

Focus groups with youth workers with reference to integration

Introduction

STRIPS on the integration road project- ERASMUS + is an integration project where a focus group is used to provide useful information in order to make comic strips. The comic strips are meant to be used as a non-formal education tool to integrate people.

A focus group of eight youth workers was analyzed. Most of the youth workers are second generation immigrants and one is of Swedish heritage.

Participants - Sweden

Name and surname	Age	Years of experience in the youth field	Qualification	Phone	E-mail
Josef Ansari	23	5 years	Youth worker	0728534021	epalogan365@gmail.com
Arona Drammeh	29	2 years	Youth worker	0763187588	Aronadrammeh@gmail.com
Zeinab Ali	27	1 year	No qualification	0762519966	yeggehorn@hotmail.com
Suleika Mohamed	27	3 years	Youth worker	0760730351	Suleika98@gmail.com
Zakariye Haji	28	4 years	No qualification	0723719676	Zakariye Haji@gmail.com
Johanna Dhallöf	25	1 year	No qualification	0707161003	Johanna@hotmail.se
Sadia Hassan	30	3 years	Youth worker	0700147177	Sadia.stensdotter@gmail.com
Qeysar Ahmed Shiikh	26	2 years	Youth worker	0765976510	Qeysarahmed@yahoo.com

The questions asked during the focus group are following:

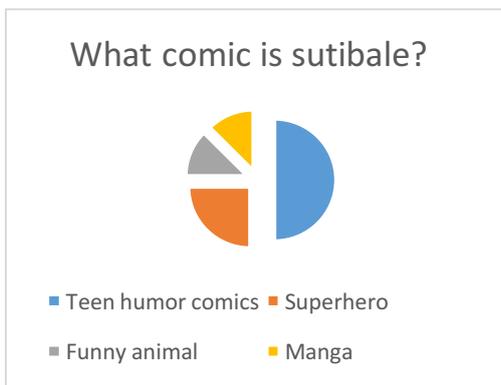
- What are the comics for you?
- Think back over the past, what is your favorite comic?
- What kind of comics does better fit our project? (gag cartoon, funny animal, superhero comic, teen humor comics, romantic comic, alternative comic, etc.)
- How to design the main characters?
- What about the setting? An ideal city, an island, a desert, a school, etc.?
- Starting from the project core issue* what are the crucial points to deal with?
- How to overcome the language barrier?

Results

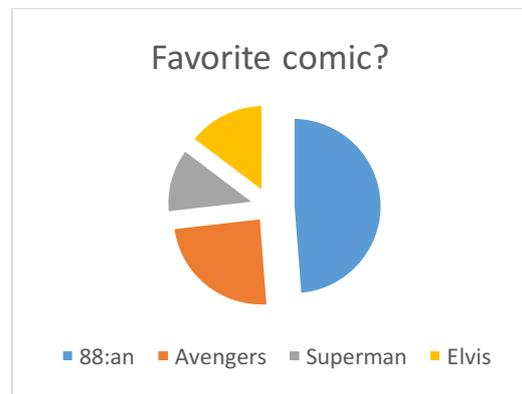
What are the comics to you? How to overcome the language barrier?

The participants all thought it was a great idea to use comics as it was a shared belief that comics would be a good way of getting out information to young immigrants that do not fully comprehend the language.” A more fun and creative way of learning. It is easier to understand a picture rather than words.” (Suleika Mohamed). “If as few words as possible and body language is used in the comics, it will facilitate understanding” (Josef Ansari). “Simplifying something, overcoming language barriers” (Arona Drammeh).

What is your favorite comic?



What kind of comics better fit our project?



Most of the participants thought a teen humor comic would be suitable. They thought that since it is for youths it should be something that they can relate to, something for them. “A teen humor comic because it is for teenagers and it seems fitted” (Zakariye Haji). Another popular suggestion was superhero since you are bombarded with information when learning the new system. “I think the best comic would be a superhero because you are overloaded with information and you have to give it your all to learn” (Josef Ansari)

How to design the main character?

When asked this question the focus group came up with rather good ideas.

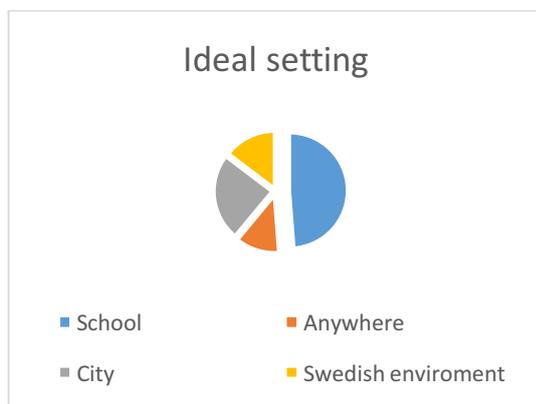
“Like I said before a superhero. He could have an I sign because he needs to “take in” information. Make him seek information. He could catch it when everyone else is trying to fight it.” (Josef Ansari)

“An exotic animal that cannot relate to the Swedish animals and environment? I mean the seasons could change and a funny comic can be made of how the animal adapts” (Qaysar Ahmed)

“I thing a teen humor comic describing what obstacles they meet on daily bases. It could be through the eyes of the foreigner “a day at school” with weird things they encounter.” (Zakariye Haji)

“Maybe manga cartoons fighting personified segregation and embracing integration” (Johanna Dhallöf)

Ideal setting?



Starting from the project core issue* what are the crucial points to deal with?

The participants all agreed that a core issue is sexism. “Sexism, gender equality is important because different cultures have different gender roles” (Sadia Hassan). Furthermore, they believed that it is of great importance to think of the language due to the language barrier. “Language, sexism and inclusion” (Johanna Dhallöf)

Discussion

The participants agreed in many questions (see above results). They thought that an informal way of learning would help to overcome the language barrier which is the main obstacle with integration. They also felt that inclusion is a massive issue when adapting to a new society. When someone feels included they are positive about learning new things. For that reason we should try to design the comic strips in a way that makes them relate. All of them work as youth workers, some had qualifications and some did not. However, they all had experience within the field and most of them have worked with newly arrived immigrant teens. The subjects were 4 males and 4 females all within the ages of 18-30 years old.