

MEMORANDUM ON THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE “REGIONAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT CENTER” IN ReSPA

Adopted on 18 February 2021

Preamble

The Heads of Governments, Ministers and representatives of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, as Members of the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), and European Commission;

hereinafter referred to as “the Parties” and/or “Western Balkans – WBs”;

- **Whereas** ReSPA has been awarded the “Effective CAF-USER” Label in June 2020, after more than two years of CAF implementation, thus confirmed as a Western Balkans lead institution, at Regional level, in the domain of quality management in public administration;
- **Recalling** that the Parties, during the 11th Governing Board Meeting at Ministerial Level of ReSPA held on 6th of November 2020, committed to establish a Regional Quality Management Center in the Western Balkans;
- **Whereas** the Parties wish to establish a mutually beneficial relationship and advance in their efforts towards quality management,
- **Considering that**, within Quality Management, among others, there are two complementary procedures:
 - *CAF (Common Assessment Framework)* which is a quality management system for public administrations, with which employees and managers assess their own organization, determine their strengths and potential for improvement, and subsequently implement improvements.
 - *PEF (CAF External Feedback Procedure)*, which provides external feedback on the assessment that has taken place with CAF, aiming to further support CAF users in their journey towards quality.
- **Whereas** the PEF is organized by either a CAF Resource Center or a National Organizer and in case of the Western Balkans, National Organizers do not exist at a large scale, it is deemed important to establish a Regional CAF Resource Center;

- **Whereas** the Parties in accordance with the present Memorandum of Establishment will set-up, enhance and encourage joint and cooperative initiatives in the domain of quality management in public administration,

The Parties hereby agree on the following:

Article 1 – Establishment and functioning

- 1.1 The Regional Quality Management Center (hereinafter “the Regional Center” or “the Center”) shall be established within the existing structure of the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA).
- 1.2 The Center will operate, *inter alia*, as a Regional CAF Resource Center for the institutions and organizations in the Western Balkans that intend to undergo the CAF and PEF processes.
- 1.3 The Center shall be entitled to issue the “CAF Effective User” Certificate to the institutions and organizations in the Region that successfully undergo the PEF process.
- 1.4 The Center may also act as CAF Resource Center for other institutions and organizations beyond the Western Balkans, provided that it has the necessary capacities and resources.
- 1.5 The official language of the Regional Center shall be English. In dully justified cases, the respective languages of ReSPA Members may be used, provided that this does not jeopardize the “regional” status of the Center.

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Article 2 – Organization of the Regional Center

- 2.1 The Center is integral part of ReSPA and shall operate under the authority of the ReSPA Director. The Center has no independent legal capacity.
- 2.2 Relevant ReSPA staff shall be dully appointed by ReSPA Director to be engaged on a daily basis for the operation of the Center and implementation of its activities. More specifically, ReSPA Staff engaged in the operation of the Center, apart from the ReSPA Director, shall be the followings: Programme Manager Coordinator, Programme Manager in charge for Quality Management, Programme Manager (Legal) and Programme Assistant in charge for QM.
- 2.3 External staff and/or experts may be engaged in the operation of the Center, if need arises.

Article 3 – The network of CAF Contact Points in the Region

- 3.1 The Western Balkans administrations shall, in cooperation with ReSPA, identify the CAF contact points (within the ReSPA QM working group) and CAF External Feedback Actors Network in each of the administrations, which shall be in close cooperation with the Regional Center and shall be engaged in its activities and operations.
- 3.2 CAF External Feedback Actors shall be responsible for implementing the CAF External Feedback Procedure (PEF) in their administrations.
- 3.3 ReSPA shall be responsible for training and certifying the members of the Network.

Article 4 – Objectives, activities and competences of the QM Regional Center

- 4.1 The main common objectives of the Regional Center are to:
 - Enhance Quality Management networking in the Region;
 - Improve cooperation in the field of Quality Management amongst the participants of the Center;
 - Encourage exchanges of experiences and best practices amongst the participants and wider;
 - Establish CAF/PEF regional expertise and increase the number of institutions and organizations that undergo the CAF/PEF process
 - Strengthen exchange with EU member states as well as with other relevant international partners in the domain of quality management;
- 4.2 In addition, the Regional Center will:
 - Conduct periodical regional analysis of application of TQM tools and respective needs for further upgrading.
 - Establish and maintain the Network of CAF contact points in the region;
 - Complete PEF process in the CAF pilots;
 - Raise awareness on CAF among the region (through the above mentioned Network), which may lead to potentially new CAF pilots;
 - Organize Training of trainers for CAF and PEF;
 - Organize accreditation for getting PEF expertise;
 - Assist public administration in WB to implement PAR strategic processes related to quality management as their inherent part

Article 5 – Participation in the QM Regional Center

- 5.1 All the Parties of this Memorandum are participants on an equal basis at the QM Regional Center and may benefit from the services and activities of the Center.
- 5.2 Any future ReSPA Member/Participant shall be automatically considered as a participant of the Regional Center.

Article 6 – Chairmanship

- 6.1 The Chairmanship of the Regional Center concords with the ReSPA Governing Board Chairmanship.
- 6.2 ReSPA Chairman is *ex officio* Chairman of the Regional Center.
- 6.3 The responsibilities of the Chairman shall be:
- convene at least one annual coordination meeting of the participants of the Center and take stock of the activities of the Center, developments related to quality management as well as identify matters that need to be addressed by the Center in the future period, till the next meeting. The Annual coordination meeting shall be attended by representatives of Ministries of Public Administration from the WBs, the Network of CAF contact Points from WBs, ReSPA GB-SL members and external invitees;
 - The Chairman may choose to host and organize other events in conjunction with the annual meeting such as Best Practices Training;
 - To maintain the list of CAF Network contacts and circulate updated versions on a regular basis;
 - To act as a focal point of information regarding the operation of the Center itself;
- 6.4 ReSPA Secretariat shall serve as Secretariat for the Chairman of the Center and shall assist the Chairman in fulfilling his/her tasks and obligations.

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Article 7 – Partner organizations

- 7.1 In its continuous efforts to enhance the role of the Regional Center, ReSPA shall cooperate with experienced international and regional partners in the domain of Quality Management, such as, but not limited to: European Commission (EC), European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), Centre for Public Administration Research (KDZ), European Public Administration Network (EUPAN).
- 7.2 Partner organizations may be invited to attend and contribute during the annual coordination meetings of the participants of the Center, based on the topics for discussion.

Article 8 – Access to information and data

- 8.1 The Members of the QM Regional Center commit to ensure access to information and data that are necessary for the Center to fulfill its objectives, in accordance with domestic legislation.
- 8.2 The Regional Center commits to provide to its members and participants any information that relates to its operation and activities.

Article 9 – Financing

9.1 The activities of the Center shall be financed by existing ReSPA Core budget as well as other sources, such as EC Grant budget, donations and external projects/initiatives.

Article 10 – Entry into force and amendments

10.1 The present Memorandum of Establishment shall enter into force from the date of its last signature by the duly authorized representatives of each Party.

10.2 The Memorandum may at any time be amended in written form by mutual consent of all parties.

Article 11 – Termination

11.1 Any of the Parties to this Memorandum, may terminate at any time the cooperation under the present Memorandum providing the other Parties as well as ReSPA with a written notice to that effect at least 3 (three) months before the intended date of termination.

11.2 Regardless of any other provision, this Memorandum cannot be valid beyond the duration of the ReSPA Agreement.

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Adopted on the date of 18 February 2021 in 6 (six) originals in English language.

On behalf of Albania:

On behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina:

On behalf of Montenegro:

On behalf of North Macedonia:

On behalf of Serbia:
