



## Project Paper 6b

# Instruments and guidelines for qualitative fieldwork

2011-07-27

Responsible institution:

**UA - PRIO**

Authors:

**De Clerck, Helene Marie-Lou (UA)  
Willems, Roos (UA)  
Timmerman, Christiane (UA)  
Carling, Jorgen (PRIO)**



University of Antwerp  
Belgium



International Migration Institute,  
University of Oxford  
United Kingdom



Centre on Migration, Policy and Society,  
University of Oxford  
United Kingdom



Peace Research Institute Oslo  
Norway



Koç University  
Turkey



Université Mohammed V Agdal  
Morocco



Centre of Sociological Research  
Ukraine



Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar  
Senegal



Funded by the European Union  
7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research



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## Introduction

Originating in anthropology, qualitative field research traditionally refers to a practice in which researchers spend long periods living within a culture in order to study it. The term has been adopted within qualitative market research to describe occasions where researchers spend time - hours, days or weeks - observing and/or interacting with participants in areas of their everyday lives. This contrasts with interview-based research or surveys (quantitative data collection) in which interaction with respondents is limited to a conventional interview on the basis of a questionnaire and where interaction is limited in time.

This Project Paper consists of five parts which together constitute the instruments and guidelines for the EUMAGINE qualitative field research: I) Localities, researchers and informants; II) Research guidelines for observations; III) Research guidelines for interviews; IV) The data; and V) Training sessions in qualitative research techniques.

The qualitative field research in the EUMAGINE project consists of two equally important aspects: **observation and interviews**. While some aspects of the research topics may be sufficiently covered by interviews with informants, others will have to be observed by the researcher in the field. An interview guide and scenario for the observation and the interviews are elaborated, partly on the basis of the quantitative data collected during the first half of 2010. However, the proposal (suggested at the kick off meeting in Antwerp) to locate the persons to be interviewed for the qualitative data collection among those persons that have participated in the survey (quantitative data collection) was not withheld for two reasons.<sup>1</sup> First, choosing informants from among the survey respondents may be considered a breach of confidentiality by some, and secondly, the purpose of the qualitative data collection is not to further explore individual factors of migration motives. While informants may include persons who have responded to the survey, the information in the two data collection formats will not be linked.

<sup>1</sup> In conformity with standard social sciences practice, persons interviewed using qualitative research methods will be called informants, while persons interviewed through the survey (quantitative method) are called respondents.

## I - Localities, researchers and informants

### The locality for the qualitative field research

Each research team will autonomously choose **one locality** per Research Area (RA) to do the qualitative data collection. This locality will be chosen in function of its representativeness for the entire RA.

Should it prove impossible to locate a sufficient number of informants corresponding to the selection criteria within one locality, research teams are free to move on to other localities within the same RA. If a team decides that for the sake of representativeness, they need to cover several localities within the RA, they are free to do so when resources permit.

It is recommended that **one person month** be spent in each of the research areas for the qualitative data collection with an absolute minimum of 2 weeks. The period allotted for the preparation and collection of the qualitative data in the DOW (WP6) are months 17 till 25 (*June 2011 up to January 2012*).

Once in the locality, it is important for the researcher to identify and gain access to the community where the data collection will take place. In some places, local officials will need to be contacted to obtain approval and support for entering. Local researchers or other professionals familiar with the locality are very important in helping to locate a variety of entry point into the community.

### The qualitative researcher

Generally, qualitative field researchers bring with them few inducements for local people to cooperate with them other than the opportunity to build a trusting relationship and talk about topics of mutual interests, especially when the stay in the field is limited and when participant observation as a data collecting method is not applied, as is the case for EUMAGINE.

Effective qualitative field researchers are those that build relationships easily, are sensitive to their surroundings, and who have few reservations about asking questions that enable them to learn new things; however, without transgressing the social norms of the community.

Researchers should also be able to separate stereotypes, and personal opinions and judgments from accurate observations and effective recording of wording, meanings, and opinions of research participants.

For the EUMAGINE project, each qualitative field researcher must be a researcher or graduate student, who is a **member of the EUMAGINE team** with an academic interest in the research topic, and who will be **involved in writing analytical parts** of the research project. Selecting qualitative field researchers should therefore be linked to the team's overall writing and publication plans.

## The informants

Researchers will need to spend time interacting with people and building a personal network in the communities in order to identify suitable informants for interviewing. Qualitative field researchers need to understand the importance of reciprocity in building relationships. Thus, they may share their time, transportation, knowledge, relationships with service providers or other resources valuable to the research participants and the communities. Usually, however, social skills and intellectual persistence and personal good may be even more important.

The experience of most qualitative field researchers is that the explanation of the project is often considered less important by the people of the community. More important are the connections through which the researcher has been introduced to the community setting, how comfortable s/he is with the people in the field, and how well s/he can maintain confidentiality. The researcher's appearance, use of language (including humour), perceived comfort level, growing knowledge of the setting, and reactions to difficult or challenging new situations are all important in building the personal relationships necessary for effective field research.

### ***Selection criteria for interviewees***

According to the DOW (P.16), a total of **20 (twenty) informants** needs to be interviewed **per RA**. All informants may be chosen from the one locality (or more localities) representing the entire RA.

Informants who spend a lot of time in the selected locality (f.e. because of professional activities) but who reside/live/sleep in another area: can be interviewed as informants of the selected locality. **In this case they will be included in the list of informants of the RA where the interview took place.**

The strategies applied by the researcher to locate the 20 informants need to be documented in point 4 of the observation report (see separate section).

Each group of 20 informants per RA needs to be diverse in five aspects:

1. **Gender** (approximately half men and half women)
2. **Age** (young and old within the range of 18 to 39 years old)
3. **Occupational status** (unemployed, employed in various occupations)
4. **Migration experience** (with and without a personal migration experience, having friends and/or relatives with a migration history, belonging to transnational migration networks)
5. **Migration attitudes** (aspiring or not aspiring to migrate)

Since this is not a survey, we are not looking for representativity in numerical terms. The important point is to cover a *variety* of situations and experiences. Suitability of potential informants is not only a question of having specific characteristics with reference to these criteria, but also personality and openness. **Annex 1, "Overview of potential informants"**, is a template to help the researchers select informants with the dimensions of diversity in mind. It will probably be necessary to consider a large number of informants in order to complete the 20 interviews — some will turn out to be less relevant, some will refuse to be interviewed and some will agree but never turn up to the appointment. The overview therefore has space for 60 **potential** informants.

### ***Special category of informants: immigrants, including transit migrants***

We decided that in the context of the EUMAGINE project we will not use the term ‘transit migrants’, instead we will use the term immigrants for every person who – or whose parents – immigrated from abroad regardless of their migration aspirations.

The methodological note on quantitative research suggested that, because the survey was not the ideal tool to explore the characteristics of immigrants – including ‘transit migrants’, the qualitative research part of the project should take up these populations. In general, immigrants may be part of the group of informants in those RA’s with a high immigration rate, and as such contribute to the diversity of informants interviewed. In view of the low percentages of transit migrants and immigrants in the first analysis of the quantitative data, care should however be taken that they are not overrepresented in the samples of the qualitative field research.

Nonetheless, should national research teams decide that there is a particular concern with these populations in their country, it is recommended they explore possibilities for researching immigrants and/or transit migrants in separate case studies (e.g. by a PhD student) in association with the EUMAGINE project. This is for example already the case at UA, where Helene Marie-Lou De Clerck shall do her PhD research on Senegalese immigrants in Istanbul (Fatih). The EUMAGINE budget cannot cover such additional research, so this is not something that is expected or required of the teams to do. (*E.g. Helene’s sample of immigrants for her PhD will not be part of the sample for the EUMAGINE project database.*)

Some research teams may decide to add “nationality/country of origin” as an extra selection criterion when locating informants in the RA with a high immigration rate, when deemed necessary for their research purposes.

### ***Strategies for locating informants***

Informants will need to be located through exploratory conversation with persons encountered during the fieldwork at the respective localities through a **variety of entry points**. Approaching potential informants through multiple points of entry is essential in order to ensure the diversity within each group of 20 informants.

The best strategy for researchers is to find out whom they must meet to gain access to a specific research environment (also called gate keepers). These could be local politicians, or informal leaders, community health workers, teachers, NGO program directors, etcetera. However, it might equally well be influential persons without formal positions—e.g. a housewife who is central to the information flows in her neighbourhood, or the man behind the counter in the local café. While these individuals may or may not be useful sources of information, they can facilitate or block access to other members of the community. If the researcher succeeds in building good relationships with such persons, these may become effective **key informants** because of their broad knowledge of the research setting or their deep knowledge of an important aspect of the research topic. Key informants are not only useful for soliciting a lot of information on the research topic, they are also essential in locating other informants through their connection with and knowledge of (sections of) the community. However key informants should not be confused with the informants, and thus not be included in the sample of informants. Yet, conversations with key informants may

give a lot of interesting information. Therefore, information on and acquired through the means of the key informants should be noted down in the observation notes (see II. Research guidelines for observations).

## II - Research guidelines for observations

### How to observe: non-participant observations

Observation refers to what can be seen through the eyes of the observer.

Aims: 1) observations will help to select the informants for the interviews; 2) the recorded observations will result in the observation report per research locality providing an in-depth description of the context of each locality.

**Participant observation** is the data collection technique that requires the researcher to be present at, involved in, and recording the routine daily activities with people in the field setting.

Although participative observation offers some advantages, this technique is time consuming. Given the time constraints of the project we will therefore not make use of this tool of observation. Instead, non-participative observation or observation from a distance will be used as tool of observation.

**Non-participant observation or observation from a distance** refers to the researcher's long-distance observation of activities related to the topic of interest. It is a form of observation that is spectator-like; not participatory. Observation from a distance is only possible when it can be conducted unobtrusively, in such a way that participants do not notice the researcher.

### What to observe

#### *Role of migration in the development of the locality*

Researchers will observe outward signs of the effects of migration on the daily life in the local communities, such as for example:

- prevalence of empty houses due to owners having migrated;
- prevalence of houses being constructed or renovated by migrants or their families;
- possible differences between houses of non-migrants versus migrants (style, standing, size, etc.);
- presence of businesses with names of foreign countries/cities that are destinations for migrants (e.g. 'Café Napoli');
- presence of advertising linked to migration (e.g. Western Union, etc.);
- presence of advertisements for money transfer services such as Western Union, Money-Gram;
- presence of businesses that provide money transfer services;
- presence of businesses for international phone calls, international travel, etc...;
- more signs of the material culture of migration: cars with foreign license plate, shops that are unusual for a standard locality in the RA (f.e. shops with luxury items that normally can only be find in large cities).



### ***Human rights and democracy issues***

Researchers will observe the outward signs of the presence of human rights and/or democracy issues in the locality. Indicators may be, for example:

- visibility of local public services (services for health care, education, different political associations...);
- local offices of human rights organizations or ‘community building’ initiatives (e.g. promotion of women’s rights, educational, health projects ...);
- the functioning of local authorities (visibility, accessibility by the public, possible personal experiences);
- presence of police or the military on the streets;
- visible signs of politics in the community (posters, slogans on walls, etc);
- the level of (dis)trust encountered in personal experiences with local persons;
- the general atmosphere in the locality (sense of optimism/pessimism).

### ***Socio-economic situation of the locality***

Researchers may observe a multitude of outward signs indicative of the level of poverty of the local community, such as:

- the state of local infrastructure (road, public services, etc);
- the number of dilapidated buildings (government buildings, private houses);
- presence of construction activities (roads, official buildings, private houses);
- the presence and age of transports means (private cars, public transport);
- the presence of (international or local) development agencies/NGOs.

### ***Other observations not covered by the 3 main topics***

#### ***Information acquired through conversations with local people, local authorities or key informants***

Observations come not only from seeing but also from hearing, e.g. conversations with local people or with key informants. The information obtained through these conversations has also to be reported in the observation notes.

## How to record observations

### *The use of observation notes*

The researchers will record their daily observations in the research localities using observation notes, which constitute a scientific record of the experience for future reference. The more complete and accurate the observation notes, the easier it is for the researcher to use them. Writing good observation notes involves detailed and concrete observation on a regular basis.

Observation notes will include

1. observations on the main topics to be observed (role of migration in the development of the locality; human rights and democracy issues; socio-economic situation of the locality);
2. other observations made by the researcher that are not covered by these main topics;
3. information acquired through conversations with local people, local authorities, key informants;
4. researcher's personal comments.

While 1), 2) & 3) are objective observations made by the researcher, 4) includes inferences and personal observations, reflections and emotional reactions of the field researcher. The subjective comments will be recorded separately from the objective observations (**template “daily observation notes”**).

Ideally, the researchers will record their observations daily. In the research field small notebooks and pencils/pens are useful for helping the researcher to record their observations. Once at home, they should transform their shorthand notes into detailed descriptions on the computer (using the **template “daily observation notes”**) as quickly as possible. Although memory and recall improve with practice, no researcher should depend on memory alone for reconstructing field notes, because memory is selective and easily biased, and recall diminishes notably, even on important topics, after 24 hours. The daily observation notes will be used by the researchers as one of the sources for writing the observation report for each locality. Meanwhile they remain important sources of the analyses. Observations notes may be written in the local language, but before attaching them to the Observation Report they have to be translated into either English or French.

The researchers should also take **pictures** of the RA to complement the observation notes. In order to preserve confidentiality, do not include informants in the pictures. The camera should be set to high resolution (usually called “L” for large) so that the photos can be used in print. The report must include the name(s) of photographer(s).

### *The observation report*

Teams need to write an observation report for each locality where the qualitative research was conducted (4 observation reports in total per team). These reports will provide an overview of the observation process in the RA and a description of the context of each research locality, and must include:

1. background about the fieldwork;
2. an introduction on the locality (localities) where the research was conducted;
3. a summary of the observations on the role of migration in the development of the locality;
4. a summary of the observations on human rights and democracy issues in the locality;
5. a summary of the observations on the socio-economic situation of the locality;
6. a summary of the other observations made that are relevant for the research locality but not covered by the topics 3 to 5;
7. a summary of the information on, and acquired through the means of conversations with local people, local authorities and key informants
8. a description of the strategies used to locate the informants;
9. ANNEX: the daily observation notes;
10. ANNEX: pictures of the RA's.

These reports will be based on both the researchers' daily observation notes as well as the interactions of the researchers during fieldwork (**template "observation report"**), and will be written in French or English only.

### III - Research guidelines for interviews

#### Preparations

According to the DOW (p.11) the interview guide needs to be developed on the basis of the first data analyses of the survey data. While we do not have substantial results in time, the interview guide is designed to facilitate mixed-methods analysis that draws upon the project's qualitative and quantitative data.

The English interview guide will be translated into the same languages as used for the survey, preferably by the same translators. There is no need for back translation.

Teams are requested to do **one pilot interview per researcher** with the final interview guide before the training, so as to exchange on results and experiences during training.

#### Semi-structured interviewing

The interview guide is an instrument for the researcher to ensure that none of the important issues to be discussed is left out of the conversation. The format of the interview itself will be that of a semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews combine the flexibility of the unstructured, open-ended interview with the directionality and agenda of the survey instrument. The topics of a semi structured interview are pre-determined, but most of the questions are formulated by the researcher in the interview setting. This researcher is attentive to what the interviewee says, and responds with follow-up question and probes.

The interview may last from approximately 45 minutes to up to 2 hours, depending on the setting and the responsiveness of the informant. For interviews in local languages not mastered by the researcher, an **interpreter** will be used in the field.

#### The interview guide

An interview guide for semi-structured interviews is *fundamentally different* from a questionnaire. It is not a list of questions, but a guide to a dynamic conversation. Importantly, our guide is a *single sheet of paper*. There are two reasons for this:

First, it allows researchers to focus their attention on the informants and what is being said. Since the researcher are not flicking through papers and reading from a list, we avoid a situation in which informants give short answers and wait for 'the next question'.

Second, semi-structured interviews always require that researchers are well prepared and know the aims of the interview by heart. Only in that way is it possible to respond adequately to what the informant is saying.

The interviews will have four main topics, outlined below. For each topic, we have formulated a suggested opening question and a list of sub-topics. The guide should be used in the following way:

### Main topics

- All the four main topics must be covered
- They should preferably be covered in the given order
- They should preferably be introduced with the given questions

### Sub-topics

- The sub-topics are suggestions, not a compulsory list
- Other interesting sub-topics could follow from what the informant says
- The order of sub-topics should be flexible
- Whenever possible, introduce sub-topics with reference to what the informant has said

For example, the answer to the opening question about life in the locality is likely to contain some mention of possible sub-topics (e.g. jobs). The researcher should improvise follow-up questions on whichever sub-topics are mentioned. Later in the interview, it is also possible to make such connections:

- “In addition to the lack of jobs, you mentioned the problems with health care. Could you say more about that?”
- “You did not say anything about how easy or difficult it is to find jobs in this area. Could you tell me about that?”

The sub-topics are not just a list of themes, but also suggested perspectives on the themes that are discussed, e.g. changes over time and differences between men and women. Researchers must be attentive to when and how it is interesting to raise these questions.

## Main topics

### 1. Perceptions of life in the locality

We are interested in how informants perceive life in their own locality? What do they see as good and bad aspects of living in the locality? This topic **includes human rights** — covering both the ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ definitions (see “EUMAGINE Methodological notes on sampling, measurement and operationalisation” by IMI in Annex 9 of the Kick Off meeting report which can be found in the Document library). How to bring up human rights and democracy needs to be planned cautiously on a case-by-case basis, bearing in mind the need for recording interviews. Given our broad approach to the topic, it might not be necessary to use the term ‘human rights’. Recall that in the survey, we addressed human rights by asking about the following issues:

- The life of women
- The life of men
- The quality of schools
- The quality of health care

- Help from the government for poor people
- The extent of corruption
- Whether politicians do what is best for the people
- Whether or not it is easy to find a good job
- Whether or not it is dangerous to walk in the street at night
- Whether or not women have the same opportunities as men
- Whether or not people can say whatever they want in public
- Whether or not the government respects the different languages that people speak
- Whether or not people can get ahead by working hard

These themes are equally relevant to the semi-structured interviews. It is deliberate that the term “human rights” is not used on the interview guide that researchers carry around with them.

## 2. Perceptions of migration

We are interested in how informants perceive migration as a possibility for people in their locality. In which circumstances is migration seen as valuable, desirable, illusory, worthless, etc.?

The suggested opening question is as follows: *Some people say that going abroad is a good way of obtaining a better life. Others disagree. What is your opinion?* Note these points about the question:

- We talk about ‘abroad’ in general, as we did in the survey.
- The question does not address the informant’s personal migration aspirations
- We ask about the informant’s attitude as an entry point to discourses in the community

If there are differences in views on migration, we want to understand the arguments on both sides. *Why do people see migration as a valuable project or not?*

Under this topic it is relevant to consider the (preliminary) results from the survey. Study the **Preliminary results sheet** as background to the interview. For instance, do most people in the research area wish to go abroad, or not? Is there a big difference in the migration aspirations of men and women, or not?

It may be possible to discuss the survey results explicitly with informants, e.g. with questions like *We found that, in this area, very few women want to go abroad. Why do you think that is so?* Keep the following precautions in mind:

- Remember that results are preliminary and might change after additional data cleaning
- Remember that the survey covers the whole RA, not just the fieldwork locality
- Refer to results in very broad terms (e.g. with expressions like ‘most people’)
- Consider the ability of informants to understand what a survey is or not
- Avoid making the informant feel responsible for what people in the area have said
- Avoid making the informant feel that you possess the ‘true facts’ about the area

### 3. Imaginations of Europe

We are interested in how informants imagine Europe, whether they have very vague or highly specific ideas, what do informants see as positive and negative aspects of life in Europe.

The suggested opening question is as follows: *What do you think of if you hear the word Europe?* This is different from the survey, where we asked ‘which countries’ people think about. In the semi-structured interviews the more open question ‘*What do you think of...*’ allows for a variety of answers. Informants could mention specific places, but they could also mention things like ‘democracy’, ‘racism’ or ‘cold weather’.

In the survey, many people found it difficult to answer questions about specific things like the quality of health care in Europe. In the semi-structured interviews it is essential to let the conversation *follow what informants have something to say about*. Try to avoid giving informants the feeling that they don’t know enough. Instead, listen carefully to find out how the informant could talk more about ‘Europe’ and encourage them to do so.

One of the sub-topics listed is ‘Desirability/difficulty of migration to Europe’. This is an opportunity to discuss migration to Europe more specifically, depending on how or whether that was covered in main topic 2 (perceptions of migration). Informants’ perceptions of European immigration policy are relevant.

### 4. Personal migration aspirations

How do informants perceive migration as a possibility for themselves? Apart from the general ideas about migration (topic 2), how do they see this possibility in their own lives?

The suggested opening question is as follows: *Ideally, if you had the opportunity, would you like to go abroad to live or work some time during the next five years, or would you prefer staying in [this country]?*

This is the same as question A1 in the survey — possibly the most important question in our project. The semi-structured interviews will allow us to go deeper into people’s reasoning behind their answers.

### How to record the interviews

**A minimum of 80% of all interviews at country level have to be recorded and transcribed.**

Although the interview is recorded, the researcher will take *notes of the interview* using a small notebook and pencil/pen. These notes should include information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the informant and responses by the informant on the topics. The researcher also needs to carefully note *the circumstances of the interviews*. Interviews can for example be influenced by the presence of a European interviewer or personal characteristics of the researcher as age, gender, socio-economic background. Interviewers can also be blocked in doing interviews when they are f.e. perceived of as government officials. These circumstances are part of the research and can yield in themselves interesting research results. Taking notes will help the researcher to guide the interview (see guidelines for conducting the interview: hints for guiding the

interview). **At the end of each interview** the researchers will transform their shorthand notes into “**interview notes**” on the computer (using the “**interview notes**” **template**). Interview notes may be written in the local language, but before submitting them as part of the interview report per RA (see further) they have to be translated into either English or French.

During the interview, informants may give their real or another chosen name for reasons of confidentiality. For cross country comparison a unique number will be assigned to each interview afterwards.

**If no consent for recording the interview**, then the researcher should be *assisted by another person* also taking interview notes, so that there are two sets of interview notes that can be compared for accuracy after the interview. The research assistants will follow the same guidelines as the researchers when taking the interview notes. These interview notes by the research assistants will also be submitted as part of the interview report per RA. The presence of an assistant is prescribed in order to limit as much as possible the biases that will come up during note taking because of the inevitable subjectivity in qualitative data gathering, and because one person cannot at the same time note the content of the interview plus his/her observations during the interview.

The sound files (recordings) must be preserved by the respective national research teams. The transcribed interviews in English-French will be centralized in one database by UA.

## **Guidelines for conducting the semi-structured interviews**

### ***How to begin the interview.***

The introduction of the interview depends on how well you already know the informant. Some of the relevant information might have been shared when you first met, or when you agreed to do an interview.

- Introduce yourself and the project  
Suggested formulation about what the project is: *A study of people’s living conditions and their thoughts and experiences with working or living in other countries.*
- Mention the survey we have completed and explain why this interview is important  
Suggested formulation: *Some months ago, we came to this area and asked 500 people a lot of questions. Now we wish to have more relaxed conversations with a few people to get the best possible understanding of the things that we are interested in.*
- Ensure confidentiality, and explain how you will protect privacy  
Suggested formulation: *Everything you say to me will remain anonymous. We will not keep a record of your name.*
- Ask permission to record interviews by recording and taking notes  
Suggested formulation: *It is important for me exactly how you say things, so I would like to record our conversation. If I just take notes or try to remember, it is easy to make mistakes and not reproduce your words truthfully. Afterwards, we will listen to the recording and write everything down accurately. Is this OK for you?*
- Make interviewees comfortable by asking how they are, how their day went, how their family is, or some other culturally appropriate small talk



In addition to these guidelines, researchers should assess the interview surroundings. If noise levels are too high to record, it may be necessary to change the location of the interview. If the interview is in someone's home, other family members or visitors may be present. It may be socially inappropriate for the researcher to ask them to leave; in this case, their views will become incorporated into and will alter the interview.

### ***How to guide the interview.***

To conduct a good in-depth interview, the interviewer must know enough about the local culture to avoid violating principles of polite conversation. In some settings, for example, interruptions are not only acceptable, but expected; in others, they signify disrespect for the speaker. Some cultures require good listeners to acknowledge a speaker's point in midsentence with a nod, "m-hm", or "yes"; doing so ensures a smooth flow of thought.

### ***Hints for guiding the interview:***

- identify and return to topics to clarify unclear or incomplete information;
- ask for narratives or experience.

Researchers should keep track of terms, points, and ideas that they do not understand by taking notes during the interview (see supra "interview notes") so that they can be revisited during the interview. Phrases useful for this purpose are:

- "what did you *mean by* the word..."
- Would you *explain ...* for me"
- Would you mind *repeating that?* I missed your explanation about ..."

Questions that can be answered with 'yes' or 'no' easily prevent good narratives. Consequently, they should be used primarily for follow-up or clarification. For opening a new topic, it is better to use open questions such as 'How do you think life in this area will change over the next decade?' or 'Why do you think so many people in this area want to go to Europe?' (if that is the case).

Narratives and storytelling permit interviewees to speak from experience about situations that illustrate points important for the study. Researchers use narratives to obtain information from the informant's perspective about episodes from beginning to end. Narratives begin with questions such as: "Tell me about your last experience with ... What happened first?". The narrative is continued or sustained as the researcher probes with questions such as "what happened then?", "and after that?".

### ***Ordering questions in an interview***

Researchers need to consider how to order and sequence questions in semi-structured interviews. In general, questions should be ordered as follows:

- temporally: from earlier events to more recent events
- according to complexity: from simpler topics to more complex ones
- according to topics or domains: group all questions on the same or similar topics together

- by level of abstraction within domains: from the most concrete to the most abstract issues
- in accordance with the threat level: from the least sensitive or threatening to the most sensitive or threatening; place the most sensitive topics last

### ***Self-management during interviewing***

Researchers can maintain the high quality of interview data by:

- maintaining a positive researcher-respondent relationship:
  - a. avoid offering opinions or making judgements about what the interviewee says, despite having strong feelings on the topic;
  - b. avoid showing surprise, disgust, or other strong emotions, regardless of personal opinion;
  - c. accept hospitality when offered;
- avoiding interviewer bias: Because in-depth interviews are designed to obtain the perspective of the interviewee, anything that interferes with this purpose is detrimental to the process. Perhaps the most serious source of bias comes from interviewers themselves. Among the principal sources of interviewer bias are the following:
  - a. failing to follow up on or omitting topics that the interviewee introduces
  - b. redirecting interviewee's story or interrupting it
  - c. asking questions that include or suggest the desired responses (e.g. questions that begin with "don't you think that...")
  - d. using non-verbal cues (such as head, face, and body movements) to indicate the "right answer" to a question, or the response with which the researcher agrees
  - e. stating opinions on an issue (researchers should avoid volunteering opinions at all; if forced to do so, they should wait until after the interview is over)

### **The interview report**

For each RA, an interview report (**template "interview report"**) will be written and submitted consisting of:

- a list of the potential informants;
- an overview of the 20 selected informants;
- 20 interview notes;
- and 20 transcribed interviews.

## IV - The data

### **To be submitted**

Each team will submit four observation reports (1 per RA) and four interview reports (1 per RA).

### **Transcription issues**

All interviews will be transcribed, and may be transcribed immediately into French or English. Having all the qualitative data written and stored in French or English will facilitate access to the highest possible number of EUMAGINE members. This is a compromise in view of our limited resources.

It is recommended that for those languages not mastered by the researcher, someone (preferably a graduate student) who has that language as his/her mother tongue, be contracted to transcribe the interview in French or English in close collaboration with the researcher. Using a different person than the interpreter will allow checking the accuracy of the translation during the actual interview.

### **Data entry: NVivo**

Because of a long standing experience of the UA in using NVivo for qualitative data analysis, and in view of the fact that only 1 partners has a limited experience in another qualitative analysis software, EUMAGINE will use NVivo for its analysis of the qualitative data.

## V - Training sessions in qualitative research techniques

The interviewers will receive a two day training in the field: one in English in Turkey for the Turkish and Ukrainian researchers and team leaders; one in French in Morocco for the Senegalese and Moroccan researchers and national team leaders.

This training will include the following elements:

### **1. Refreshment: aims of the qualitative research**

### **2. The research locality**

Strategies for entering the field setting in such a way that makes it possible for the researcher to collect data:

- establishing relationships to facilitate entry
- identifying gatekeepers & key informants

### **3. Research guidelines for observations**

- a. In-depth discussion of the observation guidelines.
- b. Training in observation techniques (how to observe & how to record observations: the use of field notes).
- c. How to write the observation report.

### **4. The informants**

- a. In-depth discussion of the informant selection criteria
- b. Strategies for locating informants

### **5. In-depth, semi-structured interviewing**

- a. In-depth discussion of the interview guide.
- b. Training in conducting semi-structured interviews.
- c. How to record the interviews.
- d. How to write the interview report.

### **6. How to work with interview assistants and interpreters**

### **7. Short introduction into NVIVO**

## References

Stephen L. Schensul, Jean J. Schensul and Margaret D. LeCompte (1999) *Essential Ethnographic Methods: Observations, Interviews, and Questionnaires*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.

## Annexes

1. **Template “Overview of potential informants”**
2. **Template “Daily observation notes”**
3. **Template “Observation report”**
4. **Template “Interview notes – RESEARCHER”**
5. **Template “Interview notes – ASSISTANT”**
6. **Template “Interview report”**



**EUMAGINE**  
*Imagining Europe  
 from the Outside*

**TEMPLATE “Overview of potential informants”**

Complete the background information if it is known (it might not be known until you become more familiar with the informant).

Identifying information for your own use (e.g. name or description of person)		Gender		Age within 18–39 range			Employed		Migration experience			Aspires to migrate		Immigrant to RA			Willing to participate	Contact information for your own use	Interview completed	ID (Number, beginning with the RA code, e.g. 3201)
		Male	Female	Low (18~22)	Middle (22~30)	High (31~39)	Yes	No	Personal	Family or friends	None	Yes	No	From another part of the country	From another country	Native of RA				
Number																				
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 University of Oxford  
 United Kingdom



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 United Kingdom



Peace Research Institute Oslo  
 Norway



Koç University  
 Turkey



Université Mohammed V Agdal  
 Morocco



Centre of Sociological Research  
 Ukraine



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**TEMPLATE “Overview of potential informants”**

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Identifying information for your own use (e.g. name or description of person)	Number	Gender		Age within 18–39 range			Employed		Migration experience			Aspires to migrate		Immigrant to RA			Willing to participate	Contact information for your own use	Interview completed	ID (Number, beginning with the RA code, e.g. 3201)
		Male	Female	Low (18–22)	Middle (22–30)	High (31–39)	Yes	No	Personal	Family or friends	None	Yes	No	From another part of the country	From another country	Native of RA				
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Identifying information for your own use (e.g. name or description of person)	Number	Gender		Age within 18–39 range			Employed		Migration experience			Aspires to migrate		Immigrant to RA			Willing to participate	Contact information for your own use	Interview completed	ID (Number, beginning with the RA code, e.g. 3201)
		Male	Female	Low (18–22)	Middle (22–30)	High (31–39)	Yes	No	Personal	Family or friends	None	Yes	No	From another part of the country	From another country	Native of RA				
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TEMPLATE “Overview of potential informants”

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Identifying information for your own use (e.g. name or description of person)	Number	Gender		Age within 18–39 range			Employed		Migration experience			Aspires to migrate		Immigrant to RA			Willing to participate	Contact information for your own use	Interview completed	ID (Number, beginning with the RA code, e.g. 3201)
		Male	Female	Low (18~22)	Middle (22~30)	High (31~39)	Yes	No	Personal	Family or friends	None	Yes	No	From another part of the country	From another country	Native of RA				
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## TEMPLATE “Daily Observation Notes”

Page1

NB If the qualitative fieldwork covers more than one locality in the RA, complete separate observation notes for each locality.

<b>Observation note ID</b>	
<b>Name of Research Area</b>	
<b>Name of the locality</b>	
<b>Name of researcher(s)</b>	
<b>Observation date</b>	



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**TEMPLATE “Daily Observation Notes”****Page 2**

The boxes will expand when they are filled with text. There is no upper limit on the length.

**1. OBSERVATIONS ON THE ROLE OF MIGRATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCALITY**

- *Are there houses being constructed or renovated by migrants or their families?*
- *Are there houses that are empty because the owners have migrated?*
- *Are there differences between houses of migrant families and houses of non-migrant families? If so, what differences? (style, size, etc)*
- *Are there businesses with names of foreign countries/cities that are destinations for migrants (e.g. 'Café Napoli')*
- *Are there advertisements for money transfer services such as Western Union, MoneyGram (apart from the signs of agent offices)? If so, where?*
- *Are there businesses that provide money transfer services? If so, which types of business?*
- *Are there businesses that specialize in international phone calls?*
- *Are there businesses that specialize in international travel (to migrant destinations)?*
- *Are there other physical signs of migration in the environment?*

**Notes:**

**2. OBSERVATIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY ISSUES**

- *How would you describe the general atmosphere in the locality? Do you get a sense of optimism/pessimism? If so, why? Is it 'hectic' or 'sleepy' or are there other words that describe the level of activity?*
- *Are police or military visibly present on the streets?*
- *Are there foreign NGOs or international aid agencies that are present in the locality? Which types of organizations? How is their presence visible?*
- *Are there visible signs of politics in the community (posters, slogans on walls, etc)?*
- *How would you describe the level of trust or distrust you encounter in the locality?*

**Notes:**

**3. OBSERVATIONS ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THE LOCALITY**

*Outward signs indicative of the level of poverty of the local community, such as:*

- *the state of local infrastructure (road, public services, etc);*
- *the number of dilapidated buildings (government buildings, private houses);*
- *presence of construction activities (roads, official buildings, private houses);*
- *the presence and age of transports means (private cars, public transport);*
- *the presence of (international or local) development agencies/NGOs.*

**Notes:**

**TEMPLATE “Daily Observation Notes”**

**Page 3**

**4. OTHER RELEVANT OBSERVATIONS NOT COVERED BY 1, 2 AND 3**

**Notes:**

**5. INFORMATION ACQUIRED THROUGH CONVERSATIONS WITH LOCAL PEOPLE, LOCAL AUTHORITIES OR KEY INFORMANTS**

**Notes:**

**6. PERSONAL COMMENTS**

*Subjective comments of the researcher including inferences and personal observations, reflections and emotional reactions.*

**Notes:**



## TEMPLATE “Observation Report”

[Country]

Observation report [Number]

[Name of Research area]

[Name of Locality/localities]

[YYYY-MM-DD]

Responsible  
institution:

Authors:



University  
of Antwerp  
Belgium



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## Contents

### **I – Background about the fieldwork**

*Account for how the fieldwork was organized: Who did the work? What were the dates of fieldwork? Where did the researcher(s) stay during fieldwork?*

### **II – Introduction: the research locality**

*Introduce the locality (localities) where the field research was conducted including the reasons for selecting this locality (these localities).*

### **III – The role of migration in the development of the locality**

*A summary of the observations notes on the role of migration in the development of the research locality (localities).*

### **IV – Human rights and democracy issues in the locality**

*A summary of the observations notes on human rights and democracy issues in the research locality (localities).*

### **V – The socio-economic situation of the locality**

*A summary of the observations notes on the socio-economic situation of the research locality (localities).*

### **VI – Other relevant observations**

*A summary of the observations notes on other relevant observations made in the research locality (localities).*

### **VII – Information on, and acquired through the means of conversations with local people, local authorities, key informants**

*A summary of the observations notes on the information on, and acquired through the means of conversations with local people, local authorities, and key informants in the research locality (localities).*

### **VIII – Strategies used to locate the informants**

*A description of the strategies used to locate the informants.*

### **ANNEX I – The daily observations**

### **ANNEX II – The locality in pictures**

*Include information about photo credits (name of the photographer).*



**TEMPLATE “Interview notes RESEARCHER”**

<b>Interview ID</b>	
<b>Name of Research Area</b>	
<b>Name of the locality where the interview took place</b>	
<b>Name of researcher(s)</b>	
<b>Interview date</b>	
<b>Interview recorded</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes [INTERVIEW RECORD ID] <input type="checkbox"/> yes [INTERVIEW RECORD ID], but partially, [explain why] <input type="checkbox"/> no, [name of assistant]
<b>Other persons present during the interview</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes, [who] <input type="checkbox"/> no
<b>Language interview</b>	
<b>Interpreter used</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no



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**TEMPLATE “Interview notes RESEARCHER”**

**Page 2**

**The informant**

---

<b>Informant ID number</b> <i>(beginning with the RA code, e.g. 3201)</i>	
<b>Name used for the informant</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> male <input type="checkbox"/> female
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Employed</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes, [ <i>occupation</i> ] <input type="checkbox"/> no
<b>Migration experience</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> personal <input type="checkbox"/> family or friends <input type="checkbox"/> none
<b>Immigrant to <u>RA</u></b>	<input type="checkbox"/> native of RA <input type="checkbox"/> from another part of the country <input type="checkbox"/> from another country, [ <i>country of origin</i> ]
<b>Aspires to migrate</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
<b>Resides/live/sleep in the <u>locality</u> where the interview took place</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
<b>Short description of strategy used to locate the informant</b>	

**The notes**

---

*Write here the notes you took during the interview.*



**TEMPLATE “Interview notes ASSISTANT”**

<b>Interview ID</b>	
<b>Name of Research Area</b>	
<b>Name of the locality where the interview took place</b>	
<b>Name assistant</b>	
<b>Name of researcher(s)</b>	
<b>Interview date</b>	
<b>Interview recorded</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes [INTERVIEW RECORD ID] <input type="checkbox"/> yes [INTERVIEW RECORD ID], but partially, [ <i>explain why</i> ] <input type="checkbox"/> no
<b>Other persons present during the interview</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes, [ <i>who</i> ] <input type="checkbox"/> no
<b>Language interview</b>	
<b>Interpreter used</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no



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**TEMPLATE “Interview notes ASSISTANT”**

**Page 2**

**The informant**

---

<b>Informant ID number</b> <i>(beginning with the RA code, e.g. 3201)</i>	
<b>Name used for the informant</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> male <input type="checkbox"/> female
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Employed</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes, [ <i>occupation</i> ] <input type="checkbox"/> no
<b>Migration experience</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> personal <input type="checkbox"/> family or friends <input type="checkbox"/> none
<b>Immigrant to <u>RA</u></b>	<input type="checkbox"/> native of RA <input type="checkbox"/> from another part of the country <input type="checkbox"/> from another country, [ <i>country of origin</i> ]
<b>Aspires to migrate</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
<b>Resides/live/sleep in the <u>locality</u> where the interview took place</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
<b>Short description of strategy used to locate the informant</b>	

**TEMPLATE “Interview notes ASSISTANT”**

**Page 3**

**The notes**

---

*Write here the notes you took during the interview.*



## TEMPLATE “Interview report”

[Country]

Interview report [Number]

[Name of Research area]  
[Name of Locality/localities]

[YYYY-MM-DD]

Responsible  
institution:

Authors:



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# Contents

## I – List of the potential informants

*Include here the list you used when selecting the potential informants (see template “Overview of potential informants”).*

## II – Overview of the 20 selected informants

*Include here a list of the 20 selected informants with information on the name used to refer to them, ID number of the informant, ID number of the interview, ID number of the recording, name of the locality where the interview took place, their gender, age, occupational status, migration experience, aspiration to migrate, and where they come from (see “immigrant to RA”).*

## III – The interviews

*Include per interview a) the interview notes of the researcher, b) the interview notes of the assistant, and c) the transcribed interview*

- 1. Interview 1.....
- 2. Interview 2.....
- 3. Interview 3.....
- 4. Interview 4.....
- 5. Interview 5.....
- 6. Interview 6.....
- 7. Interview 7.....
- 8. Interview 8.....
- 9. Interview 9.....
- 10. Interview 10.....
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- 12. Interview 12.....
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- 16. Interview 16.....
- 17. Interview 17.....
- 18. Interview 18.....
- 19. Interview 19.....
- 20. Interview 20.....