

**Welcome of the DG of EIPA at
the
Workshop of the EU Commission
(4 November 2009)**

Dear Mr Bender,
dear Guests of the EU Commission,
dear EPSA participants,
dear colleagues of EIPA,
dear ladies and gentlemen.

- Great pleasure to welcome you all to the premises of the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) for this very first workshop that is the start of a number of events for the European Public Sector Award, which will run from now until midday Friday.
- For almost two years my colleagues and I have been

taking the various steps towards the EPSA award process,

- from the first discussions with the Board of Governors and the Government representatives (15 MS agreed to financially support EPSA);
- from the launch in Paris in October 2008 at the

Quality Conference of EUPAN;

- the promotion activities in many EU MS;
- the communication with interested representatives of public administrations from all over Europe;
- the evaluation process;
- the jury meeting;

- the internal research process on the lessons we had learned;
 - and finally the preparations for the events until today.
- A long process of almost two years. And all the time we were looking forward to the EPSA event in November 2009. Now the time has finally come that you are here and it is a special

moment for the EPSA team and the whole EIPA.

- We will do our best to make you feel as comfortable as possible here and hope that you enjoy your stay in our beautiful city of Maastricht.
- It is a particular pleasure for us that Mr Bender and his team decided to hold a workshop here in Maastricht on the results of EPSA.

- The EU Commission has from the very beginning supported the activities related to EPSA in two ways:
- firstly, Commissioner Mr Siim Kallas agreed to be patronage of EPSA and to help in making EPSA known to the public administrations in Europe,
- secondly, DG Employment and particularly Mr Bender and his

team supported EPSA with the objective of “Capacity Building” in the framework of the European Social Fund. This support was very valuable as it allowed us to arrange for example an InfoDay in Brussels together with the EU Commission to make EPSA known. Thanks to this cooperation and the EU Commission’s support, the

travel costs of all those present here were able to be covered, which has thus enabled you to meet all your fellow applicants here in Maastricht. The award ceremony is also financially supported by the EU Commission.

- You will easily understand that this support of the EU Commission was crucial in the process.

- Not only financially but also in the motivation and encouragement that my team and I got from this support.
- Before handing over the floor to Mr Bender, I am happy to once again welcome you all on behalf of EIPA to this workshop. I wish you interesting presentations, lively debates and lots of new insights and innovative ideas that you

can take home with you on
Friday to your organisation.