

# Strengthening the resilience of public administration after the COVID19 crisis with CAF 2020

## Background and Objectives:

The OECD has been invited by DG REFORM to conduct a project on the resilience of public sector organisations. This will be a multi-country project spearheaded by Belgium, and including Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovak republic, Slovenia, and Spain. The project will use the EU Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and its network of contact points (at country and organisational level), to gather insights from organisations who have recently used the CAF on their experience in maintaining resilience during the COVID crisis. Through a combination of case studies, workshops and analysis, the project will develop new insights into the ways that European public organisations can improve resilience in the face of unforeseen future shocks and challenges.

In that sense, the various activities in the project are designed to explore the theme through several perspectives:

- Look back: To generate and share knowledge about public service organisations' resilience during the COVID crisis in a structured way.
- Look forward: To identify what a more resilient future looks like in public service organisations – what are the discreet and systemic changes that can be made to ensure greater resilience to future shocks?
- Look at the CAF: To consider whether/how CAF helped organisations during the COVID-19 crisis and the role of the CAF in informing and supporting more resilient public organisations in the recovery phase and beyond.

## Project activities and outputs

The project is structured around the following 4 activities. The OECD will coordinate these activities in partnership with CAF correspondents and other local partners in each of the participating countries.

1. A **survey** of organisations who have recently used the CAF, on their experience of the COVID crisis and how the CAF contributed to organisational readiness and resilience (Fall 2021). The online survey will focus on areas such as:
  - *Experience of COVID*: The survey will include questions to identify the biggest challenges related to managing through COVID; Strategies employed to get through it; identification of enablers, success stories, best practices, lessons learnt that could be shared; and new processes that could be continued after the crisis.

- *Priorities for the future*: The survey will include questions to identify the highest priority areas for embedding resilience post-covid, the steps organisations are taking to do this, and challenges and opportunities foreseen.
  - *The CAF model/implementation*: The survey will also identify which aspects of the CAF model and process were particularly helpful in the COVID crisis, and which less so, and how the CAF could be used to strengthen resilience in the recovery phase.
2. A series of **case studies** (1 per participating country) among a selection of organisations, to further analyse the response and lessons learned from the crisis. (Q4 2021-Q2 2022):
- The OECD is developing a case study template based on the CAF model, which will be used to help organisations reflect systematically on their experience of resilience during the COVID crisis.
  - Case studies will be developed collaboratively with the OECD, CAF correspondents, representatives of the organisation undertaking the case study, and local experts.
  - The process to develop the case studies may resemble a CAF implementation, but rather than follow the usual CAF quality process, the key questions will be reframed to generate insights on resilience.
3. Multi-country '**deep-dive**' **thematic workshops** (up to four) on common transversal themes that emerge from the case studies and survey. (Q2/3 2022):
- The case studies and survey will provide rich material that can be used to generate discussion and debate across various common themes (e.g. leadership and people management, digital and innovation, strategy and coordination, etc).
  - These workshops will be open to all participating countries, and to a broader set of experts, enabling a peer review of the case studies through various dimensions. There will also be a possibility to connect with existing OECD networks (Public Employment and Management, Digital Government, Centers of Government, Observatory of Public Sector Innovation etc).
  - Each thematic workshop will generate insights that will be captured in short documents, focused on good practices and challenges during the crisis, high-potential reforms for resilience after the crisis, and how the CAF can help.
4. A **synthesis report** summarising the results of the activities with clear and actionable recommendations for the CAF network, organisational management, and national-level administrations. (Q4 2022)
- The report will be launched at a high level event during Q1 2023.

### Stakeholders:

- The CAF project would count on the support and guidance of the **EUPAN DG Network**. Updates can be provided on a regular basis, and insights from the project could contribute to network discussions.
- **The CAF correspondents network** will be an essential operational group, implementing the project alongside the OECD. CAF correspondents of participating countries will be the coordinators of the project at the national level. They will review and comment on draft outputs, help to promote survey responses, help to identify case study organisations and conduct case studies, and help to design and host (in some cases) the deep-dive workshops.

- Additional stakeholders will include existing OECD networks and bodies, whose insights can be brought to bear in relevant areas of the work. Additionally, national stakeholders and communities will be welcome to engage with the project at various moments. The OECD is also discussing roles with other CAF centers of expertise, such as EIPA.

### Timeline/key milestones

1. Portugal DG EUPAN meeting (June 2021): presentation of the project
2. High-level launch event (30 September 2021): begin project
3. Slovenia CAF network meeting (November 2021): share progress on survey and pilot case studies
4. Slovenia DG EUPAN meeting (December 2021): present final survey results and launch case studies
5. France CAF network meeting (Spring 2022): update on case studies
6. France DG EUPAN meeting (June 2022): present case studies' final content and begin deep dive workshops
7. Czech Republic CAF network meeting (Fall 2022): update on deep dive workshops
8. Czech Republic DG EUPAN meeting (December 2022): present deep dive workshop final content and/or draft synthesis report
9. High level launch event of the final report (Q1 2023): final presentation and conclusions/next steps, possibly in the context of the Swedish Presidency.