

**SURVEY FOR THE 41st MEETING OF THE
DIRECTORS-GENERAL OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF
THE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
(Rome, December 2003):**

**“Study for the Italian Presidency on the use of the Common
Assessment Framework (CAF) in European Public
Administrations”**

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Introduction

The Italian Presidency has commissioned the European Institute of Public Administration to conduct a study on the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) in European Public Administrations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this questionnaire-based study on the use of the Common Assessment Framework was twofold. It was intended;

- to help develop a better understanding of the conditions under which the CAF can be a useful analytical and improvement tool for public administrations, including questions related to the type of administrations that have found the CAF most helpful and questions related to the self-assessment process itself;
- to identify the role of national agencies in promoting the CAF and lead to guidelines for promoting the CAF in the new Member States.

In addition, it was hoped to obtain information to be used, in the follow-up to the study, to launch benchmarking projects between European administrations that have used the CAF.

Scope of the Study

One questionnaire was addressed to all organisations in Europe that have used the CAF to date and that have communicated this to EIPA (i.e. those registered in the CAF database kept at EIPA). The study therefore covers organisations that have used either CAF 2000 or CAF 2002 (even though some have answered CAF-related questionnaires in the past). The study also covers organisations that have used the CAF without notifying EIPA. For these, contact was established through the group of CAF correspondents (including those in the new Member States). In view of the numbers of replies expected it was decided to use closed questions as far as possible for this questionnaire to facilitate analysis.

A second questionnaire, covering the dissemination of the CAF, was addressed to the CAF correspondents, IPSG members and national agencies responsible for the dissemination of the CAF. In this case, more open questions were posed.

The answers received from national CAF correspondents naturally concentrate on some issues and questions more than on others. In addition, the replies received by EIPA vary considerably in their length and complexity. The study takes this into account while at the same time considering all answers in a balanced way. On the other hand, our aim was to keep the study as short and precise as possible. As a result, some national replies may be quoted or referred to more briefly or more explicitly and in greater depth than others. The author apologises in advance, if some Member States consider that their answers have not been sufficiently taken into consideration.

I would like to thank the Italian Presidency for their excellent co-operation during the past few months. I would also like to thank the various national experts, IPSG members and CAF users within the Member States for helping me to carry out this survey. A particular word of thanks also to Dr Christian Engel, formerly of EIPA, without whose continued involvement this study would not have been possible, and to Ann Stoffels of EIPA who consolidated the large amount of data and information received.

Seán Fitzpatrick, EIPA.

Chapter I: National correspondents and resources

Following the meeting of the Directors General for Public Administration in May 2000 in Uppsala, a network of national CAF correspondents was given the task – together with the CAF Resource Centre at EIPA – of overseeing and co-ordinating the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework. The objective was to launch new initiatives with a view to promoting the CAF and to further develop the framework and its methodology. The main tasks of the CAF correspondents in the Member States, however, was to promote the use and the implementation of the CAF within their country.

Why was it decided to create the function of a CAF correspondent in the Member States? It was not because there was a European network to which Member States had to contribute, but mainly because we know by experience that any initiative or change, and in particular any new tool for improving the quality of public services will not get off the ground unless it is promoted, unless public sector organisations are supported in using the tool and unless they have a particular incentive for using it. The purpose of agreeing to appoint CAF correspondents and of putting additional resources into promoting the CAF and supporting its use was therefore primarily aimed at reducing the gap between rhetoric and practice often characteristic of public sector reform initiatives.¹ We may add that, in the light of the number and diversity of quality activities and initiatives in current² as well as in future Member States³, promoting a new tool such as the CAF and convincing public sector organisations of its relevance demanded an additional effort.

In analysing the use of the Common Assessment Framework to date, it was therefore also of relevance to review the actions taken by Member States – both current and future – to promote the CAF. Two main questions underlie this part of our study:

- a) *Is there a clear and significant link between the amount of resources – both human and financial – put into the CAF at national level and its actual use?* This question involves both a quantitative aspect – the number of organisations that have applied the CAF – and a qualitative aspect – the degree to which organisations wishing to use the CAF have been given information and assistance that should be reflected in how organisations have experienced working with the CAF.
- b) *Are we able to identify good practice with regard to promoting the use of the CAF and giving support to organisations?*

¹ Cf. in particular Christopher Pollitt and Geert Bouckaert, *Public Management Reform. A Comparative Analysis*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

² Cf. Spanish Presidency of the European Union, *Quality Activities in the Public Administrations of the European Union Member States*, Madrid, 2002.

³ Cf. Christian Engel, *Quality Management Tools in CEE Candidate Countries. Current Practice, Needs and Expectations*, Maastricht: EIPA, 2003.

I.1. CAF – the current status in Member States

In the questionnaire, national CAF correspondents were asked whether the CAF is officially recommended by their respective governments or indeed whether it is a mandatory tool for quality management and improvement. CAF correspondents were also asked to judge the relevance of the CAF in comparison with other tools for managing and improving quality in their respective countries. Through other questions, in particular those related to training and the development of specific tools designed to disseminate and promote the CAF and facilitate its use by individual administrations, further information with respect to the support given to the CAF was obtained. This information can be used to draw a clearer picture of the status of the CAF in different countries.

At this stage, no single country has gone as far as introducing the CAF as a mandatory tool for managing and improving quality in the public sector at large, nor indeed at any level of government or within any specific sector of activity. Having said this, some exceptions deserve a mention. In **Belgium**, the regional government of Brussels-Capital has officially decided to use the CAF in all of its administrative bodies. In **Finland**, the City of Turku – the second largest town of the country – considered using the CAF across all its administrative units following its participation in CAF pilot-testing earlier in 2000 but has, it seems, refrained from taking the decision for now. **Slovenia**, furthermore, indicated that a mandatory use of the CAF could be considered an option for the future.

Attempting to reflect the differential status of the CAF in both old and new Member States, we have divided countries into five groups reflecting, in a very rough way, the support given to CAF; note that the division of countries into groups is not in any way meant to carry a judgement of value (in the sense of group being “better” or “worse” than any other).

Table 1: Levels of CAF support

Group 1 Level 0	There is no official support for the CAF
Group 2 Level 1	The CAF is recommended as one tool (among others)
Group 3 Level 2	The CAF is recommended and supported through corresponding activities
Group 4 Level 3	The CAF is recommended and promoted as main quality improvement tool and supported through corresponding activities
Group 5 Level 4	Using the CAF is mandatory

Trying to classify the countries that responded to the questionnaire into these categories, in a somewhat arbitrary way since the information available to sustain such a classification partly is weak, we arrive at the following table:

Table 2: CAF support in Member States

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Cyprus Ireland Luxembourg Malta Netherlands Romania UK	Czech Rep. Denmark Finland Greece Poland Spain Norway Sweden	Austria Estonia Germany Hungary Italy Portugal Slovak Rep. Slovenia	Belgium	

This table is in many ways not ideal, as it reflects a) a historical moment and not a dynamic process and b) fails to take into account contextual variables (e.g. administrative cultures or political systems of individual countries or the extent to which other tools of quality management are being used). The countries in the first group, for instance, hardly form a coherent group. Both the *Netherlands* and the *UK* have, so far, shown little interest in the CAF due to the fact that another quality improvement tool is well introduced, strongly promoted and widely used in the public sector – the INK-Model in the Netherlands and the EFQM Excellence Model in the UK (like, for instance, the Swedish Quality Model in *Sweden*). On the other hand, *Cyprus*, *Luxembourg*, *Malta* and *Romania* have not yet really started promoting the use of quality management and improvement tools at all and clearly are beginners in this regard. At the same time, in the group of countries recommending and supporting the CAF in a more pronounced way, it is the most widely promoted and used tool in some (*Belgium*, *Estonia*, *Germany* and *Slovenia*), while in others it is an important but not the main tool for managing and improving quality in the public administration.

We would like, in particular, to draw attention to the fact that the picture drawn by these tables only captures a specific moment in time. Through the information obtained, it is possible to believe that this picture will look quite different in a year or so. It is most likely that a number of countries will move into a “higher” category in the near future as a critical mass of users take up the CAF and as governments develop new initiatives to promote the CAF and may decide to give a clearer and/or stronger support to the instrument.

I.2. The CAF – Resources and Organisational Patterns

Officially supporting the use of an instrument like the CAF is one thing. Actively promoting its use, devoting resources to it and, in particular, developing tools and activities that might encourage administrations to use it and facilitate that use is another. It is clear, however, that countries supporting the CAF in a more pronounced way will have also been active in devoting resources, both human and financial, to the CAF.

Resources

When we examine the resources that Member States have put into disseminating, promoting and assisting with the use of the CAF, the differences between countries on the whole come out quite clearly. Generally, we can distinguish between three groups of countries:

- those that have made little or no specific resources available for the CAF ,
- a second group of countries that have devoted a limited amount of specific resources to the CAF, and finally
- a third group of countries that have put a substantial amount of resources into the CAF.

Among these, the first group is by far the largest.

The first group of countries that have hardly invested in the CAF or not invested at all includes **Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovenia, Spain** and the **United Kingdom**. In all of these countries, no specific financial or human resources seem to have been set aside for the CAF. Within this group, however, there is a clear difference between countries that have not made available a significant amount of resources because the CAF does not – or at least not yet – form part of the country's initiatives to promote quality in the public administration (**Cyprus, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania** and the **UK**) and others where the CAF is promoted, sometimes quite strongly (**Estonia** and **Slovenia** in particular), without particular resources being set aside for this purpose.

In the second group of countries we find **Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark** (so far), **Greece, Poland, Portugal** and **Sweden**. None of these countries has so far strongly invested in the CAF in terms of financial means or human resources, but they all indicate to have allocated some – both financial and human – specific resources to the CAF.

Finally there is a group of countries – **Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Italy** and the **Slovak Republic** – that have devoted a rather substantial amount of resources to the CAF. With the realisation of its KVIK project (see further below), **Denmark** will now be entering this group of countries.

The average investment in both financial and human resources spent on disseminating, promoting and assisting with the CAF is difficult to calculate. Most countries have not set aside specific financial resources for the CAF, but have financed CAF-related activities out of budgets intended for other purposes (e.g. training) and therefore cannot specify their input. As a rough estimation, however, the average amount of financial resources spent on the CAF for all 24

countries that have responded to the questionnaire is about 50.000 Euro; if we limit ourselves to the current EU Member States, this amount increases to about 70.000 Euro. These figures, however, are strongly distorted as the total amount of financial investment in the CAF is carried mainly by three countries – **Belgium, Germany** and **Hungary** – which share the largest part of the total amount of financial resources that have so far been spent on the CAF and projects related to the CAF.

This leads us to conclude that disseminating and promoting the CAF has so far mainly worked through general information activities and conferences, convincing and networking and through other initiatives and activities.

This conclusion is supported by the information received with respect to the human resources devoted to the CAF. Just two countries – unsurprisingly **Belgium** (since 2003) and **Germany** (since 2001) – rely on one full-timer to disseminate and promote the CAF, whereas all other countries work with a smaller or larger – up to eight (**Spain**) – number of persons working partly on the CAF. As the particular share of the working time of those persons devoted to the CAF has been specified by just one country (**Sweden**: 70 hours/year for 2003 according to the working plan), the average number of persons engaged in promoting the CAF cannot be guessed. What can be said, however, is that the overall number of persons at central level who have a role to play in disseminating, promoting and assisting with the implementation of the CAF is roughly 50, i.e. two persons per country, all countries taken together. This does not include those promoting the CAF at regional or local level nor those working with the CAF in individual organisations.

Organisational facets and networks

Most countries surveyed have entrusted the dissemination and promotion of the CAF to a specific organisation. For different reasons a small number of countries have not yet done so (**Czech Republic, Ireland, Malta** and the **UK**). All, with the exception of **Germany**, have chosen to assign this task either to the Ministry in charge of the civil service or to a central government agency fulfilling the same task under that Ministry.⁴ **Germany** officially assigned the task of disseminating and promoting the CAF to the German University for Administrative Sciences in Speyer in September 2001.

The conclusion is clear: virtually all countries have seen the need to locate the organisation responsible for disseminating and promoting the CAF centrally, i.e. close to central government and its Ministry in charge of public administration.

Interestingly enough, there is no marked difference in this respect between countries with a more centralised or a more decentralised if not federal political system. Three of the current EU Member States with a high degree of regional autonomy and decentralisation, however, have found a specific way to closely involve the regional – and local – level of government with the

⁴ **Hungary, Poland** and the **Slovak Republic** have assigned the task to their Civil Service Offices respectively, Cyprus to the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration under the Ministry of Finance, **Norway** and **Sweden** to Statskonsult – under the Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Government Administration – and to the National Council for Quality and Development – under the Swedish Ministry of Finance – respectively.

CAF and its dissemination and promotion. In the case of **Belgium**, a committee involving representatives of the different levels of government (“comité de pilotage”) was set up in 2001 to prepare the First Belgian Quality Conference for Public Administrations, and a network of CAF correspondents within the country was established that continues to operate to date. In the case of **Germany**, the Speyer University is jointly financed by the federal and regional governments – the Länder – and thus directly works together with all levels of government. **Spain**, for its part, has signed, in April 2002, a covenant with the Spanish Association of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) in order to “disseminate and foster the use” of the CAF at the local level and establishing it as the reference model for self-assessment at that level.

More globally, a significant number of countries have in different ways adopted a partnership approach in disseminating and promoting the CAF. We can distinguish two kinds of partnership concepts:

- a territorial partnership aiming at the promotion of the CAF at regional and/or local level (**Belgium; Spain**) and
- an organisational partnership in the sense that relevant national centres or organisations working in the field of quality management or in the broader area of organisational development in public administration, whether directly linked to the government or working together with the government in one way or another, are involved in disseminating and promoting the CAF and in assisting organisations wanting to use it. This approach has been chosen by **Austria** (Centre for Administrative Research KDZ), the **Czech Republic** (Czech Republic Quality Council), **Denmark** (Centre for Development of Human Resources and Quality Management SCKK), **Italy** (Formez, a technical agency of the Department of Public Administration), **Norway** (co-operation with the National Quality Foundation), **Portugal** (co-operation with the National Institute for Public Administration) and the **Slovak Republic** (Slovak Office of Standards, Metrology and Testing and Slovak Society for Quality).⁵ Several countries have thus associated, in one way or another, key organisations or bodies in the area of “quality” with the dissemination and promotion of the CAF.

As a conclusion, with the exception of **Estonia** all the countries that have by now given support to the CAF at a higher level – at level 3 or 4 (see table 2 above) – have chosen to do this in association or in partnership with other organisations the majority of which either are part of the public administration or very close to it. From the point of view of central government ministries, a “do it alone”-strategy thus did not seem the ideal approach, and the results obtained in terms of the number of administrations that have performed the CAF suggests that this approach on the whole proved to be successful. If we can suggest anything then it is to involve an even larger number of organisations in a partnership-type approach.

⁵ Such partnerships may also exist in other countries but have not been reported. In **Poland**, for instance, the Umbrella Project jointly run by the government and the UNDP has played, at one stage, an important role in diffusing the CAF at the local level and in assisting a number of mainly local authorities in using the tool.

I.3. Promoting the CAF – Activities and Strategies

Turning from organisational patterns and resources to activities and strategies, Member States have, since the CAF was officially launched just over three years ago at the First Quality Conference for Public Administrations in the EU in Lisbon, developed a large number of activities and strategies for promoting and disseminating the CAF. Since the printing of CAF leaflets, the dissemination by posting or by e-mail and the organisation of training events and seminars are common to all countries, these will here not be considered unless they dispel important characteristic features.

The variety of tools developed by Member States to disseminate and promote the CAF is summarised in table 3:

Table 3: CAF-related activities and initiatives⁶

Tool or activity	Country
Advice (to individual organisations)	Austria; Belgium; Estonia; Germany; Italy; Norway
Case studies	Spain
CAF-based projects	Denmark
Database / good practice	Austria; Belgium; Germany; Hungary; Slovenia; Spain
E-learning	Austria; Germany; Portugal
Electronic application tool	Sweden
Electronic evaluation tool	Austria; Germany; Sweden
Networks and partnerships	Austria; Belgium; Denmark; Germany; Italy; Portugal; Slovak Republic; Spain
Pilot projects	Czech Republic; Estonia; Hungary; Italy; Norway; Portugal; Slovak Republic; Slovenia
Publications (leaflets not included)	Belgium; Germany
Quality conferences	Estonia; Hungary; Italy; Norway; Slovak Republic
Quality awards / contests	Austria; Belgium; Estonia; Germany; Italy; Portugal
Questionnaires	Portugal
Special guidelines	Hungary; Portugal
Special training (developed for the CAF)	Austria; Belgium; Denmark; Estonia; Poland; Slovenia; Spain
User Conferences	Germany; Hungary; Italy
Worksheets	Austria; Germany; Ireland; Portugal

⁶ We have based this table on the information obtained; if we have not included specific countries in one or the other category this is either because we did not receive any corresponding information or because we may have looked over individual pieces of information in the replies received; in the latter case please accept our apologies and send us a comment.

The initiatives taken and tools developed by Member States to promote the CAF can be broadly divided into three categories:

- those “spreading the gospel” of the CAF on a wide basis,
- those destined to actually launch the use of the CAF, and
- those that aim at providing practical support for administrations that are interested in using the CAF with the purpose of facilitating its implementation in different ways.

Dissemination and information

Within the first category we can situate – alongside the printing and disseminating of leaflets or general and basic information that is put on the web – the publication of articles dealing with the CAF in magazines or journals (*Belgium, Estonia and Germany*), and the presentation of the CAF in the context of large-scale quality conferences. *Hungary* and *Norway* in particular have done the latter successfully by each organising two larger conferences on quality in the public sector that drew the attention of nearly 1.500 persons. This approach was also followed in *Estonia*, and the *Slovak Republic* attempts the same through a large conference that was organised on 24 September 2003 in Bratislava. Along the same lines, *Italy*, in the initial phase of promoting the CAF, organised three “regional” CAF conferences (in the North, the middle and the South of the country, attended by close to 200 administrations).

Getting the CAF going

Member States have, beyond providing information and disseminating the CAF, taken a substantial number of initiatives to actually launch its use. Two types of initiatives are outstanding both in their frequency and in their impact: pilot projects and the organisation of national quality awards or contests.

→ Pilot projects

Among the present Member States, only *Italy* has reported a pilot phase before the CAF was more widely distributed or officially published.⁷ 18 administrations at different levels of government with the common feature of having already introduced a “quality culture” in their organisation took part in the pilot phase and were – if they demanded so – assisted by Formez. Their experience with the CAF was brought together in an evaluation seminar before it was officially launched in Italy. A similar “testing” pilot was arranged in *Norway* with the main purpose of reviewing the language of the CAF and adapting it to the needs of the Norwegian administration.

If organising pilot projects has been an exception in present Member States, this approach to launching the CAF has been widely used in the future Member States. The *Czech Republic* (two pilot projects at regional level), *Estonia* (a pilot in the Ministry of Finance), *Hungary* (no

⁷ Although not reported in the answers to the questionnaire, the authors are aware that *Ireland* conducted a similar pilot in 2003.

specifications are given), the *Slovak Republic* (eight pilot organisations in 2003⁸) and *Slovenia* (pilot self-assessment in eight administrations in October and November 2002). One of the characteristic features of the introduction of the CAF in future Member States is the fact that several of these countries have, within a relatively short time span, started introducing several tools for quality development and improvement.⁹ The CAF has therefore been tested in view of its adequacy for administrations in the various countries and in view of potential adaptations that need to be made. In both the *Czech Republic* and the *Slovak Republic*, the pilot projects are conducted jointly by the respective administrations and quality experts helping with the “implementation” of the CAF.¹⁰ The results of the different pilot projects are on the whole positive, since most of the mentioned countries have by now taken the decision to promote the CAF as major tool for quality development.

→ Quality awards and contests

The organisation of quality awards and contests is known to be one of the most promising initiatives encouraging public administrations to become interested in the issue of “quality” and the use of quality management tools. Different types of quality contests and awards are consequently organised in the current and increasingly also in the future EU Member States.¹¹ It is therefore not surprising that quality contests and awards have played a major role in the process of inciting organisations to use the instrument.

Three different types of initiatives can be clearly distinguished:

a) The organisation of a national quality conference fully based on the CAF. This approach has been chosen by *Belgium* only so far and has led – in connection with other activities – to a wide spreading of the CAF at the different levels of government and to the largest number of CAF applications in any country so far. The number of organisations that took part in the 1st and 2nd Belgian Quality Conference for Public Administrations in 2001 and 2003 totals 96. The analysis of the experiences of the administrations that took part in the first event in 2001 also has contributed to the development of the second version of the CAF in 2002.¹² *Estonia* is now about to follow this approach by organising in 2003, as a pilot project, a first public sector quality award for state agencies fully based on the CAF. The interest in this event is reported to have been so large that a number of agencies finally could not take part; the pilot project is limited to 10 agencies. In both countries, a quality award directed to the public sector had previously not existed.

⁸ In cooperation with the Slovak Office of Standards, Metrology and Testing and the Slovak Society for Quality, the Civil Service Office has launched, in January 2003, a pilot project called “Implementation of the CAF Model in the Slovak Republic”. The project should now be finished.

⁹ Cf. Engel. op.cit.

¹⁰ Not mentioned in the national report, the same approach can be found in *Poland* where the CAF was implemented in 2001 in more than 20 administrations with the assistance of the Umbrella project.

¹¹ Cf. Elke Löffler, *The Modernisation of the Public Sector in an International Perspective: Concepts and Methodologies of Awarding and Assessing Quality in the Public Sector in OECD Countries*, Speyer 1996; Elke Löffler, *Quality Awards as a Public Sector Benchmarking Concept in OECD Member Countries. Some Guidelines for Quality Award Organisers*, in: *Public Administration Development* 21, No. 1, pp. 27-40; Engel, op.cit, pp. 29sq.

¹² Geert Bouckaert and Nick Thijs, *Het Common Assessment Framework. Het evaluatie-instrument geëvalueerd. Tussentijds onderzoeksrapport in het kader van het DWTC-onderzoeksproject: “Kwaliteit, Tevredenheid en Vertrouwen in de Federale Overheid*, KU Leuven, 2002.

b) Linking the CAF with an established national quality award

Austria and **Germany** have, in contrast, chosen to link the use of the CAF to their established national quality award for the public sector. In both countries, applicants to the 6th Speyer Quality Award in 2002 had, before handing in their good practice applications in view of the themes of the Speyer Award, first to conduct a self-assessment according to one of the established quality tools (CAF, EFQM or ISO). Although organisations could freely choose between these, most have effectively opted for the CAF that had been recommended for this purpose (35 out of 37 German applicants and a substantial number of the Austrian administrations).

c) Evaluation according to the CAF criteria

A third, distinct approach was chosen by **Italy** and by **Portugal**. Taking part in the recent editions of their respective national quality contests – the Italian "*Cento Progetti al Servizio dei Cittadini*" in 2002 and the Portuguese "*Quality in Public Services*" 2001 award –, organisations did not have to use the CAF in the process of application. In both cases, however, the criteria of the CAF have been used to evaluate the application and the sustainability of their innovative practices. In **Portugal**, furthermore, the CAF criteria were used to select the good practices in the "*Contest for Good Practices of Administrative Modernisation in Local Authorities*" in October 2002, and local public services had to reflect the CAF criteria in their projects.

A number of initiatives taken by Member States have served both the purpose of launching the CAF and facilitating its use. These include direct advice to individual organisations (reported by **Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Italy** – via a telephone help desk and an e-mail assistance service – and **Norway**), the development of special training programmes for the CAF (reported by **Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Poland, Slovenia** and **Spain**) and user conferences or workshops (reported by **Germany, Hungary** and **Italy**).

→ User conferences or workshops

The latter have different objectives. While in the case of **Italy** a seminar was organised in connection with the pilot phase in order to gather information from the pilot administrations, workshop-style events involving users are organised in **Hungary** to develop special CAF questionnaires for different types of organisations. A "real" user conference was organised in February 2002 in **Germany** in order not only to collect their views and to discuss the CAF and its criteria but also to identify their needs in terms of practical tools for self-assessment with the CAF. A second user conference is planned for the second half of 2003. The user conference has proven to be an excellent way to involve CAF users in the development of the instrument itself.

→ Training

The role of training and special training programmes on the CAF deserves some more attention. The vast majority of countries agree to the fact that training plays an important role in qualifying individuals, teams or organisations for using the CAF. Two countries, however, point out that training doesn't seem necessary as the CAF is a self-assessment tool and should thus be self-

explanatory (*Netherlands*) or that the kind of training more needed for CAF implementation is not on the model itself, but on organisational and management-related issues (*Italy*).

In a nutshell, the experience made by the broad majority of CAF correspondents is that training is a pre-requisite for adequately working with the CAF, including training for members of a management team taking part in a self-assessment (*Denmark*). Summarising the findings, training seems to play an important role (in order of importance)

- a) in raising awareness and knowledge about the CAF;
- b) in raising the understanding of the criteria and their interconnectedness;
- c) in encouraging administrations to actually use the tool by clarifying expectations, explaining roles and reducing worries;
- d) in clarifying the methodology.

The two last aspects are those that have been mentioned most frequently and have found to be the most important elements of training.

In their majority, the special CAF training programmes developed by Member States are two-day training events, and some countries have also developed special training programmes for CAF assessors (*Estonia, Slovenia*). *Austria* and *Germany* (through the Speyer University) have, moreover, also developed an e-learning system for the CAF, and *Portugal* will do the same.

Finally, the KVIK project (Quality Tool for Developing Innovation and Competence) currently in development in *Denmark* needs to be mentioned here. Developed in co-operation between the Ministry of Finance, trade unions and the Centre for the Development of Human Resources and Quality Management (SCKK), the KVIK project will include a collection of different tools, guidance for self-assessment and networks of organisations. For the purpose of the project, the CAF criteria and guidelines will be simplified to further ease the use of the instrument. It is expected that the KVIK project will be the point of departure for a wider use of the CAF – although in an even more simplified version – in Denmark.

Practical support for using the CAF

On top of spreading information on and disseminating the CAF and taking initiatives to launch its use, some Member States have finally also taken several initiatives to assist individual administrations with the implementation of the CAF. In this category of initiatives we find direct and individual advice to organisations, case studies, the development of databases (of good practice), electronic tools for applying the CAF and for evaluating the results of a self-assessment, questionnaires, special guidelines and worksheets.

→ Individual advice

Only a relatively small number of Member States have, according to the reports received, given administrations interested in using the CAF the possibility to obtain individual advice on how to use the instrument. *Austria* has entrusted this task to the KDZ – including, upon request, the

possibility to actually accompany the self-assessment process –, **Germany** to the University of Speyer and **Norway** to Statskonsult, whereas in **Belgium** and **Estonia** individual advice was given directly by the responsible services within the competent Ministry. Only **Italy**, it seems, has set up a more structured mechanism for giving individual advice to administrations, as Fornez has operated with a telephone help line and a specific e-mail assistance service since it started to operate the CAF in 2001.

It can be assumed that some individual advice to organisations has also been given in other countries; yet this approach to facilitating the use of the CAF clearly is not widespread. We can guess that most Member States have found this approach unnecessary since the CAF by definition is a self-assessment tool. As evidence recorded from the organisations that have actually used the CAF will show, however, the possibility of obtaining individual advice - and encouragement – has not only be a strong driver for using the tool but also one of the most relevant mechanisms for ensuring a proper understanding of the CAF and a proper conduct of the self-assessment.

→ Worksheets

Just a small number of Member States have developed so-called “worksheets” or “workbooks” to facilitate the self-assessment process (**Austria, Germany, Ireland** and **Portugal**). In the case of Austria and Germany, CAF users had expressed the demand for a fixed set of indicators for each CAF sub-criterion. A worksheet featuring such indicators – those given by the CAF itself as examples and additional ones – was thus worked out by the University of Speyer and can now be used on-line (i.e. one working sheet for each sub-criterion). Portugal has developed a worksheet for each sub-criterion to be used by administrations for noting strengths, areas for improvement and justifications, and Ireland has a scoring workbook fulfilling the same purpose.

→ Electronic tools

The development of electronic tools for applying or evaluating the CAF is only now starting. From the reports of the national CAF correspondents it appears that – apart from possibilities to use the CAF on-line and register – such tools hardly exist at this stage. In **Germany**, CAF users in the national CAF network have developed a tool helping with the evaluation of results. Based on the existing worksheet, the University of Speyer also plans to develop, for **Austria** and **Germany**, a simple and user-friendly electronic tool that will help administrations evaluating the results of their self-assessment. Similarly, **Sweden** is in the process of developing an on-line version of the CAF that will allow administrations to involve a larger number of staff in the self-assessment process and to analyse the results obtained with regard to a number of background variables.

→ Special guidelines, questionnaires and case studies

Individual Member States have also developed very specific tools for facilitating the use of the CAF in their country:

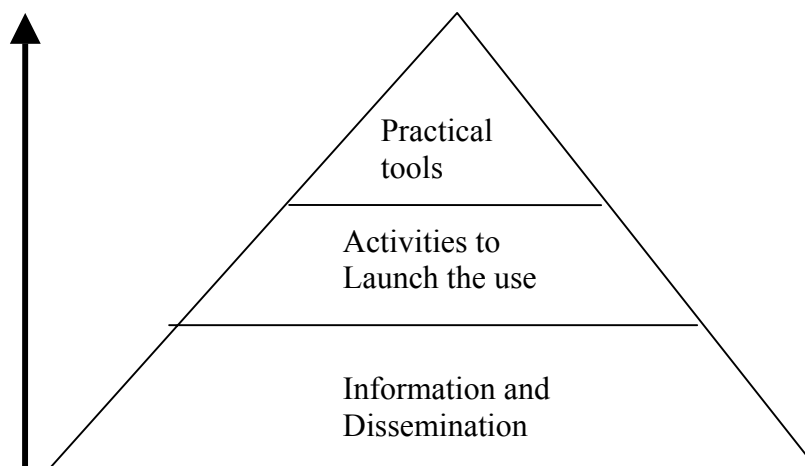
- In working out its national translation of the CAF, **Hungary** has elaborated “guidelines” for administrations helping them to understand the CAF and its criteria in the national context. With the help of special workshops, this approach is now taken one step further as specific CAF guidelines or “questionnaires” are now being developed for specific administrations (county offices, municipalities and police bodies). Similarly, a “user guide” (available via Internet) adapted to the national context has also been developed by **Portugal**.
- **Portugal** also is the only country that has reported the development of model questionnaires (available via Internet) that administrations may use for the purpose of working with the CAF. Such questionnaires have been developed for the purpose of conducting surveys (among both external and internal clients) and for middle and top managers.
- **Spain** so far seems to be the only country that has elaborated a full case study on the use of the CAF that may help administrations understanding the tool and using it in a proper way.

→ Databases

Finally, a number of countries have set up or are in the process of setting up databases with regard to the CAF. Both **Austria** and **Germany** have a fully operational databank where not only the administrations that have used the CAF and their results are recorded but through which information concerning the experiences made with the CAF and good practices is distributed. A database set up in **Hungary** in 2003 is more focused on systematically keeping information and monitoring on the use of the CAF in the country, just as a database in **Slovenia** keeps track of CAF uses and of the results (scores) obtained and the corresponding average results. Both **Belgium** and **Spain** are in the process of setting up national databases; whereas the database in Spain focuses on registering data from administrations, the Belgian databank will mainly be geared towards spreading good practice.

Summarising this chapter we find that the amount of activities carried out by Member States in view of disseminating and promoting the use of the CAF decreases as we move from pure information and dissemination activities to initiatives in view of getting the CAF going and practical ways of helping administrations to use the instrument. This can be shown in a simple diagram:

Diagram 1: The intensity of CAF-related activities and initiatives



I.4. The CAF – its implementation to date

Assuming that the “spontaneous” use of the CAF by individual administrations will have remained, to date, an exception, there should be a clear link between the support given to CAF in a particular country and the extent of its actual use.

The answers to the questionnaires developed for national correspondents revealed a much broader use of the CAF than was expected. Although it was known that far from all CAF uses have in the past been reported to EIPA, the actual number of uses was much higher than one could assume. In total, following the information received, we can assume that the CAF has meanwhile be used by *roughly 500 administrations* from *22 countries* across Europe – in average by roughly 20 administrations in those countries that have answered the questionnaire.

Again building categories (no use at all, 1 to 5 uses, 5 to 10, 10 to 25, 25 to 50 and more than 50) and accepting that part of the information obtained relies on guesses - some countries do not keep track and are not able to exactly tell how many administrations have used the CAF –, the picture of the use of the CAF in both old and new Member States is as follows (table 4):

Table 4: The use of the CAF in different countries (by categories)

Group 1 (no use at all)	Cyprus; Luxembourg; Netherlands
Group 2 (1 to 5)	Czech Republic; France; Greece; Ireland; Malta; Romania; Spain; United Kingdom
Group 3 (6 to 10)	Portugal
Group 4 (11 to 25)	Denmark; Estonia; Hungary; Poland; Slovak Republic; Slovenia; Sweden
Group 5 (26 to 50)	Austria; Germany; Finland
Group 6 (above 50)	Belgium; Italy; Norway

This picture largely corresponds to the “status” of the CAF in Member States and shows that the CAF has indeed mainly been used in countries giving particular support to the tool. Two noteworthy exceptions, however, need to be pointed out. The number of estimated CAF applications in *Finland* (around 30) and *Norway* (between 50 and 80) is rather substantial – Norway comes second only behind *Belgium* (96) – although neither country has given the CAF a particular status or has supported its use with particular emphasis. Explaining the relatively wide use of the CAF in both countries is not fully possible through the information processed. In both cases, however, part of the explanation seems to lie in the fact that the CAF has been taken up and extensively used in a specific local or regional context.¹³

¹³ In *Finland* by the City of Turku and in *Norway* by the region Vestfold in which the social services undertook a self-assessment based on the CAF.

Omitting these exceptions we are able to conclude that there is, overall, rather little evidence so far of the CAF having been taken up and used “spontaneously”. There is, thus, also reason to believe that spreading the CAF through posting, e-mail or by presenting it at wider quality conferences or in the context of so-called “quality weeks” has not, so far, resulted in a significant number of organisations becoming interested in the tool and using it. We should add that, based on the evidence received, it seems that on the whole general training activities on the CAF – of which there have been a great number – so far actually led a significant number of administrations to use the tool. On the whole, the evidence found suggests that an additional effort needs to be made or specific incentives need to be given in order for administrations to use the CAF.

This finding is also supported by the fact that a large share of administrations has used the CAF in the context of national quality conferences. This applies to the 96 administrations in **Belgium** that have taken part in 1st (2001) or 2nd (2003) National Quality Conference, for 35 administrations in **Germany** that have taken part in the 6th Speyer Quality Award in 2002, for 10 state agencies in **Estonia** that have used the CAF in 2003 (public sector quality award pilot project) and for a good share of the CAF users in Austria (participation in the 6th Speyer Quality Award).¹⁴ In a rather small number of countries, furthermore, the CAF was also used in the process of selecting the national case studies, or good practice organisations, presented at the 2nd Quality Conference for Public Administrations in the EU in October 2002 in Copenhagen (**Austria, Belgium, Finland and Italy**). This is not to say that these administrations would clearly not have used the CAF otherwise, or that they used it only because they wanted to take part in a quality award. It is to say, however, that the award, the activities associated with it and potential public recognition were essential factors leading administrations to using the CAF.

We would also like to point out that, again based on the evidence received, the European Quality Conferences – 1QC in Lisbon in May 2000 and 2QC in Copenhagen in October 2002 – seem on the whole not to have had the desired impact in terms of promotion of the CAF or incentives to actually use it. Only a small group of countries has reported that these Conferences have been highly relevant for spreading knowledge about the CAF (**Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland and Norway**). Others – and **Belgium** in particular – can clearly identify the national quality conferences as a or the main driver but not the European events. The fact that only a small number of countries has actually made use of the CAF in their national selection process is the main explanation. On top of that, the replies received from future Member States show that their involvement in the past European Quality Conferences has remained modest and that the events have had little effect there. The potential that lies in the European Quality Conferences can thus clearly be taken much further.

One of the most important debates with regard to the CAF – or indeed tools or “models” of total quality management more generally – concerns the type of public sector organisations for which the CAF or related tools are relevant, or which may most strongly profit from using such tools.

¹⁴ In the case of **Belgium** and **Estonia**, applying the CAF in totality was – or is – a pre-condition for taking part in the award process, whereas the selection of good practices is based on the CAF criteria but not necessarily on the full self-assessment over all the criteria. In the case of **Austria** and **Germany**, the full application of the CAF was a pre-condition for taking part in the award process, whereas the selection of award winners and good practices was based on different criteria. In these countries, using the CAF thus was but a first step in the award process.

In a nutshell, the academic debate would suggest that total quality management – initially developed for use in the private sector – does not or not sufficiently take into account the inherently public mission and the public character of the goods provided by most public sector organisations and, therefore, is not an adequate instrument for assessing and managing quality in the public sector.¹⁵

This question is more intensively addressed in the second part of this study analysing the questionnaires sent to individual organisations that have used the CAF. At this stage, we will, however, have a look at the type of organisations that have shown particular interest in the CAF, and the sector of activity these organisations are working in.

The information obtained through the national CAF correspondents points out that the CAF has, in several countries, raised interest mainly at the level of local government (*Austria; Czech Republic; Denmark; Greece; Italy; Poland; Portugal; Slovenia; Spain*). Two countries, on the contrary, indicated that the local level has so far taken no interest in the CAF (*Estonia* – generally because of little knowledge about modern management techniques and due to lacking resources – and *Sweden* since the CAF is only promoted among central government agencies).

While some countries report that there is no clear trend and that interest is rather evenly spread (*Estonia, Finland*), others signal a particular interest in a specific sector of activity or a particular level of government. Table 5 summarises these findings:

Table 5: Sectors of activity interested in the CAF by country

Sector / level	Country
Education and schools	Italy; Norway; Portugal
Police / border control	Germany; Hungary
Health authorities and social services	Austria; Norway
Agencies or administrations with direct service delivery	Belgium; Italy; Slovakia; Sweden
Core ministries ¹⁶	Belgium; Hungary; Ireland
Territorial governments / units	Czech Republic; Hungary; Slovenia

The significance of the findings is substantially reduced by the fact that some countries have intentionally, so far, disseminated or promoted the CAF only at a specific level of government¹⁷ or among specific administrations¹⁸ or are in a phase of piloting the use of the CAF first at one

¹⁵ Cf. for instance Torben Beck Jørgensen, *Rescuing Public Service: On the Tasks of Public Organisations*, in: Hermann Hill et.al., eds., *Quality, Innovation and Measurement in the Public Sector*, Frankfurt/Main 1996, pp. 161-182; Colin Talbot, *Public Performance – towards a new model?*, in: *Public Policy and Administration* 14, No. 3, pp. 38-52.

¹⁶ Including ministries at the regional level in countries with a regionalised political system.

¹⁷ This would include for instance *Spain*, where central government has decided to promote the CAF for use at the level of municipalities and provinces but to work with the EFQM Excellence Model at the level of central government, and *Italy*, that has assigned the task of promoting the CAF to FORMEZ, an agency working towards the regional and local level of government. In *Poland*, the Umbrella Project, jointly set up by the Polish government and the UNDP, has focused its attention on municipalities, thus explaining why the CAF mainly raised interest at that level.

¹⁸ E.g. *Sweden*, where the CAF is only promoted among central government agencies.

level of government.¹⁹ While such deliberate choices are made out of strategic reasons, they do not imply that, as such, the CAF would raise no or little interest elsewhere.

The evidence from countries that have chosen a broad approach to promoting the CAF and have invested more heavily than others thus is of particular interest to our study. When thus focusing on *Austria*, *Belgium* and *Germany*, in particular, the evidence shows that interest in the CAF has been raised both across different levels of government and different sectors of activity, although not evenly.

To conclude, the information obtained from national CAF correspondents would at least not support the assumption that basic interest in the CAF necessarily is stronger at a specific level of government or within a particular sector of activity, or among organisations directly providing services or agencies enjoying a stronger degree of autonomy. Whether different type of administrations and working at different levels of government have actually more frequently used the CAF and experienced using it in different ways is a different question.

¹⁹ E.g. the *Czech Republic*, where pilot projects are implemented in two regions.

I.5. Evaluating the evidence

Emphasising, once again, that the picture drawn is not stable but developing, we are, nevertheless, able to draw a number of conclusions from it, linking it to the information with regard to the actions taken and the activities launched to promote the CAF:

1. On the whole, there is little evidence of a “spontaneous” use being made of the CAF (exceptions: *Austria*, *Finland* and *Norway*). The findings demonstrate the relevance of active promotion and support to the CAF and therefore underline the importance of the function of CAF correspondents and those that have been assigned the task of promoting the CAF and its use.
2. The findings on the whole suggest a clear link between the extent of support given to the CAF in the various countries and the amount of initiatives taken to promote and support the CAF on the one hand and the actual use that is made of the CAF. Referring back to the different levels of support identified in table 1, it is possible to conclude that a support at level 3 at least is needed to get the CAF off the ground. Just recommending it for use will generally not encourage administrations to use it.
3. The approach to promoting the CAF has, with just few exceptions, generally been a bottom-up approach. The most “successful” countries have generally sought – by convincing and assisting – to build up networks of CAF users and to convince other administrations of the usefulness of the CAF through good examples and through “CAF agents” (a term used in the Portuguese report). Pilot projects have proven to be a very helpful exercise. Ideally, this may lead to what is called, in the German report, a “bottom-up movement” of CAF users. Conversely, it can also be said that there is an overall agreement that the use of a tool like the CAF will only work by convincing, supporting and leading the way but not in any way by pushing or even forcing.
4. Still with regard to disseminating and promoting the use of the CAF, the evidence suggests that only a minority of countries has in fact used an approach suggested by the CAF itself, i.e. a PDCA-type approach. The reports received suggest that most countries have instead engaged in a number of initiatives not fully linked to a clear and sound approach, a phase of measurement and evaluation and a review phase. It is felt that a sound approach might have helped a number of countries in finding the right approach to promoting the CAF.
5. A critical reflection on the organisation of quality awards or contests seems to be justified. The evidence clearly shows that countries that have used this approach in one way or another (*Austria*, *Belgium*, *Estonia* and *Germany*) have been successful, at least, in terms of the number of administrations that have used the CAF. There is, however, little evidence of these processes and events leading to a wider use of the CAF unrelated to quality awards. This leads us to the question as to whether individual administrations that have used the CAF in the context of a national quality award have actually shown a genuine interest in the tool and – more importantly – in a systematic improvement

process or whether they have used the CAF just for the purpose of participating in an award contest.

6. There are, on the whole, not many but some interesting differences between current and future EU Member States with regard to promoting the CAF and the understanding of the tool. For one part, future Member States have generally organised pilot projects to study the relevance of the CAF and to build up knowledge and interest; this is hardly surprising as these countries to a good extent still are in a phase of finding their “national” way to quality in the public administration. A second, more significant, difference can be seen in the fact that we find, in future Member States, a tendency to generally speak of an “implementation” of the CAF (in individual organisations), whereas this term is more rarely used in current Member States. This nuance is relevant in the sense that future Member States seem to be inclined to look for practical ways to improve “quality” in straightforward and standard ways whereas current Member States seem to share the view that each organisation finally needs to look for its own way.
7. We also find convincing evidence of the fact that in a substantial number of countries – if not the majority – an adaptation of the CAF to the national context was necessary to help get the CAF off the ground. Whether the adaptation concerned only the language used, the need to develop a standard set of indicators to be used by all administrations (Austria, Germany), the development of an even simpler version (Denmark) or the development of special guidelines for individual types of administrations (Hungary): The common denominator is to be found in the fact that a tool developed for use in all types of public administrations across European countries seems to have limitations. Thinking further ahead, the phenomenon of a national “translation” or “adaptation” of the CAF may help to encourage administrations to use the tool in an adequate way and to understand its purpose, but it has the potential risk that the common ground with regard to the CAF will become weaker, potentially also reducing the incentives or abilities to benchmark. We see a need to discuss this development.
8. Finally, looking across the reports we can identify a number of good practices developed by individual countries or a set of countries to disseminate and promote the use of the CAF. Among these, the organisation of large-scale national quality conferences, the organisation of quality award contests, the organisation of user conferences and networks and the development of a sound set of partnerships can be identified as particularly relevant. Although some sceptical comments (point no. 7) need to be made, we would add the initiatives to adapt the CAF to national or even sectoral requirements.

Chapter II: Using the CAF in practice

As mentioned above, the total number of public administrations that have so far used the Common Assessment Framework can be estimated at roughly 500. Roughly 40% of the organisations (200 in total) are registered at the CAF database kept at EIPA and have received in July 2003 the questionnaire developed for the purpose of this study.²⁰ Simultaneously, the national correspondents have approached administrations in their country that used the CAF.

On 9 October 156 organisations had returned the questionnaire to EIPA:

- 106 from the CAF database at EIPA (The response therefore consists of 53 % of the database population).
- 50 received via the national correspondents (1/3 of the total number)

These organisations have thus provided the information upon which the following analysis is based. They are all to be thanked for their readiness to take the time and to reply to the questionnaire and for the input they gave. We take the high response rate as an indication of their interest shown in the CAF and their willingness to contribute to its further development.

The table on the next page summarises information on the 18 countries, which have participated in the survey (on an individual basis).

The following sections will analyse in turn first the basic characteristics of the administrations that have replied to the questionnaire (section II.1.), then the context within which the CAF was used (section II.2.), the mode of implementation (section II.3.) and finally – perhaps most importantly – the experiences made (section II.4.). Before drawing conclusions, a final section will be devoted to the extent to which organisations have taken part in benchmarking projects or are prepared to do so (section II.5.).

²⁰ The considerable difference between the number of administrations that have used the CAF and that are registered in the database can be easily explained. First, virtually all the CAF applications registered have been forwarded to EIPA by national CAF correspondents; *Italy* is the exception as most of the Italian organisations have filled in the on-line form available through EIPA's website and thus registered directly. Where, however, CAF correspondents themselves do not keep track of administrations that use the CAF and can only estimate their number – such as, e.g., in *Finland* and *Norway* where a considerable number of administrations used the CAF – or have not existed until recently, i.e. in the new Member States, processing the information with regard to CAF applications was impossible.

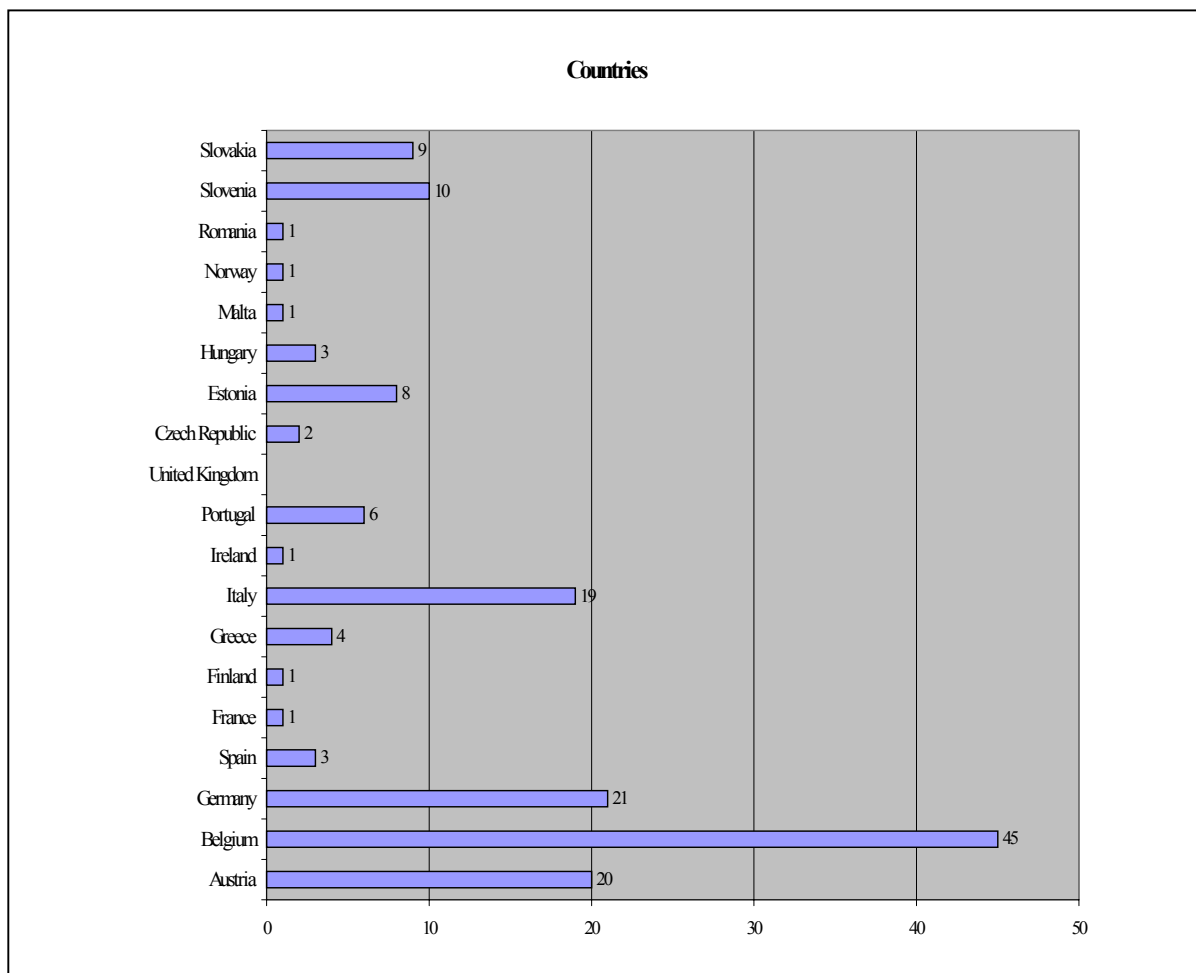
Table 6: The number of administrations that participated in the survey

		Sent (EIPA database)	Received (EIPA database)	Response rate	Via national corresp.	Replies
EUROPEAN UNION	11					
Austria		26	20	77 %		20
Belgium		65	27	42 %	18	45
Germany		38	18	47 %	3	21
France		1	1	100 %		1
Finland		2	1	50 %		1
Italy		41	19	46 %		19
Portugal		2	2	100 %	4	6
(United Kingdom)		2	-			-
Greece		-	-		4	4
Ireland		-	-		1	1
Spain		-	-		3	3
CANDIDATE COUNTRIES & NORWAY	8					
Czech Republic		2	2	100 %		2
Estonia		10	6	60 %	2	8
Slovenia		11	10	91 %		10
Hungary		-	-		3	3
Slovakia		-	-		9	9
Norway		-	-		1	1
Romania		-	-		1	1
Malta		-	-		1	1
TOTAL		200	106	53 %	50	156

II.1. Basic characteristics of the administrations

Country of origin

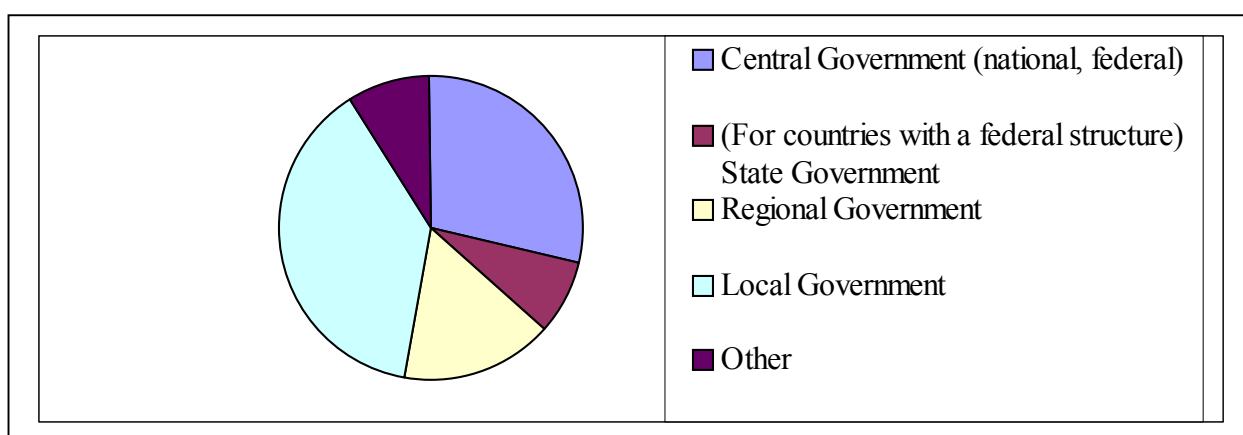
As is reflected in the previous paragraph, the majority of replies received originates from the following countries: Belgium, Austria, Germany and Italy. With regard to the future Member States, Slovenia, Slovakia and Estonia are quite well represented with almost 10 applications each. Although the CAF has been extensively used in Finland and Norway (cf. chapter I.4., above), we have received just one reply from each country since the national CAF correspondents have so far not registered the CAF uses at the national level and could thus not contact the administrations. It would be interesting to know whether the analysis provided here would have looked different with the experiences made in these two Nordic countries.



Level of government

With regard to the level of the administration, the best represented is the local level (38 %) and in particular the municipalities (ca. 22 % of the population) originating from Belgium (8), Italy (7), Austria (6), Germany (6), Spain (3), Portugal (3) and Greece (1).

45	29 %	Central Government (national, federal)
12	8 %	(For countries with a federal structure) State Government
25	16 %	Regional Government
60	38 %	Local Government
14	9 %	Other



Type of administration

32	21 %	Government Ministry (central or regional government)
17	11 %	State agency ²¹
3	2 %	State-owned or state-run enterprise
55	35 %	Local or regional self-government institution (“devolved” administration)
37	24 %	State/federal or regional-state administration at regional or local level
12	8 %	Other

Other include: combined regional self-government institution partly with state administration powers on regional level (mixed model); Public Institution depending of the ministry of Presidency; Public Institute of Social Security; Public hospital; Regional administration supervised by the State, acting as Representative of the State, ...

²¹ **Please note:** The term “state agency” is here used for all governmental agencies with a specific mission, under some control by government or “sponsored” by it, and with a certain degree of independence or distance from government. E.g. Statistical Offices, etc. (more examples).

Sector of activity

2	1 %	Criminal Justice and Law
6	4 %	Customs, Taxes and Finances
14	9 %	Education and Research
7	4 %	Health Sector
6	4 %	Police and Security
2	1 %	Public Works and Utilities
22	14 %	Social Services & Social Security
2	1 %	Transport and Infrastructure
43	28 %	Local Government (municipalities, districts, provinces)
14	9 %	General policy and oversight / co-ordination
38	24 %	Other

Several organisations crossed a combination of the sectors mentioned above. Other sectors of activity mentioned were e.a. administrative decisions/ administrative proceedings; statistics; metrology; Post and Telecommunications Regulator; Land Ordnance Survey; Land and public registry; Emergency Planning and Defence; Human resources; City planning; Department of Construction of the city; Trade; External affairs ...

Size of the organisation

Almost 50% of the organisations have between 101 and 1000 employees.

The very small (< 10) and very big organisations (> 5000) are the exception. The 3 small organisations come from Belgium (2) and Ireland (1), whilst the 6 biggest organisations come from Belgium (2), Portugal, Germany, Italy and Spain, and in 50% of the cases represent big cities (Duisburg, Bologna and Madrid).

3	2 %	< 10
22	14 %	10-50
25	16 %	51-100
36	23 %	101-250
40	26 %	251-1000
24	15 %	1001-5000
6	4 %	> 5000

II.2. The use of the CAF: the context

In this section, the data are presented as received. As some questionnaires were incomplete and some questions permitted multiple answers, the numbers do always not add up to the total number of replies received. We have chosen not to analyse the replies to each question in detail, but rather to look for patterns and significant differences in the responses. In view of the fact that this study is also intended as an input to the CAF event organised for Rome on 17th and 18th November 2003, it is worth looking at the results carefully but without rushing to conclusions. The responses are set out below, followed by a commentary on the context in which respondents used the CAF.

6a) Which version of the CAF have you used?

86	55 %	CAF 2000 (original version)
69	45 %	CAF 2002 (second, updated version)

6b) Have you used the CAF more than once?

24	15 %	<i>Yes</i>
132	85 %	<i>No</i>

If yes, what was the time span in between the two uses? 13 organisations replied:

6 months: 1; **1 year:** 4; **2 years:** 8

In this context it is worth noting that the Belgian quality conferences were also held two years apart.

7. In which context or under which circumstances has the CAF been used?

67	Normal operating context (no particular organisational or other changes)
37	The organisation had undergone or was in the process of undergoing an important organisational restructuring
32	The organisation had just introduced or was about to introduce a (new) system of performance management / measurement
28	On demand of the staff, facing the opportunities of a CAF application in the context of the general quality policy of the organisation
28	The organisation faces a growing need for accountability (towards the public, the politicians and other stakeholders..)
19	A new top management (or political management) had been appointed / elected
17	The functioning (or performance) of the organisation was undergoing (or would soon undergo) a general review (internal or external)
16	The responsibilities (tasks/functions) of the organisation had undergone a change (new responsibilities added, or responsibilities were taken away)
11	The organisation was faced with financial cutbacks (a need to save money)
7	The organisation was in the process of cutting back the number of staff
32	Other: 13 refer to Speyer or Belgian conference, while others refer to comparison with the EFQM model; use as part of a strategic planning process;

	getting to know the CAF; pilot projects; exploring the concept of quality management, and so on.
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8. Was the CAF applied in the whole or a part of the organisation?

111	72 %	In the whole organisation
44	28 %	In part of the organisation

9. Before using the CAF, did your organisation have a special quality unit / team or group?

63	41 %	<i>Yes</i>
90	59 %	<i>No</i>

10a) Before using the CAF, had your organisation any experience with other tools of quality management or improvement?

75	49 %	<i>Yes</i>
79	51 %	<i>No</i>

10b) If yes, which instrument(s) have you used before applying the CAF?

29	ISO 9000 standard(s)
28	Quality circles
23	EFQM Model
17	Balanced Scorecard (BSC)
18	Other

The following quality tools were mentioned (under "other"): Speyer Qualitätswettbewerb 1998; IBEC; management control panels and a structured approach to local and national improvement projects; Project Management; Customer Satisfaction Surveys, Employee Satisfaction Surveys, Audits: e.g. Standard and Poor's Rating; EMAS – 2; ISO14001; ISO 17025; EN 45000; “Star of quality” customer satisfaction; Excellence through people / Performance Management Development System;

A link has been established between the quality tools used and the different countries. In the following table (table 7), you see for each country:

- the % of organisations who replied Yes and
- the main tool(s) to which the organisations of that country referred to

Table 7: The quality tools (other than CAF) used in the different countries

		Yes	% Yes	Main tool	No	Replies total
EUROPEAN UNION	10					
Austria		12	60 %	Quality circles(5) ISO (4)	8	20
Belgium		18	40 %	BSC (8) Quality circles(7) EFQM (6) ISO (4)	27	45
Germany		14	67 %	Quality circles(10) EFQM (4)	7	21
France		-			1	1
Finland		1		EFQM/BSC	-	1
Italy		9	47 %	ISO (6) Quality circles(3)	10	19
Portugal		4	67 %	ISO (3) EFQM (3)	2	6
Greece		1	25 %	ISO	3	4
Ireland		1			-	1
Spain		1	33 %	ISO	2	3
CANDIDATE COUNTRIES & NORWAY	8					
Czech Republic		-	0 %		2	2
Estonia		3	38 %	EFQM/ISO/BSC	5	8
Slovenia		5	50 %	ISO (5)	5	10
Hungary		2	67 %	EFQM/ISO	1	3
Slovakia		3	33 %	ISO (2)	6	9
Norway		1		EFQM/BSC	-	1
Romania		-			1	1
Malta		-			1	1
TOTAL		75			81	156

Questions 11 and 12: Reasons for using the CAF and their importance

(A) First of all we calculated the % of organisations that found the given reason very relevant (i.e. they gave a score of 4 or 5 on a scale from 0 to 5)

Score 4-5 %	
57	a) Quick “health check” of the administration
5	b) Budgetary reasons
9	c) Explicit political demands
12	d) Explicit citizen or customer demands for improvement

50	e) Increasing sensitivity of the staff for quality
51	f) Participation in a national quality contest or conference
68	g) To increase sensitivity for “quality” issues
63	h) To promote the exchange of views in the organisation
57	i) As an input into ongoing improvement activities
52	j) Because the top management wanted it
6	k) Sudden events showed the necessity to do something
40	l) To promote cultural change in the organisation
5	m) Because other administrations close to us also used it
72	n) To identify strengths and areas for improvement
41	o) To prove that the organisation is willing to change
18	p) Marketing and public relations reasons (to show modernisation efforts)
21	q) Because the CAF was communicated in a convincing way
33	r) Because the CAF is promoted across Europe
42	s) Intention to involve staff in managing the organisation
30	t) We were looking for a tool to launch benchmarking

(B) As a second step, organisations were asked which were the most important reasons for using the CAF, in order of importance (max three). We calculated how many times this reason was mentioned to be priority 1, 2 or 3.

Frequency	
48	a) Quick “health check” of the administration
2	b) Budgetary reasons
2	c) Explicit political demands
4	d) Explicit citizen or customer demands for improvement
26	e) Increasing sensitivity of the staff for quality
39	f) Participation in a national quality contest or conference
36	g) To increase sensitivity for “quality” issues
36	h) To promote the exchange of views in the organisation
40	i) As an input into ongoing improvement activities
34	j) Because the top management wanted it
0	k) Sudden events showed the necessity to do something
22	l) To promote cultural change in the organisation
1	m) Because other administrations close to us also used it
78	n) To identify strengths and areas for improvement
13	o) To prove that the organisation is willing to change
9	p) Marketing and public relations reasons (to show modernisation efforts)
3	q) Because the CAF was communicated in a convincing way
14	r) Because the CAF is promoted across Europe
13	s) Intention to involve staff in managing the organisation
14	t) We were looking for a tool to launch benchmarking

If we consider both criteria (the priority given to the reason and its relevance in general), the following reasons were considered to be the most important - with the wish to identify strengths and areas for improvement as the outstanding number one:

Top 7

A. (> 50%) Ranking	B. Ranking	
1 (72 %)	1 - 78 x	n) To identify strengths and areas for improvement
2 (68 %)	5 - 36 x	g) To increase sensitivity for “quality” issues
3 (63 %)	5 - 36 x	h) To promote the exchange of views in the organisation
4 (57 %)	2 - 48 x	a) Quick “health check” of the administration
4 (57 %)	3 - 40 x	i) As an input into ongoing improvement activities
6 (51 %)	4 - 39 x	f) Participation in a national quality contest or conference
5 (52 %)	6 - 34 x	j) Because the top management wanted it
7 (50 %)	7 - 26 x	e) Increasing sensitivity of the staff for quality

In addition, the following reasons were mentioned:

Motivate employees; to improve the quality management in the public organisation; to test the quality management model through the entire organisation; to obtain experiences from using CAF-model and suggesting it to other organisations; to get an input to the strategy of the organisation; we were looking for an effective but simply operable tool to measure our reform efforts; we tested how to use the CAF and if it is better than EFQM.

13. Decision to use the CAF

The final decision to use the CAF will have been taken by the top management, but which was the key decision-taking body? (several answers are possible):

83	a) By the top management (administrative or political)
60	b) By a management team
27	e) Upon suggestion by a quality or improvement team
13	c) After broad consultation with staff and/or their representatives
11	f) The idea came up and was decided in a staff meeting
7	d) Upon suggestion of staff members or their representatives
15	g) Other: participation in 6 th Quality-Award Speyer; By the top management and quality department; Committee of Directors;

Commentary on the context for the use of the CAF

While the majority of respondents used the “old” CAF, the use of CAF 2002 is growing rapidly. Its application for a second time or more can be expected to grow as time passes, with a second or subsequent use being most likely after a lapse of two years. A striking feature is the fact that 72% of all administrations that have responded have used the CAF in the whole organisation, including a number of very large administrations. Although a cross analysis does not support the assumption that larger organisations had particular difficulties in applying the CAF or found the CAF less beneficial than others, the fact that just a minority of administrations used it for a part of the organisation is worth noting. It leads us to ask whether it would not be necessary to reflect more carefully about the appropriate size of an administration that is likely to benefit from using the CAF – also in terms of people or cultural development, since it is unlikely that very large organisations will be able to reap the potential cultural benefits from using the CAF in terms of communication and staff involvement.

By far the largest group of organisations used the CAF in a normal operating context, and a substantial number of these used the CAF because it offered the possibility of a quick “health check”. However, most if not all administrations had a more specific reason for using the CAF. Organisational change and restructuring or the introduction of new systems seem to have been important drivers for the use of CAF. Since cross analysis shows that on the whole experiences with the CAF do not differ between these two large groups of organisations – those that had a specific reason and those that used the CAF in a normal operating context – we can positively conclude that the CAF can be used in a beneficial way by organisations in very different situations.

In more than half the cases, the use of CAF was the first experience of using a tool for quality management or improvement and indeed the first occasion that a special quality unit, team or group was convened (51% had no previous experience at all, 59% had never set up a quality team or group). Since the CAF was mainly developed for use as an introductory tool in administrations that had no previous experience with a more systematic quality approach we are able to conclude that this purpose has been met to a satisfactory degree. It is interesting to note that organisations that had previously used other quality instruments had in several cases tried more than one. It would be interesting to explore the reasons behind adopting the CAF model after having implemented an ISO 9000 quality system or having worked with quality circles, and after having used the EFQM Excellence Model and/or the balanced scorecard in particular. With regard to those that had previously used the EFQM Model, conventional wisdom is that the CAF is a “starter” model which organisations can use until such time as their quality management processes become too sophisticated and require a more elaborate model for a more thorough analysis; it may well be that in some organisations the EFQM Model was found to be too complex, costly and/or time-consuming. In certain cases, however, it is understood that public sector organisations already familiar with other quality management tools – and with the ISO 9000 series in particular – used the CAF to take their quality management approach one step further or to demonstrate its user-friendliness to other organisations in their country. From a substantial number of individual administrations it is also known that those that have used the

CAF can be considered “reform leaders” in their countries that have tested several instruments and are very active in promoting quality initiatives and consulting other administrations in their country.

The reasons given for using the CAF are many and varied, but in the majority of cases, it was used to identify strengths and areas for improvement, as a quick “health check” of the administration, as an input into ongoing improvement activities, to increase sensitivity for “quality” issues and to promote the exchange of views in the organisation. While participation in a national quality conference was given as a (very) relevant reason in 39 cases, this was in addition to the other major reasons cited above. In this connection, however, the question arises as to how much willingness to change there was on the part of organisations using the CAF as a precondition to participate in a quality conference. There is scope here to explore how best to link the CAF to national quality conferences in the future. Perhaps the qualifying criteria could include the provision of evidence that some positive action had been taken as a result of using the CAF. At the very least, a demonstration of willingness to change should be a prerequisite.

The decision to use the CAF was taken in the vast majority of cases by top management or the management team. This is the recommended approach if the support of top management is to be forthcoming in the follow-up to self-assessment. Past analysis has shown that where there is strong buy-in from management and where management actively drives the process, there is much more likelihood that any action plan resulting from the exercise will be properly implemented. There is a clear need to establish a shared vision that conveys the importance of the self-assessment process to the overall organization, its personnel, and the public served. Sharing a view of the future represents the most important context for effecting change. When individuals are involved in the generation and use of knowledge, different groups of people are then in a position to act collectively based on informed decisions. A major benefit is the formation of a coalition of stakeholders, who are informed and prepared to affect and sustain change to improve the delivery of services and enabling supports. This is unlikely to occur in the absence of strong management support.

In looking at the context in which the decision to use the CAF was taken, we also examined the responses to this section against the responses given to later questions. We found that there was no discernable co-relation between the context in which the decision to use the CAF was taken and the actual use and follow-up of the CAF. The exception is that a number of organisations that used the CAF because it was a requirement for a quality conference took no action following the use of the CAF and do not intend to use it again.

The size of organisation and the area of activity does not appear to make a difference either, at least as far as obstacles encountered and benefits gained are concerned. While many of the responses received were from organisations describing themselves as “local government”, this is not surprising given the total number of such organisations across Europe. In fact, given the smaller “population” of central government organisations in Europe, a greater proportion of these have used the CAF. This may well be down to the fact that most national CAF correspondents are connected to central government.

II.3. The self-assessment process (the implementation of the CAF)

As in the previous section, the data are presented as received and the numbers don't necessarily add up. The responses are set out below, followed by a commentary on how the respondents reported their experience of using the CAF.

14. To whom did you communicate that the exercise was going to take place?

No. of organisations	To whom
92	The whole staff (*)
41	Management (only)
37	An existing improvement team (group, department, unit)
12	External stakeholders
7	Customers / Citizens / Users
11	Others

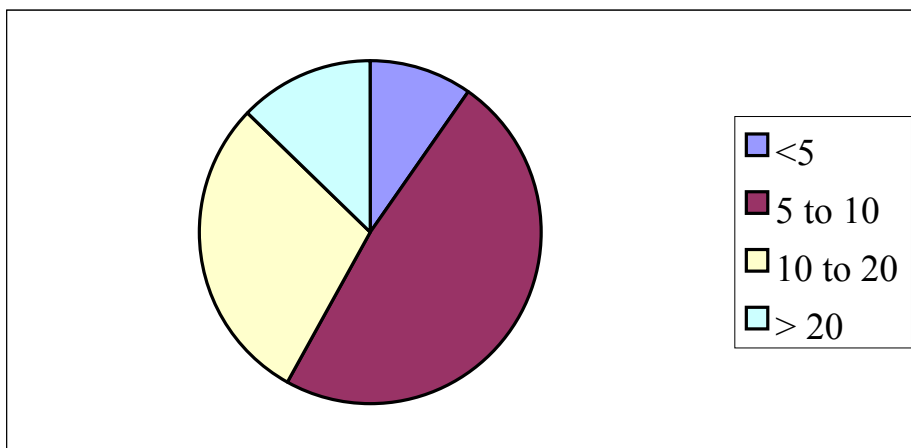
Others:

Ministry of the Interior; Permanent Secretary within Ministry; team CAF and management the administrative and political top management and some managing members of staff; special assessment team, composed only for this exercise; all the organisms and services of top management.

15. Please indicate the size of the self-assessment team (number of people that took part)

<5	5-10	10-20	> 20
15	75	45	20

Other: (from 10 to 45) there were two self-assessment teams with 12 members in each team.



16. Please indicate the number of the SA team members in relation to the whole staff of the organisation (in %).

< 10 %	10 – 25 %	> 25 %
83	53	13
Between 0,04 and 9 %	Between 10 (4x) and 24 %	1x 100%

17. Please indicate which type of staff took part in the SA group and the percentage of the self-assessment group they represented

			%		
			< 10 %	10 – 25 %	> 25 %
121	78 %	Middle management	13	29	56
99	63 %	Top management	21	45	20
92	59 %	Experts (A-level staff members)	16	35	29
86	55 %	Technical assistants (B-level staff members)	14	40	21
61	39 %	Supporting staff (Secretaries, office clerks....)	13	21	12

18a) Did you have external (expert) assistance in preparing the self-assessment (explanation of the CAF and its purpose, methodological support....)?

90	58 %	<i>Yes</i>
64	42 %	<i>No</i>

18b) If yes, by whom?

39	External consultant
10	Internal consultant
5	Quality Office
8	Training Centre
7	EIPA
	Others: Named consultancy firms, State consultancy offices, Departments of Public Administration, national quality contest experts, project managers-experts (not members of the self-assessment teams), Ministry of Finance, efficiency units and national correspondents.

18.c) What kind of preparation did you receive?

	What you consider useful	What you actually received
Explanation of the CAF	112	108
Documentation	99	97
Cases	53	27
International exchange of experience	32	13
E-learning (e.g. Speyer)	19	14

19. *If not, do you think it would have been better to have external (expert) assistance?*

30	43 %	Yes
40	57 %	No

20a) *Did you have external (expert) assistance during the self-assessment or in identifying strengths and areas for improvement (for methodological support and clarification)?*

100	65 %	No
53 + 1 afterwards	35 %	Yes

20b) *If yes, by whom*

31	External consultant
9	Internal consultant
8	Quality Office
5	EIPA
1	Training Centre
12	Others: Named consultancy firms, State consultancy offices, Departments of Public Administration, national quality contest experts, project managers-experts (not members of the self-assessment teams), Ministry of Finance, efficiency units and national correspondents.

21a) *If not, do you think it would have been better to have external (expert) assistance during the SA?*

41	42 %	Yes
57	58 %	No

21b) If yes, by whom

31	External consultant (*) with knowledge of the functioning of local administration
7	Training Centre
6	EIPA
5	Quality Office
4	Internal consultant
5	Others: Facilitator from another organisation that had used the CAF; national quality office or policy centre, external consultant to monitor methodology and follow-up benchmarking.

22. How long did the self-assessment exercise last (from the explanation to/training of the group until the conclusion of the self-assessment)

43	2-3 days
42	4-5 days (a full working week)
39	Between 6 and 10 working days (2 working weeks)
26	Other: Please indicate how long (estimate) Preliminary preparatory session by Consultant plus one afternoon for actual group interview, 3 weeks, 4 weeks, 5 weeks, 6 weeks 2 months, 3 months, 7 months, 8 months, 20 hrs in 8 days within 9 months 2-3 days over a period of one year.

23. How did you manage to reach consensus in the group?

112	Intense group discussions until we reached agreement
48	We took the statistical means of the scores (*)
16	Arbitration by the Chairperson
11	Other: A mix of the above 3 - worked fine/ better than expected; a written discussion with a paper drawn up to which others reacted; the statistical mean of the scores was the basis for the group discussions to reach consensus; for each sub-criterion a reporter / team-member was nominated who gave a first assessment hint; quality tools such as brainstorming and others.

24. In reaching consensus within the group, on what did you focus?

77	On all of the above
49	On the evidences / indicators used by different group members to support their assessment
20	On the background to different views / assessments
20	On the scores attributed by different group members
2	Other

25. What were the main obstacles encountered in the course of self-assessment with the CAF?

Frequency (for priority 1-3)	
108	a) Difficulties linked to the CAF itself (understanding the criteria, the language, the scoring system)
68	e1) Additional work due to CAF implementation alongside business as usual
47	b) Insufficient experience in sharing views and information in the organisation
32	e2) Problems in aligning the views and experiences of different group members
29	d) Lacking methodological support
26	k) Our organisation was, on the whole, not prepared for self-assessment
22	f) Uncertainty about the purpose and outcome of the self-assessment
19	j) Problems with identifying strengths and areas for improvement
19	g) Lack of faith in the relevance of the whole exercise
16	c) Problems with being honest and outspoken
17	l) We encountered no obstacles at all
8	h) Self-assessment was imposed and not “owned” by the group members
2	i) A lack of trust in the self-assessment group

Other obstacles: All levels from management to supporting staff were included in the self-assessment. Sharing views between members of the same level did not cause any problem. However, sharing views with members of all the different levels and working in different processes was less evident; not enough measurements; not enough information on the CAF; difficulty in focusing the assessment only on one service integrated within a larger organisation where interaction with other parts is significant; the organisation was not ready for an assessment; not all participants could answer all the questions because they are specialised in a specific area (e.g. budget, HRM,) and do not have an overall view of the organisation; no knowledge about benchmarking results.

26. What were the main benefits obtained from self-assessment?

Please indicate those that were relevant in your organisation (1 for the greatest benefit, 2 for the second greatest benefit, etc.).

Frequency (for priority 1-3)	
82	f) A clear identification of strengths and areas for improvement
64	i) We were able to identify a number of important actions to be undertaken
62	b) An increased level of awareness about organisational issues / problems
59	a) People developed a better understanding of the organisation

55	c) The sharing of information proved to be important
54	d) Self-assessment gave rise to new ideas and a new way of thinking
53	l) It helped to identify communication and information problems
37	g) People started to become aware and interested in quality issues
33	h) The ability to contribute and to share the own views was felt positively
29	j) We realised how previous improvement activities could be taken forward
27	e) People started to develop a stronger interest in the organisation
24	k) We developed an understanding of how different initiatives in place fit together
3	m) We did not see any benefits at all

Other: The CAF experience led to an internal audit of the organisation; participation in national and international quality conferences, gaining practical knowledge and the ability to advise other public institutions in conducting self-assessment; people developed awareness of belonging to the organisation.

Commentary on the self-assessment process

It is disappointing to note that only 92 organisations let all their staff know that the CAF exercise was to take place. In our view, this information should always be communicated to the whole staff. If people see that something is going on within the organisation that they are not being told about, the natural reaction is to assume that they are not being told because they would not like it. This generates unnecessary anxiety and is not likely to lead to improved productivity. A much better approach is to operate openly and honestly, showing that staff are trusted and involved. Failure to demonstrate confidence in all the staff of the organisation is likely to have the effect of diminishing trust even within the self-assessment group. Without mutual respect and trust, it is likely that any self-assessment exercise, whether using the CAF or another instrument, will be seriously flawed.

It is even more interesting – and perhaps worrying – to note that just a small number of administrations communicated the use of the CAF (and the results at a later stage) to external stakeholders. Although the CAF is and remains an instrument for use within the boundaries of an administration, we feel that it would be beneficial to at least communicate the action to stakeholders and, in doing this, to perhaps gather additional information relevant to the self-assessment.

With regard to the numbers taking part in the assessment group, almost half had between five and ten participants. Empirical studies have shown that groups work best when the number of participants is between seven and fifteen. It is encouraging to note that the vast majority of groups fall into this range. It is difficult to imagine how some of the very large groups mentioned were able to function using the existing guidelines. Having said that, there may well be a case for involving as many people as possible, to benefit from the resulting “buy-in” to any action plan arising from the self assessment. This is an area worthy of further examination and discussion, perhaps with a view to developing new guidelines on how to involve as many staff members as possible in the process. Could you establish special groups of between seven and fifteen to examine and assess each criterion, or even each sub-criterion? Or perhaps all staff

members could be asked to do an individual assessment to be taken into account by an assessment group?

In more than half the responses, the percentage of staff participating as members of a self-assessment group was less than ten per cent. In only one case were all staff involved. It is difficult to know what the optimum level of participation should be, and we have no way of knowing which organisations did the best job of conducting the self-assessment. In this context, the best job is not the one that was conducted most extensively, or the quickest or most detailed. In our view, the true performance indicator for a successful application of the CAF should be the successful implementation of an action plan to close the gaps identified as room for improvement. Having said that, we also recognise that the process itself can be a learning experience for the participants and for the organisation as a whole. Increased awareness and better internal communication would also be positive indicators.

With regard to the type or level of staff active in the self-assessment groups, it is noticeable that top and middle management are generally well represented, while supporting staff are less well represented. While junior staff may be less well informed about the organisation as a whole, it is a fact that not all wisdom resides at the top. Many useful insights have come from people at relatively junior levels. All staff in an organisation have a stake in that organisation, since it is what puts food on their table, a roof over their head and gives them a sense of belonging. Perhaps there is room for improvement in the guidelines with regard to how participants are selected to join the self-assessment group. An ideal group would have a good balance between level, age, gender, expertise and work area in the organisation.

Expert assistance in preparing for and in implementing the CAF was availed of by about a hundred users and these came from a wide range of areas, with the highest number being external consultants. Explanation of the CAF and appropriate documentation were seen by many as being useful in the preparatory stage. It is worth noting that nearly half of those who felt case studies would have been useful, did not get any such case studies. For those that did not use external expert assistance, it seems from the replies received that over half were happy with the decision to do it themselves. Forty-one organisations, however, felt that using such assistance during the self-assessment would have been better. It is worth noting that several organisations that undertook the preparatory stage without external assistance engaged such assistance for the actual self-assessment. With regard to obstacles and difficulties encountered, however, the presence or absence of external assistance seems to have had no real impact. Difficulties with the CAF itself were experienced more or less equally by those organisations that used external consultants and by those that took a “do-it-yourself” approach. Since the CAF was intended to be a light and easy to use tool, it would have been unfortunate if the results indicated that external assistance was essential. In this context, a significant number of respondents that used external assistance in preparing to use the CAF felt confident enough to conduct the actual self-assessment on their own. As a result, the use of external assistance was lower overall for the conduct of self-assessment than for preparation.

The length of time devoted to the whole process varied greatly, ranging from one working day up to eight months. In some instances the assessment, while being conducted in a few working days, was spread over periods as long as a year. Most, however, were conducted in one or two

working weeks. Without more information, it is difficult to say which is best. Intuitively, it might seem that getting through the process within a week would be more productive and less disruptive; perhaps spreading the process over a longer time frame could result in a more successful application of the CAF and the generation of an action plan to close all the gaps identified as room for improvement.

The majority of groups report that they reached consensus by engaging in intense group discussions until they reached agreement. Some groups used the statistical mean of scores, either as a final decision or as a basis for discussion. A smaller number used arbitration by the chairperson. A mix of approaches was used successfully by others. It is worth noting here that among the benefits of the process which were most highly valued by many groups were; that the sharing of information proved to be important, that people developed a better understanding of the organisation and they developed an increased level of awareness about organisational issues / problems. The intense group discussions undertaken by so many groups may have had an influence on this perception.

As far as obstacles were concerned, the most important and most often cited were difficulties linked to the CAF itself in terms of understanding the criteria, the language and the scoring system. It is worth noting that fewer users of CAF 2002 cited this as an obstacle, so we can take it that the changes made were an improvement. However, there is always room for further improvement. Having to conduct the exercise while conducting business as usual was also seen as problematic as in many organisations the CAF was seen as an additional workload. We would also like to point out, however, that a substantial share of the administrations that used the CAF were in fact not prepared for it and seem to have lacked the degree of organisational culture or maturity needed to work with it: a lack of experience in sharing views and information within the organisation was considered to be a significant barrier to successful completion of the self-assessment, and a substantial number of administrations also singled out other obstacles that we considered cultural barriers as major obstacles; 26 organisations – close to 20% - even mentioned that on the whole they had not been prepared for the exercise.. Although it would be impossible to establish a standard set of criteria that might help administrations to understand from the outset whether they are prepared for the CAF, we would at least like to point out that more attention – in dealing with individual administrations – needs to be paid to this issue and that in some cases it may be better to suggest not to use the CAF then just to give it a try. In our view, while there is always room for improvement in the CAF itself, effective training is the most effective way to overcome the difficulties linked to the CAF itself in terms of understanding the criteria, the language, the scoring system and the degree of maturity needed to use the instrument in a beneficial way. . There may be a case for taking more time to allow people to become familiar with the instrument and to widen their comfort zone around the language, criteria and scoring.

The most important function served by the CAF is the identification of areas for improvement under the different criteria and scoring should be seen as secondary to that objective. Difficulties encountered with the sharing of views and information will diminish as people become more familiar with participative management, in our view a necessary prerequisite to successful self-assessment.

The purpose of undertaking a CAF self-assessment is obviously to get something from it. Both the organisation and its staff can benefit from a good self-assessment exercise and it is reassuring to see from the replies received that benefits were identified for both. The most relevant and most frequently reported benefit was the clear identification of strengths and areas for improvement in the organisation. Identification of areas for improvement led to the identification of a number of important actions to be undertaken. On the people front, CAF was seen as leading to an increased level of awareness about organisational issues and problems, a better understanding of the organisation by staff and an awareness of the importance of good communications and the sharing of information. It also led in many instances to the generation of new ideas and new ways of thinking. The identification of communication and information problems was seen as a benefit by over fifty organisations. On the whole, our analysis shows that “cultural benefits” from using the CAF were the most important in terms of the number of organisations pointing out that they benefited on this side. More generally, there was no obvious relationship between the reasons given for undertaking the CAF and the results achieved. Some organisations started out to conduct a quick health check and ended up with identified areas for improvement and plans to implement. Others used the CAF as an input into ongoing improvement activities but had little by way of concrete results. The majority, however, regardless of size or area of activity, say they achieved several of the benefits outlined above, and none reported seeing no benefits at all.

II.4. The follow-up

As in the previous section, the data are presented as received and the numbers don't necessarily add up. The responses are set out below, followed by a commentary on how the respondents reported their experience of following up on the use of the CAF.

27. To whom were the results/conclusions of the self-assessment communicated (several answers possible)?

90	58 %	The whole staff
63	40 %	Management (only)
45	29%	An existing improvement team (group, department, unit)
29	19 %	Politicians
16	10 %	External stakeholders
12	8 %	Customers / Citizens / Users
15	10 %	Others: Self assessment team; external quality auditors; to other public sector institutions using different kinds of training, seminars and web-page of the ministry; to Central Government; those interested; KDZ; Bürgermeister; The "conference"; Ministry of the Interior; eventually to other entities, according the strategy token.

28. Did the use of the CAF result in sustainable improvement activities in the organisation?

96	62 %	Yes
40	26 %	No

Other: Important measures were already taken previously but there is no scope for further steps as there is no money/ time / personnel; Yes and No; not especially because of CAF; we worked already with EFQM.

29. If yes, what was the nature of the improvement activity (several answers possible)?

60	An input into running improvement activities / actions
54	An input into the strategic planning process of the organisation
38	Some individual improvement activities (but no full action plan)
29	A full action-plan outlining the way forward and describing the actions to be taken and that is actually being implemented
28	A consolidated report handed to the Management (leaving the implementation to the latter)
6	Increased financial investment in training
6	Increased financial investment in human resources
5	Increased financial investment in technology
2	Increased financial investment in benchmarking among different internal and external services and organisations.
4	Other: a very good preparation for an internal audit; development of an operational plan; brainstorming among the different groups involved with CAF in the organisation.

30. If self-assessment was not followed up by improvement activities, what were the reasons for this? Typical reasons are given by the list below (several answers possible)

20	Other priorities
15	The reason for conducting self-assessment only was to take part in an award contest
14	Lack of time
7	Lack of support for giving follow up
6	No real willingness to change
6	The results of self-assessment were not accepted as an adequate picture of the organisation
6	Self-assessment was never meant to lead to improvements (it was just a “health check” of the administration)
5	The results of the self-assessment were not seen as concrete enough
5	The results of self-assessment were not accepted by key persons
4	Lack of financial resources
3	Key players had not been involved in the self-assessment
2	We did not succeed in identifying relevant areas for improvement

Other: Lack of time for further improvements; an evaluation for learning purposes only

31.a) Do you intend to use the CAF again?

128	82 %	Yes
19	12 %	No (*)

(*) requires too many resources & too far from practice

Open answer/ option not yet confirmed: 5

Other: our efforts are centered on the tools dependent on the planning and the follow-up of our contract of administration, of the operational plan and the action plan. These tools are supported by indicators like the balanced scorecard.

31.b) If yes, in which cycle do you intend to use the CAF? (132 replies)

50	38 %	every two years
49	37 %	annually
15	11 %	every three years
11	8 %	Without preference
6	5 %	on a later date
1		every four years
= 132		Without preference

1 :EFQM annually

32. Do you intend to use CAF for the assessment of the actual state of your organisation in combination with other instruments (e.g. EFQM, ISO 9000f, Balanced Scorecard)?

78	53 %	Yes
67	45 %	No

Open answer/ option not yet confirmed: **3** (2 %)

33. Do you think it is useful to provide methodological/supporting material from the national CAF correspondent, national agency responsible for disseminating the CAF (or EIPA) to support the self-assessment?

140	93 %	Yes
10	7 %	No

34. If you intend to use the CAF again, what, if anything, would you change about how you conducted the self-assessment (several answers possible)?

55	43 %	More (or better) preparation and explanation
47	37 %	Make sure that other priorities and activities will not be in the way
45	35 %	More time for discussions within the self-assessment team
40	31 %	Stronger involvement of the employees
38	30 %	Stronger management involvement
33	26 %	A stronger involvement of key persons
31	24 %	More (or better) external assistance
31	24 %	More careful selection of the right moment for self-assessment
29	23 %	Different composition of the self-assessment team
29	23 %	Better clarification of why self-assessment is undertaken
26	20 %	More time for convincing people / colleagues of the purpose
9	7 %	Change of method in reaching consensus in the group
6	5 %	Involvement of the trade union/ employees' representatives
10	8 %	Other: better explanations, more detail; take more time for the exercise; more time for clarifying language; clearer language and a framework closer to organisation specific features of the different types of organisations; more participants in the self-assessment group; the CAF should be more orientated and modified for conditions of the public administration.

Commentary on the follow up

In line with our comments in section II.3, it is disappointing to note that only 90 organisations let all their staff know the results of the CAF exercise. Again, it is our view that this information should always be communicated to the whole staff, and for the same reasons. It could be argued that the discipline imposed by knowing that any results will be widely known could help the self-assessment group to be more objective than they might otherwise be. A number of organisations communicated their results only to management. It is interesting to note that there is a direct correlation between the width of dissemination of information and the taking of follow-up action. In most cases where the exercise was conducted under a veil of secrecy, little or no follow-up action took place. Where the results were widely announced, raised expectations resulted in positive action.

The principal positive actions were: an input into running improvement activities/ actions; an input into the strategic planning process of the organisation; some individual improvement activities (but no full action plan); and a full action-plan outlining the way forward and describing the actions to be taken and that will actually be implemented.

Since only 29 organisations reported that they had developed a full action-plan outlining the way forward and describing the actions to be taken and that will actually be implemented, it could be argued that these were the only organisations to fully implement the CAF. However, any positive action resulting from its use could also be seen as positive. Even in those organisations where no follow-up took place, the exercise seems to have had beneficial side-effects in raising awareness of organisational issues and problems. Nowhere is it reported that the use of the CAF had a negative outcome for the organisation or for the individuals involved.

Turning to the reasons given by those administrations that have done no follow-up at all, two clusters of reasons dominate. On the one hand no follow-up to the CAF as other priorities came up and no time was available, and on the other hand a number of reasons indicating that from the beginning a real follow-up had not been intended. We do not see this as particularly worrying, however, since our analysis also shows that even administrations that did not conduct a follow-up to the CAF may have benefited from using it on the people and the culture front.

On a specific issue, we would like to draw the attention to the fact that nearly one third (15) of all the organisations (51) that have used the CAF in the context of a national quality contest and had found this context to be one of the main drivers for using the CAF (cf. questions 11/12 above) indicated that no followed had been conducted because from the beginning the exercise had only been undertaken to take part in a national quality conference. This is worrying to note and leads us to believe that the way in which the CAF is linked to the organisation of a quality event or contest needs to be carefully designed if we want to avoid administrations spending their time on an exercise they would otherwise never have undertaken.

The vast majority of users say they intend to use the CAF again. Just 19 organisations (12-13% of respondents) say they do not intend to use it again. A further question that might usefully have been posed in this regard is "if not, why not?". Some explanations were volunteered, and these range from too costly to too simple. Reading between the lines, it appears that some organisations took the view that "we tried it once and didn't like it". Again, there is a direct co-

relation between the level of openness with staff and the intended future use of the instrument. The more open the process, the more likely that there would be follow-up action and a future use of the CAF. Conversely, the more secretive the process, the more likely that nothing would happen and that, for the moment at least, the instrument would not be used again. In this context, there may be scope for encouraging such organisations to think again. As the use of the CAF spreads and as awareness of it grows among the public and politicians, it is likely that organisations will in the future be expected to use some form of self-assessment process to improve the quality of public administration and the CAF is there to fill that role.

The majority of organisations that intend to use the CAF again say they will do so annually or every two years. While an annual cycle might fit well with other cycles in public administration (annual estimates, budget, performance appraisal etc.) our view is that some time should be allowed for any action plan arising from the first use of the CAF to be implemented. The second and subsequent iteration could then review the outcomes from the previous one. A two-year cycle would give more scope in this regard.

It is clear that some lessons were learned by organisations during their first use of the CAF. There is a strong demand evident for additional methodological and supporting material to be provided by national correspondents, national agencies with responsibility for disseminating the CAF and EIPA to support self-assessment. However, in terms of what organisations would change about how the self-assessment was conducted, most responses indicated that improvement was possible from within. Indeed our feeling – also reviewing again the benefits realised from using the CAF and the obstacles met while conducting the self-assessment – is that most of the improvements in the self-assessment process can be realised by understanding and addressing the internal culture of an administration in the “correct” way from the outset.

Better communication is seen as very important by most organisations. For the next use of the CAF, the most frequently mentioned improvement sought is more (or better) preparation and explanation. A significant number of organisations intend to make sure that other priorities and activities will not be in the way. Time was an issue for 35% of the organisations, who intend to set aside more time for discussions within the self-assessment team. Wider involvement of employees, management and other key persons is planned by many. More (or better) external assistance, more careful selection of the right moment for self-assessment, different composition of the self-assessment team, better clarification of why self-assessment is undertaken and more time for convincing people / colleagues of the purpose are all significant intentions for future use of the CAF.

Given that these stated intentions are the result of lessons learned during the first, and occasionally second, application of the CAF, any new users would be well advised to try to learn from others and take note of how previous users intend to apply the CAF again.

II.5. Benchmarking

As in the previous section, the data are presented as received and the numbers don't necessarily add up. The responses are set out below, followed by a commentary on how the respondents reported their experience of benchmarking.

35a) Has your organisation, to your knowledge, ever taken part in a benchmarking project?

54	35 %	Yes
102	65 %	No

A further analysis (table 8) shows the following:

Table 8: Participation in benchmarking, by country

		Yes		No	Replies
EUROPEAN UNION	10				
Austria		7	35 %	13	20
Belgium		17	38 %	28	45
Germany		10	48 %	11	21
France		-		1	1
Finland		1		0	1
Italy		8	42 %	11	19
Portugal		2	33 %	4	6
Greece		-	0 %	4	4
Ireland		-		1	1
Spain		-	0 %	3	3
CANDIDATE COUNTRIES & NORWAY	8				
Czech Republic		2		0	2
Estonia		1	13 %	7	8
Slovenia		3	30 %	7	10
Hungary				3	3
Slovakia		1	11 %	8	9
Norway		1		0	1
Romania		-		1	1
Malta		1		0	1
TOTAL		54		102	156

35b) If yes, what was the main reason or intention?

As this was an "open" question, responses varied in length and detail, but the majority of those who have undertaken benchmarking projects said they did so to learn from others. Some organisations were keen to present their own system of integrated management (operational and strategic planning) to other organisations and to find good practices from other institutions to improve their own way of working. Others wished to compare their level of efficiency with organisations offering similar services in other Member States. Performance comparison was mentioned by many respondents. Benchmarking against other systems related to service evaluation was another reason given. One organisation sought to use benchmarking to help improve their Internet site, while another wished to exchange experience about internal audit.

36. If yes, could you describe the nature of the project and the type of partners?

	% (54 positive replies)	Nature of Project
32	59 %	Simple exchange of experiences
26	48 %	Performance comparison
21	39 %	Process benchmarking
9	17 %	Functional benchmarking
8	15 %	Strategy benchmarking

	% (54 positive replies)	Partners
44	81 %	Other (similar) domestic administration(s)
13	24 %	Private sector partner(s)
19	35 %	International (European) partner(s)

37. Would you be interested in taking part in a benchmarking project with other organisations that have used the CAF and would like to learn from others?

27	At the domestic level
23	At the European level
91	Both
14	No interest

Other: In principle interested but no interest because: job cuts, cuts in other resources, too much work, too many people to deal with.

38. There are a number of possible reasons for benchmarking. From the list of possible reasons given below, which one would appeal to you / your organisation (please indicate on a scale from 0 – irrelevant – to 5 – very strong relevance)?

	Not relevant			Very relevant		
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Identifying good practices that could be taken over			3	13	52	72
Looking for new ways to improve			5	22	59	52
Looking for alternative ways of doing things	1	4	3	32	53	39
Building up a network of learning partnership		4	21	30	38	37
Satisfying customer or other external demands	6	7	24	25	37	30
Stimulating a learning culture in the organisation	2	5	16	37	42	27
Performance or “health” check	5	12	20	32	42	19
Leaving the domestic context, become European	12	20	22	28	25	17
Getting out of the ordinary working context	17	27	15	34	20	7

39. *There are a number of possible obstacles to benchmarking. Please indicate, from the list below, those that are or might be relevant in the case of your organisation.*

<i>N° replies</i>		Frequency (Priority 1-3)
89	d) Too many other priorities	66
88	c) A lack of human resources and time	68
58	b) A lack of financial resources	42
53	l) Difficulty of identifying the right partner organisations	32
51	j) Missing performance figures	29
44	f) “Cultural” resistance in the organisation	29
43	h) Language problems (in European benchmarking)	27
40	i) The need to first fully manage and develop the own processes	28
34	k) A lack of incentives to invest in benchmarking	26
23	e) Unclear benefits from benchmarking	13
22	a) Lacking commitment of top management	15
17	g) The need to divulge internal (sensitive) information	9
	m) Other (please specify)	

Other: Internal finance; disadvantages if benchmarking reflects unfairly one own organisation; difficulty in finding other comparable organisations that work in a similar institutional context or have the same missions; far from practice; specificity of our “local” structures

40. *Thinking of the same question again, which of these obstacles do you see as the most relevant ones (maximum 3)? (see “frequency” in table above)*

41. *If you are contacted by another organisation interested in carrying a benchmarking project and with a concrete proposal, would you be willing to consider the idea?*

145	93 %	Yes
7	4 %	No

Other: Yes, if the other organisation is the right partner (similar activities)

Commentary on benchmarking

About a third of the organisations that responded to the questionnaire say they took part in a benchmarking project. This participation rate is fairly evenly spread across different countries, but nearly half of German respondents has done so.

As to the reasons given for engaging in benchmarking, the majority said they did so to learn from others, or in other words to engage in a simple exchange of experiences. As already stated, some organisations were keen to present their own system of integrated management (operational and strategic planning) to other organisations and to find good practices from other institutions to improve their own way of working. Others wished to compare their level of efficiency with organisations offering similar services in other Member States. Performance comparison was mentioned by many respondents. Benchmarking against other systems related to service evaluation was another reason given. One organisation sought to use benchmarking to help improve their Internet site, while another wished to exchange experiences about internal audit.

It is interesting, but not surprising given language barriers, that more than half of all benchmarking projects were conducted with partners that were other similar domestic administrations.

In terms of what benefits were sought from benchmarking, identifying good practices that could be taken over was the most frequently given response. Another way of putting this is that the organisation was looking for new ways to improve, or looking for alternative ways of doing things, and many organisations gave all three responses. A number sought to build up a network of learning partnerships and to stimulate a learning culture within their own organisation. There was also a substantial number that sought to satisfy customer or other external demands.

The main obstacles to benchmarking that were identified were: too many other priorities, a lack of time, a lack of human resources and financial resources. Another significant obstacle was the difficulty in identifying suitable partners.

Finally, it is promising that almost all respondents (93%) say that if they are contacted by another organisation interested in carrying a benchmarking project and with a concrete proposal, they would be willing to consider the idea.

General comments from respondents

42. Are there other comments you would like to make regarding the CAF, the process of self-assessment or others items of this questionnaire?

Given the open nature of this question, responses vary in length, detail and focus. It was decided to set out the comments in full below without attribution, but the authors will no doubt recognise their own input. We apologise in advance for any errors in interpretation or translation.

“I would like to see a description of the differences between CAF and EFQM – in which way might EFQM be better. And, is it a smart thing to consider using CAF first, and EFQM later? If CAF can function as a useful tool, it is very important that the goal of using it is clear from the beginning (defined by the top management). And it is important that you have a clear plan of how to follow up the findings of the assessment. It might be useful to hear more of how others are using CAF in combination with other ways of development and managing an organisation. And in what way can we make CAF live side by side with other concepts.”

“The management board, aware of the results of the previous experience, and of the outcomes of the comparison with other local governments, which have experienced the CAF method at a European level, have decided to start a new application of the CAF updated version. Therefore they have decided to constitute two groups: the first one entirely made up of the same members of the previous experience, and an other one constituted of other colleagues selected through the same method of the past: personnel belonging to various sectors, in order to apply a methodology that let emerge an assessment related to the overall organisation; functions and roles held in the organisation, the mastery of adequate abilities to the role of evaluation. The application of this methodology should enable to compare the outcomes of the present assessment with the ones of the past, and to test the new tool, updated to the new version, both compared with the previous exploited one and with the reflections emerging by the two groups.”

“CAF is a well built tool; using it also an organisation without a specific analytical experience can make a correct analysis, self assessment and identify areas and activities of improvement”.

“The instrument of self-assessment known as CAF was used in order to validate the results achieved through the turns instrument, proposed by the Italian Department of Funzione Pubblica, called VIC and through the internal SWOT analysis. The top management was informed of the result of self-assessment and evaluated it carefully in order to undertake, in the short term, a plan of improvement of the quality of services and the most efficient and economical allocation of resources through the necessary actions for change. In the long term, after running through a phase of benchmarking, this administration will aim at the implementation of a system of total quality.”

“We believe that top management, in order to promote a better exercise and sharing of the CAF in the Public Administration, should receive information and should be trained about the CAF. If Top management decides to use the CAF it should communicate its will to proceed with a first

implementation in an official document. Otherwise, reasons that have caused the decision not to adopt the assessment framework should be explained.”

“We took a really very long time to do the exercise. Our problem is that we can not manage or are not able to manage with other priorities that sometimes do not depend on us.”;
“We remain with the doubt that we had not carried out the exercise properly (in the right way). Surely we need extra preparation and external support.”

“We question the suitability of such a rigid scoring system, the inflexible use of language, the use of “benchmarking” in scoring. This means that to achieve and maintain a high score an organisation must “benchmark”.”

“It would be very useful for the dissemination of CAF-model to have more support from EIPA as the CAF resource centre, especially regarding the methodology of the CAF-model. Although there are guidelines for using CAF-model, there is more need for explanations and methodological support during the self-assessment exercise.”

“The CAF was, in our case, an extension of a process of modernisation of practices.”

“It would be very desirable, if several similar organisations would conduct the CAF. There is a need for more transparency on the part of the central offices in the public administration.”

“In the updated version of the CAF some improvements were taken up. Personally I believe that CAF would be a very powerful instrument, if it were used correctly. Preparation and rework of CAF require however a substantial investment, which should not be underestimated. “

“The CAF, together with European Union and national conferences on quality can lead to image improvement and improvement in administrative practice. By the awarding of a certificate after CAF, the incentive for its use could be improved further. EIPA should build a stock of best practice organisations with the possibility to nominate CAF representatives”.

“Missing strategy for lasting quality improvement. Self-evaluation? But what then? “
Cf. *“Quid after the self-assessment (improvement plan; follow-up)”*

“Courage for the further development of the CAF, even if initially not many organisations do make use of the CAF. The change in thinking - away from thinking of tasks to thinking in achievements and results on the basis of operational, strategic and quality management-, requires several years of development, change and adjustment. In particular with regard to human resources which cannot be transformed in one day. A condition for the change of attitude is an appropriate organisation and personnel development as well as the political will to support this development and to give the example cf. Good governance (‘...). This must be an evolutionary process.”

“With regard to the results, the difficulty for our "young" organisation were the improvement trends over several years as well as the documentation and elaboration of facts. In the new version the evaluation mode was already amended.”;

“I find personally that in the new version too little attention is paid to the aspect of teamwork. (working through all aspects individually is in the foreground; this does not mean, however, that a good preparation of the individual team participants is not necessary.)”

“Our organisation does not wish to use to the CAF again and prefers to invest its resources to use and develop a tool such as the balanced scorecard”.

“All the members of the evaluation group unanimously regarded the CAF as being: - an innovating tool; - a simple, effective and fast internal reflection; - an introduction to the concepts of new ways of managing; - a useful exchange of words and actions; - a free methodology for the organisation, to repeat regularly; - a bowl of refreshing oxygene of which all can partake.”

“We were disappointed with the results because we think that errors were made at the time of self-evaluation because of a lack of comprehension of the items which we had to adapt to our practice on the ground. We were also disappointed with the person who came to meet us to conduct external evaluation. For us this person did not really understand the work to be carried out concretely. We have made clear our dissatisfaction to the competent authorities (mail sent). Thereafter we refused to take part in any meeting as we felt that we had wasted our time. Now with the passing of time, we consider that changes were introduced in an indirect way at the organisational level in our administration particularly at the level of the social service. As for the sharing of experience with other services, the fields of activity are so varied that a comparison is difficult. We would have preferred to have meetings with institutions which work in the same field as us: social and professional integration for underprivileged people. In short, from now on, taking into account our disappointment, we remain wary of any form of evaluation.”

“The new CAF model is better adapted to the specific characteristics and the context of government administrations. The brochure (realised by the Belgian CAF correspondents) gives many examples to make it easier to give a score.”;

“CAF is a very light model to do a quick self-assessment of the organisation but it is nothing more than that. You can find out the weaknesses and strengths of your organisation. Information that can be used as input to set up improvement actions and change projects. If you want to introduce Total Quality management there are better and more developed models like EFQM.”;

“The score tables (factors + results) that are used are still not very clear and there were a lot of discussions about their interpretation.”

“Application difficulties. Problems with interpretation of the concrete contents of the different criteria used. Certain resistances with regard to a philosophy of continuous improvement.”

“Self-assessment of a project; interesting yet not evident.”

“We have had some interesting exchange of experiences during the last month, most of time with national organisations. If there is more advertising for using the CAF, more organisations will use the self-assessment. In consequence we will find more partners to exchange information and knowledge. Otherwise a couple of students asked for information to complete their dissertation, most of them didn't know CAF as a quality instrument; EFQM and ISO were well known. On

balance we would say, that CAF is a suitable and good value instrument to start or continue quality management. However, it all depends on doing: the self-assessment and the follow-up.”

“I regard CAF personally as an excellent procedure for an economical and not very time-consuming determination of the current condition of an administration. It gives an outstanding possibility of determining weak points and thus of showing improvement potential.”

“Because of the dramatically bad financial situation of the *** cities and the cuts in personnel/ budget (> 15% in one office), dealing with quality management is just a luxury, crisis management, "débrouillardise" (key terms nowadays). All the Reform measures of the last 4 years which were initiated with a lot of effort/ investment/ resources have to be reduced / cannot be followed up.” & “Keeping oneself busy with a questionnaire of 30 pages over several days would not find any acceptance even with very reform-motivated people”

*“We wish to point out that the Municipality of *** was asked by the National Dept. of P.A.'s to test the CAF in 2000, on the occasion of the 1st European Quality Conference in Lisbon. The Evaluation was not conducted per se, but on the basis of the results of the self-assessment we had previously performed following the EFQM Excellence Model. Such a process represented the input for the subsequent improvement actions we worked on during the following 2 years. “*

“In some parts of the questionnaire it is not clear how the answers are expected to be written (are there several choices possible or not, do all of the items in the list have to be numbered.”

“CAF is a useful tool for those who are just beginning their road to continuous improvement and using quality tools. It lets you see the whole organisation as a system and how much more could be done to make the system work better and produce better results”

“The lower the position of the employee the more willing he or she is to participate in the process and reveal his or her opinion. And believe me, it is worth hearing out different opinions - together you'll see important things that otherwise remain unnoticed.”

“We conducted both self-assessment processes – according to CAF and EFQM criteria. We realised that in the field of scoring against CAF there could be some difficulties because of lack of external assessment. There is a possibility to score against subjective measures instead of being objective.”

“Regarding to the process of self-assessment, we contacted only the staff that works in the building, as a whole, because it was their opinions that we wanted, for now. In the questionnaire we answer that the size of the organisation was (101-250), while in fact this number represents whole the organisation, but we conducted the CAF just the staff that works inside the building, because were those opinions that we wanted. Outside the building works only the services of maintenance, like: gardeners, electricians, carpenters, urban services etc.. In the future perhaps, we will invite the whole staff.”

“We would only like to say that the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), helped us to see the weak points of our Organisation and gave us ideas of improvement.”

“Our Ministry has not yet applied the CAF, but is preparing it now with ministry level approval.”

“In fact, this is a project to implement CAF for the management of Quality (and with Quality) of the services, in a short time.”

“It must be stated also that in this ministry, through the general Secretary, several projects have

already been implemented under the scope of Quality and Innovation in the Services, though in no case has any instrument for self-assessment been applied. However, in the pilot-project carried out by/in 4 (four) organisms, a quality continuous improving programme was developed that used one of the tools or methodologies used to implement the CAF: The PDCA cycle as well as the "Kaisen" theory, for which we had the external support of an expert enterprise, which had already applied the same instruments, the CAF and the EFQM, in a Programme for management development (INOVA) in this ministry. To improve CAF we also created a working team representative of all the services provided by our Ministry. So, we carried out an inventory of current and previous programmes in the field of the management of Quality in the Ministry Services as well as of the current existing equipment, financial and human resources."

"I consider using this point for information, that our organisation finished the process of self-assessment only one month ago, so we will prepare all our activities for application of all results and proposals for improvements in the next step (after October 2003)."

*"Our organisation is creating a QM model for the **** labour centres at regional (county) level. The basis of the model is EFQM, in which CAF is built in. Up to now we are learning to apply CAF."*

Conclusions

As stated at the outset, the purpose of this study was:

1. to help develop a better understanding of the conditions under which the CAF can be a useful analytical and improvement tool for public administrations, including questions related to the type of administrations that have found the CAF most helpful and questions related to the self-assessment process itself;
2. to identify the role of national agencies in promoting the CAF and lead to guidelines for promoting the CAF in the new Member States.

In addition, it was intended to obtain information to be used, in the follow-up to the study, to launch benchmarking projects between European administrations that have used the CAF.

The results of the study are set out in detail above and in our view they meet the objectives very well. As stated earlier, in view of the fact that this study is also intended as an input to the CAF event organised in Rome on 17th and 18th November 2003, it is worth looking at the results carefully but without rushing to conclusions. Having said that, we believe that there are some conclusions that can be drawn immediately.

Given the total number of public sector organisations across all Member States and candidate countries, comparatively little use has been made of the potential of self-assessment using the CAF in helping organisations to explore their own strengths and weaknesses, reflect on their performance, and identify priorities for change. The CAF is a powerful vehicle for analysing organisational choices, which have a crucial influence over organisational effectiveness.

The aims of the CAF are also twofold: to build capacity in an organisation to undertake self-assessment and to build up a comprehensive picture of the factors underlying organisational effectiveness. Obviously for any organisation there are internal factors (the choices each organisation makes about what it does and how it does it), and external factors (the wider political, economic and natural environment in which the organisation works) that influence their effectiveness. These factors, or enablers, interact in a complex and dynamic way and so it is difficult to capture them at a single point in time. The use of the CAF over a relatively short timeline should help to focus an organisation on the particular areas for improvement.

Many public sector organisations aim to achieve more or less the same things. Some work in very different contexts, some adopt different approaches and strategies to achieve their objectives. The CAF provides a vehicle for critical reflection and analysis among staff. This results in both increased capacity for organisational self-assessment in the future and valuable insights into performance now. It also opens up the possibility of benchmarking performance against other public sector organisations. As staff become more familiar with the shared language and concepts in the CAF, benchmarking projects should become more widely undertaken.

Being honest about the motives for using the CAF from the beginning seems obvious. It is also necessary to be open and flexible in terms of timing, techniques and reporting back.

The use of the CAF in an organisation should only be contemplated by organisations that are prepared to reflect on their performance seriously and openly, and to change themselves as a

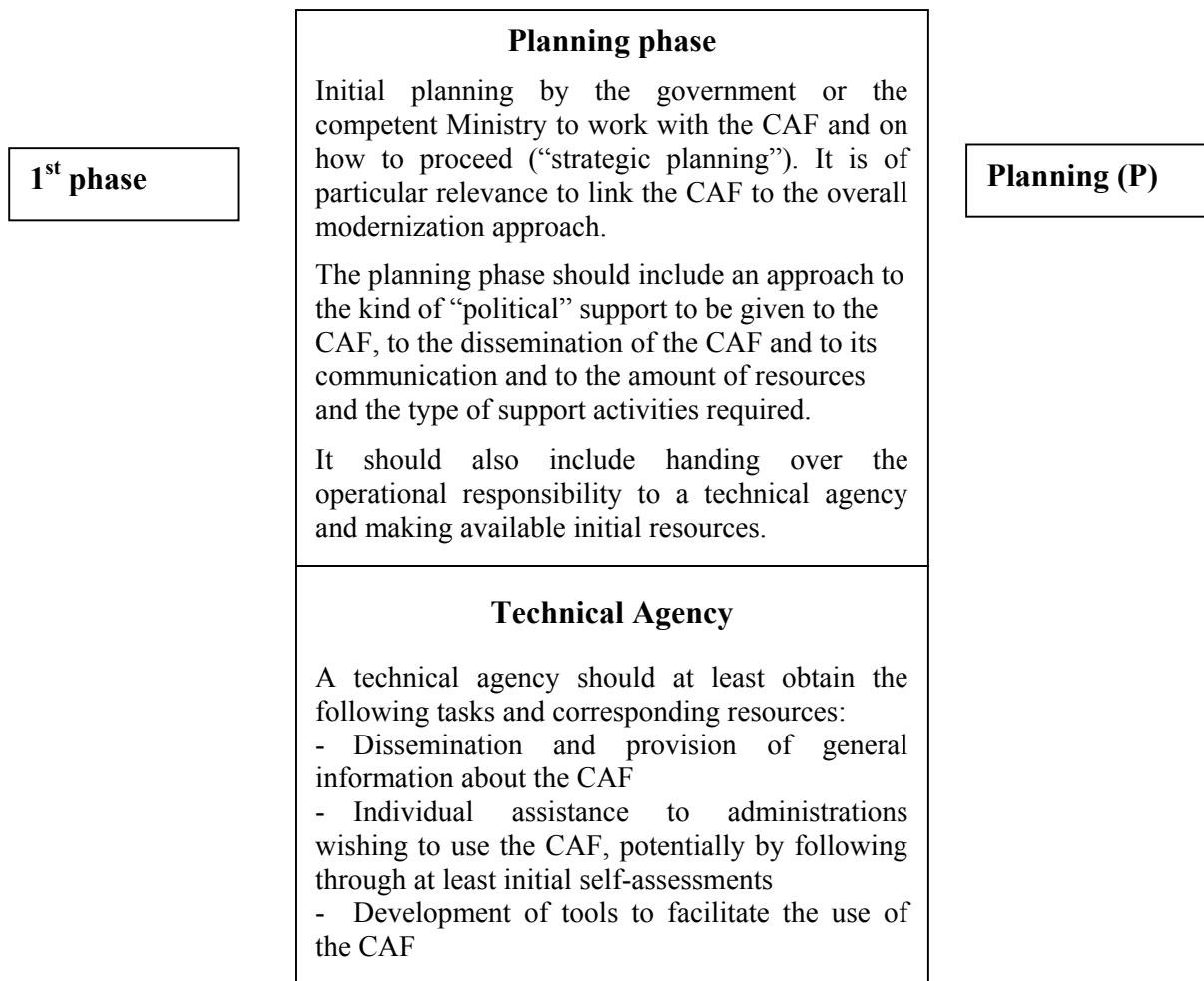
result. For public administrations that are committed to putting their participatory principles into practice, the CAF can be invaluable in identifying ways forward.

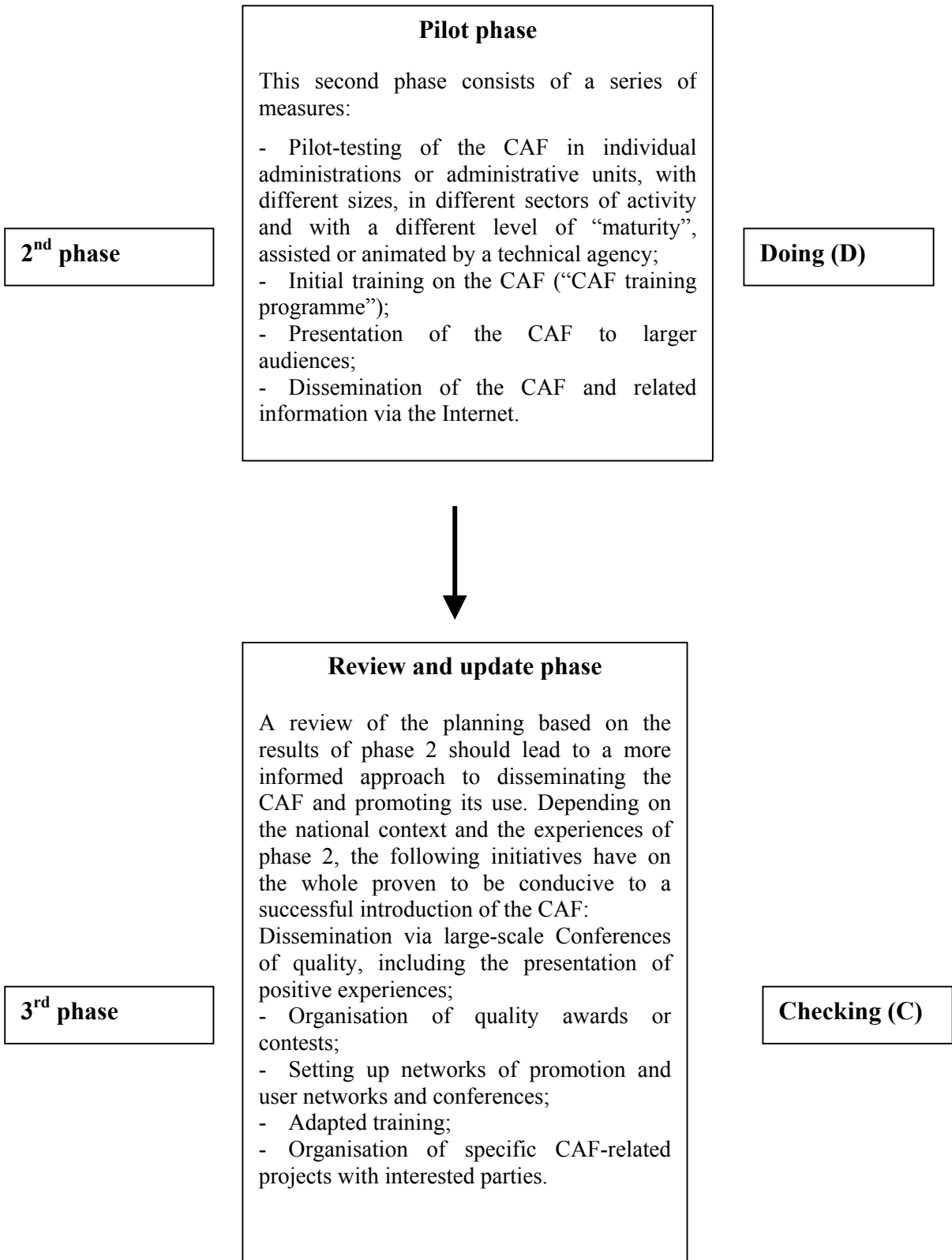
With regard to resources, it is clear that conducting a self-assessment process can be resource intensive. No matter how light the CAF may appear, it requires a dedicated budget and level of effort from participants within the organisation. This may also extend to any external stakeholders involved in the process. Budgetary considerations may include subcontracts for the self-assessment process such as consultants/facilitators, meeting or conference facilities, etc.. There may be other associated costs for: stipends/honoraria for external participants; local/domestic travel reimbursement; and printing, postage and other dissemination activities. Consideration should be given to the necessary level of effort for personnel who have responsibility for this process. This will entail delineating responsibilities and determining the duration and intensity of time required for personnel. It may require deferment or reassignment of current workload/duties. The CAF process depends on a well-crafted allocation of personnel and financial resources.

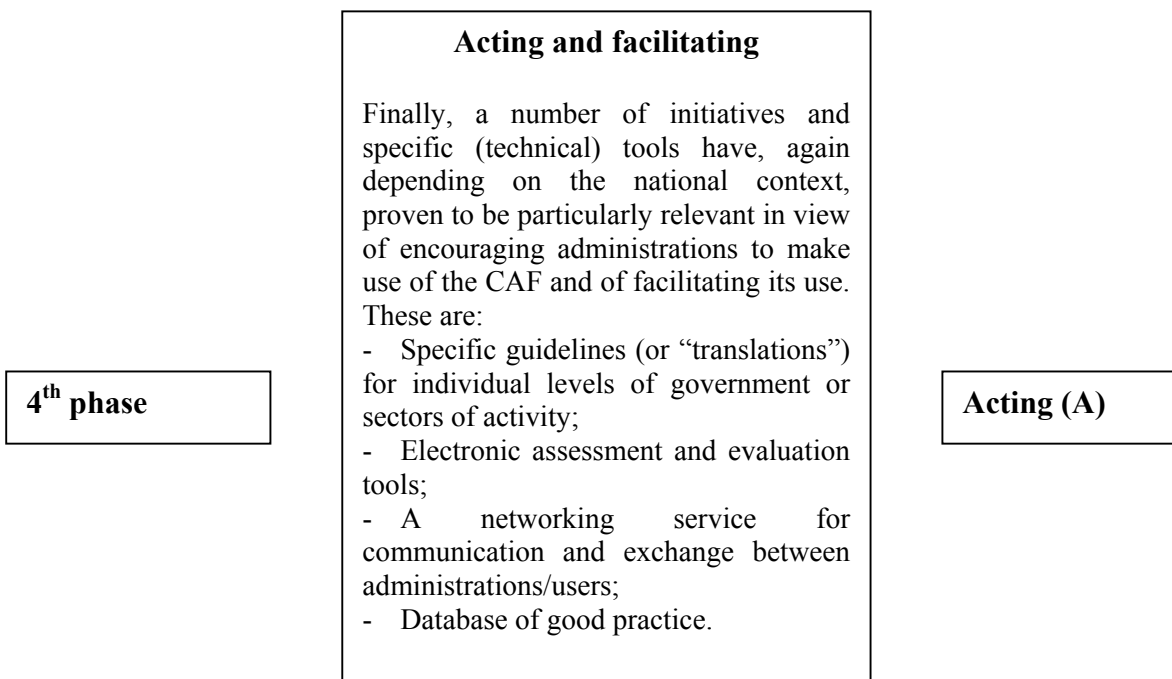
Appendix A: Dissemination and promotion at national level - Good practice

In this appendix we have summarised the information from the chapter on the dissemination and promotion of the CAF at national level. We have refrained from referring to the approach or initiatives of any specific country, but have brought together the information obtained from various countries. We would also like to emphasize that no single country has followed the approach suggested in this appendix since it includes elements of approaches from different countries, and also steps that have not been taken by any country. It is important in this context, however, to emphasise the need for a clear vision, clear goals and strategies to be implemented when promoting the implementation of the CAF at national level. It is very important also to promote adequate training strategies, both for the conduct of a self-assessment and for the organisational and management skills necessary for successful implementation in an organisation.

The good practice in disseminating and promoting the CAF can in this sense best be presented in a diagram with different phases based on the PDCA-cycle underlying the scoring system of the CAF 2002 itself.







Comments:

Experience has shown that the dissemination and promotion of the CAF should ideally be based on a sound strategic approach. This includes a number of elements:

- The CAF should best be linked to an overall reform or modernisation strategy of a government. If the CAF remains unrelated to a global (and at least medium-term) approach, it will often be perceived as “just another” initiative. It is thus relevant to communicate the CAF as part of a reform process and not as an individual (technical) tool. It would also be helpful to explain the relationship between the CAF and related tools.
- It is equally relevant to communicate the CAF in the right way in order to increase its acceptance and attractiveness. Experience has shown, e.g., that presenting the CAF as a “model” can lead administrations to see it as a theoretical exercise unrelated to their work. The initial phase should thus include a communication strategy – ideally presenting the CAF as a practical and flexible tool for organisational development – which can be evaluated.
- The development of initial training on the CAF given to a reduced number of people or organisations should ideally be part of the strategy and in this context it might be helpful to design a training methodology most suited to a given country.

- Furthermore, the dissemination of the CAF can be done in very different ways, and the same way will not be adequate to the culture of each country. Before spending many resources on e.g. printing, it is thus relevant to think about the dissemination strategy in a national context. Ideally, this should at least include dissemination via e-mail and Internet and the provision of initial information via the Internet.
- Finally, the evidence suggests that on the whole those countries in particular that have entrusted the promotion and dissemination of the CAF to technical agencies have had positive experiences. It can be argued that on the whole technical agencies have both a deeper and more specialised knowledge and staff with regard to quality initiatives in public administration and are more familiar with project-related work.

In a **second phase**, a successful spreading of the CAF has been achieved in several countries through pilot projects in particular. Pilot projects have on the whole had several positive or helpful effects:

- They have helped clarify difficulties of understanding, whether content-or concept-related or language-related. They have helped clarify the critical aspects of the CAF and, where applicable, the need to adapt the CAF and its communication to a specific national or sectoral context;
- Pilot projects have been helpful in identifying both adequate ways to communicate the CAF and its purposes and adequate training strategies and methodologies.
- Pilot projects have also, where successful, been helpful in winning over individual administrations for the CAF and in creating “CAF agents” which were helpful in convincing other administrations and showing how to use the CAF and what is to be avoided when using the CAF in practice (the “do’s and dont’s”). Administrations that are able to tell positive stories about the CAF and also to point out critical points and obstacles have proven to be one of the most useful “tools” in disseminating and promoting the instrument.

Ideally, a pilot phase should also include other CAF-related activities addressing a potentially wider audience. These include the presentation of the CAF and its purposes in the context of large-scale conferences – to see how administrations react to different ways of presenting and communicating the CAF –, the design of initial training programmes and the dissemination and presentation of the CAF and related information via the Internet. All of these activities should be carried out with the purpose of receiving – if possible measurable – feedback in view of improving the approach. They should also be carried out using as little resources as possible; the deployment of a wider range of resources should ideally happen at a later stage after a pilot phase.

In a next – **third – phase** the evidence of the pilot phase should carefully be examined and used to improve the CAF-related strategy and the accompanying activities. Depending on the results of the pilot phase, this may include:

- Rethinking the approach to communicating the CAF, its objectives and its relation with a more global modernisation strategy;
- “Translating”, where appropriate, the CAF into a concept and a language adapted to the national context and the needs of administrations in individual countries (or

sectors of activity); evidence from a range of countries suggests that the CAF, developed for use in public administrations across European countries, in many cases requires conceptual and/or linguistic translation to support its usefulness;

- Identifying, where appropriate, the adequate level of official support given to the CAF (the “status” of the CAF in a particular country);
- Identifying, and making available, the resources needed to spread the CAF and facilitate its use, matching the “status” and the expectations;
- Identifying, where appropriate, the types of organisations most likely to profit from using the CAF, and/or the kind of support different types of administrations (at different levels of government, in different sectors of activity, of different size etc.) may need to understand and to use the CAF in an appropriate way;
- Reviewing or – where appropriate – broadening the network of organisations involved in promoting the CAF and/or facilitating its use;
- Adapting – where appropriate – CAF-related training activities and training methodologies. Evidence suggests that training on the CAF should be adapted to local conditions as far as possible;
- Clarifying the best possible ways and means to spread information with regard to the CAF and to encouraging administrations to work with it; in this respect, the organisation of large-scale quality conferences with the right amount of political support and the organisation of quality award contests – or linking the CAF to existing contests – have proven to be adequate approaches. As far as quality contests are concerned, their design should be carefully considered. From the evidence received in the framework of this study, one of the shortcomings of such contests partly is that administrations are assessed – and rewarded – not on their ability or clear commitment to improvement but on the results of self-assessment or existing organisational (good) practice. As the use of the CAF is not an end in itself but merely a way to identify and launch an improvement or development process, the ability and willingness of administrations to give a follow-up to the CAF should be part of the assessment and reward process;
- Setting up – and providing the infrastructure for – user networks and the organisation of user conferences with the purpose of assisting in the above-mentioned tasks and of discussing and developing the tools that will help individual administrations using the CAF;
- Developing specific projects and/or partnerships that should lead to a broader use of the CAF, including, where appropriate, the development of an adapted CAF version;
- Reworking the information on the CAF provided via the Internet and identifying the necessary amount of information needed.

Finally, a **fourth phase** should then – if indeed the aim is to encourage a wider use of the CAF and to offer corresponding services to administrations and users – consist of the actual implementation of a broader CAF-related programme (including seminars and conferences), the deployment of the relevant resources and the development of relevant practical tools. Among these, the following may be considered the most relevant:

- *Practical (electronic) assessment and evaluation tools.* At this stage no country has really made extensive experiences with such tools, as different projects are only now

under way, but they promise to significantly add relevance to the CAF. Although there are clear limits to standard evaluation tools – evaluating a self-assessment and organisational development in the end are processes that need to be carried out individually – these may help administrations to understand the results of their self-assessments and to identify potential ways forward.

- *Specific guidelines for different types of administrations or different sectors of activity.* Again, no country has yet made extensive experiences with this type of tool, but it has the potential of offering useful and practical support to individual administrations wishing to use the CAF and to share their experiences with others.
- *A networking service and a database of good practice.* Again there are no broad experiences with these tools: just one country has set up a networking service for CAF users, and most of the envisaged databases are now under construction, but there is potential relevance to CAF users in view of sharing experiences, ideas and mutual advice is considered very high.
- *Specific CAF-related projects organised in partnership with relevant organisations and destined to specific administrations.* Deploying such specific projects – with corresponding tools – can be the right strategy for a CAF programme in the case that there is a clear aim to use the CAF as an assessment, improvement and sharing tool in clearly defined areas or for clearly defined purposes.

Two final considerations should be made: First, evidence suggests that the deployment of the CAF in any given country requires clear commitment and leadership from the centre, including a thorough understanding of the degree of support given to the CAF and the amount of resources that can or will be made available. There is, on the whole, not much evidence of a spontaneous use of the CAF by individual administrations. Second, we again want to emphasize that this approach in different phases has not been implemented in any country in the way we have presented it, although some countries have evidently chosen for an approach including some of these elements. Also, not all elements mentioned may be relevant for each country, but they are the elements we have identified as good practice. For those just starting with the CAF, we would however recommend to indeed do this with a PDCA cycle in mind, the same cycle used in the CAF itself.

Appendix B: List of national correspondents

I. European Union

Country	Representative	Feedback
A-Austria	<p>Bundeskanzleramt (Federal Chancellery) Abt. Für Verwaltungsentwicklung Dr. Elisabeth DEARING Mag. Sylvia Archmann (*)</p> <p>KDZ Zentrum für Verwaltungsforschung Mag. Thomas Prorok Mag. Irene Sachse</p>	Questionnaire
B-Belgium	<p>Service Public Fédéral, Personnel et Organisation Patrick STAES (*) Jean-Marc DOCHOT</p>	Questionnaire
D-Germany	<p>Bundesministerium des Innern Friedrich Wilhelm MOOG</p> <p>Deutsche Hochschule für Verwaltungswissenschaften (DHV) Speyer Armin LIEBIG Vera Silke SAATWEBER (*)</p>	Questionnaire
DK-Denmark	<p>Danish Ministry of Finance - Office for Modernising Government Jens QVESEL (*)</p> <p>SCKK, Centre for Development of Human Resources and Quality Management</p>	Questionnaire
E-Spain	<p>Ministerio de Administraciones Públicas Dirección General Inspección, Simplificación y Calidad de los Servicios, Deputy Directorate for Quality Management Emilio CASALS (*) María Jesús JIMÉNEZ</p>	Questionnaire
F-France	<p>Délégation à la modernisation de la gestion publique et des structures de l'État Yves GALLAZZINI (*)</p>	Email message
FIN-Finland	<p>Ministry of Finance - Public Management Department Katju HOLKERI (*) Johanna NURMI; Jukka ERKKILÄ</p>	Questionnaire
GR-Greece	<p>Ministry of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization Efficiency Unit Olga GRAVANI Dr. Nikos MICHALOPOULOS (*)</p>	Questionnaire
I-Italy	<p>Dipartimento Funzione Pubblica Ufficio innovazione pubbliche amministrazioni Sabina BELLOTTI</p> <p>FORMEZ (Technical Agency) Claudia MIGLIORE (*)</p>	Questionnaire
IRL-Ireland	<p>Department of Finance - CMOD Dave RING (*)</p>	Questionnaire
L-Luxembourg	<p>Ministère de la Fonction Publique et de la Réforme Administrative (MFRA) Walter BENEDETTI (*)</p>	Questionnaire
NL-Netherlands	<p>Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations Directorate General Management and Personnel Policy Frank FABER (*)</p>	Questionnaire

P-Portugal	Ministry of Finance - Directorate General for Public Administration Cristina EVARISTO (*) Maria Inês NOLASCO	Questionnaire
S-Sweden	Ministry of Finance - National Council for Quality and Development Thomas JOHANSSON (*)	Questionnaire
UK-United Kingdom	CMPS, Centre for Management and Policy Support, Civil Service College Directorate - Public Sector Excellence Programme Ben RICHARDSON (*)	Questionnaire

II. Acceding and Candidate Countries/ EEA

Country	Representative	Feedback
BG-Bulgaria	Institute of Public Administration and European Integration Mariana GERENSKA	none
CY-Cyprus	Cyprus Academy of Public Administration Eleni GEREODAKI (*) Ministry of Finance - Public Administration and Personnel Service Maria ALEXANDROU	Questionnaire
CZ-Czech Republic	Ministry of the Interior Modernization of Public Administration Department - Horizontal Strategies of Public Administration Unit Ms Stepanka Steinbachova (*)	Questionnaire
EST-Estonia	Ministry of Finance State Structures Division - State Budget Department Karin NÄREP (*)	Questionnaire
H-Hungary	Ministry of the Interior, Civil Service Office National Centre for CAF Dr. Ákos Kovács (*)	Questionnaire
LT-Lithuania	Public Administration Department - Ministry of the Interior Jurgita Domeikienė	Email message
LV-Latvia	State Chancellery - Policy Co-ordination Department Jelena MAURINA	none
M-Malta	Office of the Prime Minister - Strategy and Planning Directorate Charles Polidano (*)	Questionnaire
N-Norway	Statskonsult - Directorate for Communication and Public Management Ingebjorg Naes (*)	Questionnaire
PL-Poland	Office of Civil Service Organisation and Supervision of Civil Service Training Edyta SZOSTAK (*)	Questionnaire
RO-Romania	Ministry of Administration and Interior National Agency for Civil Servants Department of International Programs and Public Relations Monica Dimitriu (*)	Questionnaire
SK-Slovakia	Civil Service Office Mr. Frantisek Kajánek (*) The Slovak Office of Standards, Metrology and Testing Slovak Society for Quality	Questionnaire
SLO-Slovenia	Ministry of the Interior Bureau for Organisation and Development of Administration Mag. Polona Kovac (*)	Questionnaire

(*) person who returned the questionnaire to EIPA

Appendix C: List of organisations who participated in the survey (156)

Country	Organisation Name	Origin (*)
Austria	District Administration Zell am See	EIPA
Austria	Bundessozialamt für Wien, NÖ und Bgld.	EIPA
Austria	Marktgemeinde Guntramsdorf	EIPA
Austria	Stadtgemeinde Feldkirch	EIPA
Austria	Magistrat der Stadt Salzburg - Amt für öffentliche Ordnung	EIPA
Austria	Wiener Krankenanstaltverbund - Donauespital SMZ-Ost	EIPA
Austria	Versicherungsanstalt des Österreichischen Bergbaues	EIPA
Austria	Magistratisches Bezirksamt für den 15. Bezirk/ Wien	EIPA
Austria	Magistrat der Stadt Wels	EIPA
Austria	Herresgebührenamt Wien (future Heerespersonalamt)	EIPA
Austria	Bundesministerium für auswärtige Angelegenheiten	EIPA
Austria	Magistrat der Stadt Wien - MA 6 Rechnungsamt	EIPA
Austria	Magistrat der Stadt Wien - MA 24 - Hochbau	EIPA
Austria	Magistrat der Stadt Wien - Kontrollamt	EIPA
Austria	Magistrat der Stadt Wien - MA 55 -	EIPA
Austria	Stadtgemeinde Zeltweg	EIPA
Austria	Magistrat der Stadt Wien - MA 12 Wien sozial	EIPA
Austria	Magistrat der Stadt Linz - Gesundheitsamt	EIPA
Austria	Wiener Krankenanstaltverbund - EDV-Mgt und Betriebsführungszentrum	EIPA
Austria	Wiener Krankenanstaltverbund - KES-Schule	EIPA
Belgium	Belgisch Instituut voor Postdiensten en Telecommunicatie	EIPA
Belgium	Ministerie Verkeer en Infrastructuur/ Minist. Communications & Infrastructure	EIPA
Belgium	Banque Carrefour de la Sécurité Sociale (BCSS)/	EIPA
Belgium	Ministère de la Fonction Publique	EIPA
Belgium	Institut national d'assurances sociales pour travailleurs indépendants (INASTI)/	EIPA
Belgium	Ministère de la Région wallonne	EIPA
Belgium	Ministère Wallon de l'équipement et des transports (M.E.T.)	EIPA
Belgium	Agence Wallonne pour l'Intégration des Personnes Handicapées	EIPA
Belgium	Ministère de la Région wallonne	EIPA
Belgium	Kind en Gezin	EIPA
Belgium	Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap	EIPA
Belgium	Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap	EIPA
Belgium	Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap	EIPA
Belgium	Société du Logement de la Région Bruxelloise	EIPA
Belgium	Ville de Tournai	EIPA
Belgium	Ville de Mons	EIPA
Belgium	Commune de La Louvière	EIPA
Belgium	Ministerie van Financiën/ Ministère des Finances	EIPA
Belgium	Commune de Braine-l'Alleud	EIPA
Belgium	Province de Hainaut	EIPA
Belgium	Ville de Namur	EIPA

Country	Organisation Name	Origin (*)
Belgium	CPAS de Péruwelz	EIPA
Belgium	FOREM formation	EIPA
Belgium	Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap	EIPA
Belgium	CPAS de Braine-L'alleud	EIPA
Belgium	CPAS de Comines-Warneton	EIPA
Belgium	National Employment Office of Belgium	EIPA
Belgium	Gemeente Brecht	NC
Belgium	CERVA, Centre d'Etude et des Recherches Vétérinaires et Agrochimiques	NC
Belgium	Commune de Chaudfontaine	NC
Belgium	Douane	NC
Belgium	Ministère Communauté française - Audit Budgétaire	NC
Belgium	Province of Limburg	NC
Belgium	OCMW Mechelen	NC
Belgium	MGV Education - Onderwijshogescholen	NC
Belgium	Commune de Paliseul	NC
Belgium	RSVZ, Rijksdienst voor Sociale Verzekeringen der Zelfstandigen	NC
Belgium	Société Wallonne du Logement	NC
Belgium	Federale Politie Dendermonde	NC
Belgium	CFWB, Ministère Communauté française	NC
Belgium	RVA - Indemnisation Fund	NC
Belgium	Ministère de l'Intérieur	NC
Belgium	MRBC	NC
Belgium	Ministère de la Région Wallonne	NC
Belgium	Provincie Oost-Vlaanderen	NC
Czech	Krajsky urad Liberec	EIPA
Czech	Krajsky urad Olomouc	EIPA
Estonia	Ministry of Finance of Estonia	EIPA
Estonia	Ministry of Justice of Estonia	EIPA
Estonia	Estonian Animal Recording Centre	EIPA
Estonia	Public Service Academy	EIPA
Estonia	State Assets Administration Bureau of the Ministry of Education and Research	EIPA
Estonia	Estonian Railway Administration	EIPA
Estonia	Ministry of the Environment	NC
Estonia	Ministry of Social Affairs	NC
Finland	Keski-Uusima tax office	EIPA
France	Cour d'Appel de Paris	EIPA
Germany	Ebersberg, Landratsamt	EIPA
Germany	Landratsamt Enzkreis Pforzheim	EIPA
Germany	Fürstenfeldbruck, Landratsamt	EIPA
Germany	Hamburg, Finanzbehörde	EIPA
Germany	Handwerkskammer Trier	EIPA
Germany	Bezirksregierung Hannover (District Government)	EIPA
Germany	Münster, Polizeipräsidium	EIPA
Germany	Nürnberg, Stadt	EIPA

Country	Organisation Name	Origin (*)
Germany	Passau, Stadt	EIPA
Germany	Recklinghausen, Stadt	EIPA
Germany	Schleswig-Holstein, Staatskanzlei	EIPA
Germany	Thüringen – Landesamt für Statistik	EIPA
Germany	Kreis Pinneberg	EIPA
Germany	Stadt Wolfenbüttel	EIPA
Germany	Ministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Qualifikation und Technologie NRW	EIPA
Germany	Stadt Duisburg	EIPA
Germany	Landeshauptstadt München Kreisverwaltungsreferat	EIPA
Germany	Landratsamt Günzburg	EIPA
Germany	Hessisches Landesvermessungsamt	NC
Germany	Polizeihauptkommissar im BGS	NC
Germany	Stadtverwaltung Freiburg	NC
Greece	General Hospital of Kalamata	NC
Greece	Municipality of Amaroussion	NC
Greece	Prefect. of Kozania Greece	NC
Greece	Region of Thessaly (Larissa)	NC
Hungary	Labour Center of Veszprém County	NC
Hungary	Public Administration Office of Pest County	NC
Hungary	Ministry of the Interior	NC
Ireland	Department of Defence	NC
Italy	Comune di Bologna	EIPA
Italy	Comune di Ponte dell'Olio	EIPA
Italy	Comune di Borgo Val Sugana	EIPA
Italy	Comune di Lecce	EIPA
Italy	Comune di Faenza	EIPA
Italy	Camera Commercio Vibo Valentia	EIPA
Italy	Provincia di Napoli	EIPA
Italy	Istituzione Scolastica	EIPA
Italy	Comune di Alessandria	EIPA
Italy	Istituto Scolastico "Borsi" di Livorno	EIPA
Italy	Liceo Classico Michelangiolo	EIPA
Italy	Provincia di Crotone	EIPA
Italy	Comune di Cuneo	EIPA
Italy	Ministero Economia e Finanze	EIPA
Italy	Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore "E.Majorana"	EIPA
Italy	Agenzia Lazio Lavoro	EIPA
Italy	Scuola Media Statale "F.lli Pizzigotti"	EIPA
Italy	Provincia Autonoma di Trento	EIPA
Italy	Comune di Fidenza	EIPA
Malta	Anonymous	NC
Norway	The Norwegian Tax Directorate	NC
Portugal	Câmara Municipal de Sintra (Local Authority of Sintra)	NC
Portugal	Ministry of Social Security and Labour	NC

Country	Organisation Name	Origin (*)
Portugal	Ministério da Educação (Secretaria-Geral)	NC
Portugal	Câmara Municipal de Palmela (Local Authority of Palmela)	NC
Portugal	Portuguese Statistics Office	EIPA
Portugal	Câmara Municipal da Horta (Local Authority of Horta)	EIPA
Romania	Ministry of Administration and Interior?	NC
Slovakia	Slovak Office of Standards, Metrology and Testing	NC
Slovakia	Slovak Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology	NC
Slovakia	Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic	NC
Slovakia	Local self-government office	NC
Slovakia	Civil Service Office	NC
Slovakia	Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic	NC
Slovakia	Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic	NC
Slovakia	State School Inspection	NC
Slovakia	Office of Public Procurement	NC
Slovenia	Directorate for the Organisation and Development of Administration	EIPA
Slovenia	Administrative unit of Jesenice	EIPA
Slovenia	Administrative unit of Zagorje	EIPA
Slovenia	Administrative unit of Ljutomer	EIPA
Slovenia	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport	EIPA
Slovenia	Administrative Unit of Slovenske Konjice	EIPA
Slovenia	Administrative unit Velenje	EIPA
Slovenia	Administrative Unit of Mozirje	EIPA
Slovenia	Administrative Unit of Ormoz	EIPA
Slovenia	Administrative Unit of Murska Sobota	EIPA
Spain	Municipios del Bajo Guadalquivir (Sevilla)	NC
Spain	Ayuntamiento de Totana	NC
Spain	Ayuntamiento de Madrid	NC

(*) EIPA = EIPA database; NC = National correspondent

Appendix D: CAF Questionnaire for national correspondents

A. Action Taken

1. Which organisation is in charge of the dissemination of the CAF and where is it located (in a Ministry, an agency, ...)?

2a) What action has been taken to disseminate the CAF model in your country?

2b) Have additional tools, case studies etc. been produced at the national level as a supplement to the CAF guidelines? Please give concrete examples.

3. Training

3.a) What is in your view the role of training in the dissemination of the CAF?

3.b) Has specific training been developed? Which type of training? What lessons have been learnt from it?

4. Quality Conferences and the link with the CAF:

- Has the CAF been used for selection and description of good practices

- Have the quality conferences helped to raise awareness of the CAF in your country?

5.a) How many organisations (sectors and levels) in your country have used the CAF?

b) Which target groups have shown particular interest in the CAF (certain sectors of activity, small/ big organisations, local or national institutions, ...)?

c) Is the implementation of CAF obligatory or recommended by the Government?

d) Please estimate the number of unknown (not registered at EIPA) cases of CAF implementations in your country

B. Resources Available

6. What financial resources were made available at a national level for the dissemination of the CAF?

7. What human resources have been devoted to the dissemination of the CAF?

C. Problems in the Dissemination of the CAF

8. What difficulties were encountered during implementation?

9. What corrective measures were applied?

D. Benchmarking

10. Do you have a databank with the CAF applications in your country?

11. Are you linked to the EIPA databank? What are your remarks and suggestions on this point?

12. Please rank the following QM Systems according to the number of implemented cases in your country (1 = most used QM-System, 2 = second most used QM-System, ...)

- ISO: ...

- EFQM: ...

- CAF: ...

- others: ...

E. Future Plans

13. What plans do you have for the dissemination of the CAF in the future?

Appendix E: CAF Questionnaire for administrations

Study for the Italian Presidency on the use of the CAF in European Public Administrations

EIPA, July 2003

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the questionnaire-based study on the use of the Common Assessment Framework is twofold. It is intended;

to help develop a better understanding of the conditions under which the CAF can be a useful analytical and improvement tool for public administrations, including questions related to the type of administrations that have found the CAF most helpful and questions related to the self-assessment process itself;

to identify the role of national agencies in promoting the CAF and lead to guidelines for promoting the CAF in the new Member States.

In addition, it will help obtain information that may be used, in the follow-up to the study, to launch benchmarking projects between European administrations that have used the CAF.

Scope of the Study

One questionnaire is addressed to all organisations in Europe that have used the CAF to date and that have communicated this to EIPA (i.e. those registered in the CAF database kept at EIPA). The study will therefore cover organisations that have used either CAF 2000 or CAF 2002 (even though some have answered CAF-related questionnaires in the past). At this stage, it is estimated that the study will cover roughly 195 organisations. This number could grow if more organisations have used the (new) CAF by the deadline (see below). These organisations will be directly contacted by EIPA.

The study will also cover organisations that have used the CAF without notifying EIPA. For these, contact will be established through the group of CAF correspondents (including those in the new Member States).

A second questionnaire, covering the dissemination of the CAF, is being addressed to the CAF correspondents, IPSG members and national agencies responsible for the dissemination of the CAF.

Timing

The results of the study will give an input into the CAF event organised for 17th November in Rome by the Italian Presidency. In view of this deadline, the following time schedule needs to be respected:

Deadline for submitting answers to the questionnaires:

- (national correspondents): 22 August 2003
- (individual organisations): 10 September 2003

CAF Questionnaire for administrations²²

Please complete by marking X in the appropriate box(es)

A. General background to the organisation

1. Please indicate your country

<input type="checkbox"/>	Austria	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Norway
<input type="checkbox"/>	Belgium	<input type="checkbox"/>	Greece	<input type="checkbox"/>	Portugal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bulgaria	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hungary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poland
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyprus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Italy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Romania
<input type="checkbox"/>	Czech Republic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ireland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sweden
<input type="checkbox"/>	Germany	<input type="checkbox"/>	Luxembourg	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slovenia
<input type="checkbox"/>	Denmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lithuania	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slovakia
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Latvia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Turkey
<input type="checkbox"/>	Estonia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malta	<input type="checkbox"/>	United Kingdom
<input type="checkbox"/>	France	<input type="checkbox"/>	the Netherlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	

2. Please indicate the level of government of your organisation²³

<input type="checkbox"/>	Central Government (national, federal)
<input type="checkbox"/>	(For countries with a federal structure) State Government
<input type="checkbox"/>	Regional Government
<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Government
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify) :

3. Please indicate the type of administration

<input type="checkbox"/>	Government Ministry (central or regional government)
<input type="checkbox"/>	State agency ²⁴
<input type="checkbox"/>	State-owned or state-run enterprise
<input type="checkbox"/>	Local or regional self-government institution (“devolved” administration)
<input type="checkbox"/>	State/federal or regional-state administration at regional or local level
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify) :

²² This questionnaire is based upon the 2001 survey that was carried out by the Public Management Institute of the University of Leuven on Belgian CAF applications (Bouckaert, G. & Thijs, N. , an evaluation of the caf instrument Leuven, 2002) ,and the Questionnaire which was developed by the Belgian presidency (Jean-Marc Dochot & Patrick Staes) to evaluate the first CAF applications in the EU. The conclusions of this survey let to the new version: the CAF 2002

²³ **Please note:** All administrations run by the central government belong to the category “central government”, even if they are working at the regional or local level (e.g. decentralised state tax offices or state police offices).

²⁴ **Please note:** The term “state agency” is here used for all governmental agencies with a specific mission, under some control by government or “sponsored” by it, and with a certain degree of independence or distance from government. E.g. Statistical Offices, etc. (more examples).

4. Sector of activity

	Criminal Justice and Law
	Customs, Taxes and Finances
	Education and Research
	Health Sector
	Police and Security
	Public Works and Utilities
	Social Services & Social Security
	Transport and Infrastructure
	Local Government (whole municipality)
	General policy and oversight / co-ordination
	Other (please specify) :

5. Size of the organisation (number of staff)

	< 10
	10-50
	51-100
	101-250
	251-1000
	1001-5000
	> 5000

B. The use of the CAF – the context

6a) Which version of the CAF have you used²⁵

(N.B. If you have used both, only answer for the CAF 2002 application)

<input type="checkbox"/>	CAF 2000 (original version)
<input type="checkbox"/>	CAF 2002 (second, updated version)

6b) Have you used the CAF more than once?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

If yes, what was the time span in between the two uses? _____

For your replies to the next questions, please refer to the last time you used the CAF!

7. In which context or under which circumstances has the CAF been used?

The use of the CAF may happen in different circumstances or contexts that may affect how the CAF is experienced and how it is used. Below you will find a number of possible contexts in which your organisation may have used the CAF. Please indicate the situation in which your organisation was when it used the CAF (two or more choices are possible).

<input type="checkbox"/>	Normal operating context (no particular organisational or other changes)
<input type="checkbox"/>	On demand of the staff, facing the opportunities of a CAF application in the context of the general quality policy of the organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	A new top management (or political management) had been appointed / elected
<input type="checkbox"/>	The organisation had undergone or was in the process of undergoing an important organisational restructuring
<input type="checkbox"/>	The organisation was faced with financial cutbacks (a need to save money)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The organisation was in the process of cutting back the number of staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	The responsibilities (tasks/functions) of the organisation had undergone a change (new responsibilities added, or responsibilities were taken away)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The organisation had just introduced or was about to introduce a (new) system of performance management / measurement
<input type="checkbox"/>	The functioning (or performance) of the organisation was undergoing (or would soon undergo) a general review (internal or external)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The organisation faces a growing need for accountability (towards the public, the politicians and other stakeholders..)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

²⁵ **Please note:** A second, updated and improved version of the CAF was launched in October 2002 under the Danish EU Presidency. All organisations that have used the CAF until the end of 2002 will have used the “old” or first version.

8. Was the CAF applied in the whole or a part of the organisation

<input type="checkbox"/>	In the whole organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	In part of the organisation

9. Before using the CAF, did your organisation have a special quality unit / team or group?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

10a) Before using the CAF, had your organisation any experience with other tools of quality management or improvement?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

10b) If yes, which instrument(s) have you used before applying the CAF?

<input type="checkbox"/>	ISO 9000 standard(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	EFQM Model
<input type="checkbox"/>	Balanced Scorecard (BSC)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Quality circles
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify) :

11. Reasons for using the CAF

The CAF may be used for a large number of different reasons that may affect how it is used and how the use is experienced. Below you will find a number of possible reasons that were decisive for using the CAF in your organisation. Please indicate the reasons and their relevance on a scale from 0 to 5.

		Not relevant					Very
		0	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Quick “health check” of the administration						
<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Budgetary reasons						
<input type="checkbox"/>	c) Explicit political demands						
<input type="checkbox"/>	d) Explicit citizen or customer demands for improvement						
<input type="checkbox"/>	e) Increasing sensitivity of the staff for quality						
<input type="checkbox"/>	f) Participation in a national quality contest or conference						
<input type="checkbox"/>	g) To increase sensitivity for “quality” issues						
<input type="checkbox"/>	h) To promote the exchange of views in the organisation						
<input type="checkbox"/>	i) As an input into ongoing improvement activities						
<input type="checkbox"/>	j) Because the top management wanted it						

	k) Sudden events showed the necessity to do something						
	l) To promote cultural change in the organisation						
	m) Because other administrations close to us also used it						
	n) To identify strengths and areas for improvement						
	o) To prove that the organisation is willing to change						
	p) Marketing and public relations reasons (to show modernisation efforts)						
	q) Because the CAF was communicated in a convincing way						
	r) Because the CAF is promoted across Europe						
	s) Intention to involve staff in managing the organisation						
	t) We were looking for a tool to launch benchmarking						
	u) Other (please specify)						

12. Reasons for using the CAF

If you think of this question again, which were – in order of importance – the most important reasons for using the CAF (maximum three):

- The most important reason was (a – u from above): ...
- The second most important reason was (a – u from above): ...
- The third most important reason was (a – u from above): ...

13. Decision to use the CAF

The final decision to use the CAF will have been taken by the top management, but which was the key decision-taking body?

(several answers are possible):

	a) By the top management (administrative or political)
	b) By a management team
	c) After broad consultation with staff and/or their representatives
	d) Upon suggestion of staff members or their representatives
	e) Upon suggestion by a quality or improvement team
	f) The idea came up and was decided in a staff meeting
	g) Other (please specify)

C. The self-assessment process

14. To whom did you communicate that the exercise was going to take place?

	Management only
	The whole staff
	An existing improvement team (group, department, unit)
	External stakeholders
	Customers / Citizens / Users
	Others

15. Please indicate the size of the self-assessment team (number of people that took part)

_____ people

16. Please indicate the number of the self-assessment team members in relation to the whole staff of the _____ organisation (in _____ %).

_____ %

17. Please indicate which type of staff took part in the self-assessment group and the percentage of the self-assessment group they represented

	Top management	... %
	Middle management	... %
	Experts (A-level staff members)	... %
	Technical assistants (B-level staff members)	... %
	Supporting staff (Secretaries, office clerks....)	... %

18a) Did you have external (expert) assistance in preparing the self-assessment (explanation of the CAF and its purpose, methodological support....)

	Yes
	No

18b) If yes, by whom?

	External consultant
	Internal consultant
	Quality Office
	Training Centre
	EIPA
	Others (please specify) :

18.c) What kind of preparation did you receive?

	What you consider useful	What you actually received
Explanation of the CAF		
Documentation		
E-learning (e.g. Speyer)		
Cases		
International exchange of experience		
Others		

19. If not, do you think it would have been better to have external (expert) assistance?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

20a) Did you have external (expert) assistance during the self-assessment or in identifying strengths and areas for improvement (for methodological support and clarification)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

20b) If yes, by whom

<input type="checkbox"/>	External consultant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Internal consultant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Quality Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training Centre
<input type="checkbox"/>	EIPA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Others (please specify) :

21a) If not, do you think it would have been better to have external (expert) assistance during the self-assessment?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

21b) If yes, by whom

<input type="checkbox"/>	External consultant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Internal consultant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Quality Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training Centre
<input type="checkbox"/>	EIPA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Others (please specify) :

22. How long did the self-assessment exercise last (from the explanation to/training of the group until the conclusion of the self-assessment)?

	2-3 days
	4-5 days (a full working week)
	Between 6 and 10 working days (2 working weeks)
	More than two weeks →Please indicate how long (estimate)

23. How did you manage to reach consensus in the group?

	Intense group discussions until we reached agreement
	Arbitration by the Chairperson
	We took the statistical means of the scores
	Other (please specify) :

24. In reaching consensus within the group, on what did you focus?

	On the background to different views / assessments
	On the evidences / indicators used by different group members to support their assessment
	On the scores attributed by different group members
	On all of the above
	Other (please specify) :

25. What were the main obstacles encountered in the course of self-assessment with the CAF?

Self-assessment is not a simple exercise, and there may be a number of obstacles or problems when conducting a self-assessment. Underneath you will find a list of typical obstacles encountered. Please indicate those that were the most important in your organisation (1 for the most important, 2 for the second most, etc.).

	a) Difficulties linked to the CAF itself (understanding the criteria, the language, the scoring system)
	b) Insufficient experience in sharing views and information in the organisation
	c) Problems with being honest and outspoken
	d) Lacking methodological support
	e1) Additional work due to CAF implementation alongside business as usual
	e2) Problems in aligning the views and experiences of different group members
	f) Uncertainty about the purpose and outcome of the self-assessment
	g) Lack of faith in the relevance of the whole exercise
	h) Self-assessment was imposed and not “owned” by the group members
	i) A lack of trust in the self-assessment group
	j) Problems with identifying strengths and areas for improvement
	k) Our organisation was, on the whole, not prepared for self-assessment
	l) We encountered no obstacles at all
	m) Other (please specify)

26. What were the main benefits obtained from self-assessment?

Self-assessment may have a number of possible benefits that can be obtained. Underneath you will find a list of typical benefits. Please indicate those that were relevant in your organisation (1 for the greatest benefit, 2 for the second greatest benefit, etc.).

	a) People developed a better understanding of the organisation
	b) An increased level of awareness about organisational issues / problems
	c) The sharing of information proved to be important
	d) Self-assessment gave rise to new ideas and a new way of thinking
	e) People started to develop a stronger interest in the organisation
	f) A clear identification of strengths and areas for improvement
	g) People started to become aware and interested in quality issues
	h) The ability to contribute and to share the own views was felt positively
	i) We were able to identify a number of important actions to be undertaken
	j) We realised how previous improvement activities could be taken forward
	k) We developed an understanding of how different initiatives in place fit together
	l) It helped to identify communication and information problems
	m) We did not see any benefits at all
	n) Other (please specify)

D. The follow-up

Using the CAF should lead to a structured improvement process addressing the areas for improvement identified through self-assessment; however, ensuring an adequate and structured follow-up is not always easy. The following questions deal with the follow-up process in the organisation.

27. To whom were the results and/or conclusions of the self-assessment communicated (several answers possible)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Management only
<input type="checkbox"/>	The whole staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	An existing improvement team (group, department, unit)
<input type="checkbox"/>	External stakeholders
<input type="checkbox"/>	Customers / Citizens / Users
<input type="checkbox"/>	Politicians
<input type="checkbox"/>	Others

28. Did the use of the CAF result in sustainable improvement activities in the organisation?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

29. If yes, what was the nature of the improvement activity (several answers possible)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	A full action-plan outlining the way forward and describing the actions to be taken and that is actually being implemented
<input type="checkbox"/>	A consolidated report handed to the Management (leaving the implementation to the latter)
<input type="checkbox"/>	An input into running improvement activities / actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	An input into the strategic planning process of the organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Increased financial investment in:
<input type="checkbox"/>	training
<input type="checkbox"/>	human resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	technology
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):
<input type="checkbox"/>	Some individual improvement activities (but no full action plan)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

30. If self-assessment was not followed up by improvement activities, what were the reasons for this? Typical reasons are given by the list below (several answers possible)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of time
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other priorities
<input type="checkbox"/>	No real willingness to change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of support for giving follow up
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of financial resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	The results of the self-assessment were not seen as concrete enough
<input type="checkbox"/>	The results of self-assessment were not accepted as an adequate picture of the organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	We did not succeed in identifying relevant areas for improvement
<input type="checkbox"/>	The results of self-assessment were not accepted by key persons

	Self-assessment was never meant to lead to improvements (it was just a “health check” of the administration)
	The reason for conducting self-assessment only was to take part in an award contest
	Key players had not been involved in the self-assessment
	Other (please specify):

31a) Do you intend to use the CAF again?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

31b) If yes, in which cycle do you intend to use the CAF?

<input type="checkbox"/>	annually
<input type="checkbox"/>	every two years
<input type="checkbox"/>	every three years
<input type="checkbox"/>	every four years
<input type="checkbox"/>	on a later date
<input type="checkbox"/>	without preference

32. Do you intend to use CAF for the assessment of the actual state of your organisation in combination with other instruments (e.g. EFQM, ISO 9000f, Balanced Scorecard)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

33. Do you think it is useful to provide methodological/supporting material from the national CAF correspondent, national agency responsible for disseminating the CAF (or EIPA) to support the self assessment?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

34. If you intend to use the CAF again, what, if anything, would you change about how you conducted the self-assessment (several answers possible)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Stronger management involvement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Different composition of the self-assessment team
<input type="checkbox"/>	More (or better) external assistance
<input type="checkbox"/>	More (or better) preparation and explanation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Better clarification of why self-assessment is undertaken
<input type="checkbox"/>	A stronger involvement of key persons
<input type="checkbox"/>	Involvement of the trade union/ employees’ representatives
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stronger involvement of the employees
<input type="checkbox"/>	More time for discussions within the self-assessment team
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change of method in reaching consensus in the group
<input type="checkbox"/>	More careful selection of the right moment for self-assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	More time for convincing people / colleagues of the purpose
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make sure that other priorities and activities will not be in the way
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

E. Benchmarking

The CAF is also intended to encourage and to serve as a starting point for benchmarking projects, at the domestic or the European level. The purpose of the following questions is to gather information on the knowledge about and the interest in benchmarking projects, at the European level in particular.

35a) Has your organisation, to your knowledge, ever taken part in a benchmarking project?

	<i>Yes</i>
	<i>No</i>

35b) If yes, what was the main reason or intention?

Please specify _____

36. If yes, could you describe the nature of the project and the type of partners?

*Nature of the project*²⁶

	Performance comparison
	Simple exchange of experiences
	Process benchmarking
	Strategy benchmarking
	Functional benchmarking

Partners

	Other (similar) domestic administration(s)
	Private sector partner(s)
	International (European) partner(s)

37. Would you be interested in taking part in a benchmarking project with other organisations that have used the CAF and would like to learn from others?

	At the domestic level
	At the European level
	Both
	No interest

²⁶ **Performance benchmarking:** a simple comparison of performance indicators (outputs) without structured analysis of possible reasons explaining differences in performance. **Simple exchange of experiences:** Comparison of organisational practices or approaches without structured approach or indicators but with the purpose of learning from others. **Process benchmarking:** Structured approach to organisational comparison using indicators and organisational analysis with the purpose of understanding the background to differences in performance. **Strategy benchmarking:** Comparison of organisational strategies and framework conditions (what works why and when?). **Functional benchmarking:** Any of the above, linked to individual organisational functions (such as HRM, the use of technology, ect.).

38. There are a number of possible reasons for benchmarking. From the list of possible reasons given below, which one would appeal to you / your organisation (please indicate on a scale from 0 – irrelevant – to 5 – very strong relevance)?

		Not relevant Very					
		0	1	2	3	4	5
	Getting out of the ordinary working context						
	Performance or “health” check						
	Looking for alternative ways of doing things						
	Looking for new ways to improve						
	Identifying good practices that could be taken over						
	Building up a network of learning partnership						
	Stimulating a learning culture in the organisation						
	Satisfying customer or other external demands						
	Leaving the domestic context, become European						
	Other (please specify): _____						

39. There are a number of possible obstacles to benchmarking. Please indicate, from the list below, those that are or might be relevant in the case of your organisation.

	a) Lacking commitment of top management
	b) A lack of financial resources
	c) A lack of human resources and time
	d) Too many other priorities
	e) Unclear benefits from benchmarking
	f) “Cultural” resistance in the organisation
	g) The need to divulge internal (sensitive) information
	h) Language problems (in European benchmarking)
	i) The need to first fully manage and develop the own processes
	j) Missing performance figures
	k) A lack of incentives to invest in benchmarking
	l) Difficulty of identifying the right partner organisations
	m) Other (please specify)

40. Thinking of the same question again, which of these obstacles do you see as the most relevant ones (maximum three)?

The greatest obstacle is _____

The second most important obstacle is _____

The third important obstacle is _____

41. If you are contacted by another organisation interested in carrying a benchmarking project and with a concrete proposal, would you be willing to consider the idea (although there may be obstacles)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Yes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>

42. Are there other comments you would like to make regarding the CAF, the process of self-assessment or others items of this questionnaire?