

Partner meeting and final conference of the LLP Grundtvig Multilateral Project
“Migrants' Integrating Kit - Basic Language for Dealing with Financial Matters - INTEGRA”
“Migrants integration processes in EU; first steps in their new home countries”
Vilnius, 13-16 June, 2012
Conference venue: **Ratonda Centrum** hotel, Gedimino 51/2, Vilnius.
Friday, June 15, 2012

Integration in the Netherlands; The Drama of the Double Dutch

Many thanks, again, for the kind invitation of INTEGRA. Thank you for letting me speak at Integra's final conference on the subject of ***Migrants integration processes in EU***.

More than a year ago, on January 14th 2011, I was your guest aboard the SS 'Rotterdam'. On that occasion, I told you about the project of IHSAN, the Dutch Islamic Institute for Social Activation, which has a link with the Integra project, to promote volunteering of Muslim youths in the field of Poverty Reduction and Debt Counseling. By now, this project has been rounded off successfully. In several mosques and Muslim selforganisations, trained Muslim volunteers are now holding consultation hours to answer questions on subjects such as insolvency, dealing with debt collection agencies and getting your paperwork in order.

In Rotterdam, I also told you about the rather shocking outcome of IHSAN's national survey on poverty in The Netherlands, especially among Muslims. Whereas indigenous Dutch households have a chance of a less than eight percent to be poor, *ethnic* Dutch households run a risk of nearly thirty percent to be poor. Some ethnic groups may even have a chance of 32 percent, as is the case with Moroccan households. Poverty is also common in new immigrant groups such as Somalis and Afghans.

It seems that, since last year, the economic divide has only increased. Moreover, the divide on the labor market only grows as well. According to the latest figures issued by Statistics Netherlands (CBS), the number of native unemployed increased slightly, while unemployment among migrants, especially non-Western migrants has increased. Currently, 23.4 percent of young non-western migrants are unemployed, against 7.7 percent of the indigenous youths.

The Integra project and the IHSAN project have their *target groups* in common: migrants to old and new EU member states, old communities of migrants from third countries and migrants from new EU member states. But we differ when it comes to the aim of our respective projects. The aim of the Integra project is (...) to improve the *integration* of migrants into local society by providing them with opportunities to gain language skills on basic financial matters. I would like to take this opportunity to warn the Integra partners about this basic misconception on the basis of our Dutch experience with the multicultural drama. In Holland we've stopped believing in integration. By now, integration is in fact a forbidden word. The I-word is not to be used again! Participation is the new key word.

According to David Pinto (<http://www.davidpinto.nl/>), professor and trainer of intercultural communication, the government should stop with its integration policies. The integration of non-western migrants in the Netherlands has failed completely. Integration is the road to perdition. Non-western migrants will never fully integrate, or assimilate for that matter. In his new *Canon for Participation and Diversity*, Pinto—who has a Moroccan Jewish background—also has the solution ready: participation.

That the Integration policy has failed, is shown in the recent publications of the Ministry of Justice and of Statistics Netherlands (CBS), a ranging investigation into how the various ethnic groups in the Netherlands are doing. The investigation reveals the following:

- (Although migrant girls have a better performance than their brothers,) the school performance of Turks and Moroccans remains behind that of other non-western migrants.
- Non-western migrants perform worse on average in education than natives.
- Non-western migrants receive social benefits twice as often as natives.
- Antillean, Moroccan, Turkish and Surinamese remain overrepresented in crime.
- 72 percent of the native Dutch had a job in 2004, as compared to 49 percent of non-western migrants.

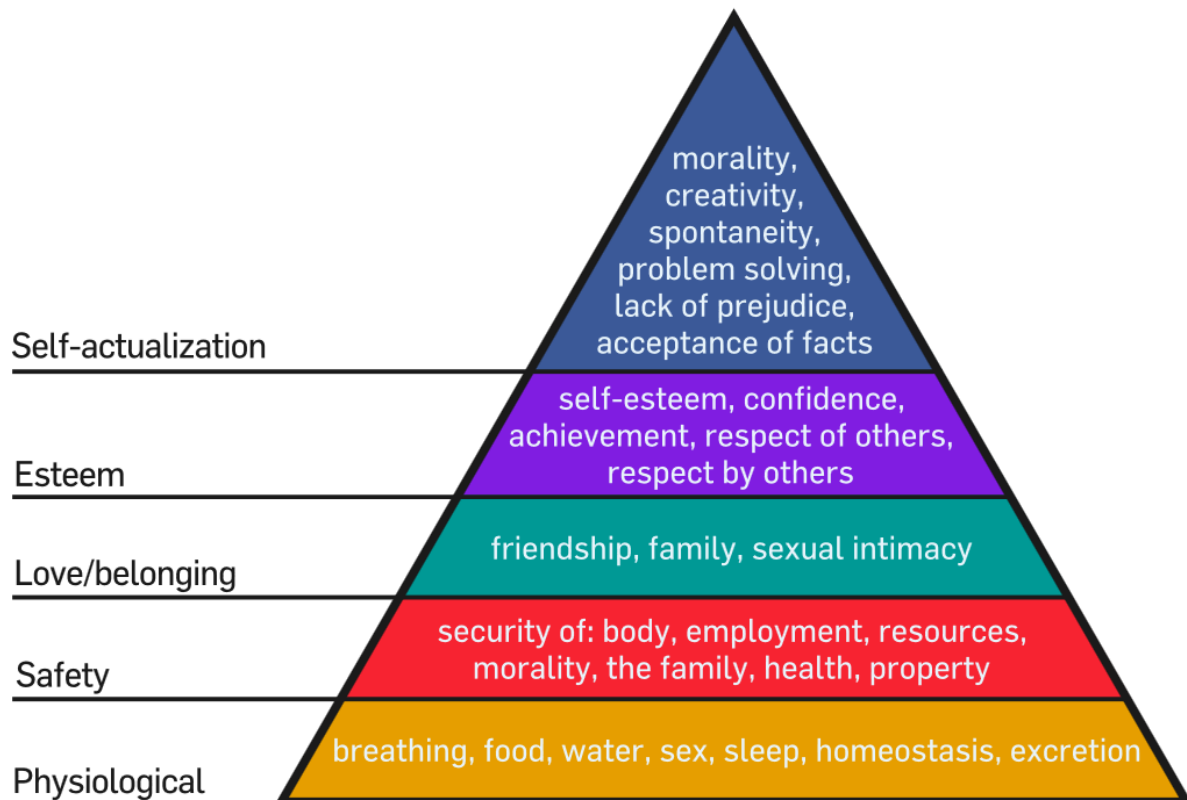
No wonder. Integration policy is aimed at achieving that immigrants "should integrate" and "behave in a native Dutch manner". While the aim should be that migrants will join in in society according to their abilities and to take part in social intercourse and civil society, to participate in short, and therefore a 'Participation Policy' is needed. This policy requires that migrants do their utmost best to be able to participate, but also requires from the host society to respect the core values and the identity of the migrant, of course within legal limits, and thus to stimulate and encourage their participation.

In the book "Immigrant Youth in Transition: Acculturation, Identity and Adaptation Across National Contexts by John W. Berry et al (2006), the results of a recent large-scale international study of immigrant youth in various countries have been published. Maximum contact with the new surrounding society and at the same time preservation of your own culture leads to optimal participation. And the only way to achieve this is to learn the language well and to orient yourself well on the society and its labor market. Young people who choose this attitude, really want 'the best of both worlds' and that is reflected in their sense of identity, relationship building, use of language and their favourite music and movies, according to the study. Youngsters in this category are also more at ease with themselves, score well on the scale of confidence, satisfaction with life, school performance and social behavior, according to Berry and his colleagues.

So, participation is the keyword here. The degree of integration is not the decisive factor, it's even irrelevant. But what has to change to make the transition? That is the central question. Pinto explains that civil servants, researchers and politicians wrongly base their policies of integration on the hierarchy of human needs according to Maslow's pyramid, in which self-actualisation is seen as the highest good. And consequently attribute these needs to everyone.

But in non-Western migrants, who largely come from rural areas, there is quite another hierarchy of needs. In the 'pyramid of Pinto', the pyramid's top therefore consists of the 'importance of the group', the 'reputation of the family' and 'honor'. Pinto: "Here lies a major cause of the failure of the policy pursued to date. As it does not reflect the experiences of migrants."

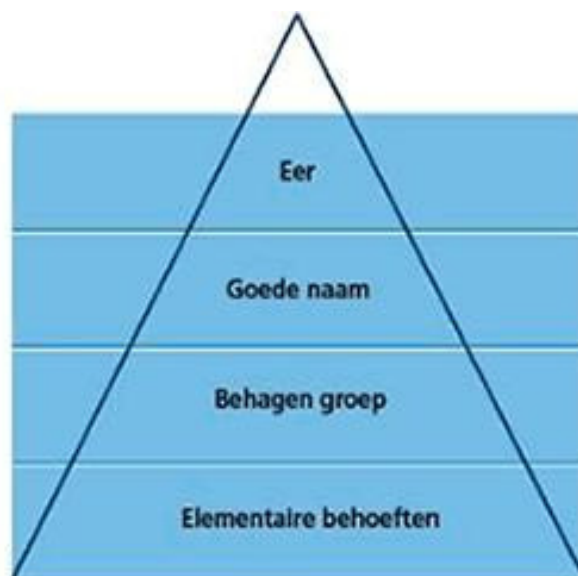
In his book, Pinto makes a distinction between fine, micro-mesh filter (F-) structures and coarse filter (C-) structures. Many non-Western migrants come from an F-structure culture. For almost every situation there is a rule of conduct. While in the C-structure culture, as in many western countries, mainly general rules apply and the individual has great freedom to fill these in personally. Pinto believes that it makes little sense to propose that these structures merge into one common culture.



Maslow's hierarchy of needs (in coarse filter C-cultures) is often portrayed in the shape of a pyramid, with the largest and most fundamental levels of needs at the bottom, and the need for self-actualization at the top. Pinto's pyramid of fine filter F-cultures (underneath on the right hand side) has 'honor' on top, and 'good reputation', 'pleasing the group' and 'physiological needs' below.



Piramide van menselijke behoeften in Grofmazige (G) culturen (Maslow)



Piramide van menselijke behoeften in Fijnmazige (F) culturen (Pinto)

According to Pinto, *such differences in mental programming between people* can lead to an enrichment, when using an effective (methodical) approach to deal with diversity effectively. This led to the development of his 'structures theory' and the Three Step Method (in Dutch: Drie Stappen Methode, DSM): how to deal effectively with differences between people while maintaining one's individuality.

Pinto's structures theory

It's called a 'structures theory' because the differences between people are not in the properties of the basic elements that we all are built of, nor the fact that all people on earth know codes of conduct and communication, but in the structure of these rules and codes.

To explain the structure metaphor: diamonds and grafite both consist of carbon, while diamonds are so hard you can drill into rock with them, whereas grafite is that soft you can write with it or even smear it. The difference lies in the structure, the way the carbon atoms are arranged: a layered structure in graphite versus a three-dimensional, pyramid-like structure with high stability in diamond.

The essence of the structures theory is this: in a structure that relates to rules and codes of conduct, concepts apply that express: many or few rules, tight or loose, in detail or more in general. In the structures theory, the terms fine filter structures (F) versus coarse filter (C) structures are used.

The extremes of these F and C structures are located on a continuum between on the one hand F— a mostly full, detailed and tight structure of convoluted codes and rules of communication between people (as in Somalia and Morocco)—and on the other hand C: a broader, looser and more comprehensive system of rules and codes (as in Canada, the U.S. and The Netherlands). This difference can be detected not only between countries but also between groups, regions, parts of the country, companies, departments and individuals. Even within the same family. In other words, this approach is applicable to macro, meso and micro levels.

Between the F and C structures, there is a mixed (M) structure. This form is found in Eastern Europe and among members the second generation of migrants around the world.

More F mostly means:

- an external (instead of internal) reference for good and evil;
- motivation by the group (more than by intrinsic motivation);
- almost everything is personal; there's little distinction between personal and business;
- more emphasis on relationship and less on form and content;
- highest in the pyramid of needs is honor and not self-actualisation.

Romania for instance has an F-culture, whereas The Netherlands has a C-culture. People in C-cultures, such as the Dutch, are in the first place individuals who are responsible for their own behavior. According to Pinto, in F-cultures (mostly non-western countries) the group plays a major role. Both cultures have different 'higher' needs (see Pyramids). We work daily with people from F-cultures, whether it's our colleagues or clients. We should ask ourselves: what do we know, basically, about their way of communicating and to what extent does it differ from ours?

According to a Romanian friend who's been living in The Netherlands for 20 years, in Romania it's all about honor, status, politeness (almost condescension) and depending on others. Generally speaking, the Romanians therefore often have a closed character: that which is private should remain private and they do not hang their dirty laundry to dry outside. The contacts they assume

are generally different ... more superficial and often have an ulterior motive. And everything depends on the wealth or status you have. You are only Somebody when you live in the right neighborhood, have a good car, wear the right designer label clothes and especially have a job that exudes status. Then people will treat you differently.

Romanians never say what they think of you and the way of communication is always indirect and cumbersome. Even if they dislike your cooking, they will just eat your food without flinching. Even if they do not agree with you and you ask their opinion, many times you get the answer: „As you think is right." Honor, pride and courtesy are essential.

Core Values

According to Pinto, it is important that people must first ask themselves what their core values are. If you have identified these clearly, you can subsequently delve into the norms and values of others. Next, according to his three-step method, it is important to set clear boundaries and not to haggle your own values.

For instance, a child may be considered as cheeky or obstinate in the classroom as it refuses to look at the teacher. That child may have learned from its own culture that it is impolite to look people straight in the eye. As a teacher, you must realize where that behavior comes from. Next, you can explain why your pupil might have to behave in a certain way at home, but that here, in this class, different rules apply. In this way, a child can hold on to its own culture at home, but in the classroom will behave according to the Dutch cultural codes. Pinto: „A child can handle that better than when it is punished."

But understanding each other's culture should not lead to surrendering your own standards, your norms and values. If a migrant refuses to accept orders from a female superior, it's a good thing that both parties involved delve into each other's motivations. But in the end, the supervisor will have to come to the conclusion: either you accept my leadership or you're out.

In practice it will often mean that migrants will have to conform to the norms and values of the host country. To Pinto this is only logical. "It is a natural fact for migrants in any country in the world whatsoever."

Target Group Policy

Governments and their integration policy makers are all too often "guilty" of developing policies targeted at specific groups. „You have to take cognizance of the difference between migrants and the host society. That difference is huge. That you must dare to articulate. But then you have to make clear that there are certain standards and values in this culture where everyone has to live up to."

According to Pinto, for municipalities this means they will have to stop facilitating separate swimming for men and women, stop subsidizing intercultural tea drinking parties and religious events. And stop funding interest groups that advocate the interests of specific migrant groups only. And municipalities should especially stop the dialogue about the prevailing core values in the Netherlands. „No open discussion, no haggling, but drawing crystal clear boundaries."

Well, that's the end of integration policies. Does this mean that the Integra project, aimed at the *integration* of migrants is outdated? I think not. The general objectives of the Integra project are: to enhance the basic language skills of migrants living in partner countries, specifically relating to financial matters; increase the migrants' potential for mobility within the EU labour market; to further intercultural learning and empathy in migrant communities for international communication in different countries; to boost self-confidence among migrants and to empower the migrant's ability to break personal and cultural frontiers.

In my mind, all this fits perfectly within Pinto’s theory. Basically, it’s a matter of wording. All objectives of the Integra project are aimed at enabling migrants to *participate* rather than to *integrate* into the receiving society. More specifically, to gain language skills on basic financial matters so that migrants can fully participate in the financial systems in the partner countries in order to fulfil their everyday needs.

Life satisfaction

Lastly, in Rotterdam, we briefly talked about the respective PPP’s (purchasing power per capita) and GNP’s (the Gross National Product) of the Integra countries. As you know, there is more to life than just the cold numbers of PPP and GNP and economic statistics. This is why the OECD, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, came up with the Your Better Life Index (<http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/>). This index allows you to compare well-being across countries, based on 11 topics the OECD has identified as essential, in the areas of material living conditions as well as quality of life.

Recently, the OECD has been keenly involved in the debate on measuring well-being. Based on this experience, these 11 topics reflect what the OECD has identified as essential to well-being in terms of material living conditions (housing, income, jobs) and quality of life (community, education, environment, governance, health, life satisfaction, safety and work-life balance). The Index is designed to let you visualise and compare some of the key factors – like education, housing, environment, and so on – that contribute to well-being in 34 OECD countries. The 34 countries are the members of the OECD, which brings together most of the world’s developed economies and a number of emerging economies, plus key partners Brazil and Russia. Lithuania, Romania and Belarus are as yet not in the Your Better Life Index.

For the other countries participating in the Integra-project (Netherlands, UK, Ireland, Germany, Spain, Poland, Greece, Turkey), the life satisfaction figures are as follows:

COUNTRY	Households’ income	Household financial wealth	Life Satisfaction
Netherlands	25740 USD	61157 USD	7.5 rate
United Kingdom	26552 USD	59923 USD	6.9 rate
Ireland	24156 USD	21485 USD	6.9 rate
Germany	27692 USD	41695 USD	6.7 rate
OECD average	22387 USD	36238 USD	6.7 rate
Spain	23541 USD	22684 USD	6.5 rate
Poland	14508 USD	8101 USD	5.6 rate
Greece	22134 USD	17638 USD	5.4 rate
Turkey			5.3 rate

As you can see, The Netherlands is No. 1 when it come to life satisfaction. Life satisfaction for C-culture people, that is. I will leave you with one question. Bearing the Pinto theory of F and C cultures in mind, can you come up with possible reasons why some 40.000 Somali asylum seekers left The Netherlands and went to live in the UK (No. 2 on the list). And can you understand why many of the second generation Somali who went to Dutch schools for a while, are just dying to get back to Holland? In short, can you explain the Drama of the Double Dutch?