Interview N

Introduction of interview participants and introduction to the topic.

The interviewee is not an employee of a municipality, but has been hired by a municipality as an external consultant for 3.5 years in order to digitise different business processes including parking permits for craftspersons and residents.

1. Do you consider the digitisation of business processes in municipalities important and do you consider it a facilitation of work? Answer options: 1-5 (1: not at all – 5: very much)

Answer: 5, Digitisation is important, but the reduction of bureaucracy and harmonization must be implemented before digitisation. An inefficient digital process still leads to long waiting times. The reduction of waiting times is particularly necessary for more critical services from the social department of the municipality, e.g. increasing child benefit subsidies. Particularly vulnerable groups are dependent on the state offering low-bureaucracy and efficient processes, i.e. financially disadvantaged citizens who are dependent on immediate state subsidies. Inefficient, bureaucratic processes are a threat to democracy.

1. Can you briefly explain the business process for issuing a special parking permit for craftspersons in your municipality?

Answer: The application is made in an online form (CIT form server). The application is converted into a PDF and sent to a mailbox. Clerks access the mailbox and manually transfer the data from the PDF to a legacy application. The legacy application is used for all kinds of parking permits: residents, craftspersons, social services. The legacy system is connected to the residents' registration system, vehicle registration system, the printing system (for the automatic printing and sending of letters), to the payment system for tracking whether payment has been made.

If a special parking permit for a craftsperson is approved, a provisional permit will be issued until payment is made. After payment, a permanent parking permit will be sent.

Originally, the entire parking management was to be rethought centrally managed in one information system. This includes parking permits for craftspersons and residents and other parking spaces as well as special parking regulations at major events. One of the new ideas for parking permits for craftspersons and residents was that only the license plate would be stored and no parking permit would be issued. The traffic wardens then check the license plates and no longer the parking permits. The ideas were gradually discarded, at first due to legal concerns, which could be dispelled in exchange with other municipalities. The next idea was to use a QR code. However, this does not work, as the municipality for which the interviewee worked has different districts with different responsibilities. In certain districts, the state police are responsible for control. They cannot be obliged to install a corresponding app to scan the QR code on the smartphone. Now parking permits continue to be printed and sealed.

Note: There is fitconnect <https://www.fitko.de/produktmanagement/fit-connect>, which is a basic infrastructure component for accelerating the digitisation of public administration by connecting various APIs.

1. What information/documents are requested to apply for a special parking permit for craftspersons in your municipality?

Answer: No knowledge

1. Do you use standard software? Do you use in-house developed software?

Possible Answers:

* 1. Standard
  2. In-house developed software
  3. PDF/non-digitised

Answer: The application form is available on the CIT form server. The processing takes place in a legacy in-house developed information system.

1. Has your business process for issuing a special parking permit for craftspersons changed after digitisation? (Different steps/Different order/Different data) Answer options: 1-5 (1: not at all – 5: very much)

Answer: 1, Only the form for the citizen is new. In the past, citizens had to come to the municipal office and apply for the parking permit on site, providing information to the a clerk. The clerk then entered the data into the legacy application, where the data is further processed. This process has not changed. Solely, the form for the applicants is now online available.

1. Does the digital business process for the special parking permit for craftspersons facilitate work? If so, to what extent? Answer options: 1-5 (1: not at all – 5: very much)

Answer: 1, It does not facilitate work, because the clerk has to transfer the data manually to the legacy system. The breakthrough is missing. There is no technical interface to the legacy system.

1. Have there been any other improvements, and if so, what are they? Answer options: 1-5 (1: not at all – 5: very much)

Answer: 3, There was an improvement for citizens, as they no longer have to go to the office, but not for the clerks. For clerks, the work has deteriorated because they have to manually transfer the data from the PDF to the legacy system.

1. If you use standard software, to what extent did it have to be customised (input fields/additional or other steps)? Answer options: 1-5 (1: not at all – 5: very much)

Answer: no standard software, therefore the question cannot be answered.

1. To what extent does the information system you use meet your expectations for end-to-end process digitisation? Answer options: 1-5 (1: not at all – 5: very much)

Answer: 2, The technical interface is missing to automatically transfer data.

1. Are there any features you would like to have that your information system does not offer? And if so, which ones (e.g. a QR code to check the validity of the special parking permit)? Answer options: 1-5 (1: not at all – 5: very much)

Answer: 3, There is no interface to automatically transfer the data from the application form to the legacy system. There is a lack of traceability. The citizen wants to know the status of their application (tracking link as you know it from a parcel delivery).

At this point in the interview, a demo of our proof-of-concept for the special parking permit for craftspersons is presented, including an explanation of the concepts for customising the business process.

1. Would the presented information system for the special parking permit for craftspersons be applicable in your municipality if it were tailored to your needs using only the presented concepts (customising data, exchanging activity implementations during various binding times)?

Answer: The concepts is applicable to the special parking permit for craftspersons. However, it is not applicable for the entire parking space management. The biggest problem and challenge is the integration into the existing information systems.

1. Does the information system seem easy to learn and intuitive from an applicant’s and municipal clerk’s perspective? Answer options: 1-5 (1: not at all – 5: very much)

Response: 4

1. Do you know of other municipalities that use the special parking permit for craftspersons in this or a different way?

Answer: The interviewee knows of another municipality, which provides a parking permit with a QR-Code.

1. Do you know of other municipal business processes that differ between municipalities? If so, which ones and what are the differences?

Answer: For almost all municipal services, the business processes are roughly the same, but there are nuances that arise due to different interpretations of law of the municipalities. Most of the time, the data are different. Often the time at which the citizen has to pay also differs, for example in the case of special parking permit for craftsperson (before or after the parking permit is issued)

There are even different requirements within a municipality. In the municipality of the interviewee, a parking permit for residents with a QR code was to be introduced. However, there are districts with traffic wardens and other districts in which the state police carry out the traffic checks. The state police could not be obliged to install a corresponding app to scan the QR codes on the smartphone.

The interviewee was able to confirm that the concept presented could have been used for this case. The entire process up to issuance would be identical for all districts and when issuing the parking permit, the respective implementation is selected at runtime, depending on the district. Either the parking permit is generated with a QR code and sent by e-mail or automatically printed and sent by post.

1. In your opinion, could the concept of the presented information system for the special parking permit for craftspersons be transferred to other municipal business processes (including reasons)?

Answer: The services are similar. The processes are similar. The biggest challenge is integration into existing information systems. Apart from the integration, the presented concept also works for other processes.

Interviewee:

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| Professional experience in this field (overall) | 3.5 years (10 years) |
| Job Description (Department) | Solution Architect (external) |
| Sex | Male |
| Number of inhabitants of the municipality | >= 1million |