



Call for applications now open for the European Public Sector Award 2009 – EPSA 2009 (1 January – 20 March 2009)

“Assess Yourself and Learn from the Best”



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The European Public Sector Award (EPSA) brings together the best, most innovative and efficient performers from the European public sector. Outstanding administrative performances are, after all, produced under different conditions within Europe. By highlighting exemplary models of innovative public practices, the award will record the continued progresses made in addressing Europe's most pressing public concerns, whilst providing a platform for the public sector innovators behind these cases to disseminate their achievements. Against this backdrop, the vision of EPSA and EIPA is to create an arena in which Europe's public sector institutions can excel and become an exemplar for the rest of the world.

The European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) is ideally placed to organise the second edition of the EPSA.¹ EIPA is a neutral and impartial Institute, which supports European public administrations in the adaptation process of Community integration. Its principle activities over the last 26 years relate to the training and development of high-level officials on all aspects related to European integration. Through its activities of continued learning, EIPA is tuned into the practices of different administrations.

The EPSA Target Applicants

EIPA, mandated by its Board of Governors' decision of 1 July 2008, and with the institutional and financial support

of 15 European States – Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland – and the European Commission, invites all **public sector institutions** from **all levels** and from **all over Europe** to submit their projects for the award.

The Four EPSA Themes

For 2009, the EPSA Steering Committee and EIPA – with support from the EPSA Scientific Advisory Board² – have chosen four highly-topical thematic areas,³ which address European public sector challenges and are drivers for change in the way that public administrations function in the 21st Century. They provide an insight into thousands of public administration “lives” that are struggling to make their way through the “stormy and muddy water” of globalisation, demographic change and a continuous shortage of money and resources.

❖ Performance Improvement in Public Service Delivery (THEME 1)

A number of profound reforms have taken place at all levels of public administration, which has led to the rethinking of distribution of tasks in

different sectors of public administration and, thus, the use of agencies, collective bodies, new types of service providers etc. (outcome – focus). The purpose of reform is to make governments more responsive to society's needs and



European Public Sector Award



Assess Yourself and Learn from the Best –
Showcasing and Rewarding
European Public Excellence

Performance Improvement in Public Service Delivery	New Forms of Partnership Working
Citizen Involvement	Leadership and Management for Change

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demands (“new pressures”). This comes as a result of growing and changing demands (e.g. efficiency/effectiveness) from citizens/customers towards public administrations and public service deliveries. Public administration is being reformed in order to provide better, faster and sometimes more services. Moreover, governments reform with the purpose of (re-)establishing trust in government; equally important is a strengthened communication and connection with the citizen. Reform is thus, the process of preparing or adapting government to its new role in a changing society.

This topic is looking for showcase projects based on how public administrations are meeting this new role in society by displaying **performance improvement in service delivery**.

❖ Citizen Involvement (THEME 2)

To adapt the often private sector models of consumer involvement in business planning and delivery, but also to build on concepts of “open government” – whereby the business of governments and state administrations should be opened at all levels for effective public scrutiny of oversights, as well as allowing involvement in planning and delivery of public services – public administrations have developed institutional and policy frameworks to promote transparency in government, access to information, consultation and ultimately involvement in making policy decisions. In effect, building effective participative partnerships between government, citizens and civil society organisations is at the heart of this approach and is demonstrated by various processes and systems designed for example to enhance openness, transparency and accountability or to enable citizen involvement in debating, discussing, evaluating and deciding on governmental and public administrative decision making.

Opening up to the entrepreneurial world is a big step for the public sector; ultimately, increased **citizen involvement** aims to increase community participation and social capital, improve service delivery, promote social inclusion/cohesion or, in fact, address perceived democratic deficits. In essence, it is about moving from models of “government” to models of “governance”.

❖ New Forms of Partnership Working (THEME 3)

Partnership is a means to an end and can be established for several possible purposes, such as attracting new investment, protecting employment, changing service culture or accessing EU funds and partner networks. Partnership working is one way of delivering differently or performing public functions, therefore, public servants need to understand when different partnership models work and

how to make them work effectively. Nevertheless, whatever the objectives of entering into the partnership, a decision to do so calls for a disciplined approach to decision making and implementation by public administrations. However in some cases, partnership models have been used when they are not appropriate and implementation has not always been planned or managed effectively. Some public authorities (sometimes sub-national authorities under pressure from national government) have also entered into too many partnerships and have showed signs of suffering from “*partnership fatigue*” in their inability to realise the benefits of partnerships. There is a clear need to refresh and open mindsets on partnerships. A win-lose approach does not lead anywhere. Instead, there is an urgent need for a partnership-based integrated approach and architecture, combined with strong leadership and an often personal-level commitment in making and implementing public policies and delivering services.

This topic is looking for showcase projects based on how public administrations are meeting this new expectation by displaying **new forms of partnership working**.

❖ Leadership and Management for Change (THEME 4)

Today’s management of public organisations is facing the challenge of leading their organisations through permanent change, while at the same time improving their own competences to do so. In this context, the top management of public organisations inevitably has to balance the interests of all stakeholders, such as politicians, citizens and enterprises, and their employees. Each top manager should perform as a leader instead of only as a manager, and should also be able to bring movement and change to the organisation in a way that encourages most of the employees to want to be part of the movement. For the management this will mean: strategic thinking and vision; high values on integrity and ethics; the ability to get the best from people; making a personal impact; self-reflection for continued learning and improvement; focusing on outcome; building relations and encouraging teams; and creating shared understanding and values. To cover all the required competences, the top management needs professional skills and has to operate as a complementary team. The composition of the management team also requires special attention, since in many public organisations there is no balance in the teams between women and men, young and old, cultural or national backgrounds.

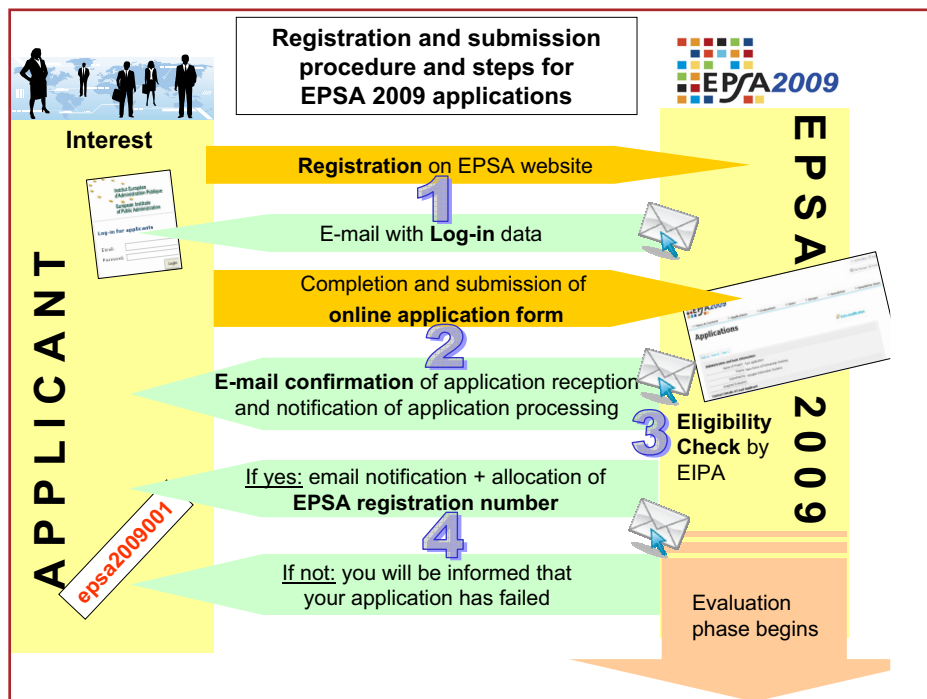
This topic is looking for showcase projects based on how public organisations are performing in these new set-ups by displaying **improvement and leadership development of the top public managers**.

NOTES

- ¹ For detailed information about EPSA 2007, please consult the websites www.eps-award2007.eu and www.epsa-projects.eu.
- ² For detailed composition, contact details and functions of the EPSA Steering Committee and Scientific Advisory Board please consult the EPSA website www.epsa2009.eu.
- ³ Each EPSA 2009 theme is guided and supervised by one or more EIPA faculty member in order to ensure the quality of the services and products delivered under the EPSA scheme. Please see the website for more information.

The Online Submission of Entries

For the exact call text for each of the four themes, as well as the online submission form, the evaluation methodology and selection criteria, please consult the official EPSA website www.epsa2009.eu



The EPSA 2009 will finally be awarded on the occasion of a high-level symposium on leading-edge public administration solutions, which will be held on **5 and 6 November 2009** in Maastricht (NL), under the auspices of the Swedish Presidency, and which will be conducted following the motto:

“Assess Yourself and Learn from the Best – Showcasing and Rewarding European Public Excellence”.

More information can be obtained from the EPSA team via the EPSA helpdesk: infoepsa2009@eipa.eu and tel. +31 (0) 43 3296 341, or consult www.epsa2009.eu. The EIPASCOPE will regularly report on the *European Public Sector Award 2009* in its upcoming editions.

The following EPSA activities are scheduled for the period July 2008-February 2009:

19 September 2008, Maastricht (NL)
First meeting of the EPSA Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)

24-25 September 2008, Maastricht (NL)
Kick-off meeting of the EPSA Steering Committee (SC)

20-22 October 2008, Paris (FR)
Official launch of the European Public Sector Award 2009 at the 5th Quality Conference organized by the French Presidency

11 November 2008, Luxembourg (LU)
EPSA InfoSessions at the “Journée de la Qualité dans le secteur public” organized by the Government of Luxembourg

15 January 2009, Vienna (AT)
EPSA InfoDay organised by the Austrian Government

4 February 2009, Brussels (BE)
EPSA InfoDay, jointly organised with the European Commission (DG Employment) and the Committee of the Regions (CoR)

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