



A migrant-centered digital learning platform

Digital navigation platform for cultural translation provides multilingual learning modules on government websites about integration, the labour market and career guidance



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Target groups for transfer:

migrant communities, migrant organisations, migrant entrepreneurs, employment agencies, local startup eco-systems, mentors, integration practitioners and policymakers

DIGNA in a nutshell:

DIGNA is a digital learning platform that helps newcomers to navigate Norwegian society and support their integration through the representation of migrant role models and multilingual information

Implementing organization:

DIGNA AS is a migrant-owned start-up that provides a digital navigation platform for cultural translation



Norway

Population (05.2022): 5.4 million

Population with a migration background (first and second generation) (03.2022): 18.9 percent

Unemployment rate for population with non-western migration background (02.2021): 9.2 percent (non-migrant population unemployment rate: 2.9 percent)

Source: Norwegian Statistical Bureau:
<https://www.ssb.no/innvarb><https://www.ssb.no/innvarb>

Starting position/challenge

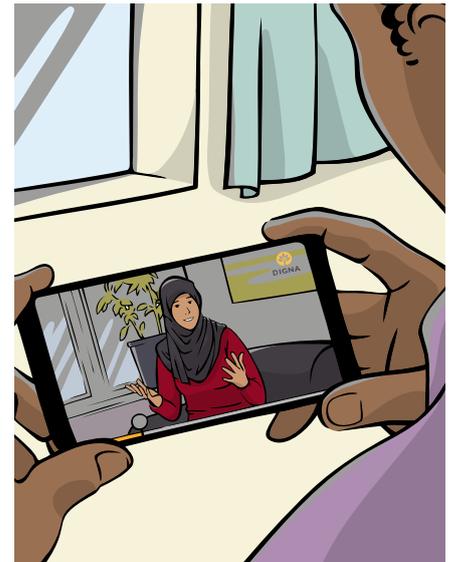
Information on government websites is challenging for refugees and immigrants. A lack of language proficiency and contextual knowledge hinder migrants in their integration in Norway. Two twin brothers with Somali background and themselves being newcomers in Norway made similar experiences. To counter this, they first created the Norwegian-Somali Facebook community "The Twins Mindset" for mutual exchange. Members of this Facebook group shared experiences with cultural differences between their home countries and Norway. The information available in Norway was perceived confusing, which made it hard for them to evaluate which path to take. As for manoeuvring the labour market according to the Norwegian work culture, many community members are not used to verbalise their competencies to market themselves. Further, it became clear that many of them remain outside of the labour market due to difficulties in learning Norwegian. A continuous analysis of the needs of members of "The Twins Mindset" Facebook community led to the foundation of DIGNA.

Implementation of DIGNA

DIGNA is a digital navigation platform for cultural translation. It combines human-centered design, cross-cultural understanding, anthropology, and pedagogy. It has been developed by people who have successfully integrated in Norway and is based on their knowledge and lessons. The target group are refugees and immigrants between the age of 18 and 50.

The tool provides multilingual learning modules on government websites about integration, the labour market and career guidance. Language learning techniques are made available, as well as information on the local environment and for social inclusion.

While the target group uses the digital



platform for information in their mother tongue, they are also encouraged to share their own knowledge and experience with other users through recorded videos. This serves cultural translation in a new environment and values the experience of refugees and immigrants.

DIGNA offers a platform for various role models with Somali background who share how they succeeded in obtaining training or a job. Making use of videos and storytelling is entertaining, encouraging and saves resources for interpreters. It inspires and motivates users by creating a sense of understanding and representation of the community.

Digital solutions and the use of mobile phones are important factors to reach inclusion. Integration may also start earlier as digital tools provide a low threshold for self-learning. The DIGNA learning platform is designed as a future-oriented system that contributes to self-determined integration and inclusion. It thus provides a sense of mastery for the Somali-Norwegian target group.

<https://www.digna.no/>

“I call DIGNA a social innovation”

Testimonial of a DIGNA rolemodel from the Norwegian-Somali community



“My name is Marian Hussein, I am 34 years old and work as a social worker. I was elected as a parliamentary representative for Oslo in the 2021 parliamentary election and sit as a member of the Health and Care Committee. I was born in Somalia and came to Norway when I was ten years old. I grew up in Stovner in Oslo. Among other things, I have worked as a nursing assistant, environmental therapist, research assistant, in the first line of NAV (the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration) and the child welfare service. I was a deputy representative to the Storting

(Norwegian Parliament) in the period 2017 to 2021, I chair the Socialist Left Party’s (SV) inclusion committee and have sat on the city council in Old Oslo and sat on SV’s programme committee. I am proud to be a Norwegian politician from the Socialist Left Party who was elected as parliamentary representative for Oslo in 2021.

Me and one of the cofounders in DIGNA AS have gone to the same university in Oslo, so therefore I knew both the Facebook-site and later DIGNA. Since my passion has always been to create a community without any difference, I was happy when I saw that the co-founders of DIGNA had started an online community on Facebook to encourage the

target group to become something in Norway and to publish the right information for the community. I thought: finally, someone dares to start a platform like this. What I like about DIGNA is that it promotes role models who have achieved a status in Norway to show the way to the target group – I call this a social innovation.

I was invited to a Facebook live broadcast to talk about my background as a Norwegian-Somali, my history, and my journey to the Storting. My goal was to show that there are endless opportunities in Norway to succeed. My advantage of joining DIGNA is that I can share my experience, history, and expertise to help others succeed in the Norwegian society.”

Three questions for Mohammed Abdelqadir, Sophie Arntsen and Abdimaalik Abdirahman, Founders of DIGNA AS

Creating a sense of ownership for the community



What is the innovative part of DIGNA?

What is innovative about our solution is that we – as Somali-Norwegian social entrepreneurs ourselves – use cultural translation with role models from the Somali-Norwegian community to simplify the understanding between public bodies and our target group. The advantage is that our digital tool is easily accessed and at the same time our users learn from role models who know the challenges and solutions for navigating the Norwegian labour market and society. Videos presenting the role models are recorded in their mother tongue, while our website also provides information in English and Norwegian. Through this way of identification, our users from the Somali-Norwegian community receive empowerment, motivation, activation, and a sense of ownership.

Is it possible to introduce the format in other countries? How can challenges be overcome during implementation processes?

It is possible to implement our solution in other countries. However, active recruitment and training of role models is needed. Time needs to be invested into finding those migrants who have already integrated well into the various parts of the society and the job market, and who are willing to stand out as a role model. Another advantage is that our approach can be adapted and transferred to other migrant communities as well as other language communities.

Which long-term achievements does the DIGNA approach hold?

Our vision for the future is one where people from all cultures and backgrounds live dignified and independent lives. We wish for a sustainable and diverse society built on the diverse knowledge, experience, and talent of all its members. Our tool is efficient in terms of outreach to migrant communities. Our approach contributes to the successful labor market integration of migrants and their social inclusion into a new society and environment. As such, the long-term achievements of DIGNA are that migrants gain access to social life and can succeed in professional life, which again serves their well-being and helps them to find stability in receiving countries. Our approach adds to existing state services and bridges migrant needs and talent gaps in the labour market.

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Version: 2022
www.netzwerk-iq.de

Network IQ
The Network “Integration through Qualification (IQ)” aims to sustainably improve the labour market integration of adults with a migration background. The programme is funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the European Social Fund (ESF). Strategic partners in implementing the programme are the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Federal Employment Agency (BA).

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In cooperation with:

