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The Norwegian Police - Experiencing Change Through Reform

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Acknowledgements

This thesis is written as a concluding part of attaining a Master of Science in Leadership and Organizational Psychology at BI Norwegian Business School. The topic of the study is organizational change in the context of the implementation of the current police reform in the Norwegian police, more specifically how the process has been led, and how employees in the organization have experienced it.

Through working on this thesis, I have been given the opportunity to get a wider understanding of the effects organizational change can have on individuals, and further, how different elements in or outside the process can influence the progression and the end result. The inspiration for choosing the topic came from a personal interest in organizational change in the public sector, and previous studies. The hope is that this thesis can contribute to the field of organizational change and leadership, moreover, that the findings can present some valuable insights into how to facilitate considerate change processes in organizations.

I would like to thank my supervisor Cathrine Filstad for her guidance throughout the process, and further, her patience and encouragement in the supervision meetings throughout the semester. Moreover, I would like to thank all the informants for being willing to meet with me, and share valuable and interesting insight from their work experience in the police and how they perceive the police reform effect and its consequences. Finally, I would like to thank my family and my friends for encouraging me and keeping my spirits up during the work with my thesis.

Oslo, 1st of July 2019

Iselin Maria Gjeruldsen

Summary

During the past three years, the Norwegian police has undergone a reform process, similar to police organizations in other countries. The proximity reform (nærpolitireformen) has introduced multiple change initiatives during the process. Some of the initiatives have been welcomed by the organization, while others have been a cause of criticism. This master thesis will look closer into the process of implementing the new police reform in the Norwegian police. The focus of the study will be on how the change process has been led and how employees in the Norwegian police, have experienced it. Through a review of relevant literature, and insights from interviews with employees in the police, the aim is to generate a clear overview over the human aspect of the reform, as well as aspects of the process itself.

The first section of the thesis gives an introduction to the topic, followed by a literature review which will aim to sum up the most relevant research on the area. The next section will look at the methods used during the study, in addition to a description of the process, the sample and ethical considerations in the study. That includes a description of the qualitative methods which have been selected to derive valuable information about the research topic.

Further, an analysis and discussion of the most relevant findings from the interviews will follow in addition to a discussion of the research question. Finally, some concluding remarks will be made and the identification of potential future research.

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Introduction

Since the early 2000s, several western countries have implemented police reforms with the objective of increasing efficiency and effectiveness, and seek a structure that best make the organization equipped to meet and face a changing and developing crime arena (Terpstra & Fyfe, 2015). Technological and digital developments have made it necessary for the police to increase competence on new arenas, to be able to address and be present in the new directions crime is developing. Being present on the digital arena is one of the strategic priorities for the police towards 2025 (Politidirektoratet, 2019). This is a factor that has led to the need for rethinking the way the organization is best structured to meet these developments, and how the police should operate strategically in the future (Politidirektoratet, 2018). Generally, the police reforms have steered in the direction of more centralization and specialization of the police force, moving away from a tradition of a decentralized and generalist police (Terpstra & Fyfe, 2015). In the last three years, the Norwegian police has been the subject of a similar considerable change process through the implementation of *Nærpolitireformen*. In the context of change in governmental organizations, change tend to occur in terms of reforms, meaning change initiatives are often quite extensive and complex, and multiple objectives are often set to happen simultaneously (Stensaker & Haueng, 2016).

Before the implementation of the new police reform that came into force in 2016, there were 27 police districts in Norway. With the intent to build more robust police districts, the number of districts were reduced to 12 (Politidirektoratet, 2017). The overall organizational model, was implemented to build districts which were able to deliver the same services and to increase the quality of them, to communities across the country. However, this change has in practice been experienced differently by police districts in the outskirts of Norway (Hernar & Mortvedt, 2018). Many small communities have expressed a concern for the increased geographical distance and reduced presence of the police. For smaller local communities and towns in rural districts in Norway, the new reform will in several cases lead to reduced capacity and in some communities shutdowns of local police stations (Martinsen & Lysvold, 2016). Furthermore, there was also

an aim to standardize the structure and way of organizing the districts, to promote reciprocal learning and cooperation, both internally in the police, as well as with other government agencies (Politidirektoratet, 2017).

The implementation of the reform will in many ways test the ability and capacity of the police to implement changes in the organization. The change will demand a lot of resources, in order to realize the planned structural changes, in addition to implement the development goals which are connected to the knowledge and competence aspect of the reform (Filstad & Karp, 2018b). Furthermore, the human aspect of the reform is also an interesting aspect of the reform implementation. According to Kahn (1990), the human aspect of change processes are an important factor that can be overlooked in change processes in organizations. As the changes stated in the reform will bring quite extensive changes for some police districts, police officers and other employees in the police, the perception of individuals involved in- and affected by the changes of the reform will be interesting to look further into.

Research question

The implementation of the police reform started in 2016, when the reform came in to force. Since then, the process has been followed and discussed by media, politicians, unions and employees in the police. The focus so far, has to a noticeable extent focused on the consequences the change initiatives have brought on an organizational level, but not as much on the effect the process has had on the employees in the police, police officers as well as civilian employees. Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is to take a closer look on how employees in the police have experienced the leadership through the change process and how they have been affected by the process.

How has the change process in the implementation of the new police reform been led and experienced by employees in the Norwegian police?

In order to answer the research question, I will among other theories, look into the literature on change processes and leadership in major change processes. There is a substantial amount of literature on the topic, frameworks and theories which

promote different considerations and actions. However, these theories also support and build on each other in many aspects. This thesis will among other perspectives draw on Kotter's framework for change. In John Kotter's framework for leading change, he presents eight steps to follow, or rather pitfalls to avoid in order to succeed with change initiatives. The theories together with insights from the interviews will be used to look closer into how the implementation process has been led, what has characterized the process and how individuals have experienced the implementation, and whether the implementation has been facilitated in a way to ensure a smooth and successful change process for the organization as a whole, as well as for the individuals.

The study – Nærpolitireformen

The current police reform came into force in 2016. The reform brings with it both structural changes for the organization, as well as a focus on capacity building and quality (Justis- og beredskapsdepartementet, 2015). Through the reform, four strategic development initiatives have been in focus: How the organization is structured, leadership and management, implementing new and better tools in the work carried out, in addition to incorporate new ways of working. Improving the first two, the structure of the organization, and the leadership and management of it, is a prerequisite for developing the production of services to the society (Politidirektoratet, 2018). The reform, has introduced new ways of working through the implementation of six functions. These functions include the implementation of

1. Knowledge based intelligence, where analyzing and understanding the challenges connected to crime, and working more knowledge-based.
2. The establishment of police contacts, with the objective of facilitating collaboration and cooperation with municipalities and the society.

3. The joint criminal case admission, secures that the proper competence is present from the beginning of the investigation, leading to increased quality, and securing a more efficient effort to solve the incoming criminal cases.
4. Strengthening the operational centers, is aimed at securing a more unified management of the police patrols.
5. *Politiarbeid på stedet*, police work at the scene, is a new way of working, facilitating for the police patrols to solve more cases "out in the field" and carrying out more of the criminal investigation process while the clues are *fresh*, and at the

same time, contribute to production for the department of criminal investigations, and further, relieve some of the workload. 6. The administration (Tjenestekontoret), is essential to ensure that the right personnel is present, available, and on call when needed. The reform has introduced quite extensive initiatives of change, which some might experience as disruptive for the organization. However, the purpose of implementing the reform, is in the end, strengthening the police both structurally and in terms of competence, in order to be able to offer quality services to the Norwegian society.

Literature review/ Theory

In the following, relevant research and theories that can contribute to answering the research problem, will be presented and reviewed.

Culture

Culture is a quite complex term, and is used quite frequently in organizational contexts. Culture reflect the deep foundation of the organization, of what the organization values, beliefs, traditions and history (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006). Schein distinguishes between three levels of culture (1990). The first level is artifacts, a clear display of the organizational values and beliefs, what actually influence work practices and behavior of employees or members of the organization. These are the observable organizational structures and processes. The second is the espoused values, what is publicly expressed of the leader's interpretation of the common values and beliefs. It is the communication of strategies, objectives or philosophies. The espoused values can either be empty rhetoric, or it can be a true representation of the values. Finally, the third level, are the underlying assumptions. These assumptions, are the underlying values and beliefs that are often taken for granted, which can be clearly observed in the behavior (Schein, 1990). Changing culture in an organization can be and often is a cumbersome process, which often is something that has to be initiated from the top level in the organization, by the leader (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006).

Police culture

The police role is characterized by the relatively high level of autonomy, while at the same time, police officers have to stay within the borders the law states (Bellingham, 2000). This and the context the police work in, influence the organizational culture (Chan, 1996). The culture in an organization is the complex and dynamic processes which make the foundation for the organizational practices, being how people act, think and communicate in the organization (Johannessen, 2013, p. 29, as cited in Glomseth, 2015, p. 53). Police culture is a term that has been attributed to a negative characteristic in some studies and has been perceived as a barrier to change initiatives in the police (Chan, 1996), however, there are factors that advocate acknowledging the complexities of culture (Cockcroft, 2014). They

claim that the development of the occupational police culture has to be seen in the context of the operating environment.

According to Chan, the occupational culture can be seen as a necessity for police officers to cope with in a line of duty that is regarded as unpredictable, alienating and prone to risks (1996). The police culture can be quite different from country to country. In some areas of the world, the police has been connected to authoritarian use of power and distrust from communities, while in other areas, the police has a higher moral standing. According to Filstad and Gottschalk, the Norwegian culture is characterized by culture which promote cooperation and collective work (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2013). Culture, or rather the need for improving the organizational culture, was one of the measures emphasized in the report from the Gjørv-commission after July 22nd2011 (NOU 2012:14; NOU 2013:9). Together with weak leadership- and communication, culture has been identified as areas where the Norwegian police has room for improvement (NOU 2013:9).

Police leadership

Being a hierarchically structured organization, the line of command is rather clear, as well as the division of responsibilities and power. As an organization, the police stands out from other organizations in that it has an extended authority to make use of necessary measures (violence) in extraordinary situations, when it is called for and within the regulations of the organization, on the behalf of the government. This authorization has to be and is under a strong political, democratic and judicial control (Johannessen, 2015). Being under a bureaucratic governance and of an operational hierarchy, this has brought with it different understandings of how the organization should be governed, a judicial understanding, with a focus on bureaucracy as the form, and a military understanding, with a focus on the operational aspect of the organization with the object of prevent criminal actions and uphold order and peace.

The first one, presuppose objectivity and a clear structure. It emphasizes individual tasks, and furthermore, adjusting the services offered to uphold the budget and regulations. The second, has the objective and mission in focus. The mission given by the leader, is resolved in groups and teams. Unlike the judicial understanding of running the organization, the mission will always be prioritized before considering

the budget. As these are quite contradictory to each other, balancing leadership and prioritizing between these two understandings, is something police leaders experience. The overall goal in more extensive change initiatives are often set by Stortinget and the National Police Directorate, and carried out by the police districts. Leaders in the bureaucratic and the operative departments of the organization, often have different priorities during reform, which can become a source of challenge. According to Johannesen (2015), leaders are associated with more influence for a result or development than often is the case in organizations. The leader is dependent on the recognition and support of the subordinates and their voluntary cooperation to bring the organization forward. According to Haake, Rantatalo and Lindberg (2017), police leaders are often captured in a squeeze between the expectations from the subordinates and their leaders. Further, the expectations for what police leader is expected to reach over in terms of tasks and responsibilities, is often quite extensive. Therefore, Haake et al., advocates a development in the direction of a perspective where the leader has to recognize that he/she relies on the relationship and cooperation with the subordinates, the communication and the ethical leadership practice in order to succeed with the leader role (2017).

Leading change

The role of the leader in change processes and in change initiatives, has been in focus for years. In Kotter's framework for leading change, there are eight steps that can contribute to facilitate for successful change efforts, or rather, eight steps to avoid change initiatives to fail (1995). To avoid change efforts from failing, the leader or leader group has to communicate in a convincing manner that change is needed, and present the benefits of implementing change. According to Nadler and Nadler, providing correct and relevant information at this point in the process, and ensuring transparency in the process will contribute to a valid and trustworthy process. Therefore, thorough preparations, consideration of multiple alternatives and open debate is important (Nadler & Nadler, 1998).

If this step is not fulfilled, and the followers do not perceive the urgency of the situation, they will not engage in the process, and some might even work against it. The next step is to ensure the presence of a coalition to lead the change, and be a driving force to promote and encourage the change process. During major

change efforts, there is a tendency that some individuals will work against it and form a barrier, hindering the change from happening. Promoting and implementing substantial change in an organization, is reliant on a team effort backing the initiative to prevent the opposing party to become a barrier. Therefore it is important that leaders contribute and actively try to convince individuals to join the change effort (Nadler & Nadler, 1998).

The third step is to create a vision and strategy. This should be sensible and realistic. If the employees in the organization does not understand or believe the vision, they are not likely to engage in the change effort. Further on, the next step is to communicate the change vision. According to Kotter (1995), this is not a one-time job. The communication has to be consistent and understandable, adapted to the receivers of the message. Engaging own leaders as role models, is important to set an example for their employees. Empowering employees to take part in the change through removing potential obstacles, be it structural or other elements that can undermine the process, is of great importance, as it will be easier to convince others to engage in the process. This is supported by Nadler & Nadler, who goes on to highlight the importance of leaders willingness to provide and set aside the sufficient amount of resources that employees need to make change happen (1998).

Another step, is to create intermediate objectives, that can contribute to encourage further engagement and involvement in the process. According to Chia (2014), it is important to highlight the small steps and victories which have been achieved, instead of only focusing on the big initiatives and ambitious plans to encourage continuous change and maintain momentum.

There are several frameworks and theories for how to successfully leading change. However, these steps are not necessarily chronological steps in a recipe for success, rather considerations worth contemplating when planning change initiatives (Fernandez & Rainey, 2017). Whether or not the framework will lead to an organization success on the change initiatives, will also depend on more factors than just following the steps. Consolidating the gains realized so far in the process, and continuing to generate more change, is important to ensure that the momentum in the process is not lost and the initiative is strengthened. Finally, securing the new procedures and approaches in culture to avoid old procedures and ways of doing things, slips back to what it was before the process started.

Readiness for change

Change is for many people associated with approaching something unfamiliar, dismantling the known structure and the prospect of instability (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2017). On the other hand, change can lead to new possibilities and opportunities, potentially something even better than the present, or the creation of something new. Buchanan and Huczynski define readiness for change as “a predisposition to welcome and embrace change” (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2017, p. 643). Rafferty, Jimmieson and Armenakis (2013) include an emotional or affective dimension to the definition, which they argue is a dimension that has been overlooked in past research on the field. The collective readiness for change, is based on a set of shared beliefs which have developed through shared experiences and social interaction (Rafferty et al., 2013). Moreover, they suggest that there are five beliefs corroborating an individual’s change readiness, believing that the change is necessary (discrepancy), believing that the change that is suggested, is a good response to the situation (appropriate), for individuals to believe that they are able to implement the change (efficacy), believing that the organization will facilitate for the process (principal support), and finally, the individual evaluating personal costs or benefits by taking part in implementing the change (Rafferty et al., 2013). Resistance to change is often brought about by self-interest being at stake, not understanding what the change will entail, individual’s evaluating the pros and cons differently than others, and finally, a varying level of tolerance for change.

Further, other research suggest that change readiness takes place on multiple organizational levels (Rafferty et al., 2013). They suggest that an organization’s readiness to change is influenced by group members’ *shared cognitive belief* of that change is needed, that the organization can carry out the change successfully and that it will lead to positive outcomes for the organization, and finally, through the occurrence of present and future-oriented positive organizational emotional response to the organizational change (Alannah E Rafferty et al., 2013).

Ambidextrous learning

Ambidextrous learning describes how some organizations can explore new areas of knowledge and at the same time exploiting current ones (Kang & Snell, 2009).

Exploration entails activities such as encouraging risk taking, innovation and flexibility, and activities such as production, implementation, efficiency and refinement (March, 1991). There has to be a balance between these two activities to ensure the gains of both. A flexible organization that on a regular basis engage in explorative activities, can risk ending up with paying the cost for focusing more resources on exploration, without attaining the benefits associated with it. The opposite might happen, if the organization focus most resources on exploitative activities (March, 1991).

Psychological safety

Edmondson and Lei use psychological safety to describe individuals perception of consequences connected to taking *interpersonal risk* in for example the context of the workplace (2014). There has been strong support for the claim that individuals will, to a greater extent, voice new ideas, own up to mistakes, ask for help and speak up in an environment where they feel safe (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). According to Cataldo, Raelin and Lambert, psychological safety is an important factor for individuals in changing organizations (2009). To dare to raise a critical voice on change in discussions with individuals higher up in the organization, reassurance and absence of negative consequences is essential (Cataldo et al., 2009). According to Edmondson and Lie, their findings suggests that psychological safety and status has to be assured in the process of change for it to be implemented.

Psychological engagement

According to Kahn, there are three *psychological conditions* that has to be in place to promote engagement in the workplace: meaningfulness, safety and availability (1990). Meaningfulness refers to whether the individual feels appreciated, safety refers to if the individual feels safe enough to express their opinion in the workplace, without expecting negative consequences, and availability refers to whether the individual has access to the resources, both physical and psychological resources needed to invest in their work effort (Kahn, 1990).

Method

In this chapter, the research process will be presented. First, the choice of research method and design will be presented, before going through the research process as it was conducted. The chapter ends with a short ethical reflection on the process.

Objective

Implementing the police reform, has shown to have been a trying experience for the Norwegian police. This reform introduces quite extensive and fundamental change initiatives, with both structural consequences as well as operational. Therefore, to answer the research question, the objective of this research project is to look closer into how the implementation process has been led and how employees have experienced it, from when it was first introduced, and until now. There have been conducted different surveys and research, to map the perception of the reform, and the consequences and accomplishments of the reform (Difi, 2017; Filstad & Karp, 2018a). The focus of this research will be to look further into how this process has been led and experienced on an individual level, both for leaders and employees.

Research design - Qualitative method – Semi-structured interviews

In order to answer the research question of this thesis, a qualitative research method was chosen, and the data gathered has been analyzed accordingly. To derive information needed to obtain new insight on the topic of the study, 10 semi-structured interviews have been conducted with informants working for the Norwegian police. Conducting interviews with informants working on different levels in the organization and in different departments, with other responsibilities, challenges and opportunities, has contributed to further enlighten the research question. To make sure that the questions in the interview were relatively open-ended, understandable, and relevant, the plan was to conduct 1-2 pilot interviews to test out the questions in beforehand. However, I was unfortunately not able to carry this through before the interviews were conducted, but the interview guide was sent to the supervisor of this thesis, in addition to an acquaintance with academic research experience.

Through conducting semi-structured interview, I have been able to go into depth on the focus areas for this thesis, and gained interesting knowledge from the informants, and what influences their perception of the topic of the study. By implementing this type of qualitative design, it has facilitated a more flexible approach to the interviews, where the informants have shared their story and perception of the process, where follow-up questions have been raised to clarify the answers given, and in some ways get better access to observe the informants non-verbal language in the situation (Krumsvik, 2014; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

All the interviews have been conducted at the informants place of work, except one, to reduce the inconvenience of being a part of the study. The informants have been anonymized, and their information will be treated confidentially according to the NSD regulations. Informed consent was collected from the informants before the interviews started. The informants have been given the opportunity to read through the transcribed interviews and through this, they have been given the opportunity to validate the transcription or make a request for changes to be made after the interview. However, only one made use of this opportunity.

Participants

The objective for this study is to understand how the implementation of the police reform, “Nærpolitireformen”, has been led, and how it has been experienced by employees in the Police. In order to get relevant insights on this, the sample criteria for the study was that the informants have to be employed by the police. Further, leadership and the experience of leadership during the implementation is also a focus for this study. Therefore, the sample includes informants who had a leader role in the process, and who has experienced being led by their leader again. Both employees who had a leader role during the implementation and employees in *regular* positions, have been included in the sample to gain insights from the perspective of the follower, as well as the leader. During this study, 10 semi-structured interviews have been conducted with informants in the Norwegian police. The participants consist of informants with a degree from the Norwegian Police University College who are working as police officers, and informants from a different academic background working in civilian positions.

The informants work in four different districts in the south-eastern part of Norway. Some of them work in smaller more rural areas, while others work in more central areas, in bigger cities. Furthermore, three of the informants were female, and the seven others male. In terms of experience in the organization, all informants have worked in the police 10 years + in the organization. The informants were recruited or gathered through my supervisor and her network, through one of the informants, and finally from my own network.

Interview structure - Interview guide

In the beginning, when preparing for the interviews, the plan was to conduct interviews of 45-60 minutes per informant. An interview guide was formulated, and the guide was used actively during all the interviews, in addition to asking follow up questions to the informants replies to clarify when needed. As there was so much to talk about, and the informants were willing to share valuable insight on the topic, I experienced it as difficult to keep to the estimated time limit set on the interviews. However, my interview guide was quite extensive, and perhaps too long, this did not contribute to keep to the time limit. After a few interviews, it was however easier to make a selection of the most important questions in the interview guide to cover the topic and gain useful insight.

In attempt not to ask leading question, the questions in the interview guide were formulated in an open-ended way, when possible. However, some of the questions were adapted during the interview to encourage informants to elaborate on their answers. The interview guide was based on relevant theories gathered for the topic of the research, and the objective of formulating a guide, was to ensure that the interviews covered all the relevant and necessary topics. The interviews were structured with three main parts. First, a few general preliminary questions on the informants work experience, and experience in the organization. Second, the main part of the interview, was structured under eight headings after Kotter's eight steps to change (Kotter, 1995), and went directly in to the implementation and change process, and their experience of it. Finally, before thanking the informant for setting aside the time for the interview, a few concluding questions about the result of the process are asked, and in the end, they were given the opportunity to add to a

statement or information they either forgot earlier in the interview, or did not feel was addressed fully in the questions.

In order to secure anonymization of the informants, the transcription of the first couple of questions have been removed, as the questions concerns personal information, which can make them identifiable. Further, individuals mentioned by name, have been replaced with (NN), and in the replies that can identify specific districts, have been altered or removed, where it has been possible without altering the content of the statement. To indicate pauses in the interviews, (...) have been used. All the interviews were recorded in order to secure that all details and nuances were maintained in the following transcription. One challenge experienced in the first interviews was the quality of the recording, making it difficult at times to make out some of the words in the statements, however I believe that the content has been secured. The interviews have been transcribed word-by-word to capture the entirety of the statements. Finally, some abbreviations will appear during the interviews and in the thesis, these include PNP (Project New Police district- prosjekt nytt politidistrikt), POD (National Police Directorate) and PIT (The police ICT services).

Ethical considerations

One of the ethical challenges or considerations that have been important during the process, is to ensure the anonymity of the informants. The interviews were recorded, and the recordings will be deleted after 1st of July. During the interview process and the processing of the interviews and transcriptions, their names, place of work, and any potential third parties were removed from the citations and insights used. And with effort have been put down to ensure that the context is still maintained and the content of the response retained. Further on, some of the informants asked specifically for parts of the interviews to be removed, and these requests have naturally been accommodated.

Establishing validity and reliability in qualitative research

Reliability concerns whether the results from the research are reliable and credible (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The reliability of qualitative studies, can be difficult

to establish by making use of standardized methods which can be used when conducting quantitative research. Therefore, it is more useful in qualitative research to evaluate the quality of the qualitative data gathered, and look at whether it is credible or not. The insights gathered through the thesis support several findings uncovered in other research (Filstad & Karp, 2018a). Validity concerns to what extent the method is relevant for what it sets out to measure and unveil or clarify (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The information gathered through the interviews, have contributed to fulfilling the intention for the study and illuminate the research question formulated, and is therefore arguably valid in terms of the intention for the study.

All the opinions expressed through the interviews are subjective, they focus on the personal experience of the informants. The sample has not an intention of being representative for the entirety of the police as an organization, however, based on previous research, some of the tendencies discovered through this study, is likely applicable to other police districts as well. Further, the opinions and experiences shared through the interviews, are as mentioned based on the informants personal experience and perception, this is important to highlight as a situation can be more nuanced seen from multiple perspectives, and only one side is presented in the following.

Analysis and discussion

List of participants

A brief description of the informants, is presented below. It includes the informants designated number, whether they work as civilian employees or police officers, gender, and finally, if they have had a leader role or responsibility during the reform.

Table 1

Informants	Police/civilian	Gender	Current position	Leader role in reform
1	Civilian	Male	ICT- consultant	Yes
2	Police	Male	Police contact	Yes
3	Police	Male	Leader of HR- department, PNP during reform	Yes
4	Police	Male	Police inspector, investigations	Yes
5	Police	Male	Project leader	Yes
6	Police	Male	Leader of operations	Yes
7	Civilian	Female	Co-project leader	No
8	Police	Male	Leader digital police work	Yes

9	Civilian	Female	Administration	No
10	Police	Female	Deputy to leader of GDE (Geographical operating unit)	No

The sample mainly consists of individuals whom has had a sort of leader role or responsibility before, during and/or after the implementation of the police reform. The sample consists of individuals with a degree from the Norwegian Police University College, who works as police officers in different positions, and informants who work as civilian employees in different positions. I believe the sample is relevant for answering the research question.

The process

In the following, the research question will be discussed up against the insights gained from the interviews, and previously presented theories. Relevant theories presented in the literature chapter will make up the foundation for the analysis and discussion. Finally, a conclusion of the most relevant findings from the interviews will follow, in addition to implications and areas for future research.

How has change during the implementation of the new police reform been led, and how has it been experienced by the employees in the Norwegian police?

When an organization has decided to implement a bigger change initiative, it is important that the leader is able to clearly communicate and convince key individuals in the organization, that change is necessary (Kotter, 1995). Establishing a common understanding of the situation here and now, highlighting the challenges the organization faces, and promote the opportunities change can lead to, can be an effective way to inspire and encourage others to join (Nadler & Nadler, 1998). Before this reform implementation, the change initiative was initiated by the political parties at Stortinget, and planned and carried out by the bureaucratic structure in the National Police Directorate. While there has been an

interest for change within the Norwegian police, some police employees experience that the reform is a direct consequence of the attack against the government buildings in Oslo, and Utøya 22nd July 2011. The police has received criticism for the operations carried out that day, leading to an acceleration of a debate in the society on the need for the police to undergo reform. In the media coverage, after the Gjørsv-commission presented their report, the main focus was on the areas the police did not meet expectations and failed, and less on the important effort of individuals on call that day (Stensønes, 2017).

Several express that government prosecutors and police officers have a different perception of the context they operate in, and evaluate the situation for the organization differently. According to one of the informants, representatives from the prosecutors, often obtain some of the more senior management positions in the police. When ones perception of the current situation does not coincide or differs from the leader, this can make it difficult to establish cooperation when faced with change processes (Rafferty, Jimmieson & Armenakis, 2013).

Informant 3: There is a breach in the communication from top to bottom, which is caused by very different perceptions of the world around, and different conceptual frameworks. This is due to the fact that the organization consists of different professions with quite different(...) even though the law is the focus in both professions(...) the different professions attract different types of people.

Attitudes toward change

Kotter's first step, out of eight, is for the leadership to communicate a dire need for change in the organization, trying to make the followers unhappy with the current situation in order to encourage involvement and initiative, through creating an *urgency for change*(1995). This way of getting organizational members to understand that change is necessary has also been supported by other researchers (Nadler & Nadler, 1998). However, according to Stensaker and Haueng (2016), there is no guarantee that creating unease or unhappiness with the current situation, will lead to an increased interest or readiness for change, and

offers no guarantee that individuals will actively engage in the change effort. When an individual is faced with a change process, believing that change is needed, is often an essential part of becoming ready to embrace change (Rafferty et. al, 2013). As a part of the interview, the informants were asked whether they have experienced a willingness and positivity towards change and development within the police in general. There was a shared opinion that there is generally a drive for change within the organization, for development and improving the procedures and ways of working to, among other things, improve the services offered to the society.

Furthermore, leaders and employees can experience the same situation or context differently, and not share the same perception of the organizations reality (Stensaker & Haueng, 2016). The level of trust in the Norwegian police, decreased after 22nd of July 2011, and it was further put under scrutiny after the evaluation of the police operation at Utøya and in the Government buildings in Oslo, was published (Ipsos, 2018). Even though the societal trust in the police has increased and stabilized in the years after these incidents, the report and to some extent public opinion, arguably triggered the discussion of the need for reforms in the police. However, this report has received a mixed reception in the police. Many individuals in the police were not able to identify with or did not recognize the description portrayed in the evaluation after 22nd of July 2011. Furthermore, many experienced that the commission failed to grasp the whole picture of the police as an organization and missed out on important nuances (Filstad, Karp, & Glomseth, 2016).

Some of the informants experience that the police reform is a direct consequence of the report after this day, and perceive this has made it challenging to create a positive engagement and interest in taking part in the implementation of the reform. The informants were asked if they experience a general positivity toward change in the police, and moreover, if they experience that there was a readiness in the organization to go forward with the reform process, that they were open to and welcomed change, the informants had different perceptions and experiences with it. While some experience a continuous drive for change to improve work processes and structures, others experience a reluctance to move away from the

known and familiar, and previously successful ways of doing things. One of the informants who experience this continuous drive for change among colleagues, but not necessarily during the reform, made a connection between a skepticism toward the link between the reform and 22nd of July and a drive for change:

Informant 10: I think people had a different perception of this, because I experience that the reform actually is a direct consequence of Utøya, that there was this “knife to the throat”-situation, and one thought (centrally) that “we have to act now”. But(...) I am sure that there has always been a drive for change in the police as well, but not as a direct consequence of Utøya.

The overall objective of the police reform is to secure that the police continues to be a present and accessible police with local anchoring and collaboration, further, to facilitate so that the police is able to deliver high quality services all over the country, working more targeted when it comes to prevention, investigation and emergency response/contingency, increasing competence and knowledge and strengthen the infrastructure for sharing knowledge and experiences, working towards a culture that is characterized by openness and trust, and further, encouraged through active good leadership and employeeship. Finally, implement and use new methods and technology, in order to work more effectively (Justis- og beredskapsdepartementet, 2015).

One of the informants, with many years of experience from working in the police, describe the current police reform as the most extensive reform implemented since the informant started in the organization. Several of the informants perceive this objective as both complex and overwhelming. There are many focus areas implemented in this objective, and a limited amount of resources to accomplish it. When asked, several of the informants supported the intention of the objective, but perceived it as quite challenging and unrealistic that it could be carried out successfully.

One thing is to believe that there is a need for change in an organization, another is determining whether the chosen solution is the best fit for the organization. The

change initiative should be perceived as realistic by potential drivers for change in order for them to be willing to engage (Stensaker & Haueng, 2016). Based on insights from the interviews, as well as insights from a report on the effects of the police reform (Filstad & Karp, 2018a), there seem to have been an agreement among most in the police, that the quality part of the reform was welcomed by the organization. When it comes to other parts of the reform, informant 3 described the experience of a potential discrepancy between leaders and subordinates, especially leaders without a degree from the Norwegian Police University College. This was supported from some of the other informants as well.

Informant 3: I think, that when you have leaders which in general, communicate a perception of the police, the societal mission, how the reality is, and use a language that the regular police officer do not recognize or identify with, and you do not experience that you share the same perception(...) it is not a familiar description of the police I am a part of(...)When the same leader comes around later and proclaims that this is what we are doing, there is not a sufficient amount of trust.

Finally, for the individual to engage in the change effort, it can be quite crucial that the individual believes that the organization will facilitate for the process to be successfully implemented (Rafferty et al., 2013). This can arguably be connected to the evaluation of costs and benefits, carried out by the individual. For many employees in the police, the reform implementation has entailed an increase in the daily work load, at least for a period of time. The balance between reform and daily operations, and relating to the demands from different levels of the organization, in addition to the rising need for increasing competence among employees in the organization, the need to strengthen the change capacity may need a boost, in order to successfully implementing the final parts of the reform.

According to Rafferty et al. (2013), an organization's readiness for change is influenced by the shared cognitive beliefs among the members of the organization. The reform and the implementation process has been met with skepticism and negative perceptions in the police unions and media coverage (Martinsen & Lysvold, 2016; Mortvedt, 2018). While many of the articles published so far have

pointed to important shortcomings during the reform, the actual wins and progress made have not been given as much coverage.

Informant 2: (...) there has been some challenges during the process, so rightfully, there are several perceptions of the process, but we have to give it some time to work, and then, we have to share the positive stories.

Coherent with the quality aspect of the reform, and the objective of strengthening the knowledge and competence of employees in the police, evaluations of the reform show that progress has been made in this area. This is also confirmed by several of the informants, even though the situation in the organization has been challenging in terms of limited resources and increased workload for employees (Difi, 2019). Another objective in the reform, is to increase the quality and competence connected to police investigations, increasing competence in among other things crime scene investigations and “catching up” with technological developments, and use this competence purposefully (Politiet, 2016). With many changes in the society as well, the structural changes imbedded in the police reform, are intended to make the police capable, robust and equipped to meet challenges and developments which may appear in the future.

When the “stories” circulating in the organization are primarily negative, this can be a barrier for future change (Kouzes & Posner, 1999). This aspect is closely connected to communication in the organization. While the plan from POD has been thoroughly formulated according to the “correct rules” of change theories, the actual implementation has during some parts of the reform deviated from this plan, in the districts. In some of the regions, the level of communication out in the organization started off being exemplary in the beginning of the reform. However, some of the informants experience that the level of communication decreased after the first year of the reform, resulting in an increase in rumors and lower level of trust.

Taking the interest of potential stakeholders into account when developing a change strategy or change vision before a change process, can reduce frustration and prevent challenges during the implementation (Kotter, 1995). This is an important

foundation building trust and adherence among employees (Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies, 1998). In the organizational context, and the context of the police, this would include employees from all levels, the internal and external stakeholders, municipalities and unions (Karp, 2014). Getting an overview of influential stakeholders and the perceptions of the planned change process, can be essential to avoid barriers for change. Working towards securing support from a group of individuals to promote the change initiative, and attempting to win the support of those opposed to change, who has the potential to become a barrier for change is arguably important to build a *guiding coalition* for the change initiative (Kotter, 1995). With the implementation of the police reform, in line with the plan, there was arranged information meetings and arenas where senior management, and the leaders of the project groups in the districts were present to inform and to answer questions, in order to facilitate for communication and dialogue.

Most of the informants give the impression that these kinds of meetings were carried out in the districts of all the informants. However, whether these arenas were perceived as useful and enlightening, there are differing opinions on. Some of the informants who were directly involved in the project implementation, describe information meetings where only a small number of employees showed up and made use of the arena. During the implementation process there were organized several of these meetings, where some districts the same group of employees showed up each time. Others describe meetings where the chief of police did most of the talking, and experienced that there was little room for dialogue. Others again, describe more unconventional meetings during particular parts of the reform, mostly for leaders, in a less formal setting where the communication was perceived as relevant and useful. Others again, invited external lecturers to present and prepare the employees for the changes that they would soon face, but experienced that employees struggled to take in or did not want to take in how the changes would affect them. The aim of inviting employees to these arenas was to reduce uncertainty and misunderstandings brought about by the reform. From the descriptions given by the informants, few experienced them as an arena for dialogue, but rather it being an initiative that looked good on paper.

Involvement

Another measure in the process was to encourage involvement and creating a common understanding of the way forward (Kotter, 1995). The establishment of different committees/work groups for different parts of the reform, was an attempt to encourage and secure the participation and influence of the employees. In some districts, members of such groups felt that their suggestions had little influence on the continued process, and that the result of their work was not taken in to account. In a change process, it is important for individuals to feel useful and appreciated, and that what they are doing or contributing with is meaningful for themselves as well as for the organization. If individuals experience that their efforts does not matter, it is easier to get disengaged in the process, making it more difficult to succeed with the change efforts (Fernandez & Rainey, 2017). The organizational support for the reform has been difficult to obtain during the reform process (Renå, 2017).

The police reform has been a top-down reform, which for some may have been experienced as disengaging. In change process, where there are both advocates for and against change, involvement in the process can be essential to convince resisters of change to become champions of change (Nadler & Nadler, 1998). However, if the involvement is perceived as something superficial and of little influence to the rest of the process, the likelihood of the resistor becoming convinced of anything else, is often rather small (Stensaker & Haueng, 2016). Some of the informants have experienced a varying degree of actual meaningful involvement in the districts, and therefore feel a small degree of ownership in the reform, and little willingness to engage in the implementation process. According to Fernandez and Rainey, successful implementation of organizational change is reliant on the participation and engagement of the lower levels in the organizations, as well as senior management encouraging and rewarding innovation and drive for change (2017).

Structure

One aspect of the reform concerns the structural changes in the police. The number of districts have been reduced, as well as the number of leaders. One of the objectives for the reform is to increase efficiency by making use of new technology

and methods (Politiet, 2016). As an introduction to the interview, the informants were asked to describe the Norwegian police as an organization, and what separates it from other organizations. The terms bureaucratic, cumbersome and hierarchic were frequently mentioned by the informants. As the police has an hierarchical, and is governed by the Norwegian Storting, and by the National Police Directorate (POD), this could arguably be expected. However, with increased efficiency as an objective for the reform, it was interesting that the informants would experience the new structure as more bureaucratic and as a potential barrier for change.

Several of the informants expressed a resignation over the fact that they experience an increased degree of bureaucracy after the implementation of the reform. Several of the informants have experienced that the centralization of the organization, a direct consequence of the reform, have made what was previously quick and efficient procedures, in to a process where requests have to be filed through the proper channels, to the correct department, and wait for a reply.

Informant 4: what is demanding for us when becoming a bigger organization, is that many of the “shared” services are collocated with other districts, so if I want a new system for handling confiscations, which is more cost-effective, this is now a central decision which has to be made on a higher level in the organization. Even though everyone agrees on its use and value, this decision has to be made by someone higher up in the organization, in order to get a “green light”.

The police organization has for many years been characterized by a substantial maneuvering space, meaning a high degree of autonomy for leaders, allowing local adaptation and adjustment (Finstad, 2000). However, over time, this has seemingly led to the development of different ways of conducting police work and the delivery of different services to the public in different parts of the country. Moreover, the focus on establishing a more unified police, supplying similar services across districts, and strengthening the district’s infrastructure in terms of the competence available, and resources in terms of manpower for extraordinary events, may have gone to far with respect to the need for local adjustment. The unification arguably

to some extent presupposes a similar local context, and access to resources, which is in fact not the case in smaller and more rural local communities and districts.

Informant 6: Well, I think we have built an organization that in many ways, resembles the one in Oslo, but that we do not have the resources to sufficiently fill that model. The structure makes out the shell of the organization in our district, but we do not have enough resources to fill the shell. In order to remedy this, we have to reallocate these resources from other parts of the organization. The result is that the resources are spread thinly everywhere.

The new structure implemented has in many areas disrupted the previous workflow and procedures, and several of the informants perceive that individuals around them experience a loss of overview of the organization. The map of the organization is big, they have new districts and new lines of command to adjust to. Most of the informants agree on the fact the new structures need time to settle and that the police organization need time to adjust to the new structures, in terms of new leadership, the effects of the merging of districts, where “new organizations” have to find a way to work. This was supported in the recent report on the reform from Difi (2019).

The Norwegian police role traditionally training police officers to become generalists in the organization (Finstad, 2000a). Generalists are trained to have a more all-round knowledge base that can be used in multiple situations (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004). With the new police reform, there has been an increased focus on training specialists with focus on more specialized and invested knowledge within a specified knowledge domain (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004). The shift in prioritizing specialization among police officers, has entailed an increased demand for training and development of personnel. Furthermore, the establishment of specialist positions have also put a strain on departments with limited resources.

Several of the informants therefore argue that their district lack the infrastructure necessary to follow up and work within the new structure and at the same time facilitate for new change initiatives. Some departments have experienced an

increase in backlog caused by the workload as there are fewer hands in the departments to contribute to producing activities, such as solving incoming cases.

Informant 4: such a big organization, that is bound by statutory and structured routines, which we are bound by law to follow, ranging from impound (beslag) to roles and responsibilities, dissolves during a reform. That is perhaps the most difficult thing to get back into place... there are always several roles that is not in place when the organizational structure is set, then a long faze of trying to fill these extra roles commences.

As a result of the reform, a number of local police stations have been closed down, and some local communities feels an increased distance to the police (Hernar & Mortvedt, 2018). As a part of the strategy for the coming years, there is an intention of the organization to strengthen the presence of the police in the digital arena, through an increased focus on ICT (Politiet, 2016). In the long run, this can contribute to reduce the experience of increased distance. However, according to informant 1, there has not been made enough progress within ICT and the digital arena at this point, to facilitate new communication with the public and presence of the police in the digital space, to make up for the reduced presence due to closing of police stations in smaller communities.

Leadership

The structural aspect of the reform has in many ways led to a disruption of organizational routines and hierarchy. For some employees, the change implemented has entailed a new job, working in a different geographic location, and/or loss of autonomy and power. During the reform process, many have experienced uncertainty, and worries about how they could be affected by the change and what the future would look like. The willingness to engage in change efforts is often an evaluation of the cost and benefits associated with a possible engagement in for change (Rafferty et al., 2013). However, employees are not the only ones who have experienced uncertainty. This process of evaluation is also essential in the willingness to change among leaders and middle managers as well (Giangreco & Peccei, 2005). During the process, the leadership structure in the organization has also undergone changes causing some leaders to lose their

positions. According to several of the informants, finalizing the organization map, and filling the leader role positions have been a time consuming process. This has led to an increase in experienced uncertainty among some leaders. During the implementation process, the leaders were expected to act as promoters for change, and contribute to convince others of taking part in, and support the reform, but many have insinuated that this has been a challenge.

Informant 3: The ones most affected, was the leaders. They were supposed to reassure their employees and keep them informed, and at the same time experience uncertainty themselves, this became quite demanding for them.

The reaction to this uncertainty among leaders, was displayed in quite different ways:

Informant 3: Some leaders were greatly affected by the changes, but they kept on taking care of and reassuring “their people”, they continued to inform and keeping the process as predictable as possible for their employees. Other leaders, who barely were affected by the changes themselves, did their best to make it more difficult for the employees under them, by telling them how badly they had been treated, and contributed to spread more disinformation than correct information, conveying rumors, and so on.

The informant was a PNP-project leader in the first half of the reform implementation. The process was, according to the informant, clearly described by the National Police Directorate, and it formulated a clear direction for the implementation process to ensure a similar implementation across the country. The plan was to a large extent organized as a bullet point plan, and relatively straight forward. There have been at least two challenges that have made the reform process more challenging. One of the consequences of the reform has been a removal of leadership levels, and in several districts, the merging of diverse specialist departments. A challenge the informant faced as a project leader, was dealing with leaders who were affected by these changes, who did not support the reform and even worked actively against it.

Informant 3: (...) the most exhausting thing of being responsible for a project, is the somewhat unethical behavior, connected to resistance to change(...) you have to spend a lot of time trying to create a common understanding for "your" objective(...)

According to a couple of the informants, some of leaders were reluctant to give away the control or power they had before the reform, leading them to display unsportsmanlike behavior. Quite a few leaders fought to keep their position, and some leaders still have not given up. Further, some leaders who did not support the reform, started to work actively against it, making it difficult for their subordinates to take part in the change initiative, and becoming a barrier to change. Some of the informants described the challenge of having to cooperate with senior management not convinced by the reform.

Informant 3: As a project leader, I had to try to be a shield for my employees, and let them focus on the work. So I took, or rather, I tried to take the most of the resistance. I took some tough skin after some time.

According to one of the informants, some leaders who did not support or take ownership in the reform, at some point started to take part in double communication. Some leaders have a conflicting relationship with POD. Some express a lack of trust toward the directorate, and some have a perception that there is a lack of understanding and competence for the current situation within the directorate.

Informant 3: Sadly, this is anchored high up in the police districts, it is seldomly expressed directly, but it is apparent in the terms used to describe the directorate.

In other districts, some of the informants experienced an increased distance to the Chief of police in the district, after the merging of districts. With the introduction of a new Chief of police, some experienced a shift in the culture in terms of openness ask critical questions and put forward change initiatives. This was

experienced as a set back by some of the old employees in one of the previous districts. Where the leaders and senior management embraced change and presented it as a positive experience, the process was less challenging on the subordinates. They were to a greater extent able to create a common perception of the reform, and for the vision presented, arguably making it easier for the employees to interpret and make sense of the new situation (Weick, 1995). This has facilitated for employees to reconcile with the changes they were faced with, and go in to the reform process with a more prepared foundation.

Openness and uncertainty

Implementing the structural changes in the police, have substantially affected previous work patterns and lines of collaboration and cooperation in the organization. The merge of districts and departments, new leaders replacing old and familiar ones, new ways of working, and different perceptions of the future direction, can result in uncertainty among individuals (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). In one of the interviews, an informant presented the new organizational map with the structure for the district. The map present a clear and extensive structure, that most likely will be a useful tool to facilitate a more efficient organization and production of services. However, the same map could be perceived as quite complex and daunting for individuals trying to find their place in the organization (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Overwhelmed by multiple new changes, identifying how they will affect them personally becomes an important focus (Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2017). Many of the informants expressed a perception that a lot of people around them, leaders and other employees alike, have experienced uncertainty during the process connected to their future position. However, according to several of the informants, some individuals were not able or willing to take in that the changes could affect them.

Informant 10: Quite early in the process, we invited external lecturers to a gathering for leaders, both a lecturer from the National Police Directorate and, I think, another external lecturer, talking about how the process would affect them, addressing the leaders quite directly. “We previously had four police chiefs her in the area, after the implementation of the reform, we will

only have one! We are going to cut a leader level, the previous leader of the police station (stasjonssjef) will disappear". Only one can become the leader of geographical management unit (GDE- geografisk driftsenhet). I thought it was crystal clear(...)I thought it could not be made any clearer, but after some time passed by, evidently all of them thinks they are getting the positions that already have been cut.

The informant expressed an astonishment over the discrepancy between what was communicated and how it was perceived. The individuals continued to expect that they would get the positions. Another informant expressed a desire for more individuals to experience a level of uncertainty in the beginning of the process in order to establish the urgency for change, and making them understand that the change initiative could affect them. Some districts had during previous reforms avoided the bigger change initiatives, and expected the same to happen once again.

Informant 3: "The problem was that people thought they would not be affected by the change this time either, and if something were to happen, it would happen to everyone else but them, because their work was much more important than others, they were indispensable".

The merging of the police districts have brought different organizational cultures together. Some police districts have been characterized by openness and understanding, while others have been less open. Some of the informants experienced a change in leadership culture after the merge of the districts. Openness to ask question without the fear of repercussion is an important factor in an organization to encourage individuals to take part during change, and dare to be involved and contribute to a continuous development (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). While the old district had worked purposefully on creating an open culture, the new management in the district represented another tradition.

Informant 9: I have not experienced it personally, but I have experienced that people close to me have been reprimanded, and in many ways been despised for expressing their opinions or having opinions at all.

In the context of organizational change, this can become a barrier for future change initiatives, if employees fear repercussions when expressing their opinions (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). In another district, the informant perceived the situation to be quite different. The objective of the police reform: A culture characterized by openness and trust through good leadership and active employeeship (Politidirektoratet, 2018). The informant described the level of openness in the district as too open, and further, that this had been the trend in recent years. This was perceived as something positive for the organization.

Informant 2: I think we are amenable for change initiatives and suggestions. The hierarchy is there, but for me, it has never been a problem to go to the senior management in the district and say what I mean. And there was no problem for a police officer to approach me with their thoughts and opinions, when I was the leader of this police station. In my opinion, the opposite is often the case, it is almost too easy now, at least sometimes.

There seems to be an opening for employees to present change initiatives to their leaders. However, many of the informants were more unsure in terms of to what extent these initiatives would be operationalized and implemented in the organization.

Informant 8: (...) surely, there is room to come with suggestions and initiative for change, but to have the suggestions and initiatives for change being materialized, most likely gets harder and harder, the higher up in the system you get. I think change initiatives and suggestions for change to a great extent is encouraged and rooted for, but whether it is actually lifted up in the organization or materialized, that is another question”.

Several of the informants share the impression that at this point in the reform implementation, many leaders still have a high workload, and therefore are not able to see beyond the scope of the reform and existing responsibilities.

Reform vs. existing responsibilities

Implementing change can often be a challenging process in organizations. The police is not alone in having to go through change processes through reform, this is a recurring phenomenon for many government organizations. What separates the situation for the police as a government organization from other government organizations, is the number of statutory responsibilities which have to be carried out, regardless of the change process they are in. They cannot be put on hold while the reform is implemented, these have to be carried out parallelly with the change process. This has led to a challenge for leaders and employees in the police. Several of the informants express a feeling of frustration at different times during the process. Keeping the balance between maintaining the objectives of the reform, and at the same time fulfill the statutory responsibilities to the society, has been challenging at times.

Informant 10: Generally, there people have “worked for free”, due to the fact that we have to carry out our daily responsibilities and production alongside with the reform implementation.

With the implementation of the quality aspect of the reform, there has been a need for training of the employees, taking them, for a period of time, out of active duty while undergoing the required training. A minimal amount of additional resources have been given to compensate for the increased workload for the remaining personnel. This has been especially challenging for the department for police investigations. This department in particular has been vulnerable due to the implementation of “investigation promise” (etterforskningsløftet), that is directly aimed at strengthening the competence of the discipline. Another challenging aspect of this department, is the pressure on production. Unlike other departments, the criminal cases received at the department of investigations will create a backlog until they are solved, and with reduced investigation capacity, the pile will only grow.

Informant 10: Few measures have been made to compensate for the fact that the implementation of the reform and carrying out daily

responsibilities has to be carried out simultaneously, other than that we have had to rely on our employees willingness to put in extra effort and work longer than they are supposed to.

Another challenge, are the new specialist roles which have been introduced with the reform. For instance, coordinators of cases within domestic violence. The intention has been to strengthen the capacity and competence in the districts. However, these positions also demand resources, which has to be taken from somewhere. One of the newly appointed roles is the police contact. The role of the police contact has both been a source of skepticism and relief. Filling the role of the police contact has been solved differently in the numerous districts. In the district of one of the informants, this is a role that has been divided between section leaders in the district. Meaning that the leaders in addition to being responsible for managing their section, have an additional percentage to follow up and maintain contact with the municipalities. This has led to many leaders working overtime.

With the reform, the number of districts have been reduced, and several police stations have been closed. In some of the more rural districts, local communities experience that the police is not as available or present anymore. The intention of the police contact, is to work as a link between the police and local communities/municipalities, where the police station is closed, as a way to maintain the proximity tradition, which has been an important priority for the Norwegian police over the years (Finstad, 2000b). However, the informant experience that this role so far, has not filled the purpose it was intended to fill, and because of this, the service to these local communities have not improved. The introduction of the police contact as a somewhat replacement of the police presence through police stations, has not necessarily received a positive reaction from all (Hernar & Mortvedt, 2018).

As the role of or the position as the police contact is newly established, one can argue that it will take time until the maneuvering space connected to it and its function is fully established. Needs in different municipalities are likely to vary, therefore taking the time to arrive at the best model for the local context, is

arguably worth taking (Stensarker & Haueng). While this role establishing process has not reached a satisfying result in all districts, in some districts this process is starting to show results. Among the informants one shared a positive view on the role of the police contact. The informant experience that the role of the police contact has become important in that community, and further, that the contact established or rather maintained, has so far allowed the police to keep a relationship of trust in the local community.

Informant 2: In my area, we are on a positive path, I experience that the role I have is appreciated. People need a place to turn to or someone to contact when they have questions or worries(...) We, the police, owe it to them to answer the questions, give back to the community(...)

In this part of the mentioned district, the police contact is a full time position, and has the full priority of one dedicated police officer. The informant goes on to highlight the advantage of having knowledge and connections in the local community, in order to be able to establish a relationship needed with the municipality, and making the position a tool that is useful for the services of the police, and further, be a sufficient compensation for the closing of local police stations.

Informant 2: I have worked in the area for many years, so people know who I am. There can be a lot of contact at times, but that is how it is supposed to be.

Resources

Removing potential barriers during a change process, is important to make it easier for individuals to join and take part in the change effort (Kotter, 1995). As a way to create engagement in the organization, encourage positivity toward change and active involvement in the change process, it is important that the individuals involved have access to the resources they need, to carry out their responsibilities and tasks (Kahn, 1990). One of the informants characterized the reform as under-financed. The reform has entailed an establishment of new positions in the

districts such as specialist coordinators in different fields and police contacts. There seems to be a shared positivity toward these new positions, as they are likely to contribute to continued development within the respective fields. The quality aspect of the reform, contributing to continuous development of procedures and an increase in competence and skill among employees in the police, has seemingly been a positive measure so far in the reform. However, the newly appointed positions, and the objective to strengthen competence amongst employees, have led to a strain on resources.

First of all, the newly appointed positions are not fully financed from POD or the Department of Justice. This means that funds and resources has to be reallocated from elsewhere, from other departments and units. Many of these departments and units, already experienced a scarcity of resources, especially in terms of the staffing situation. Several of the informants described districts where they experience challenges with securing a satisfying arrangement for employees to take out holidays, and at the same time securing a justifiable staffing on call. These situations have been solved differently in many districts, depending on when the busiest seasons in district have been, which can differ from rural and more central areas (informant 9). Where some of the old districts have contained ski resorts and areas popular during winter, employees have traditionally taken out their holidays during the summer semester, other are located close to coast lines, and are popular and busy during the summer semester. Where districts have merged, finding a satisfying and practical arrangement adapted to both situations, is still under development.

In other districts, they experience having a sufficient number of staff available to carry out the daily responsibilities. However, the increased workload brought about by the reform, has put pressure on the resources available, making it a challenge to balance between the implementation of the reform measures and, and the statutory responsibilities. According to another informant, this is also applicable for ICT-departments. Informant number 1 describes a drive for change and development within the field, and a motivation for finding new useful ways to make use of technology, to the benefit of police personnel, and the organization as a whole. However, the same informant expressed a frustration over the mission

the department was given during the reform implementation, “*just make it work now, do not focus on making it better*”. Where better solutions could be found and developed, the mission for this implementation was to make it work right now. When asked what the reason could be for this, the informant perceived that it could mostly be explained by the cost of additional resources. All the informants expressed a wish of implementing a new mindset and structure in the police to secure continuous change and development in the future, in order to avoid future reforms. Informant 1 pointed to the fact that by continuously working to improve the ICT systems, the need for the bigger reforms or changes would decrease significantly, and the backlog could, to a greater extent, be prevented. A useful tool to accomplish this would be the supply of additional resources.

There were mixed perceptions among the informants of whether an increase in the supply of resources would substantially decrease the costs associated with the implementation of the reform or make the experience of the change process less hectic. According to Fernandez and Rainey, the failure of facilitating the process with a sufficient amount of resources, can lead to an unsuccessful implementation, by increasing interpersonal stress, and in some cases neglect of core activities and responsibilities in the organization (Fernandez & Rainey, 2017, p. 172).

Celebration and encouragement

During the change process, the police reform has received mostly negative publicity in Norwegian media, in the police unions, as well as in internally in the police. During the interviews, this was presented as a challenge for the continuous implementation. Convincing and selling the reform, and trying to get the members of the organization to actively engage in the reform has been challenging. There is little doubt that aspects of the reform has yet to produce positive results for the police. However, some progress has been made, and in order to energize or realize future change, celebrating the small victories can be beneficial (Kotter, 1995, Kouzes & Posner, 1999). Generating short-term wins can be an important asset for invigorating continuous change. Chia advocate directing the focus daily on the small steps and wins, instead of the big initiatives and ambitious plans (2014). Some of the victories achieved so far are the new operation/operative centrals, the

police is working more knowledge based, helped by better tools and a more targeted way of working.

When asked about whether celebration or encouragement has been and is a part of the implementation, this is an area most of the informants agree could be given more focus in the organization. However, several express a culture for backing each other through small gestures, like a pat on the back. Furthermore, celebration and encouragement can lead to closer bonds among colleagues (Kouzes & Posner, 1999). “I learned that openly celebrating successes is essential to building and sustaining a unified team (Kouzes & Posner, 1999, p. 7). In times of organizational change, encouragement and celebration can bring individuals together as a team and set a positive agenda (Kouzes & Posner). More so when connected with potential victories they have achieved.

Making change stick

In Kotter’s framework for change, the final steps of the change process relates to making sure that the initiatives introduced, will be permanently implemented and prevent old routines and procedures to slide back (Kotter, 1995). The implementation process has been in force for three years, and according to the informants, 2019 is expected to be a year for results. Many of the project groups have dissolved, and its members have moved on to new positions. The responsibility for driving change onward and ensuring the implementation of the rest of the measures in the reform, will now move from the project groups and turned over to the line of command, and there is connected some tension and suspense to the ongoing process (POD, 2019).

One of the informants describes a culture or tendency among some police leaders to attempt to renegotiate and reverse some of the changes that has already been decided and implemented.

Informant 3: Internally, there is little respect for the law, or more precisely bureaucratic laws and rules. In many cases, there is very little respect for others opinions, unless they support the majority opinion.

There are a lot of renegotiation and rematches going on, and there is little respect for established routines for collaboration(...)”.

Expectations for the continuation of the process

The process of implementing the police reform is not over yet. While there might be groups within the police that perceive that the change process is over, there are still a few steps to complete. When asked about how the informants looked at the continuation of the reform, there were different perceptions and expectations for the future process. Many expressed an optimism for the future and for the effects of the police reform. Several informants described the positive development within the quality aspect of the reform, and were able to identify multiple gains of the reform. When it comes to the structural part of the reform, there were more skepticism and hesitation when describing their expectation for the future.

Informant 9: “It still feels like we are waiting for something. We are waiting for someone to say something, to do something(...) I hope that more action will be taken, and that the necessary decisions will be made”.

Conclusions

The following chapter will sum up the thesis, present some concluding thoughts on the research question and finally identifying a potential area for future research.

How has the change process in the implementation of the new police reform been led and experienced by employees in the Norwegian police?

The implementation of the police reform has been experienced differently by employees, leaders and districts. While progress has been made in some areas, the police still wait for more gains to manifest themselves in the organization. To begin with, most of the employees experienced that there was a positive attitude toward change in general, however, the objective of the proximity police reform was by many experienced as too extensive. Further, many employees did not agree on the direction for the reform, specifically with respect to the structural part of the reform, which has led to an increased degree of centralization of the districts. In terms of involvement, there were arenas for dialogue and work groups where employees were given an opportunity to voice their opinions. However, few choose to engage and many did not experience them as relevant or useful. The structural aspect has perhaps been the most criticized part of the reform. The structural changes have led to a disruption of previous work patterns and flow, and the changes have not had the time to normalize yet. The leadership during the reform process has unfolded in different ways on different levels. The reform has affected leaders in many ways, especially with respect to the removal of leadership levels. For the most parts, leaders have been supportive and reassuring toward their subordinates. However, some informants have experienced unsportsmanlike behavior from some leaders, who have become barriers for change in their departments. There are different experiences concerning the openness and uncertainty connected to the process. Some of the informants have experienced a high degree of openness where they work, and others have experienced a development in the other direction. Furthermore, balancing the reform activities and the existing responsibility of the police, has been experienced as challenging with regards to the amount of competing priorities and

increased workload. Many leaders feel a lack of excess energy to encourage and meet subordinates and change initiatives.

The implementation of the reform has reached a point where in some areas, it might be time to supply additional resources to some of the districts, in order to facilitate for an easier transition from the reform. As previously mentioned, several districts perceive that the access to resources is limited, and further, that the workload has increased after the reform came into force. Fortifying the departments under high pressure is arguably also called for. Therefore, it might be time to supply additional resources to make sure that the structural changes implemented will stick, and that the new structure will be able to function and carry on. However, one can argue that, for example the infrastructure connected to IT and ICT should have been in place before the implementation started, in order to better facilitate the change process and avoid additional challenges connected to infrastructure. Furthermore, an important aspect of the increased workload following the implementation process, is to secure a sustainable employee policy, in order to prevent burnout among employees. As previously mentioned, some of the informants experience that subordinates are willing to work overtime, undertake additional responsibilities in order to carry out the societal mission of the police.

As this study only include police officers and civilians, it could be interesting to look further into the third professional group in the organization, the prosecutors, to obtain more insights into how this professional group has experienced the implementation process, and whether or not there is a discrepancy between the groups.

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Appendices

Interview guide

Innledende kommentarer:

Hei, Takk for at du hadde mulighet til å stille opp på intervju. Jeg jobber med en masteroppgave om endringsledelse og implementeringen av den nye politireformen. Gjennom arbeidet med denne oppgaven ønsker jeg å se nærmere på prosessen med å implementere reformen og ledelsen av den. Jeg ønsker å undersøke hvordan prosessen har blitt lagt opp og hvordan ansatte i politiet har opplevd denne endringsprosessen. Avsatt tid til intervjuet er 45-60 minutter. Jeg vil ta et lydopptak av intervjuet, og muligens gjøre noen notater underveis.

INNLEDNING/BAKGRUNN:

1. Kan du fortelle om din erfaring i politiet? Din utdanning og hvor lenge du har jobbet i politiet?
2. Hva er din nåværende stilling og ansvarsområde?
3. Hvorfor valgte du å bli politi? Hva var din motivasjon?
4. Er motivasjonen for å jobbe som politi like stor i dag?
5. Hvordan vil du beskrive politiet som organisasjon? Hvordan skiller politiet som organisasjon seg fra andre organisasjoner? (struktur, åpenhet og villighet for endring, kultur, ledelse)
6. Har det operative miljøet endret seg de siste årene? Hvis ja, på hvilken måte?(Endret seg mye/lite?)
7. Har måten dere jobber på endret seg de siste årene? Hvis ja, på hvilken måte?
8. Har din stilling og ansvarsområde endret seg som følge av implementeringen av reformen? Hva har din rolle vært i reformprosessen?

TANKER OM ENDRINGSPROSESSEN

BEHOV FOR ENDRING? - CREATING A SENSE OF URGENCY

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1. Da behovet for endringer i politiet ble et samtaleemne blant politikere, i media og ellers i samfunnet, har du inntrykk av at dette også ble gjenspeilet innad i politiet?
 - a. (tema ble brakt på bane i etterkant av en rimelig ekstrem situasjon for politiet)
 2. Tenkte du i forkant av implementeringsprosessen at det var på tide å gjøre endringer?
 - a. Hvis ja/nei, kan du si noe mer om det?
 3. På hvilken måte har dette endret seg med implementeringsprosessen?
 4. Hvordan opplever du at man forholder seg til endringer og utvikling generelt innad i politiet?
 5. Hvem tar oftest initiativ til å endre rutiner, prosedyrer eller finne nye måter å løse en oppgave på? (Store strukturelle, små dagligdagse)
 6. Opplever du at innstillingen til å gjennomføre endringer endrer seg ut ifra hvem som foreslår de? Hvis ja, kan du si noe om hvordan du opplever dette?
 7. Hvor åpent er det for å gjøre lokale tilpasninger? (innad i avdelingen, på politistasjonen...)
 8. Opplever du at det er åpenhet for å komme med forslag til nye måter å løse oppgaver på? Hvis ja, kan du si noe om hvordan du opplever dette?
 9. Er vurderinger eller evalueringer av måten dere jobber på, oppdrag dere har vært ute på eller strukturen ved ditt arbeidssted en del av arbeidsdagen?

FELLES INNSATS? - PULL TOGETHER THE GUIDING TEAM

1. Kan du fortelle litt om hvordan implementeringen har blitt gjennomført i ditt distrikt, eller der du jobber?
2. Hvem har blitt/har vært involvert i prosessen?
3. Hva er viktig for deg som leder? Hvordan vil du beskrive måten du leder andre på?
4. Hvordan har det vært å motivere de du er leder for, til å slutte opp om endringene som skulle gjennomføres?

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5. I hvilken grad opplever du at man har fått/tatt eierskap til Nærpolitireformen i politiet? Er /har implementeringen et felles prosjekt?

TROVERDIG OG REALISTISK PLAN? - DEVELOP THE CHANGE VISION AND STRATEGY/CREATING A SENSIBLE VISION

«Målet med politireformen er å sikre tilstedeværelse av et kompetent og effektivt lokalt nærpoliti, der befolkningen bor, og samtidig utvikle gode fagmiljøer som er rustet til å møte dagens og morgendagens kriminalitetsutfordringer».

1. Hvordan har målsettingen for politireformen blitt mottatt?
2. Hvilke tanker har du gjort deg rundt målsettingen? Er det mulig å gjennomføre, vil det lede til en bedret organisasjon som kan møte et samfunn i endring og likevel ivareta tilbudet til publikum? I hvilken grad presenterer, mener du, en klar visjon for politiets fremtidige visjon og arbeid?
 - a. Hvilke prioriteringer og mål i reformen mener du fremstår som de mest viktige?
 - b. Opplever du at det er områder som ikke behandles i reformen som burde fått mer fokus?
3. I hvilken grad opplever du at det ble utarbeidet en strategi for å gjennomføre endringsprosessen? Kan du si noe om på hvilken måte? Klare mål og definerte midler for å nå målene? Strategi? Kan du si noe om hvordan du har opplevd dette?
4. «Nærpolitireformen» innebærer ganske store omstillinger og endringer i forhold til politiets tidligere organisering, samsvarer den nye organiseringen med hvordan du tenker at politiet burde organiseres for å tilby best mulig tjenester til publikum?
5. Den nye politireformen innebærer på flere måter en endring i politiets arbeidsoppgaver og ansvarsområder. Hvordan har den påvirket ditt ansvarsområde? (området du er leder for)

**SELGE INN KONSEPTET? - COMMUNICATE THE NEW
VISION/COMMUNICATE FOR UNDERSTANDING AND BUY IN**

1. Hvordan ble den nye reformen kommunisert/presentert innad i politiet?
2. Ble Stortingsvedtaket kommunisert tydelig da du fikk presentert reformen? Hvor mye kjennskap hadde du til de spesifikke tiltakene i reformen?
3. Stemmer den nye strategien med måten du tenker politiet burde jobbe på?
4. I hvilken grad opplever du at reformen slik den har blitt implementert så langt stemmer overens med slik den ble presentert i forkant av prosessen?
5. Hvordan har du opplevd kommunikasjonen med ledere og POD (osv) underveis i implementeringen av reformen? Hvordan har endringene blitt kommunisert underveis i prosessen?
6. Hva tenker du om navnet politireformen har fått/blitt døpt til?

**LEGG TIL RETTE FOR OG OPPMUNTRE TIL INVOLVERING? -
EMPOWER OTHERS TO ACT/REMOVE OBSTACLES TO CHANGE**

1. Hvordan har implementeringen av reformen påvirket din arbeidshverdag?
2. I hvilken grad opplever du at det har blitt lagt til rette for at implementeringen skulle skje på en god måte? Menneskelige hensyn, osv.
3. Kan du si noe om hvilket inntrykk du har av om ansatte i politiet har opplevd usikkerhet knyttet til sin fremtidige rolle, stilling, som en følge av implementasjonen av Nærpolitireformen?
4. Hvordan har du så langt opplevd prosessen? Tydelig, nok informasjon, usikkerhet, etc. Har du kjent på en slik usikkerhet? Hvis ja, på hvilken måte?

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5. Ser du noen nye muligheter i forhold til politiet og måten dere jobber på i etterkant av Nærpolitireformen? Ser du noen utfordringer som kan bremse eller vanskeliggjøre implementeringsprosessen?
 6. I hvilken grad opplever du at det har blitt gitt nok ressurser og tid til å gjennomføre endringene reformen bringer med seg?
 7. Kan du si noe om hvordan du leder/har ledet dine medarbeidere/underordnede i reformarbeidet?
 8. Kan du si litt om mulige dilemmaer mellom reformarbeid og dagligpraksis, og hvordan dere eventuelt løser dette?
 9. I hvilken grad opplever du at det er rom og åpenhet for å fremme egne ideer, komme med innspill, etc. i politiet?
 10. I hvilken grad opplever du at du har blitt inkludert i implementeringsprosessen og fått løpende informasjon underveis?
 11. I hvilken grad opplever du at du har fått muligheten til å påvirke hvordan implementeringen skulle gjennomføres?

MOTIVASJON OG DELMÅL?- CREATE SHORT-TERM WINS

1. Hvordan har prosessen blitt lagt opp i ditt ansvarsområde, har det blitt lagt mest vekt på det langsiktige målet med reformen, eller har det blitt brutt opp til mindre kortsiktige mål?
2. Hva har din rolle eller oppgave som leder vært i implementeringsprosessen?
3. Hvordan har du som leder lagt opp den videre prosessen med implementering av reformen? Overordnet mål, eller delmål underveis.
4. I hvilken grad opplever du, eller har du inntrykk av at dere gjør fremgang i implementeringsarbeidet, vil dere klare å innføre reformen etter tidsplanen?
5. I hvilken grad opplever du at det er tid eller har vært tid i arbeidshverdagen til å feire eller anerkjenne eventuelle fremskritt underveis i prosessen?

HOLD UT; MÅLET ER I SIKTE? - NOT LETTING UP UNTIL THE CHANGE HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED/ESTABLISHED

1. Hvordan motiverer du dine medarbeidere/underordnede til å fortsette å være en del av implementeringsprosessen?
2. I hvilken grad opplever du at pågang for endring har endret seg i løpet av denne implementeringsperioden? Blant ledere, kollegaer, etc. Er trykket for gjennomføring fremdeles like sterkt?
3. På hvilken måte er det gjort noen tiltak når det kommer til å kontinuerlig oppdatere de ansatte på beslutninger som er tatt, nåværende status og prosessen fremover?(Kommunikasjon, dialog)

OPPRETTHOLDE ENDRINGER OG IKKE GÅ TILBAKE TIL GAMLE VANER? - CREATING A NEW CULTURE/ENSURE THAT THE CHANGES WILL NOT BE OVERCOME BY STUBBORN, HARD-TO-DIE TRADITIONS

1. Reformen har også som mål å satse mer på ledelse i politiet, har du som en del av implementeringen deltatt på lederkurs eller annen opplæring? Kan du fortelle mer om dette?
2. Kan du si noe om det blitt lagt til rette underveis for arenaer hvor ansatte kan ta opp spørsmål, bekymringer, misforståelser eller usikkerhetsmomenter knyttet til reformen?
3. Har implementeringen av politireformen ført til en endring i måten man tenker på endring i politiet? Hvis ja, på hvilken måte?
 - a. I hvilken grad tror du endringene som har blitt gjennomført vil bli opprettholdt fremover?
4. Hvordan har endringsvilligheten i politiet blitt styrket eller redusert i etterkant av reformen? Hva tror du dette skyldes?
5. Hvordan har den nye reformen endret organiseringen, måten å jobbe på i ditt distrikt/din avdeling?
 - a. Handlingsrom – før og etter reform
 - b. Klarere ansvarsfordeling
 - c. Samarbeid med nærliggende politistasjoner/enheter
 - d. Kunnskapsdeling

-
6. Nå i ettertid, i hvilken grad var du forberedt på alle endringene som har blitt innført? Og hvor forberedt var dine kollegaer?
 7. Har det vært noen overraskelser underveis? Hvis overraskelser, hvilke har dette vært?
 8. Hvis du skulle gjennomført endringsprosessen på nytt igjen, er det noe du ville gjort annerledes?
 9. Eventuelt noe du skulle sett at ble gjort annerledes som var utenfor din kontroll?
 10. Hvordan ser du på veien videre? Hva er neste steg i prosessen?

AVSLUTTENDE SPØRSMÅL

1. På hvilken måte har eventuelt samarbeidet det med publikum endret seg som følge av reformimplementeringen?
2. Opplever du at publikumstilbudet har blitt bedre som følge av den nye reformen?
 - a. Hvis ja, på hvilke områder? Hvis nei, hvilke områder samt hvordan de har blitt dårligere

Da har ikke jeg noen flere spørsmål, har du noe mer du ønsker å legge til?

Tusen takk for at du satte av tiden og bidro.

Approval NSD

NSD NORSK SENTER FOR FORSKNINGSDATA

NSD sin vurdering

Prosjekttittel

Politiet som lærende organisasjon i møte med reformer og endringer i samfunnet

Referansenummer

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Registrert

06.02.2019 av Iselin Gjeruldsen - gjeruldsen.iselin@gmail.com

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Handelshøyskolen BI / BI Oslo / Institutt for ledelse og organisasjon

Prosjektansvarlig (vitenskapelig ansatt/veileder eller stipendiat)

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Type prosjekt

Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

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Prosjektperiode

01.02.2019 - 01.07.2019

Status

08.02.2019 - Vurdert

Vurdering (1)

08.02.2019 - Vurdert

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg den 08.02.2019. Behandlingen kan starte.