My<Ours

Knowledge of, opinions towards and experiences with migration at a Norwegian Upper Secondary School

An Analysis of the Comenius Survey 2013

About the survey

- Designed to reveal knowledge of, opinions towards and experiences with migration in the attending countries.
- This analysis focuses on the results from U. Pihl Upper Secondary School in Bergen, Norway.
- 111 students aged 16-17 have responded to the survey. 62% male and 38% female students.
- In the second half of the survey only students with a migration background were asked to respond.

Disclaimer

What we can and cannot claim based on the survey:

- The respondents to the survey are few, so the expected margin of error is fairly large.
- We cannot expect to find any useful information about the correlations between different answers because of the statistical variation.
- The relationship between male and female students in the survey is not representative of the ratio at a national level.



Disclaimer continues

- With the limited number (111 and 54 respectively) of respondents to the survey, we cannot generalize and make assumptions about anything else than the knowledge, opinions and experiences of the students.
- Can it not be useful anyhow? It will be interesting to compare the results with the results from the other countries, as this was the idea of the survey altogether

Disclaimer continues

- The number of respondents is falling throughout the survey, in the second part only students with a migration-background were asked to tick off answers.
- The number of respondents varies wildly (from 54 to 30), making it hard to decide exactly how many students with a migration background attend the 5 responding classes.



Disclaimer continues

- Some of the free-text answers seems to be mock-answers; we have serious concerns about whether this survey, especially the second part, can provide us with useful statistical data at all.
- It does give us reason to speculate about the reasons why a number of students do not seem to care, have any knowledge of it, are critical or express racist opinions or click the «I don't know-button» to be finished with it.
- Another weakness with the survey, is the questions. For example question 40; «in my opinion, immigration to my country is…»
- What is it that the question makers wish to find?

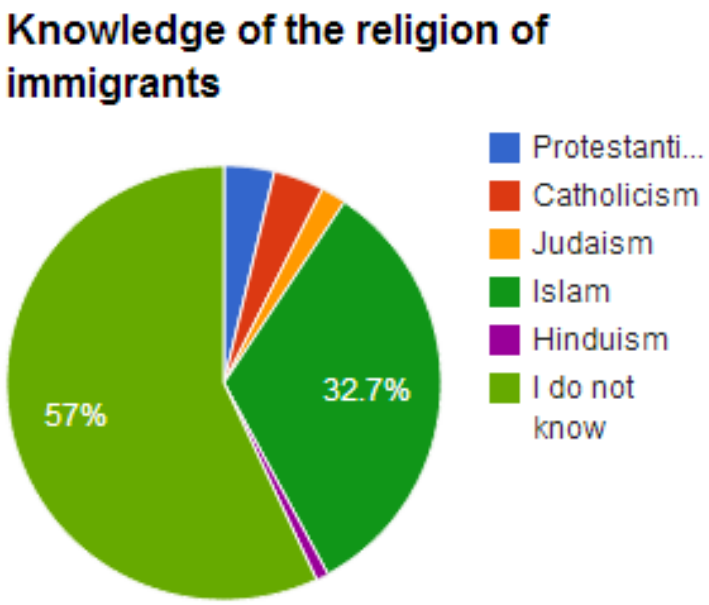
Facts about the U. Pihl-students

- The study reveals a general lack of knowledge of migration among the students.
- On questions about where most people come from, a large number of respondents clicked «I don`t know», the same is true for questions about when the largest number of immigrants arrived in Norway and similar questions.
- This is surprising, because most of the students say they learned about migration at school.

We have taken the knowledge of the religion of immigrants as an example

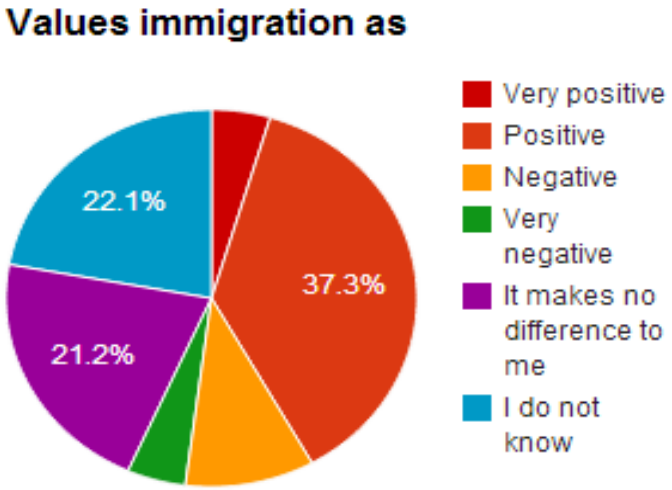
Knowledge of the religion of immigrants

- The majority of the student know that most immigrants today comes from EU-countries. One third of the students also thinks that islam is the dominating religion among the immigrants.
- The majority is actually polish catholics.



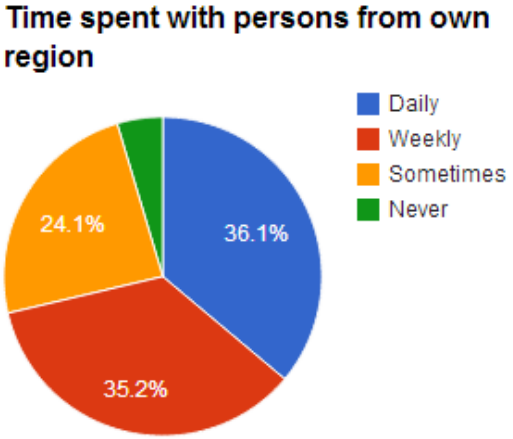
Experiences with migration

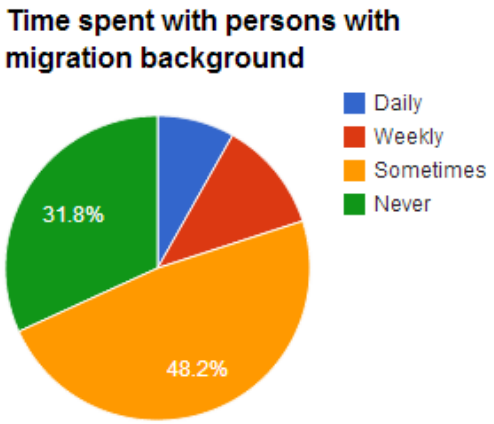
- Most students (83 %) have no experience with migration inside Norway, but 24 % have people in their family that were born in another country.
- Over 80 % were born in a European country outside of the EU, most in Norway, but also Bosnia, Russia and other countries.
- Over 90 percent attend a school-class with students with a migration background and they experience the classroom atmosphere as positive.
- The study reveals that most students have positive or neutral attitudes towards immigrants.
- 10 percent have negative opinions about migration.



Experiences with migration continues

- The students spend more time with students born in Norway than with students with a migration background.
- However, over 90 percent have friends from another country, so this may indicate that the students interact with people outside their school-class in their spare time, regardless of background.
- The statistical tendency is towards students spending more time with classmates from Norway than classmates with a migration background.





Integration problems?

- Can these statistical facts be taken to indicate that integration of people with a migration background is not working adequately in the Norwegian school system or society as a whole?
- Majority of the students with a migration background were born in Norway (79, 9 %).
- We may draw the conclusion that the integration problem also concerns the persons born in Norway. Social status, education and income, and the lack of integration are, in statistical terms, hereditary.
- We have also looked at data and surveys that studies second and third generation immigrants in Norway. When asked about their "ethnicity" and which country they refer to as their country of origin many of them tell us the nationality of their relatives who came to Norway two generations ago.
- The question this raises is if the Norwegian government and society in general do enough for immigrants and to make them feel at home.

Discrimination?

- As previously stated we cannot completely rely on the data given by the students with a migration background, but some interesting trends can be detected.
- On questions about discrimination, 50 per cent answer «I do not want to answer», leaving us to speculate about the reasons why they do not.
- Have they really been discriminated against, are they not sure or were they just searching for the «I don't know»-button?



Conclusions

The survey has some weaknesses that make the data unreliable. Despite the weaknesses, we can detect some important trends:

- Students at U. Pihl. Upper Secondary School has a poor factual knowledge of migration and immigration, despite being taught about it in school.

-The opinions towards immigration and immigrants are mostly positive or neutral.

-A great majority of the students interact with people with migration background on a daily basis at school and/or in their spare time, but they interact more frequently with students from their own region.

The question this raises, is whether the students are ignorant of the problems, thinks the theme is «worn out» or simply does not care, maybe because they experience contact with students from another country as no trouble at all.

Thank you!

