



Report of focus group research for the Wise project.

For us it was easier to do this research as a questionnaire, mostly because we ran out of days to finish before the deadline agreed upon in the project.

The research was done in the period may 4. – may. 15. 2009 in two of the VoPro adult education centres. Our main informants were 83 immigrants from 24 countries and 11 teachers/staff people from the centres.

We had one form to fill in for each of the two informant groups. (see appendix)

1. Result of the questionnaire for immigrants:

What we know about the people who answered:

83 immigrants from all over the world, but unfortunately none from the Baltic countries!

Countries represented:

Thailand 14, Burma 12, Polen 9, Pakistan 8, Irak 5, Sri Lanka 4, Tsjetjenia 4, Somalia 3, Philipinnes 3, Iran 2, India 2, Brasil 2, USA 1, Russia 1, China 1, Congo 1, Afghanistan 1, Cuba 1, Turkey 1, Kosovo 1, The Netherlands 1, Rwanda 1, Ghana 1 and Indonesia 1.

Gender:

64 women and 19 men

Age:

Oldest 55 years and youngest 17. Average age all: 32 years.

Residence time in Norway:

Longest time in Norway was 22 years, the shortest 5 month.

Average: 2,9 years

These were the answers to my questions:

Question 1. How soon did you understand the local culture (Set a mark/ X)

Answer:

5	36	28	29
Soon	After a few months	After 1 year	There is much I still don` t understand

My comments: It takes some time to understand local culture, but a majority feels they understand it after some months – 1 year. Many answering “*There is much a still don` t understand*” also said that they understood the culture after a few months/1 year.

Question 2 What have you showed/displayed of your own culture in your new society?

Answer:

43	59	23	26	8
Clothes	Food	Religion	Song/music	Art

My comments: Majority for food and clothes, very few for art. Obvious?

Question 3. Do you think Norwegians are interested in your culture?

Answer:

60	34
Yes	No

My comments: 41% thinks that Norwegians are not interested in their culture. But still a nice majority who means we are interested.

Question 4. If they are interested, which sides of your culture?

Answer:

24	58	26	32	20
Clothes	Food	Religion	Song/music	Art

My comments: Maybe we should have had more alternatives? Food is the number one choice.

Question 5: Which are the best places you can show /share your culture with norwegians

Answer:

62	31	23	14	12	29	5
Norwegian language course	School or kindergarten	Internet	Local paper/ local TV	National media	Meeting place Norwegians and immigrants.	Participate in local clubs, organizations

My comments: Not surprising that a majority answers that Norwegian language classes are the best place for cultural exchange, as long as all our informants were participants at our adult education centres. School/kindergarten, meeting places Norwegians and immigrants and Internet can also be used for this purpose. Interesting to see that only 5 persons see “*participate in local clubs, organizations*” as a good alternative.

Summary:

A majority feels they understand local/national culture after some months – 1 year. But 34 % says that there is much they still don't understand. In other words – it really takes time to get a deep understanding of a new culture.

Food is the number one link between different cultures according to this questionnaire.

A majority, 72 %, says that they believe locals are interested in their culture.

Norwegian language courses and local meeting places for locals and immigrants are good arenas for cultural exchange. Internet are also considered an alternative.

2. Result of the questionnaire for teachers/locals:**What we know about the people who answered:**

11 locals, mostly teachers answered.

Age: 40-70 Average: 51,7 years

Gender: 7 women and 4 men

Question 1. How much/where do you meet immigrants? (Set a mark/X)

Answer:

		9	8	2	3
Never	Seldom	At work	Private/ friends/ family	Through local clubs, organizations	Through schools /kindergarten

My comments: Many of the teachers/staff also meet immigrants private, also as friends.

Question 2. What do you know about local immigrants background/culture ?

Answer:

Immigrants from <i>Western countries</i> (All Europe, USA, Canada, Australia and so on.)			Immigrants from <i>Non-Western countries</i> (Asia, Afrika)		
1	5	4		6	4
Little/nothing	Pretty much	Much	Little/nothing	Pretty much	Much

My comments: Strange that one person has little/nothing knowledge of immigrants from Western countries!

Question 3. Do you think that it is important that immigrants have good knowledge of local/norwegian culture?

Answer:

11	
Yes	No

My comments: Unanimous.

Question 4. Do you want to know/learn more about the immigrants cultures,?

Answer:

11	
Yes	No

My comments: Unanimous. I think that my informants are not representing the Norwegian populations meaning in this questions,.

Question 5: Question 5: Which are the best places to know/learn more of the immigrants cultures?

Answer:

8	3	4	3	4	8	2
Norwegian language course	School or kindergarten	Internet	Local paper/ local TV	National media	Meetingplace Norwegians and immigrants.	Participate in local clubs, organizations

My comments: Majority for Norwegian language courses and meeting places.

Summary: This informant group is not representative for the locals. These people are working with and meeting immigrants in a much larger scale than the average Norwegian. Their attitude towards immigrants is partial positive.

One special answer, from a teacher at one of the centres that did not participate in the questionnaire.

I got one answer that I found interesting, from a teacher that did not want to answer and argued for why he would not answer. Here is my translation of parts of what he wrote in an e-mail:

“ I total disagree with this questionnaires definition of what culture are. I find it impossible to answer questions like:

How soon did you understand the local culture. There is not ONE Norwegian local culture. If one is thinking of Norwegians in Skedsmo municipality, we talk about many different cultures (different environments, age groups, political and religious stands, different ways to get together , different child raising and so on....).

What have you showed/displayed of your own culture in your new society? WHAT? If I came to a new country and got this question, I would understand it as just a very small fraction of my culture. My culture is not what I “show/display” on some arena/places. It is HUMANS who meet and get to know each other.

Do you think norwegians are interested in your culture? Culture does not follow national borders, it developes and changes . There are many different cultures in Norway and there are many different cultures among Americans in Norway, Turks in Norway....The cultural

differences can be bigger among the locals/Norwegians than between one who grew up in an intellectual environment in Oslo and one in the same kind of environment in Nairobi. I have more in common with my colleague from Pakistan than my Norwegian childhood friend. He still lives in Molvikgrend (15 residents and got TV and a road only a few years ago). Here we really are talking about cultural diversity!

Do you think that it is important that immigrants have good knowledge of local/norwegian culture? Which Norwegian/local culture?

Do you want to know/learn more about the immigrants cultures? I want to get to know **people/persons**. Culture is not a thing you are born with. Culture is something you learn. It develops and changes in the meeting with other people/humans. I find this question very stupid.

At last: I find that this questionnaire are built upon an “us-them- thinking”. We, the Norwegians are one group who shall meet/understand/get to know “their” culture, “the others”, “the immigrants”.

I don't share this way of thinking!”

Jan Erik Waagene

Aurskog May 13. 2009

APPENDIX:

1. Questionnaire on local/national culture. Form for immigrants
2. Questionnaire on local/national culture. Form for locals/teachers



Questionnaire on local/national culture.

Form for immigrants

Culture is morals and attitudes and the way we live our lives

- How we dress,
- How we speak,
- The food we eat,
- Religion,
- How we raise our children,
- *Kjønnsroller* and a lot more

Through the WISE-project we try to find the best ways to get to know the culture of other people.

We want to ask some questions on this to immigrants and locals in Nordic and Baltic countries.

All answers are anonymous, will be handled confidential and maculated after use.

You who answer:

Home country/country of origin: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

How long time in Norway: _____

When filling in the form it is possible with more than one mark/X for every question

Question 1. How soon did you understand the local culture (Set a mark/ X)

Answer:

Soon	After a few months	After 1 year	There is much a still don`t understand

Question 2 What have you showed/displayed of your own culture in your new society?

Answer:

Clothes	Food	Religion	Song/music	Art

Question 3. Do you think norwegians are interested in your culture?

Answer:

Yes	No

Question 4. If they are interested, which sides of your culture?

Answer:

Clothes	Food	Religion	Song/music	Art

Question 5: Which are the best places you can show /share your culture with norwegians

Answer:

Norwegian language course	School or kindergarten	Internet	Local paper/ local TV	National media	Meetingplace Norwegians and immigrants.	Participate in local clubs, organizations



Questionnaire on local/national culture.

Form for teachers/locals

At Romerike there are immigrants from many different nations and from all parts of the world. Some are here as refugees, some as work immigrants and some are married or living with a Norwegian citizen.

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- How we dress,
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Through the WISE-project we try to find the best ways to get to know the culture of other people.

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The result of our questionnaire and other countries focus group research and propositions of methods of best ways to learn about other cultures will be presented at a conference in Klaipeda, Litauen by the end of June and will also be presented on the projects web site

You who answers:

Age: _____

Gender: _____

When filling in the form it is possible with more than one mark/X for every question

Question 1. How much/where do you meet immigrants? (Set a mark/X)

Answer:

Never	Seldom	At work	Private/ friends/ family	Through local clubs, organizations	Through schools /kindergarten

Question 2. What do you know about local immigrants background/culture ?

Answer:

Immigrants from <i>Western countries</i> (All Europe, USA, Canada, Australia and so on.)			Immigrants from <i>Non-Western countries</i> (Asia, Afrika)		
Little/nothing	Pretty much	Much	Little/nothing	Pretty much	Much

Question 3. Do you think that it is important that immigrants have good knowledge of local/norwegian culture?

Answer:

Yes	No

Question 4. Do you want to know/learn more about the immigrants cultures,?

Answer:

Yes	No

Question 5: Question 5: Which are the best places to know/learn more of the immigrants cultures?

Answer:

Norwegian language course	School or kindergarten	Internet	Local paper/ local TV	National media	Meetingplace Norwegians and immigrants.	Participate in local clubs, organizations

