

(Extract from the 2009 and 2011 editions of the EUPAN Handbook)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (IPSG & EFQM)

It is intended by this Memorandum to define the future cooperation between the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN) and its Member States, represented by the Innovative Public Sector Group (IPSG) on one hand, and EFQM on the other hand, on the further development and implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) in the European Public Sector.

The European Public Administration Network (EUPAN) and EFQM have been in close cooperation since the late 1990s for the development and implementation of a Total Quality Management tool in the European Public Sector. IPSG, as one of the working groups of EUPAN, has played a key role in the development of CAF as such a tool; alongside most of the Member States, it has invested a lot of efforts in spreading and supporting the use of CAF. They are assisted by the European CAF Resource Centre that was established in 2001 as part of the European Institute for Public Administration (EIPA), to provide methodological and practical support to public administrations applying the CAF. Since the beginning, EFQM has always been one of the main founders and contributors of IPSG and the CAF expert network. With more than 1700 registered CAF users at the beginning of 2009, this demonstrates the success of these common efforts.

Based on the deployment of CAF implementation, users now wish to see their efforts confirmed through an independent evaluation. In order to develop a consistent approach to an independent evaluation, PEF (Process for External Feedback) and Effective CAF User labelling concepts are being developed by IPSG, in close collaboration with EFQM. The participation of CAF Users in the EFQM Levels of Excellence is an important option and has to be seen as an opportunity to be taken on a voluntary basis; however, this does not exclude other possibilities.

Through this Memorandum of Understanding, we aim to define the principles, roles and responsibilities of EFQM and the European Union Member States, represented in this matter by IPSG, in the context of their collaboration.

- EFQM and IPSG commit to present a common policy on the positioning of EFQM and CAF Models in the eyes of the users. This will ensure a consistent and reliable approach to support their journey to Excellence.
- EFQM and IPSG are willing to maintain a tight collaboration, with mutual respect and acknowledgement of the competences and capabilities of each other, and to work together closely to develop the PEF and the Effective CAF User (ECU) label as a sound and sustainable instrument.
- The procedure for external feedback (PEF) has been developed to provide interested CAF users with a qualitative feedback on their use of CAF. It recognises the efforts made by an organisation to install a culture of quality development through the use of CAF.
- PEF facilitates the participation of CAF users in the EFQM Levels of Excellence, thus bridging to the application for Committed to Excellence, since organisations that have obtained the ECU label can demonstrate that they have carried out a self-assessment reliably and that they dispose of an effective action plan.
- EFQM will define the requirements needed by CAF users to apply for the EFQM Level of Excellence: Recognised for Excellence (R4E), in agreement with IPSG.
- The feedback report confirming the effective use of CAF will mention the possibility to apply for EFQM Levels of Excellence.

- EFQM validators and assessors are valuable candidates for the function of External Feedback Actors (EFAC) in PEF, as well as experts on CAF from public administrations. Both groups will need additional training on CAF and the PEF process, based on a common outline supplied at the European and national level.
- Reference to EFQM will be made whenever EFQM-related content/information/material is used, according to common IP practice.
- A module presenting the relation between the CAF label and the EFQM Levels of Excellence, in particular Committed to Excellence, will be offered as part of the training for EFACs. The module will be defined and updated in collaboration with EFQM.
- A policy needs to be agreed and developed on the use of logos by the 15-16 October 2009 (CAF users event).
- A joint promotion and communication will be envisaged by both partners in order to promote and deploy the entire process.
- The partners agree to convene at the latest in the first week of December 2010 to evaluate the status of the cooperation and to make adjustments and amendments to the present Memorandum as they both consider necessary or useful to achieve the common goals.

Brussels, 17 March 2009