GAZDASÁG & TÁRSADALOM

Journal of Economy & Society

CONTENTS:

2014/4

Gazdaság & Társadalom
Journal of Economy & Society

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Quality Management in Public Administration

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ABSTRACT Nowadays in developed countries, the administrative reform appears in agenda, and also the globalization put a major competitive challenge on the administration. The paper is a combination of two areas: public administration and quality management. The research is going on to introduce the Common Assessment Framework, which is a result of a co-operation among EU Ministers responsible for Public Administration. CAF is a total quality management (TQM) tool which is designed for the public-sector organisations. Hungarian and European large cities, small towns and villages are representing the characteristic of the research, and that is compared to the results of the CAF self-assessment. The paper contains tables and graphs of CAF data and other given information about the qualities of the municipalities. The main questions of the research were: Where are the employees more satisfied? Is there a difference between the results achieved in the economical regions in the European Community? Can we suppose if there is any similarity of the Hungarian results to the others of Europe? With the benchmarking I have found out that policy and strategy and the key performance planning were the strongest part at the municipalities, while human resource management and employee relationships need to be developed.

KEYWORDS Quality management, public administration, self-assessment, CAF data

Introduction

In developed countries, the administrative reform appears in agenda. Our client's needs grow, the administrative problems are in the media, political scientists, experts also regularly deal with it, and even the profession itself is also dissatisfied with the level of its own. The previous ideas were less successful reform of internal management and focused on more efficient use of financial reserves. The globalization also posed a major competitive challenge on the administration of operating a high-quality public administration and it derives significant competitive advantage. On this basis, it became clear that the administrative reform

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needs new concept, needs to be better, faster and provides more services, the administration is facing a possible change of attitude (Pröhl, Heichlinger, 2009).

In recent years, the increasingly widespread perception that public authorities are no longer primarily public authority bodies, they also satisfy public needs, thus they are service providers. Citizens are now consumers of public services. The economic organizations have requirements that the introduction of public sector institutions also require. In the public administration reforms, effectiveness became more significant, and also the needs of modernization is essential (Pálné, 2008). The tendency is that the quality policy of administration is as the need appears. The quality management which is used in the economic sector is also needed in public administration.

The research is a combination of two areas: public administration and quality management. It is going to introduce the Common Assessment Framework, which is a result of a co-operation among EU Ministers responsible for Public Administration. CAF is a total quality management (TQM) tool which is designed for the public-sector organisations, taking into account their characteristics.

Hungarian and European large cities, small towns and villages represent the characteristic of the research, and that is compared to the results of the CAF self-assessment. The main questions of the research are the following: Have villages or cities achieved better results in self-assessment? Where are the employees more satisfied? Is there a difference between the results achieved in the economical regions in the European Community? Can we suppose if there is any similarity between the Hungarian results and the others of Europe? The paper contains tables and graphs of CAF data and other given information about the qualities of the local public administration (Buday, 2011).

Ouality of Public Administration

Quality is a complex concept, TQM is a definition of quality, which comes from consumer psychology and sets consumer expectations as the first goal of each activity in an organization. It requires the full and active involvement of all employees, and requires a willingness to invest substantially in training (Löffler, 2001).

The Hungarian public administration characterized as a formalized and hierarchical body. Duties and powers were as a result of political deals. The modernization of the organizational roles and responsibilities, were case at issue for years but have not been successful. Within the different organizations, the level of vertical and horizontal cooperation, were extremely low (Menner, Bércesi, Jászberényi, 2004). One of the most important principles of modern government is the efficiency, that all services be available by the administration.

In Hungary, there are nearly three thousand public administration authorities, and more than two-thirds of them are self-government. In the three-quarters of

the towns the population is less than two thousand inhabitants, and in one-third of the towns have joint administrative units. In our country the idea is spreading that public administration is no longer a public authority, but it also satisfies the public needs. This gradually developed in support of the standards that the private sector has proven modern organizational and operational methods and management techniques also useful in the public sector.

All these requirements were great amplified by the accession to European integration, which occurs in response to social, political and economic changes that are increasing the requirements for public administration as well. The modernization of public administration is required, and the current problem is needed to be solved as soon as possible.

It is important to note, that different countries have not the same level and type of public authorities, and the reason of this is the structure of the state. I also have to mention, that the name public administrative body attend to mean two different types of body functions: 1. it is an agency, which working in close collaboration with the political authorities; 2. is a government, which is not in a close collaboration with the representative bodies, and its functions are decision making and daily execution.

Table 1. The structure of CAF
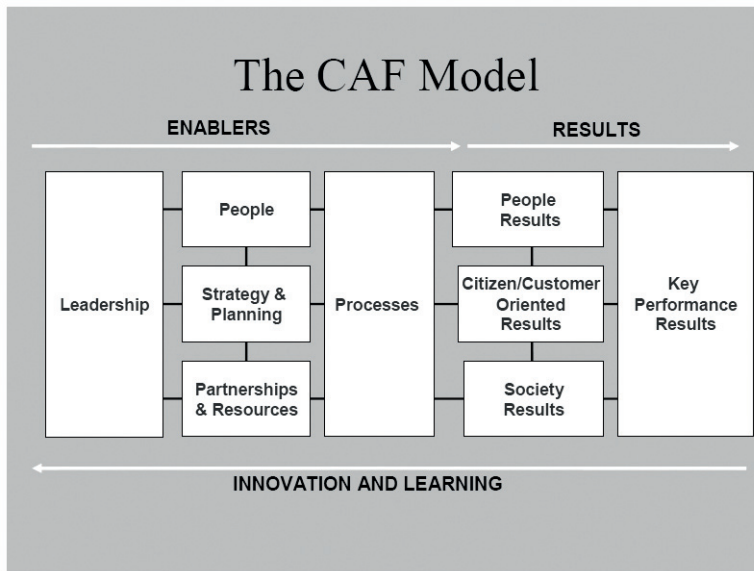
The aim of creating the CAF was to take specific steps towards improving public service for citizens. The idea of Common Assessment Framework was born to provide public administration with a quality management tool. The CAF has four main purposes:

To introduce public administrations to the principles of TQM and gradually guide them, through the use and understanding of self-assessment, from the current "Plan-Do" sequence of activities to a full fledged "Plan-Do-Check-Act (PCDA)" cycle;

- To facilitate the self-assessment of a public organisation in order to arrive at a diagnosis and improvement actions;
- To act as a bridge across the various models used in quality management;
- To facilitate bench learning between public-sector organisations.

The involvement of staff is highly appreciated in the CAF implementation. CAF is a joint project for management and staff and very often CAF is the first occasion when management and staff meet to discuss the state of affairs of the organisation and the options for the future in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness[13]. The implementing of quality management is an interaction of three contents: product, client and use. After that the public sector became interested in providing effective services, with the increase of competition, the public administration was forced to pay attention to effectiveness to be able to deal with economic problems. (Ferreira, Diniz, 2004)

The original version of CAF in 2000 contained 9 criterions and 43 subcriterions, but in the new versions there are only 27 subcriterions to facilitate the use of the system. From the outside of Europe, like the Middle East, China, Dominican Republic and Brazil show an interest about the CAF in as well. The CAF self-assessment system is intended to provide a simple and easy to use framework for the public sector.

The Research

In the centre of the research is the role of quality of Hungarian and European EU administration. The project is an interdisciplinary combination of two areas - public administration and quality management – with comparative research, where foreign and domestic CAF data provide the basis for the comparison[14].

The research is based on the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) method which is an official self-assessment of public administration in the European Union with the intention to introduce more effective management of the organization devices. This is a model based on the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) model to which administrative features were added. It is a TQM model created for the public sector.

In my research Hungarian CAF data were compared with the data of some cities of the European Union, and we should assume that the system of quality assessment in public administration in the EU is more effective, the numbers are

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13   Read more: www.eipa.eu/en/topic/show/&tid=191

14   Similar in: (Matei, Lazar 2011.)

higher than the Hungarian values. In addition, my hypothesis is that in smaller towns results are higher than in the cities, and the more developed regions have achieved prominent results. The organizations are expected to achieve different goals because of the usage of CAF.

CAF users come from all sectors in public administration. It has to be noted though that the two most prominent sectors according to the EIPA CAF database are Education and Research (403 users) and Local Administration (542 users). As CAF spreads further – also in other sectors – it might occur that in the future more of these specialised CAF-sector versions will be developed.

From these CAF users the European Union countries were used in this examination (where there was a CAF self-assessment process at a local government) and they were divided into three groups. The names the following groups received are: 1 Dominant, 2 Trendy, 3 Follower. The allocation is based on today's economic and social level.

Table 2. Groups of countries of the European Union

DOMINANT	users	TRENDY	users	FOLLOWER	users
Austria	21	Cyprus	2	Czech Republic	44
Belgium	50	Greece	23	Estonia	1
Denmark	78	Italy	107	Lithuania	5
Finland	6	Portugal	14	Poland	85
France	5	Spain	7	Hungary	9
Germany	22	Slovenia	7	Romania	3
The Netherlands	1			Slovakia	2
				Bulgaria	3
Total	183		160		152

Furthermore there is no pattern that would suggest a geographical reason as to where most of the CAF users in public administration at municipalities are. At the top of the class are countries like Belgium, Italy, Denmark, and Poland.

Supposing that the results of CAF self-assessment levels in the dominant group of public administration sector are near to value 4, in the trendy group they are between 2.5-4, and in the follower group they are between 1-2.5. Which are the strengths and weaknesses at local governments? I suppose that the 'leadership and planning' could be strong, and the weak point in most areas is the human resource sector.

Results and conclusions

On the website of European Institute of Public Administration the CAF registered users can be viewed and almost all users are given the contact person's e-mail address. During the research, I sent an email to these addresses in which

my purpose was described to gather comparative data analysis. I made a table, separated in the 2006's self-assessment summary, which has not 5 but 100 scale. I attached it to my e-mail to ease data sending.

The collection was difficult, as most of the contacts did not respond to my e-mail which I sent several times. Finally, some data were given from Jyvaskyla (Finland), Vienna 15th District (Austria), Krsko (Slovenia), Chomutov (Czech Republic), Budapest 1st District (Hungary), and Sopron (Hungary). The basic idea was to compare all three groups of villages, small towns and big cities, but this from the results were received was not possible. At each municipality the latest survey results of the CAF were investigated.

Table 3. Data were used in the research

DOMINANT	TRENDY	FOLLOWER
Vienna 15th District (Austria)	Krsko (Slovenia)	Chomutov (Czech Republic)
Jyvaskyla (Finland)		Budapest 1st District (Hungary)
		Sopron (Hungary)

Comparing the two capitals

The 1st district of Budapest is a historic part of the city. That is why it is not surprising that in the social impact on the environment, and relation to citizen it provides the most acceptable results in the CAF assessment (8, 6 and 5 criterions). There is a must for improvement in human resources management and employee relations (criterion 3 and 7). The results of Budapest were better than what was expected from the country's overall socio-economic conditions of classification.

Table 4. Budapest 1st district

Criterions	Average
1. Leadership	3,50
2. Policy and strategy	3,50
3. Human resource management	2,30
4. Partnerships and resources	3,30
5. Process and change management	3,80
6. Citizen/customer results	3,80
7. People results	3,00
8. Society results	4,00
9. Key performance results	3,60
Average	3,4
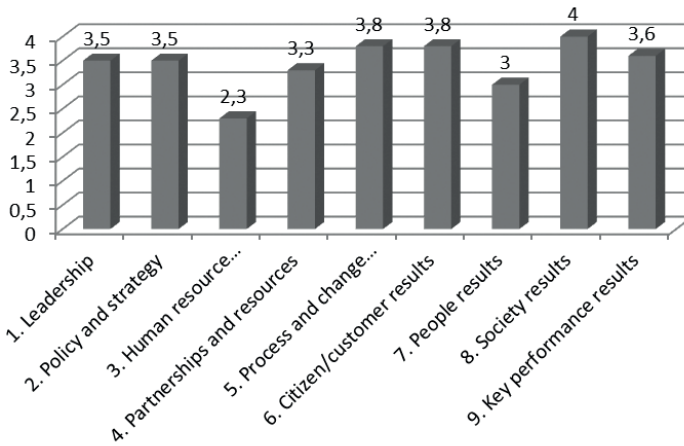
The capital of Austria has 19 local administration units with are all the part of the local administration of Vienna. The 15th district of the city became a role model of all the municipalities in Vienna with its new concept of local government agencies in practice. The new conception was to collect in one place of all the often used important cases of citizens.

Table 5. Vienna 15th district

Criterions	Average
1. Leadership	4,30
2. Policy and strategy	4,70
3. Human resource management	3,30
4. Partnerships and resources	4,20
5. Process and change management	3,00
6. Citizen/customer results	4,50
7. People results	2,50
8. Society results	4,00
9. Key performance results	4,00
Average	3,8
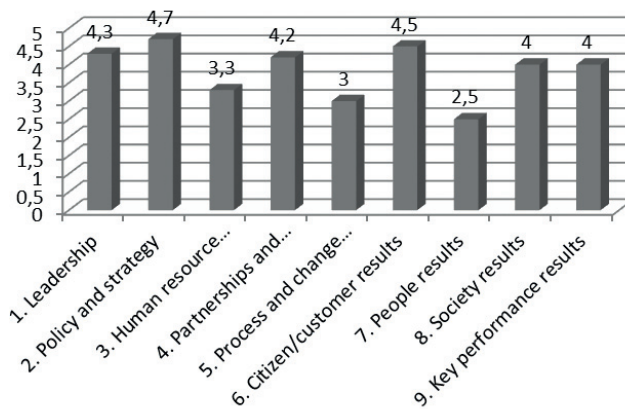
Table 6. Comparison of Budapest and Vienna
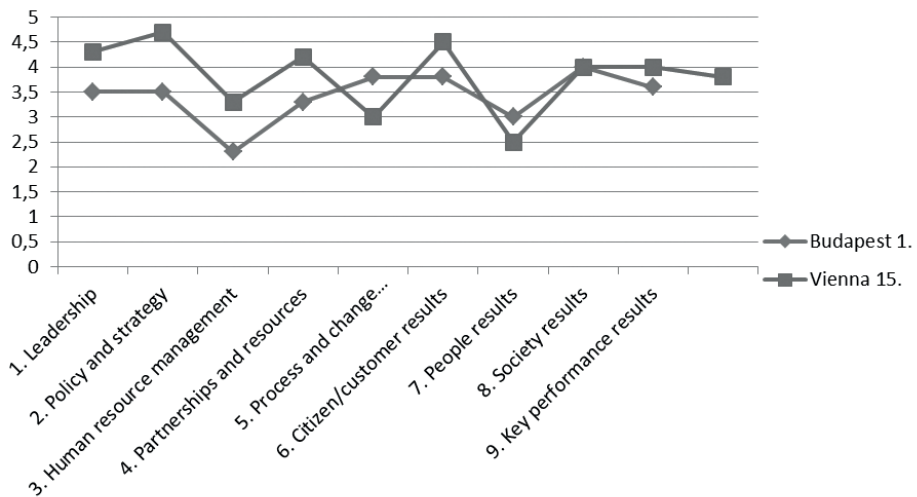
At the municipality of Vienna 15th district in the evaluation of leadership, organization and policy strategy the results were the best, however, criterions 5 and 7 are the worst. Austria was classified in the leader (Dominant) group, although it was close to the CAF 4.0 average, so this country is just going to be in the Trendy group.

As the upper chart shows, Vienna had better results - except in two cases - than Budapest. The two exceptions were Process and change management and People results criterions. The differences in the two largest municipalities were the

strategy and human resources planning and management. In these criterions the differences were more than 1 point. Vienna's excellent result was in Strategy and planning criterion, which almost reaches the maximum value of 5. You can see that Vienna 15th district averages were 0.4 higher than the average of the Budapest 1st district. An important difference is that 30 people who work at Vienna 15th district's local administration office manage 70 thousands inhabitants, while in the 1st district of Budapest 120 administrators get 24,700 citizens.

Comparison of other towns

In the case of Sopron we find that the results with one exception moved in a 0.5 lane, which shows a balance. The exception was the seventh criterion with people results that is a kind of brake of operation of the office. The difference is conspicuous (a complete unit) between the 6th and 7th criterions which can show a strained relation between internal problems and to have a good impression for clients. In the research I put Hungary in the Follower group and Sopron definitely went beyond that level, and qualified at the Trendy level.

The basic strategic direction at the administrative unit Krsko is to make a legitimate and quality service. This local administration in Slovenia ranked among the medium sized units. Krsko's average results were around 4 as the upper diagram shows. Exception is the eighth criterion of social results on the environment of society, which in this case is not particularly needed, as Krsko is a small town. It may be thought this is a balanced imaged of a consolidated local government.

Table 7. Results of Sopron

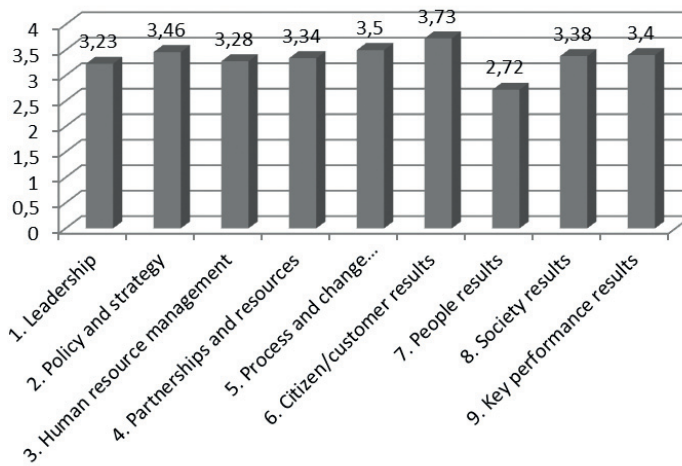| Criterions	Average
1. Leadership	3,23
2. Policy and strategy	3,46
3. Human resource management	3,28
4. Partnerships and resources	3,34
5. Process and change management	3,50
6. Citizen/customer results	3,73
7. People results	2,72
8. Society results	3,38
9. Key performance results	3,40
Average	3,34

On the 1st of January of 2009 merged the rural town of Jyvaskyla and village Korpilahti merged, and became known as Jyvaskyla, which is now the seventh largest city in Finland with 130,000 inhabitants. It is now the business and cultural heart of Finland.

As the graph shows, there is a balanced line in the middle of the survey results, only the eighth criterion of social results were behind. This indicates that the local government follows rather than directs the results.

Table 8. Results of the town of Krsko

Criterions	Average
1. Leadership	4,09
2. Policy and strategy	4,00
3. Human resource management	4,01
4. Partnerships and resources	4,07
5. Process and change management	4,12
6. Citizen/customer results	4,15
7. People results	3,95
8. Society results	3,35
9. Key performance results	4,00
Average	3,93
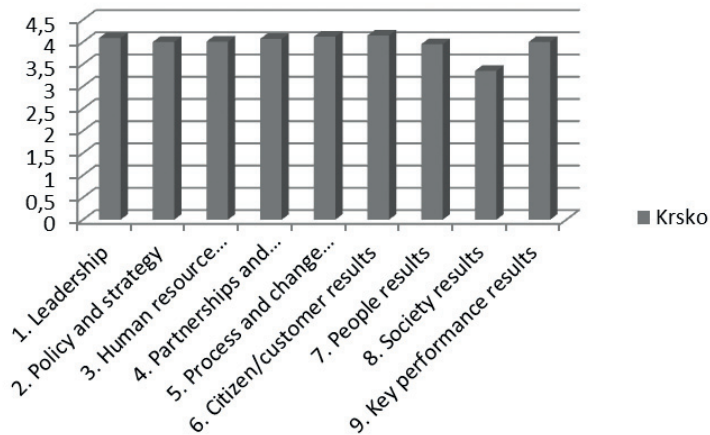
From the 1st of July of 2006 Chomutov officially became a town, and turned into the 20th largest city in the Czech Republic. The municipality of Chomutov has identified four strategic objectives: 1 better service for citizens; 2 staff and educational policy; 3 cooperation with strategic partners; 4 clear policy and culture for the authority.

Table 9. The results of Jyvaskyla

Criterions		Average
1.	Leadership	3,00
2.	Policy and strategy	2,80
3.	Human resource management	3,20
4.	Partnerships and resources	3,20
5.	Process and change management	3,00
6.	Citizen/customer results	3,00
7.	People results	3,00
8.	Society results	2,00
9.	Key performance results	3,50
	Average	3,0
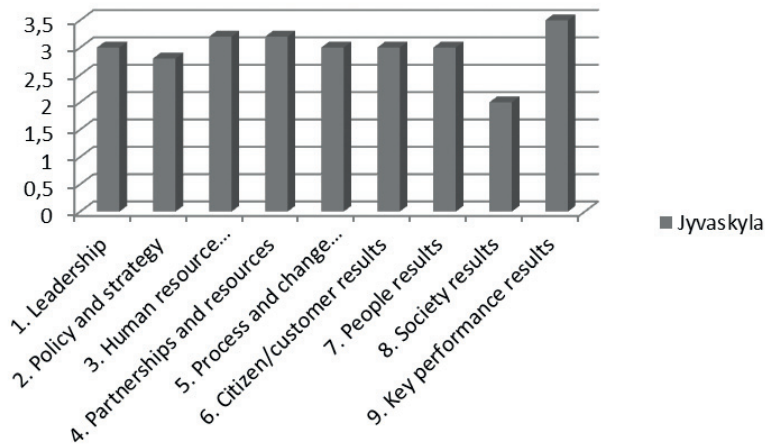
The results suggest that the local government doesn't have a very strong side. It makes everything difficult that the strategy planning and social effect on surroundings are below average, which shows uncertainty in the management. Overall, the Czech Republic is in the Follower group, so the CAF self-assessment is the average of 2.4, although the categories 2 / 3 part has reached the advanced level.

Table 10. The results of Chomutov

| Criterions	Average
1. Leadership	2,60
2. Policy and strategy	2,60
3. Human resource management	2,60
4. Partnerships and resources	2,70
5. Process and change management	3,00
6. Citizen/customer results	1,70
7. People results	1,80
8. Society results	1,80
9. Key performance results	3,20
Average	2,4
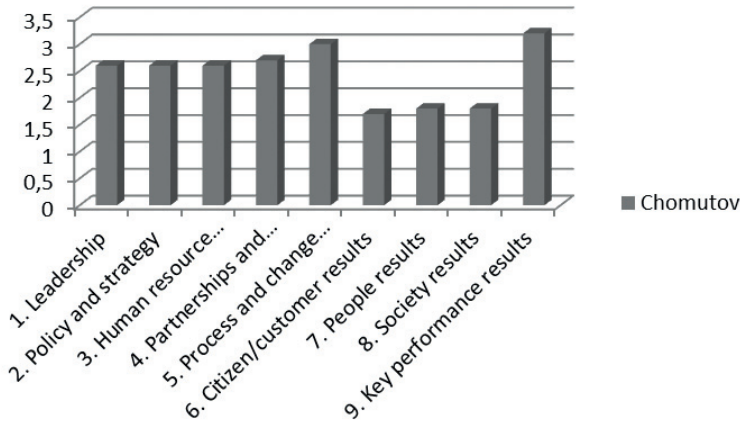
Summary

The aim was to examine what is the relationship between the output of local governments and their countries' socio-economic level. It was found that although Hungary in is the Follower zone, two municipalities (first district of Budapest and Sopron) were performed well 1 each municipalities in the Trendy (Slovenia) and Follower (Czech Republic) zone had adequate levels of CAF. From the Dominant group municipalities of Austria and Finland could show only one level lower, intermediate (trendy) CAF self-assessment results. On this basis, although without generalization, we can say that the research of the country's economic social level did not have a significant effect on the local CAF self-assessment results.

Table 11. Averages per towns

| Municipality	Average of criterions
Budapest I.	3,42
Bécs XV.	3,83
Sopron	3,34
Krsko	3,97
Jyvaskyla	2,97
Chomutov	2,44
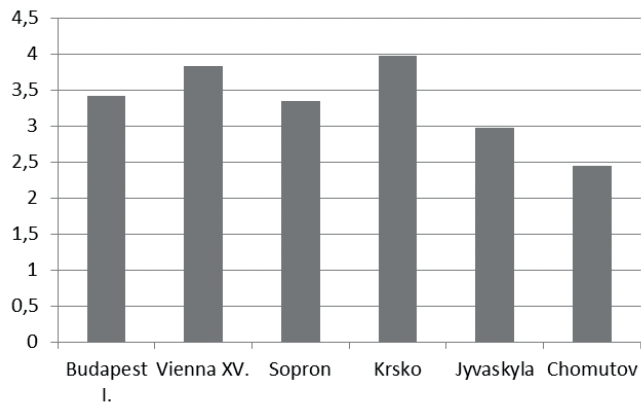
Which were the strengths and weaknesses at local governments? As the illustration above shows, the 2nd and 9th criterions are considered as strong points at municipalities, these are policy and strategy and key performance planning. In other words, the management has well-defined plans and the strategy as well as the machinery of government is implemented. The weaknesses are the human resource management and employee relationships. This is unusual, since the strength must be related to the weaknesses in this system. Such internal contradictions, the hidden faults must be brought out with the CAF self-assessment system, this is one of its functions and values.

Benchlearning, is one the main advantage of the CAF, with the use of the same scale in different countries local administration units can be compared.

The satisfaction of citizens, also take an important part in the development of administration units. Researches and everyday experiences confirm that the quality of public administration affect the efficiency of the country.

Table 12. Averages of criterions
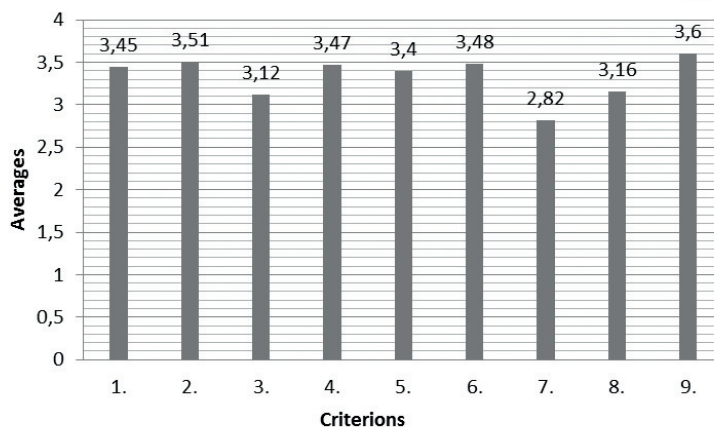
The need for appropriate benchlearning partners in different fields of public administration is growing. The CAF has continued to spread all over Europe, and as the European Union became one of the most competitive economy of the world it is essential to the states hold effective governance structures. With the practice of CAF helps to have a clear idea of the current situation, and with the time of implementation it should show better results, and what actions should be undertaken by the government.

The CAF self-assessment tool helps to measure improvements and weak points at public authorities, and it is also brings new ideas how to modernise the management and the relationships between employees at a local administration unit.

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