



STATE TREASURY

D9 team external evaluation

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D9 team external evaluation

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1 Introduction

In September 2016, the Ministry of Finance ordered the State Treasury to initiate measures to support the customer-oriented digital changes in the public services of central government agencies and institutions as set out in the Government Programme. In addition to long-span development projects, development projects and experiments to improve customer experiences with in the short term were also added to the goals of the activities. The State Treasury Digikiri reports serve as a basis for determining the measures.

The State Treasury Digitalisation Support unit was established to implement the above-mentioned goal. This unit is also known as the D9 team. The unit is subject to this external evaluation.

The decision to establish the D9 team states that by the end of its fixed-term operation, an external, independent evaluation analysing the team operations should be made. The D9 team fixed-term operating period ends on 31 December 2018. The purpose of this external evaluation is to produce information for making decisions on the potential continuation of the D9 team operations.

1.1 D9 team objectives

The aim of D9 team activities has been to provide central government agencies and institutions and other public sector with operators practical help in creating cross-administrative, customer-oriented and easy-to-use public digital services. According to the team action plan, various projects may be supported in practice in, inter alia, the following areas:

- good project management practices
- finding other similar projects (peer learning and support)
- confirmation of change management
- reforming processes
- procurement
- communication
- service design

According to the action plan, the main objectives of the D9 team have been as follows:

- 1 creating as widely as possible a foundation for a customer-oriented development culture which takes the potential of new technologies into account in various central government agencies and institutions.
- 2 creating the prerequisites for a leap in productivity under the Government Programme by influencing the development of central government operational processes and working methods through practical experience in various administrative sectors.
- 3 promoting the implementation of good digital principles in all digital development in both central government and the entire public sector.
- 4 supporting public administration organisations in carrying out new digital projects following customers' life paths which typically cross sectoral boundaries (e.g. Describing life paths, identifying ecosystems which follow through the life paths, assessing their feasibility, including finding the right owners for projects and their outputs).
- 5 creating every six months a snapshot of the implementation of digital principles in so-called spearhead projects.

The following goal has served as the D9 team vision: "By the end of 2018, there have been verifiable changes to methods of operation which lead to customer satisfaction which increases the productivity of the operations. "

1.2 External evaluation priorities and frame of reference

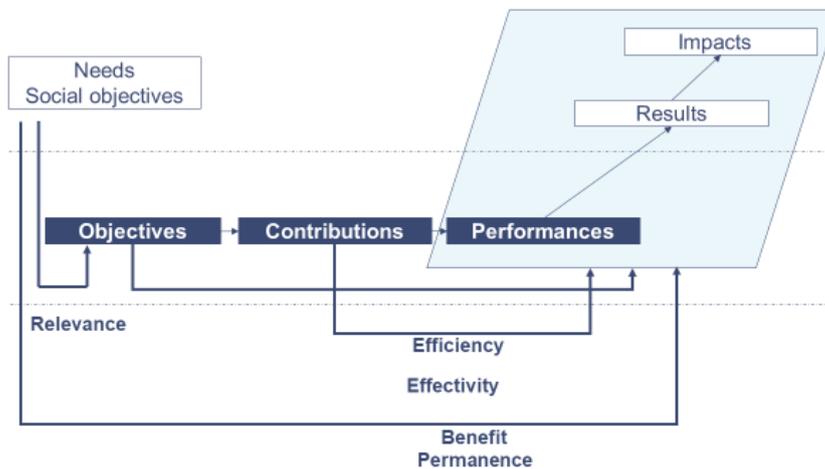
KPMG Oy Ab has been in charge of this external evaluation. The evaluation was carried out between November 2017 and March 2018. The aim of the external evaluation was to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the D9 team activities. The main priorities of the evaluation have been the following:

- Target-setting, planning and management of the D9 team activities
- D9 team organisation and resources
- D9 team operational actions
- D9 team results and impacts

The key priorities of the evaluation mentioned above have been determined using the frame of reference for the evaluation. The evaluation frame of reference is illustrated in the figure below. As for the frame of reference and the external D9 evaluation, it must be noted that the collection of evaluation material for the effectiveness and permanent

benefits has been challenging for two reasons. Firstly, at the time of the evaluation, the operational actions of the D9 team had only been ongoing for a short time, which reduces the possibility of implementing more extensive impact evaluations. In practice, the operational action of the D9 team has only been ongoing since March 2017. On the other hand, the D9 team operations have in many ways targeted customer interface development projects for which it has not yet been possible to confirm the evaluation of the permanence of the results.

Figure 1: Frame of reference of external evaluation



1.3 Description of the evaluation material

The material for the external evaluation consisted of two main sources.

The first and most important source consisted of the partially structured theme interviews conducted in connection with the evaluation. Evaluation interviews were grouped into three target groups based on the principles of multiple party evaluation. D9 team customers, D9 team personnel as well as key stakeholder operators served as target groups for the interviews. A total of 31 interviews were carried out, 12 of which were conducted with D9 team customers, 8 with individuals considered as stakeholders, and 11 with D9 personnel experts. Representatives of the Ministry of Finance and other organisations in charge of features such as guidance related to substance or D9 team target-setting were considered stakeholders.

For all interviewed groups, the same interview logic was followed: the views of various operators were collected in terms of key external priorities for the evaluation. The logic of the multiple party evaluation is outlined in the figure below.

Figure 2: Logic of the multiple party evaluation

Another source of material consisted of key document material on the operation of the D9 team and on planning their operation. Features such as the document on the decision to determine the team operations, the action plan, activity reports, the Digikiri report and other materials submitted to the evaluators have been included in the key document materials. The materials for the development projects of D9 team customers consulted in the context of the evaluation have also been used as evaluation materials.

2 Evaluation key findings

2.1 Target-setting, planning and management

This chapter examines factors related to the D9 team target-setting, action planning and management. Key evaluation perspectives have included the functionality of the objectives set for the team and the coherence between these objectives and practical activities. This evaluation priority will focus particularly on the views of the stakeholder representatives in charge of planning and monitoring related to the personnel and the activities. Naturally, outlining the operations and target-setting has been more challenging for the customers, since they have mainly observed the activities of the D9 team through an individual development project. In connection with this evaluation theme, the customer perspective examines how the D9 team and its experts have succeeded in launching customer projects.

Personnel

According to personnel views, the D9 team operations and their systematic nature have developed significantly during the period of operation. In the interviews, the systematic nature of the initial phase of the operations was described as challenging in many ways, since the team or its individual members had not yet formed a clear image of the customer interface and customer needs. In practice, based on the interviews, this was reflected in the diversity of customer projects, i.e. the team development assistance focused on very different types and levels of public sector development projects. Early-stage development projects were in many ways more operational, and they may not have been considered to be clearly connected to a significant development of public administration or more strategic issues.

In the D9 team activity launch documents, the team was also assigned the support of top digital projects under the Government Programme. According to personnel views, the support of digital top projects has remained on a relatively low level in the operations. The most common reason for this was the challenging timing, since many digital top projects were already at a relatively advanced stage, which is why the D9 team did not consider supportive interventions necessary. The delay in the launch of the D9 team operational actions also had an impact on the possibility of interventions.

However, according to personnel views, it was considered that the D9 team activities were focused during autumn 2017 and that progress had been made in the operational priorities and the systematic nature of the activities. Key factors affecting this have included the organisation of the team, the D9 team becoming better known and a clearer understanding and overall picture of the customer interface and the customers' needs for development.

According to the views, the organisation of the team has manifested particularly in the increase in the systematic nature of the actions, in the increasingly specific roles of experts, and in an ability to better analyse various customer needs in relation to the wider development needs within public administration. For analysis, the D9 team has prepared analytical criteria for internal use. They can be used to better determine identified customer needs. With the analysis criteria, the D9 team operation and development assistance can be targeted to development projects with a greater impact. A customer map (double dichotomy) prepared by the D9 team and submitted evaluators, which analyses existing and completed customer projects clearly with the aid of different dimensions, also serves an example of this. The key review dimensions of the analysis include the operational and strategic nature of the customer project and targeting the development activities (internal to the customer vs. cross-administrative).

According to personnel views, the management of the D9 team operations has been successful. Based on the personnel interviews, the good quality of the operations management is reflected in the fact that operations and the operating culture have complied with values mentioned in the planning and establishment documents for the activities of the D9 team. In particular, core values have included customer direction and customer orientation as well as maintaining a spirit or a culture of experimentation. According to the personnel views, team leadership and its operations have followed a determined action plan. However, opportunities to be reactive and customer-directed have also been available.

In the activities and the management of activities, it has also been highlighted that the customer interface aims to obtain as many concrete results as possible instead of simply talking about things or making plans. The agility of the activities, the customer direction and the culture of development through experiments are also reflected in the personnel views in the team's internal operating culture.

According to the views, an operating culture emphasising creativity and courage has been formed in the team. The culture has been affected by enabling leadership, a low-level organisation, and also the small scale of the operations and their agility. In several interviews, the operations and the operating culture of the D9 team were described as having very much a start-up spirit in a positive sense.

Stakeholders

According to the views of stakeholders, the D9 team operations have successfully met the expectations set for them. The objectives of the operations were determined in the D9 team establishment document. According to the stakeholder operators preparing for the operations, the establishment document and its content were purposefully left very broad, since the scope of the target-setting was intended to allow a rapid launch of the operations of an experimental team. The establishment document and the objectives set in it were described as enabling, and the aim of the content was to decrease the risks of the operations (providing guidelines) rather than to set clear, detailed objectives for the operations.

According to the views, the D9 team operations have also been relatively self-directed. Instead of a traditional steering group function, the D9 team activities have been

monitored through a separate monitoring group, which, however, has not attempted to interfere in the team's operative activities or operational management. In part, the aim of this arrangement was also to ensure the experimental activities of the D9 team and the freedom of operating in the promotion of digitalisation in public administration.

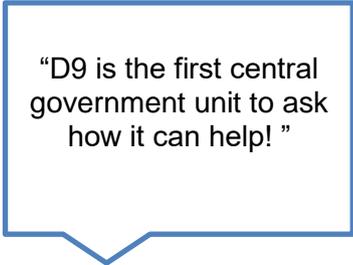
In connection with drawing up the establishment plans, an option was also considered: the D9 team would be given more opportunities (authority) to become involved in the digitalisation projects of individual agencies, institutions and ministries or their contents. However, this idea was rejected, since it was estimated it might impair the team's operating possibilities in the customer interface. When assessed retrospectively, stakeholder operators considered this a good and justified solution.

According to the stakeholder operators' views, the operations of the D9 team have been well managed, and after the initial phase, they were regarded as targeting the right kinds of development needs and development projects. Although the launch of the D9 team operations was delayed compared to the original plans, it was considered that the team had achieved very good visibility and become very well known among central government and other public administration operators. According to the views, the contribution of the senior management of the State Treasury in the initial stage and the active operations and strong visibility of the D9 team have served as good catalysts for increasing the visibility of their operations and making the team better known.

Customers

From the perspective of the customer interface, the systematic nature and management of the operations were naturally manifested in a slightly different way compared to the views of the personnel and the stakeholders. In D9 team customer interviews conducted in connection with the evaluation, an attempt was made to approach the evaluation theme using two perspectives. The first examination perspective attempted to outline how and where the customer organisation had heard of the D9 team services or contacted the D9 experts. The other examination perspective attempted to outline how and how quickly the D9 team and the customer organisation had reached an agreement on the need for development and on the services supporting this need. Customers' perspectives on the results and effects of the operations will be discussed later in this evaluation report.

The operations of the D9 team and the acquisition of customers have been strongly based on proactive work, and most customer contacts were made thanks to the proactive approach of the D9 team experts. In several customer interviews conducted in connection with the evaluation, the proactive and customer-oriented approach was brought up as a strength of the D9 team operations, as it is very different from the traditional cooperation between public sector operators and different administrative sectors.



“D9 is the first central government unit to ask how it can help!”

In five of the customer cases discussed in connection with the evaluation, the person responsible for the development project of the customer organisation had received information about D9 team activities either directly or indirectly at different presentation

events. The customer interviews emphasised that the D9 team has been successful at distributing information on its services in a very systematic and structured manner, and at presenting its service offering in such a way that it has quickly attracted the attention of customer organisations.

According to the customers' views, the D9 team and its experts have also been successful at organising and carrying out the meetings related to the detailed determination of the service needs after the contacts made at the initial stage. According to customer views, their needs for assistance and the determination between the D9 team development services and expertise have mainly been addressed quickly and efficiently. Based on the interviews, it has naturally been necessary to place limitations on the needs and the services, but based on customer views, the identification of needs and responding to them has been implemented efficiently and systematically by the D9 team.

2.2 D9 team organisation and resources

This chapter examines the organisation and resources of the D9 team. Key evaluation perspectives have included the number of resources available in relation to individual customer projects and customer needs. The organisation of the activities has also been examined from the perspective of the personnel. In this case, the purpose has been to determine whether significant development needs are related to the organisation and resourcing. Stakeholder views were not dealt with in connection with this evaluation theme, since the freedom of operation given to the D9 team has been associated to the D9 team's ability to determine its organisation and the use of its resources independently within its operating budget. In practice, the participants in the stakeholder interviews did not provide views on the organisation of the activities or the use of resources or mention identified challenges related to these subjects.

Customers

Based on customer interviews carried out in connection with the evaluation, the organisation and resourcing of the D9 team have been appropriate, and the customer interviews did not bring up any significant deficiencies. In the customer interviews, the activity of the D9 team experts was described as agile, flexible and competent. Based on customer interviews, agility and flexibility have been particularly manifested in the fact that the D9 team experts have been very flexibly involved in individual development projects and in many ways even exceeded their service commitment to customers.

According to the views, there has been a sufficient amount of expert resources available individual development projects. Resources clearly in charge of project management have been determined in the customer interface. They have often also served as the resource in

“Working with the D9 team was seamless and easy. It was excellent to have such an IN-HOUSE unit dealing with concrete cases and helping us out.”

charge of the project's substance. Good cooperation, flexibility and the ease and simplicity of operations are key words that many customers use to describe the collaboration with the D9 team. In the initial stages, only a few customer projects involved challenges related to resourcing, but the challenges have been overcome by means of good cooperation.

From the customer perspective, the ease and effortlessness of using the services have also been increased by the D9 team operating practices. Access to services has been mainly free of charge for customer organisations, which is considered to have lowered the threshold for using the services. Customer interviews brought up that although similar expert services were also available in the private market, the advantage of the In-House function is its affordability and effortlessness. The reference to effortlessness was made in terms of the challenging nature of public procurement procedures related to the use of private operators.

From the customer perspective, the flexible use of private operators enabled by the D9 team services has been another significant factor related to resourcing. The D9 team has had at its disposal the resources that allow the team to increase its service resources per customer through private expert services subject to separate invitations to tender. From the customer perspective, this type of service type, i.e. a type of intermediary organisation model, has been viewed as a good practice.

“From the point of view of the agency, the operation of the D9 team has been excellent and extremely customer-oriented. The agility and customer-oriented nature as well as the skills exhibited in their

According to the customers' views, it has been possible to rely more on the skills and work quality of external service providers via the intermediary of the D9 team, since D9 team experts have also served as quality assurance roles and supervisors.

According to customer views, it is easier to take on board external services received through such intermediary functions, since customers themselves may not have sufficient skills or time to evaluate the external service providers within the framework of public procurement procedures.

Personnel

According to personnel views, the organisation of the D9 team and the available resources have mainly worked well. The development of the operations from the early stages of the team, and the increasing demand for services related to an increasing awareness of the team have, however, increased the need for re-organisation of the operations and the use of resources.

The personnel views are very consistent in terms of the necessary development policies. Service demand by customers and the deliberate targeting of services to wider strategic development projects have created the need for both increasing and diversifying the existing resources and the competence base.

In terms of individual service areas, particularly the demand for service design by customers has increased, and according to the views, projects related to service design would be available to a greater extent than there are available resources. In January 2018, three new service design experts were hired in the D9 team. Thanks to them, we have been able to partially respond to the increasing demand. The focus on wider and

more strategic development projects has brought up needs to increase either the team's own personnel or, on the other hand, to use external expert resources. These competencies will be discussed in more detail later in this evaluation report.

According to personnel views, the increase in the volume of operations and, on the other hand, the development and refocusing of activities have led to a need to develop the organisation of activities. According to the information provided to the evaluators, development measures have partly already been taken, since the D9 team customer projects are now largely based on teamwork by two to three people. This measure aims to improve the efficiency of resource management, to increase the skills related to individual customer projects and to reduce security risks related to the operational reliability of projects.

According to personnel views, the D9 team organisation should be developed further in spite of the measures taken. The need to develop project management practices and roles related to project management were mentioned as key needs for development. It was considered a particularly problematic feature of customer projects that in many cases the substance expert involved in the customer project also serves as the project manager responsible for the customer.

It is considered that this excessively increases the workload of individual experts, and it also brings out the challenges of scoping the work. As an example of this, it was pointed out that in several projects, the customer's personal ownership of the development project and its realisation has been rather poor. According to the views, this often leads to an attempt to place the global responsibility for the development project on the D9 team of experts. In such cases in particular, the role of project management and the associated Project Manager is deemed necessary.

Although the demand for services produced by the D9 team has increased and the focus of the services has partly shifted towards more strategic development projects, the personnel does not consider that there is a need for extensive additional resourcing for the D9 team operations. Due to the values of the operations and the maintenance of the operating culture, it is not considered suitable to excessively increase the resources, since it may contribute to increased team hierarchy and reduce operational agility and the experimentally oriented operating culture. According to the views, minor additional resourcing and preserving or increasing appropriations for external purchasing services can effectively meet the demand for services without compromising the team's operating culture.

2.3 D9 team operational actions

This chapter examines the operational actions of the D9 team in the customer interface. The key evaluation perspectives have included the customer orientation of the operations, the functionality of the methods used in customer projects as well as the expertise of D9 team experts in relation to customer needs. The learning perspective has also been examined more broadly with the aim of bringing out competence areas on which the D9 team operations could focus in the future. In the personnel stakeholder

evaluation interviews, information on whether the D9 team measures targeted the appropriate customer projects or customer projects with the greatest impact potential was also gathered under the theme of the evaluation of operational activities.

Customers

The customer interviews conducted in connection with the evaluation clearly gave a general impression of a very positive attitude towards the D9 working methods, procedures and skills on the part of customers. A clear distinction between various types of projects cannot be detected. Instead, the D9 team services and assistance have been proven good in both the most operative and the most strategic development projects.

The customer interviews very strongly pointed out that the D9 team operations and methods have satisfied customer needs, and the project-specific conception of the D9 team service commitment, formed at an initial stage, has been met well from the customers' perspective. Evaluation interviews clearly brought up the fact that the key operational and service values manifested in the direction of customers have particularly included a high level of expertise, customer orientation, flexibility, ease of cooperation and effortlessness.

The working methods and procedures used by the D9 team received plenty of praise in the customer interviews. The Design Sprint method used in operational development projects in particular (in some cases in strategic ones as well), has been considered a very good method. According to customer views, it has been possible to use the method to promote the content of development projects in a very quick and agile way and to determine the orientation and goals of development projects.

The customers having used the method particularly emphasised the D9 team experts' facilitation skills in their views. By means of these skills, it has been possible to draw a clear path from multifaceted and complex development challenges for developing the operations. A good indication of the functionality of the Design Sprint method is the fact that several D9 team customer organisations have attempted to copy the procedure and draw on it independently in other internal development projects of the organisation.

The D9 team experts' level of skills was considered very high from the perspective of customers. D9 team of experts' skills in digitalisation, implementation of development projects, facilitation and service design were considered good.

During the evaluation interviews, no challenges related to substantive issues were brought to light. It was considered that D9 team experts had very quickly adopted adequate substance skills in customer projects, clearly identified development needs and made use of experiences in solving challenges in other administrative branches.

"We cannot but admire the professional skills used to capture the most essential issues in a very broad and incoherent workshop conversation for further work in the second and third workshop."

"The D9 specialists' expertise has been on a very good level in service design and service planning."

"We want to continue the implementation of Design Sprints with D9 in terms of other themes as well."

Based on the evaluation interviews, the division of labour between customers and the D9 team in terms of skills appeared to have been made successfully and in good agreement. By means of D9 team operational actions and methods, various customers have been able to purposefully connect the digitalisation skills received from the outside to the substance expertise of agencies and institutions in different administrative sectors.

In connection with the evaluation interviews, customers were asked at the end of the evaluation theme whether they intended to use the D9 team services and expertise in the future as well. It is noteworthy that none of the customers said that they were not willing or planning to use D9 team services in the future. Approximately half of the customers directly brought up that they had already planned to use D9 team services for further working on their own development project or for assistance in the other development projects within the organisation.

Personnel

In the personnel interviews conducted in connection with the evaluation, it was brought up that the D9 team and its individual experts have internally considered the appropriateness and the competence profiles required for the customer interface of their own activities to a great extent. It is considered that the D9 team activities are currently focused on development projects that are more operational and more strategic in nature. Even though an effort has been made to focus increasingly on the strategic projects of customer organisations or on cross-administrative strategic projects, the future development of activities requires a focus according to different views.

According to the views, the focus could be implemented, for instance, by continuing to work in many different administrative sectors (and between administrative sectors), but with an increasing focus on customer projects identified as exclusively strategic development projects. Another development idea brought up in the evaluation interviews was related to the focus of the operations so that in the future, the activities would only focus on activities in a few selected administrative sectors, on both an operational and a strategic level. As an example of this, among others, the SOTE sector was brought up. Due to the change in the operating environment and structures, this sector has plenty of needs for development. The third option brought out in personnel discussions relates to the development of the D9 team role as part of the administrative sector's joint reflection on how to purposefully organise the division of labour between the various agencies and units to support the central government's digitalisation developments. The D9 team operations have proven that there are needs for both operative and strategic development within the central government. The D9 team's strengths clearly lie in contributing to more strategic development projects and in supporting their activities. One of the alternatives brought up for the distribution of roles and responsibilities could be to place the D9 team in charge of supporting more strategic development projects in the future and, similarly, to place the Population Register Centre's Digituki function in charge of the most operational development needs.

It was considered a challenge of strategic projects that focusing on them requires more extensive substance skills in the administrative sector and a closer commitment to individual projects. It has been observed even in the current operational and strategic projects that customers had hoped the D9 team would make a greater contribution to the broader implementation of the results and outcomes of development projects. Examples

of this include wishes that change management and change communication processes be implemented in the target organisation. In these types of service, it is considered a challenge that they inevitably take us very deep within the customer organisation's internal operational activities. The time spent on these activities does, of course, decrease the time spent on other customer projects, and it can reduce the role of external experts in the case of individual customers or administrative sectors.

According to personnel views, the D9 team competence areas and strengths are currently divided into service design, experimental development, project and change support as well as architectural and technical support. Based on the experiences gained from the customer interface, views on competence areas which should be strengthened or deepened in the future emerged in personnel interviews. Extending and deepening architectural and technological skills was considered one of these areas. Currently, the D9 team has operated on the level of the entire central government as a coordinator and facilitator of a forum focusing on blockchain technology and its exploitation. According to the views, other developments in digital technology, such as the use of analytics and artificial intelligence, may be areas for whose coordination the D9 team could be responsible in the public sector.

In the light of the experiences acquired from the customer interface, there is also plenty of need for stronger competences in business management and strategic management, analytical competence, user experience planning and programming expertise. According to the views, the D9 team should have at least some resources of its own in the future for providing services related to these competence areas. However, it is not considered that a very extensive reinforcement of the competence field is appropriate. Instead, it is also considered important that in the future, the D9 team should have the funds to purchase the required expertise and skills from external service providers to be made available to customer organisations.

In terms of the methods used, no significant development policies emerged in the personnel interviews. It was stated that the current methods were effective solutions with which it has been possible to successfully complete current, short-term customer projects. However, it was brought out in the personnel views that the potential focusing of the operations or an extension of the competences will require a clearer conceptualisation of service offering in the future. A more specific and better conceptualisation will ensure that the public administration customers understand more clearly the focal points for the D9 team activities, the services and the team's role in the development work. This will also help customers to better outline their own role in development projects and to prepare internally for a better management and completion of development projects as well as for the implementation and practical use of results.

Stakeholders

In the stakeholder interviews conducted in connection with the evaluation, the operational actions of the D9 team were generally considered very successful. The fixed-term trial was considered effective, and a clear need for continuing the operations was also seen, since the promotion of digitalisation and the development of services based on situations in life are key development trends for public administration.

In stakeholder discussions, views on the role of the D9 team were largely related to restructuring the agencies in the administrative branch of the Ministry of Finance. The purpose of the restructuring of agencies is to combine the tasks of the local register offices, the Population Register Centre and the Development and Steering Unit for local register offices under the Regional State Administrative Agency for Eastern Finland from the beginning of the year 2020. The task of the newly established 'Agency for Digitalisation' is to promote client-oriented digitalisation in society, and to produce services based on situations in life. If completed, the Agency's personnel would total approx. 800 employees.

In connection with the restructuring of agencies, the future roles of various operators and effort sharing were considered more broadly in the stakeholder discussions. Key themes included the roles of different operators in the management of digitalisation and in the development of administration. As for the D9 team's current job description, the discussions on the D9 team powers and mandate issues held at the team planning stage were resumed. At present, the D9 team role does not contain the competence to intervene directly in the digitalisation development of individual public administration organisations or in the goals of individual projects. Instead, the operations have been purely customer-oriented and customer-directed.

According to some views, it should be considered in terms of the D9 team whether the operation of the team has been too customer-oriented. Excessive customer orientation was considered to have decreased the opportunities to steer the operation of customer organisations in the right direction by means other than views and communication. However, as a counter-argument, the interviews revealed views of how the extension of competences may significantly weaken the customers' willingness to take advantage of D9 team expertise and services.

2.4 D9 team results and impacts

This chapter examines the results of the D9 team and their effects in the customer interface. As for results and impacts, it should be noted that the D9 team has been in operation for a relatively short time, and results and impacts will only be visible in customer organisations after a longer period of time. For this reason, an attempt has been made in the evaluation interviews to focus in particular on the immediate customer benefit delivered by the D9 team, and also to identify more extensive development paths increasing productivity and effectiveness which have been targeted by D9 team services. In connection with the evaluation interviews, various target groups were also asked for views on how the usefulness and effectiveness of the operations of the D9 team in support of the central government digitalisation could be improved and rendered more efficient.

Customers

The D9 team customers taking part in the evaluation interviews had extremely positive views on the added value and benefits of the operations. From the perspective of customers, the operations and services of the D9 have had a significant impact on the success of individual development projects and their performance improvements. The concrete benefits of the services naturally vary by project and by customer.

“D9 is an interpreter for digitalisation which helps public administration units render digitalisation

Based on customer interviews, however, it can be summarised that the main results of the activities are reflected in the customer interface particularly in terms of clarifying development projects, increasing methodicalness and the improving the quality of development projects. From the perspective of development projects, one of the key benefits of the D9 team activities is that according to estimations made, the customers have been able to improve the content of the development projects and to render the organisation and progress of projects more effective by using the services. In a few interviews, it was also brought up that the use of the D9 team competences has increased the credibility of the development project within the organisation and has particularly affected the commitment of the organisation's management to the project.

The proven improvement of quality in development projects has been manifested in the projects in two ways. Firstly, it is considered that the D9 team expertise has affected the content of the development projects and, in many cases, opened the customer organisation's eyes to a completely new way of thinking. A key change in the way of thinking is particularly represented by the customer orientation in service design, the involvement of customers, and a more general understanding of digitalisation as the development of the change in the operations where technology is only a tool for the implementation of the change. These observations are important, since they can justifiably be considered to also lead to a greater impact over time. In two customer projects, the project managers also stated directly that the implementation of the development project would not have been possible without the D9 team contribution.

On the other hand, according to the views, D9 team services and an intervention by its experts have also freed up the resources of customers' own experts so that it has been possible to focus more effectively on the content of the work in the implementation of the development project. These results are particularly highlighted in the most strategic development projects using the Design Sprint method.

Based on customer interviews, it can also be noted that the larger-scale impacts of individual development projects have also accumulated within some organisations. According to D9 customers, this is manifested in practice in the fact that their understanding of digitalisation, service design, customer involvement and agile experiments and methods has increased. In addition to the increase in individual experts' competence, a more extensive distribution of competence could be detected in connection with the evaluation interviews. The development ideas and views related to digitalisation have been reinforced and spread more widely in individual target organisations, and an attempt has been made to utilise the procedures and methods of operation used by the D9 team actively in other projects as well.

In many ways, the D9 team is perceived as a 'breath of fresh air' in the development of central government. According to customer views, the customer orientation, the operating methods and the flexibility and agility of the operations, when connected to good expertise, have led to good prerequisites for concrete changes. The D9 team's neutral role and a kind of distance from the conflicts of interest within and between different administrative sectors was considered valuable, and it has increased trust between the operators. Traditionally, there have been significant challenges particularly in development projects across the boundaries of different administrative sectors, and it has been considered that the D9 team's impartiality and its position as an outsider have decreased such challenges.

"In central government, making changes across administrative boundaries is a great challenge, and they need so-called objective actors, such as D9."

The customers' wishes and views on the future roles and priorities for the D9 team will vary. The current 'catalyst role', where the D9 team operations enhance the implementation and content of individual development projects, is still considered necessary, and it is hoped it will also continue in the future. On the other hand, the D9 team and its expertise are considered to have more extensive possibilities to have an impact in the development of digitalisation in central government. According to the views, the D9 team's current operations have demonstrated that in addition to operational assistance, the team also has sufficient skills for more extensive strategic development assistance.

"The D9 team operations conveyed a genuine interest in the development of digitalisation and an

Therefore the D9 team is believed to be able to increasingly serve as a team maintaining and facilitating the strategic digitalisation development of the central government and the related discussion in the future. However, according to the views, the operations would require more extensive networking with industry researchers, research institutions and decision-makers, as well as resources to act as a type of intermediary organisation.

The role of a type of networking entity is also highlighted in views where it was hoped that the D9 team could make a greater contribution to the increase of cooperation between different administrative sectors. Collaboration between administrative sectors, and the identification of good practices and common challenges, are in many ways considered difficult to carry out alongside the administrative sectors' own activities. However, it is considered that there is a need for this type of activity in terms of digitalisation development, and it is hoped that the D9 team will play a more visible role in this regard. An individual idea on development also considered whether the D9 team could produce a digitalisation manual for central government and more widely for the public sector. The manual could be used to distribute information on what digitalisation means on a general level and in public administration and what is not included in it.

Personnel

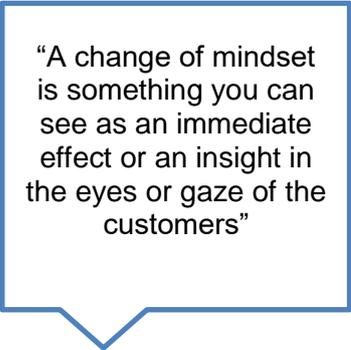
The D9 team personnel's estimates on the benefits achieved in the customer organisations correlate well with the factors brought up by the customers. Generally, personnel representatives also acknowledged that a broader impact cannot be assessed

at this stage of the operations. Instead, the resulting benefits are largely manifested in immediate results and impacts.

According to the personnel's own estimates, the D9 team interventions have also increased the effectiveness of projects and improved the quality of the content and implementation. The main focus of the operations has been to create a positive and productive atmosphere in the target projects and to produce concrete results as quickly as possible. According to the views, there has also been success in these terms.

According to the views, the combination of the top-down and bottom-up approaches used are also relevant here. In discussions, this was used to refer to the fact that in many projects, various D9 team experts have not only attempted to simultaneously influence the strategic thinking in the management but also created tangible benefits at the project level. According to the views, an operating model in which an attempt is made to stimulate and engage the management of organisations, and at the same time to produce immediately noticeable, tangible benefits, has been proven to work well.

The key impact detected by the D9 team personnel is related to an increase of understanding in customer organisations as well as a change in the way of thinking. This has particularly been emphasised in highlighting customer orientation and in opening up issues related to it. In many ways, it was found that customer organisations do understand the importance of customer orientation but do not know how it is implemented, or how internalising it must be the starting point for all activities within an organisation.



“A change of mindset is something you can see as an immediate effect or an insight in the eyes or gaze of the customers”

Based on evaluation discussions with the personnel, it can be summarised that the key results and impacts of the D9 team operations have been achieved in the following areas of the customer interface:

- bringing about a change in the way of thinking related to digitalisation in a customer organisation
- prevention of overlapping tasks in digitalisation projects and developing the content of projects
- promoting congruent methods of operation across administrative boundaries and increasing general cross-administrative thinking
- opening up the importance of customer perspective and contents for customers and bringing up various customer paths.

Stakeholders

The views of stakeholders on the results and impacts achieved in the customer interface were insignificant. Stakeholder operators have largely been dependent on information distributed in the monitoring group and on the reports on D9 team activities. This external evaluation has been the first larger-scale report examining the benefits created in the customer interface. The evaluation discussions with stakeholders largely focused on

mapping views on how and in which ways the D9 team activities and skills could be utilised more effectively as part of the digitalising central government.

The current catalyst-type operating model was generally regarded as a good starting point for the future as well to ensure the usefulness and effectiveness of the operations. This was considered to be justified by the fact that the needs related to understanding and implementing digitalisation still exist on a large scale, and the support of implementation in various administrative sectors should continue.

However, it was considered that the D9 team expertise and accumulated competence capital also have a larger-scale potential for utilisation. The customer interface has allowed the D9 team to form a strong view and situational picture of the needs and the development of digitalisation in public administration. According to the views, the accumulated and accumulating experience could allow the D9 team to also act in an expert and evaluator role for drafting more strategic policies for central government. In practice, this was used to refer to features such as the new government programme as well as the strategies of individual administrative sectors (for instance, the Group strategy in the administrative sector of the Ministry of Transport and Communications).

In addition, the D9 team competence and expertise could be used to implement the strategies and to allocate the associated funding. In practice, this was used to refer to work which could be used as a basis for a more effective evaluation of the allocation and impact of investments related to digitalisation projects.

3 Key conclusions of the evaluation

- **Conclusion 1:** The establishment of the Digitalisation Support unit or the D9 team has been a good and successful experiment. There has been a clear and identifiable need for services produced by the D9 team. The team's activities have been able to respond well to the operational and strategic development needs occurring within central government and other public administration organisations.
- **Conclusion 2:** The D9 team target-setting has been broad, and during its period of operation, the D9 team has not been able to meet all the objectives presented in the establishment document. On the other hand, the extent of target-setting was purpose-oriented, because it aimed to ensure the rapid deployment of experimental activities and also the operational agility and responsiveness of these activities. However, it can be stated that the D9 team has met well the objectives set for its operating period. The operation of the D9 team has corresponded with the objectives set out in the action plan. The D9 team operations have been particularly successful in helping public administration organisations in the implementation of new digital projects.
- **Conclusion 3:** The D9 team has been able to develop and focus its operations during its operating period. The focus of the operations has been moved towards more strategic development projects. This has been supported by criteria established for customer project analysis, the experience accumulated from the customer interface and also by an increased awareness of the D9 team activities. Increased awareness of the activities has allowed the D9 team to select more strategic development targets and projects with a greater impact.
- **Conclusion 4:** The D9 team leadership and operating culture have supported it in meeting its objectives. In particular, core values have included customer direction and customer orientation as well as maintaining a spirit or a culture of experimentation. In the activities and the management of activities, it has been highlighted that the customer interface has aimed to obtain as many concrete results as possible instead of simply talking about things or making plans.
- **Conclusion 5:** The D9 team organisation and allocation of resources have responded well to its operational needs. According to the evaluation, the available resources have been well in line with the existing needs. Giving opportunities to the D9 team to acquire external expertise in different projects has proven to be a good practice, since it has increased the flexibility of service resources and expanded the competence base for the team services.
- **Conclusion 6:** The D9 team services have been effective in the most operational and the most strategic development projects. The key operational and service values geared towards customers have particularly included a high level of expertise, customer orientation, flexibility, ease of cooperation and effortlessness. The D9 team experts' level of skills has been considered very high. The competence related to the completion of digitalisation and development projects

has been very good from the customer perspective, and challenges related to substantive competence have not emerged.

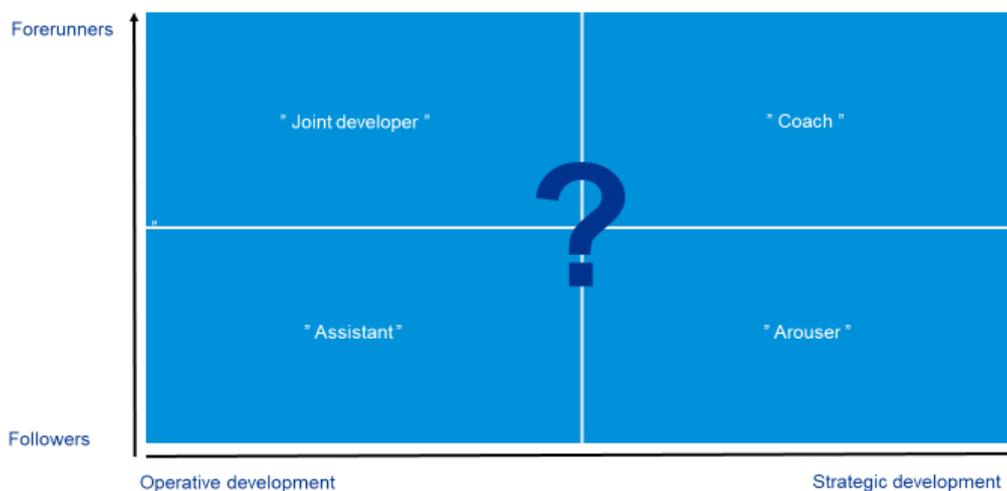
- **Conclusion 7:** The operations and services of the D9 team have had a significant impact on the launch of individual development projects and the improvement of the possibilities to implement them. In the customer interface, the main results of the operations are manifested in the clarification of the activities, in their increasingly systematic nature and in the improved quality of the content of development projects. The D9 team activities have not only improved the content of customer projects but also rendered their organisation and progress more effective.
- **Conclusion 8:** The D9 team impact cannot be reliably assessed yet. In spite of the short operating period, the D9 team can be considered to have brought about a change in the methods of operation and the way of thinking of their customers. It can be assumed that these changes will result in larger-scale impacts over time. Key changes detected in customers have included reinforced ideas of development and views related to digitalisation, an increased understanding of customer orientation and the implementation of new methods. In multiple organisations, an attempt has been made to utilise methods used by the D9 team in other development projects as well.

4 Key recommendations in the evaluation

- **Recommendation for measures 1:** The activities of the Digitalisation Support unit or the D9 team should be continued after the end of the fixed-term period of operation. The following findings and conclusions of the evaluation may be presented as justifications for this.
 1. There has been a clear demand for D9 team operations and services in central government and elsewhere in public administration, and such demand will also exist in the future.
 2. In a relatively short period of time, the D9 team has been able to raise awareness of its activities and to consolidate its position as part of the development of public administration.
 3. The D9 team activity has extensively covered a wide range of different development projects and customer relationships in various administrative branches.
 4. With its competence and methods of operation, the D9 team has managed to produce significant added value for its customers in operational and strategic development projects alike.
- **Recommendation for measures 2:** The key values of the D9 team operations and operating culture should also be upheld in the future, and it should be ensured that the team's activities continue to have a clear freedom of action without too many detailed objectives to steer its operations. The strength of the D9 team has been based on self-steering, an agile operating culture which is also oriented towards experimentation and development, and a strong focus on customers. The D9 team's impartiality and its status as an outsider can be considered a strength of the operations, particularly in development projects increasing cross-administrative approaches, and the existence of these factors must also be ensured in the future.
- **Recommendation for measures 3:** In the future, the operations of the D9 team should also focus on more strategic development projects according to the choices that have already been made. Projects promoting cross-administrative cooperation which significantly contribute to experiences of people, companies and communities in dealing with public administration, and which decrease the administrative burden of various target groups, may particularly be considered more strategic development projects. Making more strategic project selections must not, however, impair the D9 team's ability to provide concrete assistance for more operational development needs, since they are also included in development projects classified as strategic. One of the key strengths and impacts in the D9 team operations has been the fact that it has been able to implement changes to methods of operation in target organisations (top-down, management coaching), and to simultaneously produce concrete results (bottom-up, operational support). One alternative way to view the development needs in central government is shown below. In the figure below, central government organisations can be divided into 'followers' and 'forerunners' in the development

of digitalisation along the y-axis. Similarly, the x-axis describes the development needs of central government organisations from the perspective of social impact. The axis is divided into operative and strategic development needs. Among the various roles included in the double dichotomy, the natural D9 team roles consist of 'arouser' and 'coach'.

Figure 3: Analysis field related to future D9 team role and focus



- Recommendation for measures 4:** The D9 team should further develop project management tools, its project management practices and its resources for project management. In practice, a possible focus on more strategic development projects means that customer projects will last longer and will be more complex. The implementation of longer and more complex customer projects requires stronger resourcing and division of labour across various projects. Currently, a key expectation for D9 team activities is an increased need for project manager level expertise in the future. In future, the D9 team operations budgeting should take into account the potential needs to recruit a larger number of project managers.
- Recommendation for measures 5:** The effectiveness of the D9 team operations may be increased by allocating more resources to the implementation of the results and outputs of development projects and to services in support of changes and change communication which are required as methods of operation change. However, it is not appropriate to increase the D9 team resources in these services. Instead, it should be possible to produce these services by means of an external partnership network and the appropriations allocated to them. However, it is recommended that these types of in-depth services be used only in the most

important strategic customer projects with the greatest potential for impact. First and foremost, customer organisations should be responsible for the implementation.