



‘How are you’ discussions to support integration

The ‘How are you’ discussion is a low-threshold method with the key aim of ensuring that people going through integration feel heard and that their sense of inclusion is strengthened. The method provides a space for open dialogue that focuses on the views and everyday experiences of people going through integration.

The ‘How are you’ discussion model was developed as part of the community-sponsored integration pilot project (2023–2025) to address the hopes and needs of people going through integration. The information gathered through the model will guide the development of services and practices to better reflect the reality of the everyday lives of people going through integration. You can read more about community-based approaches to integration support in the pilot’s publication [Recipes for community-sponsored integration \(in Finnish\)](#) and on the [community-sponsored integration project page](#).

The most important thing is to remember to ask

You can base the discussion on the discussion model, and the person you are talking to can choose which questions to answer. However, you can adapt the model to make it your own – the most important thing is to remember to ask the questions, not the questions themselves. The discussion focuses on everyday issues: what works and what does not work, and what the person’s hopes are. This provides valuable information on how local operators can develop services and activities to promote integration more effectively. The ‘How are you’ discussion is not just a tool for collecting information; it also strengthens the inclusion of people going through integration. It can also provide insights by allowing you to observe your own routine activities from different perspectives, as different people perceive things in different ways.

‘How are you’ discussion model

The discussions are based on transparency, trust and voluntary participation. Before starting a discussion, it is important to clearly explain who you are, which organisation you represent and how the answers will be used. Please keep in mind the ethical aspects of the process. It is important to stress that the discussion does not lead to a direct solution to the potential challenges of the person going through integration, but its summary will be used at a more general level to improve operations. Think about how you can make the atmosphere of the discussion as relaxed and safe as possible. If necessary, you can also arrange a small group discussion, but be sure to facilitate an open dialogue in that case.

Experience for a person going through integration: I can be heard and articulate my thoughts.

Experience for organisations and other communities: Insights emerge from the voices of people going through integration – familiar places can become settings for new and surprising stories. We can learn to look at things differently and find solutions to the issues raised. We can learn to listen.

Please note:



The 'How are you' discussions are informal conversations. The aim is to record the answers only after the discussion is over, without including any personal information about the respondent. This is carried out differently from interviews, which must be conducted in accordance with the Finnish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity as set out by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK.

Checklist

- ✓ **Accessibility and surroundings**
Take language and interpretation needs into account. Choose a quiet space with as few distractions as possible. Also make sure that the space is easily accessible and arrange comfortable seating.
- ✓ **Transparency**
Explain who you are, where you are from and why the discussion is taking place, emphasising that participating in the discussion is voluntary. Also explain what the answers will be used for.
- ✓ **Creating a good atmosphere**
Start with a light and casual question, use friendly language and smile.
- ✓ **Flexible participation**
Give the person you are talking to the option not to answer and allow them to ask follow-up questions and deviate from the discussion.

Question templates for the 'How are you' discussion

Start the discussion with easy questions such as: How are you? What have you been up to lately?

Experience of the reception

What was it like coming to Finland / this town?

Have you felt welcome in Finland / this town?

Would you like to elaborate on that?

Could you give a few examples?

What helped you the most at the beginning, and what kind of additional support would you have needed?

Opportunities in the area and participating in them

What places do you know here?

Where did you learn about them?

How well do you feel you know your neighbourhood?

What things or activities have been memorable in this area?

Contacts and social network

Do you know many people in the area?

Would you like to find more friends?



Euroopan unionin
osarahoittama

KIRKKOHALLITUS[†]
KYRKOSTYRELSEN

Punainen Risti



HUMAK[®]

What are you interested in?

What would you like to do?

Do you feel that you have the opportunity to pursue your interests?

Have you shared your ideas or been heard?