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Modern Tools for Sustainable Development of Territories. Special Topic: Project Management in the Regions of Russia

PROJECTS IN THE SPHERE OF CUSTOMS ACTIVITY: FACTORS OF SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

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Abstract

The geopolitical, economic, and legal system of interaction between states in the international market at the beginning of the 21st century is marked by complexity, instability, the presence of challenges and threats. The noted environmental factors contribute to the formation and deepening at the level of government of the new management paradigm – the project approach. The authors emphasize the importance of project activities in all areas of government management. It allows government officials to solve problems of various scales: from the operational level of management to the strategic level. The paper explored the possibilities of development and application of design technologies in customs, the conditions for the transition to project management in the customs sphere. To study the factors affecting the applicability of the project approach in the customs sphere of the Russian Federation, the authors used a systematic approach, within which the environmental factors and the level (type) of their influence on the object under study were characterized. The factors with the greatest positive influence were: the availability of state support (regulatory framework), digitalization, social aspects (reducing risks for society). The factor of insufficient competence of government representatives in the field of development and implementation of projects has a negative effect. Based on the results of the study, it was proposed to develop programs for the training (retraining) of the personnel of the customs authorities taking into account the wider application of the Picard standards, using the experience of the Russian Project Management Association.

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Keywords: Custom digital, project management, projects in the field of customs.



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1. Introduction

Development of the customs sphere in the conditions of dynamically changing environmental factors (both of political, economic, technological, and communicative-social types) involves the active introduction of new management approaches based, on the one hand, on the digitalization of operations and procedures, and on the other, on the use of design elements management at all levels of the organization of work, the performance of job functions related to the implementation of unique tasks.

Thus, the relevance of the research topic is associated not only with the prospects for the development of the customs service itself (hereinafter FCS of the Russian Federation), but to a greater extent with the deepening of the application of the “project worldview” (as a methodology) in the public administration sector. Accordingly, the study and implementation of “best practices” of project activities in the system “state – customs – a participant in foreign economic activity” will ensure an increase in the quality of customs services, which will ultimately contribute to an increase in goods turnover (an increase in state budget revenues due to customs payments) and an increase in positive Russia's image on the international market (and as part of interstate relations), the progress of society as a whole. The authors believe that the implementation of the project management methodology in customs should be ensured, first of all, by the personnel policy of the FCS of the Russian Federation, aimed at developing the competencies of managerial personnel in the field of project management.

2. Problem Statement

As part of the study, theoretical and practical recommendations on the implementation of project activities proposed by the authors (teams of authors) as tools for creating high performance in the field of customs relations were studied.

3. Research Questions

The main research questions were as follows: what factors contribute to optimizing the application of design technologies in the public administration system; what are the characteristics of the stages of implementation of design technologies in the field under study, how in design practice customs technologies are implemented, which impedes and supports.

4. Purpose of the Study

The main goal of the study can be considered to determine the potential of design technologies in the field of customs, assess their applicability in the foreign economic activity of the state. The emphasis of the study was placed on the personnel of the customs authorities and its characteristics: design competencies.

5. Research Methods

To achieve the objectives of the study, the authors implemented an analysis of the regulatory framework (ATP Consultant plus, Garant, etc.). Methodological basis for the study also served as methods: abstraction, analysis, classification, comparison, generalization.

6. Findings

So, at the first stage, the approaches to governance as a whole in the system of state power were analyzed. The source outlines the views on the potential development of management systems through the use of project management. It is a formed consulting (mostly educational) platform on the basis of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, the use of which in order to promote and implement the idea of project management in the government system allows monitoring the implementation of national and federal projects, tracking and verifying passing control points, monitor the implementation of national and federal projects.

An analysis of the materials presented in the database allows us to conclude that the use of design technologies at the present stage of the development of the economy and society is an objective necessity for the authorities and the formation of the project as a system with a goal, indicators, methods, team, budget, and time frame allows achieve high results in a timely manner, in addition (and this is emphasized) within the framework of the project, the responsibilities and tasks of each of the executors are extremely clearly defined (thereby reducing the risk of “Seven nannies”). An important point in the project management is flexibility, the ability to change priorities when new challenges, risks, or vice versa, development opportunities arise. Table 01 shows the stages of the systematic implementation of project management ideas in government bodies in the Russian Federation (compiled from materials (Zolochevskaya & Krivosheeva, 2014; Makovkina & Trofimova, 2016).

Table 01. Stages of the implementation of project management approaches in the government system of the Russian Federation

Period of time	Normative document (ed.)	Stage content	Stage features
2013	Order of the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia dated 05.06.2013 N 304 (as amended on 11.28.2013) “On the Council for the Implementation of Project Management in the Federal Executive Bodies and State Bodies of the Subjects of the Russian Federation”	A Council has been created with the aim of initiating the implementation of project technologies in government (analysis of Russian and world practice of project management in the public sector; development of guidelines for project management; preparation of proposals for training in project management)	The activities of the Council were carried out in a communicative and discussion manner, the performers understood the difficulties of creating a culture of project management in government. Particular attention to proposals for training government officials in the project management system
2014 - 2015	Order of the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia of April 14, 2014 N 26R-AU “On Approving	The emphasis of the stage is the formation of competences in the field of project management by government representatives	The studies showed that the government officials poorly used the project principles of activity in the indicated

	Methodological Recommendations for the Implementation of Project Management in Executive Bodies”	(recommendations contain a description of project management from both organizational and technological points of view)	period: the organizational structures of project management were not widespread, the training and motivation of employees was not high
2016 - 2017	Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 30.06.2016 N 306 (as amended on 07/19/2018) “On the Council under the President of the Russian Federation on strategic development and priority projects” “Methodological recommendations on the organization and conduct of an assessment of the qualifications of civil servants in the field of project activities” (approved by the Ministry of Labor of Russia) (together with “Requirements for the competencies of civil servants - participants in project activities”)	Creation of the Council, providing the appropriate organizational structure for the implementation of projects (federal, departmental, regional); The Council approved the draft passports of priority projects and programs Formation, development and assessment of competencies of specialists of public authorities in the field of project management	Risks were noted that some of the authorities were not ready to apply project management technologies due to lack of competence in this matter, there was also a well-established practice of functional interaction within ministries, fear of a decrease in the level of process control Inadequate funding for the program; the formation of competencies itself requires the development of practical experience; the difficulty of preparing for qualifications
2018	Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 05.05.2018 N 204 (as amended on 07/19/2018) “On national goals and strategic objectives of the development of the Russian Federation for the period until 2024”	The government is entrusted with the task of developing and starting the implementation of projects: demography; healthcare education; housing and urban environment; ecology; safe and high-quality roads; labor productivity and employment support; the science; digital economy; culture small and medium enterprises and support of individual entrepreneurial initiative; international cooperation and export.	
	Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of October 31, 2018 N 1288 (as amended on January 3, 2019) “On the organization of project activities in the Government of the Russian Federation” (together with the “Regulation on the organization of project activities in the Government of the Russian Federation”)	A Department has been formed within the Government of the Russian Federation to organize the implementation of priority projects and programs.	The regulation applies only to a part of projects (to federal projects of the transport part of a comprehensive plan for modernization and expansion of the main infrastructure for the period until 2024), the program “Digital Economy of the Russian Federation” and federal projects included in it are not included

Most authors who systematize the results of the implementation of project management in the system of public authorities note that currently the existing standards of project management are not sufficiently adapted to this area. On the other hand, they highlight a significant increase in the competencies of civil servants in matters of project management, the creation of a favorable administrative environment for project management, both at the federal and regional levels, is being recorded, which contributes to the optimization and improvement of the quality of ongoing projects.

In the form of the peculiarities of the formation of conditions and requirements for the implementation of the project, the researchers identify the following factors: strict execution schedules, a high level of public control, the mandatory positive social effect, the complexity and complexity of the projects themselves (Vasiliev & Prokofiev, 2016).

At the second stage of the study, the author turned to the practice of implementing the project approach in the system of customs authorities. The models (elements) of project management (and their tools) in customs were studied and the corresponding conditions for putting them into practice (Kramarenko & Makrusev, 2019).

It can be argued that the transition to project management in the world practice of customs is based on the experience of the advanced in relation to the dynamics of economic development of countries: the USA, Great Britain, China, Japan, etc. It is clear that this experience can be used in the Russian Federation through the adaptation process and taking into account the requirements of the EAEU legislation (participants of the Eurasian Economic Union: the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Armenia). It is also worth emphasizing that the customs authorities of the Russian Federation are a specific public authority having a complex hierarchical structure (includes a federal executive body that exercises control and supervision functions in the field of customs; regional customs administrations; customs; customs posts (Federal Law RF, 2018), where management is traditionally focused on a functional approach (structural-functional), in which authority is traditionally delegated and responsibilities are distributed through functions (distinguished by the same type of work, operations, actions). And this fact can be considered as a kind of obstacle to the active implementation of project management in the activities of the FCS of the Russian Federation. On the other hand, international experience is also being promoted through formats of international customs cooperation, including within the framework of the World Customs Organization (the Russian Federation has been a member of the WCO since 1991) – this is the main international institution that initiates the introduction of innovative effective customs regulation tools and means. And here a very important condition for supporting the development of design ideas in the customs sphere is the strategy implemented by the WCO.

Over the past 15 years, the WCO has proposed to the world customs community (both practitioners and scientific developers) a whole range of ideas: from the development strategy of the customs sphere at the level of interaction of all WCO member states (more than 180 for 2019), the so-called concept of “Coordinated border management” (Kadyrkulov, Mozer, & Lipatova, 2017), up to professional standards for a modern customs officer and framework standards for performing all customs functions (Bobrova, Kozhankov, Korovyakovsky, Nenadyshina, & Shokhin, 2017). The WCO experts have developed a broad and fairly adequate regulatory framework (Conventions, Memorandums, Recommendations, etc.).

The strategic goal of the WCO is to provide overall leadership in the field of customs relations at the international level, to help optimize the management of individual customs administrations. The main objectives of the WCO strategy are to achieve efficiency in the interaction of states in the customs sphere, facilitate trade, simplify customs formalities, speed up the process of transporting goods, and the fight against crime and terrorism.

For this, a developed system of measures is proposed, this approach is described in the WCO Implementation Plan 2019-2020: the formation of a system for supporting WCO tools in the current state, taking into account the needs of participants in customs relations (for example, in the near future it is planned to deepen the use and expand the capabilities of the Single Window technology), Continue at the “digital” level the interaction of intelligence and operational customs units to prevent crimes in the customs sphere, on this basis, conducting joint tnyh (international) customs operations forces units in order to detect illegal transactions, regulatory and other support projects for the construction of customs infrastructure, and technical assistance; development and implementation of international standards that contribute to all of the above. E-commerce is recognized as a top priority and the WCO includes measures to support the development of this industry in world trade (for example, by the end of 2019, a standards structure will be developed, technical work will be carried out to define, set data, flowcharts and a plan for implementing support). Also, serious attention focuses on environmental safety and health.

One cannot but point out the priority of the development of digital customs. As noted in the WCO plan, digitalization and data science are increasingly being used around the world by various sectors and organizations. In 2016 (WCO called 2016 “the year of DigitalCustoms”). In the customs sphere, a significant number of information and communication technology tools were updated, which, in turn, were used to collect and provide guarantees for the payment of customs duties, to exercise control over the transportation of goods, individuals, and other objects and began to fully use the “blockchain” mechanism and so on. For the coming period, the WCO plans to develop a digital Customs package that combines all the relevant tools of information and communication technologies in order to combine all relevant information for organization members in one document.

The innovations mentioned above can be called, in fact, projects for the development of the customs sphere. As a definition of project management in the customs sphere, one can propose the following: this is a methodology for managing the global tasks of customs administrations in the face of limited resources (both temporary and human, technological and others) to achieve performance in specific areas of customs.

The development priorities of the international customs management system discussed above are important for the Russian Federation, therefore, the implementation of these goals requires the leadership of the FCS to move to a new level of management of all the above processes. Due to the fact that each area is quite “unique”, the application of the project approach will become prevailing in the short term when introducing innovations. At the same time, project management in the customs sphere in the Russian Federation will be implemented under the influence of a number of factors (Table 02).

Table 02. Factors affecting the efficiency of project management in the customs sphere

Factors Influence	External environment		Internal environment	
	Factor type	Influence	Factor type	Influence
Positive	Political	Support in the form of a regulatory framework and a common understanding of government officials that project technology is a promising one	Infrastructure	Actually, the infrastructure objects themselves are developing under the conditions of implementing project management (both for

				managing project activities and for ensuring the technological effectiveness of the project)
	Technological	Digital technologies in the customs authorities of the Russian Federation are priority for implementation, while design software tools are available both in price and in technical terms	Technologies for the execution of work (operations)	The existing customs management regulations facilitate planning and control of any type of project.
	Social	Customs projects affect the quality of life of society as a whole: accessibility of goods, security of transactions and goods, reduction of risks of terrorist acts and customs crimes	Personnel quality	Customs specialists are generally highly efficient, they confirm their level of competence in customs certification, participate in competitions for positions, develop their careers, all this is a good basis for inclusion in project teams
Negative	Economic	Effective project management requires significant provision for training and advanced training of managerial personnel in customs	Management style; staff motivation to use design technologies; organization (structure)	These factors have either a neutral effect (at best) or a negative effect, since the application of project technologies requires not only expanding the circle of knowledge and skills, but completely restructuring as part of a specific task, taking initiative, being responsible for the result of the project (or its parts)

To achieve high results of project activities in the customs sphere in the Russian Federation, therefore, it is necessary to take into account the WCO recommendations (especially in the framework of using the developed standards), to help achieve technological “equilibrium” - volumes of foreign economic activity and technological capabilities of customs administration by customs officers of the Russian Federation, maintenance and further development competencies of the managerial link of the customs authorities of the Russian Federation in the field of project management, further cooperation in the implementation of projects with by the owners of foreign customs administrations, etc.

If we talk about the already implemented projects of the customs sphere in the Russian Federation (and the EAEU as a whole), then we can cite the project “Modernization of the information system of customs authorities” as an example. The results of this project became the basis for the further transition of Russian customs to a digital model. During the period of 2018-2019 electronic declaration centers and electronic customs are being established. The electronic declaration center is intended to divide the documentary control of declarations into goods and the actual customs control of goods. The EDCs and external customs authorities, in the region of activity of which the goods are posted, exchange electronic documents between themselves and messages between the information systems of the EDC, the declarant and the external customs post. In 2018, the following were already created: Volga, Ural, North Caucasus, Kaliningrad, Vladivostok, Novorossiysk Central Electric and Electronic Trade Markets, in which 33.6% of diesel fuel was registered. In 2019, the concentration of customs declarations in electronic customs will

be 60%, and another 6 EDCs: Siberian, Aviation, Energy, Excise, Baltic, Moscow. In 2020, Central, Far Eastern, North-Western, Southern, will open, with 95% of the total volume of declarations being drawn up in them (today it is about 50%). Thus, today the EDCs are an integral element of the system of customs authorities in Russia.

Another relevant project in the customs of the Russian Federation, implemented jointly with the tax service, is the launch of a goods traceability system (today it is assumed that this will be furniture, prams, equipment directly related to production, monitors, some household appliances, as well as some complex technical elements). If the project is successful, then by 2024 it will be distributed to all products (Draft Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation, 2019). As part of the solution of the same problem (“traceability”), a project for marking fur products has already been implemented (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation, 2016).

7. Conclusion

The facts listed above allow us to conclude the importance of deepening scientific research in the direction of introducing design technologies in the field of customs, their applicability in the foreign economic activity of the state.

One of the necessary conditions for the implementation of project management in the customs sphere is the presence of “project” competencies among customs specialists. The existing educational programs of Russian universities in the specialty “Customs” include competencies that are similar in content, but they nevertheless contain “more vague” requirements for managerial competencies in the field of projects. So, for example, in the curricula in the section “Type of activity” one can meet the following competencies: “the ability to organize the collection of information for management activities, to evaluate the effectiveness of the customs (customs post) and their structural units, to analyse the quality of the services provided”, “the ability to prepare and the choice of decisions on the management of customs (customs post) and their structural divisions”, “the ability to develop programs for the development of customs (customs post) and to call planning activities of their structural divisions” and several others. The WCO standards contain competencies that are more suitable for project management professionals. The inclusion of elements of the Picard standards in the practice of training customs specialists in the Russian Federation would undoubtedly improve the situation with the training of new personnel for the field under study. For working customs specialists, it is required to provide advanced training courses and retraining of managerial personnel for the implementation of customs projects according to the type of courses implemented by the Russian Project Management Association (SOVNET) (Tebekin & Arslanov, 2015).

Summing up the results of the study, we note that: there is an undoubted relationship between the indicator “personnel quality in the field of design technologies” and the results of the activities of divisions of customs authorities and customs as a whole in the framework of projects and programs; at the current stage of the level of applicability of design technologies, it is necessary to increase the attention of the leadership of customs authorities, especially representatives of the personnel service, heads of departments and services to the process of organizing training of personnel in this field; in the context of the implementation of international projects (including within the framework of the EAEU), it is

recommended to use successful foreign experience in the field of training of customs specialists, the basis for this can be the deepening process of unification, standardization in all areas of customs relations.

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