

41st MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN DIRECTORS GENERAL RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Rome 2nd and 3rd December 2003

RESOLUTION ON INNOVATIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

In accordance with the resolution of the Ministers responsible for Public Administration and the Medium Term Program, adopted in Rome on December 1st 2003, the Directors General of Public Administration acknowledge that, in addition to exchanging experiences, a number of joint initiatives have been undertaken and consolidated in the area of cooperation of the quality of services delivered to citizens and businesses, and in the various forms used to constantly keep quality high across time.

They agree on the importance to further explore areas of common interest in order to adjust the cooperation activities, taking into account the needs of new Member States.

Common Assessment Framework activities

The Directors General, acknowledging the results achieved in the promotion and dissemination of CAF, as a self-assessment tool and starting point for performance improvement in public services and comparison within the public administrations:

- Welcome and highly appreciate the initiative of the Italian Presidency to organise an expert meeting in Rome on 17th and 18th November, as well as the report on the Implementation of CAF in EU Member States, Acceding and Candidate Countries, carried out by EIPA under request and financial support of Italy;
- agree to widely disseminate the results of the EIPA study and the conclusions of the Rome expert meeting;
- note the need for a new CAF plan aimed at a wider dissemination of the CAF throughout Europe, taking into account the needs of the new Member States and Candidate Countries, to be developed by the EIPA CAF resources centre, together with the CAF network and presented during Luxembourg's Presidency
- support a further evaluation of the operational effectiveness of the CAF Resource Centre managed by EIPA, to be undertaken during the Irish Presidency.

Quality Conferences

The Directors General agree that the Quality Conferences are an important occasion for spreading the information on innovating and improving the quality of public

services at European level and exchanging good practices that should take place every two years.

They:

- strongly support the organization of the Third Quality Conference (3QC) scheduled to take place during the Dutch Presidency in Rotterdam on 15-17 September, 2004 and ask the IPSP to continue assisting in the preparatory work, with the involvement of the acceding countries;
- ask the Group to evaluate different ways of collecting inputs for the preparation of future QCs examining also non-European experiences.

Benchmarking in Public Services

The Directors General stressed the importance to make significant progress in this field.

They:

- appreciate the launching of a new Learning Lab on public procurement, under the initiative of Italy, through a first meeting of procurement agencies at European level, held in Rome in 28 November 2003.
- welcome the activation of a Learning Lab on road safety coordinated by France, through a meeting to be held in Paris on 12th December 2003 and, with the aim of carrying all the previous initiatives on performance indicators forward;
- demand that work commence on an inventory of all those subjects, including administrative areas, and methods of benchmarking, between public administration at European level, where common indicators could be usefully developed and broad cooperation can be ensured. The results of this exercise will be appraised by the end of 2004 to allow for a consideration by the DGs of the viability of new initiatives in this field.

Communication

The Directors General recognize that, in consideration of the range of activities carried out in the framework of the administrative cooperation of Member States at European level, the transparency of such process and the spreading of the information about its progresses can be favoured through a range of communication methods.

They:

- stress the importance of the drawing up of an annual project plan in this area including the creation of an EPAN site open to general public and considering the need of transferring the knowledge base currently on CIRCA Extranet to the new Internet site; welcome the management and financing by EIPA of the new Internet site;

- express their appreciation for continuing the publication of a newsletter, and welcome the improvement reached during the Italian Presidency with the introduction of a new standard format;
- ask the IPSPG to coordinate the contributions of all the working Groups.

Development of an improved Working Method

The Directors General recognize the strategic importance for the IPSPG to develop a new working method, taking into account the results of the Task Force Enlargement.

They:

- approve the action plan finalised by the Group, in order to strengthen the administrative cooperation in the area of the quality of public services, to improve knowledge exchange among members of the Group and to strengthen collaboration with the other groups of EPAN;
- ask the Group to define and implement guidelines in the following four areas:
 - creation of a mid and long term planning process
 - project and activities management
 - management of meetings
 - knowledge management