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HAPPILY EVER AFTER

– case study on family reunification



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— case study on family reunification

The Master's thesis focused on a family reunification. Residence permit on the grounds of family reunification is applicable when family members follow an alien who has got a residence permit or who has got international protection. Residence permit applications are treated and decided by Finnish Immigration Service. The case study was a development project to shorten the management times of the family reunification applications. The key performance indexes were: number of decisions versus applications, number of decisions per case worker, and average management time.

Aim of the thesis and the main research question was what is the benefit of using service design methods and tools for developing governmental services. The supporting questions framed the focus: what is a customer satisfactory level, what are the bottlenecks in the family reunification process, and what are the issues affecting the application process delays from original petition to decision (both in organizational and service perspectives). Theory was based on trifold approach of service design as a discipline, description of family reunification, and organizational theory.

The research unified two different development frameworks. The double diamond and OODA-loop were combined to test how a service design concept works compared to a commonly used reference concept. The case study was divided to four phases; discover, define, develop, and deliver. Within the phases a number of service design methods were utilized and tested in practice.

The results analyzed the one-year long case study results. The results were quantitative and described with statistics-based figures and explaining text. The development project did achieve success but left room for further development. The results proofed that service design methods and tools were very useful for governmental service development. Service design should be an integral part of an organization and the service design thinking mindset should cover all service provision.

KEYWORDS:

Service design thinking, service design, operational management, immigration.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Alien	<p>A person who is not a Finnish citizen (Aliens Act 2004).</p> <p>In the global context, a person who is not a national (native or citizen) of a given State. (Derived by EMN from IOM Glossary on Migration, 2nd ed., 2011).</p> <p>In the EU context, any person other than a national of a Member State of the European Communities (Convention Implementing The Schengen Agreement).</p>
Applicant	<p>Applicant is the person who seeks family reunification (Alien Act 2014).</p>
Asylum	<p>A form of protection given by a State on its territory, based on the principle of non-refoulement and internationally or nationally recognized refugee rights and which is granted to a person who is unable to seek protection in their country of citizenship and / or residence, in particular for fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion (EMN 2018).</p>
Case officer	<p>See case worker.</p>
Case worker	<p>Personnel of the determining authority responsible for examining and assessing an application for international protection or residence permits and competent to take a decision at first instance in such a case (Derived by EMN from the definition of ‘decision maker’ in UNHCR: Beyond Proof – Credibility Assessment in EU Asylum Systems 2013).</p> <p>In the Finnish Immigration Service, the case workers have different statuses, there are senior officers (in Finnish: ylitarkastaja) and deputy administrative officers (in Finnish: apulaistarkastaja). Both case workers are competent to take a decision in the cases in their defined responsibility areas. In the peruse the translations from Finnish is used to understand the delicate differences.</p>

EASO European Asylum Support Office. A European Union agency mandated to focus on three major responsibilities: to contribute to the coherent implementation and development of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), to support and strengthen practical cooperation among EU Member States on asylum and to provide and / or coordinate the provision of operational support to EU Member States, subject to particular pressure on their asylum and reception systems. (Art. 1 and 2 of Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 (EASO Regulation.))

EMN The European Migration Network. The Finnish national contact point for the European Migration Network (EMN) is located in the Finnish Immigration Service.

A body established by Council Decision 2008/381/EC that serves to meet the information needs of Union institutions and of EU Member States' authorities and institutions, by providing up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum, with a view to supporting policy-making in the European Union in these areas (Art. 1 of Council Decision 2008/381/EC (European Migration Network Decision)).

EU European Union

Family reunification

The establishment of a family relationship which is either:

a) the entry into and residence in an EU Member State, in accordance with Council Directive 2003/86/EC (Family Reunification Directive), by family members of a third-country national residing lawfully in that EU Member State ('sponsor') in order to preserve the family unit, whether the family relationship arose before or after the entry of the sponsor; or

b) between an union citizen and third-country national established outside the European Union who then subsequently enters the European Union. (EMN 2018.)

Family reunion Synonym for family reunification (EMN 2018).

IDP Internally Displaced Person. A person or groups of persons who has been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border. (Art. 2 of UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement 1998.)

INLAND Inland is a design and innovation lab within the Finnish Immigration Service (Migri). INLAND combine design thinking and advanced technology to co-design services that support immigrants and their communities (INLAND 2019).

International protection

International protection means refugee status, subsidiary protection status or a residence permit granted on the basis of humanitarian protection. (Aliens Act 2004.)

In the global context, the actions by the international community on the basis of international law, aimed at protecting the fundamental rights of a specific category of persons outside their countries of origin, who lack the national protection of their own countries (UNHCR Master Glossary of Terms).

In the EU context, protection that encompasses refugee status and subsidiary protection status (Art. 2(a) of Directive 2011/95/EC (Recast Qualification Directive)).

IOM	The International Organization for Migration. An intergovernmental organization in the field of migration dedicated to ensuring the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, be they refugees, displaced persons or other uprooted people. (International Organization for Migration.)
KRP	The National Bureau of Investigation (in Finnish: Keskusrikospoliisi).
Migri	Official abbreviation for Finnish Immigration Service (in Finnish: Maahanmuuttovirasto).
Refugee	<p>In the global context , either a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned before, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it.(Global context: Art. 1A of the Geneva Refugee Convention and Protocol.)</p> <p>In the EU context, either a third-country national who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned above, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it, and to whom Art. 12 (Exclusion) of Directive 2011/95/EU (Recast Qualification Directive) does not apply (Art. 2(d) of Directive 2011/95/EU (Recast Qualification Directive).</p>

Refugee Convention

The Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Treaty Series of the Statute Book of Finland 77/1968.)

The UN multilateral treaty which is the key legal document defining who is a refugee and who is not, the rights of refugees and the legal obligations of States towards them (Geneva Convention of 1951 and Protocol of 1967).

Refugee status The recognition by an EU Member State of a third-country national or stateless person as a refugee (Art. 2(e) of Directive 2011/95/EU (Recast Qualification Directive)).

Residence permit

Residence permit means a permit issued to an alien for a purpose other than tourism or a comparable short-term residence entitling the alien to enter the country repeatedly and stay in the country (Aliens Act 2004).

Schengen area The Schengen Area is an area comprising 26 European states that have officially abolished passport and all other types of border control at their mutual borders. The area mostly functions as a single jurisdiction for international travel purposes, with a common visa policy. The area is named after the Schengen Agreement. Twenty-two of the twenty-eight European Union (EU) member states participate in the Schengen Area. Of the six EU members that are not part of the Schengen Area, four—Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, and Romania—are legally obliged to join the area, while the other two—the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom—maintain opt-outs. The four European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member states, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland, are not members of the EU, but have signed agreements in association with the Schengen Agreement. Three European microstates—Monaco, San Marino, and the Vatican City—are de facto part of the Schengen Area.

Sponsor In the global context, a person or entity which undertakes a (legal, financial or personal) engagement, promise or pledge, on behalf of another. (developed by EMN)

In the EU context of family reunification, a third-country national residing lawfully in a Member State and applying, or whose family members apply, for family reunification to be joined with them. (Art. 2(c) of Council Directive 2003/86/EC (Family Reunification Directive))

The family member who lives in Finland is called a sponsor (Alien Act 2014).

SPR The Finnish Red Cross (In Finnish: Suomen punainen risti).

Subsidiary protection

The protection given to a third-country national or a stateless person who does not qualify as a refugee but in respect of whom substantial grounds have been shown for believing that the person concerned, if returned to their country of origin, or in the case of a stateless person to their country of former habitual residence, would face a real risk of suffering serious harm as defined in Art. 15 of Directive 2011/95/EU (Recast Qualification Directive), and to whom Art. 17(1) and (2) of this Directive do not apply, and is unable or, owing to such risk, unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country. (Derived by EMN from Art. 2(f) of Directive 2011/95/EC (Recast Qualification Directive.))

SUPO The Finnish Security Intelligence Service (In Finnish: Suojelupoliisi).

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees. The refugee agency of the United Nations (UN) mandated to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide, and to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. (Website of UNHCR.)

UMA

The electronic case management system for immigration sustained by the Finnish Immigration Service.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Immigration

Global immigration is a growing phenomenon. Global warming, conflicts, population growth and economic inequality motivate people to migrate to other countries and continents with growing numbers.

More and more people has been forced to leave their homes. It is estimated that almost every two seconds one person is forcibly displaced as a result of conflict or persecution somewhere in the world. UNHCR has reported that there are 70 800 000 forcibly displaced people worldwide. Most of them (41,3 million) are internally displaced persons (IDP's) within their own country. Around one third (25,9 million) are refugees and the rest are asylum seekers (3,5 million). (UNHCR 2019.)

The globalization further supports work-related immigration and study related reasons to migrate. Catastrophes, wars, crises, population growth and climate change will promote growing immigration nationally, continentally and globally. People seek shelter and better opportunities as life may get more difficult or impossible in the area of origin. During the flee from the country of origin families are likely to lose contact with each other and lose contact with each other. Often one family member moves alone first to prepare the move of the rest of the family. It may take years of separation before the families can follow. In case of forcibly displaced people the family members may lose contact and it may be difficult to locate the family members. The family reunification needs support and assistance in different forms after the final destination is settled.

The pull factors that attract people to certain countries consist of good employment opportunities, good social services and health care system, stable governance and good educations system. In the background there is an aging population in western countries which causes need for additional workforce to maintain sustainability.

The push factors can be evolutionary in nature. These are population growth and climate change which cause poverty, lack of education possibilities, lack of access to health care, diminishing opportunities to farming and food production and also lack of clean water

resources. The sudden triggering events to cause immigration are usually crises caused by wars, civil wars or other armed conflicts. Nature catastrophes may cause immigration but normally people try to stay or return to their area of origin as soon as the situation has calmed to normal state.

All nations may control their areal integrity and govern who may reside in the nations area. A foreigner has several opportunities to access entry to a European Union country. There is a free movement area called the Schengen area, where people can travel freely but EU nationals need to register themselves if moving or staying for periods longer than 90 days (Maahanmuuttovirasto, 2018). The third country citizens need to have a visa for a visit up to 90 days. For longer periods the access to a Schengen area and to an individual country requires a residence permit. The residence permit has to be applied prior to entering the Schengen area if not having a visa. The residence permit grants a person to stay in the country that has granted the permit and travel within the Schengen area. (Maahanmuuttovirasto, 2018.)

People entering the Schengen area without travel documents like passport and residence permit or visa are not authorized to enter the country or Schengen area. Eventually they may seek asylum in the passport control or from any police or Border Guard officer. In all other cases the entry to a country is considered as illegal entry and the person can be taken into custody. (Maahanmuuttovirasto, 2018.)

The main categories of the residence permits are a permit to work in Finland, study permit and permit on the grounds of family reunification. Specific categories are when applying at the same time with family members and on the grounds of a returnee. On the grounds of nationality, the categories are Nordic citizens, EU citizens, family member of an EU citizen and a citizen of some other country. Same rights as citizens of EU member countries apply also to citizens of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. (Maahanmuuttovirasto, 2018.)

1.2 About the author

The author has acted as Deputy Director General of the Finnish Immigration Service since January 2016. His responsibility area is mainly the co-ordination of the operational

functions. It covers control of applications and decisions ratios and productivity of decision making. He monitors the different processes' capability to fulfill the set requirements. He is double hatted with the role of chief of staff. In this duty he is in charge of support functions. With these roles he follows the productivity and allocates HR and budgetary resources according to the situation and workload of different processes. The support units provide country of origin information, legal support, ICT services and digital development, safety and security and other administration services to all units. All these support functions report to the Deputy Director General.

The case study is a part of a larger development project which is part of the responsibilities of the author. The productivity within different units is needed to get higher and with the thesis perspective this one specific area has been studied and researched deeper. At the same time with this study different projects concerning residence permits on the grounds of work or studies have been conducted and one is ongoing. With these projects service design tools and methods have been used. Some of these projects have been documented as project reports for the MBA studies.

The author has conducted the project and study independently, though Migri's employees have participated in separate cases when their expertise is needed or when the actions taken have been their normal routines. Several parts of the study are based on different routines that have been changed a bit to provide information to this study. The study is made in back-stage by the author so that the results would not be biased if different actors would have known that their actions have been specifically measured and shadowed. The overall results will be reported when the study is finalized.

2 FINNISH IMMIGRATION SERVICE

2.1 Finnish Immigration Service

The Finnish Immigration Service (Maahanmuuttovirasto in Finnish), or abbreviated as Migri, handles all immigration-related applications. All third country nationals who wish to stay in Finland more than 90 days are required to apply a residence permit or asylum. Migri treats all other issues concerning the entry to Finland but the visas which are a responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Migri is a Finnish governmental agency and is located within Finland's Ministry of the Interior. The agency partners closely across multiple ministries in asylum and immigration-related affairs. In addition to the strategic and operational work with the Ministry of Interior close cooperation is established with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Table 1. Important actors in immigration matters in Finland (Finnish Immigration Service 2019d).

Ministry	Subordinate agencies
The Ministry of the Interior	(1) Finnish Immigration Service (2) Police (3) Border guard
The Ministry for Foreign Affairs	(1) Finnish missions (embassies and consulates)
The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment	(1) Employment and economic development offices (TE-offices) (2) Centres for economic development, transport and the environment (ELY Centres)
The Ministry of Education and Culture	(1) Finnish National Board of Education.
The Ministry of Justice	(1) Supreme Administrative Court (2) Administrative Courts (3) Non-Discrimination Ombudsman

Migri works in close cooperation with other organizations in the immigration or asylum spectrum. The partners are mainly organizations of the internal security as the police, the Border Guard, the Finnish Security Intelligence Service (Supo) and the National Bureau of Investigation (KRP). The cooperation includes all security and safety related issues from thefts to counter-terrorism. (Ministry of the Interior 2018).

The Finnish Immigration Service is a decision-making organization in the matters related to immigration, asylum, refugee status and citizenship. The agency maintains the reception system for asylum seekers. The agency is responsible to implement the Finnish immigration policy and to promote controlled immigration, good administration and human and basic rights in its operations. (Laki maahanmuuttovirastosta 1995.)

The Finnish Immigration Service provides specialist and information services to political and governmental decision makers, media, and the public. This supports political decision-making as well as national and international co-operation. The Finnish Immigration Service participates as a specialist in the discussion about immigration. Tasks of the Finnish Immigration Service are the matters related to foreign nationals' entry into Finland, residence in the country, refugee status and citizenship and to register of foreign as well as to produce information for authorities and international organization's nationals. (Maahanmuuttovirasto 2018.)



Figure 1. Organization of the Finnish Immigration Service 2019 (Maahanmuuttovirasto 2019).

The Citizenship unit grants the Finnish nationality, decides on matters concerning losing Finnish nationality and determines the nationality position in complex situations. Such situations may be cases where a person does not have any nationality. This is often possible when a child is born in Finland and he or she has to have a nationality. The unit investigates whether the bloodline does provide any nationality and if not, the Finnish citizenship may be granted. The Citizenship unit has office in Helsinki.

The Immigration unit is responsible for handling of all residence permits and decisions upon deportation and decision on refusal of entry to the Schengen area. The residence permits may be either fixed term or permanent. A fixed-term residence permit is issued for a residence of temporary nature (temporary residence permit) or of continuous nature (continuous residence permit) (Aliens Act 2004).

The Asylum unit makes the decisions concerning an applicant's status as a refugee. The unit may grant international protection. In cases where the applicant receives a negative decision, the deportation decision is also made as well as the refusal of entry. The unit grants traveling documents for asylum seekers. The Asylum unit has offices in Helsinki, Lappeenranta, Raisio, Oulu and Kuhmo.

The Reception Units is in charge of the whole reception system. The reception covers housing, health care, food and preliminary training in the Finnish language as well as work and study activities. The agency has two reception centers within its organization, one in Oulu and one in Joutseno (Lappeenranta). There are also two detention centers, these are in Helsinki and Joutseno. The reconstruction of the third detention center in Oulu started in November 2018 and was finished in September 2019. Originally the detention center was due to be ready on June 2019 (Kaleva 2018.). The facilities are ready and the Oulu detention center is activated if the need for deportation requires.

The reception system consisted of 49 reception centers across Finland in the end of 2018. Total of 43 of these were normal reception centers and 6 were for under-aged minors (UAM's). The reception system is an outsourced function except the two state reception centers in Oulu and Joutseno. Most important partners that operate reception centers are the Finnish Red Cross (Suomen punainen risti, SPR), different cities (Helsinki and Tampere, Kajaani, Kotka, Vaasa and Vöyri) and private companies like Luona and

Pihlajalinna. There is one specialized reception center for traumatized persons and persons with mental issues. (Maahanmuuttovirasto 2018.)

The Finnish Immigration Service operates the assistance system for victims of human trafficking. The assistance system is operated by the Joutseno reception center and is aimed to help and support victims of human trafficking. Help is always tailored to each victim's individual needs. The methods of help may include accommodation, advice and guidance including legal advice, social services, health care services and financial support as well as interpretation and translation services. (Maahanmuuttovirasto 2018.)

The number of people seeking asylum and waiting for their international protection decision in the reception system is slowly decreasing. During 2019 five reception centers have been closed and three more will be closed by the end of 2019. The number of active reception centers is 44 which of six are for UAM's in October 2019. (Finnish Immigration Service 2019c.)

The Customer relations and communications take care of the phone and chat-based customer service. The communications provide information to media and for internal use. The unit has offices in Helsinki and Kuhmo.

The agency headquarters include the Office, the Administration, the Legal Service and Country Information and the Electronic Services (e-Services). The headquarter is located in Helsinki. The Deputy Director General acts as the Chief of staff assisted by the office of the Office of the Deputy Director General. The respective directors of the unit's report to the Deputy Director General.

The Office is in charge of the operational and economic planning and tracking. The economics is divided in two parts. The budget of the agency is managed by one team and the budget of the outsourced reception center system is managed by another team. The unit also includes the archive and postal services and statistical team.

The Administration unit covers mainly the issues concerning human resources and office support. There are three human resources related teams, the actual human resources (HR), the personnel development and the education team. The fourth team is the office support. This team is responsible to provide the agency support functions for all the different

offices. These issues are for example mailing and courier services, transportation of goods and personnel, cleaning and safety and security.

The Legal Service and Country Information provides the legal support services for the agency and write out the legal documents. The unit creates the country of origin information and provide guidance concerning situation in the countries where asylum seekers come from. The guidance supports the asylum application decision making. The unit has also the European Migration Network's (EMN) national office. The network makes studies and annual reports on immigration related issues and policy in the EU Member States and bodies. It can provide benchmarking support by sending ad hoc queries to other countries' EMN offices (EMN 2018).

The e-Services develop the electronic case management system for immigration (UMA). UMA has about 7 000 active users within the immigration administration. Of those about 700 work in the Finnish Immigration Service. The system contains the alien database called alien registry. The system supports decision making of all applications whether it concerns asylum, resident permits or citizenship. The UMA consist also the connection to Enter Finland which is the electronic service for customers. It is used to make electronic applications and keep contact to the agency. The unit also supports other digital and electronic services and all computer assisted work.

The agency has about one thousand employees (1 089 as of 23.6.2019) (Kieku 2019a). The organization has offices in eleven different cities and seventeen different locations around Finland. The size of the different office spaces varies a lot. The biggest have over five hundred employees in Pasila and the smallest office only four employees in Rovaniemi. The facilities consist of office spaces, customer service points, customer interview offices, reception centers and detention centers. Most of the facilities have high security level classification.

Migration Library is a part of the agency. It is a special library open for the public. The library's collection consists of literature and journals about phenomena closely related to immigrants and human migration as well as conditions in countries of origin or departure. The library has also publications on themes of refugee and immigration policy, racism and ethnic relations, and other questions related to refugees and integration.

A special function within the agency is a pilot team called Inland. This internal development laboratory was established in August, 2017. The Inland is a service design platform and was originated at the beginning of 2017 as an idea of New Work Laboratory (Uuden työn laboratorio) to prepare way ahead towards the changing work patterns facilitated by an Intelligent Digital Agency project (Älykäs digitaalinen virasto ÄDV). The function foundation started in February 2017 on external premises working with design consulting agency Fjord. The employees worked together to ideate the innovation way of work and capability building structure. After six months the original idea of in-house design capability within the agency was proposed, accepted and established. In August 2017 the Inland Design started as a co-design team inside the agency and Migri joined other public sector agencies with a similar approach. (Inland 2018.)

2.2 Immigration unit and family reunification decision making

The Immigration unit is responsible to handle all of the residence permit applications. The family reunification is one category of the immigration residence permits. There are more than three hundred employees working in the Immigration unit in different offices around Finland. The unit is divided into sections which all have their respective processes to manage. In addition, there are nine customer service points around Finland. These are located in Helsinki, Lappeenranta, Raisio, Maarianhamina, Vaasa, Oulu, Rovaniemi, Tampere, Lahti and Kuopio (Maahanmuuttovirasto 2018). The section heads act as process owners and they give guidance and directions concerning their process issues to all service points.

There are several different reasons to apply for resident permit in Finland. The reasons vary from working in Finland, moving to Finland to be with a family member, studying in Finland, emigration, coming to Finland on other grounds or applying for a residence permit for a victim of human trafficking. The Immigration unit treats all these application types.

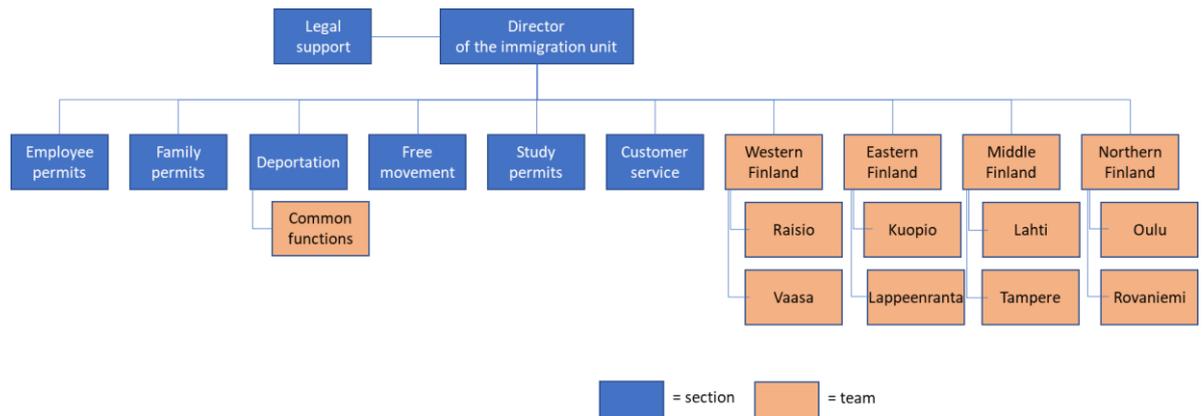


Figure 2. Immigration unit organization before March 2019.

The Immigration unit organization chart is described in figure 2. The director of the unit has 11 subordinates. Seven of them are section heads and four are team leaders across Finland in different service points. The deportation section includes common functions which serve all other sections and teams with mailing services and they are specialized for retrospective surveying whether the grounds of granted permits still exist.

The agency personnel architecture addresses to the family reunification section a total of 62 persons for the fiscal year of 2018. The cumulative amount of the human resources is available at the human resources support system (Kieku) with focused search. The amount of cumulative human resources during 2018 was 53,7 person-years (Kieku 5.3.2019). The difference is caused due to the high number of leave of absence. The family reunification sector holds office in Helsinki. The section is divided to five different teams. Teams are the family members of a Finnish citizen, other following family members, extended permits, child of other foreign which all work with all different types of family reunification applications. The section lead has one deputy. Each section has a section lead and usually consists of ten team members.

The family reunification decision should be made within nine months from the application if there are no special circumstances for longer processing time. The ombudsman has noted that in February 2019 there were 855 pending family reunification applications which have already exceeded the nine months processing time. In 2018 the ombudsman has given six notifications for illegal management to Finnish Immigration Service concerning over nine months processing times of family reunification

applications. This service and process malfunction is the primary motivation for this case study. (Parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland 2019)

In this context the role of the service can be seen primarily as supplying commodities to the public in a format of residence permit. At the same time, it has to be considered as an act of helpful activity, an organized system of employees, the supply of communication, the performance of duties as a public servant and employment of the duties of organization and government. Providing the security and sovereignty of state are parts of the service especially in the back-office functions. The agency service is a serving process in the legal framework.

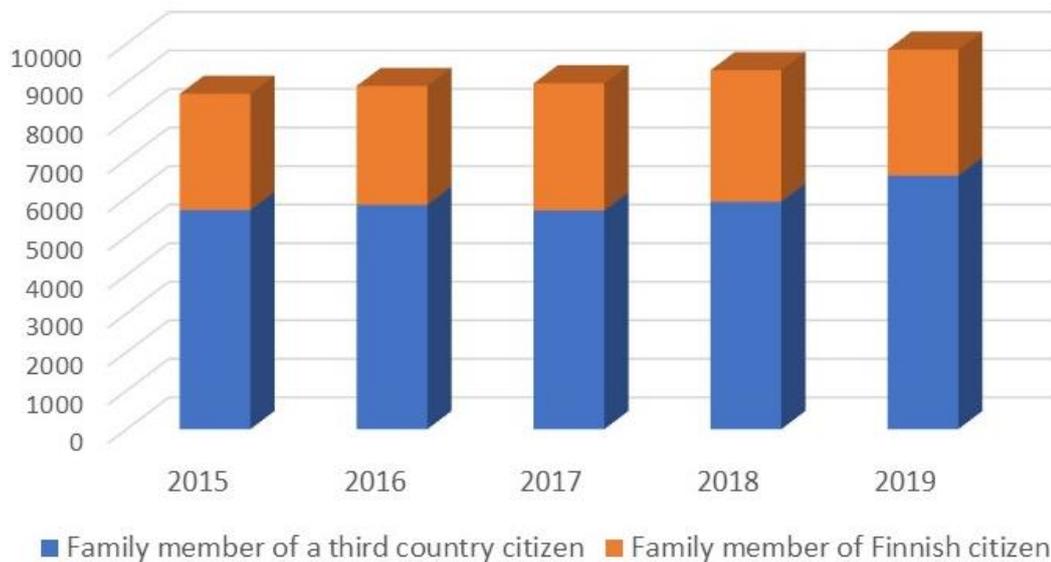


Figure 3. The number of family reunification applications from 2015 to 2019 (estimate).

Figure 3 shows how the number of family reunification applications has grown constantly during recent years. The number of personnel working with family reunification issues has also grown but not as fast compared with the number of applications. Since 2018 the number of administrative complaints has grown. The typical reason to the complaints is that the application handling time has exceeded the nine-month maximum limit which is given to the application management and decision notification. The current situation within the section workload requires an intervention to the process and organization management to facilitate applicable elements to fulfill the legal requirements as well as customer expectations.

The effectivity or productivity of the unit is measured with key performance indexes (KPI). These key performance indexes are the average time of application management and the number of applications handled per officer per year. As the average management time has grown there may be several reasons affecting the process delays. Thus, there is a need to have tools to control the process and identify issues that need further observation and development.

Customer satisfactory is in a primary focus of all services. The customer satisfactory survey will support the overall process and service design. The customer satisfactory will be evaluated based on a survey and it will focus to identify possible specific dissatisfaction elements. The analysis on administrative complaints will help to identify issues that customer's experience problematic.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Aim and objectives

This research is a case study of family reunification, which is a particularly selected governmental immigration related service. The case study aims to create innovation with design thinking and service design methods and tools. Action research will be employed to analyze the application and decision-making process interactions from customer service and customer satisfactory perspective.

The research aim is to test in practice whether service design thinking and service design methods and tools suit a governmental service development. The theoretical background builds upon the use of different service design tools and methods.

The case study aims are to test whether the different design thinking and service design tools can identify problems in the service process and help to fix them to increase productivity. The validity of the study results is tested by piloting the study phase proposals.

The supporting questions frame the main question and help identifying development actions. The case study will measure the customer expectations and satisfaction level, quality of the process, and aim to identify issues to further develop the process and customer satisfaction.

Primary research question:

RQ1: What is the benefit of using service design methods and tools for developing governmental services?

Supporting questions are:

RQ2: What is a customer satisfactory level?

RQ3: What are the bottlenecks in the family reunification process?

RQ4: What are the issues affecting the application process delays from original petition to decision (both in organizational and service perspective)?

The objective is to validate whether the service design methods and tools are useful and applicable for the development of a designated governmental service. The results of the case study aim to identify and conduct changes which develop the decision-making capability. The objective is to reduce the average treatment time and reduce the share of the applications which exceed the 270-day maximum limit for treatment while resources and decreasing and number of applications is growing (figure 3).

3.2 Frame of reference and methodology

The immigration is on a constantly growing path as stated before. The specific programs for work related immigration and education export are key issues with current Antti Rinne government agenda. Talent Boost program plans to start new programs by February 2020 to promote work related immigration. The family reunification is a side effect for both the work and study residence permits. As the number of those applications types grow the numbers of family reunification grow as well.

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) has released a study concerning the immigration processes and utilization of automacy, robotics and artificial intelligence in January 2019. On the family reunification perspective, the key take-aways are that family is too large notion and it should be divided to smaller groups. The other observation concerned the automation of DNA-test form structure. As the MoF study is of technical nature, there are no conflicting issues as both studies support each other in the execution phase. (Vuokko et al. 2018.)

The MoF study did not identify issues concerning Migri's responsibilities. The related issues were to develop the application form to more structured form and start to robotic screening of the applications and automatization of the decision making. The application form update is an ongoing project with co-operation with Migri, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland. There are total of 78 application forms including attachment forms. The applications are mainly

in Finnish, Swedish and English language with also the electronic versions which differ in some issues. There were no issues to co-ordinate or conflict with this case study. The study results combination is presented in Annex 3. (Vuokko et al. 2019.)

Service design has provided new tools and methods to customer service. The tools identify the front-office and back-office work as separate functions. The digitalization shifts more and more individual services to internet. The evolution from human to human based service to self-service is gradually proceeding. Especially in governmental and communal services the need to provide more services with less personnel has guided the way to digital services. The Ministry of Finance has had a spearhead program and a digitalization team called D9. This program has focused on a large-scale support and study on governmental digitalization to support productivity (The Ministry of Finance 2018). In this context the service design has the point of gravity in the back-office work, software assisted computerized case management and information sharing. Within a single process there are several sub-processes. If the whole process cannot be automatized there may still be opportunity to automatize some parts of the process with artificial intelligence or robotics.

This thesis is an action research which combines both leadership and service design theories and methods. The research also has research-oriented approach concerning family reunification process customer satisfactory. The thesis aims to produce new information on an outlined research question utilizing research and existing data and information.

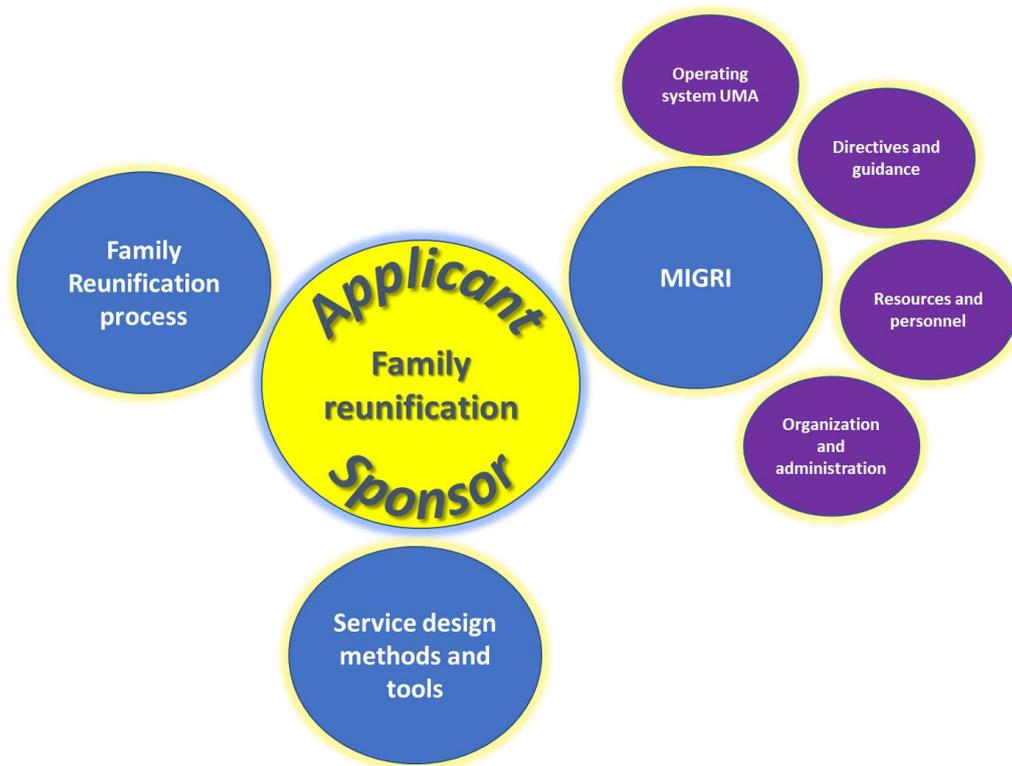


Figure 4. Frame of reference.

The main challenge is the prolonged management time of the residence permit applications. The issue was identified in September 2018 when the queue had caused delays in application management. Figure 4 demonstrates the frame of reference which contain the elements effecting the decision-making capability.

There are several factors that affect the family reunification process decision making. The process has several phases and it includes actions of several persons. The application is transmitted from application place (embassy or service point) electronically or physically. In the section an officer treats the application and finally forwards it to a team leader for decision making.

The resources contain both budgetary and personnel resources. These are linked, as bigger budget makes it possible to have more personnel who can treat bigger number of applications. Personnel have the know-how which is the capital of the agency.

How the work is organized, and the administrative duties effect the daily work. Possible organizational issues may cause delays and problems in the decision making. The organization needs to be in balance with the process.

The work in Finnish Immigration Service is expert work. The experts need up-to-date information concerning current instructions and latest legislation changes and guiding decisions of the administrative courts and supreme administrative court. All this information needs to be systematically organized and easily accessible.

The case study is conducted by using different service design methods and tools. The service design thinking is a cross-section ideology in the whole case study. The methods and tools are utilized extensively during the different phases.

The operating system UMA is developed constantly. The level of automatization is developed and new services are created upon need. Changes that support productivity are prioritized in the development process.

The methods to be used are different service design methods and tools. These include facilitated workshops, customer questionnaire (quantitative and sampling), interviews, quantitative research (data mining), organizational and process analysis, customer journey mapping, service blueprint, business model canvas, personas and stakeholder map. The workshops used co-creative methods. Additional methods and tools may be used upon need.

3.3 Research process and framework

The research framework is based on knowledge-based leadership. Each leader requires correct up to date data or knowledge to analyze, plan and decide. The challenge is how to identify issues that cause production or effectiveness to drag. The vast amount of data needs to be organized, structured and presented for the needs for the decision maker. It is expected that in every service there are problems that need to be identified. For the identification there is a need for different methods concerning different process phases.

The study process is generated as a form of research framework. This reflects the grounded theory created by Barney Glaser, Anselm Strauss and Juliet Gorbin mainly for sociological research (Anttila 1988). In this method there is no specific theory. In this research the service design tools are used and tested within the created research framework.

The case study framework is created in conjunction with the Design Council's Double Diamond and the OODA loop. While double diamond follows the steps of discover, define, develop and deliver the OODA loop builds on observation, orientation, decision and action. These two processes are used to combine a straight forward OODA loop and more iterative Double Diamond to one comprehensive package. The aim is to find a way from initial problem to impact in an effective way.

The OODA loop concept was developed by United States Air Force Colonel John Boyd. Boyd was a military strategist and applied the concept to formulate the combat operations process at the operational level in military campaigns. Nowadays it is applied to design commercial operations and learning processes. (Pearson 2018.)

The Double Diamond methodology is “a clear, comprehensive and visual description of the design process”. This Design Council's framework for innovation can help designers and non-designers to tackle complex social, economic and environmental problems. The Double Diamonds two diamonds features a process of investigating an issue more broadly and in depth (“divergent thinking”) and approach the issue with focused action (“convergent thinking”). (Design Council 2014.)

On the OODA loop structure, the elements of knowledge-based leadership and management are aligned with service design tools. In this framework the suitability of the service design tools is tested. Different tools are applied during observation, orientation and decision-making phases. After the action phase the observation phase collects the new data and orientation phase compares the changes to the previous data and evaluates whether the set goal level is achieved. If needed, new action is launched after the evaluation.

The approach is divided to four steps as described in figure 5. The first step is the discover / observation phase. It introduces the phenomenon and during the step the persona, mood

board and business model canvas are created. During the observation phase customer satisfactory is reviewed as part of the customer journey. Step two is the define / orientation phase. With gathered information and understanding provided the customer journey and service blueprint are created. The third step is the develop / prototyping phase. During this phase the ideation is used to develop corrective methods or actions to identified issues. The fourth step is the deliver / implementation. During the phase new ways of work can be delivered to the daily work and different changes may be implemented. Finally, iteration and improving observations are taken back to step one for further action.

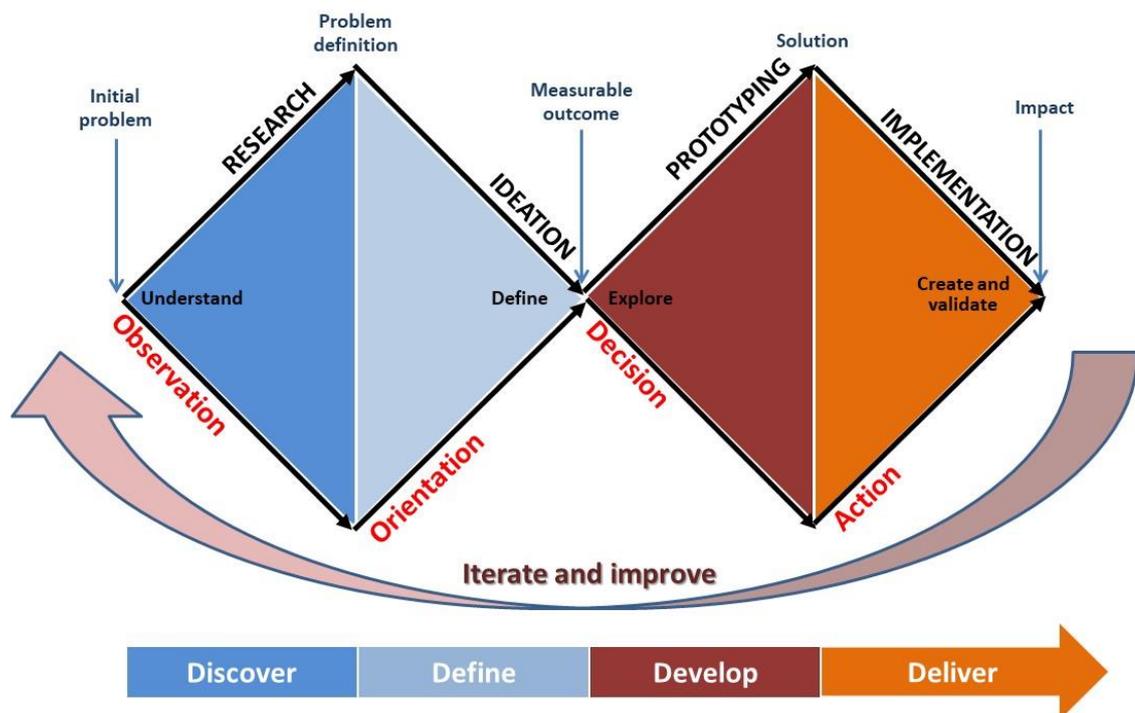


Figure 5. Combined process framework chart adapted from the Design Council's Double Diamond model and OODA loop (Design Council 2014 and Pearson 2017).

When the challenge concerning of prolonged management times of the residence permit applications was identified, the initial orientation on the issue started. The case study project started smoothly after the orientation. The problem identification and project design created the idea to test a combination of service design and another project management tool parallel in the process framework.

Different kind of service design methods and tools are used within the process framework. The information provided by the service design tools and methods are evaluated during the combined double diamond and OODA loop cycle phases. During the process the identified problems, their solution suggestions and conducted changes are evaluated to validate whether the service design tools provide useful information and can identify and fix issues on the process, in the service as a whole and in the organizational structure.

3.4 Service design methods and tools

The service design mindset is the mental orientation towards customer. It does not accept projects conducted until they it is implemented and already generating results for the next iteration. This is the mainstay for the case study which aims to conduct the project to have insights for the next development round. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 21.)

A design mindset is sustained and the process try to find innovative solutions through iterative cycles that include both research and development actions. Combining these elements to series of repeating and deepening the explorative loops new approaches are created. The user feedback, in the form of expert participation, develops the early prototyping and quick and dirty pilot phase. The iteration continues during the rounds and may slow down but it does not end as the pilot phase iterates into new implementation. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 21.)

The iterative service design process includes collaborative sessions in a series of loops. Service design uses more human centric approach than other iterative management processes. Service design has a specific approach to leadership as the inclusion of internal stakeholders and view across the customer journey often require changes is organizational structure and operating systems. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 22.)

Core tool of the service design is the research data. In includes information that can be collected, synthesized, interpreted, and analyzed. The data should be capable to predict future outcomes. Interpreted data includes the researcher's attempts to understand the raw data. In a proper research research-based tools have greater significance than assumption-based tools. It needs more time and resources so that the tools represent the current state of play. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 38 - 40.)

Research is used in service design to understand people and their behavior in relation to a respective service. With design research it is possible to emphasize with people and have genuine understanding of their practices and routines. With this approach a user-centered perspective can be achieved during the project. A vital part of a service design project is ideation. The ideas need to be generated systematically and their value lies in the outcomes that stem of them. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 91.)

Prototyping is used in service design to explore, evaluate, and communicate how the future service situations work. Prototyping makes it possible to evaluate different aspects of a new concept and explore alternative solutions. Implementation takes a service into production. Implementation of service design project may include among other things change management for organizational procedures and processes, and software development. Research is used in service design to understand people and their behavior in relation to a respective service. With design research it is possible to emphasize with people and have genuine understanding of their practices and routines. With this approach a user-centered perspective can be achieved during the project. A vital part of a service design project is ideation. The ideas need to be generated systematically and their value lies in the outcomes that stem of them. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 91.)

A persona is a profile representing a particular group of people (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 41). It is not a stereotype, but an archetype based on the research. The fictional personas help understand service needs of similar groups. Personas help to create empathy towards customer groups and understand their needs. Personas act as references throughout the design process. The key attributes of a persona are portrait image, name, demographics, quote, mood images, description, and statistics. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 40 - 42.)

Customer journey visualizes the experience of a person over time (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 44). Customer journey map show the key events of an experience. Customer journey maps help to identify the problems in customer experience and explore possible solutions. Customer journey maps can demonstrate current experiences and planned future experiences as well. Customer journey maps may represent different scales from high-level issues to detailed micro-interactions. Time perspective can vary as well for example from 30-year plan to a single service point visit journey map. Customer journey maps usually include attributes like main actor, stages, steps, storyboards, emotional journeys,

channels, stakeholders, dramatic arc, backstage processes, and “what if” lane. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 44 - 46.)

Service blueprint is basically an extension of customer journey map. It combines the customer experience with frontstage and backstage processes. Service blueprint illustrates how customer actions cause service actions. One key element to service blueprint is the physical evidences that show specific steps of the process. Key attributes of a service blueprint are physical evidences, customer actions, frontstage actions, backstage actions, lines of interaction, visibility, and internal interactions, support processes, and custom perspectives. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 54 - 56.)

Stakeholder map visualizes the different actors in an experience. It helps to understand which stakeholders are involved in the ecosystem of a service and helps to reveal existing relationships between the actors. Key attributes of the stakeholder map are sectors, stakeholders, and relationships. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 58 - 61.)

Business model canvas is a template to outline a business model. Business model canvas helps to understand influences of various options on the employee and customer experience or on the business impacts. Key attributes of a business model canvas are value propositions, customer segments, channels, customer relationships, key activities, key resources, key partners, cost structure, and revenue streams. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 76 - 79.)

Data mining is used by statisticians, and it is used to extract information from a data. Data mining process finds patterns and correlations within large data sets and can transform data into a comprehensive structure. It involves data management, data pre-processing, modelling, visualization, and online updating. (SAS 2019.)

Sampling is a strategy to get a representative dataset from a large-scale quantitative data. Data is collected with quantitative methods. Customer survey provides information on customer satisfaction and automated statistics are used for phenomenal review. Data sampling provides a richer data from a specific group for in-depth qualitative research. In the case study quota sampling was used. It shows how a population is structured according to a certain criterion. In sampling participants are randomly selected for each quota. This method is used to create personas. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 103.)

Service design process utilizes a number of different methods. In pre-ideation useful methods are slicing the elephant – splitting the challenge, trigger questions to insights, brainstorming, using checklists, ideation based on associations, developing key insights, and user stories. These are used in this case study. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 92 - 93.)

A mix of research methods is used in the case study. The process chart is presented in figure 5 with detailed description of the process. Desk research has important role in process studies, data analyzes and provisions. Participant approach has an important role as the decision work is expert based duty. Participant observation and contextual interviews provide in-depth understanding of the actual work and process related issues. Co-creative workshop is used to create customer journey maps and for method triangulation. With this method the data accuracy is improved and richness increased. It also makes the dataset more comprehensible. (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 106 - 108.)

4 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Design thinking and service design

Design thinking is a young science compared to traditional sciences. The history of design thinking can be tracked back to 1950's when an idea of creative approach to solve problems was introduced. Catalotto (2018) has gathered a timeline for service design and from her phases the most applicable issues towards service design thinking can be found during 1950's. The group creativity and brainstorming methods are mentioned in 1942 on Alex Faickney Osborne's book "How to Think Up". In 1947 human factors engineering approach focused to develop more user-centric solutions to make it easier to use the more technical and complex systems that were built during and after Second World War (Catalotto 2018).

Naturally the elements of design and design thinking can be found as far as history reaches. Catalotto (2018) notes that already in 380 BC the Plato republic was a format of co-creation. This is also considered as a form of participatory design (di Russo 2012). Next relevant issue concerning service design thinking is found during the late 1800-century as Brown (2008, 86) makes remarks about Thomas Edison. The reference to service design thinking is based on Edison's aim to create the understanding that people have a need to develop something new for other people.

The design thinking ideology can be seen after the World War II when the fast technological and infrastructural reconstruction took place. The interest was originally on the product design to innovate new and better solutions with higher performance and less costs. Creative Idea Suggestion System that was later renamed as Quality circles were launched in Toyota in 1951 were a form of co-creation and are an example of design thinking approach (Toyota 2019).

During 1980's the design thinking philosophy got more abstract levels but still concentrated on the methods of designing different kinds of products. If one should determine when design thinking was originally introduced the best guess would be 1982 (Gibbons 2017). Then Lynn Schostack published her paper "How to Design a Service".

Her second paper on the issue was published in 1984 “Designing Services That Deliver”. (Catalotto 2018.)

During 1990’s the human centered design stroke through with design-oriented business management. It can be seen even in job titles like user experience architect. New enterprises were established and they worked on service design with multidisciplinary teams. Service Design was introduced as a proper discipline in 1991 as Köln International School of Design (KISD) suggested it as a design discipline. After eight years of preparations the experimental discipline of Service Design was implemented in KISD in 1999. (Köln International School of Design 2019.)

Finally, in the start of the 21st century the evolution of design thinking formed the science to the form as it is understood today. Early 2000 new companies were established in service design consulting and even Danish ministries started a service design consultancy to public sector. The Australian Taxation Office has applied design thinking in the agency development for nearly twenty years (di Russo 2015). During this decade more universities started education on service design. (Catalotto 2018.)

The service design tools have developed through time. The Persona tool was introduced in 1993 (DesignLab 2016) and Customer journey mapping in 1999 (Catalotto 2018). The double diamond was developed in 2004 (Design Council 2014) and the first service design conference took place in 2007 by Service Design Network (Catalotto 2018).

More books and studies were published around 2010. Tim Brown published his “Change by Design” in 2009 and the first service design best-seller “This is Service Design Thinking” by Marc Stickdorn and Jakob Schneider was published in 2010. Their ideology of the nature of service design is the mainstay of this case study.

Design thinking is an emphatical art. The customer-centric approach brings people together to solve issues from human to human. The integrative thinking is in the core of service design as analytical processes cannot reach the customer interests and experiences in full. Service design seeks for innovations in creative ways towards entirely new directions. The collaboration is a key attribute of service design. The increasing complexity of different products create challenges for design and services can rarely be created relying on one discipline only. (Brown 2008, 87.)

Service design does not have a unilateral definition. Design thinking is the way of thinking needed to design different kind of services. Stickdorn has described the nature of service design formatting the ideology to five principles. These are user-centric approach, co-creative working culture, visualizing the process on sequences, service need to something real and need evidencing in terms of physical artefact and holistic view is required to cover the entire environment of the service. (Stickdorn and Schneider 2011, 34.)

All services are provided and delivered to the customer. Thus, the user of the services has the best knowledge of the expectations towards the service. There is a need to involve the users in certain level to the service development. With participation the user-centric focus can be maintained throughout the service development process. With studies and statistics, a basic knowledge of the customer expectations can be developed but the real habits, cultural preferences and social context have to be considered. With these issues there is a need to gather empirical data to analyze the true needs of the users. (Stickdorn and Schneider 2011, 36 - 37.)

Service design is a co-creative process. Providing one service there are several back-stage actors involved. Developing services, the various stakeholders need to be considered and taken into account. These actors need to be involved early into the planning already in the definition phase of the service proposition. To foster creative thinking, service designers need to generate environment where new ideas spring to life. Service design has large variety of methods that can be utilized when facilitating service development, prototyping or testing concepts. The more the future users are involved in the design process the more the likelihood of increased customer loyalty and long-term engagement are. (Stickdorn and Schneider 2011, 38 - 39.)

A service event is actual touchpoint of a sequence of interrelated actions. When a customer experiences the need for service the process starts. It consists of series of service moments that can be human to human, human to machine and machine to machine interactions. In the process there are three main phases. These are the preservice period, the actual service period and the subsequent post-service period. The preservice period cover service provider seeking by the user and the contacting the provider. The actual service period is the service occasion. The rhythm or fluent sequencing of the service

should be balanced. The service has to be in-time and the whole process timeline need to progress without delays. (Stickdorn and Schneider 2011, 40 - 41.)

A service is usually a system of services. The service that the customer wants, does require subservices which are often intentionally inconspicuous. There is a challenge with intangible services as the customer cannot give any value to the service that is not tangible. Donald Norman has also stressed the significance of user-control and humanized participatory design with the idea of making things visible (di Russo 2012). Stickdorn highlight the importance of evidencing so that the customer can have some artefact of the positive service. These artefacts can prolong the service experience on the post-service period and increase customer loyalty. It may motivate the customer to recommend the service to other potential customers. By evidencing the customer can have better understanding of the whole service process. The understanding may support the appreciation of the different actors who have participated to creation of the service. (Stickdorn and Schneider 2011, 42 - 43.)

Stickdorn argues that genuinely working in a holistic way is an illusion. He notes that it is impossible to consider every single aspect of a service though one would try to. The aim should be to have vision of the wider context of the service process. Within the holistic understanding of the service process the alternative customer journeys should be focused. The different touchpoints need to be taken into account. In the holistic view the service provider's organizational structure, culture, values and norms affect the design of the service. The service design thinking helps the service provider to keep the focus on the service user and maintain the customer centric orientation. (Stickdorn and Schneider 2011, 44 - 45.)

Service design thinking have several dimensions. With this case study the service application product developing is an important issue. The designers manage the processes to develop those towards more customer orientation. The design approach is seen in the interaction between people and technology, functionality and service offerings. In the family reunification process, there are many types of different interactions. The applicant may apply the permit via electronic service or with paper application. Then he or she have to visit the embassy or Finnish mission for identification and biometrics. For interview there may be a need for an interpreter. On the back-stage processes the application

progresses through several phases in scanning, mailing (or e-mailing) and verifications with different agencies information systems. The electronic service (Enter Finland) is developed with customer centric approach but there is always a room for development. (Stickdorn and Schneider 2011, 56 - 57.)

Operations management is heavily connected with this case study. Main challenge with too long management times is the service design operations management issue. The production-line approach in the service design supports service efficiency. The design of the production processes needs to be closely linked with the outputs of the processes. The main idea is to have the high volumes and low variety in the service instead of low volumes and high variety. The low variety is connected with robotics and automatization as the more exactly the issue is detailed with low variation the easier the service function can be automatized. The standardization and self-service technology to substitute employee labor are the future aspects in the service process design. (Stickdorn and Schneider 2011, 102 - 103.)

Gibbons (2017) states that back-stage problems create front-stage consequences. These consequences can include poor service, customer frustration and inconsistent channels. Developing the back-stage actions and processes the employee satisfaction gets better which allows them to provide better user experience for the customers. (Gibbons 2017.)

The service design thinking as an ideology has commenced around 2009, though there is no common definition of service design (di Russo 2016). Service design thinking springs from multiple histories, on the background there are the industrial design, information architecture with interaction design upon human-computer interaction and participatory design. These main approaches were separate designs that proceeded on single tracks. Combining cognitive psychology to participatory design and connecting all these main elements together, the service design thinking has got its main characteristics. The final strike-through of service design thinking was possible when the design was promoted to the non-design users in business life. (Szczepanska 2017.)

4.2 Family reunification

The family reunification is one of the main reasons for immigration into the EU. The family reunification aims to enable people (referred to as sponsors) who already reside legally in an EU member state to join with their family members. Joining the families supports socio-cultural stability, facilitate integration of third-country nationals and promote economic and social cohesion within the host countries (European Commission, 2019).

The Directive on the right to family reunification establishes the common rules for the right to family reunification. It states the conditions for family reunification, establishes the procedural guarantees and provides rights for the family members concerned. The Directive does not make difference whether the family relationship has been established before or after the sponsor arrived to the member state. The family reunification directive covers the spouse, minor children and the children of their spouse. The member states may also authorize reunification with unmarried partner, adult dependent children, or dependent parents and grandparents (European Commission, 2019).

In Finland the concept of family consists of a spouse, a registered partner, a cohabiting partner, a guardian of a child under 18 years of age and a child. It should be noted that EU citizens do not need a residence permit in Finland. The registration is required to have right of residence. This covers the EU member state citizens and also citizens of Liechtenstein or Switzerland. (Alien Act 2014.)

There are several requirements for the residence permit. The first is to have a sponsor in Finland. In most cases the family needs to have secure means of support. This means that the family has sufficient funds to live in Finland. The incomes may be from different sources, for example salary, assets or pensions. The amount required depends on the size of the family. (Alien Act 2014.)

There are different requirements depending of the status of the sponsor. If the sponsor is a Finnish citizen, it is not required to have secure means. This exclusion category includes several different groups. The family members of persons who have been granted international protection do not need to have secure means, if the family is formed before

the sponsor came to Finland and if the family member submits his or her application within three months after the sponsor has been granted asylum. (Finnish Immigration Service 2019a and Alien Act 2014.)

The income requirements mainly concern people who have been granted a residence permit in Finland. Each family member has designated sums of net income requirement. For example, a family consisting of two adults and three children under 18 years of age needs a total of 2,900€ income per month to prove secure means of support. This amount is based to the one adult earnings of 1,000€ plus another adult earnings in the same household for 700€ plus one family member younger than 18 which requires additional 500€, the second family member additional 400€ and third family 300€. (Finnish Immigration Service 2019a and Alien Act 2014.)

In the Finnish residence permit system, the family reunification has several subcategories depending of the status of the applicant. Different options are spouse of a Finnish citizen, child of a Finnish citizen, guardian of a Finnish citizen, other relative of a Finnish citizen, spouse of a person granted international protection, child of a person granted international protection, other relative of a person granted international protection, guardian of a person granted international protection, spouse of other foreign national, child of other foreign national, guardian of other foreign national or other relative of other foreign national. The biggest group are the spouses of the Finnish citizens. (Alien Act 2014.)

Family reunification is linked to asylum and other immigration related residence permit grounds. Especially the asylum seekers may lose contact with their families and may need help to find and get contact with their loved ones. On immigration perspective both work related migrants and students may have families that follow them to another countries.

Family reunification was the most common reason for moving to Finland in 2018 as it has been during 2017. The number of first applications for a residence permit on the grounds of family ties totaled 11 036 in 2018 and in 2017 the number was 11 619. (Ministry of Interior 2019.)

In Europe, as in Finland, family reunification consists of approximately a third of all third-country national arrivals. It is one of the main reasons for legal migration to the EU-member states. The EU Family Reunification Directive concerns to all other EU-member

states except Denmark, Ireland, Norway, and the United Kingdom. (Migrapol EMN 2017.)

A Nordic perspective on the issue is gathered by benchmarking with Norway and Sweden. Denmark had to be excluded as they do not provide their statistics. In Sweden family reunification numbers have varied between 47 000 to almost 58 000 during 2012 – 2016. In Norway the figures have been around 10 000 (except 2016) and in Finland mainly around 6 000 as table 2 shows. (Migrapol EMN 2017.)

Table 2. Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish family reunification statistics from 2012 to 2016 (Migrapol EMN 2017).

Family reunification applications						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Sweden	46 967	48 280	57 240	54 015	57 567	264 069
Norway	10 236	10 604	10 013	10 320	6 512	47 685
Finland	5 861	6 199	6 370	6 443	7 479	32 352
Treated family reunification applications						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Sweden	38 407	35 413	39 923	39 609	41 368	194 720
Norway	10 236	10 604	10 013	10 320	6 512	47 685
Finland	8 355	8 722	7 522	6 710	6 312	37 621
Treated family reunification applications (percentage)						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Sweden	81,8 %	73,3 %	69,7 %	73,3 %	71,9 %	73,7 %
Norway	100,0 %	100,0 %	100,0 %	100,0 %	100,0 %	100,0 %
Finland	142,6 %	140,7 %	118,1 %	104,1 %	84,4 %	116,3 %
Total number of successful family reunification applications (treated during the year)						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Sweden	28 308	27 074	28 966	28 853	27 439	140 640
Norway	7 321	7 716	7 895	8 249	5 285	36 466
Finland	5 150	5 635	5 620	5 137	5 336	26 878
Percentage of successful family reunification applications						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Sweden	73,7 %	76,5 %	72,6 %	72,8 %	66,3 %	72,2 %
Norway	71,5 %	72,8 %	78,8 %	79,9 %	81,2 %	76,5 %
Finland	61,6 %	64,6 %	74,7 %	76,6 %	84,5 %	71,4 %
Total number of rejected family reunification applications						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Sweden	10 099	8 339	10 957	10 756	13 929	54 080
Norway	2 915	2 888	2 118	2 071	1 227	11 219
Finland	3 205	3 087	1 902	1 573	976	10 743
Percentage of rejected family reunification applications						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Sweden	26,3 %	23,5 %	27,4 %	27,2 %	33,7 %	27,8 %
Norway	28,5 %	27,2 %	21,2 %	20,1 %	18,8 %	23,5 %
Finland	38,4 %	35,4 %	25,3 %	23,4 %	15,5 %	28,6 %

Table 2 shows that successful family reunification was in all countries little above 70 percent between 2012 and 2016. It should be noted that this calculation is made of the number of treated applications, not the total number of applications. The percentage of treated applications vary from 69,7% in Sweden during 2014 to 142,6% in Finland during 2012. (Migrapol EMN 2017.)

The statistics may include some bias. It is not likely that Norway would treat every year exactly 100% of the applications. The procedure how the statistics are created varies from country to country. Benchmarking of the grounds for the family reunification was not

possible. Only Norway provides information concerning the EU classification which divides the grounds as the persons admitted for remunerated activities, beneficiaries of international protection, persons admitted for study purposes, and also other categories of migrants. (Migrapol EMN 2017.)

4.3 Organization

The reason to have an organizational structure is to build up structures that make it possible to lead, direct, support and report issues concerning the duties and responsibilities of the organization. Nowadays less hierarchical organizations are a trend and they seem to suit well to expert work like start-up gaming companies. The larger the enterprise get the more a structure is needed.

The re-organization of the family reunification sector gives an opportunity to think what is best suitable set up to organize the work. In the re-organization planning the organization design was used. In the organization design development focus is with the structure, processes, reward systems, and people practices. The aim was to have an effective organization which is capable to achieve the agency and unit goals. The Administration unit has an ongoing reward system development process and it supported the organization design but was excluded from this peruse. (Kates et al. 2007)

Innovation is a key to success in the business markets. In a governmental organization it is easy to say that there is no need or no space for innovation as the markets are depending of the service and there is total monopoly. Taking into consideration the national budget, it is obvious that the public services need to be produced more cost-effective way. The way to develop services is largely supported with digitalization. The spear heads have been the Ministry of Finance D9 digitalization team and the State Treasury. The main aim it to develop governmental services more digital and customer oriented. (State Treasury 2016.)

The original idea was to update the command system by selecting a less-hierarchical organizational structure to support innovation, job satisfactory and raise valuable knowledge within the personnel. First it is required to identify what are the differences

between traditional and flexible organizational structures. In the residence permit management, all focus is within the process; easy electronic application, checking the requirements (biometrical, financial, safety, health issues) and fast management. Most time-consuming work is the treatment of the applications that do not fully match the requirements and need to be treated individually. Thus, the process itself is pretty simple and straightforward but does have exceptions.

The operational management aspect is reflected on to the organization and the processes the organization controls. In the organizational theory the best number of subordinates is a challenging issue. Father of strategic thinking Carl von Clausewitz has studied the issue and his conclusion is that the number of subordinates varies upon the size of the command (von Clausewitz 1989, 292 - 296). In certain cases, for tactical reasons the maximum size is ten subordinates but the main issue is the capability to deliver orders. In this perspective the organizational structure of immigration unit is reviewed with care as the director of the unit has twelve subordinates. The direct subordinates work across Finland in six different locations.

Basically, the number should be as small as possible. From a pure leadership perspective, the best organizational solution would be to have three or four subordinates. The command structure and chain of command should be kept as low as possible. This makes it possible to keep the speed and precision of orders and guidance under control. The most appropriate figure of subordinates is four, or at the most five units must be considered the appropriate figure. It can be argued whether the von Clausewitz theories are applicable in today's digital environment. The basic elements of leaderships are unchanged and still the same. A superior needs to deliver his or her message (orders, directives or guidance) to the subordinates in a timely manner and precise format. As the number of subordinates grow, the message may get delayed or distorted. (von Clausewitz 1989, 294.)

The differences with traditional and flexible organizations seem to make it possible to change the old-fashioned organization structure to a modern one. The flexible organization identifies the employee as a key resource. The organization is supported by professional human resources and management is done by objectives and values. The work itself is teamwork with broad jobs and competence development. All these issues fit the work of the Finnish Immigration Service. There are centralized human relations

services and the work itself is just like the work described in flexible organizations as shown on table 3.

Table 3. From traditional to flexible work arrangements (Bason 2010).

	Traditional	Flexible
Management type	Employees are an attachment to the “machine”	Employees are a key resource
	Hierarchical structure	Flat structure
	Invisible HR	Professional HR
	Fixed work and employment terms	Flexible work and employment terms
	Management through rules and control	Management through objectives and values
Work organization	Narrow jobs	Broad jobs
	Low degree of autonomy	High degree of autonomy
	Individual work	Teamwork
	Achieving formal qualifications	Competence development

It is noted that public sector organizations have difficulties with innovation support. The organizations are top-management driven and the work culture punishes failure of all sorts (Bason 2010). On the contrary the Finnish Immigration Service has grown from 300 employees to almost 1 100 employees in three years so there is room for developing a new culture. The executive leadership is committed to develop more flexible organization and create more effective ways of work and pilot new ideas. The innovative ideas are encouraged and it is accepted that some pilots do not survive but without trying there will not be any development.

The agency has obeyed the design thinking approach. First all ideas are treated as a possible experiment in respective part of the organization. If the experiment develops

action it is adopted in larger scheme. Second starting point is to challenge the status quo and ask question “why” or “what if” as often as needed. All the work is done for the customer so the value the citizen approach is in the nucleus of the process development. The innovation ideas need to be concrete to proceed to an experiment. This needs and hands-on thinking with the experts as they vest the innovation with their work. (Bason 2010)

The Star Model will be used for the organizational evaluation. The star model is a framework for decision making and suit thus to the nature of agency. The model notes that the leader is responsible to design the structure, processes, rewards, and people practices of the organization. (Kates et al. 2007)

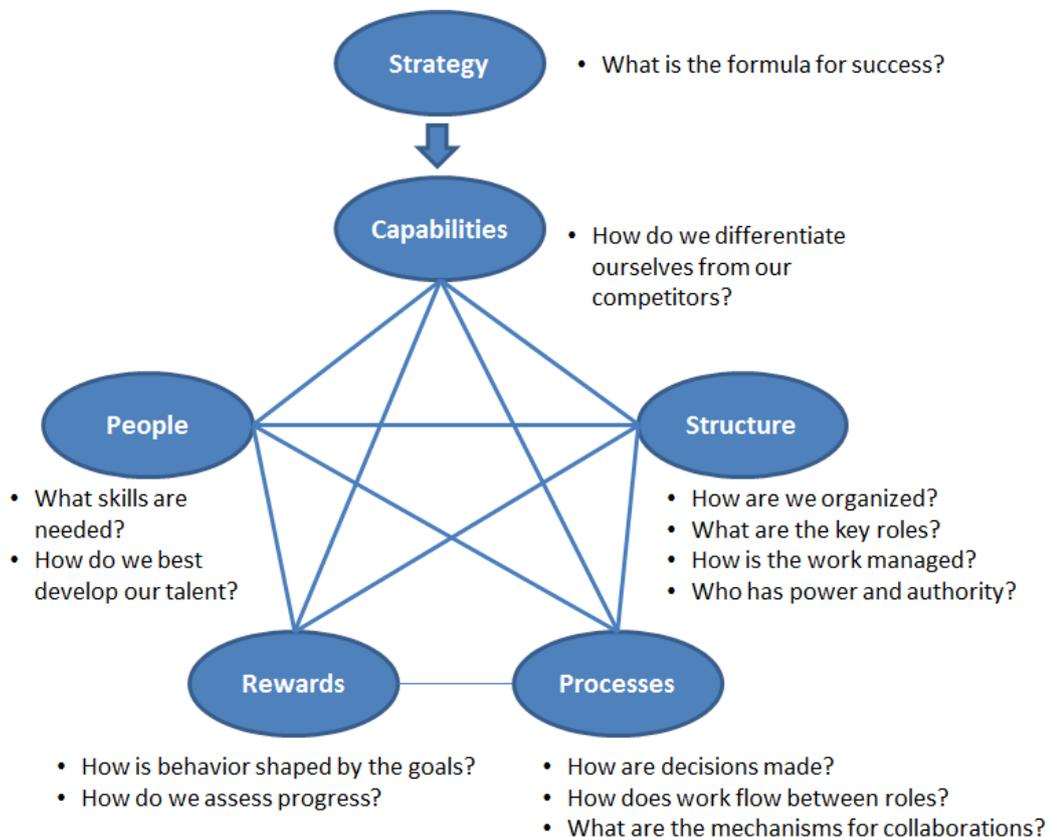


Figure 6. Star Model (Kates et al. 2007).

The Star Model takes into account the people. Basic peruse requires to sort out what skills are needed and how can we develop our talent (Kates et al. 2007). The star model creates a framework to measure the effectiveness of an organization. The capabilities describe

what are the specific products and outputs that the organization provides. Finnish Immigration Service has the exclusive right to grant the residence permits in Finland. Thus, comparison with other competing actors is difficult.

People can be evaluated on their skills concerning minimum requirements, and taking into account their specific skills. The in-house education and training should be provided. Rewards motivate people to do better and gain objectives.

Processes are most important when a large number of products are managed. In this case study the products are the decisions, the way they are made and how the work flow is organized means a lot to the fluency of the work. The structure of the organization is the backbone of all actions. Different roles create responsibilities and give power and authority to guide the work and process.

The agency strategy has been updated on 2016 and covers well the way of work and the vision support daily work well. The differentiative analyzes on capabilities can be done towards other countries immigration agencies. On that perspective, a good reference group is the other Nordic countries.

5 FAMILY REUNIFICATION DEVELOPMENT

The research started in September 2018 with a in depth introduction to the family reunification process to identify the problems and delays. The research had a dual approach. First orientation line focused in to the process itself and the second orientation line focused in to different aspects of leadership and management. The management orientation paid attention to organizational aspects and operational management. Both orientation lines were interrelated to identify holistic solutions to problems.

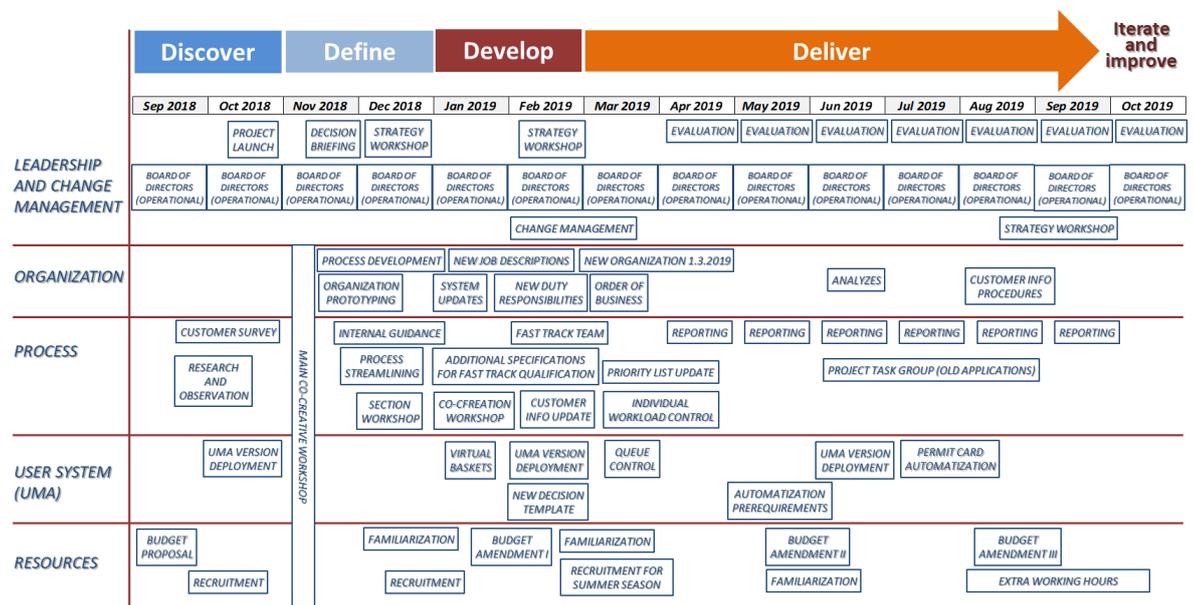


Figure 7. Case study (project) outline.

Figure 7 describes the outline of the case study and the project. It includes the main events and actions taken during the project. Originally the official project kick-off can be identified at a meeting on October 25, 2018 with the Director General, Deputy Director General, Director of the Immigration unit and the Family reunification sector head. Its issue was the challenges with the decision-making process. It was agreed that the Deputy Director General will seek for solutions for the challenging prolonged management times. The duty did not include any additional resources, but the normal authority to conduct and coordinate as well as facilitate all required actions concerning agency’s operational functions. It made it possible to conduct the case study.

The case study work has been supported by various groups based on their respective duties. The work progressed with recurrent agile projects on specific issues. After the observation and orientation, the second phase and the family reunification process orientation workshop (co-creation workshop) took place in November 2018. It was facilitated by a team from Inland, the design and innovation laboratory within the Finnish Immigration Service (Inland, 2019). The team leader Mariana Salgado and service design student from Aalto university intern Katariina Kantola helped with facilitation. Katariina Kantola gathered a presentation of the results (Appendix 4). The workshop participants were a cross section of the best experts of the family reunification section leaders and case workers. They were deputy head of the section Sanna Helariutta, team leader Simo Salmela, senior officer Inkeri Helenius and deputy administrative officer Leena Kauramäki. This workshop identified the critical faults and problems which were tried to solve in the case study.

The second phase included orientation and ideation upon the achieved workshop results. This phase resulted to a briefing in the end of November for Director General Jaana Vuorio. The briefing resulted to a decision for organizational change.

After the decision briefing the third phase started. Kick-off included tasking of the organizational changes to respective leaders. These included duties to the director of the Immigration unit Tiina Suominen and the section head Anu Tarén concerning the adoption of new routines and responsibilities, director of personnel Susanna Saari and head of the human resources section Riikka Heinikoski for the new recruitments and nominations to new organization. Senior officer Emma Rimmanen was tasked to update the work procedure. This was the prototyping phase of the case study.

The metrics to analyze the development based on the normal statistics and statistical analyzes. The data was analyzed time and again by gathering relevant data from the alien register via Cognos and personnel data from Kieku system. These were combined in Excel sheets, where the analyzes and visualizations were made. The statistics team leader Jussi Vasanen helped to create new reporting charts and statistics for the knowledge-based leadership, after the Power-BI was adopted. These charts and statistics were utilized later in the study.

The fourth phase was planned to start already from the beginning of 2019. In this phase the suggested changes were due to be conducted as a pilot phase. During the phase the application handling times were monitored in contrast with the development actions that took place. Due to human resources administrative processes provided by Palkeet - The Finnish Government Shared Services Centre for Finance and HR - the start date for this phase was postponed to the beginning of March 2019.

While the changes on the organization advanced, the process issues were dealt with the section heads Anu Tarén and Kaj Swanljung, with their deputies Heli Kumpula and Sanna Helariutta. The workshops dealt with the identified issues on the process and also focused on the new way or work on the new organizational structure. The changes in the routines, responsibilities and processes were agreed and the conduction responsibilities were shared with the section leaders.

The research consisted four consequent phases as mentioned above. The phases were the discover phase, define phase, develop phase and the deliver phase.

5.1 Discover (Customer orientation)

The first phase was the discover phase. The key elements are described in figure 8. It aimed to create a better understanding of the issue as a whole, and the problematics concerning it. It consisted of different research methods and service design methods to visualize and analyze gathered information and data.

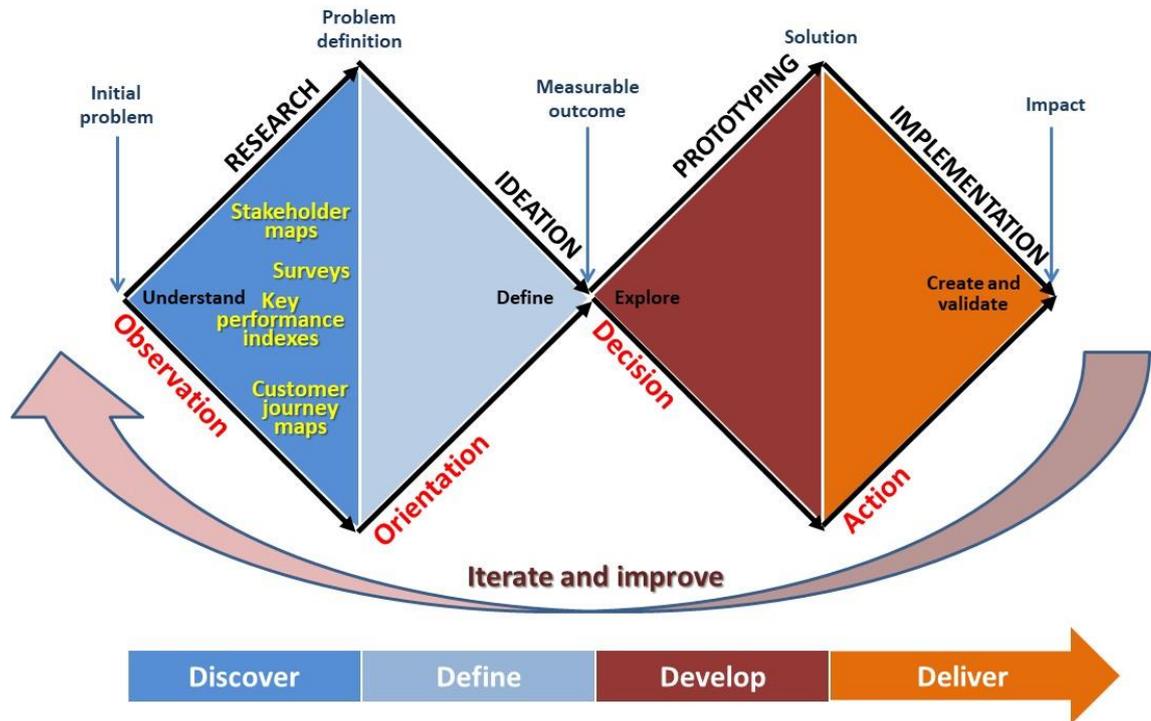


Figure 8. Discover phase.

The stakeholder map in figure 9 was finished after two iteration rounds. First draft was too process oriented and the second draft covered all the key actors well. On the final version the additional supporting actors were identified. These actors have a very small but critical part of the process. For example, the Border Guard that conducts the passport control on the entry to Finland. They check whether the alien has a visa or a residence permit when entering Finland.

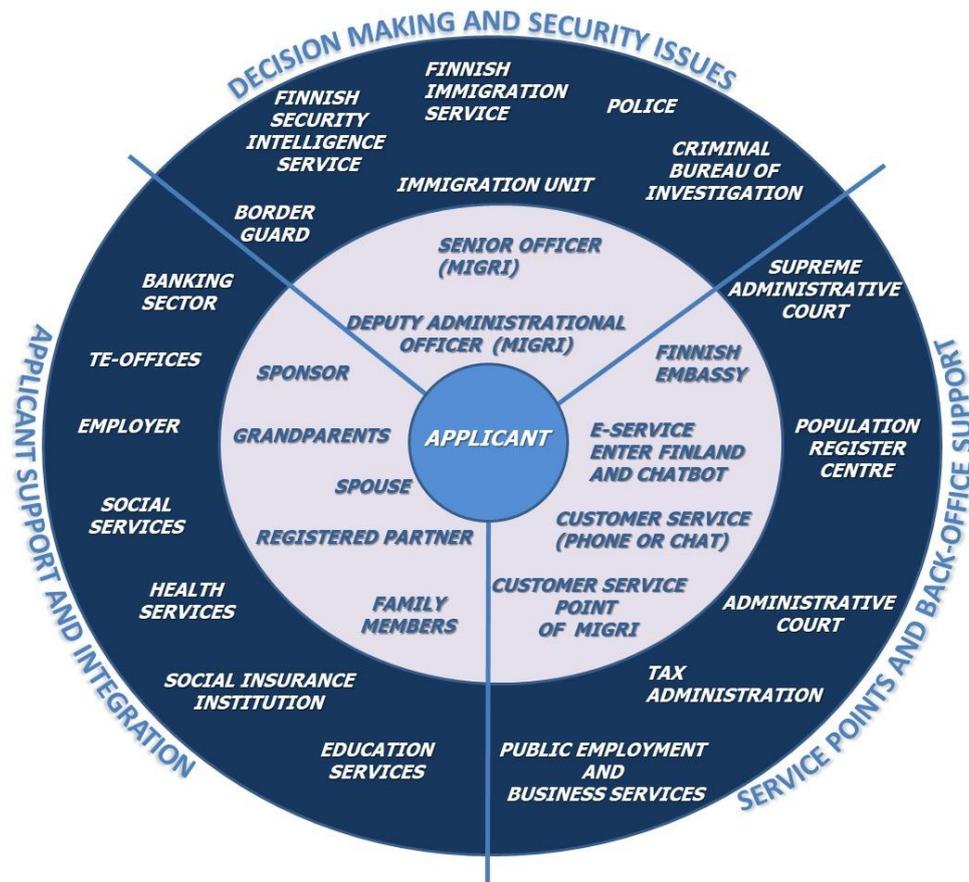


Figure 9. The stakeholder map.

The stakeholder map is user-centric and the applicant is in the focus point. The sponsor, usually meaning the spouse, in Finland is in a vital role in the process. That is obvious as without a spouse, registered partner, grandparents or other family members residing in Finland the applicant cannot apply family reunification. The other first instance contacts in the stakeholder map are the service points and service providers as customer service, electronic services and chatbot and the embassies.

In the decision making and security segment the first instance contacts are the senior or deputy administrative officers of Finnish Immigration Services. It is possible to apply first residence permit in Finland for example if the applicant visits Finland with a visa, which allows up to 90 days stay in Finland. Secondary contacts are the different agencies categorized in the three segments. The role of the other authorities and agencies come topical when the applicant enters Finland after the application is granted.

Key performance index data gathering was started in the first phase in October 2018. Older data was used to create different graphics to prepare later referencing and metrics to analyze results of the case study. These data charts are presented later in the results.

Datamining within the alien database was done to gather understanding about the family reunification issue in general. On this data an intervention was conducted to initiate required change management ideation and planning. The intervention aimed to motivate the experts to analyze their own work before the phase two workshop.

For further problem identification all administrative complaints concerning family reunification were evaluated to identify which factors were experienced problematic and what were the causes of those problems. These complaints are made to the Parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland, The Office of the Chancellor of Justice or the Ministry of Interior. All this information was handled with masked or anonymous data to respect customer privacy.

The draft of **customer journey map** was created upon the gathered info concerning the process and the actors. The customer journey map was later updated during the development phase. The map is presented in APPENDIX 1.

The customer journey describes the process from the point where the need for family reunification starts abroad. On the background is the marriage or being a registered partner or cohabiting partner. This is a basis for the right for family reunification and it is a starting point in the background. First step is to familiarize how to apply the residence permit and its requirements. Next phase is to apply and identify oneself in the embassy or Finnish mission and give the biometrics and if needed give a DNA sample. After that the application is processed first in the embassy and then transferred to Finnish Immigration Service.

The customer journey shows the different phases of the process and what the customer is expected to do and what is taking place in front-office and back-office. The emotional journey was assessed considering the feelings of the customer. After getting all needed information the feelings are high when the application is registered. During the processing time uncertainty grows and feelings get lower with anxiety growing. Finally, the decision either takes the customer emotions through the roof or demotivate the applicant. It is

possible to appeal for the decision and the emotions may develop according the success of the decision in the court handling.

Finnish Immigration Service has had a lot of media visibility during couple of previous years. During the rise of numbers of asylum seekers in 2015 different issues has been in the interest of politics, media and the people. Most of the media coverage has been negative. To create the situational awareness concerning customer satisfactory a permanent data collection system was initialized in late 2017. A customer satisfactory study was made in the fall of 2017 and a customer satisfactory system was deployed for continuous data collection.

The customer satisfactory was measured routinely with an automat in the customer service points. The automats were installed on February 2018. The technical solution was a tablet where one can give feedback by pressing a visible virtual button and add text after the overall expression. There were five different options to choose from. The smiling face automat had two green option for satisfaction, two different red buttons for unsatisfactory experience and in the middle a yellow button for a neutral service.

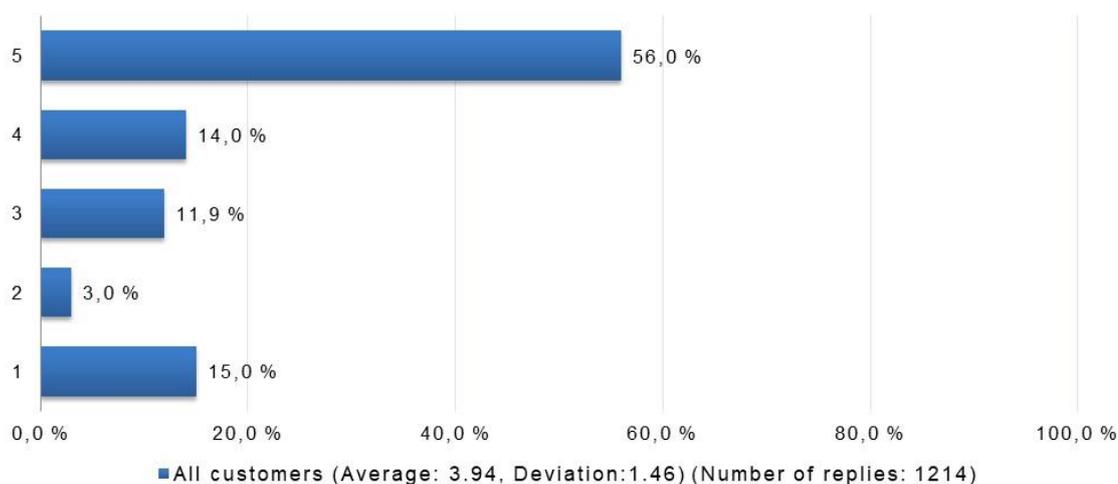


Figure 10. Customer satisfactory level.

If customer selects either one of the green or red buttons, he or she can tell also what is the reason for the experience. The feedback can be given in Finnish, Swedish or English language. By the end of October 2018 total of 1 214 feedbacks were received. Most (70,0%) of the customers were satisfied with the quality of the service. Of those 56,0 per

cent were very satisfied (level 5) as shown in figure 10. All together 17,9 per cent graded the service unsatisfactory (levels 1 or 2) and of those 15,0 per cent were very unsatisfied. Neutral observations created a group of 11,9 per cent. The average level of customer satisfactory was 3,94 in the scale of one to five. The average level can be described good.

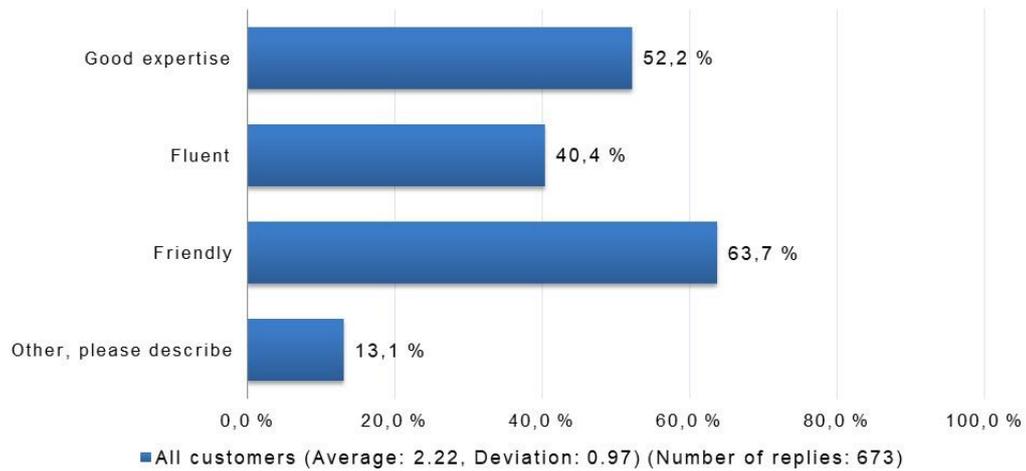


Figure 11. Positive experiences in customer service.

The automat offers several options why the service was good. The customer may select one or more options of the list and also write to a free column. Three main reasons for satisfactory were friendly service (63,7%), professional expertise (52,2%) and fluent service (40,4%) as shown in figure 11.

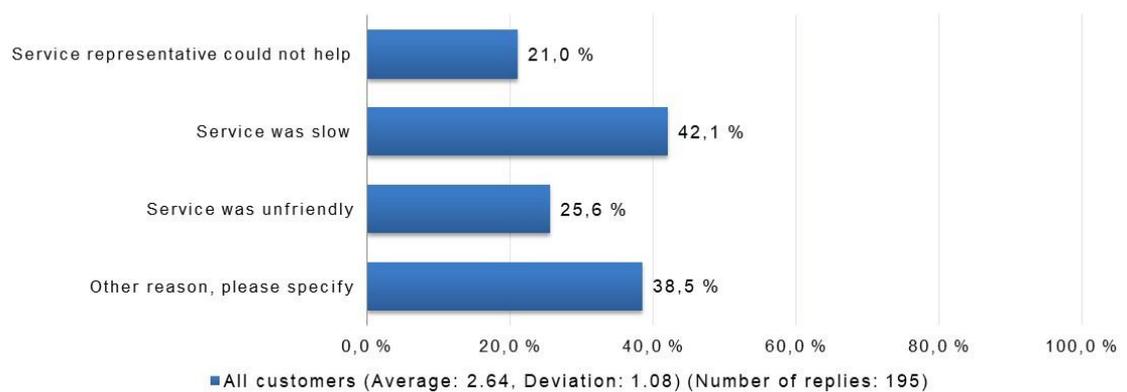


Figure 12. Negative experiences in customer service.

For negative experience (figure 12) the biggest reasons were that service was slow (42,1%), some other reason (38,5%) and unfriendly service (25,6%). On the fourth place was the reason that the official could not help the customer (21,0%).

The automat feedback was amended with a survey starting at the last week of October (on 29 October to 2 November). Each customer was given a form after the service in the service desk. In the form there were only four options available. There were the two options for satisfactory service, one for neutral and one for unsatisfactory service. Customers were asked to give additional feedback electronically.

During the amended survey phase a total of 616 answers were returned. Of those, very satisfied were 559 persons and unsatisfied only 4 persons. The number of satisfied were 49 and neutral responses were 4 as well. Totally 99 per cent of the customers were satisfied with the quality of the service. Only 0,7 per cent were unsatisfied.

Open questions provided additional information about the service. It was commented that the customer service point is very peaceful and a customer is served well. Customers experienced the service human and also that service was got fast. The interviewer was described cooperative and friendly. The place itself was experienced very quiet and a good place. The service experience consists the service as a whole. The professional and good service at the counter was supported with the service place facilities as well as good public transport, transact scheduling possibility and the feeling when customer thinks he or she has got help with his or her issue.

Negative experience was mainly caused for slow service and that there was no staff outside the rooms to help people. It was noted that the time had been late for 20 minutes and there is a lot of waiting. Also, the toilet was complained to be dirty.

It was noted that the customer service points are meant for application initialization if the customer is not capable or willing to do it online in the electronic service. Also, customer identification and biometric identification was made in the counter. There was no specific information desk available but customers were directed to right channel where the information is available. In the larger service points, there were computers available for customers.

The customer service surveys in the fall of 2017 and 2018 provided quite similar information. As the service points were established in the beginning of the 2017 with a very crowded situation the development of customer service has been in a focus for two years. After a chaotic start in the beginning of 2017 the service quality did get a good appraisal in the fall of 2017. The per cent of very satisfied customers was 98 as in 2018 it was 99. And the percent of satisfied customers was 89 in 2017 and 91 in 2018.

If the survey options are graded from one to five the average level was 4,82 in 2017 and in 2018 even better with grade 4,85. Overall the customer service can be described exceptional. Naturally there are always issues to do better, and those issues are identified and effort to fix negative things will continue.

These surveys measure the experience during the orientation and initiation phases. After those the customer needs to wait for the decision. Normally the residence permit is granted pretty fast if all required information is available and all requirements are fulfilled. Time is consumed when amendments are asked for and if consideration or judgement is required on the final decision. When the handling time get longer the customer satisfactory usually degrades and if the application is rejected there normally are no satisfied customers.

To identify the problems in the process a total number of twenty separate complaints to the Parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland, The Office of the Chancellor of Justice or the Ministry of Interior were analyzed. The complaints were made between August 2018 and September 2019. All these complaints concerned rejected applications on the grounds of family reunification. All of the complaints based on the same reason, which was the prolonged application management time. In the Alien Act (2014) the maximum management time is stated for 270 days. There was mentions of unsatisfaction concerning information available for the expected management time before the decision.

5.2 Define (Process)

The define phase in figure 13 aimed to further orientate to the issue in hand with additional supporting studies. With the workshops the ideation towards correction actions and development steps were created.

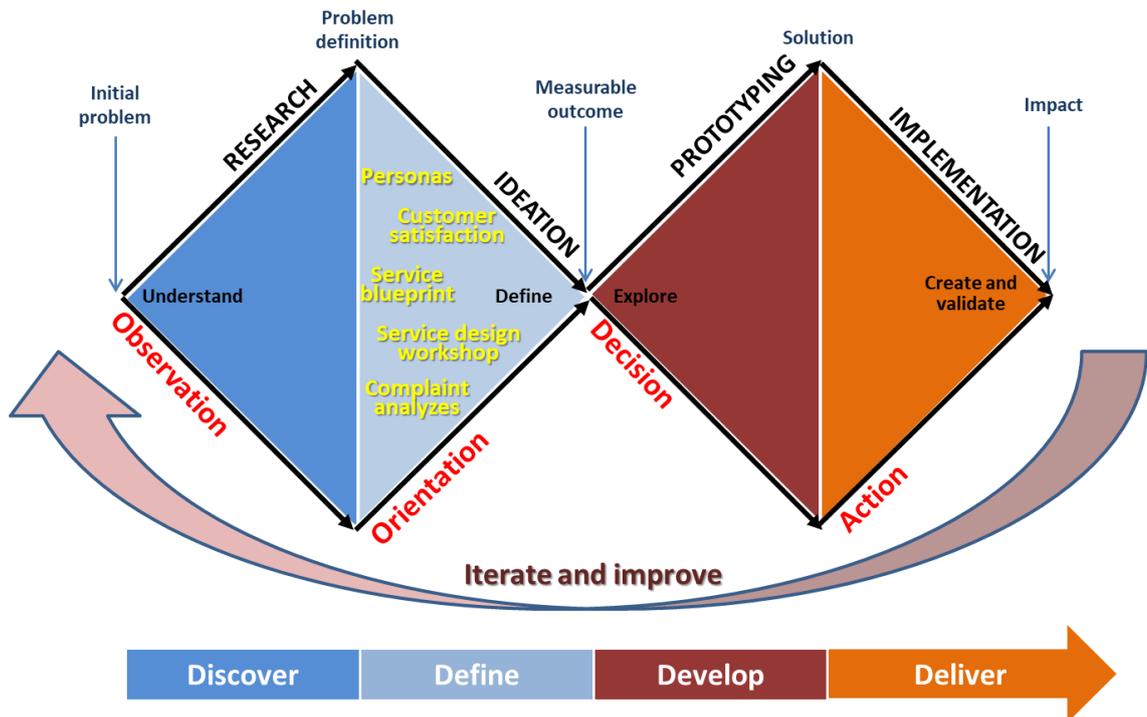


Figure 13. Define phase.

The **service blueprint** draft was created before the project service design workshop. In the workshop the specialists created two alternative service blueprint drafts from different aspects of the family reunification. The other focused on the situation when the sponsor already resides in Finland, and the other the case when both parties, sponsor and the applicant, live already in Finland. These drafts were analyzed and the final service blueprint created taking into account both options. The co-created service blueprint is in APPENDIX 2.

The **personas** were developed based on the Finnish Immigration Service family reintegration dashboard and statistics. The dashboard presents the key facts concerning the customers and the persona reflects the average applicant personal attributes. The key

attributes were that the average customer is a female, she is from South-East Asia, has an academic education and her age is about 28 years. But this generalization was achieved by selecting the biggest number of each variant. The group consisting spouses of Finnish citizens is heterogenous, but some personas can still be identified.

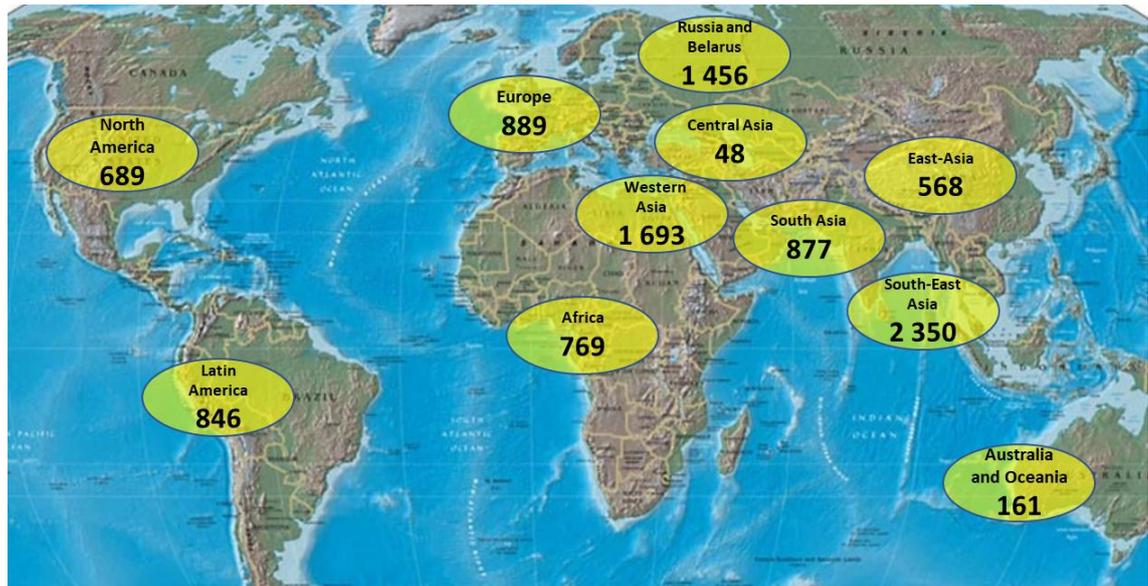


Figure 14. Geographic area of origin for applications of Finnish citizen's spouses from January 2015 to June 2019.

In the figure 14 is a compaction of different geographical areas where the spouses of Finnish citizens originate from. The South-East Asia is the biggest area. Thailand is the biggest country of origin as 1 315 spouses came from there. Philippines and Vietnam were the next biggest ones, Philippines with 418 spouses and Vietnam with 394.

Second biggest geographical areas are Western Asia and combination of Russia with Belarus. From the Western Asia Iraq is the biggest country of origin with 935 spouses and Turkey is also notably big with 597 spouses. The Iraqis are bias in the statistics as during 2015 and 2016 some 20 000 Iraqi asylum seekers came to Finland and many of them have applied residence permit on the grounds of family reunification after rejected asylum application or during the process. From Russia and Belarus area the Russians are the dominating country. From Russia came a total of 1 376 spouses.

On the country of origin data there rose three countries above others; these were Russia, Thailand and Iraq. The personas were created for these main groups. The first parameter after the country selection was to determine the gender and after that the average age of that group. As the application ground was the family ties other parametric were secondary. To get some further information about the personas a random selection of applicant data per group was analyzed for persona detailing. The key attributes with the personas were exemplary in nature and the reliability is not verified towards the whole group. The names were selected among the most famous names of the country of origin and gender.

PERSONA	
	NAME <input type="text" value="Alyona"/>
	AGE <input type="text" value="36"/>
OCCUPATION <input type="text" value="Health care"/>	
NATIONALITY <input type="text" value="Russia"/>	
QUOTE <input type="text" value="Have visited Finland several times"/>	
MARITAL STATUS <input type="text" value="Married"/>	
KEY ATTRIBUTES <input type="text" value="Married for six months. Have lived together as a family in Russia for three months. Husband is a Finnish citizen."/>	
SPOUSE / FAMILY <input type="text" value="Finnish husband, no children"/>	
DESCRIPTION <input type="text" value="Family reunification application activated in e-Service"/>	

Figure 15. Persona 1 – Alyona from Russia.

Persona 1 in figure 1 is Alyona, who has a degree in health care from the University of St. Petersburg. She is looking for to get licensed her occupation to work as a doctor in Finland later. She speaks Finnish but professional language needs additional education and training.

PERSONA	
	NAME <input type="text" value="Achara"/>
	AGE <input type="text" value="37"/>
	OCCUPATION <input type="text" value="Sales assistant"/>
	NATIONALITY <input type="text" value="Thailand"/>
	MARITAL STATUS <input type="text" value="Married"/>
	SPOUSE / FAMILY <input type="text" value="Finnish husband, 1 child"/>
QUOTE <input type="text" value="Coming first time to Finland"/>	DESCRIPTION <input type="text" value="Family reunification application activated in paper format in the Bangkok embassy"/>
KEY ATTRIBUTES <input type="text" value="Married for a year. Have not lived together as a family. Husband is a Finnish citizen."/>	

Figure 16. Persona 2 – Achara from Thailand.

Persona 2 in figure 16 is Achara, who has met her husband while he was on holiday in Thailand. After having met and spent some time together in Thailand during her husband's repeating trips, they got married a year ago. Her husband has spent all his vacations with her and she is waiting to get the residence permit to travel to Finland with her son.

PERSONA	
	NAME Ali
	AGE 29
OCCUPATION Handicraft	
NATIONALITY Iraq	
QUOTE Arrived to Finland 2016	
MARITAL STATUS Married	
KEY ATTRIBUTES Married for two months. Have lived together as a family for six months. Wife is a Finnish citizen.	
SPOUSE / FAMILY Finnish wife, no children	
DESCRIPTION Arrived to Finland as asylum seeker	

Figure 17. Persona 3 - Ali from Iraq.

Persona 3 in figure 17 is Ali, who came to Finland with his friends in early 2016. He left Bagdad during the disorder and gathered some money with help of his family to pay the human traffickers for a travel through Turkey to Europe. He had heard some information about Finland but the final destination was clarified during the trip. Ali did not get international protection but has appealed to administrative court where his appeal was rejected. He has sent an appeal to Supreme Administrative Court of Finland but the case is pending. Ali met his wife in a support group meeting and after dating for some time they moved together and got married two months ago. He left the residence permit application after the wedding.

During the recent years, after the 2015 high rise of the asylum seekers, the profile of the family reunification seekers has changed. In the longer perspective the applicant background does not have specific changes but during the couple of last year's there are higher numbers of Iraqi males. There is strong correlation with neglected asylum applications and thus Iraqi males have risen to the top three countries of origin. (Finnish Immigration Service 2019.)

5.3 Develop (Prototyping)

During the development phase the ideas were created. Within the define phase these ideas were further developed as described in figure 18. With co-creation, the ideas were tested and their possible success chances were evaluated.

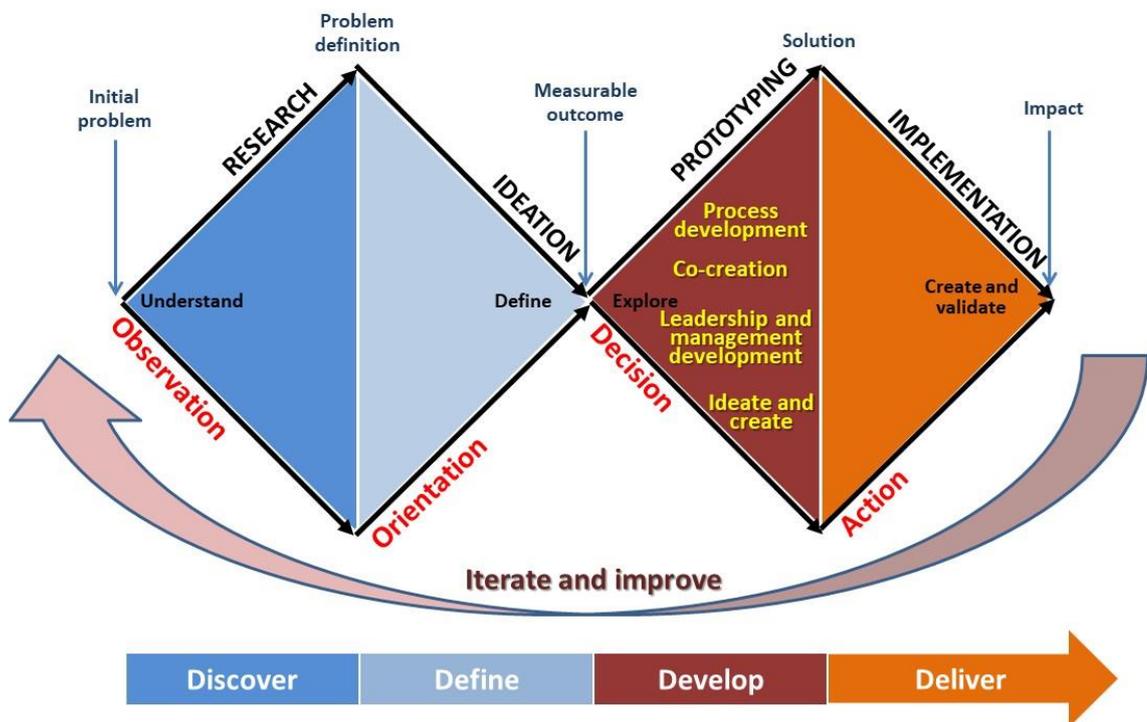


Figure 18. Develop phase.

Research on the customer and process data was conducted during January and February 2019. Data collection took approximately two weeks as some new data collection patterns had to be created by co-designing together with the statistical team. The data analyzes were already started with the older data as it was available in the end of November.

A **co-creation workshop** was held in the end of January. There were the section leader Anu Tarén and Kaj Swanljung who was about to start as another section leader in March. Also, several subject matter expert and caseworkers took part on the ideation. The aim of the workshop was to examine the family reunification process in detail, identify possible

bottlenecks which slow down the process, identify new ideas on short- and long-term perspectives to develop the process as a whole. The system requirements were discussed as well.

The process overview showed that the process was well described and functional. For the overview a background information was available with the service blueprint and statistics of the application and decision making. The decision-making authority was clear and responsibilities are well described and understood. Work flow between roles did have some issues to concentrate on. One was the long process times in challenging cases where the application stops within the process and does not proceed for an unacceptable long time. This issue is caused by the lack of team leaders. Other issue was the guidance of the customer service points. It was noted that in that capability area there is a need for additional resources. In this context the need to update organizational structure was raised as the main development issue.

As a result of the **structural evaluation** on the star model approach, the large Family reunification sector was divided to two sectors from March 1, 2019. It was noted that the leadership is overstretched with the current work and guidance of the customer service points across Finland. The section was divided to two similar sectors where only the sector heads have different key roles and duties. With this solution the hierarchy levels were kept low. The sectors have similar responsibility areas and work is managed identical way but the leaders are named differently. The one who is responsible also for the guidance of the customer service points is called process head and the other one sector head (Mintra 2019). This difference makes it easier to identify who is responsible for certain issues. The process head is the process owner and has the authority of the family reunification process as a whole.

The functional organization structure was seen to best suit the nature of work. In this form of structure, the employees are managed together by two leaders to promote knowledge sharing and greater specialization. The functional structure suits small units. One key element of functional structure is the need for depth of expertise and specialization combined with common standards. (Kates et al. 2007.)

The second part of the workshop were the **brainstorming sessions** to ideate possible solutions on the identified challenges. Both groups continued with their own theme. The main challenge was too lengthy application management time. It was caused by several reasons. One was the lack of personnel and another was the lack of decision makers.

One part of the problem was caused by the applicant. There were several different reasons for incomplete applications. The reasons may be caused by complicated instructions as the requirements are multifaceted and most applicants have to use some other than their native language. It was also noted that people tend to leave incomplete applications to save time if the required documents are not available at the moment. One big challenge was the applicant's slow reaction on the requests of additional information. This issue was a marginal phenomenon as usually the customers react swiftly to the requests. When the application was dealt with and if additional information or documents were asked for, the process may prolong for weeks or months.

Internal challenges that effect the productivity were the high turnover of personnel. Partly it is caused by growing numbers of applications so there are new higher posts available and experienced case-workers apply for those posts. It is a natural evolution and cannot be stopped. Another challenge was the number of applicant inquiries. As the handling times get more and more lengthy the applicants get worried and ask the status of their application. When caseworkers have to check the statuses and spend time with customer service, the handling work slows down.

One of the biggest challenges was the issue with the group who apply family reunification abroad. The Finnish embassies have partly outsourced their services and continue to outsource the hearings and samplings during 2019 in certain embassies. There were very long waiting times to the hearings and samplings. The time may be allocated even up to five months later. As people often have to travel far and even to another country, it may delay the whole process for months.

The corrective suggestions to identified challenges were relevant. Naturally, a need for additional workforce was identified due to a lack of personnel. It was linked for forecasting of the number of applications. Another challenge was the stress as the personnel is in great pressure due to constant need to reduce the number of personnel. For

the agency there is a challenging unbalance as there is the need to reduce personnel for budget reasons and at the same time pending applications require to increase number of personnel.

It was noted that the skills need to be deepened. About one third of the personnel had experience less than nine months. This affected the speed of the work and slowed down the processes. There was a functional training system which provided expertise with time. In the so-called clinics challenging issues were discussed, it supported learning and unified the decision-making process. This also supported and facilitated the collaboration requirement of the process part. The know-how of the personnel was already in adequate level.

To receive more complete applications, the instructions need to be clearer and easier to understand. The instructions need to guide applicants' step by step from an interest phase to the application initiation and even give guidelines beyond. The challenge concerning the instructions was that the legal background is complicated and the legal requirements have to be informed and thus the instructions are difficult or impossible to describe very simple way. Otherwise shortcuts may give falsified information and could cause even more problems.

New ideas were created. One of these was to create new form for the additional information requirement. It could be partly automatized so the writing time would slow down a bit. The formal form would also support process so that all required facts would be in the document. The workshop report (in Finnish) is in APPENDIX 4.

Ideation on problem solving was conducted during the project as required information and data was collected, evaluated and analyzed during November 2018. The ideation concerning the organization was conducted mainly with Director General, Deputy Director General and the Director of Immigration unit. The workshop created the basic layout of the challenges and possible solutions. These were analyzed and different development ideas were created with section team meetings. This pre-ideation method was continued with sessions where the ideas were treated with short brainstorming sessions. In a session one or two ideas were presented and the feasibility and possible

effects were evaluated. The ideation progressed by focused sessions and each of the ideas were either accepted, formatted or rejected.

Different **meetings** were also kept as ad hoc to create cohesion between the process owners and the project lead concerning the way ahead and roadmap. On major issues the board of directors was issued with the organizational and personnel development plans. Also, the co-operation group (in Finnish YT-ryhmä) had to handle the issues concerning personnel and organizational changes which were decided in late November.

Prototyping was started in December 2018. It started with an operational board of directors facilitated strategy evaluation meeting. During the meeting the drafted personnel amendments were further detailed. The agreed approach on prototyping was further ideated and had a new design. The new concept was agreed to consist of an agile task force with approximately 50 persons. It would make one section with five teams. Each team could be detached or attached to the unit in need of additional work force. The new design would deal with both organizational and processional issues separately. The administration would be hold stable within the host section, but from processional point of view the team will conduct duties within the section where it will be attached. It was noted that this innovational solution would have some challenges, but those can be solved with adaptive leadership and management approach.

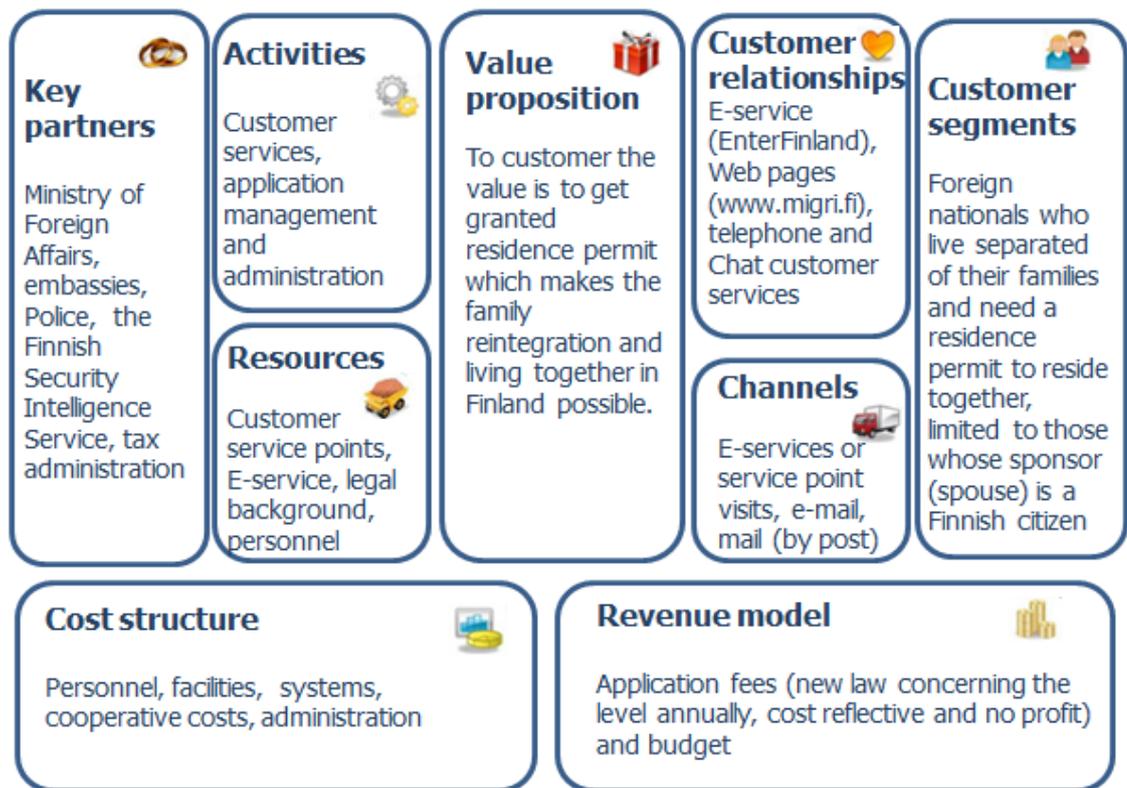


Figure 19. The business model canvas.

The **business model canvas** in figure 19 was created from the Finnish Immigration Service point of view. It presents what contact and communication methods there are to deliver information to the customer. The web pages (Migri.fi) is the main information channel and then during application phase the Enter Finland electronic service is preferable system and additional help is available by telephone service or chatbot (Kamu). Communication with the customer is done by via the Enter Finland, during the visits in service points, e-mail or by mail. Basically, the telephone is the only human to human contact channel used by customer. The electronic communication is preferred as customers reside in different time zones across globe. The value proposition is to have a satisfied customer and this is possible when the applicant gets his or her residence permit in timely manner and in general when the decision is positive. The activities during application management are the customer service for applying, the actual application management and handling and administration as a support function. This includes among other things safety and security.

The resources for the decision making are the facilities like the customer service points across Finland. Other resources are the electronic service, legal support in the background and the personnel who treat the applications. In Finland the physical customer contacts, like leaving the application, are possible in the service points. Key partners are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and their embassies who accept the applications, the police and the Finnish Security Intelligence Service for security checks and Tax Administration for the secure means of support. Cost structure is composed mainly of personnel, facilities, ICT-systems, administration and co-operative costs. The revenue comes mainly from the customers. The family reunification is mostly funded by the application fees. The coverage is about 80 per cent, so the agency budget covers rest of the needed revenue.

Additional **brainstorming workshops** were prepared to develop new concepts. The workshops were designed for 6 to 10 family reunification sector case workers at a time. In the workshop it was noted, that within the sector the understanding of the challenges and problems was unanimous and the need for these workshops in planned format did not exist. The change management and leadership required only to task the director of the Immigration unit and the sector head of the family reunification sector to the execution of the development actions.

Additional meetings to co-ordinate the way of work were held on an unofficial way with discussions between the Deputy Director General and the director of the unit. The co-ordination discussion took mainly place in connection with the meeting of the board of directors. The results were followed on the reports delivered for the operational meeting of the board of directors which takes place usually every second week.

5.4 Deliver (Testing)

The final deliver phase is described in figure 20. During that phase the ideas were implemented. The change is always an issue for those whose work it affects. The change management leadership methods were used to bring the section personnel and especially the different leaders into the change. The change was facilitated outside but conducted inside of the organization itself.

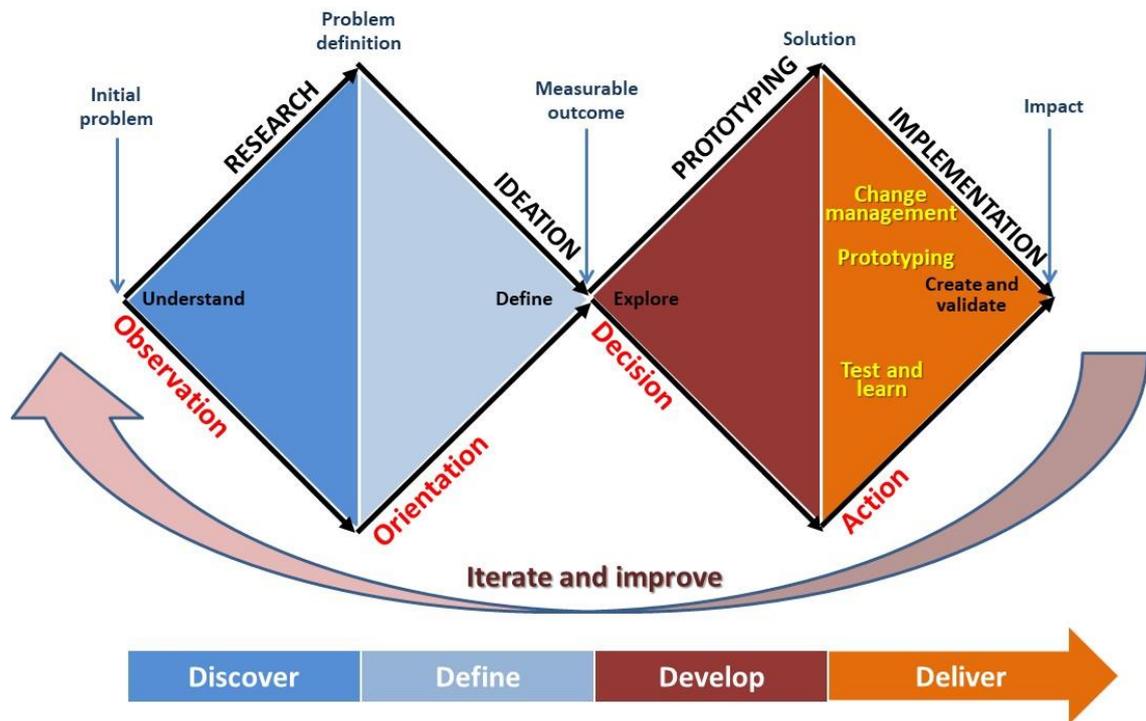


Figure 20. Deliver phase.

Deliver phase started with implementation at the beginning of March 2019 with a pilot. The recruitment process took several months as the security screening made by the Finnish Security Intelligence Service (in Finnish Suojelupoliisi or SUPO) took approximately five weeks. The new employees could not start before security screening had been made. The new task force was mainly experienced personnel. The recruitment of about 50 new employees was opened for public and internal applicants.

The new employees were planned to be positioned as a supplement to the units and sections from where current personnel would be selected to the task force. It was noted that this approach would speed up the capability building dramatically, if compared to the option that the new task force would be all new employees. This part of the pilot phase was cancelled in late January and the recruitment process aborted as allocated resources were decreased with 15 million euros towards 2019 fiscal year. The task force pilot was conducted in a smaller scale, but the task force was delegated to asylum unit and it did not have effect to this case study. With a ten-person task force, of which several had to share their time between their original and the supported unit, the efficiency of the pilot could not be evaluated.

One supporting project was the Data and Knowledge Based Leadership project where new digital tools were adopted to the daily work as part of the Intelligent Digital Agency program. These new digital tools did make it possible to analyze faster and more precisely all the collected data and reflect it with the Key Performance Indexes (KPI's). The transformation from Cognos to Power-BI started in February 2019 as a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) was released. This first version provided new functions to create analyzes on productivity against Key Performance Indexes. The Power-BI has been applied in larger scale during autumn 2019, but both systems are still is use during the changeover phase.

The **pilot phase** as a whole with the changes took place during the spring of 2019. The project utilized the service design tools and during the testing phase additional information was gathered on customer satisfactory. A customer satisfactory study was made parallel with the project and the results were available on February 2019.

The new job descriptions were applied from March 2019. The updated guides were utilized as new ones got ready during the in-house training of new personnel from December 2018 to February 2019. The information management and storage were updated so that the information was more easily available to case workers and customer service points. The version management of different guiding documents and information storage guidelines were updated and distribution of information was streamlined to avoid usage of outdated documents.

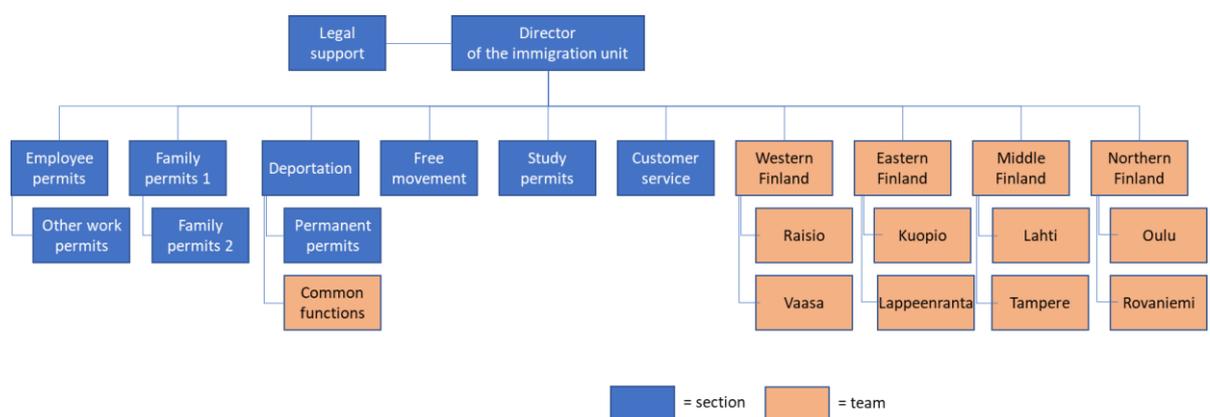


Figure 21. Immigration unit organization from March 2019.

New organization within the family reunification section was adopted from 1.3.2019. The new organization is in figure 21. The leadership, management and decision-making capability was doubled with updated responsibilities.

The family reunification was divided to two sections (section 1 and 2), the similar change was conducted for work related permits section which was divided to employees and other work-related permits. A special unit is the deportation section. It has different duties which include the deportation decisions, granting of the permanent permits and common functions which consist among another issues retrospective surveying whether the grounds of permits still exist. The other teams are the customer service points across Finland.

The new UMA software updates provided process streamlining for example with new baskets. These baskets were artificial storage points to sort out different kind of applications to certain segments. New filtering criteria were adopted beside the baskets including new additional index terms.

The testing of the suggestions before the pilot phase started partly from the beginning of January 2019. All changes for the pilot phase were executed from the beginning of March 2019. The organizational changes were postponed to March from the original plan as it was not possible without two months' notice to Palkeet due to technical issues (Palkeet 2018). Palkeet is responsible for the human resources management system and they require two months to conduct any organizational changes. The recruiting of additional personnel also took several months and new actors started in the beginning of the March. The workforce within the family reunification section was amended already from the beginning of the December 2018 and after their in-house training they were able to start at their positions from the beginning of January 2019.

The results of the testing are reported on the next chapter. It is noted that the changes will take their time to provide results but the evolution was tracked from the beginning of 2018 throughout the pilot phase until end of September 2019. The results were followed in detail to identify minor changes as well.

5.5 Results

The main challenge concerning prolonged management times on hundreds of applications was fully understood in September 2018. Then the applications that were left during 2016 and 2017 had resulted to extensive management times and the number of complaints rose.

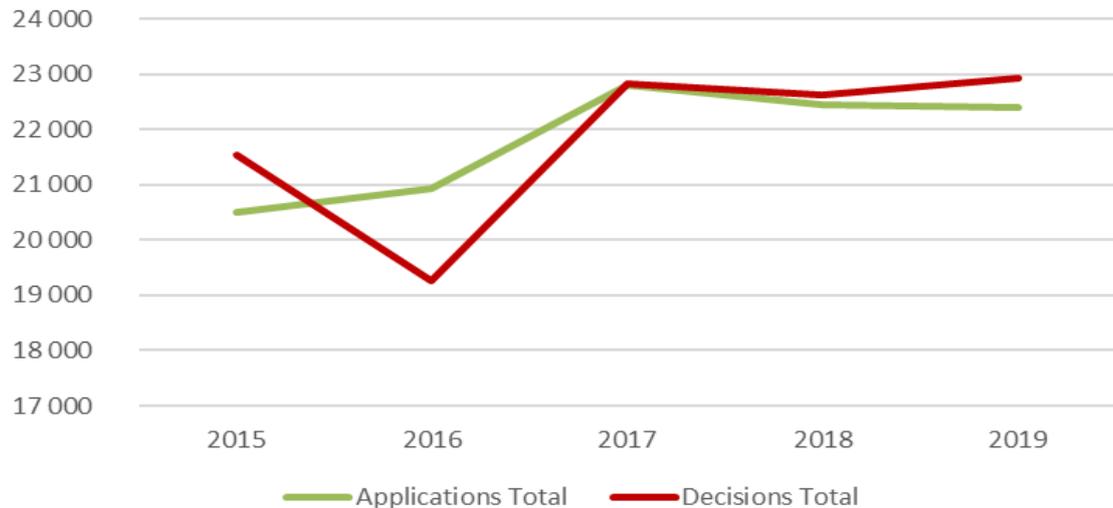


Figure 22. Applications versus decisions 2015 – 2019 (forecast) on family reunification.

Partially the reason was caused by the problem with a constant queue from 2016, which can be seen from figure 22. Then the authority to handle the extended permits was transferred from police to Finnish Immigration Service. When the decision concerning the transform of authority was made, police stopped decision making and only received the applications and transferred about 10 000 different applications to Migri in the beginning of January 2017. The chaotic situation was managed with extra hours and extended working hours for decision makers. The situation was stable but the queue did not get shorter.

This case study project started in September 2018 to identify issues to speed up the process. There were resources available at that time to start different pilot subprojects beside the recruitment of some additional personnel. In the figure 19 there are the annual development which shows that during 2019 the number of decisions exceed the number of applications and the queue is getting shorter, slowly though.

The work of the Finnish Immigration Service as a whole is a specialist work. Each official need to have suitable background education, but they need also in-house education and training for the duties. The different varieties of the law and residence permit requirements make the work itself challenging and interesting. There is no applicable education that could make it possible to just get in and start working. Concerning previous aspects both the number of personnel and the quality of the personnel are vital for successful operative work.

The number of personnel was adequate in theory after the complementary recruitments done after the first workshop results. The number of personnel was planned to be risen with 15 persons but due to budget cuts only eight additional persons could be recruited.

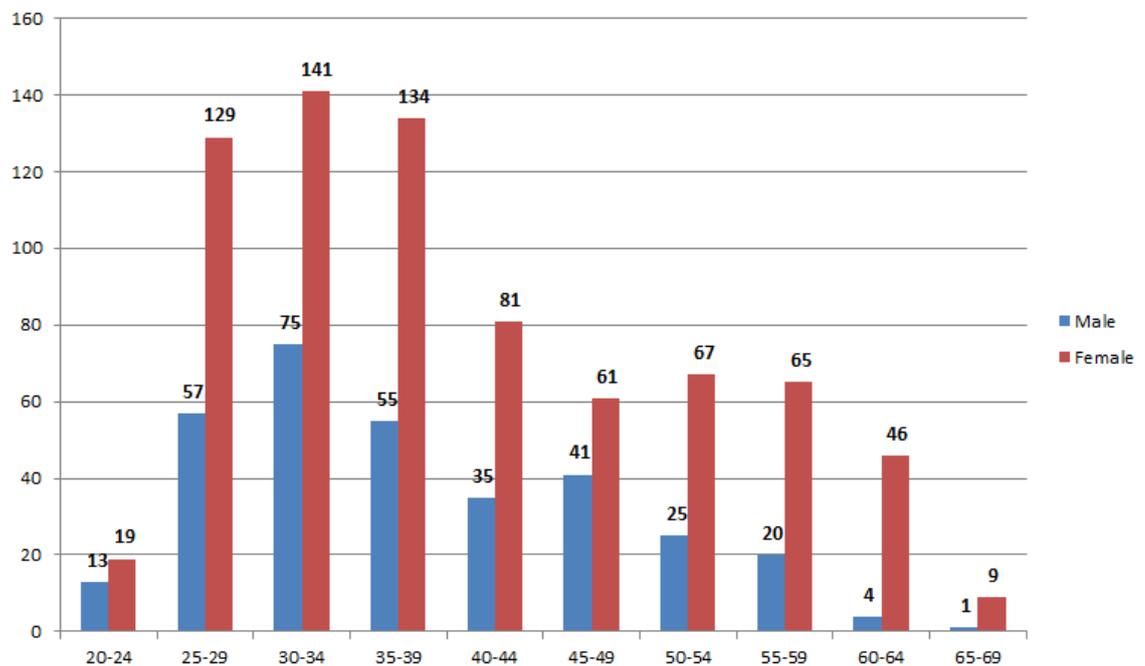


Figure 23. Age and gender structure.

The personnel are relatively young as the average age is 39,5 years and 69,7 percent of the personnel are females as shown on figure 23. In the Immigration unit the share of females is even higher as it is 79,2 percent and 59,1 percent of the unit's personnel are under 40 years old (Kieku, 2019). The number of absentees on the grounds of family leave is relatively high. Thus, a lot of personnel were absent and they were substituted with new personnel with temporary nomination. The share of the people with less than a

one-year experience is 45 percent and less than two years around 30 percent. The high turnover rate and insufficient resources to match the number of incoming applications has been the major challenge on the family reunification as well other sectors work. The temporary nature of budgetary resources and incessant need to reduce the number of personnel support the turnover rate as other more permanent jobs have been available due to good general economic and employment situations.

The number of personnel seemed to be adequate in a statistic report but on the closer observation it could be noted that some one third of the personnel had been working in the family reunification section less than six months and their special know-how was lower than required from experienced case worker. One reason is that about seventy per cent of agency employees are female and the average age of employees is less than forty years. This has the side effect the maternal leave ratio is pretty high.

The more experienced and qualified employees had to guide the newer ones and also their productivity suffered from this fact. As the number of the applications are on the rise the amount of personnel was raised about fifteen per cent. The consequence of the lower capability was that the waiting time from the preselection to application management grew too long.

The family reunification permit section structure was duplicated from March 1, 2019. The aim was the fasten the process to double the decision-making capability and support better the external actors in the service points. The original section head continued as the process owner and guided the process actors including service points, embassies and ELY-centers and TE-offices. The other section head guided the process within the two sections. Both had their own administrative duties, which were lighter as the number of subordinates was smaller than earlier. There was more time for operational issues.

Decision making is done in two different levels nowadays. First one is the clear applications that are identified in the preselection process. These applications need to be perfectly filled in and fulfil all requirements to approach to the fast track team to be handled instantly. The decision is made by the deputy inspector. More application types that can be treated quickly are identified and forwarded to the fast track team.

Second level are the application that miss information or does not meet all requirements. These are sent to the so-called baskets for the senior inspectors handling. The senior inspector details the application and ask for further information if needed. They make a suggestion for the decision to the team leader. The team leader substitute is also vested with the authorization to make decisions. As the section has had lack of competence, some of the team leaders are lacking a substitute and thus some decisions have been stuck to a queue before decision. That has been another challenge with the application management time. With reorganizing the section, the number of team leaders and substitutes is grown and timely handling of the decision suggestions will be secured.

In the overall process canvass the service points did have some waste due to cancelled times or shorter customer service slots. As a result of the organizational change the senior head of the sector could guide the work in the different service points better and the inspectors in the service points could participate more to the decision making and were guided to enhance the information and guidance towards customers. This guidance provided more detailed and easier manageable applications. This had a speeding effect to the process.

There were several identified service design proposals within the process during the workshops. The workshops used different service design methods to have different approach to the issue. Co-creative methods were used and the issue was described with customer journey. The brainstorming provided new ideas in the constructive atmosphere. The ideas included leadership and management issues as well as customer service and system tools. The main challenge was the number of applications that exceed the Alien law requirement of nine months management time. In February 2019, the nine-month limit exceeding's were 28 percent of the decisions made, and the average management time was 181 days. In October 2019 the percentage of the too long management times was reduced to 16 percent and the average time was 153 days. During the whole year the average management time has been 173 days. (Power-BI 2019.)

First change in the process development was the more specified job descriptions for the senior officers and the assistant administrative officers. The senior officers do have more experience and they are to focus more clearly to challenging applications. The assistant administrative officers in the sector and also in the service points handle the applications

which do have all required documents and do not have any specific issue to use consideration.

Another issue was to develop the guides and information availability to case workers and customer service. The version management and information storage and distribution were streamlined to avoid usage of outdated documents.

The leadership and management of the daily work needed enforcing. The number of team leaders was too low and prepared decisions were delayed. The administration takes some time of the daily work and it was noted that there is a need to enforce the decision-making capability which is the main responsibility of the team leaders. The process ownership and guidance needed also some enforcement and it was decided to split the section to two sections.

The UMA system needed process-oriented streamlining. New filtering criteria were developed with new additional index terms. This has enabled more detailed follow-up capability and has shortened the processing times and total management times. The reporting tools have been developed and this has saved time from reporting to operational duties. There is a change from older Cognos system to new up-to-date Power-BI reporting system taking place. The change is conducted in phases, first ones started in August 2019 and the Cognos is planned to be given up by the summer 2020. Within the UMA earlier mentioned basket system for in-process applications were created. With a new enhancement the UMA system monitors the queue and sends a note if an application has been in a queue too long without treatment.

The process itself has been described in more detail to support the daily work. The decision paper formats have been developed to support the structure of decision making.

The aims and goals of the employees were more clearly designated and process culture developed in coordination with the new job descriptions. With specific projects the teams have had orientated seasons to treat the older applications from the queue.

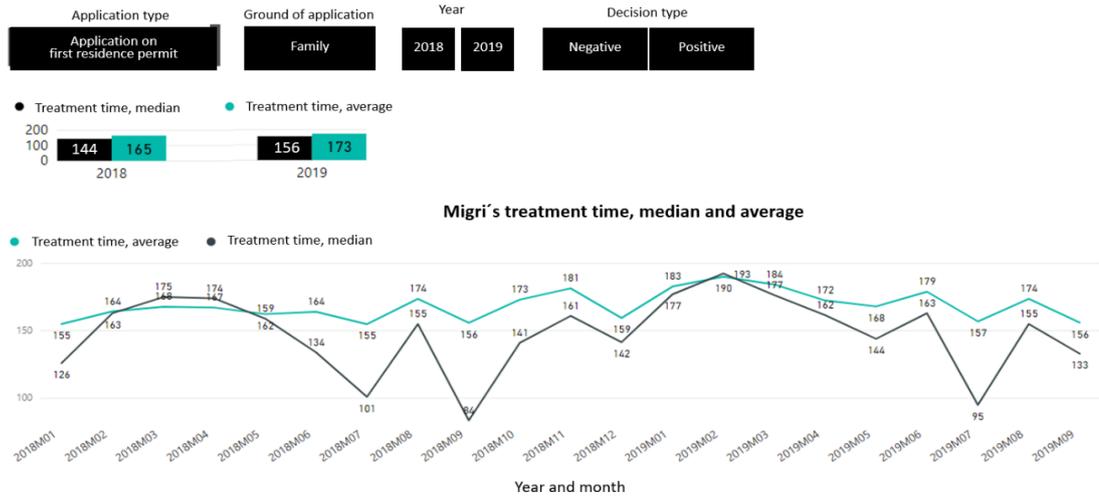


Figure 24. Median and average management times during 1/2018 – 9/2019 2019 (Power-BI 2019).

The figure 24 shows the difference between average and median management times. The average time is quite stable but in median there is changes from month to month. As most of the applications are treated well under the required 270 days and the median is under 100 days during some months it means that some of the decisions take far more time. Earlier the statistics did not provide information concerning the prolonged applications especially and the average management time was well under the required 270 days. Thus, the issue with prolonged management time was not noticed.

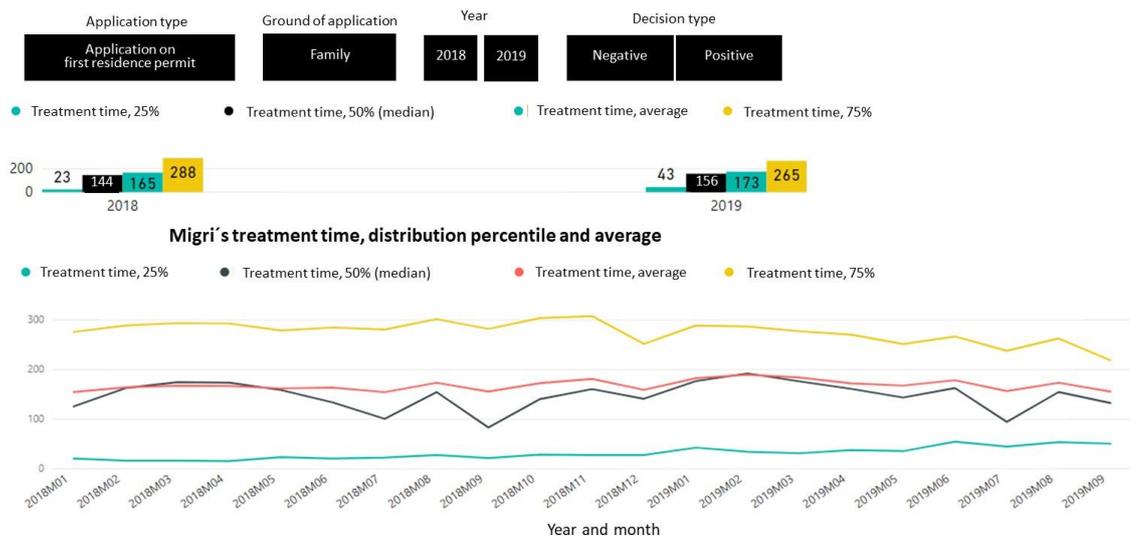


Figure 25. Management time distribution with percentile and average 1/2018 – 9/2019 2019 (Power-BI 2019).

The figure 25 shows the actual challenge. Average management time is well under 200 days and the 25% percentile was in 2018 at 23 days and during 2019 until October 43 days. The yellow 75% percentile is the critical level. During 2018 that percentile exceeded the 270-day limit meaning that over 25 percent of decisions took too much time. During 2019 the 75% percentile is 265, it is better but still far too high.

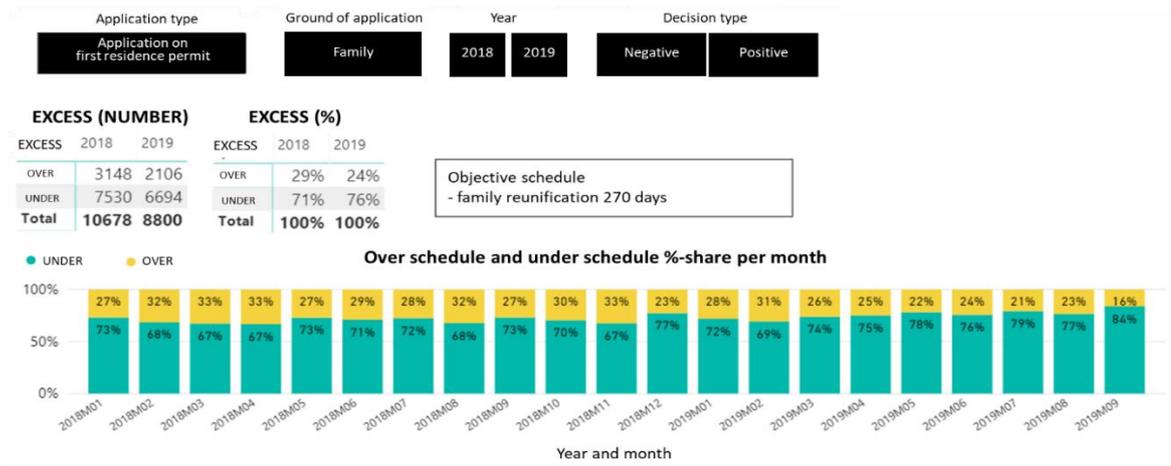


Figure 26. Applications within and over objective schedule 1/2018 – 9/2019 (Power-BI 2019).

Figure 26 shows what is the portion of applications exceeding the set time limit of 270 days (objective schedule) with yellow color. The exceeding's are constant but the trend is getting better during 2019. Only in September 2019 the 80 percent level of decisions within required time was achieved.

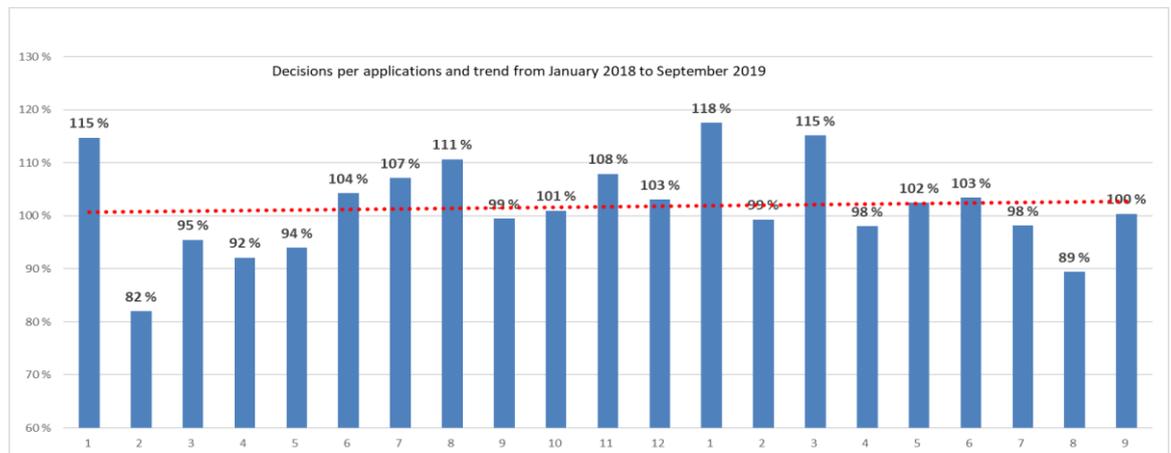


Figure 27. Decisions per applications 2018 – 2019.

The ratio between applications and decisions provides information on how the agency is managing the applications in queue. Figure 27 shows that the family reunification was capable to treat 100 percent of the applications on a trend line in January 2018, but the February to May season provided a lot more applications to the queue. In figure 19 it was presented the challenging issue from 2015 on. It can be stated that from June 2018 the decision-making capability has got better according the red trend line though monthly variations are high.

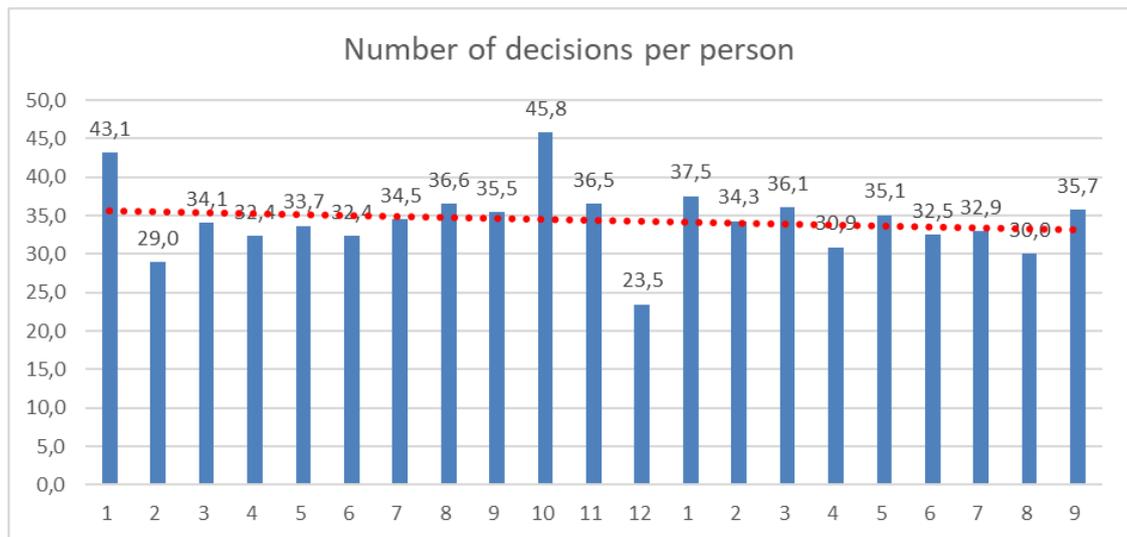


Figure 28. Number of decisions per person 1/2018 – 9/2019.

Most reliable metrics on the decision-making capability or efficiency is the number how many decisions have been made per number of employees. In figure 28 the reality is clearly observable. The red trend line shows that gradually the number of decisions is getting lower from 35 decisions a month per person to about 33 decision per person in month in September 2019. The amount of personnel effects all other metrics concerning the number of decisions but this ratio presents the actual effectiveness.

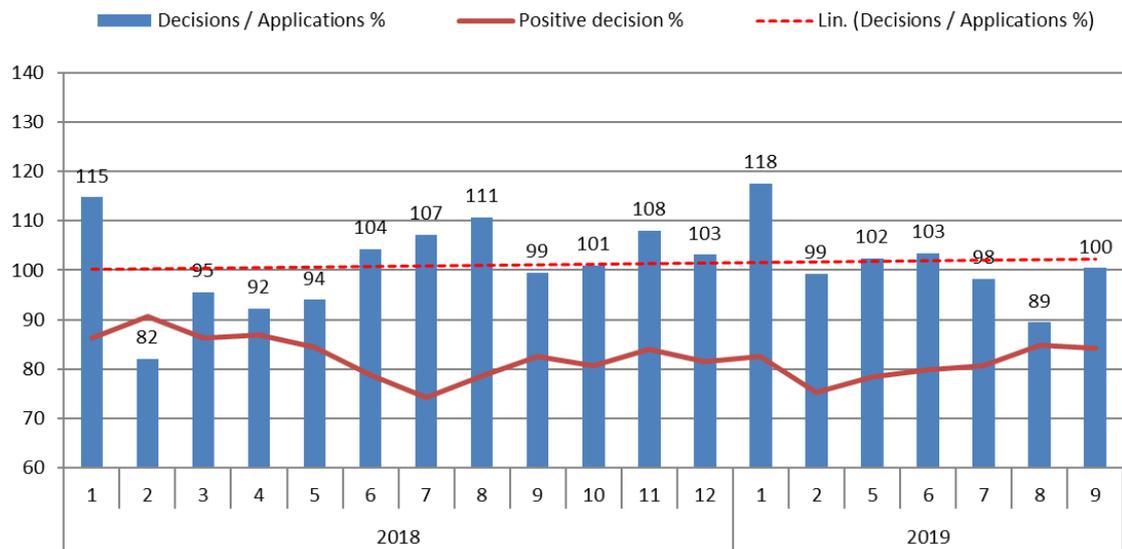


Figure 29. The share of decisions versus applications per month and percentage of positive decisions January 2018 – October 2019 (Cognos 2019).

In the figure 29 the relative share of decisions versus applications is presented by month from January 2018. The percentage of the positive decisions is presented to reflect whether there have been any specific changes concerning the applications. As the percentage is very static at 80 percent level there are no specific changes within the difficulty level. During 2019 only April provided less decisions than applications. In 2018 there were five months with under 100 percent of decisions. The linear trendline shows that the decision rate versus application number is growing supports the conclusion of successful case study and development project.

The lean work management is done with the baskets. If the deputy inspector cannot handle the application, he or she forwards the application to preselection and to a work basket. There have been some challenges that some applications have been forwarded to a wrong basket. This has further caused a delay in the process as the application is re-forwarded and the system positions it to the end of the queue. To avoid this, the process needs to be better controlled and instructions and support provided as required. The sector head owns the process. As she has had the process and the personnel at her control the workload has been too high. The section was divided to two different sections. The senior sector head is responsible mainly for the process and guides it in all the service points and customer

service as well. The other section head is responsible of the personnel but supports at the process in the main office, where the challenging applications are treated.

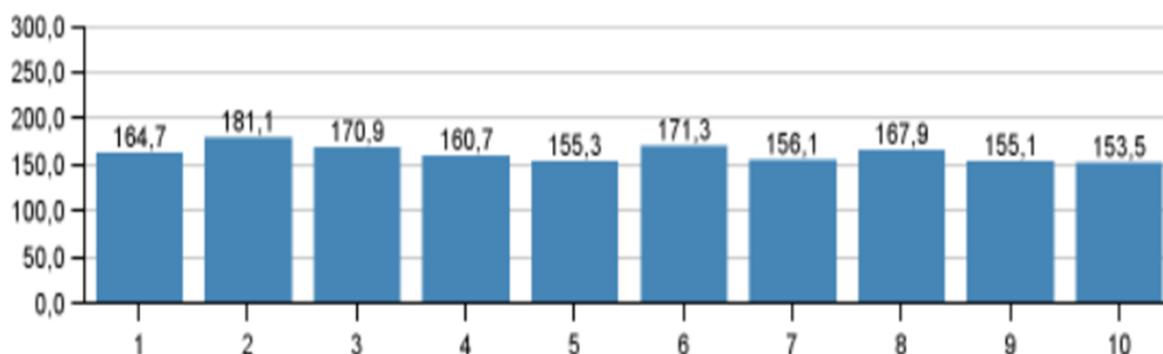


Figure 30. Average treatment time of family reunification applications per month during 2019 (until 26.10.2019) (Cognos 2019).

The project was successful in identifying and rectifying different challenges in the family reunification process. As the process itself is a solid and well functional service there still are specific issues that can be developed for better service. In the figure 30 the average treatment time monthly shows that some development has been achieved.

The aim of the case study was to find out what is the benefit of using service design methods and tools for developing governmental services. This study has proofed that the methods and tools are fully competent in developing governmental services towards the customer expectations. The design thinking and service design tools and methods are very suitable for governmental service providers. The design thinking has gained ground lately and for example there is a group called public designers (Julkismuotoilijat). This is an expanding community of service designers and design-minded civil servants who are working in various governmental organizations. They support internal design skills and capabilities to enhance cross-governmental collaboration. (Leppänen 2019.)

The supporting questions helped to frame the main question. The customer satisfactory level was on a good level. The face to face service is emphatic and customers get what they need. The bottlenecks in the process were identified and corrective actions could be taken in the pilot. The piloted organization and functions did help the issues and developed the process. For the petition phase issues, some challenges were identified. An example is the scanning of the paper applications, and who should do that work. This

issue is discussed with Ministry of Foreign Affairs as it affects the work in the embassies and Finnish missions. Other delays were addressed and corrective actions were taken where appropriate.

The whole case study and the research has been a large change management project. The work started with observations and research to create full understanding of the issue and especially the challenges concerning it. It continued with orientation towards the challenges and ideation how to develop the service as a whole and specific issues that cause difficulties of problems. Next phase was to decide what to do and prototype the solutions and prepare pilots or changes. During the last phase action took place and the changes were implemented. In this phase the change management is tangible although it took place throughout the process. The tangible change management results were the changes in the organization, in the process, and in decision making. All these consisted intangible actions, which were for example internal recruiting, evaluations, decisions, plans and coordination.

6 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The service design thinking brings a new edge to the governmental service production. The customer needs to be in the focus to provide high quality and easily accessible services to all customer segments. The requirements and expectations toward services vary a lot depending on the customer preferences. The services need to adopt to different customers and the services have also to be scalable to meet the changing circumstances and changes in the demand of services.

The service design methods and tools help to structure, visualize and analyze different service-related issues. New methods on brainstorming sessions give a boost to the ideation but it is important that the use of various methods may not take the whole focus of the actual topic. Thus, a facilitator is suggested to be applied so that the experts can keep their focus in the issue in hand.

This case study aimed to find out what are the benefits of using service design methods and tools for developing governmental services. As described above the use of service design thinking and the use of different methods and tools did prove to be useful. With a useful tool different issues can gain new and larger perspectives to chew over and new innovative ideas may be generated. The workshops exercised different iterative methods and visualization tools.

The supporting questions required to find out the customer satisfactory level and identify the bottlenecks in the family reunification process. Finally, the reasons that affect the application process delays from original petition to decision (both in organizational and service perspective) was analyzed. The supporting projects studied the questions and provided the required data for further analyzation. On these grounds the ideation, prototyping and implementation were conducted. The results were verified by reflecting the achieved result metrics with earlier data.

With the operational and change management the structures were changed and process development the application versus decision ratio did get better. The change was not big but it is notable. The initial problem with the prolonged management time did get a little

better and the average treatment time decreased. Over all the results achieved were positive.

During the case study, it was pondered whether there is anything new in the service design thinking and methods compared to older planning procedures or methods. This was a sideline within this case study. The OODA loop was a process tool that was familiar to me earlier. The terms are different but the nature of double diamond and OODA loop are just alike. Also, other relevant process planning tools have very similar phases. This contemplation supports the original research question concerning the benefits of service design in governmental services. As the differences in planning and development are small but service design brings new additional tools to utilize it can be addressed that the service design is useful to governmental as well as any other service development.

My motivation in the beginning of the studies was to learn what is service design all about. I had earlier a view that design focuses on the material world, but there is much more available in the service design. The working life has developed and new methods have erupted during the last two decades but I did not have clear vision where different group work methods came from. Now it is easy to see the big picture and understand how service design has expanded its impact to the world of services. Services need to be embedded into a cultural context which interconnect systems of people, processes, structures and material evidence to a holistic system of systems. In the future projects and daily work as well the service design will be embedded. The agency has trained service design ambassadors to all units, they can bring the service design thinking and methods and tools to the daily work.

The case study has taken a lot of time but the issue itself is very interesting. The study has brought deeper understanding on different processes and has developed personal contacts as co-operation with several people has been deeper than usual. The results have supported the work of the agency. The results are valid and reliability is cross-checked with different metrics.

In this perspective I have achieved the original aim for the studies to understand the possibilities and capabilities of design thinking and service design. It is easy to concur to the Migri's service design team's motto; "Our ambition is to drive positive change inside

the bigger ecosystem. Inland Design uses design to re-think work culture and enable organizations to deliver better public services.” With this approach we can provide better and new services to our current and future customers. The adoption of this kind design led approach in the Finnish Immigration Service supports a transformation from a traditional governmental bureaucracy to a more creative, adaptive and collaborative environment.

The changes have not been done by the author only. The case study has been possible with the best practices and lessons learned from service design thinking and using the service design tools and methods. Co-creation and commitment of the section personnel have made it possible to conduct the reorganization and several changes in the processes. People with different backgrounds and knowledge have worked together with passion. The joint effort to do better has carried throughout the year while heavy workload has been consistent. There are successes but also some challenges have not been solved. With these issues and decreasing resources there is an imminent need to create something new for the process as the old one cannot achieve the speed required.

It would have been great to take a breath after the studies as working full-time and studying has taken its toll. Unfortunately, the agency resources are going down. By starting negotiations to lay-off all personnel for two weeks in December woke up support from several stakeholders. This has forced the government to grant additional resources for the rest of the year. But the cuts for 2020 and on, are still taking place. This requires above mentioned new broad development actions to adapt the organization and processes to gain balance with the decision-making capability and the resources. Starting again from a scratch is the only solution but the service design tools and methods will again be useful in this work. The services are public services but the aim will be clear – services from people to people.

The service design thinking is a self-evident part of the public service development. As there is a need to continue to develop the services the issue for further studies would be how to apply design thinking approach in a governmental agency. Study could describe what are the methods and tools that suite best the activities and describe the design process. Another issue for further study would be the challenge with the decision per person ratio. As the resources are decreasing and the number of applications is getting

higher there is a need to raise the number of decisions made by employees. How to maintain the quality and legality, but treat the applications faster?

This research and case study has provided a vision that learning to design by doing is useful way to get familiar with service design. Mastery will be achieved designing within a community of practitioners, and reflecting on their doing with mentors' support. The ability to design in teams is supported by the trained service design ambassadors in every unit.

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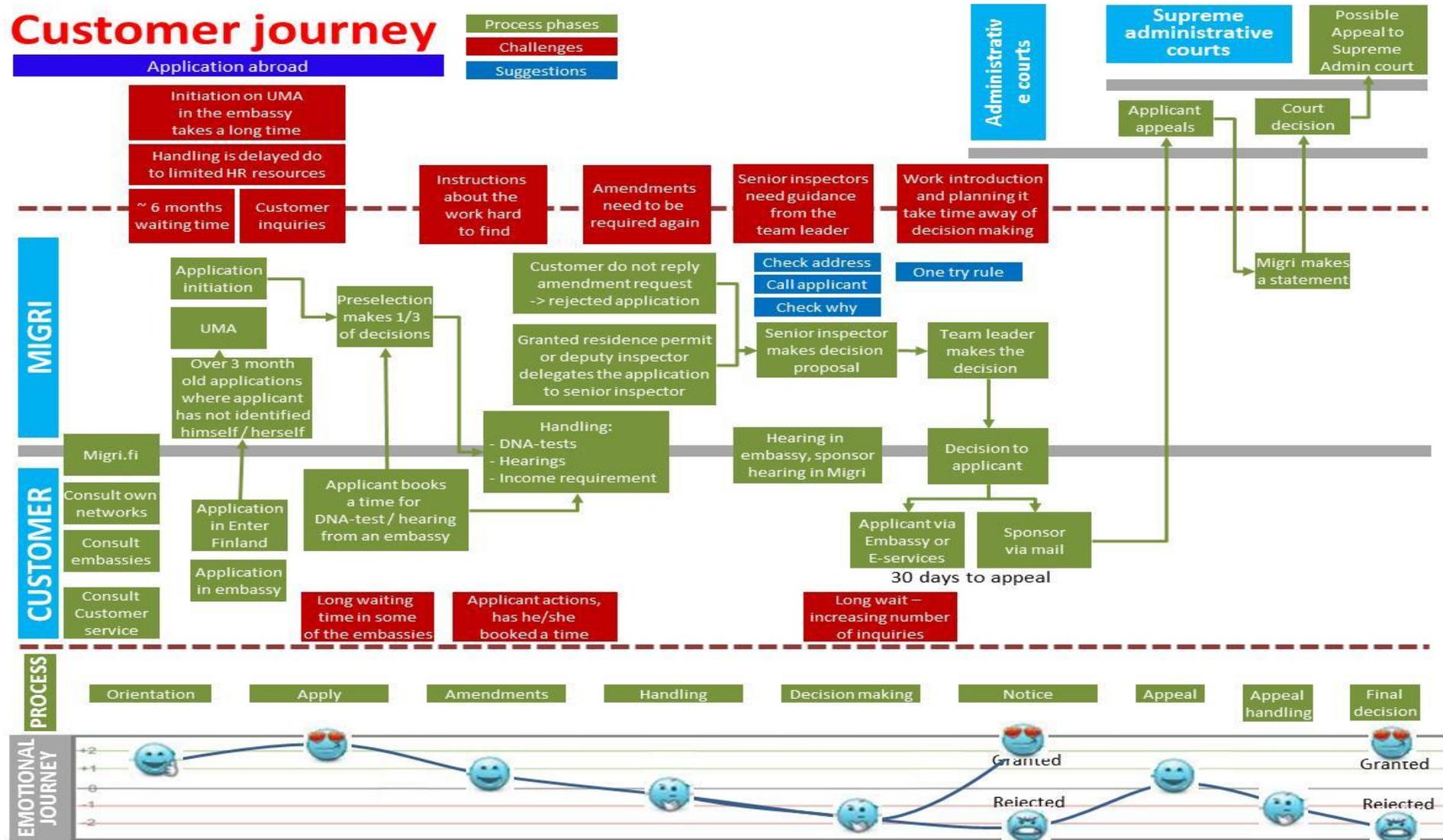
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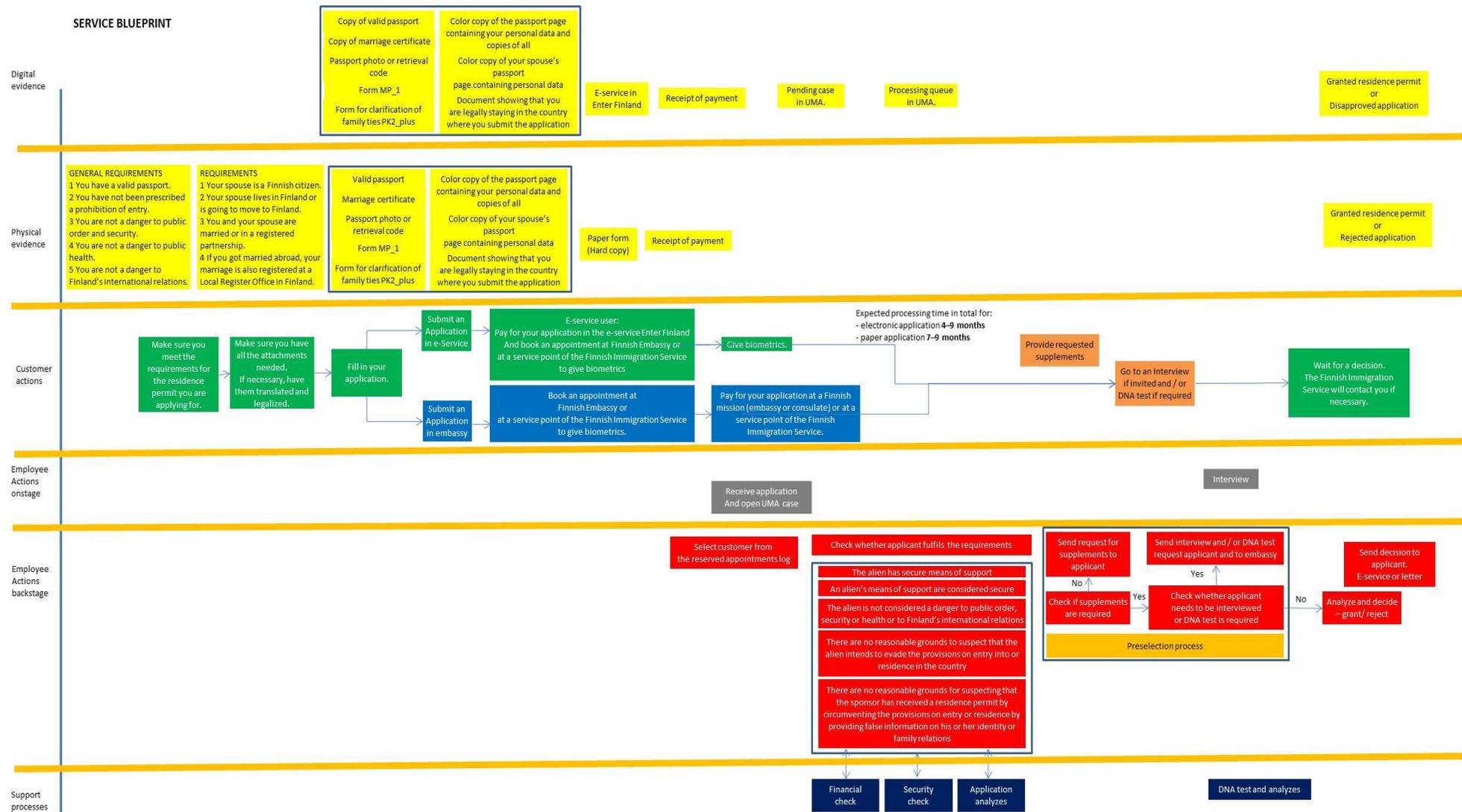
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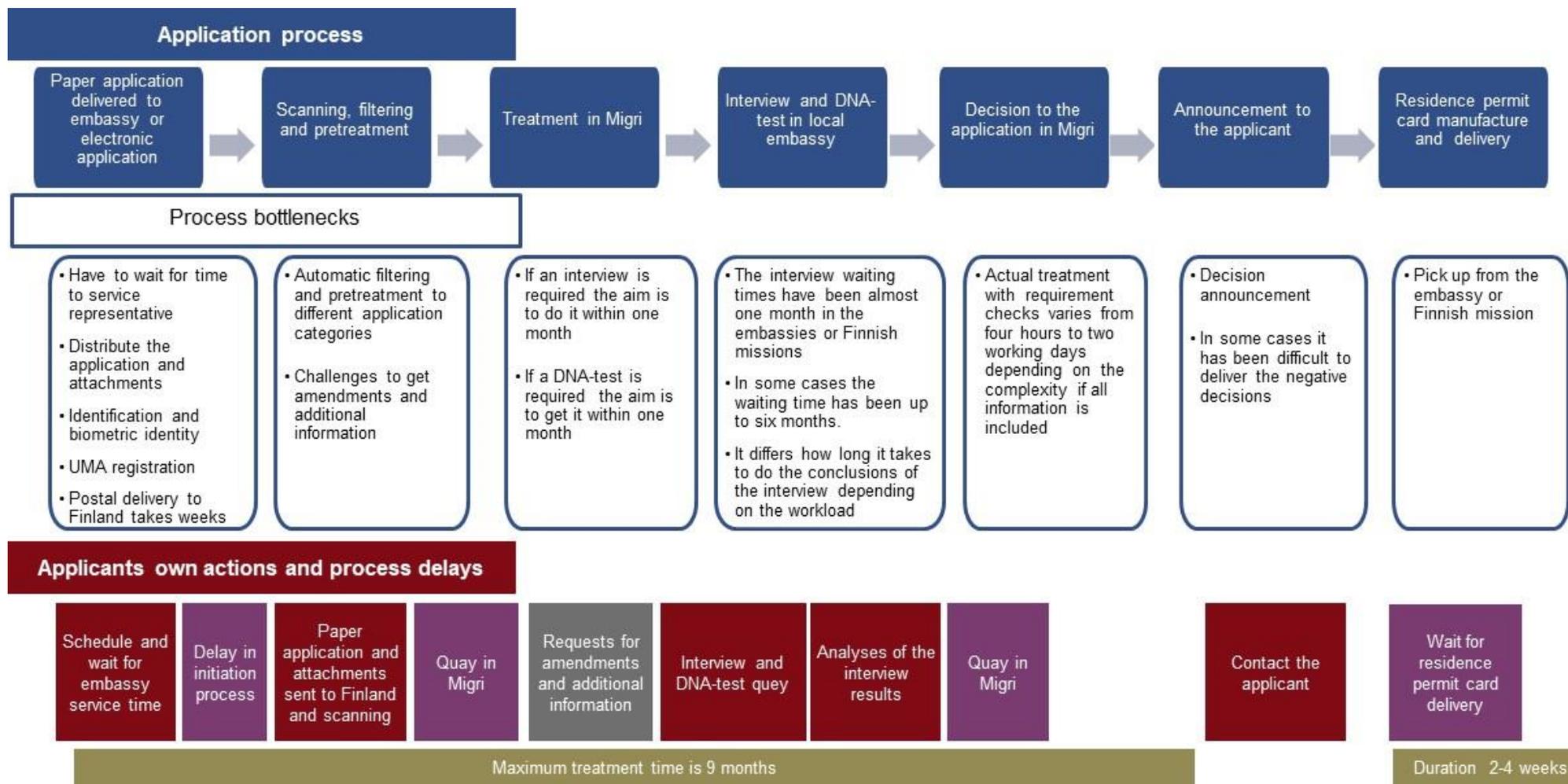
CUSTOMER JOURNEY



SERVICE BLUEPRINT



FAMILY REUNIFICATION APPLICATION PROCESS AND THE PROCESS DELAYS



(Vuokko et al. 2019)

FAMILY REUNIFICATION WORKSHOP ON 9.11.2018



Työpajan tavoite

Ongelma: Perheenyhdistämisen prosessin lakisääteinen käsittelyaika on 9kk, mutta nykyään se ylittyy paljon. Miksi?

Työpajan tavoitteena oli käydä läpi perheenyhdistämisen prosessi, löytää käsittelyä hidastavat pullonkaulat, selvittää uusia tapoja organisoida työtä, sekä luoda uusia ideoita joita kehittää joko lyhyemmällä tai pidemmällä aikataululla.

Työpajan fasilitointi

Mariana Salgado (Migri/Inland)
Katariina Kantola (Migri/Inland)

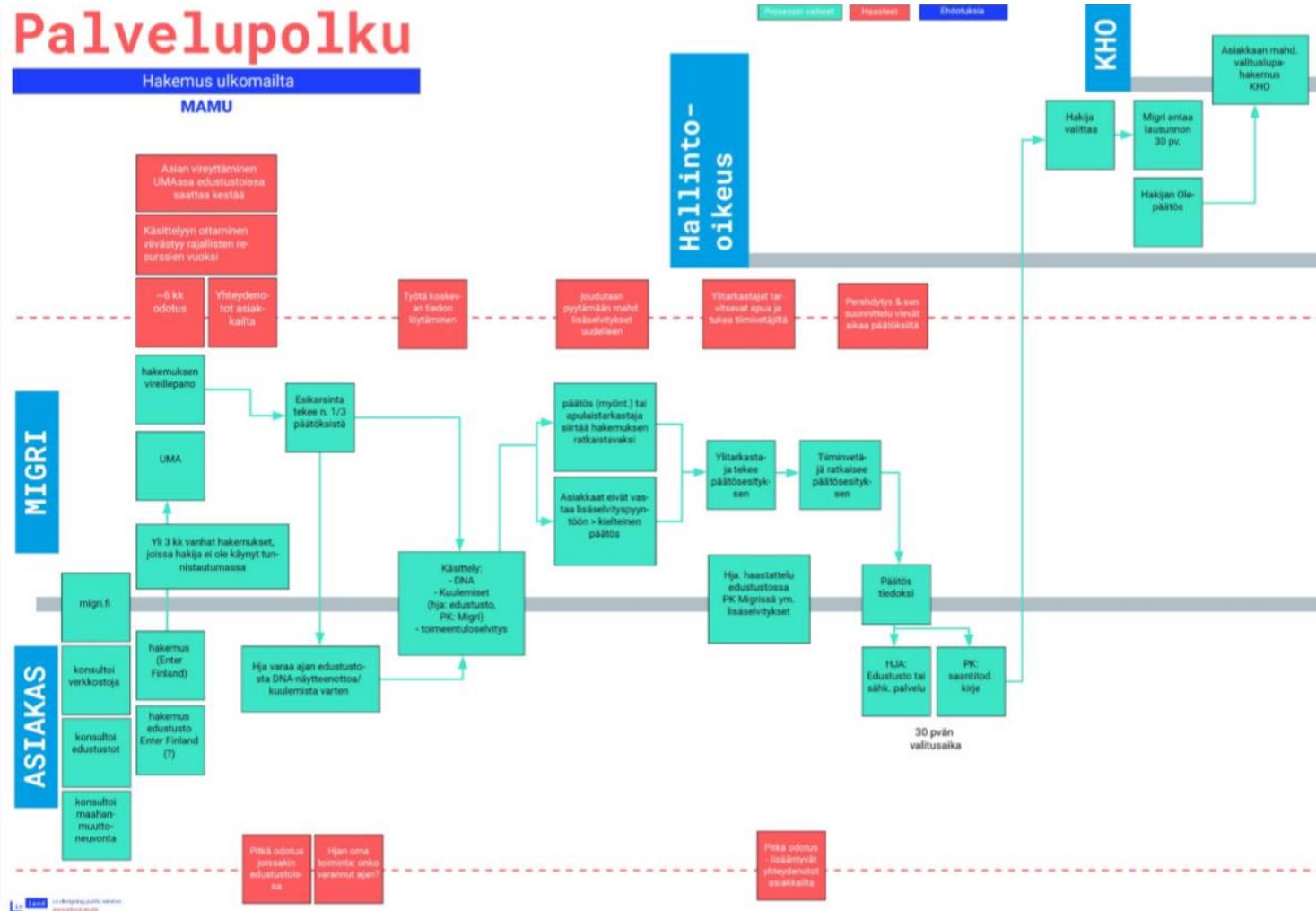
Työpajaan osallistujat

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Ryhmä 1

Palvelupolku

Hakemus ulkomailta
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Osa 1 - Palvelupolut

Ensimmäisessä tehtävässä käytiin läpi perheenyhdistämisen prosessin vaiheet ja tunnistettiin siinä esiintyvät haasteet ja pullonkaulat. Molemmat ryhmät luonnollisesti totesivat sekä hakijaa että Migriä koskevaksi selkeäksi ongelmaksi *käsittelyajan liiallisen pituuden*. Tämän puhuttiin johtuvan sekä *hakijan toimista tai niiden puutteesta*, että Migrin puolelta erityisesti *henkilöstöresurssien vähäisyydestä* ja *ratkaisuoikeuksien puutteesta*.

Suurimmaksi **hakijaan** liittyväksi haasteeksi nostettiin *hakijan oman toiminnan vaikutus prosessiin*. Ongelman tunnistettiin näkyvän erityisesti hakijan reagoinnin hitautena tai puutteena esimerkiksi Migrin pyytäessä lisäselvitystä tai täydennystä hakemukseen, ja hakijan varatessa aikaa kuulemiseen/näytteenottoon edustustoissa. Hakijan reagoinnin puute näissä tilanteissa aiheuttaa käsittelyprosessin viivästymistä, tai jopa automaattisen negatiivisen päätöksen. Reagoimattomuuden pohdittiin johtuvan mahdollisesti hakijoiden digilukutaidottomuudesta,

osoitteenmuutoksista, tai hakemustilanteen vähäisestä tarkkailusta.

Migrin puolella puollonkaulaksi koettiin *pitkät odotukset hakemusten jättämisen ja käsittelyyn ottamisen välissä*, johtuen *rajallisista resursseista*. Vähäiset resurssit näkyvät *henkilöstön vajauksena* ja *suurena vaihtuvuutena*. Syinä tähän nähtiin muun muassa huono palkkaus, pitkät määräaikaissuudet, koulutuksen kesto ja työn kovat vaatimukset. Käsittelyjonojen pidentyessä myös *hakijoiden tiedustelut lisääntyvät*, ja vaativat vuorostaan henkilöstöresursseja pois itse työn tekemiseltä.

Pullonkaulana pidettiin myös **edustustojen pitkiä odotusaikoja**, liittyen esimerkiksi hakijan kuulemis/näytteenottoaikojen saamiseen.

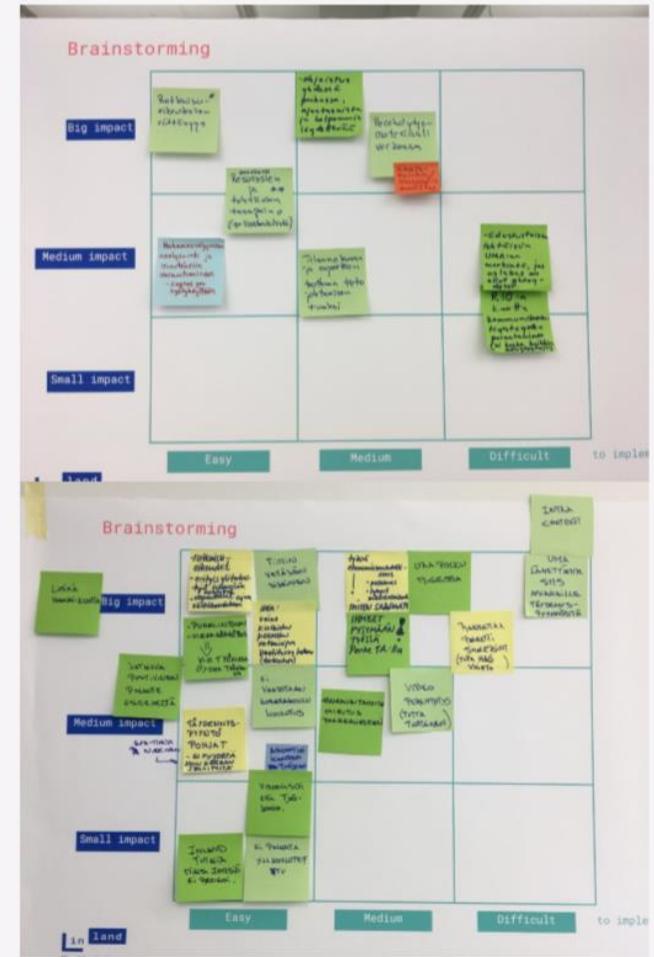
Osa 2 - Brainstorming

Kun haasteet oli tunnistettu, keskityttiin niiden mahdollisiin ratkaisuihin. Ratkaisuehdotukset asetettiin vaikuttavuustaulukkoon, jossa mitattiin kunkin idean vaikuttavuuden tasoa ja toteutuksen helppoutta.

Ensimmäinen ryhmä koki suurimman vaikutuksen ja helpoimman toteutuksen kohteeksi *ratkaisuoikeuksien lisäämisen*, vastaten pitkään odotusaikaan ylitarkastajan päätöksentekoesityksen ja ratkaisun välissä. Myös *resurssien ja tehtävien tasapainotus ja ennakointi esimerkiksi lisähenkilöstön kautta* koettiin vastaavan rajallisista henkilöstöresursseista johtuvaan käsittelyyn ottamisen hitauteen vireillepanon yhteydessä. Suuren vaikutuksen, mutta keskivaikean toteutuksen kohteeksi todettiin *helposti löydettävä, yhtenäisempi ohjeistus*, joka sisältää ajantasaisen perehdytysmateriaalin. Tätä pohdittiin toteutettavana verkossa esim. Sharepointin tai manuaalin uudistuksena.

Myös toinen ryhmä koki *laajemmat ratkaisuoikeudet* helpoksi, korkean vaikutuksen ratkaisuksi. Tämä toteutettaisiin esimerkiksi saamalla *erityistarkastajat tekemään avustavaa työtä*, vapauttaen näin aikaa päätöksentekoon, ja mahdollistaen paremmin mm. *tiiminvetäjien sijaiset*. Ryhmä pohti, voisiko henkilöstön vaihtuvuutta vähentää jollain tasolla *kielteisten päätösten ratkaisijoiden vaatimustason laskemisella* (olla esimerkiksi vaatimatta korkeakoulutusta). Keskitason vaikutus ja helppo toteutettavuus todettiin olevan *täydennyspyyntöpohjilla*, jotka mahdollistaisivat selvityksen pyynnön tarpeen vain kerran.

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Lopputulos ja jatkotoimet

Jatkotoimiksi sovittiin alustavasti pienen käyttäjätutkimuksen tekeminen puhelimitse (Inland). Tarkoituksena on haastatella asiakkaita, jotka ovat eivät ole reagoineet täydennyspyyntöön määräajassa. Tavoitteena on selvittää reagoimattomuuden syitä ja mahdollisia ratkaisuideoita hakijoiden näkökulmasta. Sen jälkeen vastaukset käydään läpi MAMUn kanssa, ja työskentelyä jatketaan löydösten pohjalta.

Tarkoitus on myös tutkia miten mahdollistaa ratkaisuoikeuksien saaminen useammalle henkilölle tiiminvetäjien lisäksi.

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