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Feasibility Study on the Establishment of a Regional Centre on Quality Management in ReSPA

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Nick THIJS,
Lead Expert on Quality Management
Tihana PUZIC,
Regional Expert on Quality Management

“Feasibility Study on ReSPA Quality Management Centre”

REPORT

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Contracting Authority

Regional School of Public Administration - ReSPA

Person in-charge at Contracting Authority

Mr. Goran Paštrović, Programme Manager

Email: g.pastrovic@respaweb.eu

Director of ReSPA

Ms. Ratka Sekulović

Email: r.sekulovic@respaweb.eu

In charge of the analysis:

Mr. Nick Thijs, Lead Expert

Email: eunick.thijs@gmail.com

Ms. Tihana Puzić, Regional Expert

Email: tihana.puzic@gmail.com

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Introduction

Improving the functioning of the public sector and enhancing governance are highly ranked on the EU's enlargement agenda. A sufficient level of good governance, in line with international and European governance standards and EU practice, is therefore a condition for a (potential) candidate country to make progress in the accession process. Good governance and Public Administration Reform (PAR) need to be addressed early in the process. Quality Management is a complementary requirement to both PAR and economic governance, two of the pillars of the EU Enlargement Strategy 2014-2015,¹ putting emphasis on increase in quality of public services provided to citizens and businesses, as well as quality of citizens' life. In the 2016 Enlargement Strategy the EC strengthens this importance. *"A continued commitment to the principle of "fundamentals first" remains essential for the enlargement countries. The Commission will continue to focus efforts on the rule of law, including security, fundamental rights, democratic institutions and public administration reform, as well as on economic development and competitiveness. These remain the fundamentals for meeting the Copenhagen and Madrid membership criteria. A stronger role for civil society and stakeholders more broadly remains crucial."*²

The SIGMA Principles of Public Administration³ are referring to the structural reform of the public administration for the EU-Neighbouring Countries, where the principles relate to following chapters: strategic framework of public administration reform, drafting and coordination of policies, civil service and human resources management, accountability, providing services and financial management in public sector. These principles also include 19 key requirements out of which supervenes the total of 48 principles, stressing the importance of good quality of public services particularly in Principle 3 under the Service Delivery chapter, which requires that *"mechanisms for ensuring the quality of public services are in place."* But, besides of this pointing out of the quality and mechanisms related to the public services, all mentioned chapters can be approached through systematic or specific use of quality management tools, giving it full perspective of an holistic approach towards sustainable, well-planned, monitored and evaluated results. The SIGMA baseline measurement reports 2015 and 2016 give an indication of the lack of knowledge available and/or the low take –up of quality assurance tools and techniques till date⁴.

Improving the quality of public services is also one of the actions foreseen within the cross-cutting Good Governance aspect of the Governance for Growth Pillar of the South-East Europe 2020 Strategy – SEE2020, namely the Effective Public Services dimension of Governance for Growth Pillar. In times of Euroscepticism and political instability in some of the Western Balkans region, there are still important and high-level initiatives to bring the region closer to the EU. The Berlin Process is encompassing the importance of EU integration of the Western Balkans region, which can be utilized by quality management systems and tools: *"...this process aims to reaffirm the region's EU perspective by improving cooperation and economic stability within it. Connectivity is an important aspect of this process, with investment in infrastructure being seen as a means for creating jobs, business opportunities and other benefits. Creating high-level political connections, reconciling societies by stimulating youth exchange and education projects, and resolving outstanding bilateral disputes, while ensuring civil society participation in the whole process, are other significant aspects of this initiative. The Berlin process enjoys the support of the region and the EU alike, as an initiative bringing a new perspective and impetus to the enlargement process. It has brought a positive momentum for regional cooperation, notably through its projects which are expected to have an economic and social impact that will complement the EU membership ambitions of the individual countries"*⁵.

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2014-15. European Commission, Brussels 8 October 2014. COM(2014) 700 final. p.1

² European Commission, DGNEAR (2016), Enlargement strategy 2016, p.2

³ SIGMA Public Administration Principles.

⁴ <http://www.sigmaxweb.org/publications/public-governance-baseline-measurement-reports.htm>

⁵ [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI\(2016\)586602](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI(2016)586602). Link active on 16.8.2017

The principles of quality management, regardless of ISO, EFQM or CAF are shaped around almost the same core values which drive sustainable success and lead to economic, societal and financial sustainability when used in systematic way. A short overview of the main principles of ISO, EFQM and CAF will serve to demonstrate the level of similarities between the systems, unlike the differences which are too often stressed in professional cycles:

ISO Principles	EFQM Principles	CAF Principles
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customer focus 2. Leadership 3. Involvement of people 4. Process approach 5. Systems approach to management 6. Improvement 7. Factual approach to decision making 8. Mutually beneficial supplier relationships 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adding value for customers 2. Creating a sustainable Future 3. Developing organisational capability 4. Harnessing creativity & innovation 5. Leading with vision, inspiration & integrity 6. Managing with agility 7. Succeeding through the talent of people 8. Sustaining Outstanding Results 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Results orientation 2. Citizen/Customer focus 3. Leadership & constancy of purpose 4. Management of processes & facts 5. Involvement of people 6. Continuous improvement & innovation 7. Mutually beneficial partnerships 8. Corporate social responsibility

ReSPA has responded to these expectations and demands via several recent initiatives and activities.

By the establishment of the ReSPA expert Working Group on Quality of Public Administration and Public Services (WG QPAS) in July 2015, the topic of Quality Management and Quality of Public Services has been put firmly on the agenda. This expert working group triggered the sequence of several ReSPA initiatives in the area.

In November 2016, ReSPA Technical assistance project and Bosnian partners (PARCO & GIZ) have organized a two-day regional conference on quality management in Sarajevo - BiH where numerous examples have been presented highlighting the trends in use of Quality management systems and tools. First steps towards a common initiative on regional level was initiated. Following consultations and expressed interest of the ReSPA Members it has been decided that ReSPA should contribute significantly towards improvement of quality management in public administration in the Western Balkan region.⁶ The conference was attended by more than 250 participants, with a satisfaction rate of 4,7 out of 5 points (organization, contents, location). In December 2016, the joint event organized by KDZ from Austria, Council of Europe and RESPA has been organized in Vienna, Austria devoted to the topic in subject (QPAS). The workshop meeting included RESPA QPAS working group members and Governing Board members at senior level and event outcome was confirmation to conduct the feasibility study on ReSPA Quality Management Centre.

ReSPA has been successful in negotiating the participation of ReSPA's member states representatives as potential EU candidates on the European Public Sector Quality Conference in Malta (organized by the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU, the EUPAN network and EIPA). On 15-16 May a ReSPA delegation, with representatives from the various member countries participated at the 9th European Public Sector Quality Conference. During the 20 parallel sessions and the in-depth working sessions, 300 participants from all over Europe, speakers from 20 countries discussed and shared ideas on the overarching theme "Joining Forces and Breaking Silos towards a Better Performing and Inclusive Public Administration". Back-to-back to this conference a focus group discussion was organized with the ReSPA delegation as a kick-off for this feasibility study.

In order to have a first overall helicopter perspective on the status on Quality Management a general baseline study was conducted (December '16 – June 2017). This study resulted in a regional analysis devoted to Quality Management in the Western Balkans, particularly focusing on the organizational aspects of central government.

A high-level conference devoted to Service Delivery (Tirana-Albania) as a comprehensive component of the PAR was organized on 18 and 19 May 2017. The conference aimed to present the current state of affairs of modernizing service delivery in WB region, with a particular emphasis on the Albanian model being currently implemented, through which a comprehensive panorama will be presented, as well as based on further analysis of the components of the Service delivery reform. As a result of the conference ReSPA will launch a comparative study on service delivery in the second half of 2017. A session on the specific topic of Quality Management was held on day 2.

⁶ ReSPA, Quality Management in Public Administration - Market Research, ReSPA, 07 October 2015

In the context of quality service delivery and high interest and motivation to work with quality management tools/systems such as CAF and ISO, and based on the well-established cooperation with various actors being active in the field of quality management, ReSPA has declared its willingness to provide further support to co-operation in implementation of quality management initiatives, concepts, methods and techniques in public sector organizations. On the basis of previous initiatives from members countries, ReSPA decided to carry out a Feasibility study (April – September 2017) of the proposed establishment of a regional Quality Management Centre in ReSPA. This feasibility study aims to identify the needs and expectations from the QPAS group via focus group and questionnaire. On the other hand, the study launched a regional wide large scale questionnaire identifying the state of play (detailed baseline), needs and expectations and potential role of ReSPA. In order to decide and design the Centre, the needs and expectations are linked to the required capacity and competences (as is and to be) of such a centre.

To fulfil the aims, the underlying report contains 9 distinctive parts.

Part 1 briefly describes the applied methodology and the work plan followed to execute this feasibility study.

Libraries have been filled with books and articles on Quality Management and its implementation, added value and obstacles in the Public Sector. The aim of this study however was not to do a theoretical study on Public Sector Quality Management in the Western Balkans. Therefore **part 2** presents only a brief overview of the raise of Quality Management and the growing importance of Quality Management as thriving force for an effective Public Administration (Reform).

The following parts 3, 4 and 5 are the core parts of the study. These parts are based upon the inputs from the different countries and an ambitious online survey that has been executed within the public administration of the various countries (see part 1 methodology and work plan for more details). As a start, **part 3** presents the "status" of Quality Management in the Western Balkans. How important is the topic? What is the political, strategic attention to it? How lively is it in the public administrations? What is the maturity in terms of usage of Quality Management systems and concrete instruments and tools? **Part 4** describes the Quality Management landscape and capacity in the different countries, both on country and organisational level. What is the perceived capacity to support the Quality Management dynamic, by training, promotion, and implementation? Finally, **part 5** deals with the question how does this relate to the role played and to be played by ReSPA in this regard. What is the potential and expectations towards a regional Quality Management Centre in ReSPA?

Part 6, highlights some interesting examples of Quality Management Centres as source(s) of inspiration for ReSPA and its member countries.

Part 7, translates all of the above into a draft profile of a regional Quality Management Centre in ReSPA and reference is made to the capacity (current and future) in **part 8**.

Part 9 elaborates on the importance of the Quality Management thinking and practice on the "managerial accountability" discours. Managerial accountability is deemed as highly important in the PAR dynamics. Too often managerial accountability is restricted to (financial) controlling and too less to organisational development. In this way quality management systems and techniques could be a missing link in PAR.

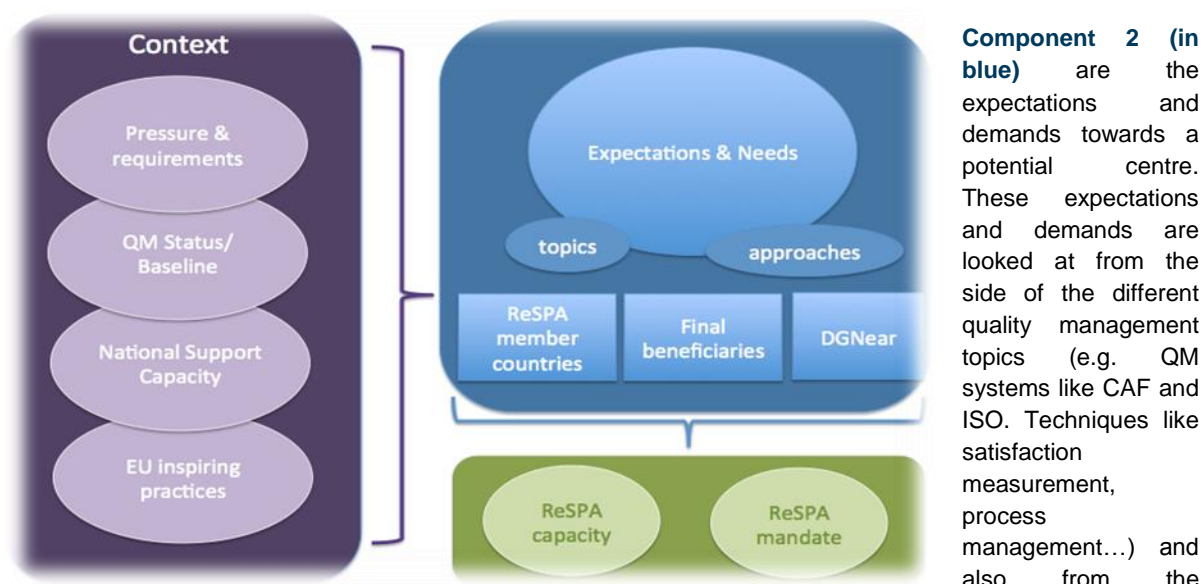
Part 10 presents some brief conclusions and future lines that are translated in **part 11** into a budgetary and cost estimat

1. Methodology & work plan

The study was launched in April 2017 and was due to be concluded in September 2017. Because of the sharp timeframe a sound methodology and detailed work plan were elaborated upfront by the lead and regional expert together with the responsible ReSPA Programme Manager. Throughout the execution of the work the team was in close contact with the ReSPA Programme Manager.

In order to define the interest for, role and scope of a potential Regional QM Centre in ReSPA, several components needed to be taken into account.

Component 1 (in purple) are the elements that contribute to the general context of a potential Regional QM Centre in ReSPA. These are the *pressure* towards QM from different angles. The most pressing one being the accession progress and the demands issued in this regard by the European Commission. Second element defining the context of such a centre is the *current state of affairs*. The state of affairs regarding the experience with QM in Western Balkan public administration, the maturity in using QM in the public administration of the different countries on the one hand. But also the capacity within the different ReSPA member states to undertake activities (training, promotion, implementation support, evaluation...) on a country level. Finally, the potential ReSPA centre might be inspired by other, but similar examples and experiences.



approach to be followed (e.g. capacity development-training, networking, establishment of QM databases...). In order to receive a sound understanding on the needs and expectations, 2 target groups were envisaged:

- the ReSPA countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) via their respective contact points and members of the QM working group (QPAS).
- the final beneficiaries, these are individual public sector organizations in these 6 countries

The European Commission (DGNear), as key stakeholder was identified.

The **3rd component (in green)** reflects the ReSPA capacity ('as is' and 'to be') for the establishment of a centre, following the directions and conclusions drawn from the previous components.

In order to organise the feedback and input from the different actors different methodologies and approaches were used.

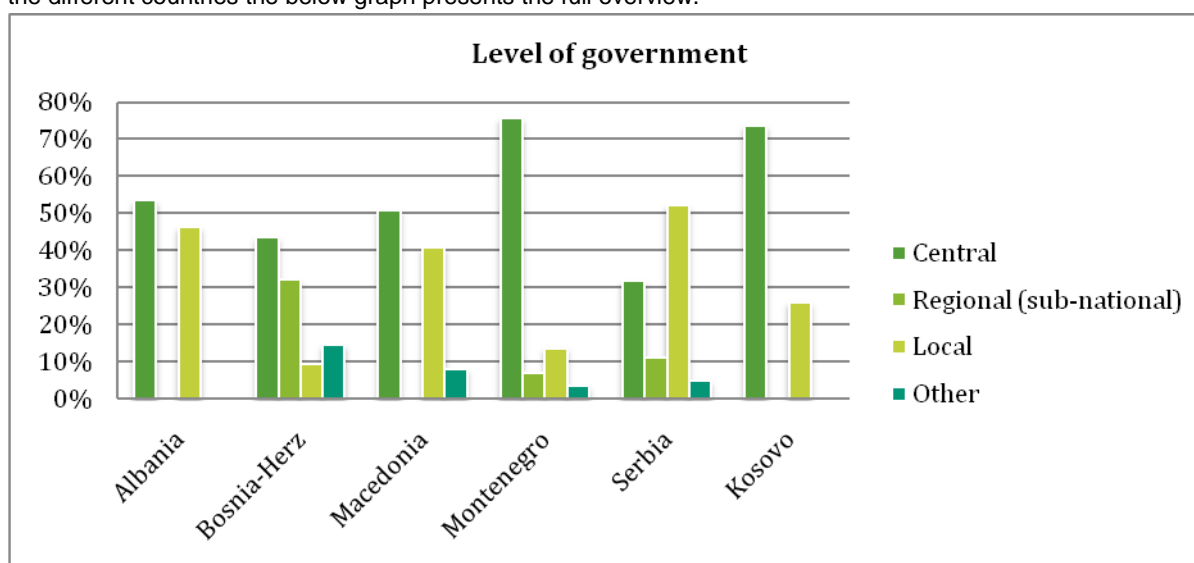
Desk top and document analysis were applied to get an insight in the QM literature and most important documents illustrating the QM place and role in the PAR agenda.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on the status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

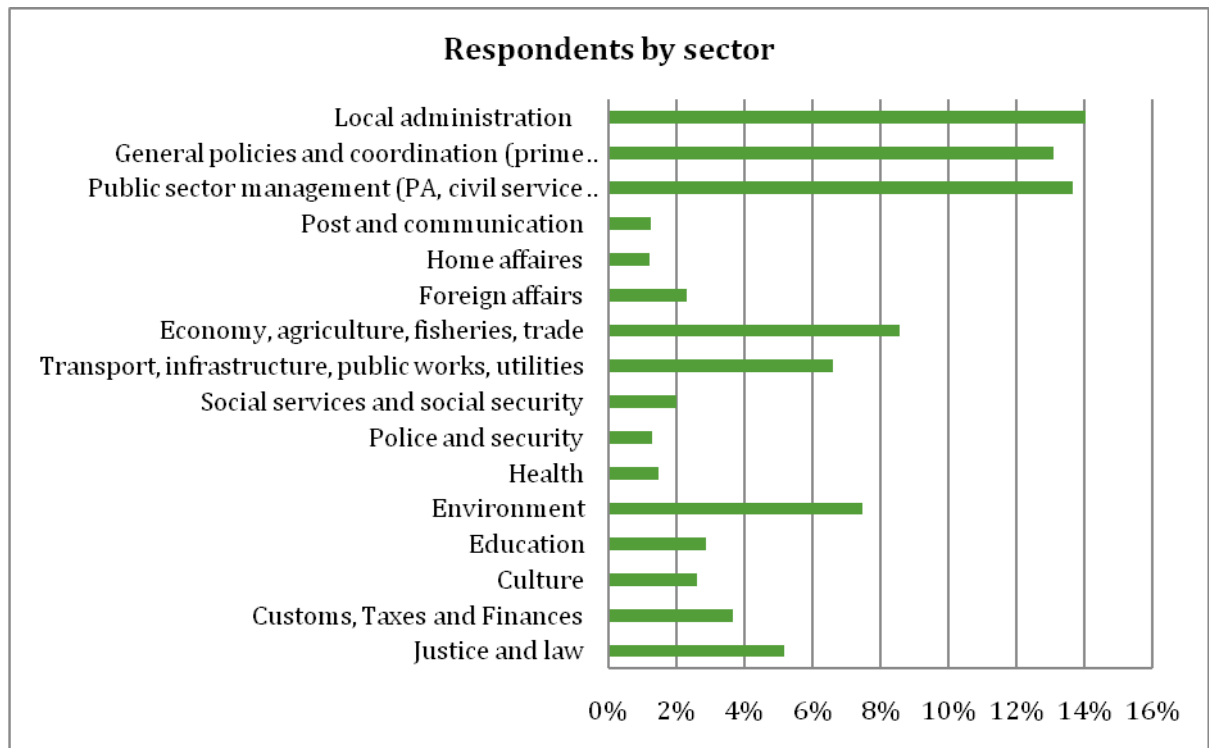
At the start of the project, a **focus group discussion (with members from the QPAS working group and/or national coordinators)** was organized in the mid of May. All ReSPA member countries (with the exception of Kosovo) participated to this focus group. This focus group was organized with the aim of gathering valuable input, ideas, concept proposals and opinions from the group participants related to the establishment of a potential ReSPA QM Centre. The focus group, in addition to other forms of surveys (see below) was perceived as key to deepen the insights on the views, needs and expectations of the ReSPA QM centre. The design and proposed methodology and work plan were presented and discussed. In this way an important buy-in for the future stages of the study was assured.

A second source of input are the results gathered from the **online questionnaire** run in second half of June 2017. This questionnaire (see Annex 1) focused on the input from the QPAS work group members and ReSPA country coordinators. Per member country only 1 answer was expected (so if more actors were working on quality management they have consulted with each other and consolidated their answers). All 6 countries: Albania (AL), Bosnia and Herzegovina (BA), Kosovo (K*), Macedonia (MK), Montenegro (ME), Serbia (SR) participated in the questionnaire and provided their input by 29th June.

The third source is the feedback received from “the **final beneficiaries**”. For this purpose an **online questionnaire** has been developed (see Annex 2) and ran in June 2017. The questionnaire has been translated in the local languages and the ReSPA contact points have spread the invitation in their countries. Overall 1048 invitations have been sent and 454 organisations have replied. For an online questionnaire a 45% response rate is more than satisfactory. In this, Serbia is represented with the highest number of 226 organisations. Furthermore the other countries are equally represented. The biggest group of respondents (55%) are to be situated on central government level. But also the local level is well represented with nearly 32%. Spread over the different countries the below graph presents the full overview.



Also sorted by different sectors, a wide variety of sectors/policy areas are represented.



After the data collection phase, the ReSPA National Coordinators and QM focal points were provided with the data and analysis for their own country, to be used as baseline data for future planning/benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation purposes.

The final report was presented and discussed with **DGNear and ReSPA** to get feedback on the proposed scope/role of the Centre and the relation to the capacity (needed and available).

The overall work plan and timing is presented below.

Activity	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
1. Design work plan						
2. Fine-tune online questionnaire						
3. Focus group						
4. Desk work regarding baseline						
5. Run online questionnaire						
6. Run questionnaire ReSPA QM members						
7. Analyse (online) questionnaires results						
8. Comparative study						
9. Interview with DGNear & ReSPA						
10. Scenario writing						
11. Deliver feasibility study						

2. The importance of QM as a thriving force for effective PAR

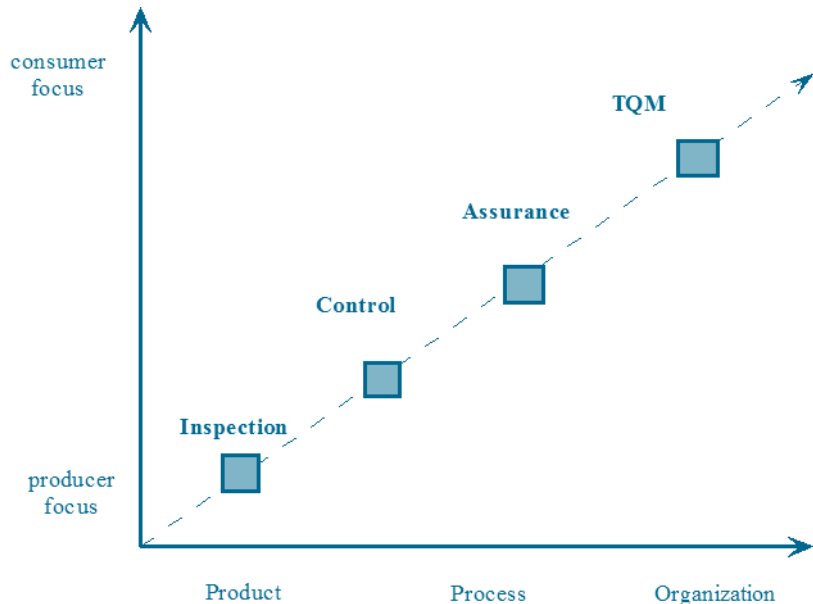
2.1. A brief history on public sector Quality Management

The history of quality thinking has its roots in post-war industrialisation and the rise of mass production.⁷ The emphasis with respect to quality inspection and control was originally related to output and had a strong product focus. Attention gradually shifted from the processes and the guarantee of quality during the course of this process (quality assurance) to Total Quality Management (TQM). A greater focus was placed on the user and the effects that the products and services had on that user.⁸ Satisfaction became a key concept.⁹ TQM is characterized by the permanent mobilization of all the resources (especially the people) to improve in a continuous way: all the aspects of an organisation, the quality of goods and services delivered, the satisfaction of its stakeholders and its integration into the environment. The first and final goal of TQM is to meet customer expectations. Therefore active commitment of all employees, as well as comprehensive information systems that collect and process information with regard to customers, suppliers, corporate-wide processes are required.¹⁰ TQM is usually used synonymously with continues quality improvement (CQI), stressing TQM involves cultural change.¹¹

TQM was originally developed in the US, was then widely applied to Japanese manufacturing industry and was subsequently re-exported to the West, during the late 1970s and early 1980s. It percolated from manufacturing to the commercial services and eventually to the public services in the late 1980s.

TQM was officially embraced by the US Federal Civil Service and in the UK a number of TQM-pilots were launched in the National Health Service.¹² Many of the ideas and methods were developed and used in the private sector before being introduced in the public sector.¹³ The concern about public sector

Figure: Evolution of quality management



⁷ Ovrevit, J. (2005) 'Public service quality improvement'. in Lynn, L., and. Pollitt, C. (eds.); *The Oxford handbook of public management*. Oxford : Oxford university press, 789 p.

⁸ Bouckaert. & N. Thijs (2003), *Quality Management in Public Administration*, Academia Press, 505p.

⁹ Parasuraman A., Zeithaml V. and Berry L. (1988) 'Servqual: a multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality', *Journal of Retailing*, 1, pp. 12-40

¹⁰ Löffler, E.(2002) '*Defining and measuring quality in public administration*'. in: Caddy J. and M. Vintar (eds.) *Building better quality administration for the public*, Slovakia, NISPACee, pp.15-37

¹¹ Beckford, J. (1998) *Quality. A critical introduction*. Routledge, London, 351 p.

¹² Pollitt C. & G. Bouckaert (Eds.) (1995), *Quality improvement in European public services: concepts, cases and commentary*, Sage Publications, London, p 4.

¹³ Pollitt, C. (1990) "Doing business in the Temple? Managers and quality assurance in the public sector", *Public Administration*, 2 (4), pp. 435-452

quality and using methods in the European public sector emerged in the late 1980s and particularly the early 1990s.¹⁴ Research carried out by the European Commission stated that quality improvement was on top of the list in many European countries in the mid-1990s.

Initially, the public sector quality movement was based on users' charters. The 1991 'Citizens Charter' in the UK, The '*Charte des services publics*' of 1992 in France and in 1993 '*het Handvest van de Gebruiker*' [the Users' Charter] in Belgium, later followed by a number of other countries.¹⁵ In the late 1990s, many TQM inspired models and techniques (e.g. ISO, Balanced Scorecard, EFQM and CAF) found their way into the European public sector.¹⁶ We mention the quality systems based on ISO 9000 (www.iso.org). The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies from more than 140 countries, one from each country. The most widely known standards in a public service context are ISO 9000. ISO standards and a management system built upon these standards are captured by the term "quality assurance". This approach has been described as "*write what you should do, do as you write, write when you don't do it right*".¹⁷ ISO 9000 has in recent years incorporated TQM ideas including process improvement. ISO 9000 certificates have become highly popular in the private sector and have also found their way into the public sector).¹⁸ The revision of ISO 9001 which was made in 2015 brings several changes to the system. Not only that the requirements are slightly adapted to the public services, also the wording and the concept of risk management assessment is more user-friendly for the PA.

Another widely spread instrument is the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) (www.balancedscorecard.org). The BSC is developed by Kaplan and Norton.¹⁹ It is a management system (not only a measurement system) that enables organizations to clarify their vision and strategy and translate them into action. It provides feedback around both the internal business processes and external outcomes in order to continuously improve strategic performance and results. The balanced scorecard suggests that the organization must be viewed from four perspectives: customers, finance, process, and innovation and learning. Metrics must be developed, data collected and analysed relative to each of these perspectives.

The third most widely used TQM-based method is the EFQM model – the European version of the Baldrige Framework (www.efqm.org). The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) was founded at the end of the 1980s by 14 major European companies and started to focus on the public sector during its evolution. In 1992 EFQM launched its model for self-assessment. This model is based on 9 criteria. EFQM changed its model slightly in April 1999, trying to make it more compatible to the public sector by including an innovation and learning perspective. The nine dimensions of the model are: leadership, people, policy and strategy, partnerships and resources, processes, people results, customer results, society results, and key performance results. The EFQM-model is increasingly used in European public services.²⁰ These same dimensions can be found in the Common Assessment framework (CAF) (www.eipa.eu/CAF). Since its origin beginning 2000, the Common Assessment Framework has been increasingly used in public sector over the years.²¹ For a more

¹⁴ Ferlie, E., Ashburne, L., Fitzferald, L. and Pettigrew, A. (1996) *The new public management in action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

¹⁵ Van de Walle, S., Thijs, N. & Bouckaert, G. (2005). *A tale of two charters: Political crisis, political realignment and administrative reform in Belgium*. Public Management Review, 7 (3): 367-390.

¹⁶ van Dooren, W., Thijs, N., & Bouckaert, G. (2004). Quality management and management of quality in the European public administrations. In: Löffler, E., & Vintar, M. (Eds.). *Improving the quality of East and Western European public services*. Hampshire: Ashgate. pp. 91-106.

¹⁷ Ovreveit, J. (2005) 'Public service quality improvement'. in Lynn, L., and. Pollitt, C. (eds.); *The Oxford handbook of public management*. Oxford : Oxford university press, p549.

¹⁸ Engel, C. (2003). *Quality management tools in CEE candidate countries*. Maastricht: Eipa, 104 p.

¹⁹ Kaplan and Norton, (1992) 'The Balanced Scorecard, Measures that drive performance'. *Harvard Business Review*. January-February 1992, pp.71-79.

²⁰ Ovreveit, J. (2005) 'Public service quality improvement'. in Lynn, L., and. Pollitt, C. (eds.); *The Oxford handbook of public management*. Oxford : Oxford university press, p 549.

²¹ Staes P., Thijs N. & D. Claessens (2016), CAF Improvement identification, prioritisation and implementation. A study of inspiring practices installed in 20 Public Sector organisations throughout Europe and the methodologies for prioritisation. Study for the Slovak EU Presidency, 235 p.

elaborate description of the CAF and its use in the public sector we refer to part 6 of this study, in which the European CAF Resource Centre is presented as potential inspiring example for ReSPA in this context.

Table: Focus of quality management models

Model	Input	Activity	Output	Immediate Outcome
ISO	X	X		
BSC	X	X	X	
EFQM	X	X	X	X
CAF	X	X	X	X

Quality management ideas and techniques are widely spread across Europe. In recent times, public sector quality improvements have also appeared on the agenda of Eastern European countries.²² The “new” EU member states in particular are very active in promoting quality tools.²³ Quality approaches among the different countries differed for a long time.

2.2. The rise of Public Sector Quality management

Over the years, public administration reform has become an increasingly important matter for the EU member states. Different countries have responded to the challenges in different ways. Nevertheless, these reforms are characterised by the introduction of new principles and common grounds: a growing focus on efficiency and effectiveness, attention to transparency and accountability, awareness of public service delivery and the role and place of the citizen/customer.²⁴ In 2010 the EU formulated its new “Europe 2020” strategy for the next decade, to enable the Union to emerge stronger from the crisis, and to turn its economy towards smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Modernising public administration and the quality of public administration are seen as key areas in defining the performance of the member states towards the five headline targets of Europe 2020.

Governments have to be more responsive to society's needs and demands. Public sector organisations are being reformed in order to provide better, faster and more services. The public sector needs to increase its own capacity and on the other hand needs to have an outward looking focus, to know what the citizen/user is thinking about the services and the way they are delivered. However, quality, quantity and speed are not the only new competences that society requires from its government. Since the pace of societal change is accelerating, governments should equally be able to respond to changing demands by offering new solutions. Quality, satisfaction and continuous improvement become central elements in the reforms and ways to enhance the institutional capacity and improve the efficiency (and effectiveness) of the public administration.

The topic of quality of public services and quality management thinking has undergone significant development, as illustrated above. The real rise of public sector quality thinking became evident in the last half of the '80s and at a wider scale in the '90s, allowing quality to become “a central term in our contemporary public administration reform rhetoric”.²⁵ The public sector needs to increase its own capacity and on the other hand needs to have an outward looking focus, to know what the citizen/user is thinking about the services and the way they are delivered. Quality, satisfaction and continuous improvement became central elements in the reforms in many EU countries and ways to enhance the institutional capacity and improve the efficiency (and effectiveness) of the public administration. The 2008 *comparative study on Quality Management in Public Administrations of the EU Member States*, carried out by the Slovenian Presidency of the EU, give a detailed insight and overview of the state of the art of quality dynamics and the use of various instruments and techniques in public sector organisations across Europe.²⁶ In the same way the study argues that various of these private sector quality management instruments, are far from the public sector reality and difficult to implement in this context specific setting.

²² Engel, C. (2003). *Quality management tools in CEE candidate countries*. Maastricht: Eipa, 104 p.

²³ Löffler E. & M.Vintar (2004) , The current quality agenda of East and West European public services, in Löffler E. & M. Vintar (eds.), “Improving the quality of East and West European public services”, Ashgate, pp. 3-19.

²⁴ Doherty, L. and Horne, T. (2002) *Managing public services*. Routledge, London, 559 p.

²⁵ Pollitt, C. & G. Bouckaert (Eds.) (1995), *Quality improvement in European public services: concepts, cases and commentary*, Sage Publications, London, p. 3

²⁶ Zurga G. (2008), *Quality Management in Public Administrations of the EU Member States*, Slovenian Presidency of the EU, 200 p.

Figure: Quality management tradition in the EU

1980s		Denmark, France, Spain, United Kingdom
1990s	Early	Belgium, Cyprus, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden
	Late	Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia
2000s		Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Slovak Republic, Romania

With the increased attention to quality management, the focus on the citizen/user orientation has also increased. The first insight is that a high focus on the internal processes, qualities and efficiency oriented towards the producer must be complemented by the perspective of the user or of the party involved, with respect to the efficiency, results, effects and satisfaction. A second major insight is related to the changing relations towards the citizen/user. Public sector organisations are developing from the relations traditionally dominated by the state of law to a relationship dominated by the action of the parties involved. Citizen/users are involved in the process of consultation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation, based on their interests.

2.3. QM as a cornerstone for efficient and effective PAR

This changing dynamics are also affecting the WB. To summarise, *“the public administration of the countries of the WB should be more open to the citizens and businesses while delivering public services. Overall, the process of civil service reform in the Western Balkans provides a mixed picture of achievements and persisting weaknesses. The main weakness of civil service systems is the low degree of rule effectiveness combined with a low degree of reform sustainability. Even if formal civil service rules exist and even if they are routinely implemented, they often fail to achieve the outcomes that they are meant to achieve. The lack of rule effectiveness is particularly pertinent in the domains of senior civil service management, integrity management and performance management. Similar deficiencies exist in the areas of recruitment and civil service training, albeit to a lesser extent.”*²⁷

Although not formally part of the *acquis*, improving the functioning of the public sector and enhancing governance are highly ranked on the EU's enlargement agenda. In essence, PAR aims at putting into place the overall institutional framework (central reform body, central civil service body, ombudsman, supreme audit institution, anti-corruption agency...) and legislative framework (civil service law, administrative procedures law, access to information... the "meta *acquis*") required for the transposition and implementation of the *acquis*. A sufficient level of good governance, in line with international and European governance standards and EU practice, is therefore a condition for a (potential) candidate country to make progress in the accession process. Good governance and PAR need to be addressed early in the process.

QM is a complementary to both PAR and economic governance, two of the pillars of the EU Enlargement Strategy 2014-2015,²⁸ putting emphasis on increase in quality of public services provided to citizens and businesses, as well as quality of citizens' life.

Furthermore, the importance of good quality of public services is stressed in the SIGMA *Principles of Public Administration*: Principle 3 under the Service Delivery chapter requires that “mechanisms for ensuring the quality of public services are in place.”²⁹ The SIGMA baseline measurement reports 2015 give an indication of the lack of knowledge available and/or the low take –up of quality assurance tools and techniques till date ³⁰

²⁷Meyer-Sahling, J. (2012), *Civil Service Professionalisation in the Western Balkans*, Sigma paper 48, pp.6-7.

²⁸ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2014-15. European Commission, Brussels 8 October 2014. COM(2014) 700 final. p.1

²⁹ SIGMA Public Administration Principles, Chapter 5: Service Delivery. p.69.

³⁰ <http://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/public-governance-baseline-measurement-reports.htm>

Proportion of institutions using quality assurance tools and techniques (e.g. European Foundation for Quality Management, Common Assessment Framework and other international standards).	Albania	Not available
	BiH	11.5%
	FYROM	49.1%
	Kosovo	0.8%
	Montenegro	Not available
	Serbia	Not available

Improving the quality of public services is also one of the actions foreseen within the cross-cutting Good Governance aspect of the Governance for Growth Pillar of the South-East Europe 2020 Strategy – SEE2020, namely the Effective Public Services dimension of Governance for Growth Pillar.

The new Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (2014 – 2020), IPA II, underlines from the very beginning the importance of public administration reform and administrative capacity.³¹ Strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law, public administration reform and good governance will remain a key focus of future (pre)accession assistance in all beneficiary countries, as well as the fight against corruption and organised crime, development of civil society and promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. As a corollary of the ‘new approach’ to chapters 23 and 24 and given the longer-term nature of reforms pursued in these areas and the need to build-up track-records of implementation before accession, IPA II assistance will address the requirements of the beneficiary countries in these domains from an early stage.³²

By taking the challenge to explore the possibility for a regional QM centre, ReSPA (and its member countries) proves that it recognises the importance of introducing/improving the QM systems and/or practices in public administrations of WB countries. Furthermore, through the work of the Quality of Public Administrations and Services (hereafter: QPAS) working group,³³ ReSPA makes additional efforts to achieve these targets and gain necessary commitment of regional PAs to take part in this process, which should contribute to important developments in this area in the region.

During previous years ReSPA has created the QPAS Group, comprised of pivotal actors dealing with public sector Quality Management in ReSPA’s member countries, several high-level events on the topic of quality management and service provision in public administration have been agreed on and successfully implemented, synergies with other important stakeholders in the region and EU have been created and networking channels successfully used for further dissemination of best practices, techniques and products in the field of QM. As for the feasibility study for a regional Quality Management Centre at ReSPA, it will be of outmost importance to focus on the needs and expectations of (senior) public professionals working in this relatively new field, their capacities, capacities that need to be developed in future, implementation methods of CAF, ISO, EFQM and institutional, managerial and financial aspects of the service provision.

Furthermore, the data collected in this feasibility study on QM centre will provide relevant data on QM state of play in the region, where it will be of high importance to continue using relevant data for purposes of strategical plans, policies, benchmarking, capacities and know-how in the region. The strength of the QM initiatives and high motivation of ReSPA member countries have the capacities to develop a fruitful regional cooperation, supporting SIGMA principles for the EU-accession path.

³²DG Enlargement, *Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013*, (COM (2012) 600 final), p.20.

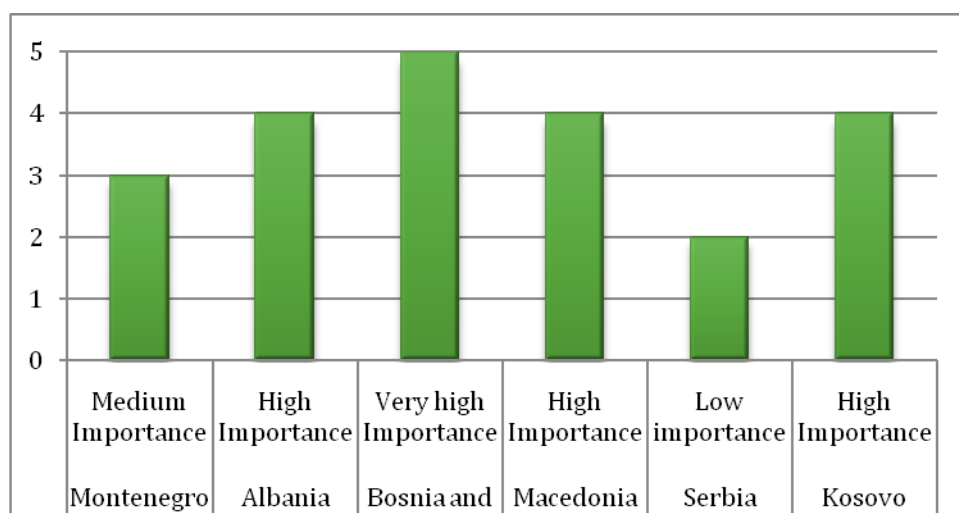
³³ Link to: <http://www.respaweb.eu/0/events/53/working-group-on-quality-of-public-administrations-and-services-qpas>

3. Quality Management Status in the countries

For this and the following parts of the report, the results from the online questionnaires (the 6 QPAS/country correspondents on the one hand and the 457 individual public sector organisations on the other hand) will be presented and discussed.

3.1. Importance of Quality Management

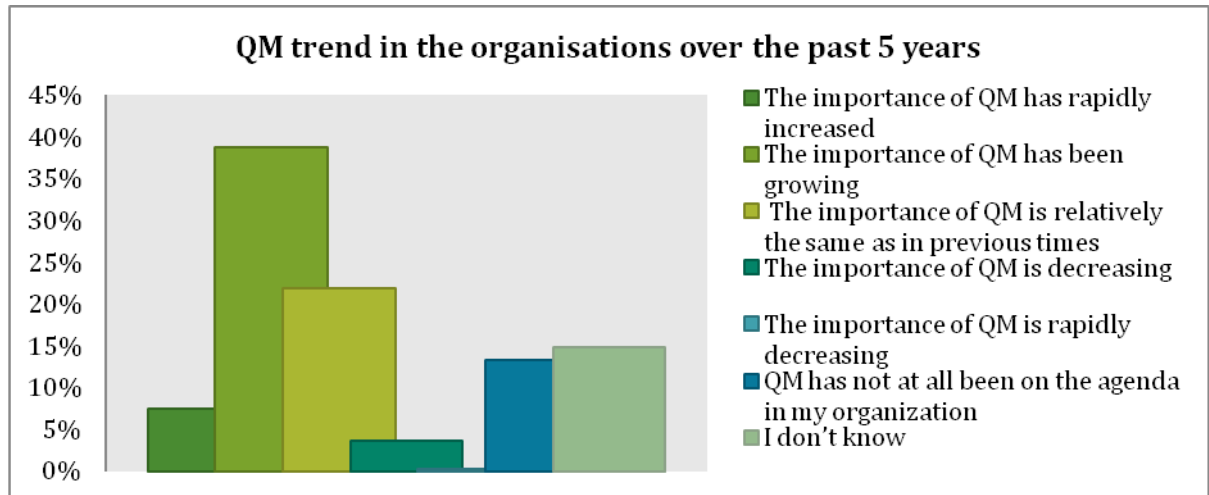
Most countries report the importance of the QM topic on the PAR agenda rather high (with the exception of Serbia). This relative importance is reflected in the fact that all countries have “anchored” the Quality Management topic in the official PAR agenda/strategy/policy in one way or the other.



- Montenegro: “Strategy for public administration reform 2016-2020”,
- Albania: “PAR Strategy”,
- BiH: “Revised Action Plan 1 of the PAR Strategy”,
- Macedonia: “Strategy for Public administration Reform (2010-2015)” and “new Strategy for Public Administration Reform” (2017-2022, in preparation),
- Serbia: “Action Plan for the Implementation of Public Administration Reform Strategy, 2015-2017”
- Kosovo: “PAR strategic framework” and “Better Regulation Strategy” specifically, in terms of simplification of procedures and reduction of red-tape.

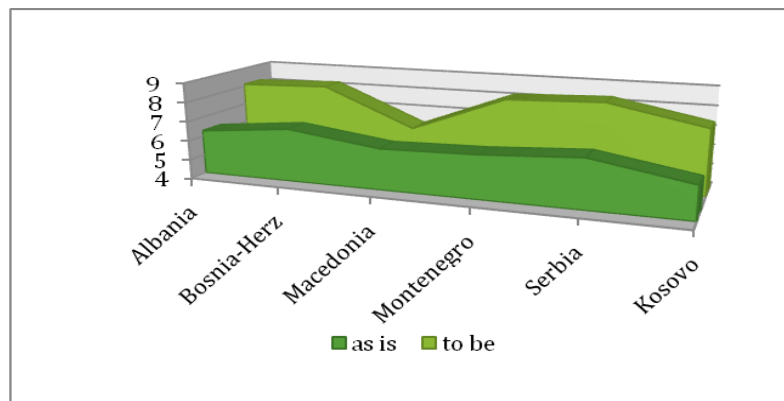
Nonetheless several countries (MK, K*, SR) reported the “lack of political interest” as the major difficulty encountered in the spread of Quality Management techniques. Other difficulties are the “lack of interest on the QM topic from institutions” (ME), the “lack of financial resources” (AL, BA) and the “lack of capacity in supporting public sector organisations” (MK)

This general importance estimation is also reflected on organizational level, where a growing importance of the QM topic is reported. Over 45% of organisations have indicated the importance of the QM topic has been growing (39%) and even rapidly increased (7,5%) over the past 5 years.

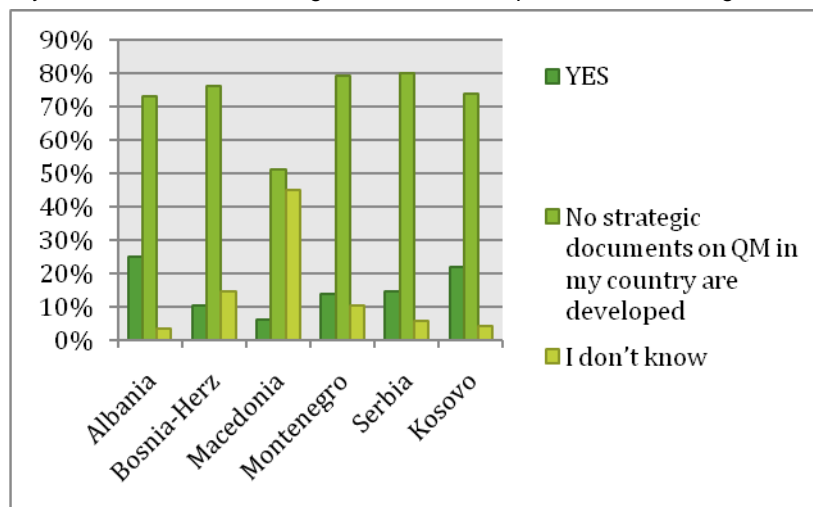


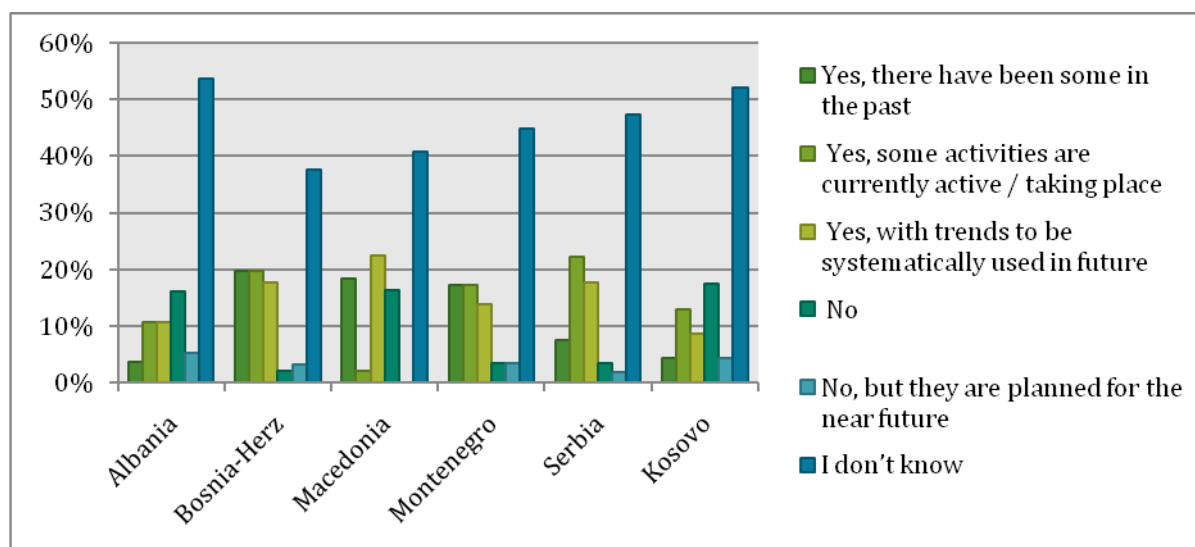
On the other hand there is still a high rate of organisations where QM is not yet on the agenda (13%) and 15% of respondents indicating they “don’t know”. This knowledge gap is important to note here, because it is something that returns throughout the report and potentially might be an area in which a QM centre can play a significant role.

A second interesting observation from the final beneficiary respondents is the future role for QM. In all the countries respondents wish for a bigger role for QM on the PAR agenda. On the question “How important QM is currently on the PAR agenda and how important it should be”, respondents indicate a significant higher score (on a 1-10 scale) for the future role, compared to the current role.



The most interesting –and striking– figures however are related to the knowledge on the PAR strategies and the link or integration with the QM area. Where all countries have indicated above they have QM anchored in one way or another into a strategic document, the picture from the organisational side looks quite different. In all countries, over 70% of the organisations (except Macedonia where it is 51%, but here the “don’t know group is nearly 45%) indicate no strategic documents on QM in the country are developed. Again this knowledge gap is significant in the QM dynamic in the region. This is also reflected by the perception on “promotion or awareness initiatives”. Spread over all countries, most respondents are not aware of the initiatives taken (if any at all).

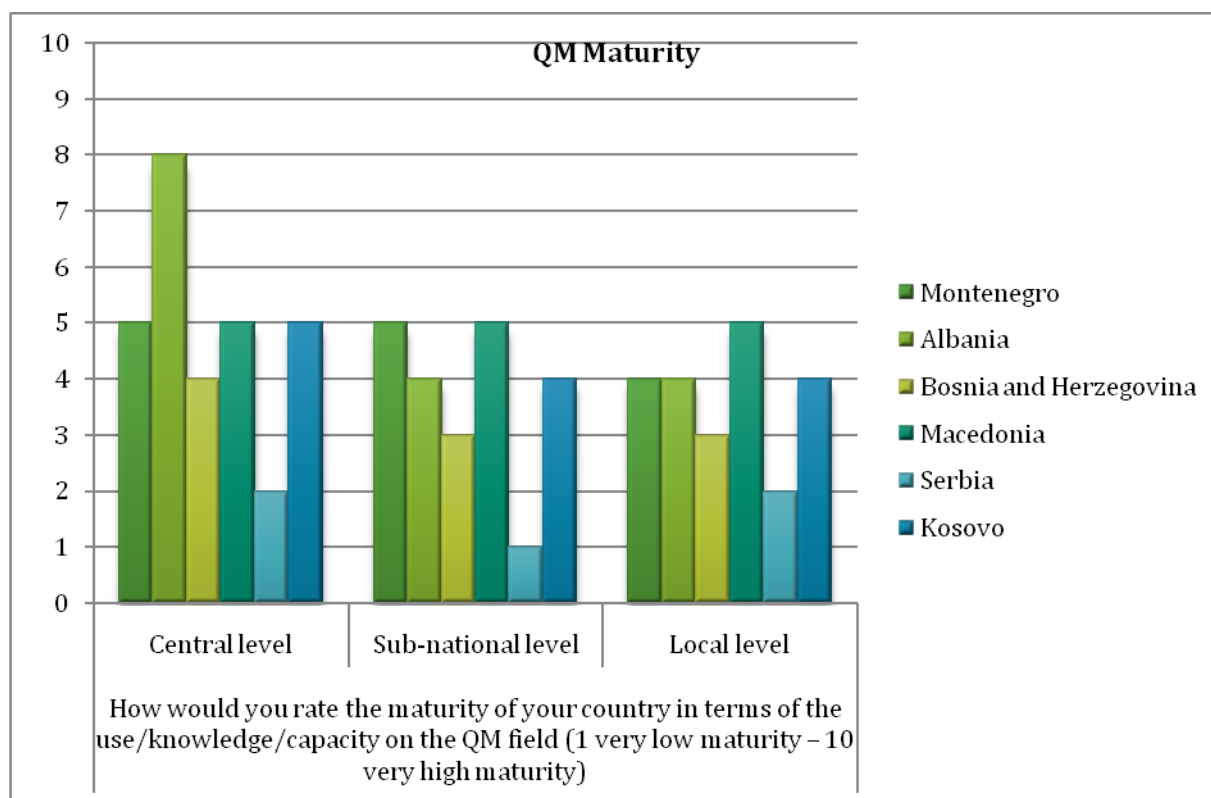




It seems that - in a context in which the importance and interest in QM is growing - the general level of awareness raising, promotion and spreading of the culture of public sector quality management is still in need of big efforts, both on (within) the country level as on the level of the WB region as a whole. This awareness raising is needed on various levels (and via various means) starting from the political and senior administrative levels, via leading civil servants towards executive and operational staff in public sector organisations. It is demonstrated from our results that initiatives are needed both on central government levels and “lower” levels (subnational and local) to install a quality management shift throughout the entire public sector.

3.2. Quality Management maturity

In this context of a (growing) importance and interest for the topic, that definitely needs to be stimulated and triggered further, the status (on the use) of quality management and service delivery / user orientation is rather low. Although the maturity at central level is judged a bit higher compared to the local level by the QPAS/coordinators, in fact little difference is noticed between the different countries and the levels of government in this regard.



The “higher” score for Albania on the central level might be explained by the fact that in recent years a “*citizen-oriented policy for service delivery is in place and applied*”. Whereas in other countries (ME, MK) “*the policy is in place, but institutions on the ground are not sufficiently supported with the implementation*”. In the case of SR, BA, K* “*the policy is currently being developed*”.

This overall “implementation gap” is well illustrated in the below table. In case concrete instruments and tools are already used, this is in a “limited” way. Often these are “*islands of excellence*” (or at least pilots), where the use of a particular tool/instrument was upon the initiative on organizational level. One exception seems to be the provision of e-services.

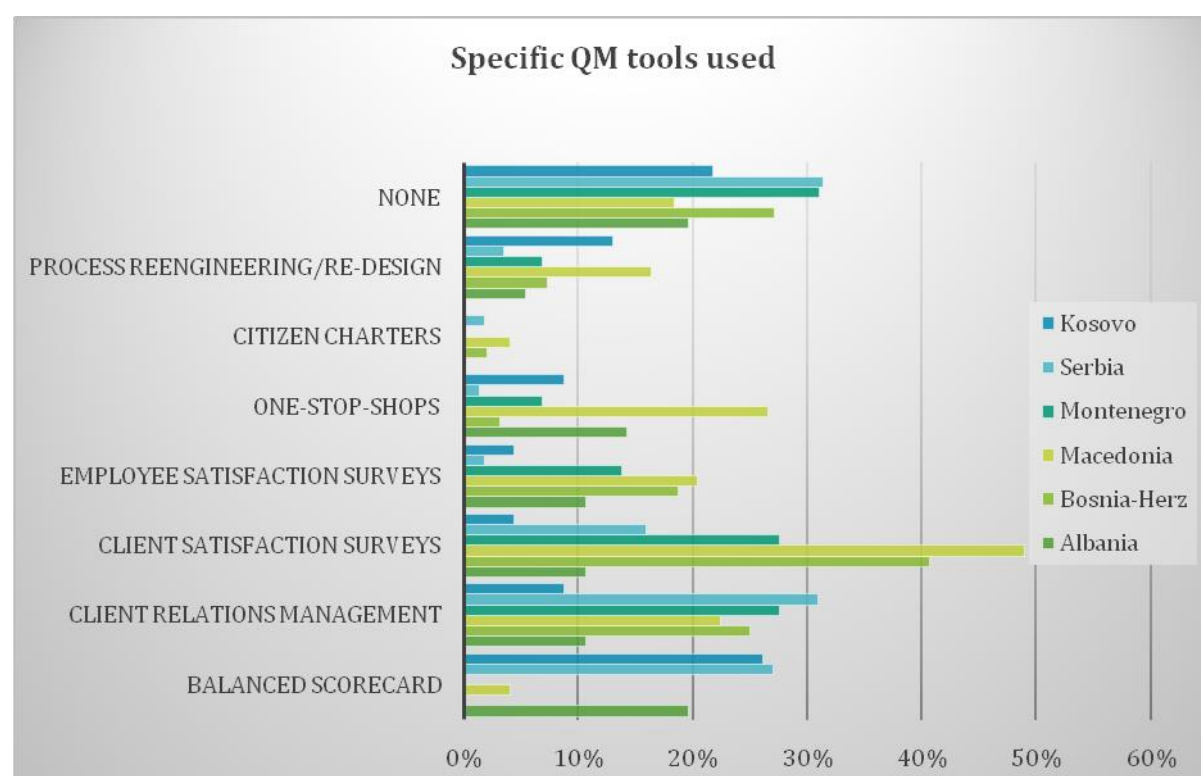
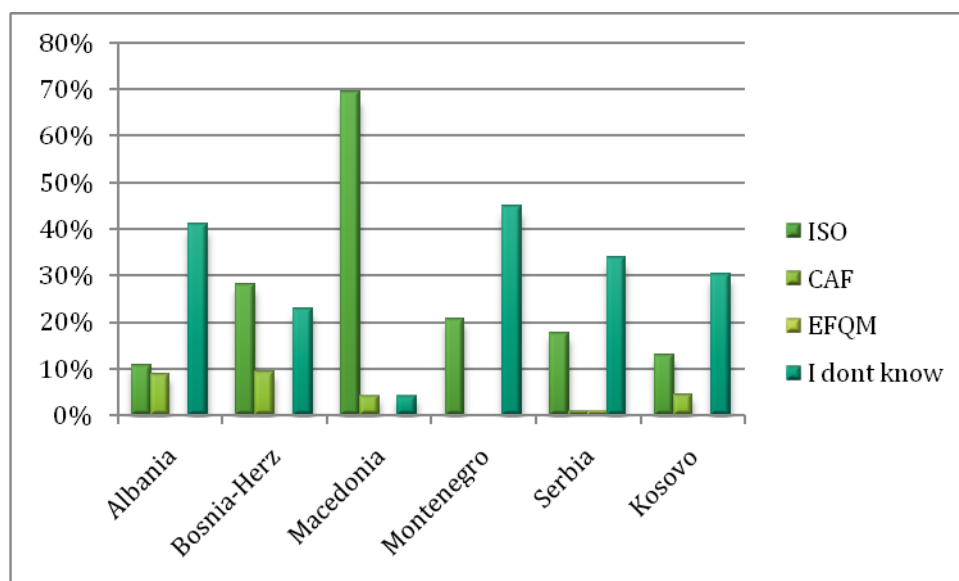
	Not used at all	Used in a limit number of institutions	Widely spread in the public sector	All institutions are using it
CAF	ME, SR	AL, BA, K*, MK	/	/
ISO	/	AL, BA, ME, SR	K*, MK	/
EFQM	BA, K*, MK, ME, SR	AL	/	/
Balanced Scorecard	BA, K*, MK, ME, SR	AL	/	/
Client Relations Management	BA, K*, ME	MK, SR	AL	/
Client satisfaction surveys	/	BA, K*, MK, ME, SR	AL	/
Employee satisfaction surveys	ME, SR	AL, K*, MK, BA	/	/
One-Stop-Shops	/	BA, K*, MK, ME, SR	AL	/
Mystery shopping	BA, K*, ME	AL, K*, MK, SR	/	/
Process reengineering/redesign	BA, K*	ME, MK, SR	AL	/
Analysis of the user needs	SR	AL, BA, K*, ME	MK	/
Services are re-designed based upon customer needs	SR	BA, K*, MK, ME	AL	/
E-services are provided	/	BA, MK, ME	AL, K*, SR	/
Processes are regular monitoring assessed talking into account user feedback	SR	BA, K*, MK, ME	AL	/
Measurement of Customer satisfaction	SR	BA, K*, MK, ME	AL	/
Standards of service delivery are set out for the main public services delivered (service charter)	SR	BA, K*, MK, ME	AL	/

These general findings on country level provided by the ReSPA contact points/QPAS members are confirmed by the individual organisations. ISO seems to be the most widespread QM system in the WB region. Certainly Macedonia is scoring high in this regard. CAF is indeed used in a limited way in all countries.

Senior (28%) and middle (29%) management were indicated as the most important actors in initiating the QM initiative in the organisations that have started working on QM, both in favour of dedicated quality managers (26%) and elected politicians (17%).

The above mentioned "implementation

gap" is well-illustrated by the organisations in terms of the use of more specific approaches. Client satisfaction surveys, CRM and one-stop-shops are "most widely" spread, although this is still relative (see below graph on "customer focus").



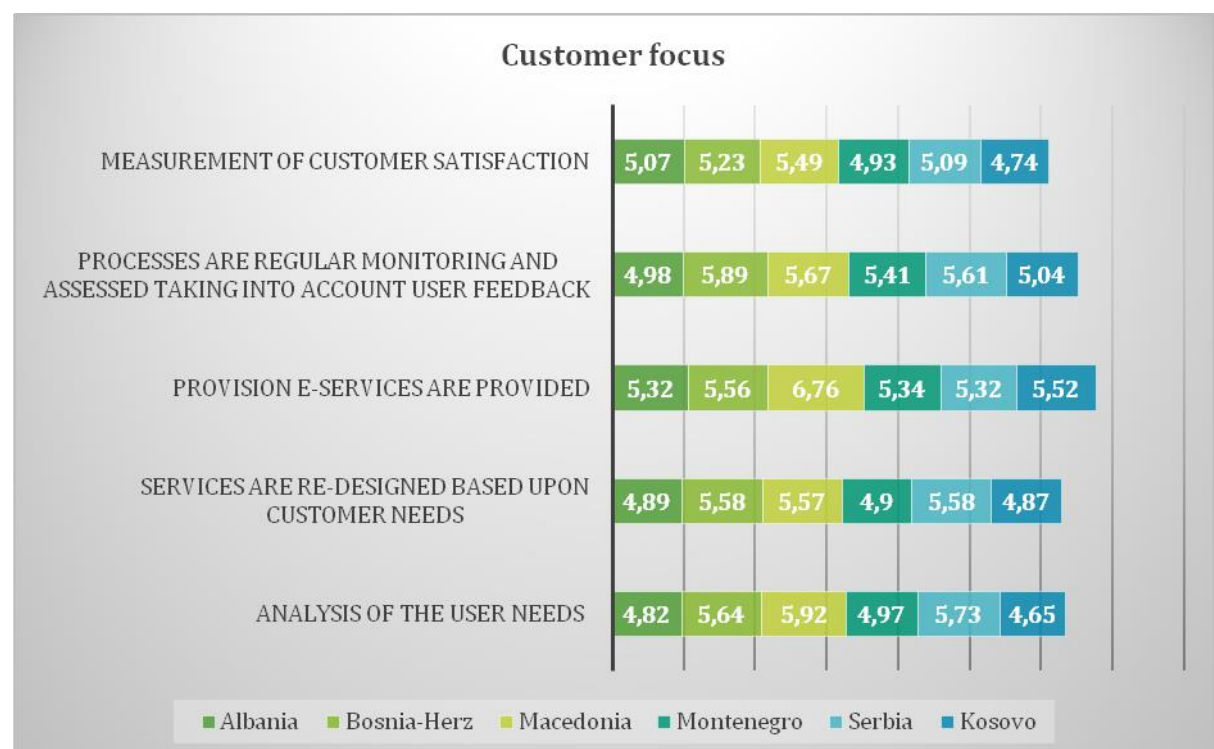
Managing customer satisfaction is indispensable for public organisations, to see if they are doing the right things and if they are doing things right. In being a public service, this is not always the easiest thing to do, due to the nature of the "customer" on the one hand and the nature of public services on the other.

Nevertheless public sector organisations evolve from a closed, self-centred service providers to open networking organisation which the public can trust. This occurs through transparent processes and accountability; through

democratic dialogue from an internal (resources and activities) focus to an external (output and outcome) focus; and from a classical-design-decision-production-evaluation cycle to an involvement of stakeholders in general, and citizens (as users) in particular at each and every stage of this cycle. Citizens/customers become co-designers, co-deciders, co-producers and co-evaluators. In the service delivery cycle the following steps could be tracked accordingly.

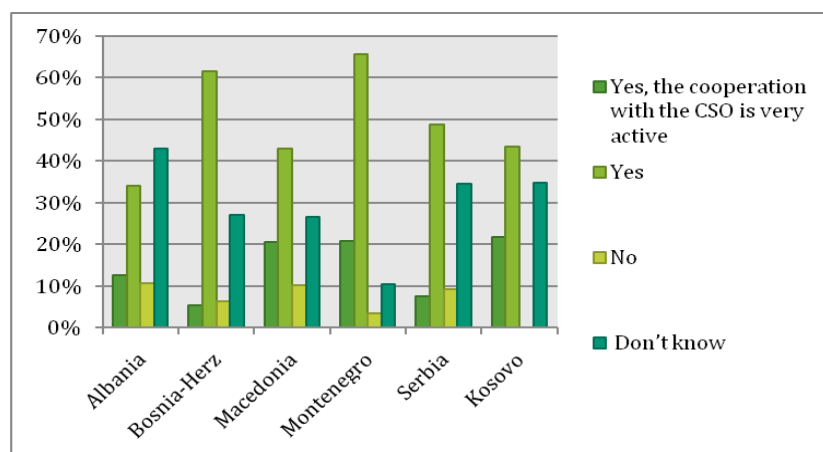
- Analysing and understanding of the users and their needs
- (re-) design services based upon customer needs
- Provision of E-services
- Monitoring and assessing processes taking into account user feedback
- Measurement of customer satisfaction

All the organisations (regardless of the country) give a quite low score on the maturity in relation to the different aspects in the service delivery cycle. A lot of work in terms of awareness raising, training, development of instruments and use of instruments on this important element of QM seems to be necessary.



The good news is that many organisations indicate well established cooperation and interaction with the Civil Society (Organisations).

Although the limited experience and level of maturity, there is a positive appreciation towards the use of QM. 36% of the organisations found the use of the QM approach "very useful and continue using them in a systematic way". 38% rated it as "useful, and would use them again". 26% found it "somewhat useful". No organization found it "not

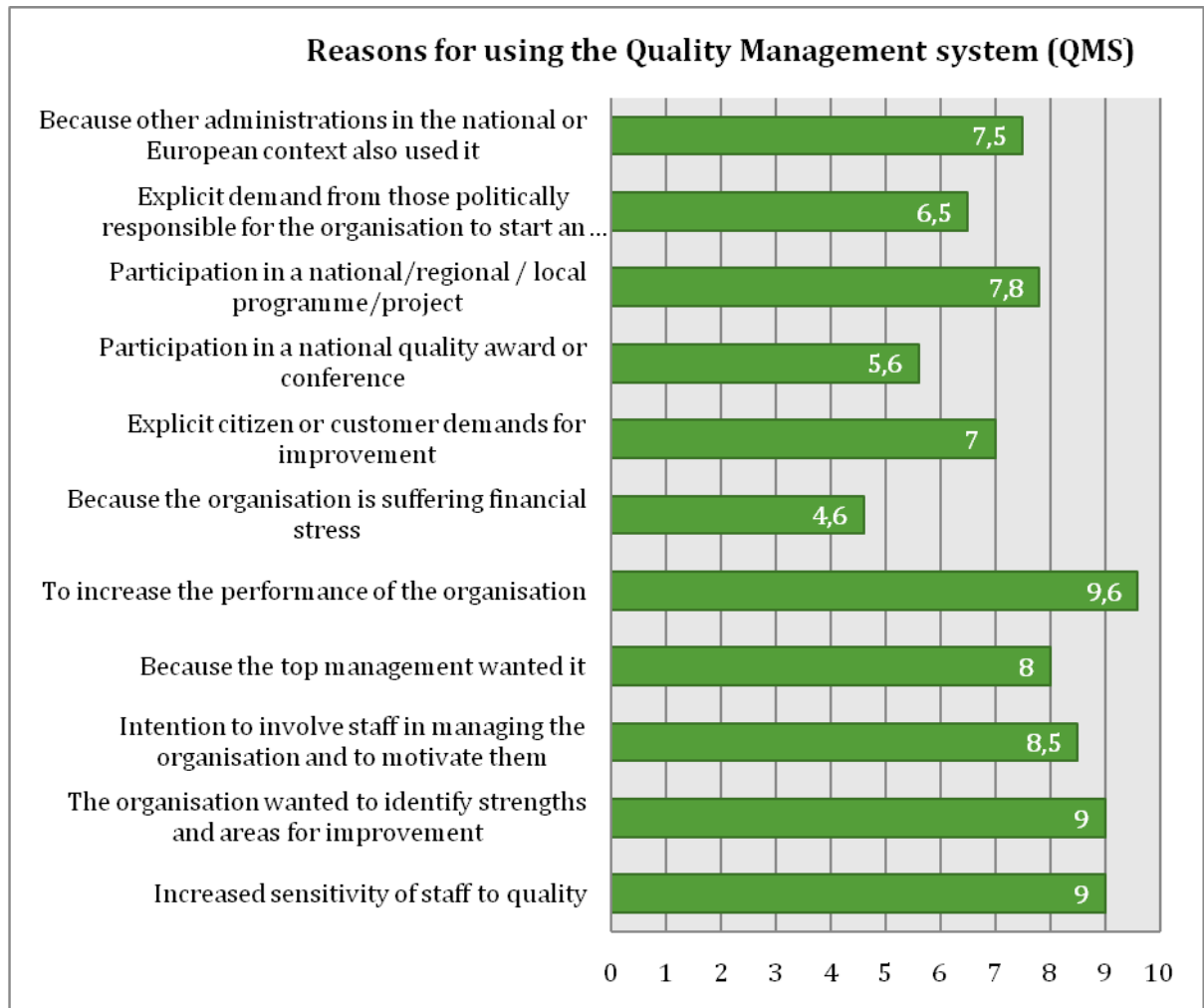


useful, and would not use them again”.

As most important reasons for the use of the quality management approach:

1. the increase of the performance of the organization,
2. the identification of strengths and areas for improvement,
3. and the increased sensitivity of staff to quality,

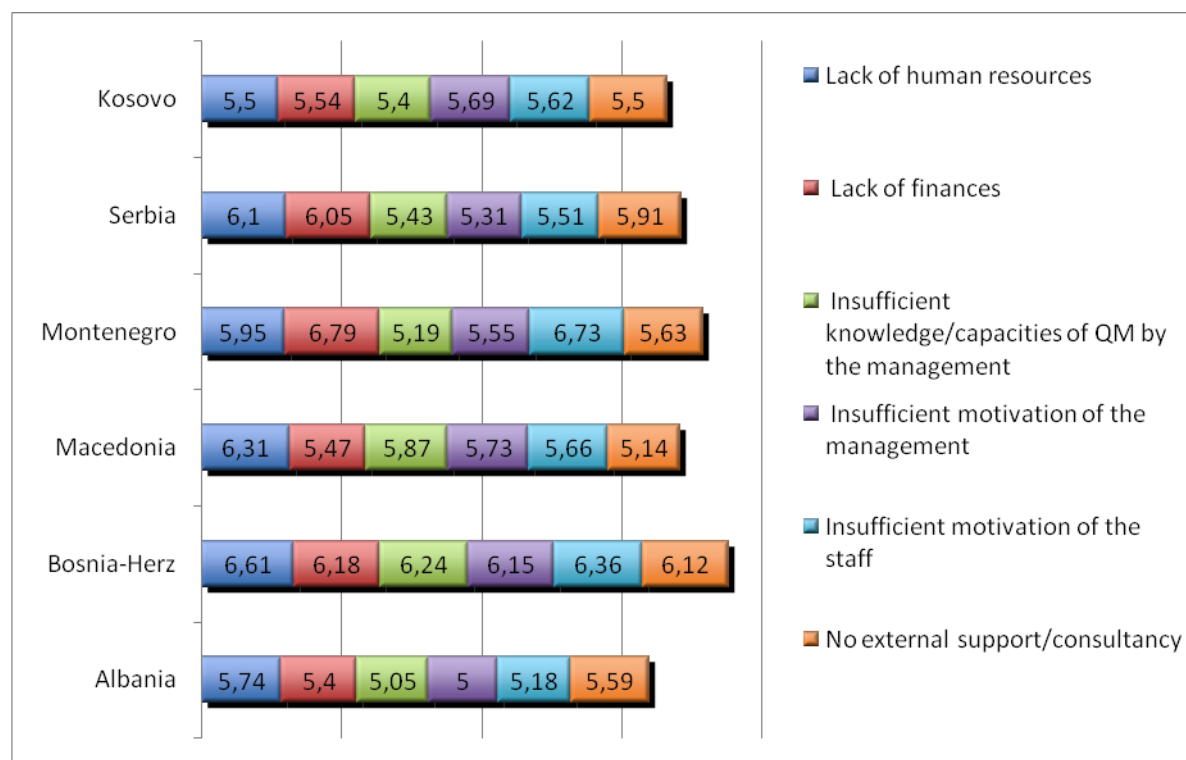
are indicated.



Lack of finances and lack of HR have been indicated by the organizations not using QM approaches as the most important reasons.



On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest) the following factors were considered as major obstacles in general by the organisations for a successful and systematic Quality Management implementation/maintenance.



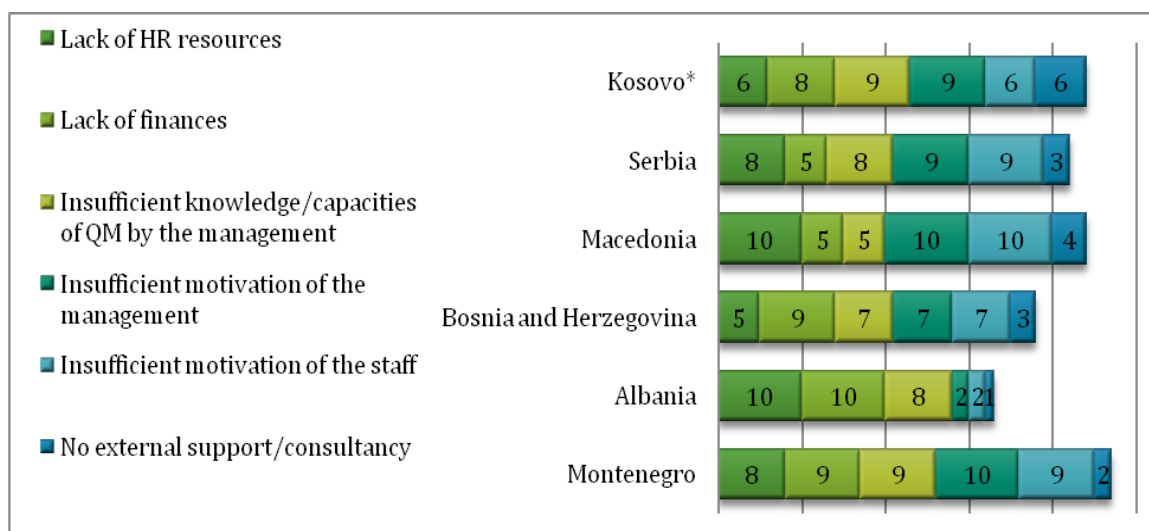
4 QM Landscape & Capacity in the Countries

The QM landscape looks quite similar in the different countries. On the one hand an institution (being it a Ministry or Agency), close to or belonging to the Centre of Government act as the overall coordinating body in terms of QM policy development/coordination. Whereas the other tasks, including training (which makes sense), implementation support and awareness raising are taken-up by HR/training actors.

	QM policy making/coordinate the work on public sector QM	Training on QM	Supporting public sector organisations in implementing QM	Awareness raising and marketing on QM issues
Montenegro	Ministry for public administration	Human Resources Management Authority	Human Resources Management Authority	Human Resources Management Authority
Albania	Line Ministries as policy drafters and the Prime Minister's Office as coordinator and facilitator	ASPA and ADISA	ADISA	ADISA
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Different institutions, but PARCO coordinates activities at state level of BiH	Civil service agencies	ResPA, different donors	Via trainings
Macedonia	Ministry of Information Society and Administration	Ministry of Information Society and Administration	Ministry of Information Society and Administration	Ministry of Information Society and Administration
Serbia	/	Human Resources Management Service (occasionally through the training program for Managers)	/	/
Kosovo	Ministry of Public Administration and Ministry of European Integration	Kosovo Institute for Public Administration	Kosovo Institute for Public Administration	Kosovo Institute for Public Administration

BiH (PARCO), Macedonia (MISA) and Kosovo (KIPA) have recently established (or are in the process of setting it up) a CAF Resource Centre. All centres report the lack of capacity (in numbers, finances and skills) to be more active on the ground.

However the different countries received substantial support in the area of QM over the past 5 years - Albania (UNDP ISDA Program, CCSD WB project), BiH (GIZ, KDZ Austria), Macedonia (British Embassy, GIZ and OSCE Mission to Skopje), Serbia (Sigma), Kosovo (GIZ and UNDP supported training in CAF) - , the lack of finances was mentioned as an important obstacles for a successful and systematic QM implementation/maintenance on an organizational level.

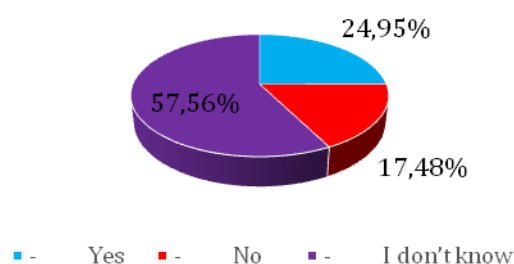


While lack of finances is reported as an important obstacle, several other “capacity and motivational gaps” are identified (and potential areas of work for a regional QM Centre at ReSPA). An obvious one, in the core area of ReSPA’s mission is the training and the increase of knowledge. Here the member countries report a huge shortcoming. Besides Kosovo, training possibilities are reported by the nation coordinators/QPAS members to be non-existing or limited.

	Which statement would you find most valid related to QM training in your country	# People trained (per year) on QM?
Montenegro	No training on QM provided	None
Albania	Limited training possibilities to attend training on QM	I don't know
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Limited training possibilities to attend training on QM	50-100
Macedonia	Limited training possibilities to attend training on QM	50-100
Serbia	Limited training possibilities to attend training on QM	10-50
Kosovo	Interested people have easy access to QM training	100

The organisations indicate that the organized training offer is indeed limited or at least many organisations do not know about the training offer.

Specific trainings on QM provided by a national organization/agency/body?



5. General needs assessment of a ResPA QM centre

5.1. Assessment of current ReSPA role

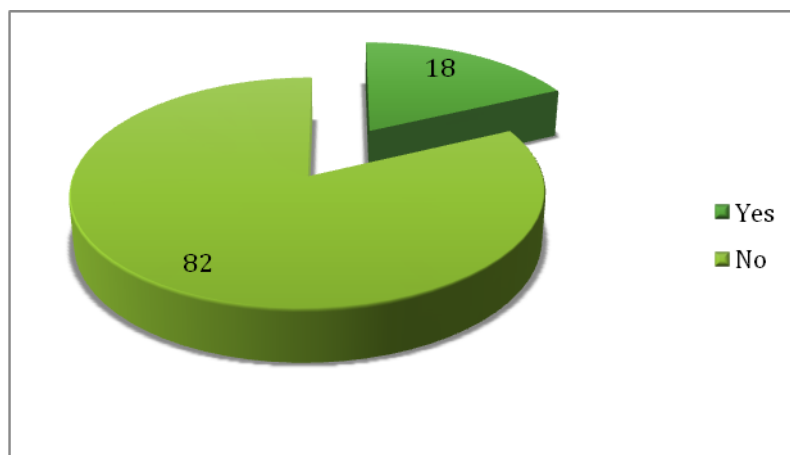
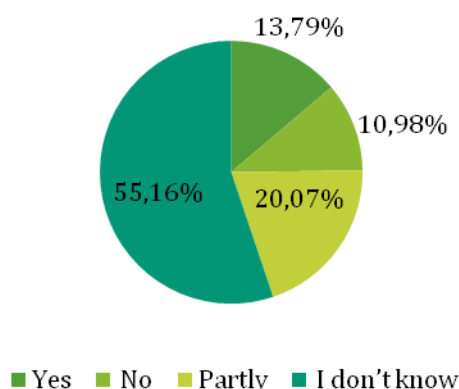
Overall the role played by ReSPA in the area of QM so far has been appreciated positively, but not sufficient, much more can and should be done. ReSPA created a unique platform for the region in QM issues, but more activities should be undertaken (cfr. Montenegro and Serbia responses). ReSPA has a huge potential, but it should be exploited better. Much more QM activities should be undertaken (cfr. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo). The same assessment was made on the work of the ReSPA working group on quality management.

	Which statement fits best regarding the cooperation on regional level in QM matters?	How do you assess the work of the ReSPA QM group?	How can the work of the QM group be even better designed? (multiple answers possible)	
Montenegro	The region should cooperate on a much higher level in QM	The group has initiated several important activities with a moderate impact	More meetings (also VC)	More information studies to EU countries with a clear follow up afterwards
Albania	There is only a moderate exchange on QM in the region	The group has initiated several important activities with a moderate impact	More meetings (also VC)	More information studies to EU countries with a clear follow up afterwards
Bosnia and Herzegovina	The region should cooperate on a much higher level in QM	The group has initiated several important activities with a significant impact	Members of the group should be chosen more carefully	More information studies to EU countries with a clear follow up afterwards
Macedonia	The region should cooperate on a much higher level in QM	The group has not initiated much	More meetings (also VC)	More information studies to EU countries with a clear follow up afterwards
Serbia	The region should cooperate on a much higher level in QM	The group has initiated several important activities with a moderate impact	Members of the group should be chosen more carefully	More information studies to EU countries with a clear follow up afterwards
Kosovo	The region is successful in exchanging best practices, know-how and products in QM	The group has initiated several important activities with a moderate impact	The work of the group doesn't need a redesign since it works perfectly in the given circumstances	More information studies to EU countries with a clear follow up afterwards

On the organizational level we cannot but conclude that ReSPA and its work is still too much unknown. While 34% of the respondents finds ReSPA QM training offer freely and easily accessible or at least partly, 55% doesn't know.

Only 18% of the respondents are familiar with the ReSPA QPAS group that has been established in 2015. This QM group has an

training offer on Quality Management in ReSPA as freely/easy accessible?



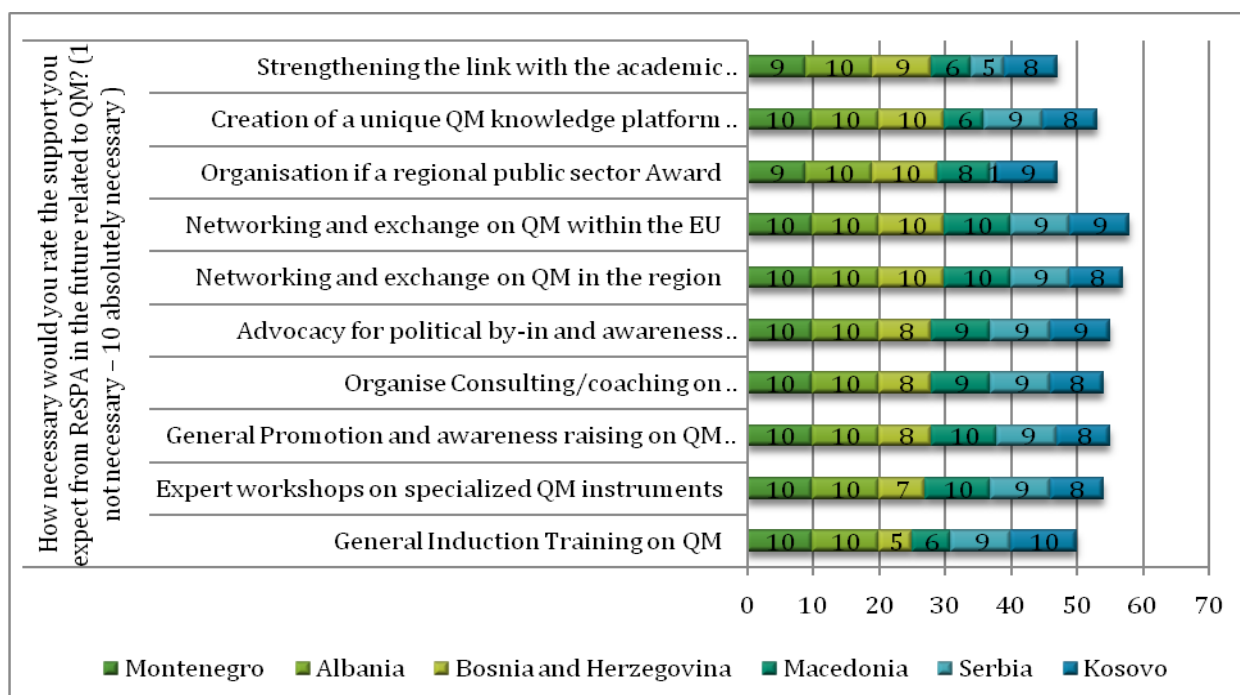
important role to play in “translating” the regional QM dynamic into the respective countries. If a future regional QM centre becomes operational this can only function if it can cooperate with a network of country responsible QM actors, gathered in this QPAS group.

5.2. Future ReSPA role and needs assessment

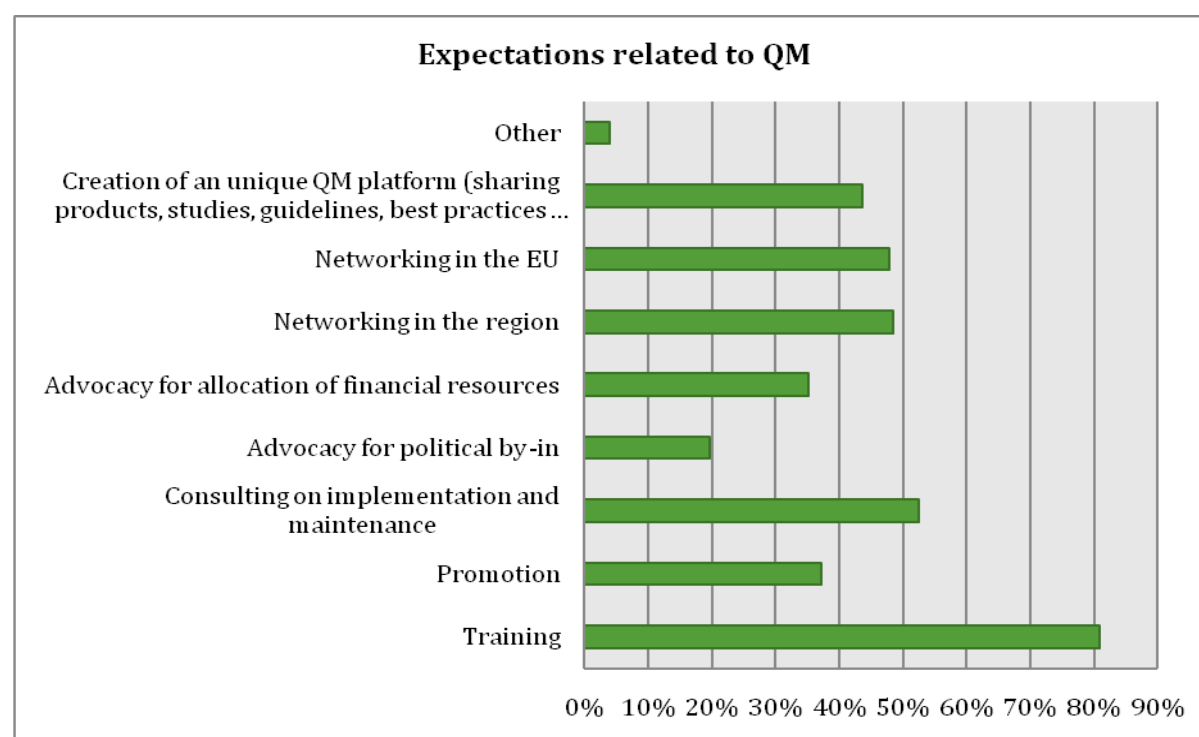
ReSPA's future role in the area of QM is seen as much more active and leading (in different roles) by the different countries.

	Complementing national level	Take the lead in pushing & stimulating the region	Take the lead in training	Take the lead in promotion	Take the lead in data exchange & dissemination	Regional interface on QM products for common use
Montenegro	X	X	X	X	X	-
Albania	-	-	X	-	-	X
BiH	X	X	-	-	-	X
Macedonia	X	X	-	X	X	-
Serbia	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kosovo	X	X	X	X	-	X

The expected support from ReSPA in the future related to QM is vast. All the below mentioned activities are perceived by the member states as absolutely necessary. Besides the “organization of a regional award” (only Serbia scored as “not necessary”), and the “general introduction training on QM” (scored average by BiH and Macedonia, most probably because these countries had some of these trainings organized on a country level over the past years), all countries score all the activities extremely high.



These expectations expressed on future activities by ReSPA in the QM field by the countries are also reflected by the over 450 respondents on organizational level. The expectations related to training are by far the highest. Supporting the concrete implementation and networking (regional and EU level) are also seen as important.



It is safe to say that both on country and organizational level expectations towards ReSPA are quite high regarding several fields of activities. This is for sure an interesting basis for a potential regional centre. It should be acknowledged (and that is the risk) that this centre can “only” facilitate, support and stimulate. It can never replace the countries’ role in this regard. Therefore a close link with a well-established network of QM actors via the QPAS group is absolutely needed.

6. Inspiring examples

After identifying the needs and expectations regarding a potential centre, this part highlights some interesting examples of Public Sector Quality (or Excellence) Centres as source(s) of inspiration for ReSPA and its member countries. The focus in this part is not on purely national approaches or centres. Several countries have a national quality management approaches and ditto centres or units. Instead we want to focus on centres that “serve” several countries, regions or at least different tiers of government. Therefore the following three centres have been selected. First, the Centre of Excellence on Public Sector Productivity of the Asian Productivity Organisation (APO), second the Canadian Institute for Citizen-Centred Service and third the European CAF Resource Centre.

6.1. The Asian Productivity Organisations’ Centre of Excellence on Public Sector Productivity

The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) was established on 11 May 1961 as a regional intergovernmental organization. The APO is non-political, non-profit, and non-discriminatory. APO membership is open to countries in Asia



and the Pacific which are members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP). The current membership is 20 Countries, comprising Bangladesh, Cambodia, Republic of China, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. These countries pledge to assist each other in their productivity drives in a spirit of mutual cooperation by sharing knowledge, information, and experience.

In 2015, the Philippines was designated by the APO as the Centre of Excellence (CoE) on Public Sector Productivity (<http://dap.edu.ph/coe-ppsp>). The Philippines has been designated as the APO Centre of Excellence on Public Sector Productivity (COE-PSP) with the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) as the focal organization and implementing institution. The DAP also serves as the country’s National Productivity Organization (NPO) that supports the APO in promoting and implementing public sector productivity-related activities in the Asia-Pacific region. The designation of a COE is a key strategy of the APO to develop NPOs such as the DAP in areas where NPOs possess unique strengths and expertise. The DAP is a government corporation with more than four decades of dedicated support in training senior government officials to be highly effective, conducting strategic and innovative research in public sector efficiency, providing technical assistance along the lines of public sector efficiency and national productivity, and serving as nexus for catalysing the exchange of ideas and expertise in productivity and development in Asia and the Pacific.

As the implementing institution and the country’s NPO, the DAP is tasked to facilitate learning and sharing of knowledge and best practices on PSP among APO members, conduct relevant research on new areas related to the PSP including identifying innovations and best practices, develop resources and materials to assist member countries with their programs, and build a database of experts who could assist APO member countries with their programs on PSP. Specifically, the COE-PSP has the following objectives:

- Promote the advancement of the public sector productivity movement in Asia and the Pacific region;
- Help address common and critical issues on public sector productivity performance besetting the APO member countries;
- Foster cutting-edge research, facilitate training and knowledge-sharing, and support outreach to APO member countries in raising productivity of the public sector organizations in the region; and
- Serve as a hub of a ‘web of collaborators’ (physical or virtual) on innovation and productivity in the public sector.

In the latter role as a hub of a “web of collaborators” on innovation and productivity within and outside the Philippines, the COE-PSP has four key components:

1. Knowledge Bank

The PSP Knowledge Bank serves as repository and online library of pertinent data, information, materials and references on public sector productivity. It accumulates, codifies and publicly disseminates PSP knowledge products derived from APO projects (e.g. Best practice manual, Productivity & Quality toolbox, etc.), contributions from NPOs, international publications on innovation and productivity in the public sector, database on local and international experts on public sector productivity.

2. Capability Development Programme

To create a critical mass of PSP practitioners, the PSP CapDev Program designs and offers a range of face-to-face or online training, seminars, conferences and other modes of capability building to develop and hone competencies of NPOs and selected public sector organizations on productivity methods, tools and techniques as applied in the public sector.

3. Innovation Lab

The PSP Innovation Laboratory shall serve as venue for the NPO and selected public sector organizations to understand and obtain first-hand experience in applying pioneering and specific Productivity & Quality tools, techniques and methodologies to address critical public sector productivity issues, under the guidance of technical experts to be deputed by APO.

4. Research Programme

PSP Research will initiate studies on public sector productivity such as identifying innovations for productivity including best practices, adaptation and examining effectiveness of Productivity & Quality tools, etc. In the medium to long-term, the agenda could include expansion/updating of productivity measurement research and other studies to determine the PSP needs of APO.

Major lessons to be learnt and take aways

- ✓ “Young” centre, many activities gradually under construction
- ✓ Focus on training, research, networking
- ✓ Strong involvement by the member countries
- ✓ Wide perspective on Quality and Productivity, aiming to be a centre in Public Sector organisation development or excellence

6.2. Canadian Institute for Citizen-Centred Service

The Institute for Citizen-Centred Service (ICCS- <https://iccs-isac.org>) was created in 2005 by the Public Sector Chief Information Officer Council (PSCIOC) and the Public Sector Service Delivery Council (PSSDC) as a not-for-profit organization to provide an inter-governmental platform to pursue partnerships and coordinate initiatives focused on innovative public sector service delivery. This includes research, the Common Measurements Tool and certification and learning programs. The ICCS also provides secretariat services to the two Councils, including agenda management and logistics support for biannual in-person meetings of the Councils and regular teleconferences as well as hosting websites (public and members-only) and managing the financial accounts of the Councils.



The PSSDC was created in 1998 to bring together service leaders from the federal, provincial and territorial governments to share information and best practices. Subsequently, regional representatives of municipal governments also joined the Council who are currently appointed through the Municipal Service Delivery

Officials organization. The PSSDC has supported a research agenda to gain a better understanding of what drives excellence in public service. There is a sharing of best practices that has led to a number of service integration initiatives which have improved public service delivery across Canada.

To achieve its mission, ICCS has the mandate to:

- provide secretariat and other support services to the Public Sector Service Delivery Council (PSSDC) and Public Sector Chief Information Officer Council (PSCIOC)
- provide a neutral platform for inter-jurisdictional collaboration and shared learning in support of the service delivery community in Canada
- undertake research into citizens and business expectations, satisfaction, and priorities for service improvement
- support development of organizational capacity for citizen-centred service through a Certification and Learning Program
- measures, monitors and promotes the progress of the Canadian public sector in improving citizen and business satisfaction with service delivery
- recognize and celebrate excellence in citizen-centred service
- serve as a resource centre for best practices, publications, and tools that promote cost effective public sector service delivery
- act as a global centre of expertise and a champion for citizen-centred service throughout the public sector

Research

Governments across Canada are embracing a “citizen-centred” approach to service delivery and it is starting to make a difference. The public sector has been shedding an internally-focused (or “inside-out”) perspective and has been increasingly adopting an “outside-in” perspective when delivering service to the public – a perspective where the interests and opinions of citizens are instrumental in defining expectations, setting priorities, and establishing service standards. Through its research, the ICCS strives to find new and better ways to harness public input and assist others in obtaining actionable insights to improve service delivery.

Measuring citizens satisfaction - the Citizens First Series

In the late 1990’s, senior government officials from across Canada established the Citizen-Centred Service Network, dedicated to improving the quality of government services for Canadians. Under the direction of the Canadian Centre for Management Development, the Network undertook a unique national study – Citizens First.

The mission of the Citizens First project was to gain a deeper understanding of how citizens experience government services. This knowledge enables providers to improve service based a citizen perspective and empirical evidence. The original Citizens First Study, published in 1998 was a landmark study focused on citizen-centred service delivery. Through Citizens First, Canadians across the country were asked what they thought about the delivery of public services, what expectations they held, and what they saw as the priorities for improvement. This formed the baseline against which progress has been measured.

Learning

The Certification & Learning (C&L) programs offered by the ICCS provide high-quality professional education opportunities to public sector service delivery staff. Designed by senior leaders from the Canadian service delivery community, our programs aim to:

- Establish a common language and consistent standard of excellence within the service delivery community
- Professionalize the service delivery practice
- Encourage the use of the citizen-centred approach

The ICCS offers two certification streams, along with a variety of in-person courses, intended to offer flexible training options to organizations. They also offer a Train-the-Trainer program for organizations interested in increasing their internal capacity.

Common Measurements Tool

The Common Measurements Tool (CMT) is an easy-to-use client satisfaction survey instrument that facilitates benchmarking across jurisdictions. Using the CMT, public-sector managers are able to understand client

expectations, assess levels of satisfaction, and identify priorities for improvement.

Major lessons to be learnt and take aways

- ✓ Strong mandate
- ✓ Strong analytical/research capacity
- ✓ Focus on training, research, networking
- ✓ Funded by the government

6.3. The European CAF Resource Centre

The Common Assessment Framework is the result of an intense collaboration between many actors on the European scene during nearly 18 year. The preparations started in 1998 under the Austrian EU presidency, within the EUPAN network (www.eupan.eu) and nearly all the EU Presidencies in between contributed to the further development and spreading of the model in order to introduce a culture of Total Quality Management in the Public Sector all over Europe.

On demand of the member states, the European CAF Resource Centre was established in May 2001 at the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) in Maastricht (www.eipa.eu/CAF).

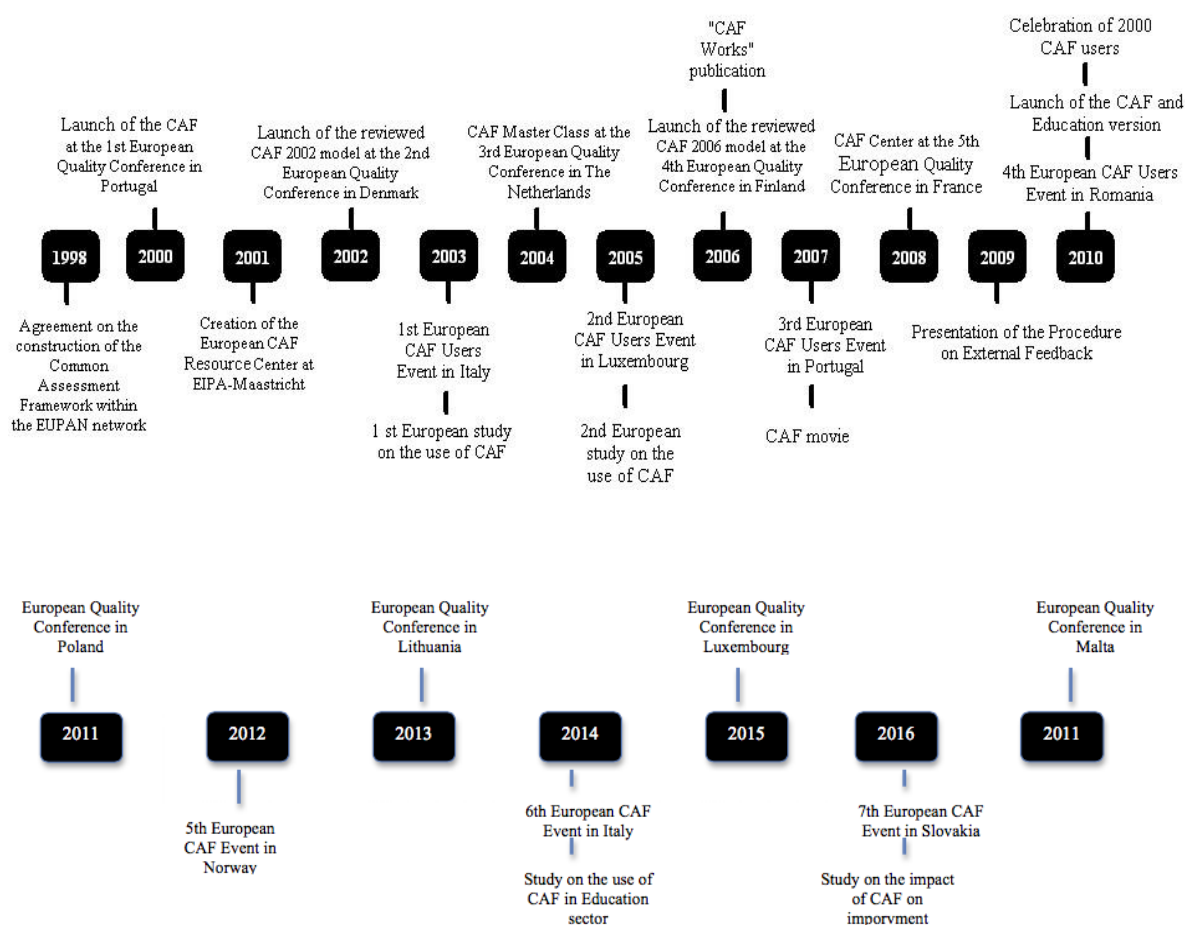


The CAF Resource Centre operates in a spirit of open coordination between the members of the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN). The centre received the following tasks:

- to be a centre of expertise in CAF implementation promoting the CAF and good practice in its use in public administrations in Europe;
- to act as a complement to, and in coordination with, the existing national centres of expertise, and with a focus on countries without a national centre of expertise;
- to be a training and consultancy centre;
- to carry out research on the use of the model and further develop it;
- to support and stimulate the European network of national CAF contacts and the community of CAF users;
- to maintain the CAF database for registered users and good practices.

An important role is played by the network of national CAF correspondents. The CAF-Network consists of the national correspondents in charge of the dissemination of the CAF at national level.

Since the first launch in 2000 at the 1st European Quality Conference in Lisbon, many things have been realised. A brief overview of the initiatives taken at the European level during the past 17 years is presented. Since its creation, the European CAF Resource Centre played an important leading role in all these events.



After the initial years in shaping the CAF model, the Directors-General in charge of public service within the EUPAN network asked EIPA to install a European Resource Centre, with the aim of being a European centre of expertise in CAF implementation that coordinates with the national quality hubs and also serves as a training and consultancy centre. Furthermore, the CAF Resource Centre carries out research on the use of the model to further develop it and aims to stimulate the European CAF network of national correspondents and be a source of inspiration to the European CAF community. Last but not least, the CAF Resource Centre was entrusted with the setting up of a database to register and collect European CAF users. To date nearly 4000 organisations (from all over the world are represented in the database as CAF users.

In **2002**, the model was simplified and improved with the aim of adapting it even more to the public sector and launched at the second European Quality Conference in Denmark. The need to adapt the model in a way that it is more tailored to the public sector became obvious to the network because of a European study on the use of CAF that had been done in 2003.

In **2004** the EUPAN, in their meeting held in Vienna, took the decision to set up the CAF expert group for developing a draft CAF Action Plan. The CAF expert group is composed of the CAF national correspondents of the Member States, the EIPA CAF Resource Centre and EFQM representatives. The group is open to the participation of experts of CAF/TQM nominated by countries. It meets at least twice a year and its major tasks are:

- to improve and regularly update the CAF;
- to define in collaboration with EIPA the role of the European CAF Resource Centre (tasks, mandate, placement, financing);
- to develop in collaboration with EIPA CAF support tools (e.g. CAF website);
- to validate the different ways to adapt CAF for national or sectoral use;
- to assist and promote the exchange of good practices of operational managerial tools between European Member States;

- to organise the CAF users events (content papers and programmes);
- to report back to the EUPAN at least twice a year.

The collaboration as such is very special, because the network operates in the spirit of consensus on European level to drive forward the development around and within the model, which is at times difficult due to distance, different public administration cultures, national agendas, funding, etc. However, the network has proven its capability to steer the CAF forward with its many initiatives and products, which will also become evident in this publication.

Since the launch of CAF in 2000, it was clear that mutual understanding and bench learning among CAF users would be a strong impetus for the success of the model in Europe. European CAF Users' Events are thus organised regularly with the aim of being an inspiring meeting point for CAF users and to further spread TQM in the public sector in Europe.

In **2003** and **2005** CAF Users from all over Europe met in Rome and Luxembourg at the first two European CAF Users' Events. The Portuguese Presidency organised the 3rd European CAF Users' Event in Lisbon in **2007**. In **2010**, Romania hosted the 4th CAF Users' Event in cooperation with the network of CAF national correspondents and the EIPA CAF Resource Centre. The 4th Event had a special focus on the 8 principles of excellence and the newly developed the CAF External Feedback as well as the tailor-made CAF version for the education sector. Afterwards Norway (**2012**), Italy (**2014**) and Slovakia (**2016**) hosted these events.

In **2004** the tradition of the European Quality Conferences was continued in the Netherlands. At this Quality Conference a CAF Master Class took place. Subsequently in 2005, not only did the second CAF users' event take place, as mentioned above, but a second study on the use of CAF was also conducted.³⁴ The study revealed that a number of areas in the CAF needed further improvement: increase the coherence and simplicity of the model, increase the user friendliness by improving the examples and the glossary, develop a more fine-tuned scoring system for certain users, and broaden the quality approach with directives for the improvement action plans and guidelines for bench learning. Consequently the CAF was reviewed for the second time and in **2006** the CAF 2006 was launched at the fourth European Quality Conference in Finland. The result was a better definition of certain criteria and sub-criteria, an increase of the internal consistency of the criteria, the formulations and the way of evaluating and scoring. The fifth European Quality Conference took place in Paris, France in September **2008** and saw the second CAF Centre – a special place for CAF and the workshops and sessions about it – attracted 800 of the 1100 participants at the Conference an undeniable signal that the interest for the tool was still growing. Ever since the CAF played an important role in the European Quality Conferences in Poland (2011), Lithuania (2013), Luxembourg (2015) and Malta (2017), each time hosted by the EU Presidency country in close collaboration with EUPAN and the European CAF Resource Centre.

As the efforts of CAF implementation in the Member States rests with themselves, the Member States have to be credited for the biggest part of the CAF model's success. When CAF was first introduced in the Member States, it was not always a big hit from the outset. In some countries, public organisations were not accustomed to the use of total quality management. In other countries, public organisations were already using other TQM models. It was a challenge for every Member State to launch and disseminate the CAF in their public sectors. For that purpose they designed many CAF-related activities and tools. These tools aimed to promote CAF, support the implementation of CAF and stimulate the exchange of best practices. The following enumeration gives an idea of the major CAF-related activities and tools in the Member States:

- CAF brochures in 25 languages
- Special guidelines and worksheets
- Electronic application and evaluation tools in 11 countries
- CAF training in 20 countries
- One bench learning project in four countries
- Individual advice and coaching in 14 countries
- Quality programmes, conferences and awards in 12 different countries
- CAF versions for specific sectors e.g. CAF and Justice (in Denmark and Italy) CAF and local administrations (in Belgium and Czech Republic), CAF and education (in Belgium, Denmark, Italy and Portugal)

³⁴ EIPA (2005), Study on the use of the Common Assessment Framework in European public services, Maastricht, 89 p.

The efforts made by the Member States are reaping rich rewards as the CAF is starting to spread itself. The good reputation of the model has a catalyst effect on its dissemination. It stimulates the decision to implement the CAF and thus facilitates the promotion of CAF by the Member States. This is a good development.

Bench learning projects are successful within Member States and between neighbouring Member States. Quality conferences, awards or contests occur in at least seventeen countries. From those seventeen, five countries organise only quality conferences (Czech Republic, Finland, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Norway), five countries organise only quality awards or contests (Austria, Greece, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain), and seven do both (Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Slovakia).³⁵

The exchange of good practices between Member States across Europe on the other hand has proved to be more difficult so far. With extensive help from the European CAF Resource Centre, three Member States have organised CAF Users Events as part of their European Presidency (Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, and Slovakia).³⁶ Only Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic had a formal international bench learning project through partnerships.³⁷ This is a challenge for the future. More can be done to enhance the exchange of successful support instruments and good practices for the other Member States.

Many efforts have been made to successfully disseminate CAF in the European public sector. Nearly 4000 users have experience with the model. These good results are an energiser for the coming years. One of the future challenges is to increase efficiency by working on the quality of the CAF model. More work also has to be done to make public organisations familiar with self-assessment, with making improvement actions and with aiming at excellence. The commitment of the Member States to face these challenges together is by far the biggest strength of the Common Assessment Framework.

Major lessons to be learnt and take aways

- ✓ Strong mandate, position and reputation grew over the years being the reference centre
- ✓ Facilitating/coordinating role , no mandate to impose
- ✓ Capacity to do research, training and support implementation (consulting)
- ✓ Strong involvement by the Member States (national coordinators network and group)
- ✓ No specific funding for the centre, the member states (organisations) making use of the service pay for the services

³⁵ Based upon the CAF study 2005 (p. 17) and contributions of the Members States for 10 years CAF

7. General description of ResPA QM centre

Based upon the above assessment of the current state of affairs on QM in the WB countries on the one hand and the role(s) and activities expected from ReSPA to play in this regard the following main building blocks of the ReSPA regional QM Centre can potentially be distinguished. The inspiring examples presented would allow for deepening out some of the building blocks. In any case they can be used to take the key learning points in the



creation, organisation and operationalization of such a centre.

Building block 1: Awareness raising



In the first building block ReSPA needs to play its leading role in setting and shaping the regional QM agenda. The activities developed in this block should be organized in targeting specific target groups:

- **Political level** (Promotion/Advocacy/Awareness Raising). The *Strategic approach* coming from the regional level (ReSPA QM Centre) needs to be cascaded down into the country levels and to be used for better decision making progress (i.e. Input for Regional/National Roadmap – Action Plan on QMS
- **Senior administrative level**, by demonstrating the operational advantages of QM systems, further ambassadors and sponsors for QM should be created.
- **QM people on organizational level**, to build their capacity in implementing QM techniques and tool, becoming champions and promoters of QM in organisations
- **Civil Society Organisations**, to drive public administration using, learning and reporting on performance. The “outward-looking perspective” is inherent to the QM systems. As immediate (and organized) representatives of the general public, these organisations should play their intermediate role in society by their watchdog, but also communication function.
- **Academic sector**, having a strong academic scene, challenging, but also inspiring the Public Administration should be the ambition. QM capacity in faculties for Public Administration should be strengthened in order mainstreaming on QMS into official curricula invest in future professionals could take place.³⁸

³⁸Kalous, van den Muyzenberg and Oldroyd, 26 April 2004 defined the SHEPAR (School of Higher Education for Public Administration Reform) – Feasibility Study conducted by ReSPA - Academic School = a specialist academic institute,

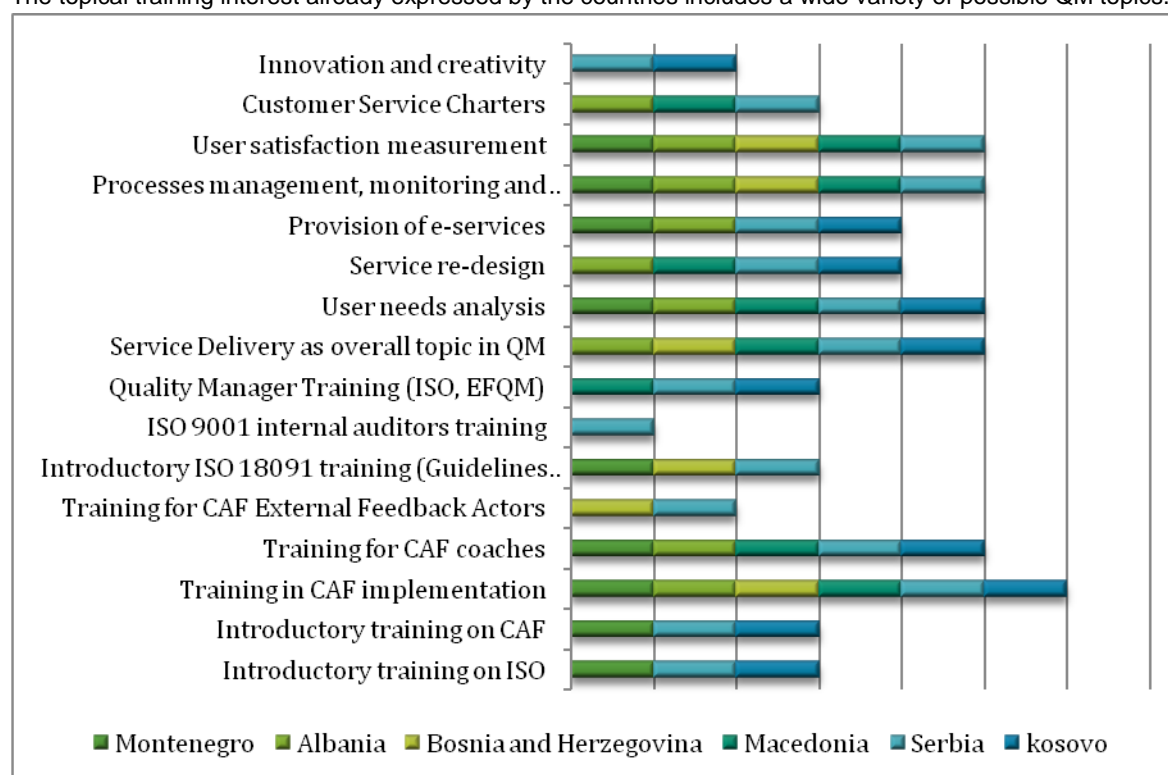
- **Public-Private Dialogue** on QM Initiatives, incl. chambers of commerce, QM associations (also for the up scaling effect of ISO expertise which is considered to be risky because of dumping prices by consultants and hence low service delivery and negative impact on QMS of institutions)



Building Block 2: Capacity building via training

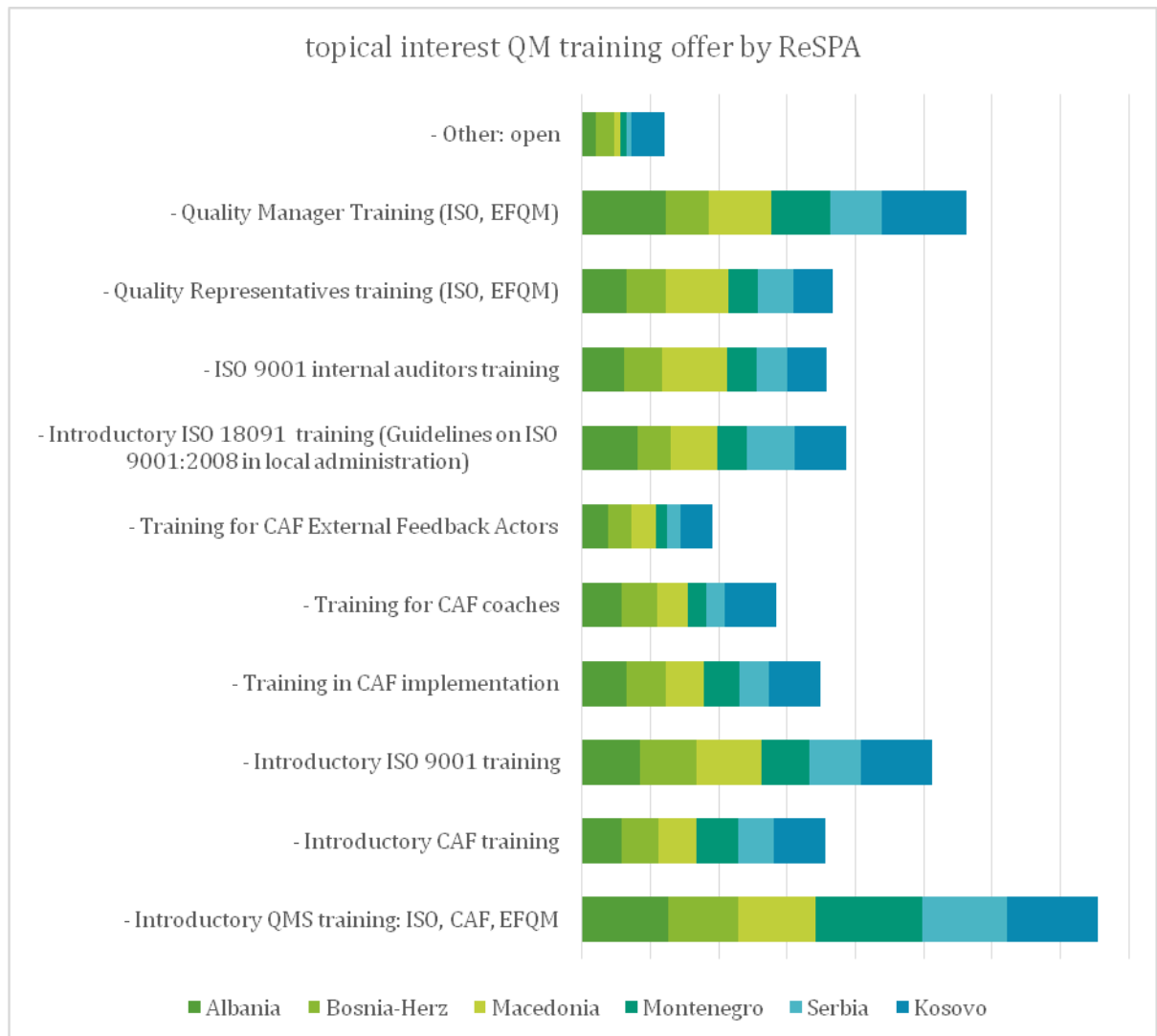
This block is perceived as one of the crucial factors/activity where the centre should close the capacity gap by offering a well-targeted and differentiated topical training offer. A difference need to be made between training for high level civil servants (management/decision makers) in diverse QM topics, with special focus on leadership and decision making – Master Classes (for expert civil servants), and other QM trainings/workshops/seminars/coaching sessions for other levels of public servants.

The topical training interest already expressed by the countries includes a wide variety of possible QM topics.



The training as a special pillar of the possible QM Centre should generate a Pool of trainers in QM, captured in an updated database containing info on trainers, coaches, mentors for CAF/ISO/EFQM/QMS. If possible, the database should contain info on the progress on QMS tools on national level (tracking and choosing the trainer in accordance to the profile, but also progress of the specific country). This demands are supported by the organisations, with the addition that also basic/intro training is still requested.

faculty, centre in a university or university department for civil service education providing academic research and advanced qualifications. This idea could be well combined with the establishment of the Quality Management Centre as presented .



Building Block 3: Support QM implementation

The idea is to make use of regional experts in helping/advising other countries in «setting-up» their QM approach (**P2P**, **Taiex**, **Twinning**) with an import role for ReSPA to coordinate the expert database and run the **exchange system of operational support in implementing QM** in the different countries.

Donor Coordination, and targeting actively the donor community in the field of QM in the region could be an interesting activity in this area as well. It aims at efficient use of resources, up-scaling of successful pilots in the region and project proposals for further initiatives accordingly. So far it is visible that those countries who have received support in QM initiatives are showing faster growth of the opening of the public administration through use of QM tools/systems, but a common point where EU-stakeholders such as donors, technical assistance programmes and EC projects can assess the synergies, possible overlappings and best use of resources is not existing yet. ReSPA has been successful in the last couple of years in establishing close cooperation with donor and key-stakeholders representatives in the region, but also abroad. The potential of using synergies for creation of a regional QM committee, led and represented by ReSPA and/or GIZ, KDZ should be further explored, where also the Council of Europe and the models like EloGE (as presented in the Tirana conference) can play an interface in the top-down approach towards the municipalities. The donor community and actors like GIZ, KDZ and Council of Europe, together with ReSPA could have a significant impact on the political leverage and buy-in, since present in the region for a longer period, contributing to the overall economic, political and societal development.



Building Block 4: Knowledge generation and dissemination

The centre should also be the excellence and regional knowledge centre in this area. In this way it should identify and promote **interesting (good) practices**. This can be done by actively organising the exchange and mutual learning: by organising bench learning events, study tours...

Bench learning as part of the systematic measurements and learning process, but with a focus on benchmarking between countries of the region before reaching out to EU countries benchmarking. The option of identify and promoting good practices in the region by introducing the **Regional PA Quality Award** should be further explored.

8. Capacity assessment

With the defined scope and role of the potential centre in the previous part, the closer focus on ReSPA's capacities clearly needs a realistic approach on one hand, and a fine balance towards the expectations from member countries on the other hand. The chapters prior to the capacity assessment have shown a very high interest coming from ReSPA's member countries when it comes to using quality management systems as proven tools towards reforms. But, besides of the initial building blocks (which need to be further elaborated in a comprehensive operational roadmap for the centre, indicating clear steps, initiatives, activities, discussed with the stakeholders), the current set-up of ReSPA should be explored into more details, proving the future roadmap a basis for further elaboration.

In assessing the current and future capacities of ReSPA in the context of a QM Centre establishment, ReSPA's areas of expertise³⁹ provide an excellent insight into the synergies which can be utilized and synchronised in the wider scope of a QM Centre:

- Public Administration Reforms
- Legislation
- EU Accession, EU policies and related issues
- Protocol
- Financial Management
- Anti-Corruption, Ethics and Integrity in Public Administration
- Human Resources Management
- Total Quality Management
- Strategic Management and Planning
- Leadership Public Management, Good Governance and Modern Administration
- Principles
- Project Cycle Management and IPA/Structural Funds
- International Relations
- Communication and Administrative Procedures in the Organizations
- Public Private Partnership
- Public Access to Information, Transparency of the Public Administration
- E-Government

The Total Quality Management approach could play an important part of the well-functioning, reporting and visibility of ReSPA – hence it is highly recommended for ReSPA to implement CAF and/or ISO 9001 before or along starting the establishment of a QM Centre. The impact on internal capacities and effectiveness could be double-folded: The ReSPA staff would be trained in quality management systems and hence able to implement a QM system in ReSPA and to maintain it over the coming period, showing a positive example of a regional commitment towards quality, independently from sector/area of expertise. The use of a QM system such as CAF

³⁹ <http://www.respaweb.eu/72/pages/42/areas-of-expertise>. Link active as per 16.08.2017

in ReSPA, working in a self-assessment group, preferably for the first time with a short external expertise, would involve in higher team understanding and deeper mutual respect. The Leadership, Governing Board, Programme Managers and DGNear could significantly prosper from the use of TQM approach in ReSPA.

A short ReSPA SWOT Capacity Analysis can look as follows, with detailed description afterwards:

STRENGTHS

- Human capacities
- New management
- Upscaling possibilities
- Member countries taking initiative

WEAKNESSES

- Internal capacities may be overburdened
- No specific QM expertise in-house available

OPPORTUNITIES

- Stronger role of QM and National Coordinators
- Implementatio of CAF/ISO in ReSPA incl. training for ReSPA QM team
- Regional QM network/products/policies/standards

THREATS

- Lack of understanding on the concept/idea of QM and link with PAR and managerial accountability
- Perception of (un)equal use of ReSPA support in establishing/mainataining/improving quality management systems/tools
- Perception of QPAS group

Strengths – *Human capacities of ReSPA*: Highly appreciated professionals working for ReSPA (New Director since 2017 and Programme Managers) who are following an innovative and open-minded approach towards the member countries and the EC/DGNear. *Human capacities of the member countries*: Various conferences, initiatives and activities realized so far are demonstrating that the member countries have high motivated and professional (senior) public servants, with more than solid, in some cases extremely high knowledge in ISO and CAF. This capacities should be further shaped used for upscaling in countries on central level and also on local levels of PA, but also on regional level. Also, the QPAS has a wider scope of opportunities which could be further utilized to strengths. A stronger QPAS setting, more visibility of achievements and eventually a creation of a regional quality management network could be lead to very powerful regional cooperation. The studies completed and published so far are of high quality, showing a *trend of member countries taking the initiative* to move on from closed to open/reformed public administration.

Weaknesses – *Internal man-power* seems to be the first visible weak point of the establishment of a ReSPA QM Centre. For a well-functioning QM Centre it will be needed to work with strengthened internal capacities, so the ReSPA Programme Managers and ReSPA Assistant(s) are not overburdened with too many additional tasks related to the Centre. It is not recommended to change the setting of the ReSPA staff and related duties, responsibilities and tasks, but to assess the possibility of technical assistance of QM professionals, devoted to operationalisation of QM Centre objectives and activities, in close cooperation and under supervision and overall responsibility area of the already assigned Programme Manager. In this regard the biggest weakness might be the *lack of specific QM knowledge and expertise*. With regard to the high demands raised by the different stakeholders, this expertise needs to be generated relatively quickly.

Opportunities – *QM Coordinators* could take up a stronger role in promotion, networking and triggering new initiatives. The possibility of creating a young critical mass on professionals on quality management in PA of the Western Balkans on its way to EU integration could be taken up from member countries and QM teams who are already on one or the other way (deeper) familiarized with benefits of quality management systems and tools. The region has a great opportunity in not only competing to each other, and hence producing a positive effect of ongoing improvements of the public administration, but also to set up *regional standards and common objectives* for future benchmarking and peer-to-peer learning. It is one of the sometimes missing elements in public administration, not to have a healthy competition. In the case of the Western Balkan region, the geographical location and existence of ReSPA could be employed in relation to the mentioned introduction of a Quality award. A clear opportunity is the already mentioned implementation of CAF/ISO in ReSPA.

Threats – If the decision will be taken to establish a ReSPA Quality Centre, this concept should be *clearly communicated* to all ReSPA staff and main stakeholders. If not, there is a threat that due to misunderstanding of the concept, internal or/and external misinterpretations may come up, what would result in inefficient use of internal capacities of ReSPA and those of member countries. The possible future provision of QM support in member countries could eventually lead to a *perception of unequal use of ReSPA support* in establishing/maintaining/improving quality management systems/tools. A clear mandate of the QM Centre, followed by a vision, mission, strategy and internal guidelines on how to apply for specific support to a country should be developed together with the representatives of the QPAS. A next threat is that the *QPAS group* could be perceived as a pointless group if it doesn't start to produce more concrete activities and take up responsibilities as defined. The QPAS group should have a clear communication flow and visible description of responsibilities. The tasks devoted to the QPAS members, or to National Coordinators should be performed in due time, without too much of external efforts. The professional commitment to QM systems/tools in reforming the regional and country wide public administration should be triggered by this group and respective National Coordinators who should become individual and organizational change agents in QM of Western Balkans.

9. Managerial accountability as precondition for successful PAR

The focus group representatives, respondents of the questionnaires, theory and practice of quality management in PAR are showing one specific priority to be taken into full consideration: managerial accountability.

In highly politicized circumstances of the WB public administration, quality management systems, models and instruments can be effectively used to bring the rise of professionalization, accountability and client/citizen orientation in first place. Nevertheless, without “strategic management approach”⁴⁰ and full managerial interest and accountability on the subject of what precisely has been defined in the QM improvement plans and actions, only sporadic successes can be achieved. ISO, CAF and EFQM are stressing the leadership role for the efficient QM implementation, followed by institutional change to continuous improvement. The leadership, here the managers of public institutions, are not only leading by example, but shall completely be involved into actions/plans/strategies deriving from quality management approach – feeling the pulls of the employees, clients, end users and stakeholders. Only if the management is fully informed on the QM actions, with a transparent consensus and healthy discussion between the QM teams (ISO approach) or self-assessment groups (CAF and EFQM approach) and the management, with a clear communication line towards the whole organisation, one can speak of total quality management where we will provocatively say – managerial accountability in its full sense.

Researching the major success factors and obstacles for successful PAR, one can say that employees and QM teams/self-assessment groups are capable and professional enough to solve the defined actions and priorities for improvement by themselves, maintaining close contact to the management, but being limited to act when it comes to strategic decisions and actions - and those are where the real change and opening of public administration is happening, especially in ENP countries.

Managerial accountability is often (miss)interpreted by internal (financial) controls/audits, which in itself is not wrong, but is for sure not providing the whole picture of what managerial accountability should stand for, as defined by the EC but also as following:

“The managerial accountability (MA) of public managers is a crucial issue in many discussions on Public Internal Controls (PICs) and, more broadly, on the development of the public sector. Its importance is due to a number of reasons, a prominent one being the heritage of more than three decades of intense public management reform. A spate of managerial reforms has swept around the globe (usually placed under the ‘umbrella’ of the New Public Management), which has led, to a certain extent, to the ‘managerialisation’ of public servants, who have also been made accountable in terms of ‘results’ (measured according to the categories of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, as well as the often forgotten category of long-term sustainability of the operations of a given public sector organisation or public programme)”⁴¹.

ReSPA has already been engaged in supporting the improvement of managerial accountability and risk management in 2017 through the workshop of PIFC Working group on 28-29 June 2017 in Belgrade for the Heads and participating staff of Central Harmonization Units (CHU) from ReSPA Members and Kosovo*. The approach of ReSPA, respecting the six key areas of Principles of Public Administration, could be focused on achieving the objectives for EU accession of the Western Balkan region, following the clear quality management approach and respecting the EC/SIGMA principles.

The relation between the eventual ReSPA quality management centre and managerial accountability lies in, as already demonstrated, political buy-in – promoting the benefits of quality management through frequent meetings, seminars, masterclasses, conferences and study tours to European countries, but also promoting the use of QM in and between the regions. The managerial level where we are addressing not only the top management, but also the middle management, needs to be accountable for all actions defined to be crucial for the effectiveness and increase of trust in public administration, despite or in favour of the fact that their functions are mostly political.

⁴⁰ Edoardo Ongaro, pg 3: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/events/pic2012_doc08.pdf. Link active 26.9.2017.

⁴¹ As above, pg1.

10. Next steps

The most obvious and straightforward conclusion is that the plan to host (and create) a regional quality management centre in ReSPA is very much welcomed and encouraged by the member countries and individual institutions. In a context of a rather low quality management maturity and lacking capacities (knowledge and implementation gap), the centre has a huge potential.

Prior to starting setting up the Centre (if decision is made), it is of crucial importance for the overall approach to develop the QMS internal capacities of ReSPA. This is closely connected to the mentioned introduction of CAF or ISO in ReSPA. Since the QM Centre should not serve exclusively as an ISO, CAF or EFQM centre, but as a Centre of Quality of Public Administration of the Western Balkans region, the ReSPA team should have in-depth understanding of all systems/models. Following the theory and the practical implementation of QMS in member countries, the same approach should be applied in ReSPA. It is recommended for the (QPAS) ReSPA team to be trained in following:

- ISO Quality Managers. The training is lasting ca 7-10 days, divided into more modules. This training will provide the ReSPA team with an in-depth understanding of the quality management history, development, major instruments and the overall QMS approach. The approach, philosophy and the use of QMS is the most important aspect of the training, since EFQM and ISO will be subject of training, and their use in bringing institutions and organisations in continuous improvement. The trainings should be completed with a certified exam, accepted in the EU and by an EU member states.
- CAF in-depth training: The understanding of CAF, as a tailor-made concept of QMS for public administrations, concrete use of CAF and practical examples, as well as innovation in practice of PA will be subject of this training. Two modules are recommended: in-depth training of CAF (3 days) and moderation and training when using CAF (4 days).

Using this methodology for strengthening the internal capacities of RESPA, the transfer of knowledge, ownership and sustainability of the Centre towards the member countries is provided. The follow-up of the training should result in a successful introduction of QMS in ReSPA, using the systems internally to feel the benefits and holistic approach of quality management, leading by example.

The momentum of a uniformed approach to quality, customised practices and products, common methodologies, guidelines and analytical papers on how to improve not only the services, but the overall organizational and institutional effectiveness and transparency needs to be taken as a serious attempt to bring the region concrete steps forwards to EU. ReSPA could take up the role of bringing together the regional champions and to follow the examples of mentioned Quality Centres/Centres of Excellence. It should be stressed that quality management should not be seen as an exclusive topic or tool for itself, since in that manner, the use of QM systems and tools is on a rather low level. All ReSPA areas should be part of the possible QM Centre, encompassing the structural reforms in a holistic and proven way. When synergies on organizational, institutional and regional level and culture (policy coordination, strategy, leadership, HRM, employee orientation, client orientation, financial management) are put in a common framework using systems as ISO and/or CAF, the strengths of continuous improvement will be visible, tangible and measurable much sooner than working only on exclusive parts, without synergy creation. Additional to this very crucial momentum, there is an added value of quality management in the region which needs special attention to be paid to: quality management can be used for innovative solutions from central levels down to local levels, where ReSPA obviously could play an important role in the region. ReSPA was successful too far to create new, identify already existing critical mass on country/regional level, where the knowledge management in form of sectoral policies as part of quality management can be easily transferred to other levels than only the central one. This is particularly important for countries such as Bosnia-Herzegovina where even four administrative levels are hindering the efficiency of public administration.

The expectations are extremely high and wide. From strategic/political agenda setting and shaping, over training to strengthen and organize the implementation capacity. Once the decision if, what and how the centre needs to be shaped and a long-term roadmap and detailed operational plan for the first year(s) need to be drafted. This roadmap and plan will be the guidelines for designing and implementing several activities starting from 2018 in the area of quality management and service delivery according to the collected needs and expectations. In this way the demands from the member countries and ReSPA's endeavour to play a driving role in contributing

towards improvement of quality management in public administration in the Western Balkan region will be realised.

In the same way, Quality Management grew over time from a narrow, internally oriented concept, to a concept of organizational development including all organizational aspects (leadership, staff development, process management....) and a strong outward looking focus (user orientation, societal impact, partnership development), it should be the ambition of the centre to grow over time becoming a reference centre on Quality Management in the large sense of the concept.

The building blocks described in this report must be subject of a detailed and well elaborated roadmap, taking into account not only the needs and expectations from member countries which are presented in this report, but also seriously considering internal ReSPA strategy and capacities and the possibility of establishment of such a centre must be proven by DGNear on providing sufficient funds for successful running of such a regional QM centre and the overall political framework, especially in the context of the path to EU-integration of the Western Balkan region.