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2015

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Suggested citation:

Sustar, Helena (2015) The immigrant service journey as an eye-opener in the complex governmental systems. In: Relating Systems Thinking and Design (RSD4) 2015 Symposium, 1-3 Sep 2015, Banff, Canada. Available at <http://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/2040/>

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The Immigrant Service Journey as an Eye-Opener in the Complex Governmental Systems

Abstract

This paper focuses on implementing human centred design in the Finnish siloes structured governmental immigrant system by adopting service design approach to foster human scale view. The research adopted customer service journey as a way to diagnose current Finnish governmental immigration system as a part of the on-going project of developing web-based platform. Furthermore, it attempted to establish the common language between different governmental system levels and immigrant service networks and with visualisation aimed to improve perception of entire immigrant system. Preliminary results reveal that is the customer service journey very valuable tool to indicate system complexity, neglection of *individual's needs and system fragmentation*.

Introduction

When immigrant enters to country has to deal with the complex system of entry services delivered via five different ministries and its service organisations (for example, Ministry of the Interior, Migration office) alongside other independent institutions (Maistraatti) (European Migration Network, 2014). Each of these institutions uses different language of legislations, policies and actions. Finnish governmental immigrant system is siloes organised according to matters concerning immigration and the responsible authorities that manage and make decisions for example, residence permit (Finnish Immigration Service, 2015). Individual immigrant customer journey spans across different ministerial responsibilities, organisational boundaries and channels, which from customer perspective often cause inefficiencies and breaks in communication, coordination and information sharing (Hyvärinen and Sustar, 2014).

From Service to Systemic Design

Boyer, et.al., (2011, p.19) states that by “expanding our understanding of systemic problems, we can better appreciate the principles that govern them and the risks they pose to society” therefore, to propose service design intervention it was necessary to consider an organisational design and due to currently incising immigrant issues in Europe also social transformation (Jones, 2014). The holistic understanding of service systems, the service process-nature and the human perspective in service development are not enough. It is necessary to understand the system rather than institutions and siloes to get better knowledge of user needs, reducing unintended consequences, and make more holistic decisions (Boyer, et.al., 2011, p.16). Not many approaches exist in systemic design practices when considering governmental systems. Veale (2014) mitigate silos governmental structure by naming and describing them; any other large-scale alternatives do not exist yet. When studying cultural tension author uses different typologies while observing these siloes.

Jones (2014) and Darzentas and Darzentas (2014) state the importance of service design in system design from the position of the value (co)-creation for customers and stakeholders. Latter authors state the importance of systemic design in the service design when dealing with complexity and state the need for new method, methodologies and approaches (ibid).

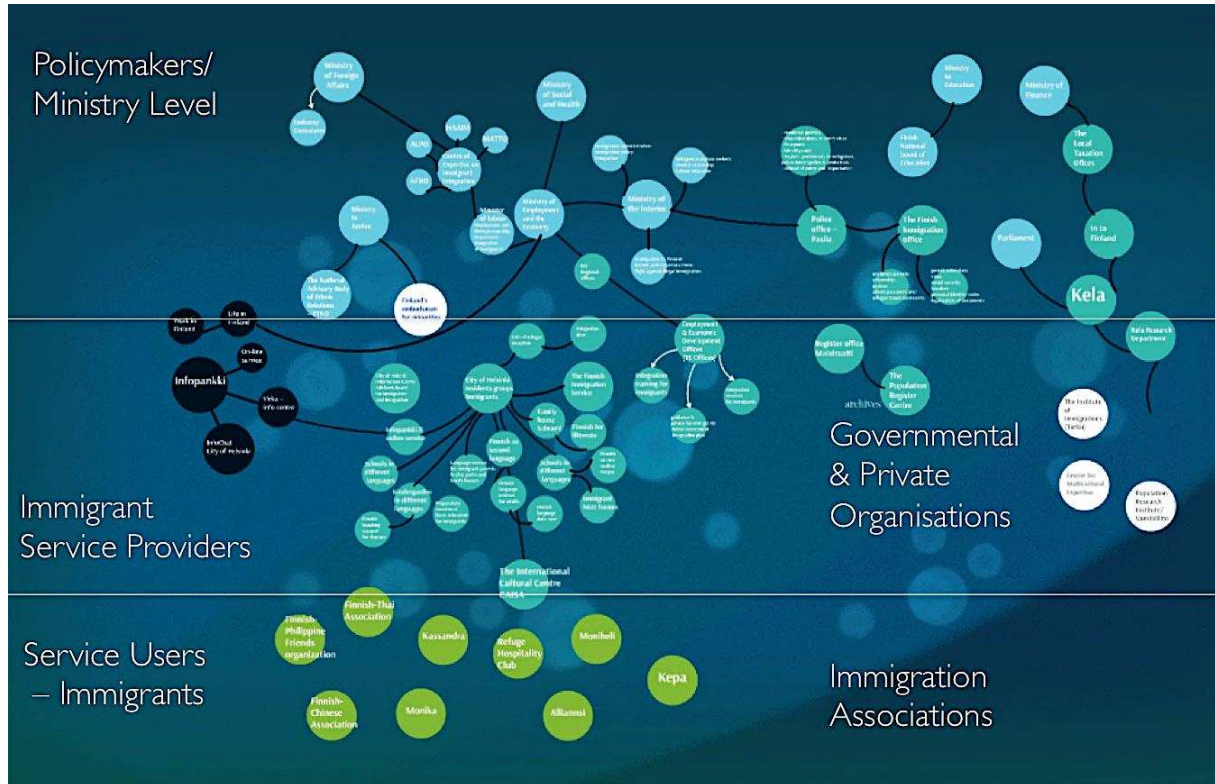


Figure 1. A temporary rich picture of the Finnish immigrant system.

Adopting a systemic design method

To get a holistic understanding of the Finnish governmental immigrant service system a provisional rich picture was designed to map out current policymakers, service providers and immigrant customers (Figure 1). The project aim is to design the online platform, which visualise different customer service journeys based on immigrant origin and ground of moving to country and it will be used by decision makers and policymakers and back and front office workers. To achieve this, a visual approach was used, which established a common language between different immigrant system actors. Based on positive experiences from previous studies (Hyvärinen and Sustar, 2014) customer service journey¹ was implemented when conducting semi-structured interviews (Figure 2) with different immigrant service providers’ employees. Civil servants from the nine different governmental institutions providing immigrant services from six main cities in Finland were interviewed; among others police, registration and migration office workers.

Discussion and Conclusions: “We need a new system”

The preliminary findings indicate that the planned online platform is not necessary the most appropriate solution for the immigrant system complexity. Instead civil servants requested more flexible and functional governmental immigrant system supported by with disruptive technologies on one hand and better communication between different system levels and service networks on other. The visualisation of the individual customer service journey that customer has to undertake indicates immigrant system and services complexity. Then, immigrant matters (housing, education, integration), which are silos orientated are

¹ Immigrant journey is defined as the series of service encounters that customers have with different public.

spanning between different ministry bodies do not necessary focuses on the customer, civil servant or policymaker's needs.

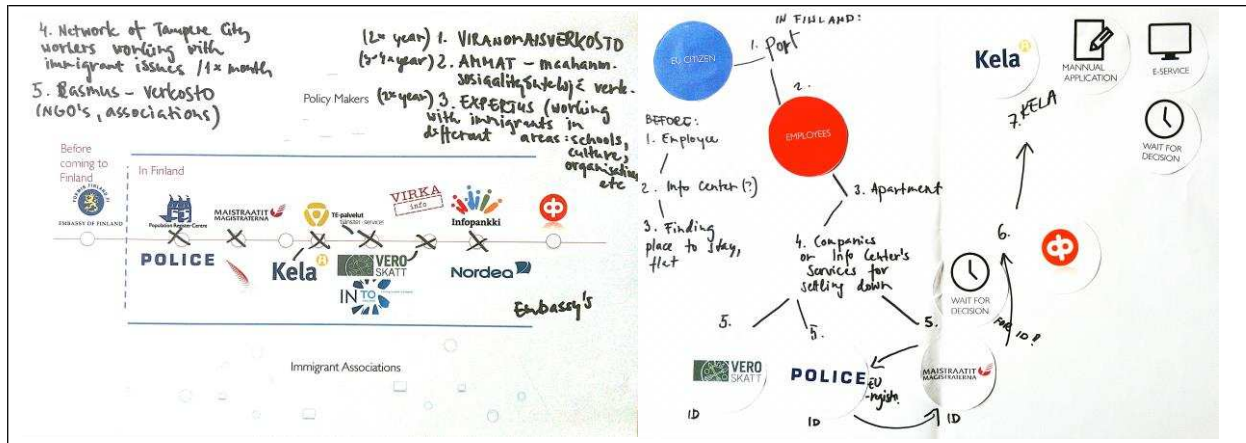


Figure 2. Interview's visual material: Identifying collaboration between different levels of immigrant service actors (left); capturing human scale view by customer service journey (right).

Finally, the customer journey indicates poor and very limited collaboration between different ministries and service providers' organisations and hardly any collaboration with immigrant associations (top-down and bottom-up). In addition, individual journeys also indicate inadequate inter- and cross-organisational collaboration. Consequently, future work will focus on bringing together currently segregated policymakers, immigrant legislations contractors and customers to investigate provisions for a more responsive governmental immigrant system.

Disclaimer

Views and opinions presented in this article are solely the authors and do not represent those of the Ministry for Employment and the Economy.

Acknowledgments

This work would not be possible without the Aalto University and Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration (Ministry for Employment and the Economy) project grants. Thanks to the TEMWISIT project steering group and all participants undertaking the interviews.

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