



Guidelines for Integration Dialogue Platforms



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Introduction

These guidelines are part of the project “Strengthening Integration Dialogue Platforms”¹ supported by the Central Baltic INTERREG IVA Programme, which explores integration-promoting citizen dialogues with focus on ethnic minorities in Estonia, Latvia and Sweden.

In immigrant and ethnic minority integration the focus and the aim of the dialogue process is on enhancing the participation of minorities in decision making. Demands for increased public participation in policy-making have been founded upon both pragmatic and normative lines of argumentation. From a pragmatic perspective, participation is considered to improve the quality of decisions, while from a normative point of view participation is necessary to render the decision-making process more democratic².

Participation in policy-making contributes to the trust-building between the public and their governing institutions but also enhances the legitimacy of the decisions taken. In order to increase public support for and understanding of programmes and policies, the public can be directly involved in planning and implementing them. Participatory decision and policy-makings can also be regarded as means of building social cohesion. It is a useful process to achieve consensus and mutual understanding when differences in opinion and even conflicts have to be solved.

Using dialogue for strengthening integration involves significant work, both in the preparation of the dialogue activities and in the implementation. The organisers of dialogue platforms should keep in mind a number of general success criteria as well as specific integration-related recommendations. While the methods of discussion in the dialogue platform can vary, the aim of each initiative is to keep the interest of participants and quality of discussion on the high level. Several dialogue methods involve a series of meetings, combined with other activities. Some also require substantial action after the event to in order to achieve the intended task.

The current Guidelines are developed with the aim to help the organisers to implement effectively integration-related dialogue platforms in ethnically and culturally diverse societies. The Guidelines consist of three chapters. Chapter one gives an overview of the factors, which are essential for the success of dialogue platforms in general, followed by chapter two that provides more detailed recommendations concerning integration-related dialogue platforms. Chapter three summarises dialogue methods, which are used most frequently for dialogue purposes and which can also be applied for promoting dialogue in the field of integration.

¹ See the web site of project at <http://sidp.abikeskused.ee/>

² Participatory Methods Toolkit. A practitioner’s manual. King Baudouin Foundation, 2003. See http://archive.unu.edu/hq/library/Collection/PDF_files/CRIS/PMT.pdf

1. Defining and Enabling Dialogue Platforms for Integration

Dialogue can take different types and format. The current guidelines focus on the (active) participatory methods of dialogue. However, it should be emphasised that the level of participation is a continuum and methods vary in the degree to which they engage participants in framing the questions and issues and in designing the procedures. Participatory approaches are specifically appropriate for addressing issues that may call for a choice between fundamental values and principles, but also policy matters that require emotional and moral acceptance of the eventual decision, which play important part in integration debates. The decision to engage the public through a participatory process is inherently political, especially with politically sensitive topics such as migration and integration. Whether or not the aim is to directly influence policy, participatory methods are interventions in society and thus need to have as clear aims and objectives as possible.

There are different ways of classifying the types of dialogue in the society as well as ways of defining the dialogue itself³. Yet there are some features that are common to most of the definitions:

- Dialogue involves deliberation – careful consideration of evidence, social interaction, discussion and debate, consideration of a range of views, and the opportunity to re-evaluate initial positions.
- Dialogue entails inclusion – involvement of a diverse range of individuals and groups, including previously excluded groups who are not represented in the normal interest group discussions.⁴

For the purposes of this project we suggest the following definitions for integration and dialogue platform:

- *integration* is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by ethnic minorities and other members of society⁵
- *dialogue platform* is a consultative body (or an event) for ethnic minorities set up at local, national or regional level to provide a forum for consultation for the goal of:
 - a) policy-making/ decision-making - between elected representatives and ethnic minorities to provide recommendation to integration policy, or
 - b) common understandings in society - within civil society between ethnic minorities and other non-governmental organisations to reach agreement on various issues of community life.

This definition ensues from the “Common Basic Principles” on integration⁶ and recommendations proposed by the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities⁷, the Lund Recommendations⁸, the Ljubljana Guidelines⁹ and is based on the classification proposed in the Council of Europe Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level¹⁰.

³ For more detailed overview of the theoretical and methodological approach to dialogue please see Chapter 1 of the “Comparative Analysis of Dialogue Platforms in Estonia, Latvia and Sweden”, the report can be found at <http://sidp.abikeskused.ee/online-resources>

⁴ Dialogue Methods: A Typology of Community Dialogue Processes. Parker, J. & Duignan, P. (2005). <http://www.parkerduignan.com/documents/132pdf.PDF>, p 4.

⁵ Adjustment of the definition provided in “A Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union”, available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52005DC0389:EN:NOT>

⁶ 14615/04 (Presse 321), available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/82745.pdf

⁷ ETS No. 157, available at http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/default_en.asp

⁸ The Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. More details available at <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/32240>

In order to measure and evaluate the efficiency of the dialogue platforms it is useful to identify the enabling factors that characterise successful dialogue initiatives¹¹. The aim of identifying enabling factors is to generate a successful dialogue platform that generates an open and respectful exchange of views and helps participants to find common ground for cooperation¹².

Enabling Factors	Importance of the Factor
i) Agreeing on concrete objectives	Agreement on specific objectives establishes realistic expectations among participants regarding the expected results of the dialogue platform and avoids reducing the initiative to 'window-dressing politics'.
ii) Recognising the equality and dignity of all participants	All participants of the dialogue platform have to be treated as equals and no party should claim to be the exclusive bearer of the values and proposed solutions to the issues discussed.
iii) Identifying relevant and representative partners	The participants are the driving forces behind the (success of) dialogue platforms. Representativeness of the participants amplifies the impact of the dialogue. Relevance of partners and participants is determined by the scope and objectives of the proposed platform and dialogue topic.
iv) Building baseline knowledge and skills	Organisers of the dialogue platforms should be wary of the assumption that those participants are best situated to address the issue at hand are also those with the greatest capacities for dialogue and impact on the societal situation. Serious knowledge gaps between participants can lead to unequal starting positions for dialogue.
v) Ensuring coherence across sectors and levels of governance	Misunderstandings and tensions may arise or spill over in many areas of life therefore dialogue platforms can be mainstreamed into all relevant sectors linked to integration. All areas of life can benefit from the basic values, partnerships, and baseline knowledge that underlie dialogue-based approaches to integration.
vi) Evaluation and continuity	Continuity, proper timeframe and resources determine the attainment of the goals of the dialogue platform. Evaluation, both of the objectives set and results achieved play an important role when planning and implementing dialogue activities, but also in measuring the impact dialogue platforms have had on policy making.

⁹ The Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies, for more information please see <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/96883?download=true>

¹⁰ No. 144, 1992, available at <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?CL=ENG&NT=144>

¹¹ For more details please see Migration Policy Group (2008). Issues paper for the INTI technical seminar on 'Dialogue Platforms', Dublin, 15/16 May 2008. For more details please see http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/resources/detail.cfm?ID_ITEMS=9036

¹² Handbook on Integration for Policy-Makers and Practitioners. 3rd edition. European Commission, 2010; available at http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/resources/detail.cfm?ID_ITEMS=12892

Dialogue platforms usually emerge in response to specific societal tensions in the area of integration. Integration dialogue platforms a strong symbolic component as it represents the act of sitting down to peaceful discussion. This is why it is especially important that all participants are able to express their views during the dialogue platform on an equal footing. Participants should not enter and leave the dialogue with anticipation as the 'victor' like in the debate. The dialogue is based both on social bonding and bridging so as to foster trust and cooperation between the participants. Ensuring the equality and recognition of the participants ensues from the recognition of in-built disparities and majority and minority power dynamics in ethnically diverse societies. Furthermore integration dialogue platforms should not be treated as "a quick fix". Reaching shared or common understanding takes time. Continuity of dialogue initiatives is important. Participants of the dialogue platforms determine the proper timeframe and resources for achieving their agreed goals depending on the form of the platform (e.g. unlimited duration for permanent consultative bodies to short period of times for ad hoc platforms). In addition to time, sufficient resources are necessary for meaningful reporting and evaluation, the latter being one of the most key but also challenging components of successful dialogue platforms – what is the impact of the dialogue platforms, how are dialogue initiatives and proposals translated into activities and policy action?

2. Recommendations for Integration-Related Dialogue

Based on the Comparative Analysis¹³ produced for this project and overview of the dialogue methods presented in Chapter 3, we propose the following enabling factors that play an essential role in the integration-related dialogue.

2.1. Clarifying the nature and end-result of dialogue

The nature of the dialogue platform and its expected result should be made clear in the beginning, before the invitations are sent to participants. It is possible to distinguish the dialogue platforms by the level of engagement, and it is not necessary to assume that dialogue platform will be always designed for making a change in the level of integration policy.

Transmitting information – to keep the other side informed, or just listen the other side’s concerns – can be also considered as a (passive) form of dialogue. Usually this type of dialogue platforms are organised by state/ local authorities to inform the stakeholders (immigrant/ minority organisations, other civil society organisations, media channels, schools, etc.) about new initiatives in the field of integration policy/ programmes, to introduce the results of integration-related surveys, etc. Sometimes it is used also as a space to release boiled up emotions and cool off, decreasing social tensions in particular situations either between some ethnic/ religious groups or between the state/ local authorities and the immigrants/minority community. There is no expectation that joint positions will be identified in the end of dialogue activity. Accordingly, the invitations for participation usually state that the event is designated for informative purposes.

Bi-directional platforms – when active exchange of information and discussion takes place - can be designed for reaching common understanding. Within civil society, at the grass roots level, community members or non-governmental organisations (incl. representative bodies of minority communities) may gather to explore the issues/problems of integration (e.g., lack of tolerance or discrimination) as a result of which all participants have improved their knowledge of the issue of particular group or about importance of an integration-related problem in general.

Taking a significant step further, dialogue platforms can be established for identifying joint statements/proposals on certain integration policy issues. The results of Comparative Analysis indicated that most of criticism of immigrants/minority communities in three countries in respect of dialogue platforms is caused by the expectation that the participants can directly influence the integration policy and its implementation either on the state or local level. On the basis of feedback from interviews and analysis of reports-surveys, the present Guidelines recommend certain rules for this type of integration dialogue platforms:

- if the participants of the dialogue platform will reach a consensus or compromise concerning certain integration issues, then it should be clear whether the relevant statements/proposals will be submitted to a state/ local government institution thereafter. This will clarify how important role the dialogue platform will play – either just to increase the mutual understanding and respect/tolerance among participants or to influence the decision-making process of integration policy on the state or local level too;
- it has to be clarified and explained to the participants whether the submitted proposals have advisory nature or they are legally binding also for the receiving institution. Otherwise, the

¹³ “Comparative Analysis of Dialogue Platforms in Estonia, Latvia and Sweden”; the report can be found at <http://sidp.abikeskused.ee/online-resources>

participants of dialogue platform may feel frustration that they do not influence the decision-making process, if their proposals will not be accepted later;

- the receiving institution should always respond to the submitted proposal and explain whether the proposal is accepted or not and why. Lack of information about the outcomes of submitted proposals may create rumours and prejudices, which in turn may diminish the credibility of receiving institutions.

2.2. Transparent and inclusive selection of partners

The organisers of dialogue platform have to carefully set the criteria of selection of participants before the dialogue event takes place in order to ensure that all key institutions, groups or persons are covered. Also, it is highly recommended to make the developed the membership selection criteria public so that all interested stakeholders can be convinced about the objectivity of selection process. In broad terms, the selection criteria can be based on:

- the principle of representation – participants in the dialogue platform are representatives of interest-groups (national/ ethnic minority organisations, immigrant communities, advocacy organisations, research institutions, state/ local authorities, etc.), and/ or,
- the principle of expertise – participants are the very competent in the topic, open to dialogue and express their positions in a rational-logical way.

The representativeness of interested groups is usually ensured by composing the list of most relevant organisations in the field and asking them to appoint the suitable candidates. If the dialogue platform is institutionalised, then the appointment procedures should be defined, competences and mandates of participants should be introduced to wider public. In concrete cases, it might be reasonable to organise an open competition for finding the participants.

As a sub-type of representative approach, sometimes organisers use also so-called random choice – the purpose is to reflect the wide variety of opinions and attitudes of “the person on the street”. The list of participants is comprised of randomly selected persons who represent a cross-section of the involved groups. The sample and the number of participants depend to a great degree on the topic and the scope of application. In sub-section 3.3., the example of random selection technique – “Citizens’ Jury” – is provided.

The experts are used usually in order to negotiate the possible solutions to specific questions of integration and to produce a well-justified and analysis-based report or recommendations for solving the specific integration-related problem. The main priority is to involve experts in the topic of integration who are able to present matters and challenges and who are able to find consensus. Most explicitly the expertise-based principle is used in the technique “Expert Panel” of the sub-section 3.4.

In fact, many dialogue platforms are composed of members by combining both of the above-mentioned principles. This ensures that the wide variety of positions of interest-groups is covered, giving the legitimacy to the democratic dialogue, the discussion goes into the depth-of-problem and produces convincing conclusions or proposals. The format of “Conference” covers this mixed approach very clearly. The format of “Conference” covers this mixed approach very clearly; for further, see sub-section 3.1.

2.3. Ensuring professional and transparent way of work

The dialogue platform should be conducted in a professional manner, on a regular basis and using effective techniques of dialogue. The following recommendations can be pointed out:

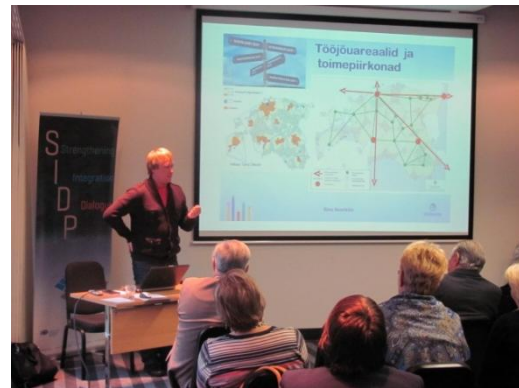
- usually the meetings/ events of dialogue platform should be conducted on a regular basis, as the solving of concrete integration issues via dialogue takes mostly more time than one-time event. Also, this will convince the participants that the platform is truly dedicated to find positive outcome;
- the dialogue platform should be always dynamic, urging the participants to express their positions and motivating them to start the rational and argument-based debate of integration issues. For this purpose, various techniques of dialogue can be applied – see more in Chapter 3;
- the intensity of discussion may vary in framework of the dialogue platform:
 - o it may start with gathering of as many different standpoints as possible over a short period of time. Then the method of dialogue should be very dynamic, intense and inclusive and the techniques of “Fishbowl” or “Charrette” can be used – for more details please see sub-sections 2.2. and 2.5.
 - o after mapping of various positions, the thorough and careful consideration of arguments and claims can be conducted. Then the techniques of “Conference” or “Expert panel” can be applied – for more details please see sub-sections 3.1. and 3.4.
- the role of the moderator is essential in all dialogue techniques and types. The moderator should be flexible, unbiased, empathetic, a good listener and enthusiastic. The moderator should develop a good rapport with the participants, be respectful and communicate in a clear, friendly demeanour, which is particularly important in the questions related to integration, as integration topics are often sensitive and participants hold emotional and opposing views;
- the participants should have the right to make proposals for the agenda of the meetings/ events and well in time, in order to avoid the impression that organisers try to monopolise the agenda;
- if state/ local authorities are directly related to the topic of dialogue platform, then it is important to keep in mind that the representatives of these authorities attend the events and communicate in person with the other participants;
- online social network channels can be very effective ways of dissemination of information on the meetings of dialogue platform, background information, etc. However, organisers should keep in mind that some participants may not be very competent in using Internet, so alternative ways of information dissemination should be ensured as well;

2.4. Improving the knowledge and skills of participants

The organisers of dialogue platform should prepare and disseminate sufficient information on the integration topic among participants.

Very often the participating organisations have limited staff and lack of expertise in a wide range of integration issues (e.g. minority education, equal treatment, language requirements, etc.). In order to have a rational and argument-based discussion of topics, it is reasonable to distribute various information materials before the event, e.g. prepare and disseminate issues papers, information brochures. When possible, it would be good to organise a training seminar on the topic for participants or to invite external experts to prepare the opinion on the topic. This approach of preparation of participants is used most often in case of dialogue technique “Conference” – see subsection 3.1

However, in some cases the main objective is to find out the initial-original understandings of participants and make them on their own to come to the possible solutions-proposals. Participants may be more likely to feel the “ownership” of outcomes of dialogue event when these come from their own ideas. Then the organisers should avoid being too prescriptive in setting the agenda and guiding the process of dialogue. The technique of “Community Level Dialogue” (incl. Open Space method) does not usually involve special preparation of participants, see sub-section 3.6



Training on dialogue in Narva-Jõesuu 22.11.2013.

A separate issue is the language skill of participants, as representatives of minority groups may not be sufficiently fluent in the dominant language of society. In this case, either co-operation with relevant language training programmes or having a multi-language event can be solution to the problem.

2.5. Measuring the impact of dialogue

The impact of the dialogue platform should be measured on the regular basis so that participants will be convinced that their time and efforts have been spent meaningfully. The organisers of dialogue platform can do this, for example, by disseminating information about impact in the newsletter or in the social network channels in the Internet. Sometimes it is useful to commission an external evaluation for impact assessment.¹⁴ A key to measuring the impact of the dialogue platform is establishing measurable goals for the completion for specific stages of the dialogue (benchmarking). This can be used to evaluate the progress of the dialogue platform.

2.6. Sustainability of dialogue platforms

The organisation of dialogue platforms on integration may depend (especially the grass-roots initiatives) on the availability of funding either from the state or external assistance programmes. Comparative Analysis showed that the civil society organisations of Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia) depend significantly on the project-based financing from the state/EU programmes in case of integration-related dialogue activities. Therefore, the role of state/ local authorities should be the development of a long-term funding strategy, which would give the confidence to organisers of dialogue platforms that the dialogue activities are sustainable – dialogue will not end with the project. The other issue is the so called neutrality of funding - how to ensure that the agenda of dialogue and expected outcome is not dictated by the financing body. This is especially relevant in case of grass-roots (civil society) initiatives which depend on the financing from external sources. One solution is to provide in the financing rules that the financing body does not influence the content of dialogue platform, so they can work independently.

¹⁴ A list of recommendations is provided in „What Works? Evaluating Interfaith Dialogue Programs.“ United States Institute of Peace, 2004; available at <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr123.pdf>

3. Types of Dialogue Methods

In this chapter we present an overview of methods that are most frequently used for dialogue purposes and that can also be applied for promoting dialogue in the field of integration. Each dialogue method is accompanied by one or more examples of their use promoting participation of immigrant and ethnic minorities in decision-making and defining integration policy. These methods are structured around six questions that we have found to be helpful in thinking systematically about consultation with minority and immigrant groups and documenting its application.

- i) What is the goal of the dialogue method? What it is aiming to achieve and who was intended to benefit? What is the method of delivery of the dialogue?
- ii) What is the topic of the dialogue?
- iii) What is the procedure and criteria for the choice of participants in the dialogue?
- iv) What is the time frame for the dialogue? What is the level of complexity of the dialogue?
- v) What is the budget of the dialogue?
- vi) What was the context and outcome of the dialogue? The assessment and evaluation of the results of the dialogue.

3.1. Conference

Conference is one of the most common forms of meetings and can take many formats. Two of the dialogue events under this project were conferences. The first dialogue event in Tallinn¹⁵ examined the integration challenges and risks in the labour market and education. The third dialogue event that took place in Riga¹⁶ was a conference that focused on the participation of minorities in decision-making through different consultative mechanisms.

What is the goal of the dialogue method?

The aim of the conference is to hold a consultation or discussion and to exchange views and settle differences between different parties. Since conference is a very generic form of discussion then it is often used in conjunction with different dialogue and discussion methods. For instance our project team used *fishbowl*, *plenary* and *panel discussion* as methods of dialogue to guide the debate.

During the conference *Minority Consultative Mechanisms, Participation in Decision Making* the project team used panel discussions as dialogue method. The aim of the event was to analyse the successes, problems and challenges of society integration and minority consultative mechanisms (councils, commissions) established at the state and municipal level in Latvia.

A *panel discussion* is designed to provide an opportunity for a group to hear several people knowledgeable about the issue at hand and invites the audience further clarify and evaluate their positions regarding topics under discussion and increase their understanding of the positions of others. The selection of this method and focus was specifically based on the information gathered during the interviews in Latvia for the comparative analysis of this project. Two panel discussions were held during the conference in Riga: (1) Achievements, Problems and Prospects of Municipal Society Integration Bodies and (2) Achievements, Problems and Prospects of National Consultative Bodies on Ethnic Minorities. To provide a diversity of opinions, both local and state institution

¹⁵ For more information on the event please see <http://sidp.abikeskused.ee/dialogue-forum/dialogue-forum-i>

¹⁶ For more information on the event please see <http://sidp.abikeskused.ee/dialogue-forum/dialogue-forum-iii>

representatives, as well as NGO representatives shared their experience (two representatives from each consultative mechanism – one from the state or local institutions responsible for the concrete consultative body and one from NGO participating in the body). In total, nine consultative mechanisms (4 local and 5 national) were represented in the panel discussions.

A *plenary session* is a form of a formal meeting to be attended by all participants at a conference or assembly, who otherwise meet in smaller groups (e.g. fish bowls in the case of our project). The plenaries usually take place either at the beginning to discuss general issues or at the end to announce progress of a meeting.

What is the topic of the dialogue?

Conference is a suitable form of dialogue in the case the topic(s) under discussion need shared solution or there is a need for opportunity to present different alternatives on a topic that has not been discussed before.

The latter was the case for the dialogue event carried out in Riga. It was the first occasion the representatives of all consultative bodies to come together. The aim of the event was to analyse the successes, problems and challenges of society integration and minority consultative mechanisms established at the state and municipal level in Latvia¹⁷. While in Tallinn the choice of the topic ensued from the quest of finding possible shared solutions on two topical and politically sensitive issues in Estonia: whether there is a need to bring in foreign labour to Estonia and what are the suitable future models of Russian-medium education in Estonia.

What is the procedure and criteria for the choice of participants in the dialogue?

The selection of participants is mainly depends on the goal of the event. Our project team focused essentially on relevant stakeholders – policy-makers, members of consultative bodies and NGOs, local government officials, researchers and journalists. This was greatly because the aim of the dialogue events was to exchange point of view on rather specific topics and to reach some common conclusions. However participants can also be invited from the general public.

The conference in Riga was attended by 69 participants, mostly stakeholders and members of the consultative bodies: representatives of various Latvian NGOs, including representatives of ethnic minority NGOs, representatives of local councils (Riga, Jelgava, Liepaja, Ventspils) and state institutions (Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Saeima, Society Integration Foundation), representatives of foreign embassies in Latvia (Swedish, U.S., German, Estonian, Polish, Russian embassies), as well as project's partner organisations from Estonia (Estonian Advice Centre and Ida-Virumaa Integration Centre) and Sweden (Municipality of Sodertälje).

¹⁷ For more detailed overview please see "Comparative Analysis of Dialogue Platforms in Estonia, Latvia and Sweden"; the report can be found at <http://sidp.abikeskused.ee/online-resources>



The conference was also attended by journalists and students. It was important that the event had two working languages (Latvian, with simultaneous translation into English). Although simultaneous translation into Russian was not provided (due to financial reasons), participants were given the opportunity to ask questions also in Russian. This gave participants an opportunity to choose the language they feel most comfortable to express themselves.

Conference in Riga 26-27.09.2013

The conference in Tallinn was also attended by some 60 participants representing the main stakeholders of the discussion on the topic at hand - entrepreneurs, parents and students, state and local government representatives and experts from research centres

What is the time frame, cost and the level of complexity of the dialogue?

Conference is low complexity and cost and takes 4-6 weeks of average preparation time. However it can be helpful to contact the possible speakers at the plenary or panel discussions even earlier to confirm their availability.

Regarding the time of the event it important to decide whether it is one or two day event. The event in Riga was one day event and the conference in Tallinn was a two-day event. Having a longer event allows for more in-depth discussion, but at the same time there is a risk in “losing” participants, since majority of the participants would need to take time off their everyday work. It is also important to consider that the opening and closing time would allow people to arrive at the event if they need to travel from near-by locations. Or alternatively it would be necessary to include the travel and possible accommodation costs of the speakers (and participants, if permitted) in the budget of the event.

Taking into consideration that integration dialogue often involves bringing together people of different ethnicities and mother tongues it is useful to consider having interpretation into the main languages of the participants of the events. Speaking the language of country of residence is an important aspect of accommodation and integration, but at the same time it is often difficult to actively take part in the discussion on important matters and follow the debate in another language. While interpretation is rather costly, it gives all participant equal levelling to take part and contribute to the discussion

What was the context and outcome of the dialogue?

The prerequisite of successful dialogue event is a follow-up feedback and examination of the results of the event. We made following observations regarding using the panel discussions in dialogue platforms.

- (1) the substance and the outcome of discussions depends not only on the panel discussion participants, but also on the professionalism of moderator. Moderator should be prepared to ask additional questions or interrupt participants if necessary;
- (2) to be better prepared, questions to panel discussion participants should be sent at least two weeks before the event. It's important to discuss this questions also by phone or face to face as each of us can perceive and understand issues differently;
- (3) it is important to devote sufficient time not only for panel discussions (the more participants, the more time needed), but also for discussions with all conference participants (at least 30 – 60 min, depending on the number or conference participants);
- (4) if there are participants from different minority groups and embassies, simultaneous translation in at least two languages (English and Russian in a case of Latvia and Estonia) should be provided. It means that appropriate budget should be allocated.

At the Tallinn conference there was an opening plenary that introduced the goals of the project and the results of the comparative analysis carried out during the project. There was also a concluding plenary where the results of the discussions in the two “aquariums” were presented. The concluding plenary also included a presentation on the main principles was Estonia immigration policy. It was however noted by the moderator in the feedback of the conference that it would have been more useful to have such an overview prior to the fish bowls. Also it was suggested that the participants would have benefited from an introductory presentation on the Russian-medium education in Estonia during the opening plenary. This would have given all participants a more equal footing to take part in the debate during the workshops that followed. During the closing plenary the participants were invited to express their suggestions for further actions to improve the situation in the two areas under discussion (labour market and education). These suggestions were formulated into short proceedings (2-3 pages long) of the conference that was forwarded to relevant policy-makers.



Dialogue Forum in Tallinn 15-16.04.2013

Since conference is such a generic form of discussion follow-up of the results of the debate is often forgotten. In order to meet the goals set for event it is advised that the organisers produce short concluding summary of results of the discussion to be distributed among the participants of the event or conveyed to the policy-makers, depending on the aim of the initiative.

This is the approach used in a sub-type of conference method, the consensus conference.¹⁸

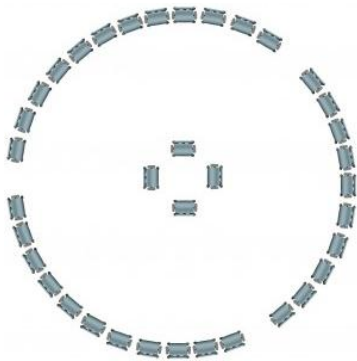
¹⁸ Consensus conference is a public enquiry focussing on the assessment of a socially controversial topic. The experts are presented matters and challenges concerning the issue at hand and are asked to negotiate the possible solutions to these questions. The result of the conference is a consensus statement that is made public in the form of a written report. For

3.2. Fishbowl

During the first dialogue event of our project¹⁹ in Tallinn, as mentioned above, which focused on integration challenges and risks in the labour market and education, our project team decided to use fishbowl method of discussion in the workshops in the second half of the first day of the event.

What is the goal of the dialogue method?

A fishbowl²⁰ is a form of dialog (group discussion) that is used when discussing topics within large groups. The advantage of fishbowl is that it allows the entire group to participate in a conversation and several people can join the discussion. The picture below depicts the proposed arrangement of the room for the fishbowls. There is an inner circle of 3-7 chairs (we had 5 chairs in each fishbowl). This is the fishbowl. The remaining chairs are arranged in concentric circles or one outside circle the fishbowl. Our dialogue event had 60 participants, 30 in each aquarium. We pre-selected the participant of the fishbowl – each representing an important stakeholder in the discussion. E.g. for the labour market aquarium the circle included the representatives of employers and entrepreneurs, but also the Ministry of the Interior and universities who have carried out research on labour migration. In the case of education the inner circle included the teachers (both Estonian and Russian speaking teachers) who teach at Russian-medium schools, school principals, parents, researchers from universities and the Ministry of Education and Research. A few participants are selected to fill the fishbowl, while the rest of the group sit on the chairs outside the fishbowl. In an open fishbowl, one chair is left empty. In a closed fishbowl, all chairs are filled. We opted for the closed fishbowl. The choice of participants for the outer circle was based on their interest in the topic from the organisations that are active in the field. The moderator introduced the topic and the participants started discussing the topic. The participants outside the fishbowl listened to the discussion.



In a closed fishbowl, the initial participants speak for some time. When time runs out, they leave the fishbowl and a new group from the audience enters the fishbowl. This continues until most of the audience members have spent some time in the fishbowl. Once the final group has concluded, the moderator closes the fishbowl and summarises the discussion.

What is the topic of the dialogue?

The participants were divided into two “aquariums” – (i) discussion on the need of foreign labour force in Estonia – whether it would be necessary to modify the regulations of bringing in foreign

more information, see the following publications: “Participatory Methods Toolkit. A practitioner’s manual”. King Baudouin Foundation, 2003; available at http://archive.unu.edu/hq/library/Collection/PDF_files/CRIS/PMT.pdf; “Research integration using dialogue methods”. David McDonald, Gabriele Bammer, Peter Deane, 2009; available at http://epress.anu.edu.au/dialogue_methods/pdf/whole_book.pdf

¹⁹ See the web site of project at <http://sidp.abikeskused.ee/>

²⁰ For more information on this method please see <http://slitoolkit.ohchr.org/data/downloads/fishbowl.pdf>

workers to Estonia, and whether bringing in foreign labour would pose challenges for Estonia and (ii) future model of Russian language basic education on Estonia that would ensure participation of all members of society in the labour market while providing opportunities to maintain ethnic and cultural identity.



These topics are rather controversial in the Estonian context and politically sensitive. The aim of the “aquariums” was to propose shared solutions by the participants, who involved the most relevant stakeholders in the discussion, e.g. entrepreneurs, parents and students, state and local government representatives and experts from research centres. The project team chose the topics for discussion based on the questions in the area of integration that have been subject to public attention in recent years, but had not yet reached common and shared solutions.

Fishbowl on the topic of foreign labour force in Tallinn 15.04.2013

What is the procedure and criteria for the choice of participants in the dialogue?

The participants were divided into two “aquariums” approximately 30 people each. The participants represented the main stakeholders of the discussion on the topic at hand - entrepreneurs, parents and students, state and local government representatives and experts from research centres.

Since the participants had different level of (background) knowledge on the topics discussed the project team developed issue papers on both topics that were circulated among the participant before the actual event. The papers included the overview of the current situation in the labour market and Russian medium education in Estonia, as well as results of academic research and points of contestation where a shared preferred solution could be proposed.

What is the time frame, cost and the level of complexity of the dialogue?

Conference using fishbowl method of discussion is of medium complexity and cost, as it can be one day event. The preparation involves briefing the moderators and facilitators of the aquariums and the members of inner circle. Informed and eloquent presentations of the members of inner circle are of vital importance for sparking lively debate. Competent facilitator is of critical implication for the result of the discussion – whether all participant of the aquarium have the possibility to express themselves and also whether the group will reach some common conclusions that they would like to propose for the project team to take further to the policy-makers.

What was the context and outcome of the dialogue?

In fishbowl moderators of both aquariums presented the results of the discussions that took place in their respective aquariums at the concluding plenary. While neither of the aquariums resulted in consensus on the points of contestation as the competing differences of the stakeholders remained, several shared points of views were also mapped that could be presented as joint conclusions to the wider public and decision makers. The project team also asked the moderator of the dialogue event and the facilitators of the aquariums for provide for feedback of the process of the dialogue and the event organisation, which also provided useful suggestions for carrying out dialogue activities. The

main difficulties, as expected, focused on reconciling the competing and often conflicting positions of the stakeholders and other participants. It was outlined that it was important that the event had three working languages (Estonian, with simultaneous translation into Russian and English). This gave participants an opportunity to choose the language they feel most comfortable to express themselves.

3.3. Citizens' Jury

Citizens' jury method has been used for discussing wide range of social and political topics, including integration. It is most useful in situation when one or more alternatives solutions to a problem need to be selected and the various competing interests arbitrated. This method is beneficial and will lead to tangible action and results when linked to specific policy document and or legislation. In Estonia, for example citizens' jury was used as one of the methods for consulting with the third-country nationals in developing the Strategy for Integration and Social Cohesion²¹.

What is the goal of the dialogue method?

The Citizens' Jury²² is a method of consultation to obtain informed citizen input into policy decisions. The Jury usually consists of 12-24 randomly selected citizens (who are referred to as 'jurors'). The jurors then go through a process of deliberation and subgroups can be formed to focus on different aspects of the issue. Finally, the jurors produce a decision or provide recommendations in the form of a citizens' report. Usually the sponsoring body (e.g. government or local authority, NGO) is expected to respond to the report either by acting on it or by explaining why it disagrees with it.

While there is no one single method to carry out citizens' juries, they all share two main characteristics –creating a representative sample of participants and having a deliberative discussion. If you are considering organising a citizens' jury, it is advisable to employ project staff to carry out the organisational activities who is separate from sponsor or the initiator of the discussion. This is important because integration related questions are often politically sensitive. The separation of the two will avoid the exertion of influence on the result of the project by the initiator and will preserve the integrity of the process.

Depending on the scope of the initiative you may find it useful to establish an advisory committee. Integration is a complex phenomenon and involves many different stakeholders who can have conflicting interests. Forming an advisory committee (6-10 people) ensure that the project implementers are knowledgeable of the different perspectives and relevant issues at stake. The committee can be composed of experts who are well-informed about the issues, but are not direct stakeholders in the issue at hand, or alternatively the committee can also be made up of different stakeholder in the issue discussed. Both approaches have their own advantages. While the advisory committee of expert may be more manageable and less conflict ridden, the stakeholders'

²¹ Institute of Baltic Studies and Praxis Centre for Policy Studies jointly organised open forum-type debates "Shared Future". The aim of the debates was to discuss with third country (i.e. non-EU) citizens or people without a citizenship what kind of problems they do face in Estonia, how they perceive the Estonian society and what kind of proposals for improving the cohesion in the society do they have. For more detailed information please see <http://www.ibs.ee/et/publikatsioonid/item/120-euroopa-kolmandate-riikide-kodanike-loimumisarutelude-aruanne>

²² This section is based on the suggestions outlined in "Participatory Methods Toolkit. A practitioner's manual". King Baudouin Foundation, 2003. See http://archive.unu.edu/hq/library/Collection/PDF_files/CRIS/PMT.pdf. This method is described with practical examples also in "Research integration using dialogue methods". David McDonald, Gabriele Bammer, Peter Deane, 2009; available at http://epress.anu.edu.au/dialogue_methods/pdf/whole_book.pdf

involvement in the committee will increase the impact of the discussion in the community, since they are advocates on the issues at stake.

In either case, it is important to ensure that all significant perspectives are represented so that the tasks, agenda and witness list are not biased. The role of the advisory committee is to give ideas and topics to be discussed during the jury process and also devise the list of possible jurors and the moderator. Otherwise, the input into the jury process can be provided by a survey (a telephone survey or a small opinion poll). This will enable the project team to prepare the discussion topics and questions for the jurors. It is useful to consider involve some experts as “witnesses” in addition to the advisory committee. The role of the expert is to assist jurors understand the relevant aspects of the topics included in the charge to the jury. This is mostly because the topics under discussion might be the ones that jurors have not thought about before. They will serve as a neutral source of information for the jurors for the vocabulary and complexities, the history behind the issue at hand. While the (same) level of knowledge on the topic at hand is outlined as one of the enable factors for the successful dialogue platform, then in the case of citizens’ jury it is not of vital importance since the materials prepared and the expert presentations will help to bring the participants to the similar level.

What is the topic of the dialogue?

In Estonia citizens’ jury was first used in the field of integration in 2013 as a part of consultation process for developing Strategy of Integration and Social Cohesion in Estonia 2020²³. The aim of the initiative was to include third country nationals and people with undetermined citizenship living in Estonia in designing the integration policy in Estonia. Policy proposals were formulated in the form of the written report as a result of citizen juries carried out. The debates and recommendations focused on the labour market performance, access to public services, education but also on promoting tolerance and problems connected to learning Estonian.

What is the procedure and criteria for the choice of participants in the dialogue?

The selection of participants is vital for the success of the citizens’ jury. Jurors need to be representative of the community in terms of demographic characteristics and attitudes depending on the issue at hand. It is important to identify the relevant population that is affected by the topic discussed (e.g. the community as a whole or a subsection on the community). From the perspective of integration it is necessary to consider whether it is an issue that needs to be tackled within the ethnic minority community, among different ethnic communities or society at large. While all levels are important it is the latter that involves both minorities and the majority that is often missing. Participation of both sides constitutes the essence of integration as mutual two-way process. The most common variables for choosing jurors are age, educational level, gender, ethnicity/race, geographic location. In case of integration citizenship (nationality) can also be regarded as an important variable. It is important that the recruitment of jurors is based on random selection. This forms the basis for the credibility of the initiative. The actual method of selection can vary – e.g. random selection from the public telephone book or random selection of addresses (recruitment by mail or in person).

²³ For more information please see Institute of Baltic Studies,
<http://www.ibs.ee/en/component/content/article/241-loimumisarutelud>

What is the time frame, cost and the level of complexity of the dialogue?

Citizens' jury is rather complex, costly and time consuming method of consultation. It can take up 4-5 months, including the planning, selection of advisory committee, experts and recruitment of jurors, while the jury itself can take one or days, depending on the issue at stake, time and financial resources available. It also involves considerable logistical work – to find suitable times for advisory committee and jury event itself. Since jurors and advisory committee members are not usually paid for their participation (experts on the other hand could be paid for their analysis). Participants might be asked to take up this responsibility after work or during the week-end, so that they do not have to time off their working day. This was, for example used in the case for consultation of third-country nationals in preparation of the new Estonian integration strategy. The organisers noted that the number of participants was greatly affected by the time that the event took place: discussions on Friday evening had the least number of people and the events on Saturday afternoon the greatest number of participants (both in Tallinn and in Kohtla-Järve). Taking into consideration the area of integration, it is also useful to consider the use of several languages and interpretation during the meetings and the jury event, since not all participants will be fluent enough in the official language to participate fully in the debate on complex issues. This will enable participants to fully engage in the discussion. Furthermore it is a sign on respect and willingness to hear their point of view. This, of course, becomes relevant in the case the committee and/or the jury are comprised of different communities. The choice and usage of different languages should be decided by the participants. Additionally, since some participants are most likely expected to come from outside the city where the jury event takes place, you would need to consider covering their travel costs and on some occasions also accommodation costs if the jury event will last longer than one day. Alternatively the meeting times of the event can be accommodated accordingly, to allow participants from nearby areas to arrive and leave in time.

Whereas there are no uniform requirements for organising the room of for the jury event, it is advisable to choose a room large enough to accommodate a U-shaped table set up to seat the jurors. This will allow everyone in the jury to face and see one another, or if required to break into smaller working groups during the discussion. The moderator and experts will usually sit or stand at the open end of the U-shape. There should be some space for the podium, table and the projector. The jury event itself consists of three parts: introduction (housekeeping details, getting to know other jurors); the hearing (presentations from experts on different aspects of the issue at hand); deliberation (aimed at reaching conclusions and recommendations). It is useful to have a member of project team taking notes on the deliberation debate. Then the recommendations can be typed, printed and copied and then presented to the group for revision. Notes will also provide the background information on how the jury arrived at a specific decision and recommendation. This can for instance include rankings of the various solutions, votes on the various proposals presented, pros and cons of the options, etc. It is important for providing the justification for the recommendations at the later stage.

What was the context and outcome of the dialogue?

It is advisable to follow up the dialogue event. In the case of citizens' jury it could mean the feedback/evaluation sheets to be filled out by the jurors and the experts. This will provide the direct feedback to the project team on the organisation of the jury and the fairness of the process. Second part of the follow-up focuses on the communication of the jury results to the community and/or

media. This can take the form of the conference and/or written report. This was the case of the events organised in Tallinn and Kohtla-Järve.

3.4. Expert Panel

What is the goal of the dialogue method?

The main task of an expert panel²⁴ is usually synthesising a variety of inputs (e.g. research reports) – and produce a report that provides a vision and/or recommendations for future possibilities and needs for the topics under analysis. It can be used in the conjunction of other methods like a consensus conference²⁵ and Delphi²⁶. The goal is to broaden the debate on a given issue and include the viewpoints of non-experts in order to inform policy-making.

What is the topic of the dialogue?

Expert panels are useful for integration related issues since they cross-cut many different areas (employment, education, workplace culture just to name a few) and appropriate for topics that are relatively specific and require the synthesis of experts from different disciplines. This method is not designed to actively involve the broad public. If a study is of special topical interest, arrangements may be made to schedule a (public) session at which issues, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the report are presented.

What is the procedure and criteria for the choice of participants in the dialogue?

The preparation for an expert panel includes specifying the task, determining the desired composition of the panel and then recruiting panel members, a panel chair and support staff. Once formed the expert panel is expected to investigate and study the topics assigned and set forth their conclusions and recommendations in written reports. The two key dimensions of this method are composition and balance. Composition concerns the mix of expert knowledge and experience needed for the panel to understand, analyse and draw sound conclusions about the issues before the panel. Balance concerns the even-handed representation of differing points of view that can be expected to affect the conclusions on issues the panel will address. You might consider interviewing the possible panel members prior to the actual event. It might be useful to consider electing the chair of the panel. The chair person guides the process of analysis and seeking solutions for policy issues serves as facilitator and team builder for the panel and as lead integrator of the panel's report.

What is the time frame, cost and the level of complexity of the dialogue?

The expert panel is of moderate cost and complexity. When other methods suggested in these guidelines presume voluntary unpaid participation, then expert panel will usually involve honorarium

²⁴ For more information on this method please see the following publications: "Participatory Methods Toolkit. A practitioner's manual". King Baudouin Foundation, 2003. Available at http://archive.unu.edu/hq/library/Collection/PDF_files/CRIS/PMT.pdf; "Research integration using dialogue methods". David McDonald, Gabriele Bammer, Peter Deane, 2009; available at http://epress.anu.edu.au/dialogue_methods/pdf/whole_book.pdf; and http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/evaluation/methodology/examples/too_pan_res_en.pdf

²⁵ For further, see Section 3.1.

²⁶ Delphi method involves each participant completing a questionnaire prior to the event. Then participants are given feedback on the responses. With this information in hand participants again fill in the questionnaire, this time providing explanations for any views they hold that were significantly divergent from the viewpoints of the others participants. The explanations serve as useful information for others. In addition, (s)he may change his/her opinion, based upon his/her evaluation of new information provided by other participants.

for the experts. The estimated costs include, in addition to expert and meeting costs also the production and dissemination of the report.

The expert panel can be valuable because it brings together different types of actors who might not normally meet in the course of a panel – such as financiers, policy makers, academic researchers, etc. Panels need to avoid too narrow representation, which is liable to result in challenging thinking, lobbying by interest groups or perceptions that vested interests are in charge. Panels need to be chaired and facilitated effectively, to maintain motivation and morale, to resolve conflicts, to monitor timetables and external constraints, to prevent over-dominance of strong personalities.

What is the context and outcome of the dialogue?

The aim of the expert panel is to synthesise a variety of inputs on a specialised topic and produce recommendations. The expert panel is expected to examine the topics assigned and propose their conclusions and recommendations in a written report. The report is the result of the panel's work and deliberations and hence, reports should be given close attention. Expert panel reports are usually scientific inquiries. Panels should strive for a consensus report, but not at the expense of substantially tempering analysis and results. Experience shows that consensus building and report writing are the most demanding parts of this dialogue method. It is more useful to report serious disagreements and explain the reasons behind the discord than to sweep them under the carpet. Lack of consensus on all points is not a failure of the panel and will not be treated as such. Members of the panel are expected to serve as individuals, not as representatives of organisations or interest groups.

3.5. Charette

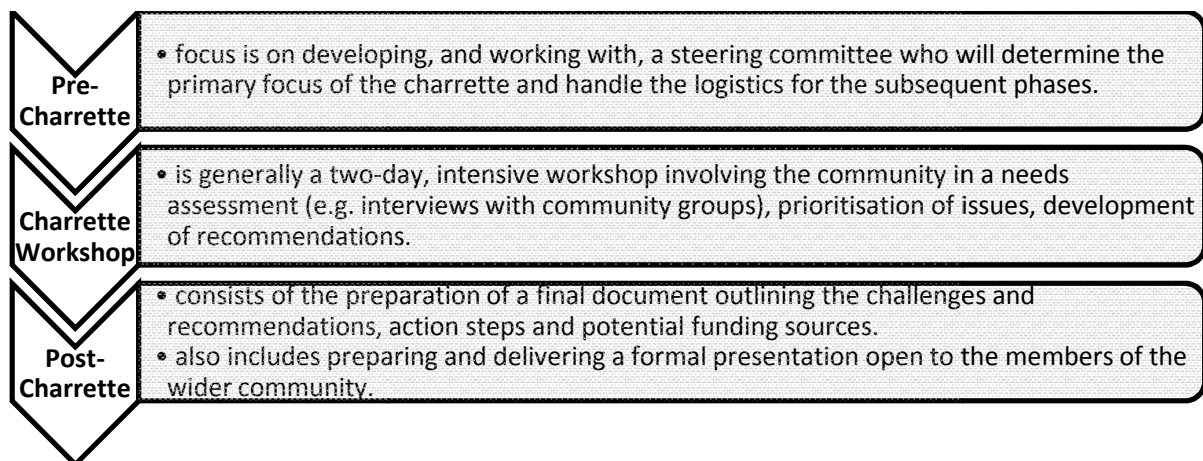
Charrette²⁷ is an intensive face-to-face process designed to bring people from various sub-groups of society into consensus within a short period of time. The main aim of the Charrette is to generate agreement between diverse groups people and stakeholders on the topic at hand. It provides local officials and concerned citizens with a set of resources and a process that will help educate and involve the community in the decision-making process

What is the goal of the dialogue method?

Charette is mostly used for development, design and planning activities at the local community level. It establishes a platform for a free flow of information and opinion sharing. Its primary goal is to provide a forum for building community consensus on a vision for the future of the community through active involvement. Charette is particularly useful for integration related topics as it encourages input from a wide range of participants and facilitates making decisions on difficult issues. Charette also allows for resolving indecision or deadlocks between groups which may occur during the debate.

²⁷ For more information on this method please see Participatory Methods Toolkit. A practitioner's manual. King Baudouin Foundation, 2003, <http://www.charretteinstitute.org/charrette.html>, and <http://www.charrettecenter.net/charrettecenter.asp?a=spf&pfk=7>

A Charrette is a three-phase process:



What is the topic of the dialogue?

The choice of the topic is a very important. The stakeholders must first determine that they want to get involved in this process and are willing to do something with the results. While the Charrette itself is a community endeavour, it commences with the efforts of a few dedicated leaders that will establish the foundation. They define the primary issues related to the Charrette and determine the scope of the project. The choice of the topic is led by the project manager (can be one person or a team), who oversees the coordination of the whole process. Project manager is supported and guided by the steering committee. The approximate committee size is between 9 to 15 persons. The composition of the committee should reflect the diversity of opinions within the community. In the context of integration it could mean including people of different age (both young and senior citizens) and migrating generation (newly arrived and local born ethnic minority background), but also different religious organisations. It is also worthwhile to involve members of the business community, researchers (academic experts) and elected officials depending on the topic under discussion.

What is the procedure and criteria for the choice of participants in the dialogue?

The participants of the Charrette are usually average citizen. However a Charrette can also be composed of stakeholders. The Charrette participants should form a group of individuals with a broad range of skills and backgrounds. They will be responsible for producing the tangible results of the workshop. It is important that the participants are chosen for their skills, not just for their individual interests.

What is the time frame, cost and the level of complexity of the dialogue?

Charrette is of low complexity, but medium cost. The approximate preparation time is up to three months. The length of the individual Charrettes can vary (from one day up to five days). Charrettes can also vary in size from a few dozen to thousand people.

What is the context and outcome of the dialogue?

The expected result of the Charrette is to generate consensus among diverse groups of people and stakeholders, and form an action plan or recommendations. The final step of the Charrette is to present results to the community. The outcomes of the Charrette discussions should be gathered into a final document. This final document should not be finished until after the final presentation.

Following the presentation, the final document should be modified if necessary according to comments at the final presentation. The document should then be approved and adopted by the steering committee. It is essential that the final report be action oriented, highly visual and explanatory (not only descriptive).

3.6. Community Level Dialogue

Dialogue can take place on different levels. For this project²⁸ we have identified two levels where dialogue platforms can function. Dialogue platforms can aim at providing recommendation for policy- and decision-making, but also at formulating shared understandings in the society – within civil society between ethnic minorities and other NGOs and community members to reach agreement on various issues of community life. This stems from the notion that dialogue is a process of creating joint meaning and shared understanding’ in different matters that are relevant to the community. In the context of integration this refers to dialogue activities between different ethnic minority and immigrant associations, but also (mainstream society) NGOs interested integration related topics.

What is the goal of the dialogue method?

Second dialogue event took place in Södertälje and was divided into two parts – first part being a seminar for (stakeholders – local politicians, local public and NGO workers); the second part – in practice a dialogue for social cohesion and integration in the district of Fornhöjden within the outskirts of the city of Södertälje. The aim of this dialogue event was to encourage the use of participatory dialogue as a method for increased understanding, social cohesion and integration, on the one hand between decision makers and citizens, on the other hand between citizens themselves.

What is the topic of the dialogue?

The expected result of the event were: deeper understanding and development of the dialogue process in itself; a better knowledge and mutual agreement between decision makers and citizens and between citizens and citizens for the future development of Fornhöjden as an attractive suburb of intensive diversity and multi-ethnicity. The format used was open space dialogue with residents on the challenges and opportunities for the area where they live in. there were two main topics discussed:

- (i) Opportunities for the young
- (ii) The attractive area of Fornhöjden– what are the challenges and the opportunities in Fornhöjden

What is the procedure and criteria for the choice of participants in the dialogue?

The goal of this method was to engage local residents in one of Södertälje’s city districts with approximately 4000 inhabitants in the development of this district with the intention to understand the change and development concerning increasing social unrest, unsafety, unemployment and lack of social cohesion among the residents of a variety of ethnic origins – Iraqi, Finnish, Assyrian/Syrian, Swedish. In a broader sense the method could be named an Open Space method²⁹. The aim of this method is to reduce the risk for one or more people to dominate the dialogue entirely. The choice of method was made with the intention that everyone could benefit – more or less everyone

²⁸ See the web site of project at <http://sidp.abikeskused.ee/>

²⁹ For further information, see <http://www.kstoolkit.org/Open+Space>

participating had the chance to express their opinion - because everyone's opinion matters. Organisers benefit from this method because what everyone present at the dialogue wants to say can be said.

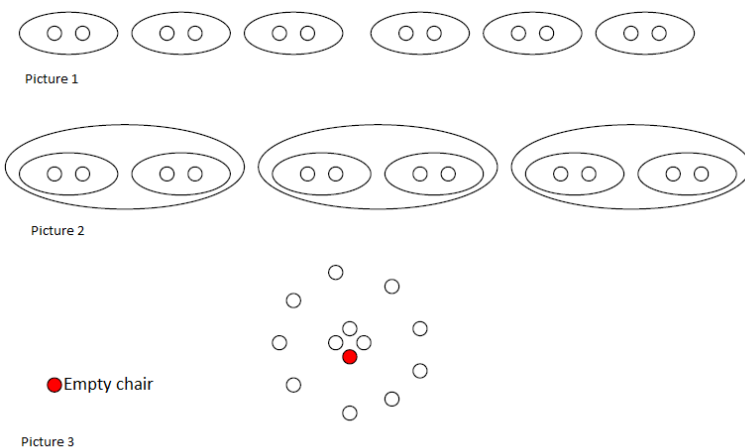
The topic of this certain dialogue event was about ways of increasing social cohesion in the district of Fornhöjden, via the residents' expressions of what they want their housing area to be or not to be, including specific statements on how the area could be developed.

- First the participants were asked to close their eyes and visualise “the worst day possible in Fornhöjden”. They were asked to answer questions like “what has happened?”, “how does it smell?” and “what do you see?” etc.
- The answers were written individually on post-it notes, one item on each note.
- The participants discussed their notes two and two together (picture 1 below).
- The notes were then discussed at each table. Each table had to choose three notes (picture 2 below)
- The facilitators collected the notes and arranged them into groups, all on a board that everyone could see.

This process then was repeated, but this time the participants were asked to visualise “the best day possible in Fornhöjden”.

The third task focused on the opportunities. The participant were asked what they would do, if they had unlimited resources and can do and decide whatever you want in their neighbourhood and there asked to discuss at their table.

After five minutes the reverse was announced by the moderator – all resources are gone now. Participants were asked to discuss in their group what was possible to do with no resources at all. Participants were given longer time to discuss this matter. They were even asked to choose a representative to take part in “reflective dialogue” in the final session on the dialogue event.



This figure describes the room arrangement for the dialogue event. In the first part of the dialogue participants are asked to work individually (visualise a situation) and then share it with their neighbour. In the second stage they are asked to share their points of view with the table (6-10 people), while in the last stage each table is asked to nominate a

representative to take part in the reflective dialogue and share their table's views with the rest of the participants. The reflective dialogue was organised with the representatives sitting in chairs forming a circle (see picture 3). There was one additional (empty) chair. The empty chair can be used by participants if they feel that they want to add or ask something. This is similar to open fishbowl discussion method presented above.

The representatives (of the groups from the tables) were then given some rules for this part of the dialogue:

- The dialogue is conducted among yourselves only
- Please tell the essence of what you have discussed within your group
- Everyone has to be listened to when they are holding the microphone

As mentioned above, it is crucial to have a specific aim for the dialogue event before it takes place. It is also of great importance to document the event in order to be able to give some feedback. When people make an effort to participate and share their experience, it is of great importance that their opinions are documented. The exercise with post-it notes is very suitable.

What is the time frame, cost and the level of complexity of the dialogue?

This method has been used in the past with more than 150 people. The time frame of the event is two hours if there are more than 50 participants. The complexity depends on the issues that the participants bring up. In this case, the complexity is about getting all sorts of people, with different backgrounds, prerequisites, languages – to get all involved and engaged and to give everybody a sense of equality. Coffee and good cakes belong to the extra goodies that make out a necessary ingredient.

Preparations are of great importance to achieve a successful dialogue. The participants are brought together based on the mobilisation plan. For this particular event the Municipality of Södertälje wanted to have dialogue with residents in the district of Fornhöjden. In order to find participants the project team engaged local agents, young people residing in the area and recreation leaders to spread and distribute information about the event. Prior to the dialogue event it is important to decide the goal of the event and you have to keep in mind all the important aspects when executing the dialogue event.

The Dialogue event had an intention to welcome all residents settled in Fornhöjden to the event – of all ages, backgrounds and professions. The invitations were actively spread by the local municipality employees (from the primary school, the youth centre) NGO employees in the Tenants Association and the Local Congregation of the Lutheran Church. Local media and municipality media disseminated the information about the event one month ahead of the event.



*Open Space Dialogue in Fornhöjden
29.08.2013*

Flyers about the event were distributed in all the flats of the residents – about 1000 were distributed by youngsters from the youth centre. In that sense, the municipality as the organiser, had no beforehand idea on how many participants should turn up. The project team expected that 40 people would turn up, however more than 100 people came to the event. This meant that the methods planned for the meeting, needed to be adapted to a larger number of participants.

Re-adapting to the changed circumstances requires that the moderator is well prepared to sense the atmosphere and change the dialogue method if needed to be more creative, constructive to allow everyone to participate given the time constraints of the event. At every stage of the dialogue a concrete task was given to participant to complete. Moderator kept the time to fit into the time allocated for the event.

What was the context and outcome of the dialogue?

The context of the dialogue was centred round a number of alienation, physical environment and safety issues. The outcome stated a number of suggestions for change – especially in the area of physical environment. Social cohesion is very fragile in the area. The participants want physical opportunities to meet and to explore common creativity and other activities. Obviously, there is a remarkable division between the blocks of flats, where the Middle East dwellers live – and where the Swedes and the Finns live. There is an urge to bridge the gap and the wish from the participants is that this wish is taken for real by the municipality and by the housing companies. The dialogue and its outcome gave the stakeholders, including the decision makers, a platform with some very concrete physical proposal for immediate change and development. The dialogue itself creates expectations to fulfil by the authorities. If handled with respect, it is the start of a new process including the future participation of the local district inhabitants.

3.7. Moderator

The role of the moderator is essential in all participatory methods. This is why we decided to outline responsibilities and tasks of the moderator and the facilitator in a separate subsection. Some of his/her tasks vary from method to method, but in general it is the responsibility of moderators to maintain the flow of the proceedings and to keep everyone on time and on track. This requires a firm but diplomatic presence. The moderator should be flexible, unbiased, empathetic, a good listener and enthusiastic. (S)he should develop rapport with the participants, be respectful and communicate in a clear, friendly demeanour, which is particularly important in the questions related to integration. Integration topics are often sensitive and participants hold emotional and opposing views. The moderator needs to keep the group on the subject at hand and encourage and provide space for less vocal members to express their ideas.

A moderator should have:

- Considerable skill and experience in moderating or facilitating meetings.
- A reputation for non-partisanship, both politically and in terms of the specific issue being addressed.
- The moderator should not be a known advocate for one side of an issue or for a political party favouring one side.
- Either some direct knowledge of the topic or the time to acquire that knowledge before the events.
- For some methods, a good knowledge of the topic is more important than for others.
- The ability to be empathetic with different types of people and to be able to draw out their concerns and questions. Reputation is less important to the participants than the feeling that the moderator cares about them and is acting on their behalf.
- Knowledge of different types of group processes to make sure that all participants feel that they have had the opportunity to be heard.
- The ability to work as a member of the project team, working closely with the project leader and/or organisers.

Conclusion

The aim of the current guidelines is to offer recommendations to improve the organisation of integration -related dialogue platforms in ethnically diverse societies, where dialogue platforms can serve as one mechanism for enhancing the participation of ethnic minorities in decision-making.

The first part of the guidelines outlines the definition of the integration dialogue platforms and reviews the possible enabling factors that could serve as benchmarks for carrying out successful dialogue platforms. This is followed by more detailed recommendations on organising integration related dialogue platforms based on the comparative analysis that was undertaken for this project. We have outlined six recommendations that are prerequisites for a successful dialogue integration platform that would bring out an open discussion and assist the participants to find common ground for collaboration:

- (i) Clarifying the nature and end-result of dialogue
- (ii) Transparent and inclusive selection of partners
- (iii) Ensuring professional and transparent way of work
- (iv) Improving the knowledge and skills of participants
- (v) Measuring the impact
- (vi) Sustainability of dialogue platforms

In the third chapter we present a selection of six methods (conference, fishbowl, citizens' jury, expert panel, Charrette and community level dialogue) that are most frequently used for dialogue purposes and that can also be applied for promoting dialogue in the field of integration. When describing each method we have addressed six aspects that we have found to be helpful in thinking systematically about consultation with minority and immigrant groups and documenting its application.

- i) The goal of the dialogue method
- ii) The topic of the dialogue
- iii) The procedure and criteria for the choice of participants
- iv) The time frame and complexity of the method
- v) The cost of the method
- vi) The expected outcome of the dialogue