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## **EFQM MODEL AND BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN ALBANIA RELATED TO QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

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### **Abstract:**

**Purpose of the research:** Providing a general picture on quality management issues between Albanian firms and to configure a path towards European model on excellence on doing business using total quality management approach.

### **Method and methodology:**

Focusing the attention of the paper research on quality management, European quality and excellence model, situation between Albanian firms related to ISO standards, gathering information, data, figures, etc, about these issues, mainly from primary resources, writing the paper, drawing conclusions and under that base drawing recommendations.

Major findings, results and conclusions: The EFQM Excellence Model is a non-prescriptive [framework](#) for organizational management systems, promoted by European Foundation for Quality Management and designed for helping organizations in their drive towards being more competitive. Regardless of sector, size, structure or maturity, organizations need to establish appropriate management systems in order to be successful. The EFQM Excellence Model is a practical tool to help organizations do this by measuring where they are on the path to excellence; helping them understand the gaps; and then stimulating solutions. Self-assessment has wide applicability to organizations large and small, in the public as well as the private sectors. Self-assessment using the EFQM Excellence Model can give the management team a holistic overview of the whole organization. Increasingly organizations are using outputs from self-assessment as part of their business planning process and use the EFQM model as a basis for operational and project review. In Albania there are a lot of problems related to quality management, especially those of firms' purpose of certification usage. Most of local firms want the certificate for public procurement procedures participation and not for their internal use, strengthening of organization in all aspects. Country's integration in the region, Europe and wider requires not just certifying local firms with ISO standards and other standards, but a long term maintaining of these standards for gaining competitive advantage in local and international markets.

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**Keywords: EFQM model, quality management, business**  
**JEL Classification:** JEL: M – Business Administration and Business Economics; Marketing; Accounting

### **Introduction**

The EFQM Excellence Model is a non-prescriptive *framework* for organizational management systems, promoted by European Foundation for Quality Management and designed for helping organizations in their drive towards being more competitive. Regardless of sector, size, structure or maturity, organizations need to establish appropriate management systems in order to be successful. The EFQM Excellence Model is a practical tool to help organizations do this by measuring where they are on the path to excellence; helping them understand the gaps; and then stimulating solutions. Self-assessment has wide applicability to organizations large and small, in the public as well as the private sectors. Self-assessment using the EFQM Excellence Model can give the management team a holistic overview of the whole organization. Increasingly organizations are using outputs from self-assessment as part of their business planning process and use the EFQM model as a basis for operational and project review. In Albania there are a lot of problems related to quality management, especially those of firms' purpose of certification usage. Most of local firms want the certificate for public procurement procedures participation and not for their internal use, strengthening of organization in all aspects. **Country's integration in the region, Europe and wider requires not just certifying local firms with ISO standards and other standards, but a long term maintaining of these standards for gaining competitive advantage in local and international markets.**

### **Main text**

#### EFQM Excellence Model

The EFQM Excellence Model is a non-prescriptive *framework* for organizational management systems, promoted by *EFQM* (formerly known as the European Foundation for Quality Management) and designed for helping organizations in their drive towards being more competitive. The Model is regularly reviewed and refined: the last update was published in 2010. Regardless of sector, size, structure or maturity, organizations need to establish appropriate management systems in order to be successful. The EFQM Excellence Model is a practical tool to help organizations do this by measuring where they are on the path to excellence; helping them understand the gaps; and then stimulating solutions. Over the years a number of research studies have investigated the

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correlation between the adoption of holistic Models, such as *OIQ, Organizational Integrated Quality* and EFQM Excellence Model, and improved organizational results. The majority of such studies show a positive linkage. One of the most comprehensive of these was carried out by Dr. *Vinod Singhal* of the *Georgia Institute of Technology* and Dr. *Kevin Hendricks* of the *College of William and Mary* (11). The model can be used in four ways:

1. To help determine where an organization is on their journey towards excellence.
2. To provide a common language to enable the exchange of ideas and information, both within and outside the organization.
3. To integrate existing & planned activities, improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness.
4. To provide a basic structure for the organization's management system.

#### EFQM Applicability

Self-assessment has wide applicability to organizations large and small, in the public as well as the private sectors. Self-assessment using the EFQM Excellence Model can give the management team a holistic overview of the whole organization. Increasingly organizations are using outputs from self-assessment as part of their business planning process and use the EFQM model as a basis for operational and project review. In its simplest form, the EFQM Excellence Model is a 9 box "Cause and Effect" diagram. There are five 'enablers' and four 'results'. The 'enabler' criteria cover what an organization does. The 'results' criteria cover what an organization achieves. To improve the results it achieves, the organization must improve what it does. The 5 enablers are: Leadership; Strategy; People; Partnerships & Resources and Processes, Products & Services. The 4 result areas are: Customer Results; People Results; Society Results and Key Results. The Model provides a non-prescriptive framework that helps to understand the often complex cause and effect relationship within an organization (Fig 1, 2, Appendixes).

#### EFQM Excellence Award

The *EFQM Excellence Award* is run annually by *EFQM*. It is designed to recognize organizations that have achieved an outstanding level of sustainable excellence, based on assessment against the EFQM Excellence Model. EFQM help organizations drive improvement through the EFQM Excellence Model, a comprehensive management framework used by over 30 000 organizations in Europe. To help EFQM provide training, assessment tools and recognition for high performing

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11 K. Hendricks & V. Singhal (1996) *Quality Awards and the Market Value of the Firm: An Empirical Investigation*, Georgia Tech, Management Science, Vol. 42, No. 3. March 1996, pp. 415-436

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organizations, from gathering good practices and integrating those within our portfolio. EFQM, a not-for-profit membership Foundation, aim to share what works, through case studies, online seminars, working groups, conferences and thematic events, sharing member's enthusiasm, their motivation and the results they achieve.

### History

EFQM, formerly known as the European Foundation for Quality Management, goes back more than 20 years ago, when 14 CEOs joined forces in 1988 to develop a Management tool that would increase the competitiveness of European organizations. Supported by the European Commission in the European Quality Promotion Policy, the founding members created the EFQM Excellence Model. The EFQM Founding Members are: AB Electrolux, British Telecommunications plc, Bull, Ciba-Geigy AG, C. Olivetti & C. SpA, Dassault Aviation, Fiat Auto SpA, KLM, Nestlé, Philips, Renault, Robert Bosch, Sulzer AG, Volkswagen (12).

### Criteria

Through the 9 criteria everyone can understand and analyse the cause and effect relationships between what the organisation does and the results to be achieve. Five of these criteria are 'Enablers' and four are 'Results'. The 'Enabler' criteria cover what an organisation does and how it does it. The 'Results' criteria cover what an organisation achieves. Each of the 9 criteria has a definition, which explains the high level meaning of that criterion. To develop the high level meaning further, each criterion is supported by a number of criterion parts. The **RADAR logic** helps you to assess and score the level of each sub-criterion. Criteria are:

1. Leadership
2. Strategy
3. People
4. Partnerships & Resources
5. Processes, Products and Services
6. Customer Results
7. People Results
8. Society Results
9. Business Results

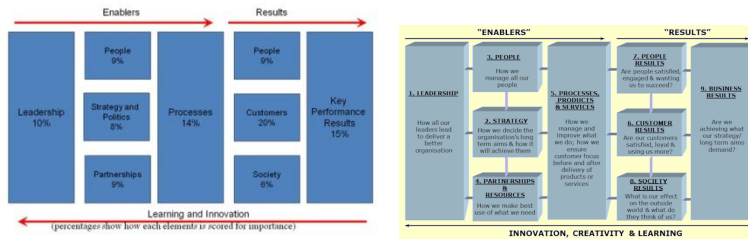


Fig1. EFQM 9 Criteria.

Fig 2. EFQM criteria's details

(<http://www.efqm.org/en/Home/AboutEFQM/tabid/108/Default.aspx>)

### Fundamental concepts of excellence

The Fundamental Concepts of Excellence are the underlying principles of the EFQM Excellence Model which are the essential foundation of achieving Sustainable Excellence for any organization. They can be used as the basis to describe the attributes of an excellent organizational culture. They also serve as a common language for senior management.

1. Adding Value for Customers. Excellent organizations consistently add value for customers by understanding, anticipating and fulfilling needs, expectations and opportunities.
2. Creating a Sustainable Future. Excellent organizations have a positive impact on the world around them by enhancing their performance whilst simultaneously advancing the economic, environmental and social conditions within the communities they touch.
3. Developing Organizational Capability. Excellent organizations enhance their capabilities by effectively managing change within and beyond the organizational boundaries.
4. Harnessing Creativity & Innovation. Excellent organizations generate increased value and levels of performance through continual improvement and systematic innovation by harnessing the creativity of their stakeholders.
5. Leading with Vision, Inspiration & Integrity. Excellent organizations have leaders who shape the future and make it happen, acting as role models for its values and ethics.
6. Managing with Agility. Excellent organizations are widely recognized for their ability to identify and respond effectively and efficiently to opportunities and threats.
7. Succeeding through the Talent of People. Excellent organizations value their people and create a culture of empowerment for the achievement of both organizational and personal goals.

8. Sustaining Outstanding Results. Excellent organizations achieve sustained outstanding results that meet both the short and long term needs of all their stakeholders, within the context of their operating environment.

### Radar

The RADAR Logic is a dynamic assessment framework and powerful management tool that provides a structured approach to questioning the performance of an organization. At the highest level RADAR logic states that an organization needs to:

1. Determine the Results it is aiming to achieve as part of its strategy
2. Plan and Develop an integrated set of sound Approaches to deliver the required results both now and in the future
3. Deploy the approaches in a systematic way to ensure implementation
4. Assess and Refine the deployed approaches based on monitoring and analysis of the results achieved and ongoing learning activities

### EFQM Excellence Award

The objective of the EFQM Excellence Award is to recognize Europe's best performing organizations, whether private, public or non-profit. Previous applicants have described the EFQM Excellence Awards as "like playing in the Champions League", because it is supported by one of the most rigorous assessment processes. To identify the finalists, a team of 4 – 8 international experienced managers spend one week on site, or an average of 500 hours per applicant; reviewing documents, interviewing and analyzing the organization against the **EFQM Excellence Model**. The feedback from the **assessor teams** then presented to an independent jury that decides the level of recognition for each Finalist. To win the EFQM Excellence Award, an applicant must be able to demonstrate that their performance not only exceeds that of their peers, but also that they will maintain this advantage into the future. A prize winner is an organization which demonstrates role model behavior in one of the 8 criteria's mentioned above. The EFQM Excellence Award is run once a year, and only **EFQM Members** can apply for it. EFQM Members, including more than 500 companies and organizations, share a common goal; the pursuit of excellence.



**Fig 3.** Relations between fundamental EFQM and Excellence concepts, **Fig 4.** Radar logic  
(<http://www.efqm.org/en/Home/AboutEFQM/tabid/108/Default.aspx>)

Benefits for members

- a) Expert advice and support for your organization's journey towards excellence.
- b) Access to a Knowledge Base containing free to download assessment, management and improvement tools; as well as Good Practices identified from the last 3 years of the EFQM Excellence Awards.
- c) A discount of 20% on all EFQM Products & Services, including Training, Publications and Recognition.
- d) There are themed events and webinars throughout the year, with Good Practices and new tools being shared and explained by EFQM and member organizations.

Any organization, regardless of size or sector, can join the EFQM member community. The membership fee is paid on an annual basis, based on your turnover.

26 September 2012 19 October 2012 (10. 00 - 12. 00)	Applicant Webinar
November 2012	Call for Assessors
30 November 2012	Applicant intent to apply Completed and signed application form Completed qualification file
15 February 2013	Final submission document due
26 Feb - 1 Mar 2013 5 - 8 March 2013 12 - 15 March 2013	Assessor Briefing Events Applicant meeting with the Assessor Team
27 - 31 May 2013	Site Visit
July 2013	Jury Meeting
July 2013	Feedback reports delivered to applicants
23 & 24 October 2013	EFQM Forum, Vienna, Austria Celebration Dinner & Award Ceremony

**Table 1.** EFQM Excellence Award 2013 - Key dates  
(<http://www.efqm.org/en/Home/AboutEFQM/tabid/108/Default.aspx>)

Annual turnover	Membership fee
More than 1 billion Euros	€11, 000
Between 100 million Euros and 1 billion Euros	€ 5, 500
Between 5 million Euros and 100 million Euros	€ 2, 700
Less than 5 million Euros	€ 1, 350

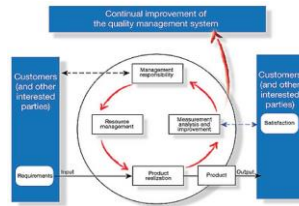
**Table 2.** Membership fees  
(<http://www.efqm.org/en/Home/AboutEFQM/tabid/108/Default.aspx>)

Business environment in Albania related to quality management

There is a lack of information and studies about quality management in Albania, because TQM has been unknown for most of Albanian specialists, and this is the main importance of this study which opens a path for other studies to generate more ideas on how to improve situation and how to promote local firms to practice TQM in their daily activity (Ceko Enriko. (2010) Total Quality Management and Competitive Advantage of Albanian Firms. V International Conference, Alb-shkenca. August 2010 – Tetovo). According to a study undertaken during 2001 – 2007, about 99, 9% of clients are happy with products and services of german, japanese, british firms, etc, which apply TQM, compared with only 70% of clients that are happy with products and services of firms which doesn't apply TQM (Ceko Enriko. (2010) Total Quality Management. p. 8).

The theory on how TQM generates CA and on how both concepts together if applied carefully generate more profits for firms, have been described by some theories of both disciplines, but, in the world of business practice there is a plenty of space to explain and clarify this relation in details, especially in case of private firms that have a little experience in international trade. This is very important because there is a strong relations between TQM and CA not only in the framework of individual firms, but in the framework of the industries / sectors of countries, regions and alliances of all kinds which apply methods, principles and techniques of TQM and CA, compared with those firms, industries / sectors and countries, regions and alliances which don't use and don't apply these concepts, or apply them not in a proper way (I Adebajo, D. , & Kehoe, D. (1999). An investigation of quality culture development in UK industry. International Journal of Operations & Production Management, 19(7), 633 – 649).





**Fig 5.** The scheme of relations between quality management principles and the focus of ISO 9000 ([www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org))

Derived by questionnaire held during 2009 - 2010: a large number of Albanian firms generally don't know exactly what quality is (a), they don't apply procedures, tools, techniques and principles of total quality management (b) and don't know concepts of market advantage defining and application, competitive advantage included (c). A large number of Albanian firms don't know very well standardization and certification process (d) and a large number of them consider certification as a way to participate in tenders and public procurements and not as a way to create more market spaces (e). In Albania there is not any structured and functional system for standards, quality, certification and auditing related to quality, compared with modern international models (f). There is a lack of practice criterions application for classification of subjects that do certifications and auditing of private and public subjects related to quality management and standards (g).

In Albania there is not any certified organization for doing auditing of quality on Albanian private firms (h). In agribusiness sector there is a lack of HACCP system application, besides the fact that there is a law request (i). As a result of these conditions, combined with other factors of different natures, Albanian firms are not in such of conditions to be competitive in the marketplace. This has an indication on economic and financial course of these firms, which has been expressed evidently in conditions and course of country's economy generally and in the negative and totally improper situation of trade balance especially. Creation of conditions for Albanian firms to achieve, apply and maintain TQM to create CA continuously in a global world, remain the main duty of public and private sector in short, medium and long term period.

In Albania as per 2013 there are about 450 private subjects that have certified for ISO 9001 as well as about 10 - 12 firms ISO 14000. There are in the process about 65 other firms for ISO 9001. About the agribusiness sector certification, the situation is grave, because local firms don't know anything about ISO 22000 and FSST 22000, while there are about 30 - 35 firms which have taken

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HACCP certificate. For HACCP certificate there are in process about 15 other firms. The agribusiness sector, one of the pillars of the local economy, contributes with about 20% of GDP, while there is a slow trend of HACCP certificates application process, besides the fact that this is a law requirement. This has a great negative indication on quality systems application and defining of competitive advantage of agribusiness firms in Albania (Ceko Enriko (2010) Quality and competitive advantage. Article. *Ekonomia*. 30 March 2010). The Agency for Food Controls has been created only in January 2010. This situation exists when there are about 109.000 licensed private subjects in Albania.

In the country there are about 200 individuals trained and certified in different levels of auditing for quality, from which about 10 with the attribute of lead auditor. Recently have been registered about 3 auditing and certifying subjects, but only one of them has been accredited by General Accreditation Directory of Ministry of Economy and Energy. National Standards Directorate is operating efficiently, looking to have a full membership in International Standards Organization. There is created the Accreditation Agency, which currently is in a vague situation, mainly because of lack of financial support. The TQM discipline has been introduced in curricula of some private universities only in last three years (Ceko Enriko (2010) Management Strategic Marketing. p. 14, 21). In Albania there is not any competitive advantage in production because local firms haven't base values like; working style, and work culture, employers integrity, clients' care, innovation, continuous improvement, etc, that are main elements which brings difference and support for competitive advantage (Ceko Enriko. (2010) Total Quality Management and Competitive Advantage of Albanian Firms. V International Conference, Alb-shkenca. August 2010 – Tetovo). According to ISO 8402 "Total Quality Management relies on the cooperation of all members of the organization, is focused on quality and customer satisfaction through, aimed at achieving long-term business success and profitability of members of the organization and society" (ISO 8402 - Quality Management and Quality Assurance). By this definition, quality is the key element for achieving the client's key competitive advantage, but only 27.6% (18) of the subjects interviewed stated that there are strong links between quality and competitive advantage (Ceko Enriko (2011) Problems of Albanian firms certification with ISO 9001: 2008 Standard during 2009 – 2011. VI International Conference of Alb-Shkenca 2011 August. Pristina).

According to Peter Drucker: "Quality is not what the producers decide on the product / service, but what customers get / are willing to pay. Better fulfill the needs / desires of the client is substance / essence of quality. A capable and modern enterprise sforcohet not simply to meet the needs / pleasures of customers, but to predict which will be needs / pleasures of customers of the

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future "( H. James Harrington. ISO 9000 and Beyond), while the question of whether predictions made for the clients' wishes responded positively to the future only 12. 3% (8) subjects (Peter Drucker. Management Challenges for 21st Century).

To succeed in the market according to ISO 9001: 2008 requirements to be met are: "the focus (the client), the fulfillment of normative references, knowledge of terminology / definitions of quality, application of quality management system, knowledge of managerial responsibilities, resource management, product realization / performance measurement, analysis, and in them the realization of continuous process improvement "(13), while only 9% (6) of the subjects mentioned these requirements during meetings. Any entity that enters into the path of building a quality management project that passes through the stages (a) the appointment of project managers, (b) the creation of the team, (c) set out the requirements of the QMS, (d) study the conditions for a SMC, (e) determination of differences between current conditions and desired, (f) creation of a detailed plan for the project, (g) enforcement / regular monitoring of the plan, (h) the execution of internal audit, (i) implementation of the necessary verification of corrective measures, and, (j) assessment of the system (14).

Firms have not formulated a strategy, "which brings added value, leadership, empowerment, partnership, adequate information on time, continuous improvement and innovation, and quality Implement strategies, organization for quality improvement, cost reduction and manufacturing cycle time, increase the number or volume of products produced without flaws, the variance reduction product / service, reduction of time machines that do not work, reduced employee absenteeism, increased on-time product tracking from the manufacturer to the consumer, etc" (15). Only 24. 6% (16) of the managers questioned the existence of the vision, mission, strategic objectives, operational objectives and action plan, responded positively to this, and for recognition of the firm's strategy on the part of employees responded that they were not able to indicate how the strategy is made known to employees. The main competitive advantage is based on competence, "is very deep skill makes the company unique values transmitted to the client, penetrating the markets, product diversification, it does not to create value in a time of competitors, leading to the predominance performance "(16), while contacts with firms in the study

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13 ISO 9001: 2008 - Quality Management System

14 H. James Harrington. ISO 9000 and Beyond

15 Ceko Enriko (2010) Total Quality Management.

16 Frederick P. STUTZ, Barney Warf. The World Economy: Resources, Location, Trade, and Development

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indicate that the largest part of their standard applies for participation in competitions of various public and private 83% (54), to improve the management of the organization 9% (6), to improve the management of customers and suppliers 4.5% (3), to improve the image of the organization (two subjects did not respond to reason), so firms generally do not seek application of the QMS and ISO 9001: 2008 for achieving competitive advantage market, but for other purposes (may be considered only 13.5%, 6 + 3). Firms applying for ISO 9001: 2008 are operating mainly in construction and food industry, the sectors that most contribute to economy (agriculture / agribusiness with 22% Construction 20%) and it actually shows a lack of diversification of the economy.

From contacts with entities providing consultancy and certification services and public bodies that monitor and control this activity under the law (17, 18), it appears that for ISO 9001: 2008, service consulting, certification, maintenance and recertification is not regulated. Consultancy has been provided by unlicensed individuals in the majority and from some non-specialized consulting firms to ISO standards. Certification is performed by foreign entities and certifying only one of them is accredited to the Accreditation Department. Maintenance process is realized mainly by individuals and less on consultancy firms. The validity of the certificate is 1 - 3 years. Certification firms in Albania are Italian subjects (4), Greek (2), English (2), Austria (1), German (1) and Turkish (1), so occasional certificates are issued by an Irish subject and a Kuwaiti. Cost of process consulting, certification, recertification and maintenance depends on the number of employees and sector where the firm operates, but in general we can say that the cost of certification to number of employees varies between figures 15 to 50 Euros, and it can be said that construction, food industry, wholesale and retail trade, etc., are sectors in which firms seek certification to provide quality management packages with higher prices than in other sectors. The average cost of consultancy is 2000 - 7000 Euro, the average cost of certification 1500 - 6000 Euro, average maintenance costs 1000 Euro and recertification costs from 1500 to 3000 Euro. These are somewhat higher costs for private sector in Albania, but are quickly bring cost of acquisition, but these payments are not sufficient to entities providing consultancy and certification services because not enough for keeping the office, paying staff and conducting operating expenses.

About starting the process of certification should be noted that subjects performed generally initiator action as a result of advertising firms doing certification and not

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*17 Law no. 7630, dated 28. 10. 1992 "On standardization and quality"*

*18 Decision no. 854, dated 19. 12. 2003 "On organization and functioning of the Directorate of Accreditation"*

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as a result of the application to make love to certified entities. This process can be divided into several stages which are stages of consulting, certification, recertification and maintenance. Consultancy stage lasts 3 - 6 months, depending on the sector where the operating entity seeking certification, the size of the firm, its personnel training, etc. , but in practice were observed several times that the consultancy period was even shorter than three months. The main problems of this stage are lack of cooperation by the firm (because their leaders believe that the consultant should do everything), employees are afraid of change, there is a lack of communication between staff, no communication with consultants, the firm is preparing preliminary poor, the quality manager and / or quality are fictitious representative, is fictitious consultancy, quality documentation is not complete, etc. The main problems of the stage of certification are seeking certification to participate in public tenders and procurements, there are deficiencies in the procedures required by the standard, the selection of suppliers is fictitious, staff training is fictitious, the questionnaires are fictitious customers, certification bodies made from accredited in the country, etc.

The main problems are failing to do maintenance stage of the maintenance of certification order in controls, firms do not audit, or it is fictional, made no training, no selection made suppliers, customers do not become questionnaires, etc. The main problems are the stage of the recertification requirements for firms to make price reductions as agreed in principle with or without preliminary contract, not quality documents reviewed, etc. In Albania there are some international institutions involved in the process of building a quality infrastructure and these are the IFC, the project supported by the Dutch government in cooperation with the EBRD and the project supported by the Swiss government (mainly for the agribusiness sector), which have funding available and relevant to this issue, mainly for training and certification, but these projects have little information to the public and no record of how many subjects have benefited from these funds and what contribution monetary value of these projects. By working with the subjects during the period 2009 - 2011, I had occasion to contact only in four subjects who have had the chance to benefit from these projects.

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## **CONCLUSIONS:**

1. Since most private entities in Albania aimed certificate ISO 9001: 2008 for participation in competitions and tenders, there is little chance to achieve and maintain competitive advantage in the market, because the goal is not the focus of the client because private entities lacking basic values: style / and the work culture, employee integrity, customer care, creativity, continuous improvement, etc. and they lack the strategic planning of quality management, process control and management processes.
2. In Albania there is an organized and clearly defined system of standards, quality, certification and auditing lacks practical application of the criteria for the classification of entities performing certification and auditing and has only one accredited entity to conduct quality audits to private firms Albanian.
3. Creating conditions that Albanian firms fail to apply and maintain total quality management and to create competitive advantages continuously remains the main task of public and private sector for the short, medium and long term.
4. Changing the mindset for quality certification is an immediate requirement to switch from the private sector in Albania, in parallel with the creation, organization and maintenance of a system of clearly defined standards, quality, certification and auditing, practical application of the criteria for classification of entities performing certification and auditing of public and private entities, the creation of certified organizations to conduct quality audits to private firms in Albania as a major positive change institutional and structural incentives for the application of total quality management to achieve competitive advantages Albanian firms in their operations both domestically and internationally.
5. An integration of ISO 9000 requirements in the business plan of each firm will be one of the greatest achievements of the private sector in Albania, because it ensures that there is a basis that will start from about improving the quality of products and services.

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