



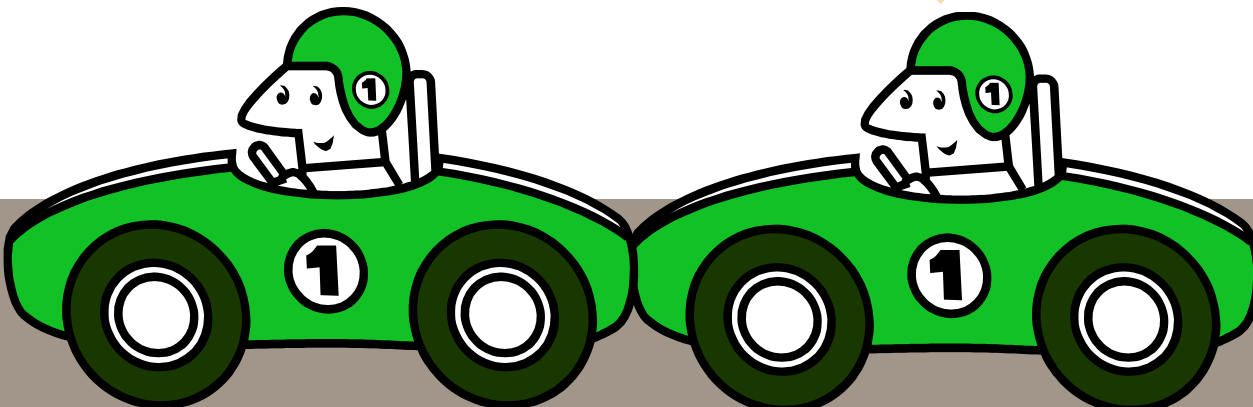
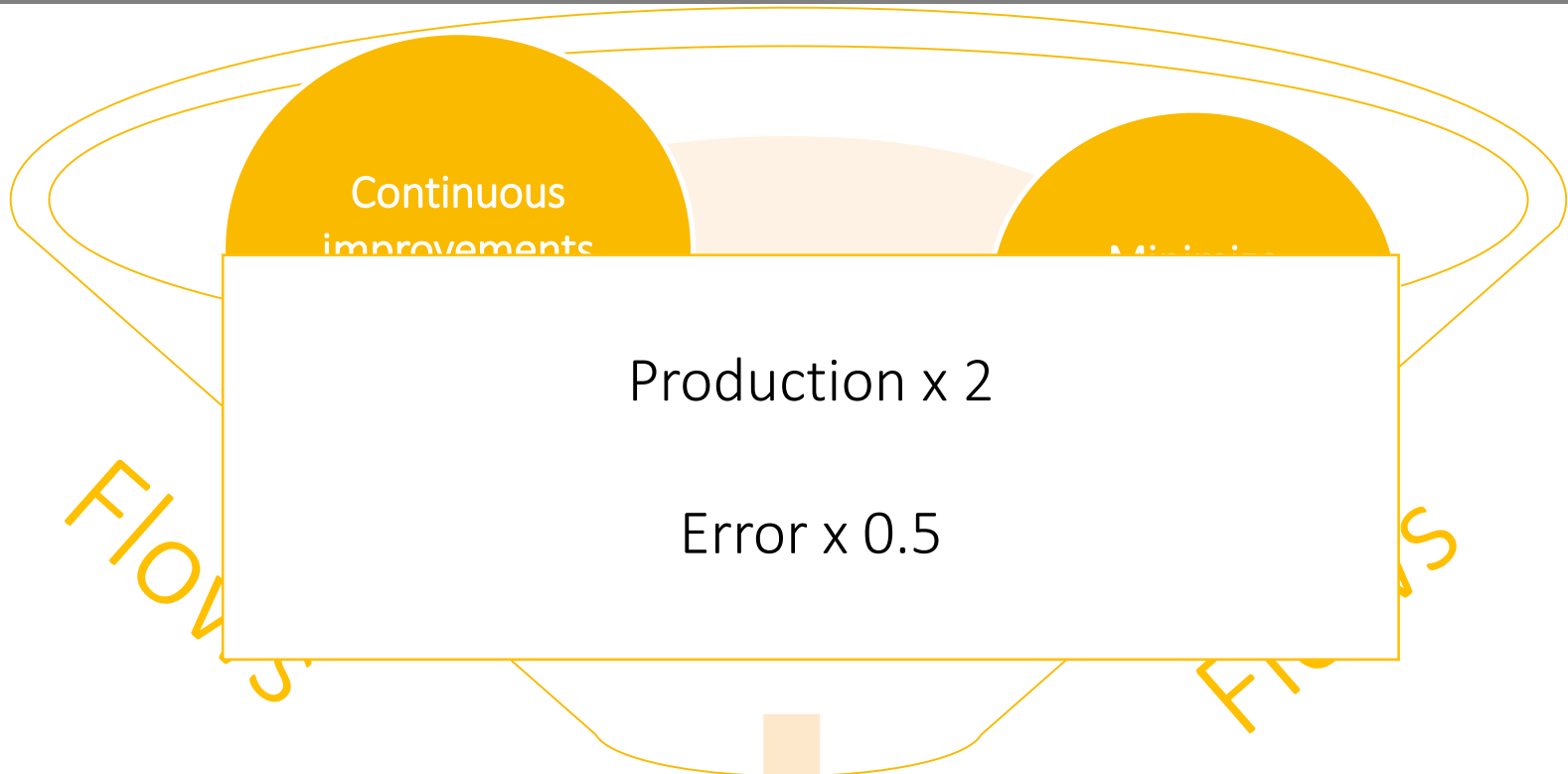
# Migrationsverket

Swedish Migration Agency  
International Affairs Department

# Promoting Quality Outcomes in Asylum Adjudication through Lean Management

- ▶ Lean management
- ▶ Implementing Lean in the Swedish Migration Agency
- ▶ Quality assurance in asylum adjudication through Lean management
- ▶ International partnerships

# Toyota Production System



# Resource efficiency

Resource

Organization characterized by distinct "islands" where each co-worker has a work portfolio with unique goals

Flow Unit

Flow Unit

Flow Unit

Modig & Åhlström 2012

# Flow efficiency

Resource

Resource

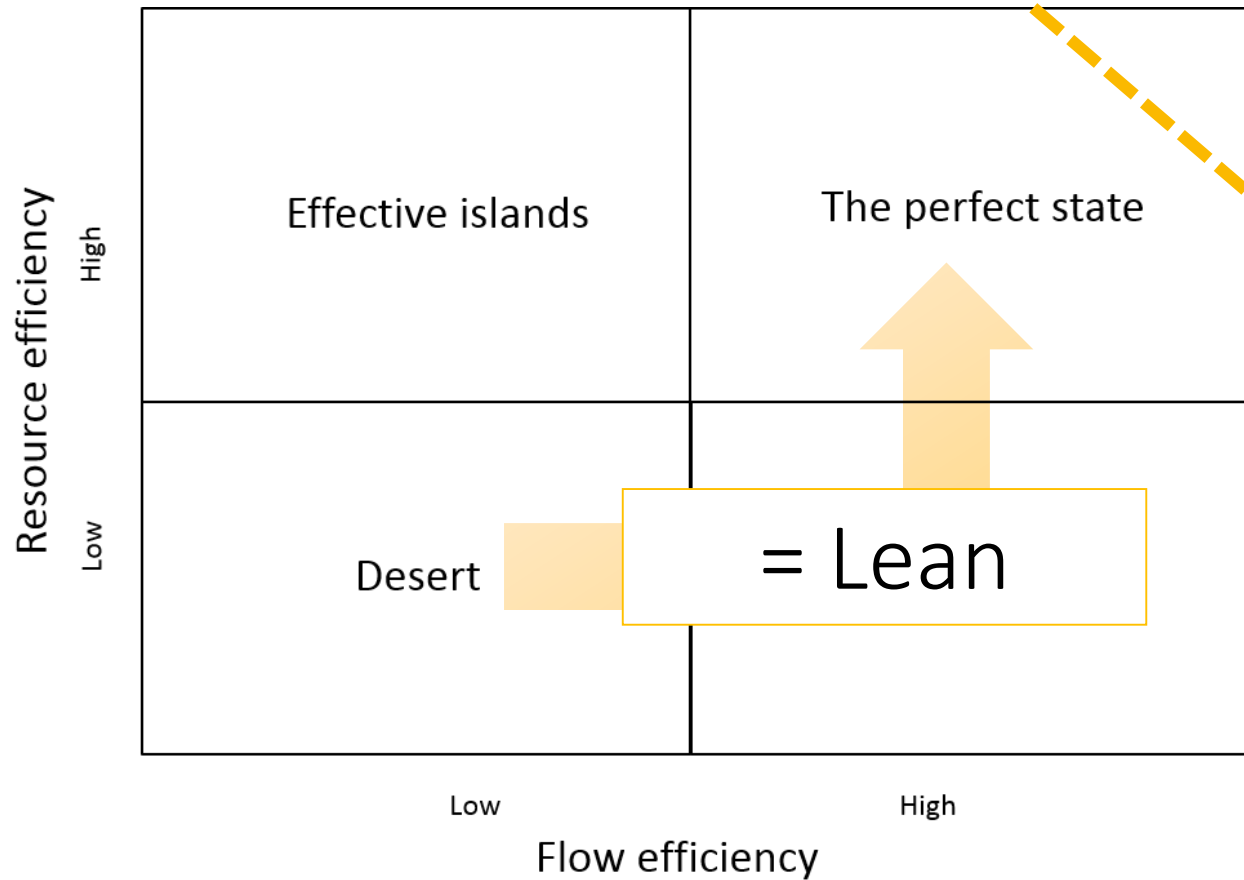
Resource

Organization has distinct processes where staff work in teams and focus on shared goals

Flow Unit

Modig & Åhlström 2012

# Little's Law and The Efficiency Paradox



Modig & Åhlström 2012

# Waste

Overproduction

Duplication

Unnecessary work

Unnecess

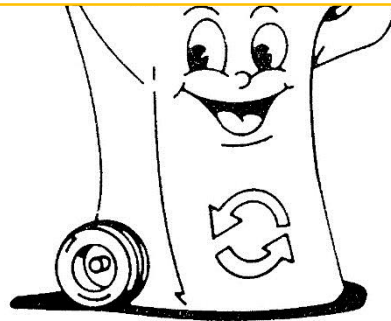
Waste = Flow Inhibitor

se of error

Handovers

Lost creativity

Overproduction



Unnecessary work

Waiting

# Our Lean journey

2009

## Project Shorter Wait

Assisted by McKinsey Consulting, a leaner RSD-process cut handling times from over 13 months to 3 months. Courts analysed cases and found positive quality improvements. **Enabled expedited procedure for requesting additional funds from GoS.** Facilitated improved response to increased migration flows today.

2011

## Organisation-wide implementation

All areas of the SMA implemented lean. All units structured in 7-8 person teams and rolled out improved value streams and systems for continuous improvements.

2013

## The Learning Organisation

Another ERF-funded project introduced continuous improvements to the staff through a learning organisation in order to further enhance quality in RSD.

2015

## The future

An increase in the number of applicant and a subsequent doubling of staff has yielded challenges in maintaining a system of continuous improvements.



# Implementing Lean as a business model in RSD

## Key finding

- Geographic discrepancies in Sweden

## Key challenge

- Harmonizing adjudication practices and outcomes across 14 Asylum Examination Units



# What is a Learning Organization?

A safe environment that values reflection, experimentation and development of knowledge, **where management requests learning** and appreciates development of competence.



# SMA Lean

## Principles

- Continuous improvements
- Respect for every person

## Purposes to achieve

- Client value
- Balances and harmony
- Innovation/development
- Sustainability

## Methods

- Standardized process
- System for continuous improvements
- Value-stream mapping
- Teamwork
- Visualized work
- Lead time
- Hands-on leadership
- Management by coaching

## Client focused, continuous improvements



” With focus on what will be of value to the client, we continuously review our processes, our way of working and our routines. This in order to incrementally, through a series of small steps, improve our organization and our service to the client.

# Continuous improvements

## A holistic model

All teams across the organisation meet every morning to discuss what can be done better today compared to yesterday. Tasks and suggestions are visualized on a whiteboard.

The improvement chain is short and fast. Suggested improvements reach the executive office before noon. Amended standards guide revised implementation practices – real-time control and M&E.

An example from the corporate world: suggested improvements have to meet three conditions:

1. Better for the customer
2. Simpler for the employees
3. Cost improvements for the organisation

# External Reference Group

A reference group of key partners and stakeholders was formed:

- UNHCR
- Red Cross
- Save the Children
- Amnesty International
- Migration court
- The Swedish Bar Association
- The Swedish Network of Refugee Support Groups



# The Learning Organization project



# Value stream analysis – a typical result

**Handover :**  
need for a  
new person  
to restart

**Secondary need:**  
Concerned  
applicant calls  
SMA

Case officer over-  
worked:  
non-working  
**inventory** created

Late quality  
check:  
need to  
**rework**

OLD



NEW



**Front loading:**  
Experts screen  
cases at  
registration and  
assign them to a  
suitable flow

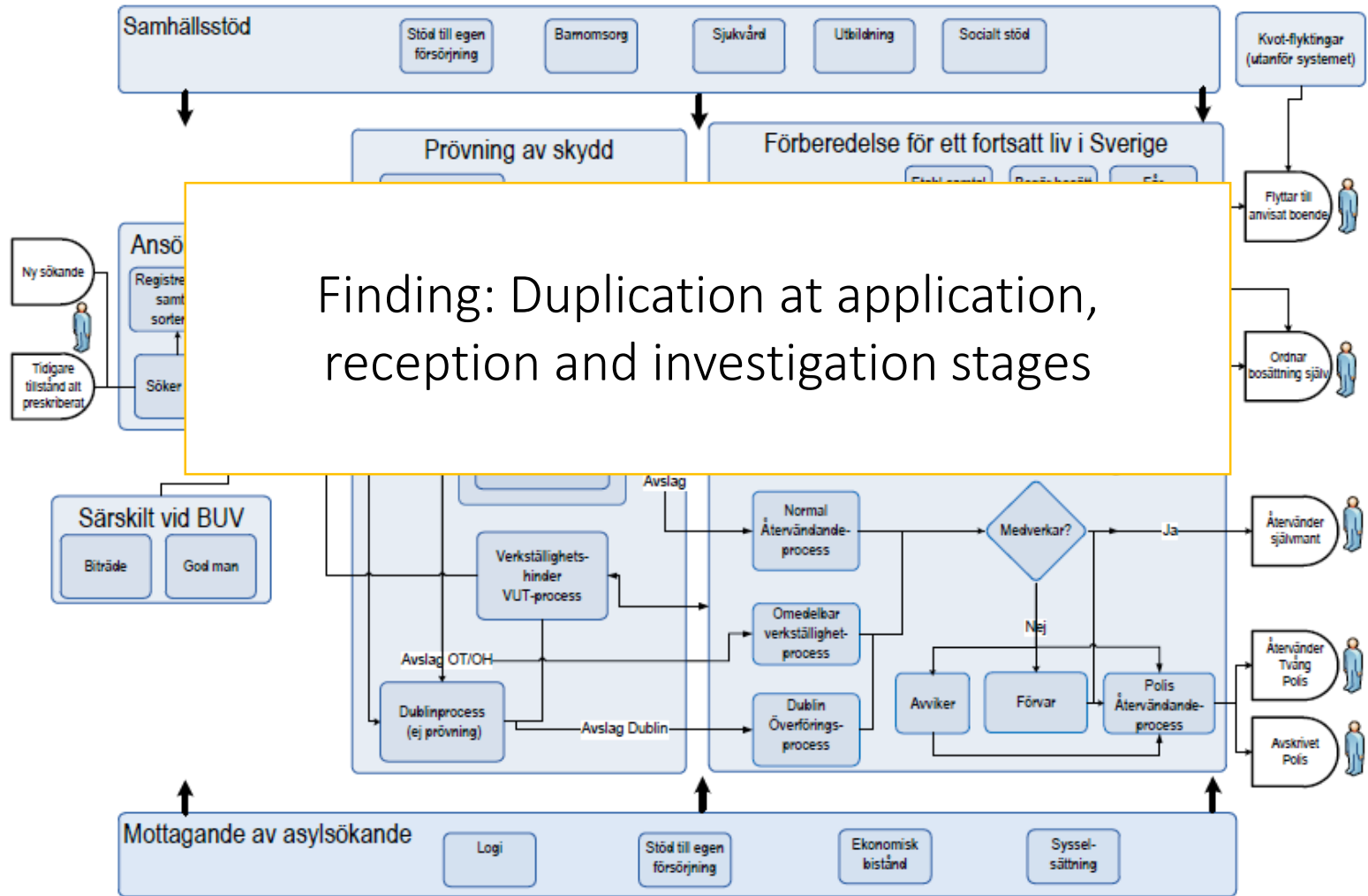
**Even flows :**  
case officers have  
an even work load  
and can increase  
quality

Applicants are  
aware of the next  
step in the process

THROUGHPUT TIME



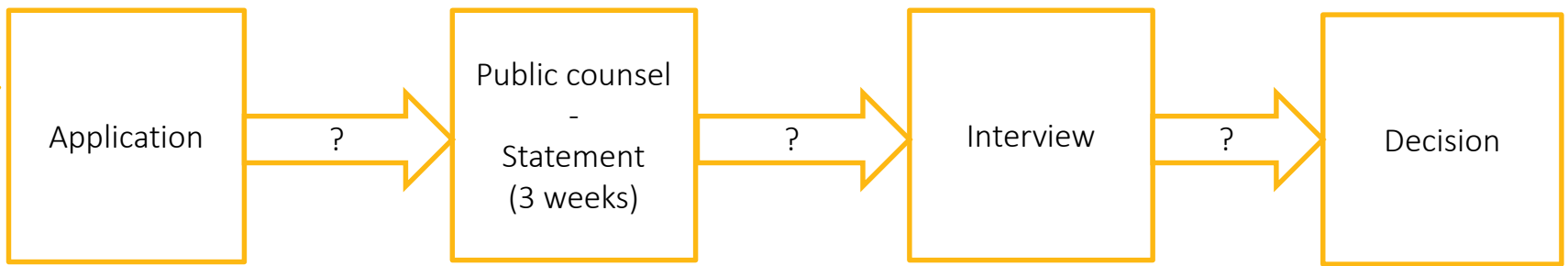
# The Protection Process



Finding: Duplication at application, reception and investigation stages

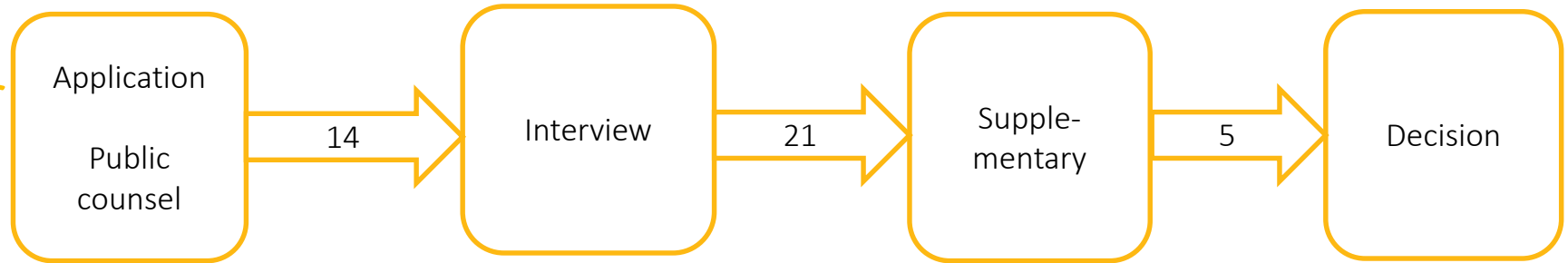
# Resource “islands” versus standardized “Protection Process”

BEFORE



Average throughput time in 2008: 267 days

AFTER



Average throughput time in 2012: 120 days

Average throughput time in 2014: 140 days

# Defining quality outcomes in Sweden

” To improve the conditions for a uniform asylum examination process characterised by high level of legal quality

➔ A short waiting period for a correct and understandable decision that reflects that the applicant was heard.

- Uniformity of procedures and outcomes
- High legal quality
- Reasonable time-frame
- Plain language
- Applicant heard

# Defining uniformity

- Identical outcomes in cases involving similar determinative criteria regardless of where the application was adjudicated
- Identical processing of cases involving similar determinative criteria regardless of where the application was adjudicated.

# Operationalizing Lean: defining outputs

- Tools and methods for support and control
- Leaders that promote an organization committed to continuous learning
- Case-based learning
- Increased competence within asylum adjudication

# Tools and methods for support and control

- A quality standard checklist and reference resource
- A method for quality assurance at the unit/departmental level
- A method to promote uniformity of outcomes in asylum examination
- A method to ensure decisions are articulated in a way so as to ensure they are understood by applicants

# Leaders that promote an organization committed to continuous learning

- Team based
- Role: remove obstacles
- Employ a coaching management approach
- Look for system errors, not individual errors
- Frontload expertise
- Focus on management, not technical work
- Accept conflict as an inherent trait in high-performing teams but seek to promote quick, amicable resolutions

# Case-based learning

- Teams follow cases through the relevant sections of the asylum process
- Fictitious, real (anonymized) cases
- Case database
- Builds on staff experience, facilitator role versus teaching role
- Permits exploration of particularly challenging areas



# Increased competence within asylum adjudication

- Introductory program focusing on the civil servant role and other skills that contribute to success within the asylum adjudicator role.
- Staff will also be able to self-evaluate their performance and the quality of decisions rendered.
- University tailored curriculum on administrative law and migration, the primary purpose of which is to provide a basis for continued learning for case officers who wish to pursue a career as decision-makers within asylum adjudication.

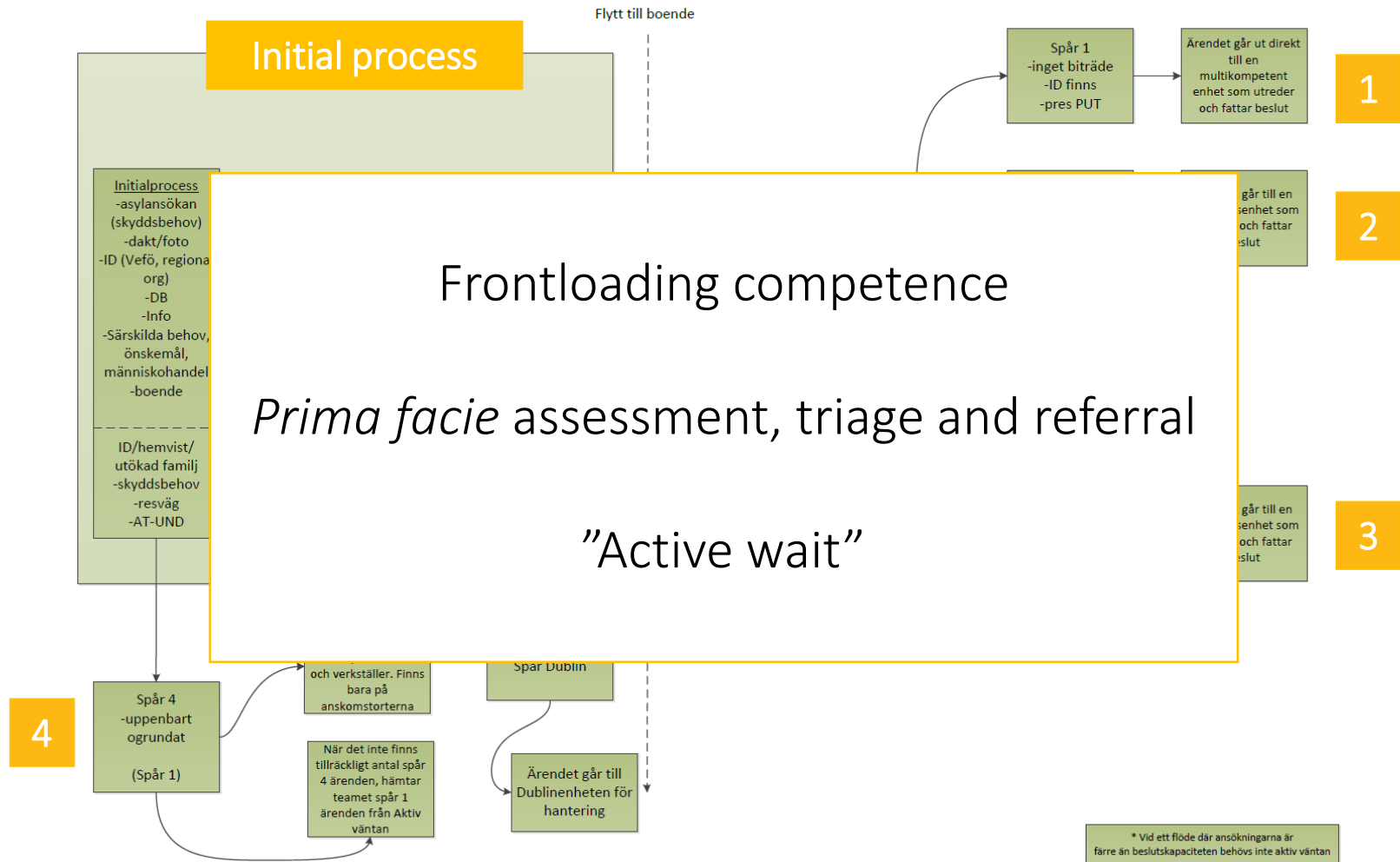
# Post-project phase

- 2015 Learning Organization project concluded

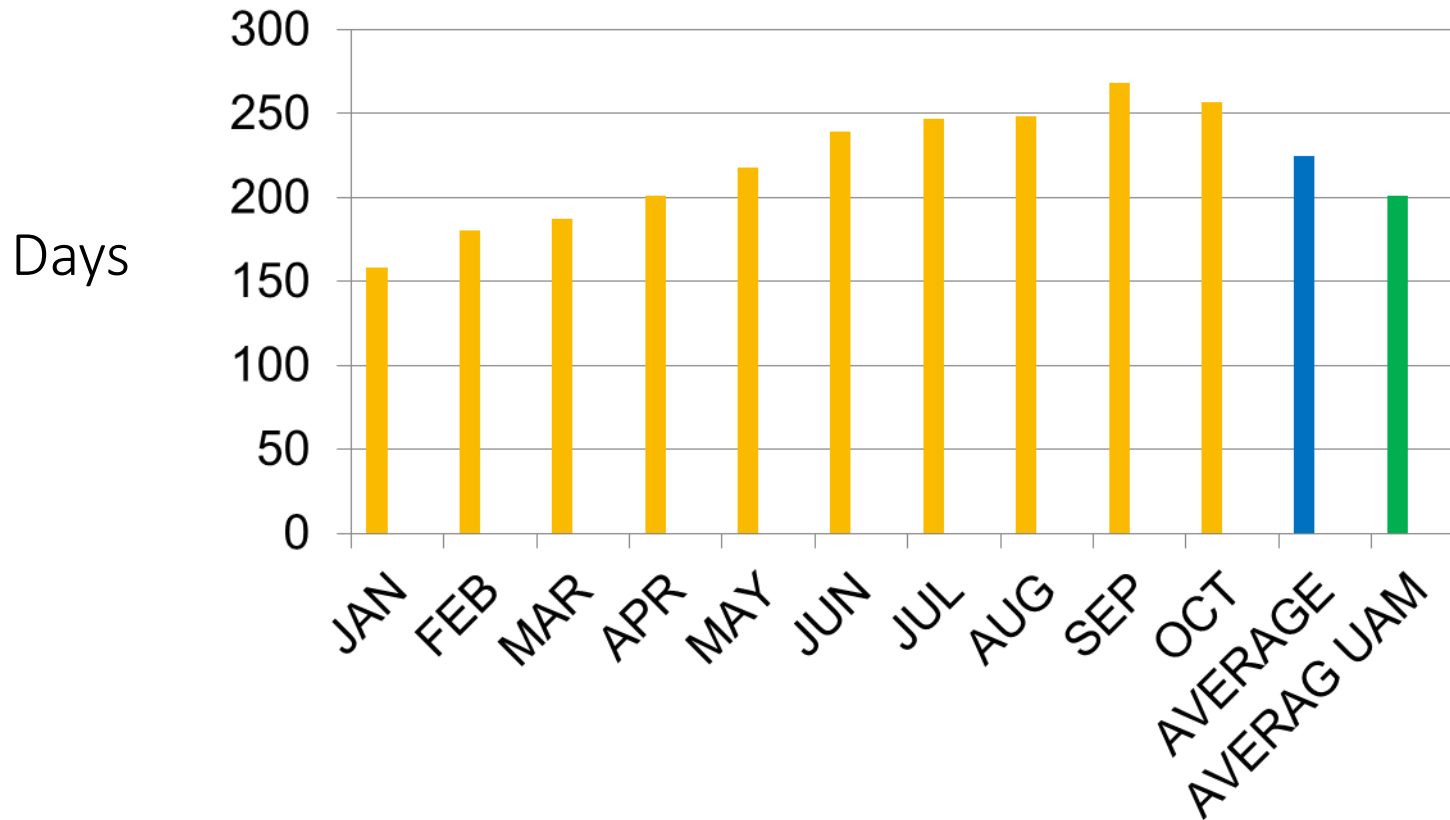
## Now

- Understanding Asylum
- The Improved Protection Process

# The Improved Protection Process



# Waiting periods 2015



# International cooperation

- Iceland 2014-2015
- Turkey 2014-2016\*
- Turkey (planned) 2016-2018/9\*



SWEDEN

\*With the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

# Organizational commitment

- 35 staff members working exclusively on quality assurance
- XX staff members working exclusively on Lean reform

# More about Lean



*This is Lean*, Niklas Modig, Pär Åhlström; 2012

