

# Interview guide – migrant memories

Oral history interviews try to let the stories flow freely. To ensure this, “free storytelling” provides the most authentic interviews for oral history. “Sharp” interview questions can close more than they open.

Example interview questions:

- Open: “Tell me about your childhood?”
- Sharp: “Where were you born?”

Structure:

It is often useful to structure the interviews chronologically. A typical structure may look like this:

- The homeland
- The break/ the choice to leave
- The journey
- The newcomer
- Integration
- Cross-culture
- Return
- Descendants

It is recommended to encourage the storyteller to reflect on their own role in history. This ensures a good flow, as well as more depth in the interview. This can be done by alternating between micro and macro history. An example of this is by switching between the individual’s story and the conditions in the country at that time. Think of the interview as a camera lens: you alternate between zooming in on the individual and zooming out to the society to capture as much context as possible.