

## INTRODUCTION: GIVING VOICE TO THE CITY IN MIGRATION STUDIES

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It's significant that one of the first issues of this newly born journal on urban studies is devoted to migration. Indeed, it's a commonplace notion that cities have been formed due to migration, and as a result, the first studied form of migration was mobility between rural and urban areas. Even now, we rarely speak of migration in contexts apart from the city – and we rarely speak of global cities without mentioning migration.

The tight bond between migration and the city has largely remained in the background, however, and knowledge about it has been fragmentary and dispersed across disciplines. The goal of this special issue of *Urban Studies and Practices* is ambitious, as it aims to build bridges between these “isles of knowledge” – researchers from multiple disciplines, working in different countries, as well as practitioners.

The multi-bridging task has been undertaken within three main sections of the current issue. The first section brings together eight prominent scholars from various countries who “take stock” and reflect on the current state of studies at the intersection of migration and urban studies, as well as trace future trends. We are delighted that our broadly formulated questions initiated such interesting narratives, which altogether, form a multi-voiced discussion.

The second section is formed with six original articles, half of which discuss the Russian context, and other half being devoted to other European countries (Spain and the UK). Importantly, Russian is the language of two of the articles about Europe, while English is the language of two articles about Russia. This cross-bridging is significant as it allows opportunities for comparing perspectives. Many theories have been developed in a specific context and are not always relevant for other contexts. Being able to learn about other settings and thus test a theory at least in one's mind is important for pushing scientific explanations and interpretations forward. Thus, bringing the Russian context to the fore of the international discussion on migration and cities allows us to observe a gigantic region with substantial migration from post-Soviet countries, but with no ethnic neighborhoods – a context that differs significantly with the rest of Europe and North America.

The section starts with a Russian-language article by Evgeni Varshaver, Anna Rocheva, and Nataliya Ivanova, who describe the project of bridging scholarship and practice in the field of migrant integration in Moscow neighborhoods. On the basis of interculturalism and contact theory, they developed, conducted, and tested with tailor-made assessment procedures four integration events. Here, they discuss this experience and the opportunities and hindrances of its upscaling.

Correspondingly, in his English-language article, Pavel Zubkov examines xenophobic attitudes towards migrants of minority groups, which in turn affect the attitudes of the general population. He describes his research of parishioners of the Adventist churches of Moscow, and based on structural equation modeling, he shows that the spirituality preached in these churches, once turned into practice, is positively associated with tolerant attitudes towards migrants.

Liliia Zemnukhova breaks the seemingly homogeneous community of Russian-speaking, highly-skilled migrants in London into four waves and shows their specific characteristics in relation to the national and city-level context (in English).

Iraide Fernández Aragón, Farid Khogyani Bassina, and Julia Shershneva address (in Russian) the question of migrant segregation in Bilbao. They discuss the migration situation of Spain, Basque Country, and Bilbao, assess segregation with various measures for migrant population overall and selected migrant groups, and then provide interpretations for the revealed data.

Raisa Akifyeva presents another Russian-language paper on Spain, examining child-rearing practices of Russian-speaking women in Madrid. Among the factors influencing these practices, she discusses, on one hand, the roles of the neighborhood and, on the other, individual characteristics of migrant mothers.

Vlada Baranova and Kapitolina Fedorova, based on fieldwork in St.Petersburg, contribute (in Russian) to the discussion of the relationship between migrants' presence in a locality and its linguistic landscape. They show the contradictory nature of this relationship, arguing that the linguistic landscape does not always reflect the real linguistic situation, but the linguistic ideology that underlies it.

Finally, the third section comprises a Russian version of the highly-cited 1993 article by Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou introducing the concept of segmented assimilation. It serves as a bridge in two senses. First, this is one of the first papers that addressed the question of the context surrounding migrants, not just as a background, but as an important factor influencing the “assimilation outcome.” The authors delineate diverse directions of “assimilation” corresponding with the contexts. The least advantageous context is that of poor, inner-city neighborhoods with “anti-school” cultures, though the negative influence can be mitigated by ethnic communities and families with strong social ties. Therefore the paper stresses the importance of the urban context. Second, by publishing a translation of this prominent article into Russian, we aim to bring it to the center of the Russian academic discussion and make it more generally available.

In some sense, making an issue of a journal on migrants and the city is easy, as almost all papers dealing with migrants have the city as a background. But then again, in the case of so many of them, the city remains mute. In this issue of *Urban Studies and Practices*, we wish to publish papers that “give voice” to the city. Even when it’s not the focus of the discussion, it remains an active participant. And we hope that this multi-bridging issue will inspire further discussions and new, interesting ideas for research.

*Anna Rocheva and Evgeni Varshaver*