

Presidency project 2023

**Voices of young immigrants – inclusion into
jobs, education and society**

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Core focus of the project

Target group a) Young immigrants - perspectives towards inclusion in education, work and society

Target group b) Related stakeholders (immigrant issues - policy, organizations, institutions, labour market)

Emphasis

- Increased flexibility in regard to access to lifelong learning, education and VPL (Validation of Prior Learning)
- Improve services for the target group, f.ex recognition of prior learning (formal documents)
- React to the needs of the target group
- Learn from the experiences of other Nordic countries (how have they overcome barriers, what works)
- Support increased inclusion on the labour market and in society
- Strengthen cooperation of various stakeholders / actors

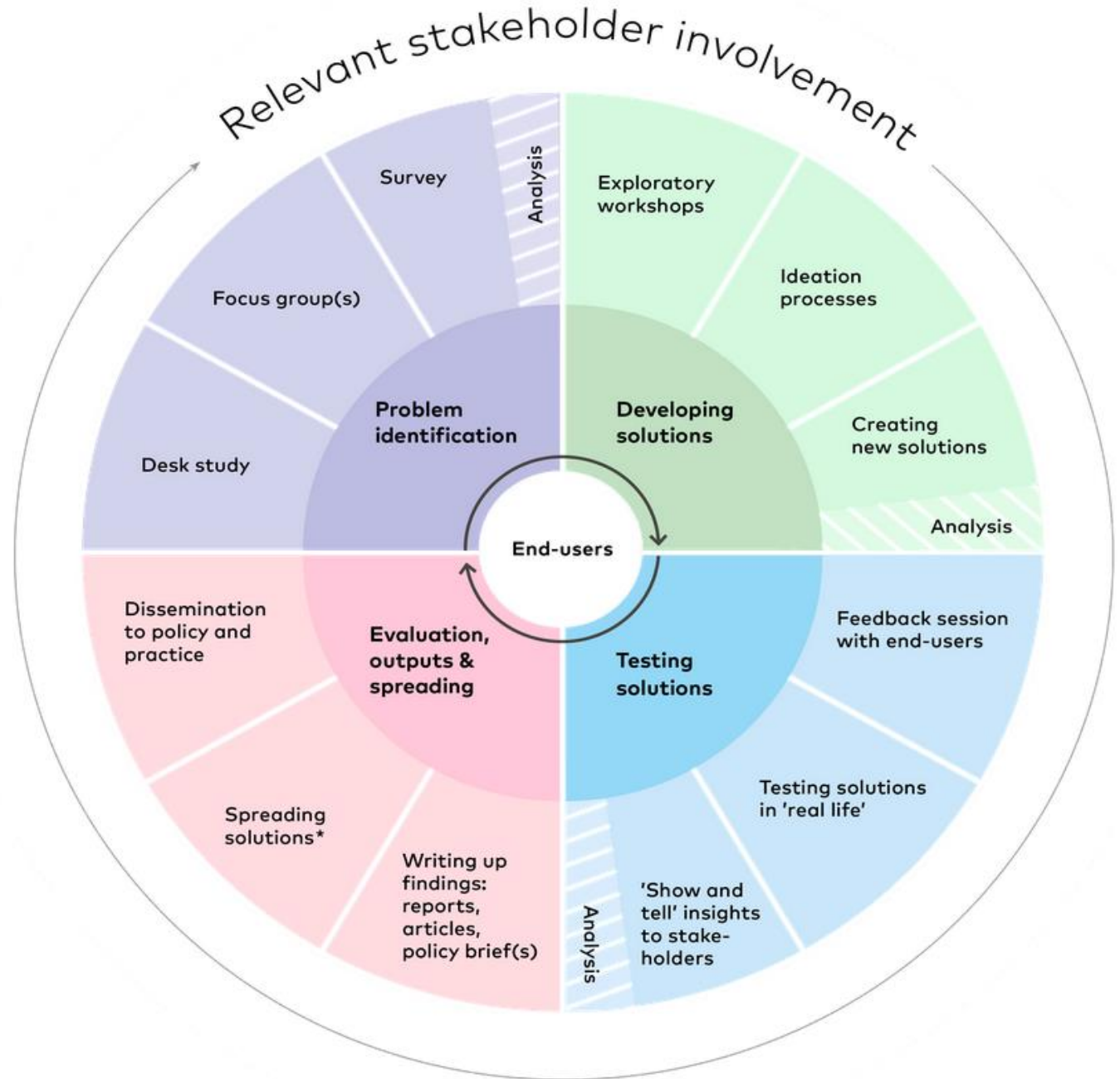


NLL involvement

- NLL an active partner in the project
- NLL – national coordinators regularly informed and consulted
 - Providing feedback on process development
 - On the results from Icelandic reference group
- Connections to other Nordic stakeholders
- Connecting to national stakeholders
 - Recruitment for the main event
- Production of main products – published on www.nll.org
- On-going developments based on process and findings
- Dissemination into networks and national stakeholders / venues



Design Based Research (DBR) process in the project



Main activities

- Reference group
 - "Half-open" - recruitment
 - Focus group discussions identifying challenges
- Focus groups with young immigrants (5 regions)
 - 18-35 years of age
 - Language: Icelandic/English
 - Jobs, education and society
- **Company survey*
 - Sent out to 3000 companies
 - Responserate was 130 / 80 with immigrant workers
- Project conference
 - 86 participants / 26 other Nordic countries
 - Solutions produced, networking
 - [Conference website with material](#)
- Feedback from the focus groups
 - Findings reviewed and feedback documented
 - Solutions adjusted and prioritized accordingly



Focus groups with immigrants

Results -> Challenges

- **Education**
 - Information and guidance on pathways
 - Languages - access to training
 - Prejudice
- **Work**
 - Validation of prior learning
 - Entering jobs (networks)
 - On the job training (consistency)
- **Society**
 - Support network and information

Recommendations

- Formalize access to information and pathways to work & education
- Utilize support to those who are „immigrant information guides“
- Support public spaces where people can network



Reference group

Results -> Challenges

Policy

- Leadership (commitment)
- Unclear strategy
- Unbalanced priorities
- Belonging (as a focus of policies and communities)

The immigrant

- Heterogeneous group
- Motivation to learn
- Identity struggles

Initiatives

- Communication
- Coordination
- One-fits-all models

Blind spots

- Self-centred mindset
- Language focus as a main solution
- Been there – done that
- Immigrants: either a problem or a project

Stakeholders presented in the reference group

- Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour
- Ministry of Education and Children
- Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation
- Labour market partners
- Icelandic association of Local Authorities
- Multicultural information center
- National association for adult learning (LEIKN)
- Association for regional educational providers (SÍMENNT)
- Directorate of labour (VMST)
- University of Iceland – ENIC/NARIC, researchers
- University of Akureyri - researchers
- Associations for specific immigrant groups
- The Council for welfare
- Municipality based educational institutions and public institutions
- Private language schools
- Regional lifelong learning centers
- Upper secondary schools



Company survey

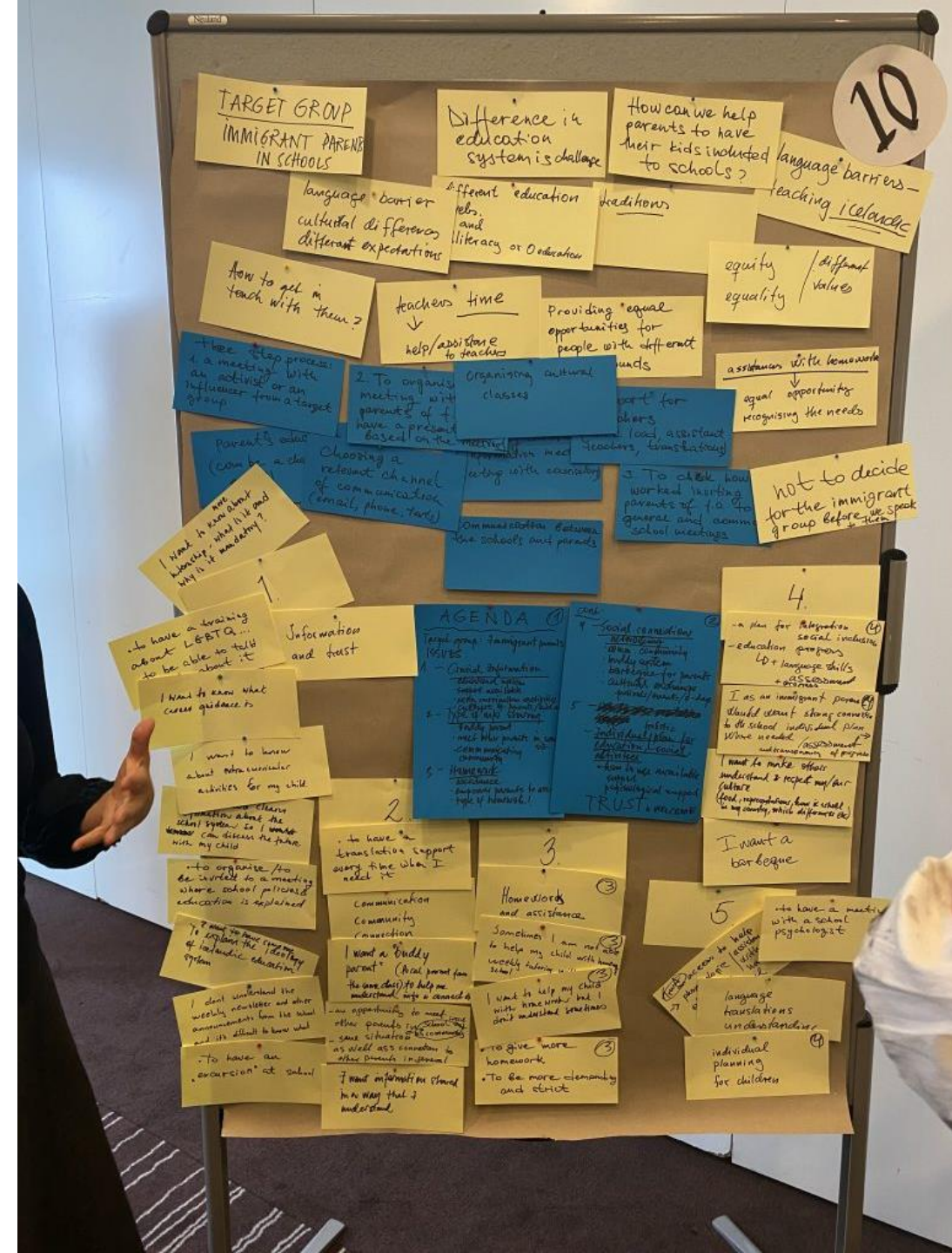
Results -> Challenges and suggested solutions

Language

- Foreign employees lack Icelandic language skills, the want to learn the language, and difficulties in communication can lead to misunderstandings
- The main qualitative results on the challenges Icelandic companies/corporation face regarding workers of foreign origin concur with the quantitative finding on such worker rarely get any formal Icelandic teaching during working hours

Solutions to the challenges identified in answers:

- Offer formal Icelandic teaching
- Offer in-formal Icelandic learning
- Option of the use of another language (English)
- Develop more technical solutions



Conference with stakeholders

Results -> Solutions

- Communication/networking platforms
- Access to information
- Mentors / information guides
- Immigrants' involvement in society in general
- Immigrants' involvement in policy making
- Icelandic teaching
- On-the-site learning
- Recognising qualifications
- The inclusion of children with immigrant background into the school
- Blindspot education



Feedback from representatives from the focus groups



- *The target group identified which solutions were most valuable, provided more ideas and added blindspots*
 - They recognized the value in the suggested solutions from conference

Blindspots:

- Immigrants should be seen as integral to the solution process
 - Not just for identifying the challenges but actively involved
- Programs should not be viewed as a quick fixes
 - Both immediate practical need of newcomers and their long-term needs
- Avoid seeking a "one size fits all" solution – it's a diverse group
 - Programs need to remain flexible, offer a variety of options to meet needs

Dissemination

2023	2024
Interview based articles (2) on NVL.org and Gátt	UNAK – article
University of Akureyri – conference and committee for revising the adult education law	Ålborg Uni - article
Conference website with material as a link	Cooperation between researcher (UNAK and Ålborg) – article
Regional lifelong learning centers -19. sept.	Third article in Gátt – on findings
EKA - 20. sept.	Further dissemination within the NLL networks – into other networks – national connections
Menntakvika – University seminar series - 29. sept.	Nordic local events
Online seminar for the adult education field 2. okt.	Third article in Gátt – on findings
Targeted emails	Media (Gátt article)
Final meeting with the reference group - nov	On-going developments in cooperation with the adult education field (LLL centers) shaping solutions locally
Final report – and a policy brief - des	And more...



Design Based Research (DBR) process

A sustainable model
for change

