recorded).

The fourth column of the Table 2 shows the difference between these two indexes (implementation rate). It was presupposed that the size of the specified country would be comparable to its Users share in proportion to the total number of the Users within EU member countries. The following basic scales have been set for the implementation rate (hereafter IR). Basic statistical values of the IR resulting, i.e. average value of 0.04, medium

⁸ Statistics Database Eurostat 7/2012.

value of -0.44 and standard deviation of 4.67, were considered for fixing the three below stated IR levels.

- IR within the limits (-4.4; 4.4) means corresponding IR
- $IR \geq 4.5$; represents low IR
- $IR \leq -4.5$; represents higher IR

In Table 2 the member countries are ordered from the greatest to the smallest CAF implementation rate, according to the resulting IR value.

Table 2: The CAF implementation rate in the member countries of the European Union

State	Index 1	Index 2	IR	Description
Poland	7.6	14.89	-7.29	higher
Denmark	1.1	8.30	-7.20	higher
Belgium	2.2	8.35	-6.15	higher
Portugal	2.1	6.49	-4.39	corresponding
Italy	12.1	15.76	-3.66	corresponding
Finland	1.1	4.59	-3.49	corresponding
Hungary	2.0	5.12	-3.12	corresponding
Slovenia	0.4	3.37	-2.97	corresponding
Austria	1.7	3.47	-1.77	corresponding
Slovakia	1.1	2.05	-0.95	corresponding
Czech Republic	2.1	3.03	-0.93	corresponding
Cyprus	0.2	0.93	-0.73	corresponding
Estonia	0.3	0.83	-0.53	corresponding
Luxembourg	0.1	0.54	-0.44	corresponding
Latvia	0.6	0.78	-0.18	corresponding
Greece	2.2	2.24	-0.04	corresponding
Lithuania	0.4	0.29	0.11	corresponding
Ireland	0.9	0.20	0.70	corresponding
Bulgaria	1.5	0.54	0.96	corresponding
Sweden	1.9	0.24	1.66	corresponding
Romania	4.3	2.29	2.01	corresponding
Netherlands	3.3	0.29	3.01	corresponding
Germany	16.3	11.86	4.44	corresponding
Spain	9.2	2.20	7.00	low
France	13.0	1.02	11.98	low
United Kingdom	12.5	0.34	12.16	low

Source: interpretation based on the CAF Resource Centre (2012).

It is obvious out of the IR results the number of users is in relation to the size of the specified country in 77% of countries (20 states).

In other words, the highest CAF implementation rate falls to Poland, Denmark, Belgium and Portugal. Italy and Finland represents the limit between the high and comparable implementation rate. From the country size point of view, there are mostly middle-sized

countries, except for Poland and Italy (see Table 2 – Index 1). The largest countries of the EU such as Germany, Spain, France and United Kingdom, represents very low CAF implementation rate.

2.3 The CAF Implementation in the Public Sector Spheres

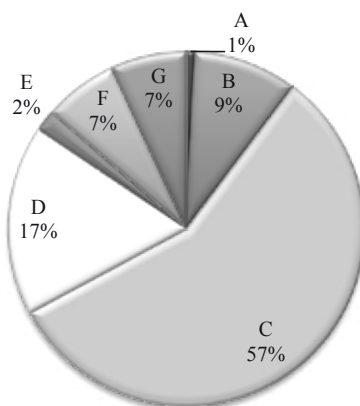
The structure of Users has been composed according to the public sector spheres, marked with letters from A to G, in which the User concentrates its activities. The structure was organized with reference to the number of Users registered in the Users Database for the particular public sector spheres (see Table 3).

The following basic structure of the public sector has been organized:

- A – Justice (Courts, Public Prosecutor's Office, Prison service)
- B – Defence, Public Policy and Security (Military Forces, Police)
- C – Public Administration (Municipal Authorities, State Administration)
- D – Educational System, Science and Research (Schools, Universities, Grant agencies)
- E – Religion, Culture and Sport (Churches, Parishes, Museums, Libraries, Special agencies and associations)
- F – Health and Social Services (Hospitals, Houses for Elderly People, Social service agencies)
- G – Others (Transport, Telecommunications, Housing, Environment, Industry)

By dividing the public sector into the spheres, it is obvious that the highest percentage of the Users, 57%, is concentrated in the sphere "C" – Public Administration. 17% share, which is very significant rate, falls to the sphere "D" – Educational System, Science and Research while the sphere "B" – Defence, Public Policy and Security represents 9% of the Users. Figure 3 illustrates the overview of the Users percentage share in the particular spheres.

Figure 3: Users share in the selected public sector spheres



Source: interpretation based on the CAF Resource Centre (2012).

Table 3: The number and structure of Users within the public sector spheres of the specified EU countries as of April 30th, 2012

27 EU states	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Sum
Belgium	3	20	91	18	2	26	11	171
Bulgaria	0	0	9	0	0	0	2	11
Czech Republic	0	1	59	2	0	0	0	62
Denmark	2	10	17	89	15	16	21	170
Estonia	0	0	12	1	1	0	3	17
Finland	0	27	39	11	2	6	9	94
France	1	0	10	5	0	2	3	21
Ireland	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	4
Italy	6	9	119	137	1	29	22	323
Cyprus	0	0	4	3	0	2	10	19
Latvia	0	1	14	1	0	0	0	16
Lithuania	0	0	4	1	0	0	1	6
Luxemboug	0	0	8	1	0	1	1	11
Hungary	0	54	48	1	0	0	2	105
Malta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Germany	4	27	149	22	5	16	20	243
Netherlands	0	0	4	1	0	0	1	6
Poland	0	0	300	3	0	0	2	305
Portugal	0	0	60	29	9	24	11	133
Austria	0	1	60	3	0	5	2	71
Romania	0	29	15	1	0	0	1	47
Greece	0	7	29	2	1	3	4	46
Slovakia	0	0	20	15	0	3	4	42
Slovenia	0	5	64	0	0	0	0	69
Great Britain	0	0	2	3	0	1	1	7
Spain	0	1	23	4	5	3	9	45
Sweden	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	5
Summation	17	192	1166	354	41	138	140	2048

Source: interpretation based on CAF Resource Centre data from April 2012.

Table 4 illustrates the CAF implementation (according to the public sector spheres) as well as the Users growth in the public sector based on Frequency Statistical Analysis. There can be seen that only in three countries the Users have applied the CAF only in two public sector spheres, in six countries the CAF has been implemented in three spheres, seven countries has applied the CAF in four spheres, in three countries the CAF has been used in five spheres, in three countries the tool has been implemented in six spheres and, finally, in four countries the Users have applied the CAF in all seven public sector spheres.

Table 4: The CAF implementation in the public sector spheres

Number of public sector areas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number of states	0	3	6	7	3	3	4
States	x	Bulgaria, Slovenia, Sweden	Czech Republic, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland	Estonia, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Great Britain	France, Portugal, Austria	Finland, Greece, Spain	Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Germany

Source: interpretation based on CAF Resource Centre data (April, 2012).

Table 5: Comparison of the CAF implementation rate and public sector areas with the highest CAF implementation

State	IR	Description	Public sector
Poland	-7.29	higher	98 % (C)
Denmark	-7.20	higher	52 % (D)
Belgium	-6.15	higher	53 % (C)
Portugal	-4.39	corresponding	45 % (C)
Italy	-3.66	corresponding	42 % (D)
Finland	-3.49	corresponding	41 % (C)
Hungary	-3.12	corresponding	51 % (B)
Slovenia	-2.97	corresponding	93 % (C)
Austria	-1.77	corresponding	84 % (C)
Slovakia	-0.95	corresponding	48 % (C)
Czech Republic	-0.93	corresponding	95 % (C)
Cyprus	-0.73	corresponding	53 % (G)
Estonia	-0.53	corresponding	71 % (C)
Luxembourg	-0.44	corresponding	73 % (C)
Latvia	-0.18	corresponding	87 % (C)
Greece	-0.04	corresponding	63 % (C)
Lithuania	0.11	corresponding	88 % (C)
Ireland	0.70	corresponding	50 % (C)
Bulgaria	0.96	corresponding	82 % (C)
Sweden	1.66	corresponding	80 % (C)
Romania	2.01	corresponding	62 % (B)
Netherlands	3.01	corresponding	66 % (C)
Germany	4.44	corresponding	60 % (C)
Spain	7.00	low	51 % (C)
France	11.98	low	48 % (C)
United Kingdom	12.16	low	43 % (D)

Source: author's interpretation.

Last table (see Table 5) shows comparison between the CAF implementation rate in the particular states and specific public sector areas with the highest CAF implementation rate (IR) in the specific country. It is evident from Table 5 that the IR does not impact on preference of the specific public sector area. The CAF implementation in the public administration prevails at 77% of states.

Conclusions

Since 2000, the CAF as an European tool of the Total Quality Management has been implemented by the public institutions. The origin and lifetime of the CAF is connected with impetus and efforts on the level of the EU institution, especially EIPA, Innovative Public Services Group and CAF Resource Centre. The CAF Resource Centre, which operates the CAF Users Database too, provides the Users constant organizational and technical support.

The self-assessment tool, the CAF, provides the public institutions complex assessment and quality improvement within the nine criteria framework. Within this framework, activities of the organisation are assessed by two aspects. Within its activities, organisation develops conditions and expectations for its quality and effective performance, which represents the first aspect. The second aspect is focused on the results to be reached by organisation in relation to the given expectations. In 2010, the CAF was improved with the evaluation tool called the CAF External Feedback providing external objectification and confirmation of the CAF self-assessment results. This tool enables organisation being awarded the Effective CAF User label.

Within this paper, assessment of the CAF implementation rate was carried out by the positive survey of the CAF Users conditions and structure in the member countries of EU.

Here are the most significant conclusions:

- The CAF has been implemented in 2,048 public sector organisations in all member countries of the European Union, except for Malta.
- It is necessary to submit that in the most of the member countries (20 countries) the number of CAF Users is comparable or little higher or lower in proportion to the size of the specified country. From this point of view, Poland, Denmark, Belgium and Portugal represent the highest implementation of the CAF within EU. Italy and Finland are the next ones. On the contrary, Germany, Spain, France and United Kingdom represents very low CAF implementation rate.
- Basically, 57% of the CAF Users concentrate in the sphere of Public Administration. Further, in Educational system, Science and Research, Defence, Public Policy and Security or Health and Social Services the CAF has been used intensively.
- The CAF Users registered in all public sector spheres can be found only in Belgium, Denmark, Italy and Germany. On the other hand, in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Sweden the CAF has been applied only in two public sector spheres. On an average, the CAF has been implemented in the member countries of EU.

- No contiguity nor higher orientation on the specific area were proved comparing the implementation rate (IR) and orientation of the CAF implementation on the specific area of the public sector. Implementation in the public administration predominates at 77% of states.

Assessment of the number and structure of CAF Users within the European Union illustrates extensive differences at the CAF implementation in the specified countries. The whole range of the specific factors and features, such as activities and support on the EU level, political or economic situation of the specified country, could be the cause of such differences.

The structure of CAF Users divided into the particular public spheres shows that the CAF can be implemented in all public sector spheres. Also extension of the CAF Users is obvious.

In sequence of the CAF extension rate in the public sector, growing number of users and CAF Resource Centre activities the CAF can be submitted as a quality and efficiency improvement tool for the public services which has high potential in all areas of the public sector.

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