

Systems of Excellence in Public Transport: A Strategic Choice for Societatea de Transport București STB S.A. among International Models of Competitiveness

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Abstracts. *Organizational excellence frameworks, such as the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the European Foundation for Quality Management models, are globally recognized for improving performance and competitiveness across various sectors. This paper explores the application of these models to public transport organizations, with a focus on identifying the most suitable diagnostic tool for assessing the performance of Bucharest Transport Company (STB S.A.). The literature review reveals that while several international frameworks, including the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index and the IMD Competitiveness Model, focus on macroeconomic factors, the Malcolm Baldrige and EFQM models are more effective for organizational-level assessments. The research methodology involves a qualitative approach, comparing six diagnostic systems based on criteria such as clarity of objectives, scope, flexibility, and impact on strategic decisions. The main results indicate that the Malcolm Baldrige model is the most appropriate for STB S.A., as it provides a comprehensive framework for improving leadership, innovation, and performance management. Its application is expected to help align organizational objectives with market needs, optimize resource utilization, and enhance customer satisfaction. This paper contributes to the field by providing a detailed analysis of how international excellence frameworks can be adapted to the specific needs of public transport organizations, offering insights into their benefits and limitations. The findings suggest that the adoption of the Malcolm Baldrige model can significantly improve Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A.'s operational efficiency and strategic decision-making processes.*

Keywords: Public transport, Organizational excellence, Competitiveness diagnostics, Institutional performance, Development strategies, International assessment tools.

Introduction

Organizational excellence frameworks, such as the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (Technology, 2023-2024) and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) (Management, 2019) model, are internationally recognized tools for assessing and improving performance. The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award emphasizes leadership, innovation, and integrated management systems to support long-term performance, while EFQM provides a comprehensive approach for evaluating excellence across all organizational functions. Other tools, such as the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index (Forum, 2020) and the IMD Competitiveness Models (Development, 2019), focus on economic competitiveness and are useful in evaluating the conditions for organizational development.

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For public transport organizations, adopting excellence models is crucial for improving operational efficiency and service quality. These frameworks support continuous performance evaluation, identifying strengths and areas for improvement, and aligning strategic objectives with market needs and regulations. In the context of public transport, such systems help optimize resources, reduce costs, increase user satisfaction, and promote sustainability (Bank, Doing Business, 2020).

In this analysis, a comparison between six diagnostic systems will be carried out, with the aim of identifying the most appropriate tool for assessing the performance and competitiveness of the Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A. Each proposed methodology addresses the specificities and complexity of the transport organization, with different approaches that can contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing its success. Through a critical and systematic evaluation, the system capable of providing relevant data and essential insights will be chosen, in order to optimize the performance and strategy of Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A. (Bank, Business Ready, 2024).

Literature review

In the field of organizational performance and competitiveness, particularly in public transport, various models and theories have been proposed to assess and enhance efficiency and effectiveness. These frameworks provide valuable tools for understanding the multifaceted nature of organizational performance, integrating both internal and external factors that influence long-term success.

Among the most well-known models is the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (Technology, 2023-2024), which is considered a global benchmark for excellence. It emphasizes leadership, innovation, and an integrated management system, encouraging continuous improvement within organizations, including those in the public transport sector (Bourne Mike, Neely, Andy, Mills John, & Platts Ken). Similarly, the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) (Management, 2019) model also emphasizes organizational excellence and has been adopted widely in European organizations, demonstrating its applicability to both the private and public sectors. However, the EFQM (Management, 2019) model is seen as more complex due to its numerous criteria and sub-criteria.

Additionally, the IMD (Development, 2019) and World Competitiveness Center (WCC) models, which focus on economic competitiveness and macroeconomic factors, provide insight into national-level performance but can be adapted to assess the competitiveness of organizations in specific sectors, including public transport (Herman Aguinis & Kurt Kraiger, 2009). Meanwhile, tools like CompNet and Doing Business provide data on national competitiveness and regulation but lack the specificity needed to analyze performance at the organizational level, especially in industries with unique operational characteristics, such as public transport (Karadeloglou & Konstantins Benkovskis, 2015).

The theoretical foundations of competitiveness in public transport are primarily grounded in strategic management and institutional economics. Porter's theory highlights that competitiveness arises from both internal capabilities and the external environment, including infrastructure and regulatory frameworks (Gerard, 2023). This perspective suggests that diagnostic models must consider both internal factors (e.g., leadership and innovation) and external influences on the sector (Neely, 2002). Additionally, strategic performance management, which includes constant monitoring and adaptation to market and regulatory changes, is essential for ensuring the

sustainability and operational efficiency of public transport organizations (Robert S. Kaplan & David P. Norton, 1996).

In terms of practical implementation, the literature suggests that models like EFQM and Malcolm Baldrige have been successfully used to improve the quality of services and efficiency in public transport organizations (Marr, 2012).

Despite the considerable body of research on organizational performance and competitiveness, a clear gap remains in the literature regarding the adaptation of international models to the specific needs of public transport organizations in large cities. While general performance assessment models are well-established, few studies have explored how these models can be tailored to address the unique challenges faced by public transport systems, such as user satisfaction, sustainability, and resource management (Neuman, 2000). Further research is needed to examine the impact of diagnostic models on decision-making processes and the long-term performance of public transport organizations like the Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A.. Thus, the present research aims to bridge this gap by integrating international models into a diagnostic framework that considers both global best practices and local particularities in public transport management (Parmenter, 2010).

Methodology

This article analysis included a detailed comparison of six distinct diagnostic tools, each characterized by specific methodologies and applications, including:

The CompNet Competitiveness Diagnostic Toolkit (Robert S. Kaplan & David P. Norton, 1996)

World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Competitiveness Index (Forum, 2020)

World Bank Doing Business Report (Bank, Business Ready, 2024) (Bank, Doing Business, 2020)

IMD research World Competitiveness Center (WCC) competitiveness model (Development, 2019)

EFQM - Radar monitor model (Management, 2019)

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria for Performance Excellence (CPE) model (Technology, 2023-2024)

A strategic choice for Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A will be based on a comparative and performance assessment approach. In this research, a qualitative method will be used, supported by documentary analysis and detailed evaluation of six international competitiveness diagnostic tools. These tools will be analyzed from the perspective of their applicability in the specific context of Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A., given the complexity and specificity of a public urban transport service (Porter, 1990). (ISO, 2015)

The research process will include the following steps:

Documentary analysis: Detailed study of the literature and international reports for each of the six models for assessing competitiveness, performance and excellence.

Systematic comparison: Applying a set of evaluation criteria to compare the six instruments according to factors such as clarity of objectives, completeness of scope, methodology, flexibility and costs involved.

Critical Appraisal: Giving a score to each scheme based on the criteria set and arguing the case for it.

System selection and recommendation: Choosing the most appropriate diagnostic tool for Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A., based on a transparent decision-making process. (Technology, 2023-2024) (Robert S. Kaplan & David P. Norton, 1996)

Research questions will include:

Which of the six diagnostic systems provides a more complete assessment of the competitiveness and performance of the Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A.?

What are the key criteria that determine which evaluation model is appropriate for a public urban transport organization?

How can international diagnostic models be applied to improve the strategic performance of STB S.A.?

What are the advantages and limitations of each diagnostic model in the specific context of STB S.A.?

Nine key criteria, relevant for the analysis and assessment of each instrument, were used in the ranking and evaluation process of the six diagnostic systems for competitiveness, excellence and performance. Each scheme was assessed against these criteria and the scores assigned - 7, 8, 9 or 10 - were determined by a combination of objective and subjective factors, taking into account their clarity, relevance and impact in the specific scope. (Neuman, 2000)

The process of prioritization of performance, excellence or competitiveness assessment tools can be carried out on the basis of well-defined criteria that reflect the particular purposes and context of the analysis. In this respect, prioritization is based on the following fundamental criteria:

Clarity and relevance of objectives

Criterion: It is analyzed to what extent each system or tool is able to achieve the specific objectives set, such as measuring economic performance, identifying key factors of competitiveness, or promoting organizational excellence. It is essential that the objectives of the system are clear and well defined in order to effectively guide the diagnostic process.

Score 9-10: Clear and relevant objectives are fundamental to the effectiveness of a system. Models with a well-defined purpose that respond to the needs of the specific market or domain received high scores. Examples include the "WEF Global Competitiveness Index" and the "Malcolm Baldrige Criteria Model", which are clearly geared towards assessing organizational competitiveness and performance at the global level.

Score 7-8: Models that are more complex or have limited applicability in a particular context, such as "CompNet" (which focuses on economic competitiveness and requires detailed data), score lower. They are relevant, but not as easy to implement or understand by all users (Neely, 2002) (Marr, 2012).

Completeness and scope

Criterion: The ability of an assessment system to cover a broad spectrum of essential factors relevant for diagnosing organizational performance, including financial, organizational, strategic and innovation dimensions. An effective tool should be able to address multiple aspects of an organization's activity, providing a comprehensive view of them.

Score 9-10: Models such as the "World Competitiveness Center (IMD)" or "Malcolm Baldrige" cover a wide range of dimensions of organizational, economic and sectoral performance and are extremely comprehensive in their assessments.

Score 7-8: Models such as "Doing Business Report" or "CompNet" are comprehensive in one context, but their applicability may be narrower. For example, "Doing Business" focuses on legal regulations and business climate without directly addressing organizational performance. (Neely, 2002) (Marr, 2012)

Methodology and data validity

Criterion: The reliability and validity of the methodological approaches used by each diagnostic system is an essential criterion. It is important that assessment methods are based on verified data and rigorous methods so that the conclusions drawn are reliable and have applicability to the organizational reality.

Score 9-10: Models using hard data and well-defined methodologies with wide international recognition, such as the "WEF Global Competitiveness Index" and the "IMD Model", scored high due to their methodological soundness and long-term validity.

Score 7-8: Models relying on less standardized methodologies or relying on external data sources, such as "CompNet", may score lower. However, these tools are valid under certain conditions but require more detailed implementation to ensure data accuracy (Parmenter, 2010) (Neuman, 2000) (Neely, 2002).

Flexibility and adaptability

Criterion: The ability of the assessment tool to adapt and respond to the needs and particularities of different industries, organizations or economic conditions.

Score 9-10: Models that can be applied in a wide variety of contexts or industries, such as "EFQM" and "Malcolm Baldrige", are valued for their flexibility, being suitable for organizations of all types, regardless of size or sector.

Score 7-8: The more rigid models or those that are focused on specific sectors, e.g. 'CompNet' (which focuses on the national macro-economy), scored lower as they do not offer the same flexibility in application (Neuman, 2000) (Parmenter, 2010) (Porter, 1990).

Simplicity and ease of implementation

Criterion: The degree of complexity of the implementation and use of the assessment tool, taking into account both the resources required for its effective integration and the impact on users. While a very complex system may impose significant costs and resources for implementation, one that is too simplistic risks neglecting essential factors that may affect the accuracy of the results.

Score 9-10: Models such as "Doing Business" and the "WEF Global Competitiveness Index" are extremely easy to implement at the macroeconomic level as they are based on external data and standardized reports already publicly available.

Score 7-8: Models such as "EFQM" and "Malcolm Baldrige" are more complex and require an internal self-assessment and implementation process, which makes them more difficult to implement in smaller organizations or those with no experience in assessing excellence (Robert S. Kaplan & David P. Norton, 1996) (Porter, 1990).

Impact on strategic decisions

Criterion: The ability of the evaluation system to provide valuable and relevant information to support strategic decision making, thus contributing to the development and adaptation of the organization in the current economic environment.

Score 9-10: Models that directly influence strategic decisions globally or in large organizations, such as the "IMD Model" and the "Malcolm Baldrige Criteria", are widely used for performance improvement and strategy formulation, achieving high scores.

Score 7-8: Models that are more descriptive in nature or focus on economic research, e.g. "CompNet" and "Doing Business Report", have less impact on direct strategic decisions, but are important for analyzing the global context (Neuman, 2000) (Neely, 2002).

Cost and resources required

Criterion: Financial and human resources required to implement and maintain each evaluation system.

Score 9-10: Models that are accessible to the general public or do not require considerable resources to implement, such as Doing Business, receive high scores due to their affordability and minimum investment requirements.

Score 7-8: Models that require a substantial commitment from organizations, such as 'EFQM' and 'Malcolm Baldrige', which require internal resources for implementation and training, receive lower scores due to the higher costs involved (Neuman, 2000) (Neely, 2002) (Porter, 1990).

Track record of success and international recognition

Criterion: Market response and international acceptance of the evaluation scheme.

Score 9-10: Models that are widely accepted and implemented globally, such as the WEF Global Competitiveness Index and the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria, enjoy widespread validation and have a significant impact internationally, which gives them a high degree of credibility.

Score 7-8: Newer or not widely adopted models such as "CompNet" may score lower, but are valued in economic research and sector analysis and are still valuable in the academic context (Porter, 1990) (Parmenter, 2010).

Feedback and continuous improvement

Criterion: The ability to continuously adapt and improve the assessment process on the basis of the feedback received.

Score 9-10: Models that are frequently updated to reflect economic changes and emerging trends, e.g. "Malcolm Baldrige Criteria" and "WEF", benefit from constant feedback, which allows them to improve processes and remain relevant over time.

Score 7-8: Models that are not regularly reviewed or have a more static structure, but are based on current data, are still valued, but receive a lower score due to the lack of regular adjustments (Parmenter, 2010) (Neuman, 2000).

The choice of the excellence system was based on a detailed analysis of evaluation criteria, including the clarity of objectives, completeness, flexibility, and impact on strategic decisions. Consideration was given to the system's ability to adapt to the organization's specifics and support continuous improvement, thereby ensuring an effective and sustainable evaluation of organizational performance.

Results and discussions

As observed, the Malcolm Baldrige Model (75 points) is ideal for STB S.A. due to its clear objectives and wide applicability in improving organizational performance, focusing on leadership and innovation. The World Competitiveness Center Model (74 points) emphasizes economic competitiveness and can be adapted to the Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A. context. In

contrast, the Doing Business Report (66 points) provides general information, but is less relevant for a detailed assessment of Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A.'s performance.

The "Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria (CPE) Model" stands out with the highest score due to its clear and relevant objectives, broad applicability, and international recognition.

Table 1. Final ranking results

Diagnostic system	Final score
Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (CPE) Criteria Model	75 p
World Competitiveness Center (WCC) Competitiveness Model	74 p
WEF Global Competitiveness Index	73 p
EFQM Model - Radar Monitor	73 p
CompNet Competitiveness Diagnostic Toolkit	69 p
World Bank Doing Business Report	66 p

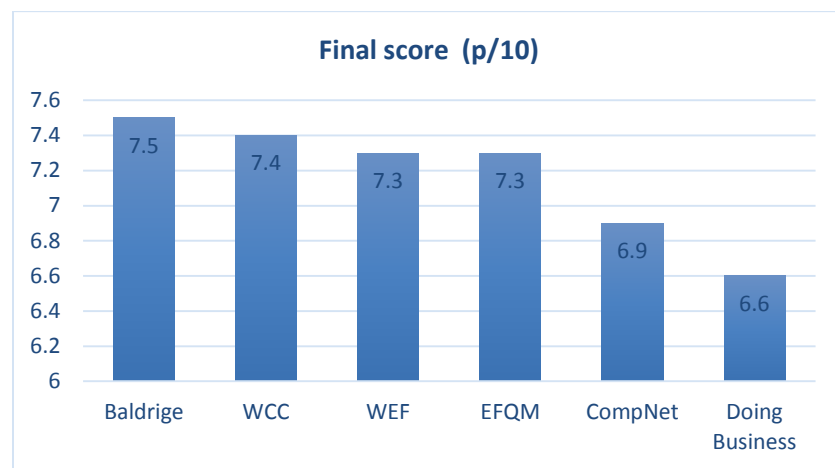


Figure 1. Hierarchy of diagnostic systems

The selected business excellence models were evaluated based on the nine established criteria, with scores assigned according to the adopted evaluation methodology. This approach ensures an objective and comprehensive assessment of each system, considering their relevance and applicability within the specific organizational context.

In Table 2, where the CompNet Competitiveness Diagnostic Toolkit system was evaluated, the established criteria were analyzed, and scores were assigned based on the applied methodology. This system stood out for the relevance of its objectives in assessing economic competitiveness, but it presented limitations in terms of applicability at the microeconomic level, being more suitable for the analysis of national and sectoral economies.

Table 2. Analysis of CompNet Competitiveness Diagnostic Toolkit

(Robert S. Kaplan & David P. Norton, 1996)

CompNet Competitiveness Diagnostic Toolkit		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Clarity and relevance of objectives	Highly relevant for assessing the competitiveness of national and sectoral economies, with a focus on economic and performance indicators.	9/10
Completeness and scope	Covers a wide range of economic and sectoral factors, but focuses mainly on macroeconomic aspects.	8/10

CompNet Competitiveness Diagnostic Toolkit		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Methodology and data validity	Uses standardized methodologies and comparable data across economies, but applicability depends on the quality of available data.	8/10
Flexibility and adaptability	Is adaptable, but focuses mainly on national economies, which limits application in other areas.	7/10
Simplicity and ease of implementation	Can be implemented fairly easily, but for full use requires detailed data which may be difficult to access.	7/10
Impact on strategic decisions	Useful tools for economic policies but less so for firm-level strategies.	7/10
Cost and resources required	Use of existing data can reduce costs but may require resources for complex analysis.	7/10
Success track record and international recognition	It is globally recognized and used by international organizations and governments.	8/10
Feedback and continuous improvement	Based on continuous research and up-to-date data.	8/10
Final score criteria – 69 p		

In Table 3, the evaluation of the WEF Global Competitiveness Index was conducted by analyzing the established criteria and assigning scores based on the applied methodology. This system is notable for its comprehensive approach to measuring global competitiveness, focusing on critical factors like institutions, infrastructure, and innovation. However, while it is highly relevant for broader economic analyses, it has limitations in supporting microeconomic decision-making.

Table 3. Analysis of WEF Global Competitiveness Index (Forum, 2020)

WEF Global Competitiveness Index		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Clarity and relevance of objectives	Measures global competitiveness, focusing on factors such as institutions, infrastructure and innovation.	9/10
Completeness and scope	Covers a broad spectrum of factors relevant to an economy's competitiveness.	9/10
Methodology and data validity	Uses robust data and methodologies based on extensive research, but there are criticisms about the subjectivity of some indicators.	8/10
Flexibility and adaptability	Can be adapted to different economies and contexts, but focuses on the global macroeconomy.	8/10
Simplicity and ease of implementation	Indicators are easy to interpret, but implementation can be complex due to large amount of data.	7/10
Impact on strategic decisions	Useful for governments and international organizations, less for specific micro-economic decisions.	7/10
Cost and resources required	Requires access to global data and resources to interpret it.	8/10
Success track record and international recognition	One of the most widely used systems globally, with significant recognition.	9/10
Feedback and continuous improvement	It is regularly updated and reflects economic trends.	8/10
Final score criteria – 73 p		

In Table 4, the World Bank Doing Business Report was evaluated by analyzing the established criteria and assigning scores based on the applied methodology. This system is focused on assessing the business environment, with particular emphasis on regulations and legal procedures. While it offers valuable insights for business decisions, its applicability for in-depth competitiveness assessment is limited, especially when compared to more comprehensive frameworks.

Table 4. Analysis of World Bank Doing Business Report (Development, 2019)

World Bank Doing Business report		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Clarity and relevance of objectives	Focuses on measuring business conditions in various economies, with an emphasis on regulations and legal procedures.	8/10
Completeness and scope	Addresses key aspects of the business environment but focuses more on legal and regulatory factors.	7/10
Methodology and data validity	Uses data and case studies, but some methodologies have been criticized in the past for limitations in interpretation.	7/10
Flexibility and adaptability	Very useful in analyzing the global business climate, but less relevant for in-depth competitiveness assessment.	6/10
Simplicity and ease of implementation	It is easy to use, with clear reports and scores.	8/10
Impact on strategic decisions	It has a direct impact on business decisions and is used by investors and governments.	9/10
Cost and resources required	It requires access to official government data, but is publicly available and does not involve high additional costs.	7/10
Success track record and international recognition	It is widely recognized, but has been subject to criticism on methodology and applicability.	7/10
Feedback and continuous improvement	Regularly updated but sometimes criticized for the approaches used.	7/10
Final score criteria – 66 p		

In Table 5, the IMD World Competitiveness Center (WCC) Competitiveness Model was evaluated based on the defined criteria. This model proves to be highly relevant for diagnosing the competitiveness of economies and regions, offering a comprehensive approach that includes economic, educational, and technological factors. Its applicability spans various economic contexts, but requires significant resources for detailed analysis. Despite this, the model's international recognition and frequent updates make it a valuable tool for policymakers.

Table 5. Analysis of IMD World Competitiveness Center (WCC) Competitiveness Model (Forum, 2020)

World Competitiveness Center (WCC) competitiveness model from IMD research		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Clarity and relevance of objectives	It is a highly relevant model for diagnosing the competitiveness of economies and regions.	8/10
Completeness and scope	It covers a wide range of economic, educational and technological factors.	9/10
Methodology and data validity	It uses a robust methodology based on high-quality research and data.	9/10

World Competitiveness Center (WCC) competitiveness model from IMD research		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Flexibility and adaptability	Can be applied across different economic contexts, even though it is a flexible tool.	8/10
Simplicity and ease of implementation	Reports are easy to understand, but detailed analysis requires resources and expertise.	8/10
Impact on strategic decisions	Extremely useful for policy makers at national/governmental level.	8/10
Cost and resources required	Requires significant investment for full implementation, but the report is affordable.	8/10
Success track record and international recognition	It is widely recognized and used by economists and policy makers.	8/10
Feedback and continuous improvement	It is regularly updated and reflects global economic trends.	8/10
Final score criteria – 74 p		

In Table 6, the EFQM Model - Radar Monitor was evaluated based on the established criteria. This model focuses on organizational excellence and performance, applicable to both private and public organizations. It provides a comprehensive approach by covering leadership, strategies, processes, results, and sustainability. While highly adaptable to various organizational sizes and sectors, its complexity may pose challenges for smaller organizations without prior experience in excellence assessments. Despite requiring substantial resources for implementation, the EFQM model's global recognition and emphasis on continuous improvement make it a valuable tool for enhancing organizational performance.

Table 6. Analysis of EFQM Model - Radar Monitor (Management, 2019)

EFQM Model - Radar Monitor		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Clarity and relevance of objectives	It is a model dedicated to organizational excellence and performance, particularly applicable to private and public organizations. It helps assess how well organizations achieve their strategic objectives.	8/10
Completeness and scope	EFQM is a comprehensive model that focuses on all organizational factors, including leadership, strategies, processes, processes, results and sustainability. It covers a wide range of performance areas.	9/10
Methodology and data validity	It uses a detailed set of criteria and indicators to assess performance, and its validity is based on internationally recognized good practice. However, may be difficult to apply widely in smaller organizations.	8/10
Flexibility and adaptability	It can be applied in organizations of different sizes and sectors and is flexible enough to be adapted to different types of organizations.	9/10
Simplicity and ease of implementation	It is a detailed model and, although comprehensive, can be complex to implement, particularly for organizations that do not have previous experience in excellence assessments.	7/10
Impact on strategic decisions	The EFQM model strongly influences internal strategic decisions, helping organizations to improve performance through continuous assessment and by identifying opportunities for improvement.	8/10

EFQM Model - Radar Monitor		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Cost and resources required	Implementing the model can require significant resources, including time for training and internal evaluation.	7/10
Success track record and international recognition	EFQM is widely recognized and used by thousands of organizations globally to assess organizational excellence and performance.	9/10
Feedback and continuous improvement	It is a model based on continuous self-assessment, which encourages constant process improvement.	8/10
Final score criteria – 73 p		

In Table 7, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria for Performance Excellence (CPE) model was assessed based on the evaluation criteria. This model is highly relevant for both public and private organizations, focusing on improving organizational processes and outcomes through clear and comprehensive objectives. It covers essential areas such as leadership, strategy, customer focus, measurement, and process management, making it universally applicable. While its detailed approach can make implementation resource-intensive, the model's global recognition, rigorous methodology, and emphasis on continuous improvement contribute significantly to organizational excellence. The model's flexibility allows it to be applied across various sectors, though it may appear more rigid compared to others like EFQM.

Table 7. Analysis of The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria for Performance Excellence (CPE) Model (Technology, 2023-2024)

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria for Performance Excellence (CPE) model		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Clarity and relevance of objectives	The Baldrige criteria are very clear and focus on excellence in performance and quality for both public and private sector organizations. The objective is to improve organizational processes and outcomes.	9/10
Completeness and scope	The model covers all essential aspects of an organization, including leadership, strategy, customers, measurement, analytics, and process management. It is very comprehensive and applicable to any industry.	9/10
Methodology and data validity	The Baldrige Criteria are supported by a rigorous assessment framework and validated data, and are based on internationally recognized research and best practices.	9/10
Flexibility and adaptability	Like EFQM, Baldrige can be applied in organizations of different sizes and sectors. However, it can be perceived as more rigid than the EFQM due to more detailed criteria.	8/10
Simplicity and ease of implementation	The model is quite detailed and can require significant resources to implement correctly, but the benefits are significant.	7/10
Impact on strategic decisions	It has a direct impact on internal strategic decisions, giving organizations a clear framework for improving performance and quality.	9/10
Cost and resources required	Implementing this model can be costly, given the need for an ongoing self-assessment process and the allocation of resources for monitoring and training.	7/10

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria for Performance Excellence (CPE) model		
Evaluation Criterion	Criterion Evaluation	Criterion Score
Success track record and international recognition	It is one of the most recognized and respected models of excellence around the world, used by many organizations seeking to win the Malcolm Baldrige Award.	9/10
Feedback and continuous improvement	It encourages constant feedback and continuous improvement and is based on regular evaluations.	8/10
Final score criteria – 75 p		

Conclusion

The 'Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria (CPE) Model' stands out with the highest score due to its clear and relevant objectives, wide applicability, and international recognition, making it the most relevant for the Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A. Considering that this model places a strong emphasis on leadership, innovation, and integrated management, it aligns perfectly with Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A.'s needs to continuously improve operational performance and service quality. Additionally, the Baldrige model supports a holistic approach to organizational excellence, which is essential for a complex organization like STB S.A., which must respond not only to the demands of external regulations but also to internal efficiency needs and user satisfaction. Similarly, the EFQM model, with its comprehensive structure, allows for a detailed evaluation of performance across various areas of the organization, and its application in public transport can also support the identification of opportunities for service improvement, much like what the Baldrige model proposes. Moreover, the 'World Competitiveness Center (WCC) - IMD Competitiveness Model', although more focused on economic competitiveness analysis, can provide valuable data for Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A. in assessing its position in the public transport market in Bucharest, in comparison to other organizations in the field. Thus, all of these models can contribute to the strategic development of Bucharest Transport Company STB S.A., but Baldrige remains the best-suited for achieving operational excellence and long-term sustainability goals.

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