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# How to deal with migrants and the State's backlash – Polish cities' experience

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## ABSTRACT

Over the last decades, Poland has witnessed a relatively dynamic increase in the number of immigrants. At the same time, current Polish central authorities, politicians of the ruling party and the majority of the population perceive migrants mostly as a threat and a challenge. Municipal authorities lack complex support from central authorities. However, the situation is slowly changing. Some Polish cities are adopting migration policies or including migration issues in the local development strategies. Considering this, the article aims to examine migrants' integration policies in selected Polish cities considered leaders in this field: Lublin, Gdańsk, Kraków and Wrocław. The main research question is: how do Polish cities deal with the backlash from the national government and absence of clear legal regulations on their role and competences in the area of migrant integration? The research method is that of a legal-institutional analysis and case study. The former is used to interpret the legal acts and other documents. Its application is justified by the fact that this paper examines strategic documents adopted at the level of urban governments regarding the integration of migrants. Case study methods made it possible to examine the migrants' integration policy in four Polish cities.

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## 1. Introduction

Over the last decades, Poland has witnessed a relatively dynamic increase in the number of immigrants. On the one hand, this is a result of efforts made to attract workers, and on the other of the integration processes within the European Union and the opening of labour markets that have contributed to the movement of people looking for jobs. These factors

led to a growing number of economic migrants, mainly from Ukraine, Belarus, and Asia. Central and Eastern Europe has also become a transit corridor for migrants from Africa and Asia resulting in a growing number of people coming to Poland from Chechnya, Vietnam, Kazakhstan, Armenia, China or Africa. Although Poland is initially a transit country for most of these people, some of them decide to stay here (Immigrant Integration Model, 2016, p. 9).

On the other hand, the 'Never Again' Association (Stowarzyszenie 'Nigdy Wiecej') alerts that the number of racist and xenophobic attacks in Poland has increased from several dozen a month to several dozen a week (Rojewski, 2018; Sieradzka, 2016). In April 2018, the former Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydło dissolved the Council for the Prevention of Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia (Rada ds. Przeciwdziałania Dyskryminacji Rasowej i Ksenofobii) and the number of so motivated attacks is growing rapidly. According to experts, the words and deeds of politicians constitute an implicated permission for xenophobic behaviour (Pędziwiatr, 2017, p. 414, 428, 429; Szaniawski, 2018). At the same time the Polish Government publicly declares its hostility to migrants, especially from the Middle East to North African countries (many of them Muslim and as such seen by the Government as a security threat) while it quietly accepts more and more of them (for example the Nepalese obtained 9200 work permits, the Byelorussians 7600 and the Moldavians 2500) (Nowak, 2018). It is also indifferent, if not even sympathetic to migrants from Ukraine, who are perceived as 'good' migrants willing to work. In 2018 the Ukrainians obtained the largest amount of work permits (about 107,000) (Nowak, 2018). This shows that the Law and Justice Government is not against all migrations but attempts to attract only what it views as 'desirable migrants'. And the factors taken into account are not necessarily skills of the migrants but their race or religion (see Pędziwiatr, 2017 on the growing islamophobia of the Poles). It is very difficult to state the exact number of migrants in Poland, due to different statistics used and different legal bases of the rights to residence in Poland, as well as variety of statuses migrants can receive. Detailed statistics pertaining to the number of migrants with certified right of residence in Poland are published by the Office for Foreigners (Immigrant Integration Model, 2016). In October 2018 the number of migrants who were granted the right of residence in Poland reached about 360,000 (this does not include people staying in Poland on the basis of valid visas) while in October 2017 it was about 30,800 and 23,700 in 2016 ([migracje.gov.pl/en](http://migracje.gov.pl/en)). The number of irregular migrants is unknown.

Building on the literature in the areas of migration and urban studies the research goal of this article is to examine migration and integration policies or strategies or elements thereof in the selected Polish cities that can actually be regarded as leaders in this field (but only in Poland). These cities include Lublin, Gdańsk, Kraków (Cracow) and Wrocław. This is the reason for their selection – these cities are the leaders in the field of adopting and implementing city migration policies. The paper includes a broader context, namely the significance of cities for integrating migrants and the attitude of the Polish central authorities as well as Polish people to migrants. Against this background concrete cities and their migration policies will be examined. The main research question is: how do Polish cities deal with the backlash or blockade from the national Government and lack of clear legal regulations on their role and competences in the area of migrant integration? The answer requires examining strategies adopted by Polish cities in this regard.

After this introduction Section 2 offers a brief review of the relevant literature in the fields of migration and urban studies followed by a brief section on the methodology. Then the paper presents the broader context of the examined issues – challenges and opportunities linked with migration, a phenomenon of migration to Poland and an attitude of the central Government and Polish people to migrants. In this context the author analyses the strategical documents of selected Polish cities on the integration of migrants.

In the conclusions the paper provides answers to the research questions and discusses the main findings on what Polish cities can do for migrants.

## 2. Review of the literature

The subject of this paper lies at the intersection of urban studies and migration studies. Historically, the latter tended to be underpinned by an approach known as methodological nationalism (Jaskułowski, 2017, p. 2), which has now been rightly criticized. Methodological nationalism may be defined as ‘the assumption that the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form of the modern world’ (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002, p. 302). In other words, society tends to be conflated with the nation-State (Glick Schiller & Çağlar, 2009, p. 180; Jaskułowski, 2017, p. 2). Consequently up to the 1990s modern history was mainly a history of nation-States and their mutual relations (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002, p. 305). As will be indicated below States are no longer the only problem-solving actor on the international arena as cities also have a role to play in the area of problem-solving, such as integration of migrants. Very often cities send impulses to States to begin dealing with this challenge and not the other way round. Accordingly, ‘privileging the nation-state in analysis does not correspond with the reality of the contemporary world, especially as it does not take into account the increasing significance of transnational mobility and the growing role of cities and regions’ (Jaskułowski, 2017, p. 2). Hence, the methodologic nationalism cannot be the dominant approach.

In Poland, the body of work on migration and the city has mostly prioritized migrant professionals (Jaskułowski, 2017; Meier, 2015 with special emphasis on Wrocław) or highly skilled migrants (Piekut, 2013a, 2013b). Aneta Piekut has explored patterns of social adaptation of intra-European Union migrants living temporarily in Poland. She has focused on the so-called ‘geography of highly skilled migrants’ within urban context of Warsaw. The novelty of Piekut’s approach lies in adopting the family and female perspective on social adaptation of migrant professionals in opposition to the usually adopted male perspective. Similarly, Magdalena Dutkiewicz and Majewski (2017) have concentrated on foreigners in Warsaw and their integration.

In the field of migration studies cities have also been researched as ‘containers that provide spaces in which migrants settle and work’ (Glick Schiller & Çağlar, 2009, p. 177). Taking this into account Nina Glick Schiller and Ayse Çağlar have analyzed the relationship between different positionings of cities within world-wide areas of power and the roles migrants play within the reconstitution of particular cities.

Research on migrants in an urban context also focuses on the challenges and opportunities presented by irregular migrants (Delvino, 2017b) and on how cities handle this. The latter research strand includes literature on sanctuary cities (Cities of Sanctuary, Communities of Welcome, 2009; How is your city responding to irregular migrants? 2018; Sanctuary Cities: Challenges and Opportunities, 2016; Urban Citizens, 2008; Villazar, 2010; World Economic Forum, 2017). In this context Rose C. Villazor explores a controversial and particularly interesting issue of ways in which sanctuary cities and their laws illustrate the tensions between national and local citizenship, the latter providing some protection to undocumented/irregular migrants. Taking as an example the USA, Villazor points out that such sanctuary laws collide with the federal governments’ authority to decide who may legally enter and stay in the USA (Villazar, 2010, p. 579). Sanctuary laws illustrate how

cities can deal with the backlash of States, especially with respect to irregular migrants. Delvino (2017a) rightly indicates that the presence of irregular migrants cannot be overlooked by local authorities directly responsible for cities and regions; obliged to care for the population, they are prompted to respond to the basic and social needs of irregular migrants. In Europe, a variety of policy approaches have been adopted by local authorities to mitigate the marginalization resulting from EU and national policies. She then examines such diversified local approaches to irregular migrants.<sup>1</sup> In the literature on the sanctuary cities examples of how such cities deal with the irregular migrants are given: the city of New Haven, introduced a municipal ID card – the first of its kind in any American city. The card is available to all New Haven residents regardless of their citizenship status. It facilitates an identification necessary to, for example, ‘going to a pharmacy to have a prescription filled, opening and accessing a local bank account, using any public service including getting a library card’ (Urban Citizens, 2008). A similar card was introduced in New York (World Economic Forum, 2017).

Migrants in cities are also considered in the research on the right to the city which should be accorded to all city inhabitants irrespective of their nationality or citizenship (HABITAT III Policy Paper 1, 2016; Harvey, 2008, 2012) or more particularly on the diasporic right to the city (Finlay, 2017). The latter combines the diaspora and the right to the city as ‘a diasporic right to the city is a gradual and spatially transformative process that emerges through the interactions between migrant place-making strategies and the urban context’ (Finlay, 2017, p. 3). Diaspora, cities and the right to the city are definitely connected as the right to the city is accorded to the most marginalized people such as migrants (Finlay, 2017, p. 3; Marcuse, 2009, p. 191).

The present paper aims to fill the lacuna and provide new knowledge and analysis of the city migration policies in selected Polish cities. Some of these cities, for example, Wrocław in 2018, adopted new strategies to deal with the problem of migrants’ integration that so far have not been examined in the Polish or foreign literature. Hence, it seems interesting to find out about various ideas, plans and strategies of selected Polish cities in this regard, especially taking into account the ambivalent attitude of the Polish Government.

### 3. Methodology

The author would like to stress that the paper is interdisciplinary, fitting into the areas of migration and urban studies. The research method used is that of comparative review and analysis of strategies adopted in selected Polish cities as well as of analysis of relevant literature. Understandably, the author analyses mostly Polish legal texts and other documents. These documents are available at the website of the City Councils or other official websites of the cities. The strategic documents in the area of migration/migrants’ integration policy analyzed include: *Immigrant Integration Model* in Gdańsk (2016), *Lublin Development Strategy for the Years 2013–2020*, Wrocław’s *Strategy for Inter-Cultural Dialogue for 2018–2022* and Kraków’s *Open Cracow* programme of 2016. Apart from the documents the paper examines particular projects that were/are implemented in some of these cities like *Lublin for Everyone* or Lublin’s *Communication for Integration*. The documents are very recent or relatively recent (2014–2018) as the author intended to examine the most recent and hence, as yet unexamined, elements of the municipal policies on the migrants’ integration.

The comparative review and analysis embraces mostly legal-institutional analysis as a research method used to interpret textual material and decipher its meaning. The institutional and legal analysis includes an examination of the content of legal acts and other documents. Its application is justified by the fact that this paper examines strategic documents adopted at the level of local (urban) governments regarding the integration of migrants. This method aims to organize and interpret the content of the documents adequate for the research aim. The analysis of these documents made it possible to reconstruct the migrants' integration policies of selected Polish cities. On this basis, a practical aspect is also briefly presented – actions taken to implement these policies. Such an analysis of the texts of the documents and certain projects' proposals implemented in Polish cities examined here allows for comparisons of these cities' migrant integration policies to be made. The approach adopted in this paper inevitably results in the use of a case study research method. This method made it possible to analyze the activities in the field of migrants' integration in Polish cities considered leaders in this regard.

#### 4. Broader context – migration challenges and opportunities and attitudes of Polish authorities and the population

Margit Fauser indicates in her book *Migrants and Cities* that frequently national governments consider the issue of migration as a political one, an abstract one and a matter of statistics. For cities, however, it is a matter of specific problems and concrete actions. Migrants live and work in these cities, where they need access to healthcare system and where they use the city infrastructure. Therefore, while States very often do anything possible to stop or discourage irregular migrants (usually with unsatisfactory results), cities attempt to solve the problem and often do it successfully (Fauser, 2012). This causes the conflict between cities and the central governments. Frequently cities decide to perpetuate this conflict because the alternative is even worse, for example, children of irregular migrants being unvaccinated (which is connected with the protection of children) or irregular migrants' homelessness. These are the challenges that cities have to face every day. Generally, integration of migrants in their new environment poses a challenge for cities. It is at the level of cities that decisions influencing the scope and pace of integration are made. In a report on the European Cities and Migrants with Irregular Status from 2017 Nicola Delvino

identified municipal initiatives for the inclusion of irregular migrants in several areas of service provision, including shelters and housing support, legal counselling, healthcare, education, civic documentation, and support for victims of crime. The report shows how – in the lack of clear guidance and often restrictive national policy frameworks – municipalities have to rely on innovative and often informal solutions to provide access to services without breaching national law (Delvino, 2017b).

The approach of both the EU and individual States to the issue of irregular migration is to discourage irregular migrants from staying by introducing policies that exclude such people from the labour market and deny them access to social assistance services. Such policies result in marginalization and vulnerability, particularly of those people who cannot return to the country of their origin, whether of their own will or not. In European

cities, return policies have not always been able to prevent the formation of marginalized sub-populations without official access to labour and social assistance. Irregular migrants are estimated to constitute 3–6% of the inhabitants in such cities as Genoa, Ghent and Rotterdam, with as many as 440,000 living in London (Delvino, 2017a, pp. 22–23).

In many West European countries all kinds of migrants constitute a considerable percentage of every community. They settled predominantly in large cities. In response to the increasing ethnic diversification, cities more and more often see the need to construe integration policies. One of the good practices is to adopt such policies in a participatory way, including the representatives of the receiving community and of migrants themselves (Winiarska, 2015, p. 3). Including migrants in consultations and integration efforts may take place at different levels: at the systemic national level through municipal level to the level of neighbourhood. Authorities of many cities have begun to notice the presence of various migrants' groups and recognize their special needs. It is understandable that this pertains to cities with a high percentage of migrants, usually at the level of one-tenth or more of the population. It is worth looking closely at such experiences and draw inspiration from them also in the cities where migrants do not constitute such a significant subset of the city inhabitants (Winiarska, 2015, p. 10).

European cities such as London, Amsterdam, Barcelona or Vienna have been attempting to attract migrants by, inter alia, offering them jobs, facilitating registration of irregular migrants, providing them temporary accommodation or ensuring access to municipal public services. International organizations repeatedly state that migrants are an important source of human/social capital directly contributing to innovation growth in cities through creating demand for goods and services or developing the local labour market. The OECD points to the migrant's impact in three areas: the labour market, the public purse and economic growth. Accordingly,

[m]igrants accounted for 47% of the increase in the workforce in the United States and 70% in Europe over the past ten years. Migrants fill important niches both in fast-growing and declining sectors of the economy. Migrants contribute significantly to labour-market flexibility, notably in Europe. Migrants contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in benefits. Labour migrants have the most positive impact on the public purse. Migration boosts the working-age population. Migrants arrive with skills and contribute to human capital development of receiving countries. Migrants also contribute to technological progress (OECD, 2014, p. 1; see also Maloney & Korinek, 2011, pp. 98–114).

Though by no means complete, this enumeration clearly shows that migration may be very beneficial for the economy, especially of the receiving country. *The Urban Agenda for the EU. Pact of Amsterdam* of 2016 also expressly counts among its priorities 'inclusion of migrants and refugees' (Urban Agenda for the EU. Pact of Amsterdam, 2016).

At the same time in Poland migration is perceived by the Government and most of the Polish people primarily as a threat and a challenge. Sixty percent of the Poles is against accepting migrants or refugees at all, 72% against accepting those from the Middle East or Africa. This number drops to 56% with regard to migrants from Ukraine (CBOS, 2018, p. 1, 3, 6). Local/municipal authorities do not always use the chance to increase the level of multiculturalism of Polish cities which could mostly contribute to sustainable development of local communities. Moreover, the central authorities do not provide local/municipal authorities with complex support the latter need to deal with migrant issues. However, the situation is slowly changing, especially in cities with relatively large

communities of migrants. Some Polish cities are opening up to migrants and adopting migration policies or including migration issues in the local development strategies (Korniychuk, 2015, p. 19).

## 5. Examples of Polish cities' strategies of dealing with migrants' integration

In 2017 Mayors of twelve large Polish cities, members of the Union of Polish Metropolises, signed a *Declaration of Mayors on cooperation of the Union of Polish Metropolises Regarding Migrations* (*Deklaracja Prezydentów o Współdziałaniu Miast Unii Metropolii Polskich w Dziedzinie Migracji*) (2017).<sup>2</sup> According to the Declaration, which is worth quoting in full,

[m]igrations are dynamic, common and – as the history of the world shows – unavoidable, but in the context of socio-demographic situation in our country they are even beneficial. Large Polish cities for years have been open to migration processes and diversity of inhabitants. Friendly service at the offices, availability of housing and employment, access to education and health services, learning Polish language and culture – these are the foundations for integrating people of different origins. In order to be friendly hosts to the immigrants, cooperation is necessary among such entities as local-level self-government and State authorities, public service agencies, non-governmental organizations, churches, universities as well as business and labour market organizations. It is in our common, broadly understood interest that migrations are managed responsibly and safely at the local level so that we create socially coherent cities, minimizing the threats related to ghettoization, separation, poverty and exclusion of new inhabitants. We declare cooperation of cities through exchange of experiences and good practices, with a view to ensuring high quality of life for all inhabitants, in the spirit of solidarity and responsibility for the community that we create together with the migrants. To exchange information, knowledge and experiences, we establish a working group on migration and integration. It will be supported by specialist knowledge of two key organizations: International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). We declare openness and willingness to cooperate as partners with State administration, non-governmental organizations and religious organizations with regard to formulation and implementation of Polish migration policy based on management of safe migrations. Together we are able to develop appropriate migrant-welcoming culture, which will help develop our cities and make them more innovative and competitive.

Unfortunately, the law in Poland accords the local/municipal authorities only a limited role in migration and integration areas. Formally, city councils do not participate in migration policy. In practice a broadly construed migration policy does not belong to obligatory or voluntary tasks of the local authorities. Polish *Local Government Act* (*Ustawa o samorządzie gminnym*) of 1990 among the tasks of the community/city authorities mentions not 'migrants' but 'nationals', for example in the context of ensuring their safety and security (art. 7). Hence, local authorities have to justify their actions promoting multiculturalism in their cities as they cannot find such a justification in the law (Korniychuk, 2015, p. 19). In 2012 national document *Migration policy of Poland – the present State and suggested actions* (*Polityka migracyjna Polski – stan obecny i postulowane działania*) prepared for the Ministry of Internal Affairs and adopted by the Government, the authors called for according cities (local governments) a crucial and strengthened role in the areas of migration and integration (Korniychuk, 2015, p. 19). It proposed simplification of the rules on staying and working in Poland for foreigners and on preventing illegal immigration, improvement of integration programmes, a greater emphasis on education of

migrants' children and enabling the legalization of stay of illegal migrants (Government adopted, 2012; Grot, 2013; Polityka migracyjna Polski – stan obecny i postulowane działania, 2012). In 2017 the Polish government abrogated the 2012 document and, so far, the new one has not been adopted (Socha, 2018). Before the establishment of the current Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, a party that is very national-conservative and prioritizing 'God, honour and the State') Government, the local authorities could count on the NGOs engaged in helping and integrating migrants. The NGOs activities may not have always been coordinated but at least they were there. Nowadays, the local authorities must help the NGOs because the EU funds from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund destined for NGOs have been appropriated by the Government and are now used mainly for the Polish Border Guard. NGOs have thus been forced to restrict their activities, which is difficult, especially now, when there is more and more migrants with more needs to fulfil (Socha, 2018, p. 87).

Efficient migration policy at the city level requires adoption of strategic documents and legal regulations that would make it possible to include activities in this area among the tasks that are the purview of local/municipal authorities. In other words, certain legal regulations envisaging such a role for cities are indispensable. It is worth remembering that the first step in migration policy has to be made by State authorities. Migration issues should be taken into account within the whole system of law beginning with central legal regulations. Systemic/holistic approach to migrants' issues at the national (Polish) level will make it possible to define main goals of migration policy at the voivodeship level and then to take into account the local level and finally the local specificity in concrete undertakings. A voivodeship (*województwo*) is the highest-level administrative subdivision of Poland, corresponding to a 'province' in many other countries. In such a system the local authorities will be able to take greater responsibility for migrants' situation because they will be able to count on financial support from the central authorities (Kornychuk, 2015, p. 20). Witek Hebanowski, a president of the Other Space Foundation (Fundacja 'Inna Przestrzeń') and the coordinator of the Warsaw Multicultural Center, claims that Polish cities are sufficiently independent so as to conduct their own foreign policy. Even despite the unfavourable law, Polish cities may be the leaders in the area of migration and integration (Miasta otwarte, 2015, p. 53). Polish cities and communities are obliged to take care of all their citizens, no matter their nationality. This duty of care is rooted in human rights law obligation to respect human rights of all people under the jurisdiction of State authorities (for example art. 1 the European Convention on Human Rights [1950]).

In the meantime, while there are no legal regulations and central Government's declarations are hostile or ambivalent to migrants, but at the same time, the number of permissions to stay in Poland is increasing, Polish cities are undertaking efforts to deal with the situation of local migrants contributing in this way to their integration.

### 5.1. Gdańsk

Gdańsk is ready for the arrival of migrants as it has been preparing for that. For more than a year an interdisciplinary team worked on an Immigrant Integration Model (hereinafter: IIIM). It was initiated by an NGO named Immigrant Support Center (Centrum Wsparcia Imigrantek i Imigrantów) (Socha, 2018, p. 84). After extensive work in which various

environments and institutions participated, in 2016 the Model was adopted by the City Council. It encompasses tasks within the broad range of aspects: education, integration, work, health, housing, culture and social care (Socha, 2018, p. 85). Part of the cities (like Warsaw,<sup>3</sup> Lublin, Wrocław, Poznań) had dealt with the issue of migrants earlier than Gdańsk and consequently some of them are more advanced with regard to specific aspects. However, Gdańsk was the first to address this matter in a systematic and coordinated manner, in a public municipal policy for migrants and the receiving community (Socha, 2018, p. 85). Contrary to Warsaw, where a Multicultural Centre operates, Gdańsk decided to adopt a network approach, for integration of migrants takes place at many levels. For example, while the city finances the Polish language courses for migrants they are conducted at homes, libraries or cultural institutions. There are clubs for senior migrants and for parents and dayrooms for children. There is no better way for integration than through such direct contacts. According to the research done in 2015 at the request of the International Migration Organisation, people who have met or know foreigners in their private or professional lives have better opinions on them. They more frequently declare their readiness to accept migrants as neighbours and more positively evaluate migrants' influence on the labour market (Socha, 2018, p. 85). All these actions were undertaken just in time. In 2015, when the work on the Immigrant Integration Model begun, about 10,000 migrants lived in Gdańsk, while now there are 40,000–50,000 (10% of the whole population) (Socha, 2018, p. 85). As stated in the publication of the Gdańsk City Hall,

[t]he original idea behind the IMM was to develop and implement specific solutions for immigrants who are currently living and working in Gdansk as IIM's primary target group. It was not the team's role to design a comprehensive immigration policy or strategy for Gdansk. The team members did not discuss any measures to increase or reduce the number of immigrants in Gdansk but focused on the existing members of our community. They are the target of our efforts as we want to ensure that their needs are better addressed and their problems resolved. In addition to these clearly delineated objectives, we recognised the need to develop and implement measures related to the admission and support to new immigrants coming to Gdansk. Consequently, the IIM focuses primarily on the immigrants who are already living in Gdansk, and provides a framework to face the challenges of the projected increase in immigration to Gdansk in near future' (Immigrant Integration Model, 2016, p. 15).

Contrary to the 'sanctuary cities' which are open to irregular migrants, the IIM is applicable only to the integration process of regular migrants,

and does not cover any aspects relating to the admission of foreigners or legalization of their stay in Poland. The City of Gdansk does not [have] decision-making powers with respect to the admission of immigrants, including refugees. The main policy makers here are the government, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Office for Foreigners. These are the competent authorities for regulating Polish migration policy, and granting financial support and regulated immigration statuses to foreigners legalizing their stay in Poland. The Office for Foreigners is also the competent authority for the refugee procedure. Coordination of the integration measures is one of the tasks delegated to municipalities by the government. The IIM has been developed within this context (Immigrant Integration Model, 2016, p. 17).

## 5.2. Lublin

In Lublin in 2012, migrants constituted about 3% of city population. The number has risen to 10% by 2018 (Socha, 2018, p. 85). The *Lublin Development Strategy for the*

*Years 2013–2020* constitutes a framework for systemic actions undertaken by the Municipal Office of Lublin that focus on integration of immigrants (especially point 2.3.9 focusing on adjusting the existing offer to foreigners' needs). Within the first three years, all the Lublin administration institutions and non-governmental organizations initiated and gradually expanded their cooperation with regard to migrants. A part of this network was the project *Lublin for Everyone* (*Lublin dla wszystkich*) implemented by the Chancellery of the President of Lublin and consisting of several elements:

- 1) Development and implementation of a system for managing diversity;
- 2) Bringing together various Lublin minorities: national, ethnic and religious;
- 3) A social campaign *Lublin for Everyone – Faces of Lublin* (*Lublin dla wszystkich – Twarze Lublina*) – an exhibition and a website presenting photographs that reflect the city's multiculturalism. The faces representing Lublin inhabitants included numerous people who have directly experienced migration, people of different ethnic origins who settled in Lublin;
- 4) A series of workshops for teachers on cultural awareness, ways of preventing discrimination and participative city management.
- 5) Establishment of regular meetings of a group providing support in management of cultural diversity (Miasta Otwarte – Open Cities, 2016, p. 22).

Although the project *Lublin for Everyone* ended in September 2014, the Municipal Office in Lublin still continues many of the project activities.

The second integration project implemented by the Municipal Office was named *Communication for Integration* (*Komunikacja dla integracji*) and includes such activities as:

- 1) Establishing a local network encompassing (representatives of) local authorities, State institutions, NGOs and individual citizens;
- 2) Preparing trainers and so-called anti-gossip agents who will work in their environment on counteracting stereotypes regarding migrants;
- 3) Organizing anti-gossip workshops for different groups (senior citizens, students, NGOs' volunteers, etc.);
- 4) Organizing media workshops for secondary and tertiary education students where the participants prepared short movies that promoted diversity;
- 5) Promoting diversity through a social campaign including promotional spots and 'Café Dialog' meetings in Lublin libraries, when the citizens could meet foreigners living in the city;
- 6) Involving Lublin inhabitants in such social-cultural events as the 'Football for Everyone' games (Miasta Otwarte – Open Cities, 2016, p. 23).

An expert from the Municipal Office of Lublin indicates that although migration policy has been implemented in Poland, the tasks that are specifically the responsibility of local authorities do not include integrating immigrants, nor is there any funding allotted for these purposes. Therefore they have to seek financial support on their own and cooperate with different NGOs; the Chancellery of the President of Lublin realizes the urgent need for such integrative activities (Miasta Otwarte – Open Cities, 2016, p. 23).

### 5.3. Wrocław

The population of Wrocław constitutes about 635,000 people. There are about 4800 migrants living in the Lower Silesian voivodeship, most of them assumedly in Wrocław. This makes it about 0.75% of the city population (Jaskułowski, 2017, p. 5, 6; Podsumowanie, 2018). Generally, it is difficult or impossible to state the exact number of foreigners in Wrocław because the official data refers only the number of foreigners in the voivodeships.

In 2018 Wrocław, following Gdańsk, adopted a Strategy for Inter-Cultural Dialogue for 2018–2022. It constitutes a response to new challenges and social needs and is a result of growing participation of migrants in the socio-economic life of Wrocław. The experience of multiculturalism may be a new one for the people from Wrocław as well as for migrants (Strategy for Inter-Cultural Dialogue, 2018, p. 3). As argued by Krzysztof Jaskułowski (2017, p. 5), '[t]he city is attempting to enhance its attractiveness in the global market by creating the image of a multicultural and open place'. For these reasons it is so important to create conditions favourable to building new bonds, increasing the intercultural competences that are necessary for mutual understanding, coexistence and cooperation. Acceptance and appreciation of values that other cultures contribute to the life of the community are directly related to the knowledge and understanding of one's cultural identity (Strategy for Inter-Cultural Dialogue, 2018, p. 3). The document contains the vision of Wrocław as a community of inhabitants that live in mutual respect irrespective of their origins, cultural distinctiveness, language or religion (Strategy for Inter-Cultural Dialogue, 2018, p. 3). In order to implement this vision in the course of analysis, research and consultations four areas of needs were indicated: education, security, cooperation and communication. These goals are interrelated and are strictly connected as parts of a coherent whole (Strategy for Inter-Cultural Dialogue, 2018, p. 23). The programme is addressed to all Wrocław inhabitants, whether Polish or not. And, to be precise, all the activities are directed not only at individuals but also collective (students, teachers or employees) and institutional entities. One of the most important elements within the implementation of the Wrocław Strategy will be initiation and continuation of cooperation, knowledge and information exchange between cities, national government, Polish Border Guard, intergovernmental and international institutions, universities, business people, churches, local leaders, migrants' diaspora and private persons who are interested in intercultural dialogue (Strategy for Inter-Cultural Dialogue, 2018, p. 25). It is extremely important that the Strategy is addressed also to Polish nationals living in Wrocław as they must learn and acquire some intercultural competences necessary to the successful integration of migrants.

### 5.4. Kraków

According to municipal documents, Kraków (Cracow) is a home to more than 15,000 migrants, most of them the Ukrainians (Sprawozdanie, 2018, p. 3). This amounts to about 1.95% of the city population. In the city of Kraków migrant integration initially fell to a large extent within the scope of the *Strategy of Counteracting and Reaction to Events of Xenophobic and Racist Character in the Public Space of the City* (*Strategia zapobiegania i reakcji na zdarzenia o charakterze rasistowskim i ksenofobicznym w przestrzeni publicznej miasta*), which was implemented by the Department of Social Affairs in the

Municipal Office of Cracow in cooperation with the Association Interkulturalni.pl. The consultations concerning the project took place in 2014 (among the Municipal Office's departments and units of municipal organization) and January 2015 (with relevant NGOs). The main goal of the Programme was to implement the anti-discrimination policy of the City of Cracow by raising the citizens' knowledge and awareness of xenophobia and racism, promoting tolerance towards foreigners and national and ethnical minorities as well as identifying issues related to xenophobia and racism by the institutions that implement the Programme and selecting appropriate tools to react suitably in case of particular incidents (Miasta Otwarte – Open Cities, 2016, p. 35).

Finally, in 2016 Cracow also adopted a programme called 'Open Cracow' ('Program Otwarty Kraków'). The document adopted by the Municipal Council states that Cracow is a city with rich cultural heritage and essential historical values. It owes this both to its native residents (born in Cracow) and to incomers from other parts of the country and from abroad. Migration and the phenomenon of multiculturalism should first and foremost be perceived in terms of new opportunities, not just as a threat. It requires, however, proper management and preparation from the host society, public offices and institutions and not only at the State level, but above all at the regional and local ones. What is important, experiences of other countries receiving migrants lead to a conclusion that these activities should not be delayed and postponed until migrants appear in a significant number – rather such activities should be planned in advance, when the number of migrants is still relatively low (Open Cracow, 2016, p. 2). In order to achieve that, joint efforts and activities of local and national authorities, non-governmental organizations, universities, the police, the Prosecutor's Office, the Border Guard, cultural institutions and labour market institutions for support and development of the potential of national and ethnic minorities and migrants are necessary. According to Article 3 the main objective of the Programme of Open Cracow is the implementation of the openness policy of the city, openness towards representatives of national and ethnic minorities and migrants through building a sense of solidarity and awareness among the residents of Cracow and knowledge about the culture and customs of other nationalities; shaping an attitude of tolerance towards migrants, national and ethnic minorities as well as activities focused on identifying and solving problems related to functioning in the intercultural community. Ultimately the Programme aims to ensure a high quality of life for all the residents of Cracow and to strengthen solidarity and the sense of the community's responsibility for the fate of the city; it also strives to ensure active participation of city citizens in making decisions regarding solving current problems of the community (Open Cracow, 2016, p. 3).

### 5.5. Discussion

The aim of all of these documents is to support migrants and to foster the locals' positive attitude to migrants. Other Polish cities do not adopt separate programmes on migrants but include their integration in the municipal development strategies (Socha, 2018, p. 85). The numbers of migrants in Polish cities clearly show that something has to be done about this matter. Inaction could lead to isolation of migrants or their marginalization. The former will result in growing social conflicts and discrimination while the latter in the attitude 'earn and leave' (Socha, 2018, p. 85). Unfortunately, in Poland

local/municipal authorities are blocked by lack of central/national legal regulations concerning migrants, and very often may do very little even though they wish to do more. Some of the cities find a loophole or stretch the law and treat migrants as any other citizens (Socha, 2018). Hence, the local/municipal authorities – through their micropolitics – attempt to fill the void created by absence of a national strategy. This situation may be compared to the situation of irregular migrants and cities' efforts to include and integrate them. Here too European municipalities are forced to balance the necessity of respecting State immigration rules (which impose exclusionary policies) with the socio-economic human rights of irregular migrants dictated by individual State constitutions and international obligations (which may demand more inclusive approaches). Thus municipalities are caught in the net of complex political and legal contradictions with regard to irregular migrants: while cities are not supposed to be overly inclusive towards such persons, their duties of care and the potential results of migrants' exclusion practically create an obligation to react to the irregular migrants' presence with inclusionary approach. When national policies tend towards the restrictive end of the spectrum, cities cannot adopt straightforward inclusive policies; thus they have developed innovative – and not necessarily formal – means of providing assistance without breaching State-imposed rules (Delvino, 2017a, p. 25).

It is also worth noting that all these activities, programmes and strategies of Polish cities fit into the right to the city concept. Art. I of the World Charter for the Right to the City (2005) states:

All persons have the Right to the City free of discrimination based on gender, age, health status, income, nationality, ethnicity, **migratory condition**, or political, religious or sexual orientation, and to preserve cultural memory and identity in conformity with the principles and norms established in this Charter [emphasis added].

It constitutes a collective right of the inhabitants of cities, particularly those belonging to the vulnerable and marginalized groups. The right to the city is interdependent meaning that it includes all internationally recognized human rights – civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental, in other words the three generations of human rights (HABITAT III Policy Paper 1, 2016; World Charter for the Right to the City, 2005).

## 6. Concluding remarks

The examined cases can be a contribution to the discussion on localized approaches to migrant integration. Part of the municipal documents, in particular, the most recent ones, have been examined for the first time. The paper has attempted to expand the knowledge regarding the role cities can play in migrants' integration, especially focusing on cities that are considered Polish leaders in this regard. In this broader context the main reproach question was: what can Polish cities do for migrants? Taking into account the experience of other cities as well as of some Polish cities examined in this paper, it is clear that municipal migration policy may be implemented at different levels with an active participation of the most interested individuals, namely migrants. Migrants may, for example, participate in social consultations, construing strategic programmes, participatory planning and social integration policy (Korniychuk, 2015, p. 20). Some Polish cities have the potential to construct and implement reasonable migration policy. Unleashing of this potential to a

great extent depends on the systemic support of the State. On the other hand, Polish cities must be aware that it is the local authorities that are the first to introduce conditions favourable to the development of cohesive communities. Multicultural city is not a futuristic idea but an every-day-reality in which we live and will be living more and more frequently (Korniychuk, 2015, p. 21).

This article has also illustrated that cities may successfully complement nation-States in the task of migrants' integration. Taking all this into account, cities are considered a part of the global governance architecture (Acuto, 2013) or multilevel/multi-layered governance (Auby, 2011). States are no longer the only problem-solving actor on the international arena. As demonstrated by this article, cities also have a role to play in the area of problem-solving, such as integration of migrants (see also: Skelcher, Sullivan, & Jaffares, 2013). Among the advantages of a more efficient model of cities dealing with the issue of migration, one may point to the fact that cities are more practical than ideological, which is connected with cities bypassing national sovereignty; they are also more emotionally intelligent than nation-States and constitute global brands that attract the creative class (Coll, 2015). Those advantages clearly explain why the role of cities in the realm of migrants' integration is growing. It goes without saying that efforts of cities in dealing with this issue should be supported by States (Bouteligier, 2013). But even without the appropriate legal regulations and financial support from the State, Polish cities may manage quite well.

To answer the research question posed in the introduction, the main tactic or a trick adopted by the examined cities is to treat migrants as any other citizens. Hence, the local/municipal authorities – through their micropolitics – attempt to fill the void resulting from lack of national strategy. Despite the absence of proper legal regulations Polish cities are capable of contributing to the migrants' integration. Actually, they are at the forefront of this process for the simple fact that most migrants stay in cities. All the programmes and strategies examined in this article demonstrate that efforts at integration of migrants are addressed not only to them but also to the Polish nationals indicating how important it is for the Polish citizens to learn and acquire intercultural competences necessary to the successful integration of migrants. Another common aspect consists of the joint efforts of national, regional and local authorities, NGOs, universities, the police, the Border Guard, churches, business people, cultural institutions and labour market institutions.

Due to the absence of proper legal regulations on cities' competences with reference to the issue of migration the Polish cities' experience may once again be compared to the situation of irregular migrants. In the European countries it is the local authorities that have felt most strongly the need to include the irregular inhabitants and demonstrated the most open approach. In several cases the local solutions have been pivotal in introducing national-level changes (or in mitigating the marginalization resulting from State policies) and provided an example for higher-level policymakers (Delvino, 2017a, p. 26). In Polish cities the local authorities also attempt to include migrants in their development strategies and activities aimed at simply improving the conditions of life of their inhabitants. In a way, cities attempt to apply their own rules.

As a conclusion the author would like to formulate some recommendations regarding a good and comprehensive municipal migration policy. It requires the following:

1. a proper national migration policy (at present lacking in Poland);

2. direct cooperation between the local/municipal authorities, NGOs, anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists and culture experts in the process of creating the migration policy as well as its implementation;
3. regular analyses of the migrants' needs;
4. an anti-discriminatory policy;
5. a possibility of learning the language of the receiving country;
6. a housing policy responding to the needs and capabilities of migrants and facilitating their access to accommodation;
7. support for migrants' efforts in getting a job for example by vocational trainings and programmes realized in cooperation with the employers;
8. local authorities' integration programmes that take into account local specificity;
9. long term multicultural education of local and migrant communities as well as of the private and public sector employees. It should include regular training of the public administration officials and workers in the migration law;
10. inclusion of migrants in the decision-making in matters important to the local communities;
11. support for initiatives of migrant and refugees environments in the areas of social and cultural life and labour market;
12. legal advisory services accessible for migrants;
13. respect for diversity and cultural background of migrants (Miejska Polityka Migracyjna, 2015, p. 17).

## Notes

1. Such approaches include: 1. 'security frame' *policies* which individual municipalities adopt to discourage migrants with irregular status from settling in this particular area, for example by multiplying obstacles in registration procedures and introducing status checking on public transportation or even in private houses. 2. 'human rights' or 'humanitarian frame' *policies* which are based on the notion that irregular-status migrants or people who were refused asylum are particularly vulnerable and – due to their irregularity – more threatened with marginalization. Cities which adopt this stance demonstrate an open approach towards their 'irregular population' and seek ways to provide these inhabitants with access to basic services and/or ways to obtain legal status. A version of this stance is seen in policies that are based on the notion of *deservingness*: they contain measures to include certain groups of (irregular) migrants – those perceived as more deserving of rights and services than others (such as children, irregular workers that cater to the local economy needs etc.). For more details see: (Delvino, 2017a, pp. 23–24).
2. These cities are: Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk, Katowice, Kraków, Lublin, Łódź, Poznań, Rzeszów, Szczecin, Warszawa, Wrocław.
3. The 'Strategy for Development of Warsaw until 2020' created by the Municipal Office of the capital does not prioritize multiculturalism and migrant integration issues. No special documents concerning Warsaw's migration policy have been introduced so far, yet strategic documents on particular domains of activity of the Warsaw Municipal Office contain elements of such policy. One of them is the initiative named 'Study in Warsaw', a part of the 'Education Development Program' ('Program rozwoju edukacji'); another is the Social Dialogue Commission for Foreigners that has been operating for several years at the Social Communication Centre. Another initiative of Warsaw's authorities is an anti-discrimination clause concerning rental agreements – a relevant document has been signed by the Municipal Office and renters offering their services in the city area (Miasta Otwarte – Open Cities, 2016, pp. 46–47).

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