



Summary - Discussion event 16.11.2013

Feeling of belonging motivates to integrate and learn

It is crucial for each of us to belong to a certain group, community. The feeling of belonging in the community is often created by securing the basic issues as joint meals, music experience, doing together (*talkoot*) and alike. It does not depend on particularly organized program of the event. People tend to organize themselves once the basic feeling of security and beneficial being together is created.

Roles of people and different organizations shall even out for the aim of reaching larger feeling of community. City organizations and inhabitants should have equal positions.

The feeling of belonging to the town as the community increases the newcomer motivation to learn local culture and language.

Imago of Rovaniemi

Rovaniemi has brought the sense of security and safety. At the same time Rovaniemi is a town of a low level of acceptance and tolerance of the diversity.

The Culture services of the Rovaniemi City organize many official events in the town as the Veteran day, the New Years' eve, elderly people celebration, Independence Day and many more throughout the year. The organization is also positively responding to the feedback of the events. Rovaniemi week is one of the events and particularly aimed at introducing the many faces of the town to its inhabitants.

Circus artist Mette Ylikorva told about the Salainen aarre children festival as an example of community building cultural event in the town. It has gathered hundreds of families for numerous years.

Even though events are organized openly to serve different target groups and their needs, the new Rovaniemi inhabitants do not dare to attend them. There is an incomplete understanding whether also immigrants can participate in events as Finland's Independence Day.

The events are designed particularly for specific target groups as well as elderly people, children and youth, working-age people. Hence, some of the immigrant



groups would benefit from gender specific events, multi-cultural events independently of the age.

How to open up cultural events for the new inhabitants of the Rovaniemi?

Challenges to reach the audience

The flow of information is crucial for the success of the event and efforts in generating the sense of community.

Hence the information and information channels are not yet serving as expected in Rovaniemi. Not all people are reading Lapin Kansa. And if reading, language skills may not be sufficient to grasp the targeted information.

The existing channels could be used more effectively. For example, the staff of the immigration service centres gets to know the people well during the early integration process. There could be closer cooperation, for example, between the centre staff and school teachers, youth workers to ease up the cultural integration. Teachers and youth workers could also be the information channels for the various activities in the town.

Families with children are often easy to reach. The family integrates through children activities in day care, school, youth work. Single or families with no children are difficult to motivate in participating in local cultural events.

Continuity and effectiveness of the discussions

Some of the participants repeated that similar discussions on the topics related to Rovaniemi strengths, weaknesses and possible opportunities have taken many times. Immigrants are often asked of their opinions and ideas, but during many years no change has been seen. It may be the reason for low participation also in this exact event.

How to secure the continuity and effectiveness of the numerous projects and activities in the town? How to encourage immigrants to implement their own initiatives?

Rovaniemi city as partner in event organization

The third sector is searching for the opportunities to encourage the inhabitants to participate in the production of the events, content of the events. Also inhabitants have many ideas. Rovaniemi city could take an active share in the realization of the events, for example, by offering a space for various



Rovaniemi

Hyvinvointipalvelut
Kultti / Sintija Dutka
25.11.2013



Euroopan unioni
Euroopan sosiaalirahasto

events and take charge on the information distribution.

Ideas

Women could gather together every second week or once a month for peer support, joint activities, discussions. The women group would particularly serve those with limited social networks (not only immigrants).

Family event for the both Finnish and immigrant audiences about the various daily routines could be organized. For example, there could be a humorous performance of the women and men roles in family, parent and day care cooperation in upbringing the children telling about the values in the Finnish society. Such event would give the necessary information for the new inhabitants and also offer in return information of the other cultures.

Participants of the third Kultti project's discussion

Aayah Abo Hamdah

Intisar Mushaileh

Sintija Dutka, Kultti project's worker

Mette Ylikorva, Circus artist

Merja Tervo, Head of Cultural Services, Rovaniemi city

Vipuvoimaa
EU:lta
2007–2013