

## The Christmas market

The Christmas market activity is an example of a final event within the UVUC program. The participants decided to take part in a Swedish Christmas Market for their final event in the end of their UVUC time. The Christmas Market were arranged by a local community group living in Olofstorp, that is a part of Northeast Gothenborg, but situated right on the outskirts, in a countryside landscape.

### The initiative and its objectives

Together with the UVUC coach and an extern design and product development tutor the participant planed the event from a product development perspective. Starting with a brainstorming on what and how to prepare for the market. They decided to bake traditional cookies and make tea from the different countries the group represented. They would prepare sale bags for the cookies and a recipe booklet with the story of their cookies.

They booked a table at the Christmas market and sold their cookies bags and the tea at the event.

*The cakes and tea made were:*

*Mandazi Grandmother Amisa's recipe from Goma in Kongo*

*Grandma Amisas ginger tea*

*Maemul mother's recipe from Syria eaten at the Eid after Ramadan*

*Kahk cookie with mahaleb spice, his mother's recipe from Syria always prepared before the Eid*

*Dagnys hallongrotta a neighbours' recipe, from Gothenburg in Sweden*

The aims of the Christmas Market were professional and socio-cultural integration, sustainability and the language training. The Christmas market event gives the participant an inside view on a cultural heritage event and on activities that locals can plan during December. a month with many traditional celebrations in Sweden.

### The accompaniment process

>> Through the involvement of an extern tutor for the planning and preparing of the event the participant gained knowledge and skills in design and entrepreneurial thinking. Through the event itself the participant gained knowledge and skill in practice hosting, they got increased confidence of communicating with people (from Gothenburg) and improved their language skills.

By baking traditional cookies from their homes, the participants connected their own cultural heritage with the new cultural heritage they experience. In this way participants learned more about the cultural heritage and can take part in the cultural heritage in the new country they live in. This opens up for the process of appropriating the cultural heritage and feeling home.

By preparing a recipe booklet with the story of their cookies they used storytelling to open up for anchoring and connecting their cultural heritage in the local area. It gave the visitors of the Christmas market the opportunity to learn from the participant, to gain knowledge of the participants cultural heritage and to connect to it as well.

A role play was made of the Christmas market together with the participant in the classroom. Through role play the participants get the opportunity to get knowledge of the situation. They can use their own knowledge and skills to support each other to find a good way to address visitors and to find solutions to challenges that may arise. The coach supported the role play by creating a safe and tolerant atmosphere.

The involvement in a local event is also important by giving the participants the opportunity to see a local tradition and to talk to people from this local community. They meet people who are not connected to their official network like the school, UVUC or the employment office. This type of meetings can be difficult to achieve for newcomers on their own. The learning process got an anchor in the local area which can motivated the participant to take part in more local event.

## **Evaluation of the initiative**

The final event, in this case the Christmas market, is a tool for the team to give the opportunity to the participants to increase and to use all their skills they gained during their UVUC time.

During the preparation the team learned to be more aware about the cost effect and the time consumption of preparing the developed product, in this case a cookie bag. The design workshop created a nice homemade sale bag. But when folding the bags it took much more time than anticipated. From the entrepreneurial aspect they should have made a budget, too.

During the Christmas market the tutors learned that it was not easy to connect with the people passing by the table. But once they stopped, they became interested and stayed often for a longer chat. But people tried to talk to the coach instead of the participant. After involving Christmas market visitors in a conversation, they had to involve the participants and thereafter leave the conversation in a good but not obvious way.

The participants loved to be at the Christmas market. There was a lot of laughter and the participant stated that they would not have talked to so many people living in Sweden like on the market. At the Christmas Market the participant took own initiatives to talk to visitors and to explain what is in the cookie bag. They took active part.

Through the different method of creating interaction the participant trained and gained knowledge in different fields:

The product development:

- Professional integration – through entrepreneurial thinking
- Socio-cultural integration – through getting knowledge on Swedish Christmas traditions
- Learning and practice of the Swedish language – through preparing ‘their’ talks and training hosting
- To use their own knowledge and skill to support each other in a collective activity

The visit of the Christmas Market:

- Socio-cultural integration – through the talks on their cookies with the visitors. As well as the conversations that occurred when they themselves went over the market
- Professional integration – through a real selling of the cookie bags and therefore created a little job opportunity for themselves
- Knowledge of the City - through anchoring the groups learning processes in the local territory

The conversation with the customers

- Professional integration – through placing talks into the right context
- Learning and practice of the Swedish language– through role play as well as practice speaking in a real live situation
- Socio-cultural integration – through the interaction with the customers and the reflections on the answers together with the Tikitut coach

### **The challenges for the accompaniment team**

- Cooperate with the organisers and get knowledge about the other sellers
- Make a time budget to be aware of the actual preparation time of the product
- Role play the situation in a safe and tolerant atmosphere
- Be the icebreaker to involve both visitors and participants in conversations
- Don't forget that you are the icebreaker – don't get lost in conversations which the participants can't follow
- Support the participants when it's needed and step back when the conversation between the participants and the people flows. Otherwise, the conversation will be between you and the people and the participants become passive listener.
- Dare to have some quietness before taking over the conversation. Some people need time to start to speak.