



Expert support



MINISTRY
OF FINANCE



WHAT? Expert support provided knowledge assistance to digital developers free of charge

In 2021–2022, expert support was organised through a pool of experts, which offered expert assistance to municipalities and government agencies free of charge. The goal was to improve the quality, accessibility and customer-orientation of digital services through co-creation.

The pool included service designers, experts in change management, and usability experts, among others. At first, co-creation was carried out as challenge projects. Later in 2022, it took the form of municipalities' digital roadmap work related to the digital compass.

To determine the need for support, a survey was conducted for municipalities and government agencies. The main support needs highlighted by the survey were related to revising and enhancing operating methods by means of

digitalisation, developing service design and customer-oriented services, and determining the state of existing services and development needs.

The Digital and Population Data Services Agency contributed with experts and service designers from the public sector. The first pilot and test projects for developing the operating model were carried out in 2021, and the following year, five challenge projects were launched based on an open call for applications. The progress of the projects could be followed at open morning coffee sessions for digital developers. In addition to the challenge projects, a digital roadmap was developed for municipalities in cooperation with the Digital and Population Data Services Agency and the Association of Finnish Municipalities.

- Free digital service competence for municipalities and government agencies:
- An expert pool including service designers, experts in change management, and usability experts, among others
- A new operating model, challenge projects and a digital roadmap for municipalities in the digital compass
- In cooperation with the Digital and Population Data Services Agency and the Association of Finnish Municipalities



HOW? Challenge projects and digital roadmap work

Expert support was provided in the form of challenge projects. The goal of the projects was to help especially small municipalities that do not have adequate resources for dealing with change needs. The themes of the challenges included the smoothness of services provided to customers, the identification of needs for change and the initiation of change in organisations, as well as the employment of solutions benefiting common national services in service development.

In addition to the challenge projects, morning coffee sessions were organised to share information about and among the projects. The sessions were attended by service developers from municipalities, government agencies and institutions, as well as by company representatives. The impact sought through the activities was undermined by the small number

of applicants and the weak participation of small municipal operators. There would have been enough resources for more than the five projects carried out.

Resources were thus allocated to the municipalities' digital roadmap work, the purpose of which was to make the goals set for public services in the national digital compass more concrete from the perspective of municipalities and thereby strengthen the management of digitalisation in municipalities.

The goal was to identify common tasks and measures that would help achieve the targets of the digital compass by 2030. Another goal was to determine municipalities' needs for the next Government Programme.

- Challenges to be solved were sought from municipalities that had special needs for digital competence.
- Morning coffee sessions were organised to share information among projects and to network.
- The digital roadmap strengthens the management of digitalisation in municipalities.
- It also makes the content of public services in Finland's digital compass more concrete from the perspective of municipalities.



FOR WHOM? Expert support benefited municipal service developers

Expert support was primarily intended for the developers of digital services in municipalities and government agencies, and especially for small operators with a clear need for digital competence. However, the number of municipalities that applied for the challenge projects was small, and ultimately only two of the five projects focused on the municipal sector. These were attended by the City of Porvoo, the City of Lahti and the municipality of Asikkala with a joint project.

On the other hand, the digital roadmap attracted greater interest in the municipal sector, with more than 40 municipalities participating in the related activities. There is an interest in continuing work on the digital roadmap, and plans are to update it in the future.

Based on the activities carried out, expert support is a flexible co-creation operating model that meets the resource needs of municipalities and other organisations and supports their networking.



BENEFITS? New working methods, information sharing and concrete outputs

As the interest in challenge projects was weaker than expected, some of the resources were allocated to the digital roadmap. This was ultimately felt to be even more useful, even though the related expert process was more demanding. The digital roadmap also provided many tools for future projects, and the work it gave rise to can be continued in the future.

The challenge projects carried out were also found to be useful, for example in terms of the manuals, cooperation, and solutions for improving service utilisation rate, promoting knowledge-based management, and administering Suomi.fi authorisations resulting

from the projects. The projects were also related to the life event service packages, which are part of the digital compass.

One of the goals of expert support was to develop the model for sharing learning, which involves co-creation and the future use of results. Related to this, a new online course available to everyone will be prepared and offered through the eOppiva learning environment to help share the results and learning from the different projects. The course will be published in the first quarter of 2023.

- Because of the limited interest shown in applications for challenge projects, activities with municipalities focused on the digital roadmap.
- The digital roadmap helps promote follow-up projects and provides a range of tools for them.
- An eOppiva online course on the results and lessons learned from the operating model will be prepared in early 2023.



RESULTS? Cooperation, agreement, and the importance of networked development are the key lessons for the future

The key results of the digital roadmap concerned the municipalities' interest in and need to participate in the cooperation and co-creation related to the implementation of the digital compass. Dialogue and the creation of a common understanding were also highlighted. Overall, the digital roadmap project taught the participants to do things in a new way that was found to work well. This insight will be communicated through the eOppiva online course.

The results of the challenge projects include guidelines for planning digital service instructions (Avaimet asiakkaan maailmaan, "Keys to the customer's world"), a roadmap for

management based on customer information, solutions for improving the findability of information and raising the utilisation rate of digital services, and improvements to the administration model of Suomi.fi authorisations.

In general, the projects highlighted the importance of service design, cooperation and communication, as well as understanding customer needs. The solutions found in the challenge projects call for continued attention in the participating organisations and can also be useful to others. The digital roadmap should continue to be updated in the coming years.

- Significance and model of co-creation and collaboration:
- Significance of dialogue and agreement
- New people-centred operating methods and customer understanding
- Co-created solutions to the digital challenges presented