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**GOOD GOVERNANCE IN THE POLISH  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

## Introduction

The objective of the article is to present the notion of Good Governance in the Polish public administration. The authors assumed that Common Assessment Framework (CAF)<sup>1</sup> might be one of the methods for implementing the Good Governance concept. They noted the significance of human resources management (HRM). An effective management of human resources and an efficiency of their actions allow for reaching a public administration effectiveness.

The control system of the research was the following research hypothesis: it is assumed that in the town/city halls in towns/cities of the urban powiat status from the Śląskie Voivodeship the quality of HR management is low. Consequently, in the field of HR management there is much room for improvement. The work presents experience and results of the studies undertaken while implementing the CAF method in Poland.

## 1. The notion of Good Governance

The roots of Good Governance should be traced to the notion of New Public Management (NPM) which, in turn, stems from the experiences of public administration within which the so-called administrative approach dominated<sup>2</sup>, that was based on the theory of bureaucracy invented by M. Weber<sup>3</sup>.

In Western Europe, resourcefulness in the public sector is defined as “New Public Management” (NPM) and its agents are known as “new public managers”<sup>4</sup>. The beginnings of the NPM date back to the 1980s and Great Britain. However, already in the 1960s, the notion of New Public Administration (NPA)<sup>5</sup> had emerged in the United States as a response to the then persisting fossilized bureaucratic machine.

Within the NPM framework, four models were developed in line with which reforms may be implemented. These include:

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<sup>1</sup> More information can be found in: *Study on the Use of the Common Assessment Framework in European Public Administrations*. Ed. P. Staes. European Institute of Public Administration, Maastricht 2005; P. Staes: *The CAF as an Instrument for a Bottom up European Quality Approach in the Public Sector*. 3<sup>rd</sup> European CAF Event, Lisbon 2007; A. Stoffels, L. Heidler: *CAT eTool and Users' Database*. 3<sup>rd</sup> European CAF Event, Lisbon 2007; J. Orvalho: *People: The Heart of Organizations*. 3<sup>rd</sup> European CAF Event, Lisbon 2007.

<sup>2</sup> According to W. Kieżun, one of the most outstanding Polish management and organization scholars: “[...] one should not talk about administering, but rather about public management. The structure of administration has an impact upon most economic issues” – more information in W. Kieżun: *Państwo powinno być oszczędne*. “Gość Niedzielny”, 13 czerwca 2004, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Z. Martyniak: *Prekursorzy nauki organizacji i zarządzania*. PWE, Warszawa 1993, pp. 157-158.

<sup>4</sup> See T. Kraśnicka: *Koncepcja rozwoju przedsiębiorczości ekonomicznej i pozaekonomicznej*. Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej, Katowice 2002, p. 281.

<sup>5</sup> More information in: *Nowe zarządzanie publiczne w polskim samorządzie terytorialnym*. Red. A. Zalewski. Szkoła Główna Handlowa, Warszawa 2007, pp. 26-73.

NPM Model 1 – Increase in efficiency – strives at shaping the public sector to resemble the private sector.

NPM Model 2 – Decentralization and “reduction” of the public sector – aims at the transition from hierarchy-based management to contract-based management.

NPM Model 3 – In search of perfection – emphasizes the organizational culture within public institutions.

NPM Model 4 – Orientation towards public services – aims at increased significance of quality management methods.

In practice, a gradual transition from the first to the fourth NPM model has been taking place<sup>6</sup>.

In Poland the development of NPM is facilitated by such official legislative bodies as gmina councils, powiat councils, and regional parliaments at the respective levels of local public administration. The legislative bodies determine what direction the actions of executive bodies should take. Such actions motivate the executive bodies not only to administer, but most of all to show resourcefulness in realizing their goals. However, the objectives set by legislative bodies (e.g. gmina councils) do not always coincide with those set by executive bodies (e.g. the president). Conflicts arising in an office, most commonly from political differences, may have a negative impact on the activities of the office.

Governance<sup>7</sup> refers to NPM. This is particularly visible in its treatment of citizens as customers and in “maximization of social profit”. Moreover, Governance points to a stronger cooperation of public authorities, i.e. to openness and transparency of public institutions; quality of public authorities (e.g. voluntary political legitimization, effective and audited administrative structures and authorities, public-private partnership); decentralization of the state system; network-based model of governing centres in modern society<sup>8</sup>.

Good Governance may be deemed a synonym for Public Governance. Good Governance implies appropriate identification of and effective solutions to social problems by public authorities<sup>9</sup>, with the participation of stakeholders<sup>10</sup>. Within the Human Capital programme, Good Governance can be seen as increasing the potential

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<sup>6</sup> See K. Opolski, P. Modzelewski: *Zarządzanie jakością w usługach publicznych*. CeDeWu sp. z o.o, Warszawa 2004, pp. 35-37.

<sup>7</sup> Governance or Public Governance – Public management; also known as Corporate Governance in the business sector which establishes, among other things, good management practices in corporations (more information at [www.pcfg.org.pl](http://www.pcfg.org.pl)).

<sup>8</sup> K. Szczerski: *Administracja publiczna w modelu zarządzania wielopasmowego*. Centrum Europejskie Natolin, Warszawa 2005, pp.13-14.

<sup>9</sup> Public authorities comprise all of the state’s legislative, executive, and judicial bodies which act in compliance with and within the limits of the law, in a responsible and effective way, satisfying material and non-material needs of citizens through cooperation with social and economic organizations; more information at [www.uek.krakow.pl](http://www.uek.krakow.pl).

<sup>10</sup> Definition acc. to the “Good Governance” seminar held in 2006 at Małopolska School of Public Administration by the University of Economics in Kraków; the faculty of Economy and Public Administration.

of public administration to draft laws and policies, providing high-quality service and strengthening partnership<sup>11</sup>.

To sum up, Good Governance involves improvements in the management of social issues, e.g. effective and efficient functioning of public administration, made by public authorities in cooperation with stakeholders.

Good Governance refers to the notion of Total Quality Management (TQM) within which the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) can be applied. This is one of the aspects of social economy that forms in scientific and economic environments, for instance, through the field of Public Administration and Economy.

## 2. CAF and Good Governance

### 2.1. Good Governance in Poland as a priority in the OP Human Capital 2007-2013

In Poland, CAF is the method used for Good Governance. The Operational Programme Human Capital 2007-2013 (HC OP) may serve as an example here. Good Governance is the 5<sup>th</sup> of 11 priorities that were defined under the program<sup>12</sup>. The priority supports state and local administration, judicial institutions and is oriented towards development of NGOs. The objectives under this priority will be realized by increasing the quality of and access to public services, as well as by improving the legislation and management of public finances. This process will happen simultaneously to a broadening of public sector staff skills<sup>13</sup>.

The program includes the objective “Improving the potential of local government administration” with more specific objectives 5.2.1 – Modernization of management in local government administration, and 5.2.2 – Systematic support of local government administration. Objective 5.2.1 includes projects covering:

- improvement of quality, broadening the access to public services provided by local government administration,
- implementation of management-related improvements in public administration viewed globally, including quality management (e.g. ISO standards) or assessment of the operational and developmental level of offices (e.g. Common Assessment Framework),

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<sup>11</sup> Third objective proposed within the Operational Programme Human Capital 2007-2013 (OP HC), which included the Good Governance as its 5<sup>th</sup> central priority.

<sup>12</sup> K. Lisiecka, T. Papaj: *Jakość zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi w urzędach terytorialnej administracji publicznej*. Wydział Zarządzania, Akademia Ekonomiczna w Katowicach, p. 19 (unpublished study, 2007); more information at [www.caf-localgov.gr](http://www.caf-localgov.gr).

<sup>13</sup> Operational Programme Human Capital 2007-2013. Department of European Social Fund Management, The Ministry of Regional Development, Warsaw 2007, p. 10.

- implementation of improvements in management of selected aspects of the public administration, e.g. internal communication, circulation of documents, risk management, strategic planning,
- identifying and propagating good practices in units of local self-government, including customer service, organization and functioning of offices, and management.

The issues covered by the objectives of priority 5 are a good sign for the future implementation of Good Governance in Poland. Since CAF has been embraced by priority 5 – Good Governance, the method stands a good chance of being promoted within the Polish public administration.

## **2.2. CAF operational plan for Poland**

The 2007 Cologne CAF correspondents meeting served as an inspiration for preparation of the CAF operational plan for Poland. Promotion of CAF was launched by the Head of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister. Further activities were taken up by the Civil Service Department of the Chancellery which employs a correspondent responsible for implementation of CAF in Poland. The application of CAF has not been introduced by way of a formal decision and is non-obligatory. The CAF initiatives were supported by such institutions as the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, the Ministry of Justice and the Tax Office in Warsaw. The proposed CAF Operational Plan for the years 2007-2008 was published in April 2007 and is currently being reviewed in cooperation with EIPA.

## **2.3. CAF in state public administration**

The project 2004/016-829.01.03 was an example of implementation of CAF at selected Polish ministries and central offices. The project aimed at improving the functioning of Polish public administration. Implemented between October 2006 and November 2007, the project involved the training of 500 employees from 20 selected ministries and central offices, the preparation of 40 state administration employees to perform the role of CAF coaches (advisors), self-assessment based on CAF in the selected offices and definition of areas requiring improvement, and, subsequently, preparation of projects for the improvement of these offices. Moreover, the project involved preparation of the 20 best improvements in organizations participating in the project and preparation of a good practices database<sup>14</sup>. In November 2007 the project was summarized and the effectiveness of CAF method was confirmed by indicating improvements that were started in the state administration institutions.

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<sup>14</sup> Project 2004/016-829.01.03 Implementation of CAF at selected ministries and central offices. WYG International 2007, p.5; more at [www.mswia.gov.pl](http://www.mswia.gov.pl).

## 2.4. CAF in local public administration as exemplified by the Province of Silesia

Among the examples of how CAF is used within local public administration was the study conducted in one of the largest Polish regions – Silesia. The study included offices of *poviat* towns. Townships of the Silesian Province were selected primarily because they operate within one of the largest conurbations in Poland and provide services for about 2.7 million customers<sup>15</sup>.

The studies focused on the evaluation of the HR management quality of the local public administration. The studies attempted to verify the following research hypothesis: it is assumed that in the town/city halls in towns/cities of the urban *poviat* status from the Śląskie Voivodeship the quality of HR management is low. Consequently, in the field of HR management there is much room for improvement. Information for the studies has been primarily collected with the answer questionnaire using the research methodology of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), version 2006<sup>16</sup>. The study was financed by Karol Adamiecki University of Economics in 2007.

The quality of HR management was determined by evaluation of the level to which a given CAF criterion has been implemented. Levels were evaluated using an expert method.

The purposive sample was selected from the entire general population of the offices of local public administration comprising of town/city halls, *gmina* offices, *poviat* starostys, and offices of the marshal of the voivodeship throughout Poland. The questionnaire was sent to all (19) urban *poviats* in the Śląskie Voivodeship. Answers were sent back by 8 towns, i.e. 42% of the respondents<sup>17</sup>. The offices in these towns/cities constituted an empirical population.

Out of nine CAF criteria, two were chosen for the studies, both concerning HR management, namely: “People” and “People Results”. Each of the aforementioned criteria consists of several sub-criteria and detailed questions.

The HR management quality evaluation was based on the sub-criteria implementation progress. Each sub-criterion with related detailed questions, to which an appropriate score was assigned, was subject to self-assessment. The score was assigned based on the adopted point scale. The studies used the classical point scale<sup>18</sup>.

Below we present a classical assessment panel for Enablers and Results.

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<sup>15</sup> Further information: *Województwo Śląskie 2006 – podregiony, powiaty, gminy*. Urząd Statystyczny w Katowicach, [www.stat.gov.pl/katow/](http://www.stat.gov.pl/katow/)

<sup>16</sup> The questionnaire was developed based on the Polish version of the CAF 2006 questionnaire template (including the calculation method), as provided by the European Institute of Public Administration in Maastricht, Holland; [www.eipa.nl](http://www.eipa.nl).

<sup>17</sup> Research questionnaires were received from the following towns/cities: Chorzów, Częstochowa, Jastrzębie-Zdrój, Ruda Śląska, Rybnik, Siemianowice Śląskie, Zabrze, and Żory.

<sup>18</sup> There is also another type of this scale, known as the fine-tuned scale, however, it was not considered in the studies. More: *Wspólna Metoda Oceny – CAF 2006* (The Common Assessment Framework). Służba Cywilna, Warszawa 2006.

Table 1

## Criterion “People” according to CAF – classical assessment panel

Phase	Enablers Panel	Score (in points)	Level
	We are not active in this field. We have no information or very anecdotal	0-10	Not applicable
Plan	We have a plan to do this	11-30	Very low
Do	We are implementing/doing this	31-50	Low
Check	We check/review if we do the right things in the right way	51-70	Medium
Act	On the basis of checking/reviews, we adjust if necessary	71-90	High
PDCA	Everything we do, we plan, implement and adjust regularly and we learn from others. We are in a continuous improvement cycle on this issue	91-100	Excellent

Source: Own study based on *Wspólna Metoda Oceny – CAF 2006* (The Common Assessment Framework). Służba Cywilna, Warszawa 2006, pp. 36-37.

Table 2

## Criterion “People Results” according to CAF – classical assessment panel

“Results” Panel	Score (in points)	Level
No results are measured and/or no information is available	0-10	Not applicable
Key results are measured and show negative trends and/or results do not meet relevant targets	11-30	Very low
Results show flat trends and/or some relevant targets are met	31-50	Low
Results show improving trends and/or most of the relevant targets are met	51-70	Medium
Results show substantial progress and/or all relevant targets are met	71-90	High
Excellent and sustained results are achieved. All relevant targets are met. Positive comparisons with relevant organizations for all the key results are made	91-100	Excellent

Source: Own study based on *Wspólna Metoda Oceny – CAF 2006...*, op. cit.

## Results of the studies

The results have shown that the HR management quality for the “People” criterion is medium, while for the “People Results” is low. Considering partial scores of the criteria included in the studies, we received a total of 49 points<sup>19</sup>, which places the organizations at a very low level (see Table 3).

<sup>19</sup> The adopted research methodology provides that the result up to 50 points is a low-level result.

Consequently, there is a large potential for people results, especially regarding monitoring and measurement of these results.

*The studies made it possible to positively verify the initial research hypothesis.*

**Table 3**

**Results obtained in verification of the research hypothesis based on the studies of the offices of local public administration against individual CAF criteria and sub-criteria**

CAF Criterion/Sub-criterion	Score (in points)	Level
<b>3. People</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>medium</b>
3.1. Plans, manages, and improves human resources transparently with regard to strategy and planning	<b>59</b>	<b>medium</b>
3.2. Identifies, develops, and uses the competence of employees, aligning individual and organizational goals	<b>49</b>	<b>low</b>
3.3. Involves employees by developing open dialog and empowerment	<b>59</b>	<b>medium</b>
<b>7. Results in "People Results"</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>low</b>
7.1. Measurement of people satisfaction and motivation	<b>44</b>	<b>low</b>
7.2. Indicators of people results	<b>37</b>	<b>low</b>
<b>Average from items 3 and 7</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>low</b>

Source: Own study based on the authors' studies: *Jakość zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi w urzędach terytorialnej administracji publicznej* (HR Management Quality in the Offices of Local Public Administration). Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej w Katowicach, Katowice 2007.

### **Ad. 3.1**

Among the sub-criteria, our attention is particularly drawn to the high implementation level in 3.1.5 and 3.1.6. They relate to developing and agreeing on a clear policy containing objective criteria with regards to recruitment, promotion, remuneration, rewards, and the assignment of managerial functions, as well as ensuring good environmental working conditions throughout the organization, including taking care of health and safety requirements. These areas are governed by legal regulations. We observe a low level in sub-criterion 3.1.2 Developing and communicating the HRM (Human Resources Management) policy based on the strategy and planning of the organization, which may indicate that many things are done to implement the HRM, yet a documented HRM policy is missing.

### **Ad. 3.2**

Within the sub-criteria, we observe a medium level in 3.2.1 and 3.2.4. The issues covered by these items refer to identifying current competencies at the individual and organizational levels in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as well as sup-



porting and assisting new employees (e.g. by means of mentoring). It is considered important that the personnel is competent and that new employees are introduced to the specificity of work in the office.

Sub-criterion 3.2.8 Assessing the impacts of training and development program in relation to the costs of the activities through monitoring and the provision of cost/benefit analyses received a very low score, which shows that the cost/benefit analyses for training results are rare.

### **Ad. 3.3**

On the other hand, sub-criteria 3.3.3 and 3.3.7, i.e. involving employees in the development of plans, strategies, goals, the design of processes, and in the identification and implementation of improvement activities, and consulting with the representatives of employees (e.g. trade unions) received a high score. This proves that the offices actually undertake improvement activities, and that they attach great significance to the role of trade unions in human resource management. The results confirm that the offices perform poorly in terms of promoting a culture of open, non-hierarchical communication and dialog and the encouragement of team working (sub-criterion 3.3.1).

### **Ad. 7.1**

The implementation level for three sub-criteria (7.1.4, 7.1.5 and 7.1.6) was evaluated as medium. Therefore, the organization's top management and middle management's ability to steer the organization and communicate, as well as rewarding individual and team efforts and the organization's approach to innovation are medium. A very low implementation level was observed for criterion 7.1.2. concerning the level of employees' awareness of conflicts of interest.

### **Ad. 7.2**

We observe a satisfactory average score for sub-criteria 7.2.3 and 7.2.4, i.e. levels of using high information and communication technologies by employees, as well as indicators regarding skills development (participation and success rates in training activities and effectiveness of training budgets). We may conclude that authorities have still a lot to do as regards information technologies. We can mention, for instance, the project of the System for Electronic Communication of Public Administration (SEKAP) whose launch in 54 offices of local public administration of the Śląskie Voivodeship is planned for March 2008<sup>20</sup>.

The studies also show that the number of reported possible conflict of interest cases is small (sub-criterion 7.2.9.). We may assume, however, that the underlying reason for this satisfactory result is the organizational culture, which does not favor disclosing such conflict of interest cases.

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<sup>20</sup> The project involves the Office of the Marshal of the Śląskie Voivodeship; more: [www.silesia-region.pl](http://www.silesia-region.pl).

## Conclusion

In order to increase efficiency and effectiveness of Polish public administration, the principles of Good Governance should be implemented. The experience from implementing the CAF method in which HRM criteria were applied indicates that the method can be considered as an effective Good Governance tool in Polish public administration.

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