Concultural Practices of Young Ukrainians as a Challenge for the Intercultural Openness of Warsaw

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Institutional intercultural openness is a crucial part of urban inclusion policy towards migrants. In cities with a long history of social and cultural diversity such as Berlin, London or Amsterdam, intercultural openness provides migrants with full or partial participation, initiating activities in the metropolitan space, access to public resources, and social security. In Warsaw, a relatively new inflow of economic migrants from Ukraine, who constitute a large and heterogeneous group, has necessitated changes in municipal cultural and integration policies to facilitate the needs of the new group of recipients. In our article, we focus on results from 91 interviews with Ukrainian students living in Warsaw conducted between 2019 and 2020. We analyse whether, how and why young immigrants from Ukraine use the offer of Warsaw's cultural institutions; what their expectations are and how their cultural participation is connected with their acculturation and integration. Our research shows that despite the fact that Warsaw tends to build up its culturally open policy for diverse participants, it is not adjusted to the needs of young Ukrainians. As a result, this new diaspora begins to create its own **conculture** (not to be confused with counterculture). We understand this phenomenon as a set of cultural practices initiated by a minority group of migrants in their new place of residence, which result from the national cultural script of this group. Through these practices, this group cultivates the community, without any connection to the dominant (national) culture of the wider society they belong to or in the space of which its members live. On the one hand, the

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diversification of a municipal cultural offer allows migrants to find their preferred places and events within Polish culture, although on the other hand, it creates a space for the development of con-cultural practices that can lead to ghettoisation.

Keywords: concultural practices, intercultural openness theories, Ukrainians as migrants in War-saw, urban inclusion policy

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Institutional intercultural openness is a crucial element of urban inclusion policy[3] towards migrants and dominant societies. Modern intercultural cities aim to build their policies and identities based on a clear recognition that cultural diversity can be an important resource and capital for the development of a society. In Europe-an cities with a long history of social and cultural diversity such as Berlin, London, Stockholm or Amsterdam, intercultural openness and the construction of diversity ensure migrants full or partial participation, initiation of activities in the urban space (they are an active part of), access to public resources and social services. It also re-quires a sense of responsibility on the part of migrants for being part of the local community. In Warsaw, a relatively new mass inflow of economic and educational

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[3] In this text, we focus on integration and integration policy as the main categories important for the understanding of cultural openness/closure to migrants on the local level. Integration is one of the acculturation strategies, resulting in both a positive evaluation of biculturalism, the transformation of an individual's identity by adding new laws, principles and values characteristic to the host culture to the already existing normative structures, and the acquisition of competences related to bilingualism and biculturalism (Berry, 1997). Integration takes place on the basis of long-term, positive ethnic relationships and results, on an individual level, in the emergence of a sense of cultural community with members of the host society. Integration should not be confused with assimilation, which means completely accept-ing the culture of the dominant group as one's own while rejecting the entire culture of origin. The term assimilation is often used in anti-immigration, xenophobic and exclusion discourse (Garapich, 2016).

By contrast, social inclusion is a 'process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social ex-clusion gain opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have greater participation in decision making which affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights' (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 9). While integration takes place on the individual level, inclusion is a collective process in which members of two or more groups collaborate and negotiate values, norms, and ways of their expression, resulting in the creation of a new quality in the public forum.

immigrants from Ukraine, who constitute a large and heterogeneous group, has necessitated changes in municipal and district cultural and inclusion policies designed to serve this new group of recipients. Economic and educational migrants from Ukraine can be differentiated from each other despite the fact that most educational migrants also work. However, they spend their leisure time differently, have different social and cultural needs and – what is probably the most important – Ukrainian students differentiate themselves from economic migrants from Ukraine. These contrasts need to be considered by policymakers, if they want to respond to the specific needs of each group.

In this article, we outline concultural practices of young Ukrainians – educational migrants – as a challenge to Warsaw's multicultural orientation and intercultural openness[4]. The text is based on a participatory approach in which we eschew (also in what we write and describe) methodological nationalism and show (as researchers) the participants' viewpoints. The article begins with an attempt to address the concept of urban multiculturalism treated both as a resource and as a challenge on the municipal policy level. We address the fact that the majority of Polish cities rely on multicultural orientation while forgetting the concept of intercultural openness we discuss here. In light of the growing cultural diversity in the capital of Poland, we then outline a relatively new phenomenon in the city – a significant inflow of educational immigration of young adults to Warsaw from Ukraine that has taken place in recent years. This process has led to various social tensions (e.g. discrimination). We draw attention to the complicated processes of accepting this group in the cultural practices of the city which has become their home for the period of their studies (and frequently for a longer period of time), and at the same time the willingness and competences of Ukrainians to be accepted.

In this regard, we refer to complicated historical relations and Polish-Ukrainian resentment as an important element of postcolonial reflection (Bakuła 2006), current tensions and the colonial past as well as approaches oriented towards institutional intercultural closure/openness to migrants in the context of their daily functioning in the conditions of a new country. In order to understand the mechanisms characteristic for urban inclusion /exclusion policies towards migrants – here – from Ukraine, we present the results of research with Ukrainian students living in Warsaw. Through the study, we try to bring attention to important concultural practices of young Ukrainians, previously omitted in research on migrants, which appear as a challenge to intercultural openness on the local level.

Our research is innovatory[5] as students from Ukraine – the second largest group of students – educational migrants in our country (in 2019, Ukrainians constituted

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[4] The term intercultural openness is explained in the section: Institutional intercultural closure/openness to migrants.

[5] The article was written based on a research project: *Concultural practices as a way of participating in culture among young educational immigrants,* by a research team from the University of Warsaw: dr Anna

47% of all foreign students in Poland, see: GUS 2020: 123) had never been in the centre of interest of researchers exploring participation in culture. We primarily focus on concultural practices which are caused by discrimination and result from a safe and comfortable participation in their own culture. In the case of Ukrainians, these practices also constitute a strategy of their postcolonial resistance, which can lead to their ghettoization.

The research indicates that on the one hand, the diversification of the municipal cultural offer allows migrants to become familiar with the Polish national cultural canon; on the other hand, it creates a space for the development of Ukrainian cultural practices which can lead to ghettoization and only an illusory engagement of migrants in the creation of urban policies. For this reason, we emphasise the important role of municipal inclusion policies which should be based on intercultural openness incorporating migrants' active participation in public institutions and services based on intercultural openness towards them.

Multiculturalism in the city – a resource or a challenge

Today, the majority of metropolises face challenges connected with multiculturalism arising from global and internal migration. With these challenges comes a question: "how urbanites from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, occupying different socio-economic positions, speaking different languages and often with different legal statuses, can make a common life together in their city or neighborhood?"(Oosterlynck et al. 2018: 1). Some of them tend to manage the migration flow by incorporating it into metropolitan transnational networks. Their migration and integration policies aim to strengthen the economic, social and cultural relations even between distant cities as well as facilitate the efficient circulation of people, products and services (Krätke et al. 2012). Polish cities such as Warsaw, Szczecin and Poznan exemplify this approach. Moreover, super-diverse cities such as Krakow, Gdansk, Lublin, Wroclaw are also part of transnational networks, however their integration policy emphasizes an inner context

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Jawor, dr Urszula Markowska-Manista, dr Marta Jadwiga Pietrusińska, and students of the Faculty of Education as co-researchers. The results were discussed in the report: Barriers in using the offer of Warsaw's cultural institutions by young immigrants from Ukraine. Diagnosis- causes – recommendations from 2019 available in the Digital Library of Warsaw at https://cyfrowabiblioteka.um.warszawa.pl/files/original/79892f 19b79fb1bb9184c7a107073823.pdf and in the book: Jawor A., Markowska-Manista U., Pietrusińska M.J. (2020), Konkultura. Wymiary uczestnictwa w kulturze młodych imigrantów z Ukrainy w Polsce, Warszawa: Scholar. The innovative character of our research primarily involves moving away from treating participation in culture as an indicator of integration (Ager, Strang 2004), towards exploring participation in culture as a potential factor that favours the integration and inclusion of migrants and the dominant group. It appears to be an interesting path in research as a similar approach to participation in culture was applied by J. Mucha (2020). Currently, dr Urszula Markowska-Manista and dr Marta Jadwiga Pietrusińska develop this concept in a project *Participatory research on young educational migrants: concultural practices of leisure* with students as co-researchers.

of urban interactions. This superdiverse approach contests multiculturalism as a policy and introduces new narratives about the management of groups with multifactorial diversification, which increases sensitivity to issues of equality and any associated equality legislation and underlines intersectionality (Grzymała-Kazłowska, Phillimore 2019).

This new superdiverse approach towards migration and integration policies is not the only shift in public management. The politicisation of migration in the public discourse came along with the so-called 'migration crisis' that played an important role in the parliamentary elections in Poland in 2015. Local authorities of the biggest Polish metropolises opposed the anti-immigrant narration promoted by the ruling Law and Order Party and began to introduce their own solutions in the area of migration and integration policies. The result of such activities on the local scale is the emergence of a dual migration policy – conducted differently at the central and local government level. Additionally, it is strengthening and emphasizing the importance of localities for the process of migrants' integration. Although the EU recommends the multi-level governance of migrations (CRPM 2018), in the case of Poland it strongly supports local integration policies (European Commission 2019). As Sławomir Łodziński and Marek Szonert have argued since 2015, Polish migration policy: "is becoming more and more communal while moving to the regional and local level" (2016: 32).

These (local) urban policies can perceive multiculturalism resulting from migration as a resource and opportunity to develop new possibilities, not as a problem and source of potential conflict. This approach requires changes both in management strategies and preparation of the host society, offices, institutions, and services as well as migrants themselves to cooperate and participate in their places of daily functioning. This also holds true for intercultural relations which are not usually perceived as a resource but a source of potential conflict.

Another challenge in this area lies in the hegemony of political discourse manifested in the soft power of institutions that create local urban policies. Multicultural orientation is commonly used in municipal narratives about immigration. A positive image of migrants who are willing to integrate and actively participate in the life of the community is created to oppose the discourse of the central government. Even though multicultural orientation plays an important role in the anti-discriminatory debate, it omits both the heterogeneity of migrant groups and the intersectionality of each migrant. On the one hand, it dissembles social tensions and the reluctance to integrate which exist among some migrants. On the other hand, it imposes a desired and highly valued outcome of acculturation on migrants – integration (Berry, 1997). This mechanical placement of migrants, frequently limited to informing, much less frequently inviting to consultations, makes it necessary to remind and emphasize "the subjectivity of individuals, endowing them with due rights, competencies and responsibilities" (Wójcicki 2013: 120) which are crucial in the process of society's intercultural opening.

Inclusion heading towards a dialogue between the broader society and migrants, with an adequate management of diversity on the local level, facilitates the creation

of an inclusive community. Social integration in which migrants become partners in initiating community activities is one of the strategies and tools applied in the implementation of this approach. When applying this perspective, migrants participate, co-act, cooperate and co-construct. In other words, approaches "for migrants" based on the power discourse, and limited to providing information, give way to democratic approaches "with" migrants who move up the participation ladder (consulting, co-deciding, citizens control) (Arnstein, 1969). These approaches result from a more broader discursive trend visible in western societies, to be more precise – they emerge from the civic participation discourse. Participation, as opposed to tokenism, is becoming a crucial form of effective cooperation facilitating migrants' participation in the social and cultural life and in decision-making processes on a local level.

Despite the fact that Warsaw has the highest number of migrants[6] among all Polish metropolises, other cities like Gdansk, Lublin, Wroclaw and Krakow have outstripped the Polish capital in their proactivity in the area of migration and integration policies. Each of these cities have a separate strategy, or program devoted to migrants and social inclusion. Although a Multicultural Centre and Unit for the Coordination of Activities for Foreigners operate in Warsaw, there is a lack of specific integration policies that target migrants who live in Warsaw. This approach was replaced by a social diversity policy aiming to "create conditions for respect of the dignity, freedom and equality of all persons and social groups, regardless of their different features, as well as to counteract discrimination and social exclusion of members of various groups" (Warszawa2030, 2020 http://2030.um.warszawa.pl/polityka-roznorodnosci/). On the discursive level, such a policy matching one of Warsaw's strategic goals – a responsible community (Warszawa2030, 2018), shows that the local authorities favour a social cohesion approach rather than multicultural orientation. Nonetheless, a specific migrants' integration policy is purposefully not outlined, because it was never meant to be an important part of the strategy[7]. Social cohesion is used in the Warsaw 2030 Strategy (2018) to omit socially controversial issues in the public debate – migrants' integration and tensions related to it.

Still, Warsaw actively supports migrants' integration mainly by offering grants to NGOs. This is another important context of our research – Ukrainian organisations that receive money, e.g. Ukrainian House (*Dom Ukraiński*), act mainly towards maintaining the national identity and acquainting Poles with the tradition and canonical

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[6] Approx. 20–25% of all migrants in Poland live in Warsaw (Dudkiewicz, Majewski 2017).

[7] In one official document report from social consultations about the Warsaw 2030 Strategy's 'Community' Program, in one of the remarks about the program it is said that there is a lack of coherent migration policy in Warsaw. In the official response it is written: "The issue of migration policy does not directly concern the 'Community' Program. Offices which, in terms of their tasks, have various types of activities related to migrants, for various reasons, have not decided to include these projects in the Program. At the moment, the readiness to implement these tasks has not been confirmed (e.g. due to budgetary constraints)" (Program wspólnota, 2020:22). However, the 'Community' Program is the only element in the entire Strategy, which can be related to migrants' inclusion.

Ukrainian culture. The majority of their activities consist of folklore, traditional and religious festivals or politically engaged events. Taking into account the cultural and leisure needs of Ukrainian students, this offer is not sufficient or in many cases relevant for this group.

Ukrainians as a "multiculturalisation" factor of Warsaw

Although Ukrainians are historically settled in Poland as members of a national minority (since the 14th century)[8] as well as migrants (for the last 30 years), they are the largest and one of the most discriminated against national groups in Poland (Tyma 2019; Winiarska 2020). Between 1989 and 2014, Ukrainians (both Polish-Ukrainians and immigrants from Ukraine) were an "invisible minority". Since 2014, an increasing influx of migrants from Ukraine to Poland has been noticeable. Along with the growing economic crisis in Ukraine and the outbreak and escalation of the Ukrainian-Russian conflict, which began with the annexation of the Crimea and military operations in the Donbas, a growing number of Ukrainians have decided to move to Poland. The pulling factor at that time was undoubtedly the liberalisation of Polish migration law. Although there has been and still is ongoing warfare in Ukraine, most Ukrainians did not take advantage of the possibility of coming to Poland as part of international protection, choosing a procedurally easier way of migrating – immigration for work or education. Based on migration trends, it can be estimated that before the Covid-19 pandemic there were about 2 million Ukrainians in Poland (Chmielewska, Dobroczyek, Panuciak 2018; Jaroszewicz 2018). These are mainly economic immigrants who, for economic reasons, have been pulled by the Polish labour market that has become more easily accessible to them. Moreover, since June the 11th 2017, Ukrainians have been able to enter the territory of Poland, and thus the European Union, without visas (Miszewski 2018). Ukrainian migration has changed its character not only in terms of numbers, but also: in the geographical diversification of regions of origin (an increase in the number of migrants from Central and Eastern Ukraine); in gender distribution (men predominate in the most recent migration stream, while since the 1990's women outnumbered them); in the nature of migration – from seasonal or short-term migrations to settlement migrations.

Data as well shows not only a change in the nature of migration, but also a change with regard to the purpose of migration. An increasing number of Ukrainians come

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[8] A national minority is defined as a "group of Polish citizens who jointly fulfill the following conditions: 1) is numerically smaller than the rest of the population of the Republic of Poland; 2) significantly differs from the remaining citizens in its language, culture or tradition; 3) strives to preserve its language, culture or tradition; 4) is aware of its own historical, national community, and is oriented towards its expression and protection; 5) its ancestors have been living on the present territory of the Republic of Poland for at least 100 years; 6) identifies itself with a nation organized in its own state" (ACT of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and on the regional languages article 2).

to Poland for educational purposes, not for economic profit. In the years 2009–2016, there was a significant increase – by 176% – in the educational migration of Ukrainian citizens (Andriejuk, Korniychuk 2018). The report on foreign students at Polish universities shows that in 2019 Ukrainians accounted for more than a half (50%) of all foreigners studying at this level of education, i.e. over 39,000, which is almost 18 times more than 10 years ago (2018 Outlook). Poland is a country where the largest group of Ukrainian students who decide to go abroad learns (Jaroszewicz, Małynowska 2018). This is so not only because of the geographical proximity of our countries, but also because some Ukrainians can study at Polish universities free of charge – based on the Polish Charter (Karta Polaka, Карта поляка), or owing to individual decisions of universities or scholarships (Gierko 2015). Moreover, it is also the result of promotional activities carried out by the Polish government in Ukraine in such cities as Lviv, Kiev, Odessa, Zhytomyr, Kharkiv, Donetsk, and Chmielnik. The attractiveness of Polish universities is also related to the fact that they provide a diploma recognised in the European Union, which opens the possibility of applying for a job in Western European countries after graduation.

We would like to draw attention to the fact that until 2014, short-term immigrants were involved in their own, closed networks constituting the category of "invisible" migrants, therefore in public discourse Ukrainians were unnoticeable and muted. In contrast, migration after 2014 cannot go unnoticed due to its massive character. Moreover, as in the times of the Second Polish Republic, Ukrainian has become the second most used language in Poland. It can be heard in trams, cafes, grocery stores, supermarkets, and at bus stops. In Polish society, which has a false sense of homogeneity, this "intrusive" Ukrainian language can increase xenophobic attitudes. At the same time, Ukrainians feel treated as second-class citizens (Jaroszewicz, Małynowska 2018). They feel discriminated against and oppressed by employers who violate their rights, by people who provide or restrain access to public services in cultural institutions, social care institutions, health centers, kindergartens or schools.

Students from Ukraine feel similarly at Polish universities. Research among Ukrainians studying at one of Warsaw's universities reveals that young Ukrainians experience direct and indirect discrimination in the academic community, and sometimes even harassment. It is most often discrimination by lecturers, other students and administration employees (Gasińska 2016). The respondents were also asked about barriers and difficulties related to studying in Poland. As many as 38% answered that they had difficulties in establishing relations with Polish friends; 28% indicated such barriers as lack of understanding and support from universities and a sense of discrimination in the university environment, while 25% reported a lack of direct access to culture in Ukrainian language (theatre, cinema, literature)[9].

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[9] It seems to us that although the research was carried out at a private university, its results can, to some extent, be extrapolated to the entire population of Ukrainian students who collide with systemic

The negative attitude towards Ukrainian students results from wider social contexts, such as the widespread resentment towards Ukrainians among Poles. The latest CBOS research (2020) shows that 35% of Poles are fond of our eastern neighbours. Nonetheless, 33% of Poles feel antipathy towards them, which ranks Ukrainians as the fifth least liked national group out of 23 groups. Cultural proximity spoke in favour of affection for Ukraine, while the economic and political factors as well as the memory of historical Polish-Ukrainian relations increase tensions between the two nations (Konieczna-Salamatin 2015: 141). It is important to note that the status of Ukrainians has changed from being an invisible group to the most visible one and connected with negative stereotypes. However, nowadays these prejudices gradually change due to the emergence of the Ukrainian middle-class, more frequent contacts between both groups, and openness to otherness. Yet this process is not without its obstacles, tensions and conflict.

Current tensions and the colonial past

As Justyna Winiarska (2020) notices, these prejudices are rooted in a Polish axiological division between "Europe and Asia", where Asia is imagined as a wild land of barbarians. Such pejorative representations are derived from the long-lasting Russian colonisation and the merging of Russians and Ukrainians into one discursive figure. Another factor that has a strong negative influence on the image of Ukrainians are national conflicts during World War II, especially the Volhynian massacre.

For centuries, the archetypes of Ukrainians that have existed in the Polish common symbolic imagination describe them as uneducated, single-minded, strong but submissive peasants or insubordinate Cossacks. Poles primarily ascribed the following features to Ukrainians: backwardness, poverty, laziness, mismanagement, alcoholism, greed, vindictiveness, ruthlessness, deceitfulness, nationalism, lack of respect for the law and contentiousness (Bielecka – Prus 2015: 182). A Ukrainian was seen as a bandit, rapist and anarchist. On the other hand, in historical discourse, Ukrainian women are seen from a male point of view in areas dominated by patriarchal relationships: representing housework, sexuality and violence (Connell 2009). They are perceived as naturally beautiful, sensual and libidinous, living in harmony with nature, obedient and subordinate, often working as maids or acting as mistresses. After 1989, the discourse about Ukrainians changed but only in the field of social roles, not personal features. Women became cleaners, caregivers for elderly people, wives of Polish husbands or fruit picking workers. Men remained physical workers in such sectors of economy as logistics, construction, food processing and agriculture.

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and non-systemic barriers. What is more, such conclusions are coherent with our own research (Jawor, Markowska-Manista, Pietrusińska, 2020).

These stable archetypes result from the entanglement of Poland into "the triple relation: in relation to Russia as its former colony reflecting past the Russian Empire and Soviet domination, as a former coloniser of other Eastern European nations and in relation to the Western hegemons" (Mayblin et. al. 2018: 72). Polish historical narratives are built on martyrology, a constant fight for independence and a symbolic fear of "Others" who could steal it (Sowa 2011; Napiórkowski 2019). Therefore, migrants in general are seen as an "imagined enemy" (Bobako 2017). Nevertheless, the experiences of Ukrainians as newcomers double (or as we will prove later even triple) their stigmatisation from former Polish colonies[10], which, in Polish historical and literary discourse, emerge as the litererary topos of "Borderlands" (*Kresy*). In these discourses, Poles regarded themselves as kind masters who brought cultural models and spread Western civilisation through their cultural mission in the territories of today's Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine (Fiut 2014). This colonial discourse emerges from a historical and literary analysis (Bakuła 2006, 2011, 2014; Fiut 2014; Huk 2013; Ribaczuk 2002). It is "characterised by paternalism, the conviction of the indisputable domination of one's own world, which nevertheless gives a voice to so-called multiculturalism, namely controlled multiculturalism" (Bakuła 2014: 104). To fully understand the concept of colonialism, one has to refer to Said, Spivak and Bhabha and their broad definitions of "colonial discourse". Those pioneers in postcolonial studies see this phenomenon as complex colonisers' convictions created by linguistic, colloquial and situational (literary, scientific, political) contexts. Such colonial soft power is used to justify a sense of superiority and the right to rule over other territories, people, and cultures as well as a sense of mission towards them. However, as Ewa Thomson emphasises, "the essence of colonialism is the enslavement of territory and population (whose national consciousness is already established or it is shaping during colonial domination), political and economic exploitation and abatement and preclusion of development" (Thompson 2011: 291).

In the case of Ukrainians who were always the colonised (never the colonisers) – either by the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union or by the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Second Polish Republic, the collective memory of being subalterns is deeply rooted in their national identity (Riabczuk 2015). In colonial discourse, they were presented on the one hand as servants, uneducated peasants or rebel Kozaks and on the other hand as "younger brothers'' of Russians.

An ambiguous identity and new Ukrainians

Young Ukrainians are a generation which has been partially brought up in a post-Euromaidan reality. Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity (*Революція гідності*) in 2013/2014 was an important transgressive moment initiating the post-colonial

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[10] Although only a part of today's Ukraine was colonised by Poles between the 14th and 20th century, in the common historical memory, all Ukrainians are seen as subalterns.

process of overcoming Russian, Soviet and Polish colonial trauma. Today, Ukraine is struggling between anticolonial nationalism (Fanon 1990) and a hybrid third space of Homi Bhabha (1994). As for now, in the context of the war in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea, this first approach is more successful as fighting the enemy is a strong bond of collective identity. Also, resentment, based on feelings of grief and anger towards colonisers as those who restrain the development of Ukrainian language, culture, and politics (Mayblin et al. 2016), helps to build national solidarity. Education is one of the most important spaces that helps to overcome decolonisation challenges by supporting individual and collective agency and empowerment as well as building anti-imperial resistance (Spivak 1988).

Since the beginning of the post-Soviet era, Poland has not been perceived as a threat worthy of attention, also due to relatively good diplomatic relations. However, the tightening of historical policy in both countries – in Poland due to internal needs and in Ukraine as a result of external violence from Russia – put the Borderlines together with Volyn and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in the spotlight. In the Ukrainian national mythology, suffering, slavery and oppression at the hands of Poles became emphasised again. On the other hand, Ukrainians – peasant folks, have never hurt anyone other than themselves. The abovementioned topoi are justified by representations of Volynian events as a national revolt. Consequently, Poles and Poland are currently perceived ambivalently in Ukrainian discourse (Krawczyk 2008). On the one hand, as colonisers whose narratives about multicultural Borderlands are veiled attempts to disturb the stability and integrity of the Ukrainian culture in the territories that are ethnically Ukrainian. On the other hand, Poles appear as neighbours with a common enemy of both countries – Russia. Additionally, Poland is perceived as a country with an open labour market and access to relatively cheap higher education at the European level.

Institutional intercultural closure/openness to migrants

Bearing in mind the historical Polish – Ukrainian and Ukrainian – Polish relations as well as current tensions and the colonial past, we need to look at the context of intercultural openness of institutions and structures which are used at the central and local level both by the citizens of a particular country and migrants.

The term "intercultural openness[11]" was first formulated in the context of social services being opened to the needs of migrants in the 1990s. It emerged as a critique of earlier policies of ignorance towards migrants and an unequal treatment of nationally diverse clients of social, health and educational services. This approach was

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[11] As opposed to intercultural closure of institutions and services and the lack of development of intercultural competences. Intercultural closure also means lack of engagement of migrants as co-authors of initiatives and services and as co-workers of institutions directing their services to a diverse society.

a result of treating diversity as a burden (Schröer 2016: 89) rather than a chance for development and effective cooperation.

The concept of intercultural openness is strictly connected with the consequences of increasing the economic migration, movement and settlement of various groups of migrants in Europe, the expansion of migration environments and the growing number of people with migration backgrounds in multicultural national states. In the recent three decades, this approach has evolved from a socio-political stance to a strategy of organisational development (Handschuck, Schröer 2012). It has become a postulate for social justice and a postulate towards the society as a whole and thus towards all institutions (Schröer 2016: 87), having been accepted by non-governmental, volunteering, and public organisations as well as local authorities in many Western European countries. The premise of this approach is just to provide access to services that will not be dependent on one's cultural origin and will provide for intercultural diversity (Vanderheiden, Mayer 2014).

Intercultural openness refers to a strategy of the organisational development of institutions and services that should respond to the society's cultural diversity, in a way that is adequate to its needs. The concept of institutional and service-related openness is one response to the challenges connected with increased migration processes and migrants' integration processes (Handschuck, Schröer, 2002; Januszewska, Markowska-Manista 2017). Herre argues that "intercultural opening is the attempt to transform the requirements of the immigration society into an institutional concept and to allow for the fact that transnational migration movements have consequences on the diversity of the population" (2013). At the same time, it is an attempt to overcome the cultural mechanisms of excluding and ignoring migrants as participants, executors and recipients of services (Engin 2015).

Intercultural openness is an attempt to transform the needs of an immigrant society into an institutional concept and to accept the fact that the growing international migration movements as well as migrant mobility within Europe come with consequences for population diversity and its daily functioning. As a result, social organisations have to consider various interests and situations of all inhabitants, based on non-discrimination and the principle of equity treatment. Intercultural openness is understood here on two levels: national and cultural minorities' possibility to participate in daily social and cultural practices of the dominant society (Griese, Marburger 2012), and their being heard and participation in (social and academic) research on the functioning of minorities and their participation in the majority society.

Every kind of openness involves various types of mutual experiences and produces various results translating, to a lesser or greater degree, to top-down and bottom-up changes in the practices of including migrants in the social life of the majority society (Barwig, Hinz-Rommel 1995, Hinz-Rommel 1998). Intercultural openness in migrant societies is such openness of social services being a consequence of intercultural orientation (Handschuck, Schröer 2000, 2002) in social, cultural, health and educational

practices. Intercultural orientation is simultaneously a socio-political approach of people and institutions recognising that various groups with various interests living in a particular society communicate with each other and need various means of information, access and representation (Gesemann, Roth 2017). This involves the evolution of a strategic function of institutions, i.e., a practical implementation of participation and improvement of strategies for the inclusion and integration of various social groups. This approach has an important influence on the structures, processes and outcomes of joint social activities (Barwig, Hinz-Rommel 1995; Handschuck, Schröer 2002). Intercultural openness leads to changes in the structural and procedural organisation and can contribute to the elimination of barriers in access for minorities; those invisible, unknown, and misunderstood by the majority. On the other hand, to the majority responsible for the functioning of institutions and direct contact with clients, intercultural openness gives a sense of security in the implementation of administrative, social, educational and cultural tasks (Handschuck, Schröer 2001). The aim of intercultural openness processes is to ensure equal access to services (such as public administration, social, health, educational etc.) to members of national, ethnic and cultural minorities (including refugees and migrants). They are also intended to prevent exclusion mechanisms (Januszewska, Markowska-Manista 2017: 13).

The results of international research indicate that merely "not to exclude" migrants from the daily practices of social life in dominant societies is not sufficient. This practice is not tantamount to socio-political harmonisation. The widespread belief that anyone who wants to migrate, will migrate, does not guarantee that the parties to this process will be ready for it. In reality, administration, social and health services do not reach migrants to the same degree as members of the dominant society, particularly in the area of prevention (Gaitanides 2001: 181). This in turn translates to the absence of migrants in places and spaces which provisionally are, and should be, open to everyone. It is not merely a zero-one question of needs and choices. Like the majority of society, immigrants also face social, psychological and health related problems (Penka, Kluge, Vardar 2012). However, intercultural differences and unfamiliarity with the cultural code frequently become an insurmountable barrier. It is thus necessary to bear in mind the needs of institutions and staff who might enable migrants to participate in the previously mentioned services and facilitate the process of becoming both recipients and creators of culture and education.

While searching for support and access to institutions, migrants are frequently left alone or additionally burdened with systemic (including legal) discrimination, or poorly paid jobs, at risk of exclusion, hidden exploitation and other experiences hindering their possibilities of using generally accessible institutions and services.

Research by Annette Sprung conducted among Austrian society indicates the reasons why immigrants rarely use public services. It also reveals barriers that prevent them from participating in the practices of intercultural openness. The scholar stresses for instance language and cultural barriers, lack of trust towards public institutions,

lack of knowledge about the structures and services offered to migrants by public administration, migrants' negative experiences in the service sector in their countries of origin, distinct concepts of support or counselling as well as fear of the consequences of using the services due to the uncertainty about their residence permit (Sprung 2004).

Many of the challenges listed above seem to be caused by migrants' individual adaptation challenges, however their problematic character is also a result of the institutional policy in a particular society (on the national and local level). We must remember that institutions and organisations offering services have to inspire trust, ensure transparency and access to information as well as provide translation and interpreters to ensure access to information. They need to facilitate communication and address the challenges of the globalising world. When initiating the process of intercultural openness, it is thus of crucial importance not only to identify barriers and limitations, but to first of all allow for the participation of young migrants in the cultural practices of urban centres. What is more, treating the processes of intercultural openness of institutions and services as a turn towards diversity, we must take into consideration the risk of enhancing and emphasising differences and opposition (us vs. them), which, in unfavourable conditions, can aggravate ghettoization.

Research methods and procedure

The article focuses on results from 91-recorded interviews with Ukrainian students (73 females, 18 males[12]) living in Warsaw, conducted in Polish in the years 2019–2020. We selected one nationally homogenous group of migrants for the research sample – students from Ukraine, whose process of settling in Warsaw seems complex in Polish socio-cultural conditions. We were interested in members of a new Ukrainian diaspora, with the term diaspora being understood as immigrants, so individuals who were socialised in Ukrainian culture for some part of their lives. When selecting the participants, we applied a snowball method ensuring maximum variability within the sample, i.e., inviting students varying in age, gender, university specialisation, socio-cultural, economic and geographical status, region of origin and the level of knowledge of the Polish language.

The study addressed the participation in culture of students from Ukraine (a minority group) and its connection to their integration with the cultural majority in the new country of residence. In the context of the study, we understand participation in

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[12] According to the Office for Foreigners, 60% of Ukrainian immigrants in Poland with valid residence permit or visa in 2019 were men and 40% women. However, this proportion was slightly reversed in the educational migrant's population. In the academic year 2016/2017 (last accessible data) there were 55% women and 45% men among students from Ukraine in Poland. Nevertheless, in our research there is a higher representation of women.

culture as passive and/or active participation in the activities of particular institutions, organisations and groups. The purpose of the research was to gain knowledge about the cultural practices of Ukrainian students as well as barriers preventing Ukrainian students from participating in culture.

We analyse whether, how and why young immigrants from Ukraine use the offer of Warsaw's cultural institutions, what expectations they have and how their participation in culture relates to their acculturation and integration (Jawor, Markowska-Manista, Pietrusińska 2020). Within the context of this research, we understand participation in culture as using the resources of culture created by cultural institutions. We were interested both in high culture – the canonical national culture which is taught at schools and universities, shown in museums and the familiarity with which is required from foreigners aspiring to be members of a particular society, and popular culture, which is more accessible and whose main purpose is entertainment.

The research questions posed in this study verified and expanded the conclusions from the first stage of the research. They were as follows:

- Do the research participants take part in/know about concultural practices among the Ukrainian diaspora in Warsaw?
- What are the causes of concultural practices?
- How can Warsaw's (primarily cultural) institutions integrate Ukrainians participating in concultural practices?

As this complex phenomenon required a multifaceted exploration, we adopted the model of qualitative research and applied the method of partly structured, overt, direct, individual interviews in Polish. Interview instructions were developed after consultations (with the research team members and co-researchers) aiming e.g. to eliminate redundant thematic threads and simplify the overly complicated language (terminology, wording).

The research was partly participatory. It was designed and conducted with a group of university students (co-researchers) who shared three important attributes with the participants: student status, age and place of residence – Warsaw (Jawor, Markowska-Manista, Pietrusińska 2020). This facilitated the researcher-respondents relationship based on partnership, reducing the age and status gap, and allowing us to look at the research aim and questions from the students' perspective and gain better access to research participants. The script consisted of four parts and combined two perspectives: individual and collective.

The research was conducted with respect for the researchers' and participants' right to information and privacy. Research participants were informed about the aim of the study, the purpose of processing the collected information (GDPR) and their rights.

The study discussed in the text is based on an analysis and interpretation of data in the context of methodological nationalism and presented through a participatory approach.

Concultural practices of Ukrainian students

The research reveals that the new diaspora of educational migrants from Ukraine is beginning to develop its own conculture[13] (not to be confused with counterculture). We understand this phenomenon as "a collection of cultural practices initiated by a minority group of migrants in their new place of residence, emerging from the national cultural script of this group. Through these practices, the group fosters a community having no connection to the dominant (national) culture of the broader society which it belongs to or in which it lives" (Jawor, Markowska-Manista, Pietrusińska 2020: 50). On the one hand, diversity within the municipal cultural offer allows the migrants to find preferred places and events in Polish culture; on the other hand, it creates a space for the development of cultural practices which can lead to ghettoization.

In our research we refer to the cultural practices of Ukrainian students living in Warsaw based on simultaneous participation in Polish high culture and Ukrainian popular culture in the new country of residence and studying. We look at what migrants from Ukraine do after work, how they participate in culture in Poland and what potential barriers they face.

During our research, we noticed that the migrants from Ukraine who came after 2014 – most of them have been in Poland for 2 to 3 years so are in the first phase of acculturation – participate in culture differently. To gain the competences of "being Polish", they participate in high culture[14]: going to museums, galleries, theaters, concert halls and visiting historical sites. They do so to acquire the canonical national culture which is the culture that is learned at schools, presented in artistic, historical and folklore institutions. It is also the basic knowledge that is required from foreigners aspiring to be members of a society. On the other hand, when other migrants students seek entertainment, they turn towards Ukrainian popculture in Warsaw, book presentations and meetings with famous Ukrainian writers, concerts of Ukrainian bands and club events, e.g. the Sound of Ukraine concert or the Tusovka electro event held regularly at the Iskra stadium, screenings with Ukrainian subtitles or dubbing, or stand-up shows. During such events, they meet within their own cultural groups (or within Russian speaking groups) based on bonding social capital (Puntam,

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[13] Based on an inclusive approach, we provide the translation of the definition into Ukrainian: Конкультура: Під поняттям 'конкультура' ми розуміємо сукупність культурних практик, що були ініційовані групою мігрантських меншин у приймаючій країні, що є результатом культурного сценарію у національному контексті цієї групи. Мігранти посилюють свою приналежність до цієї групи, при цьому не прив'язуючись до загальноприйнятої культури приймаючого суспільства. Важливо підкреслити, що подібні практики використовуються не для сприяння розвитку національного культурного канону чи фольклору, а для участі у глобалізованій популярній культурі в межах найвідомішої групи – культурної чи соціально-економічної. Важливо додати, що такі культурні практики є способом участі у глобалізованій культурі згідно зі сценарієм та правилами функціонування найближчої соціально-економічної групи за межами своєї країни походження' Явор, Марковська-Маніста, П'єтрусінська 2020: 50 (переклад Кошулько 2020).

[14] Although many actors treat the terms low and high culture as "zombie" categories (Eco 2010), we use them as analytical categories.

2008). Unlike the newly arriving migrants, members of the old Ukrainian diaspora in Warsaw represent entirely different participation modes. For them, cultural participation strengthens the bridging of social capital and is used as a tool for intercultural integration. The social phenomenon of conculture refers thus (primarily) to the new Ukrainian diaspora (consisting of young people). These migrants strengthen their affiliation to the community and its practices without bonding themselves to the dominant culture of the new society they live in. It is important to emphasise that such practices are not used to foster the national cultural canon or folklore, but to participate in globalised popular culture within a group they are most familiar with – both culturally and socio-economically. They are a way of participating in a globalised culture according to the cultural script and according to the rules of functioning in the nearest socio-economic group. They are also practices the participants feel safe in, as they remain in a familiar space of using culture created between various worlds of initiating culture.

The interview excerpt below illustrates this concultural practice:

There are, for example, whole groups created on Facebook or other places only for Ukrainians, or …only those who speak Russian. And, for example, there are bands, concerts there and only Ukrainians go there most often. Ukrainians, Russians, Belarussians. All those who speak Russian. (…) I think other nationalities simply don't even know about it because it's all written about in our language, right? For example, we have concerts and other things like that! I can even say that I've been to such concerts a few times. (A2_K_13)

As our interviewees say, young immigrants from post-Soviet countries frequently participate in parallel cultural events in Warsaw which are unavailable for Poles.

As our research reveals, concultural practices are motivated by three factors. First of all, they result from a search for familiar ways of celebrating popular culture according to one's own cultural scripts. It is more convenient to participate in cultural events, especially related to entertainment (e.g. concerts of pop, rock, techno, electronic music; club parties, stand-ups), in a culturally familiar context and manner. One can anticipate how others will interact with him/ her, what the gender and social relations will be during the event, and what kind of verbal and non-verbal communication will be adequate (e.g. formal or informal language; slang). Moreover, one can feel confident about self-expression – in the sense that one's clothes, gestures, pose, make-up are adequate to the social situation they participate in. Since the cultural script is familiar, one is able to predict what the event's setting will look like, what kind of food and drinks will be served, if at all; what kind of music could be played and preferred by the audience. Therefore, concultural practices are chosen to ensure one's sense of belonging to the group. The fragment of an interview below indicates how migrants distance themselves from the dominant society and want to participate in culture within their own cultural and national group which they treat as a safe asylum protecting them against potential difficult situations. These situations may

result from misunderstandings and a negative perception of reactions or behaviour of migrants in the dominant group.

> *I know for sure a few people who didn't go to the cinema with their Polish friends because they were ashamed of the fact that they might not understand something or that their friends would laugh at them. Not even in the context [moment of reflection] that they would laugh at them, but that it would be amusing for them, amusing in a friendly way, but it would still be unpleasant. So I think that young people, students can certainly be afraid of being negatively perceived because they belong to a different culture and perhaps don't know some elements.* (U2_K_10).

Secondly, young Ukrainians participate in concultural events as they seek to be able to communicate more easily and to be understood. The main language of interaction is Ukrainian or Russian, as it is a language known by many Ukrainians. Moreover, this second language allows for the incorporation of Russians and Belarusians into concultural practices as their cultural scripts are congenial. Communication in this sense is not perceived as coding and encoding information based on a common system of signs and grammar rules. It is also a competence to grasp idioms, jokes, references to mass culture (e.g. quotes from cultural texts). It was especially visible when our interlocutors recounted their participation in a film screening, a theatrical performance or stand-ups in Polish language. They report that the lack of familiarity with the Polish cultural context made them feel stupid or embarrassed when, for instance, they did not laugh when everybody else did or their jokes were misunderstood.

One of the participants commented on the cultural and communication barrier in the following way:

> *Firstly, there is the communication barrier and simply, even when someone says something without negative intentions: ha ha, you said something funny, the fact that you said it in the wrong way makes you feel a bit withdrawn and maybe even less willing to take part in this type of events* (U2_K_10)

Last, but in our opinion the most significant motivation to participate in conculture is avoidance of discriminatory situations which disorganise the migrants' sense of security. The majority of young migrants who were interviewed experienced discrimination in Poland or know Ukrainians who were victims of discrimination. The most common situations where Ukrainians were treated unequally are related to work. As the interview fragment below shows, some migrants from Ukraine experience mobbing at work.

> *Researcher: And did you hear about any cases of Ukrainians being treated unequally?*

> *F: Well yes, sure, when it comes to economic migrants who work as seasonal or long-term workers. But also with reference to people who live in workers' hostels, their passports*

are taken away and they're also treated badly. They really only work for...they're really slaves. (M2_M_4)

They are treated as second-class workers who are paid less than Poles, are abused and often work without social protection. Some students told us that they were treated in a degrading manner by customers as soon as they were identified as Ukrainians due to their accent, even though their Polish language was on an intermediate or even proficient level.

Educational migrants from Ukraine are exposed to discrimination also in regular, daily situations – they are insulted or called names in public; they are refused when renting an apartment because of their nationality or are rejected by their peers because of national biases. The rejection by peers is most striking for our interlocutors, as we can see in the interview excerpt below:

When someone hears that you're from Ukraine, they're interested where you're from, why you are keen on something or like something – this person wants to get to know you, but it's just the opposite. When you say "Hello I'm from Ukraine", it's – go away, I don't even want to talk to you. Sometimes I met these people, I wanted to talk normally, go to the cinema together, and they, you know, I don't have time and won't have time tomorrow and the day after tomorrow and for the next 20 years I won't have time either. (M_K_10).

For us, as academics, discrimination on the part of other academics is the most striking. Although it is not as frequent as other discriminatory situations mentioned above, it seems that it is more degrading as it weakens the Ukrainian immigrants' sense of belonging to a coherent student group or undermines their competences in the discipline they study.

At my university I heard that…well I was told straight up that the lecturer didn't believe I had written this paper by myself, as not being Polish I can't write Polish language like that. And it's very difficult to prove. When you study, especially when you study philology, everyone gives their papers to their friends to read them, and he wanted me to comment on that and when I heard the accusations towards me, that it wasn't possible for me to have written that, well it was quite unpleasant. (U2_K_10)

After hearing such accusations from a lecturer, with whom the foreign student is in a power relation, it is extremely difficult to feel equally and justly treated. Moreover, such, or even harsher remarks from Polish academics towards Ukrainian students undermine the vision of a university as a place that welcomes diversity and supports inclusion.

Despite experiencing discrimination in many aspects of life, it is interesting that young Ukrainians deny any discrimination from the employees of Warsaw's cultural institutions. However, they indicate that culture itself could be discriminating, especially

cultural events which relate to Polish – Ukrainian relations. During such events as screenings of "Wołyń" or "Katyń" or celebrations on November 11th (Polish National Independence Day), they feel unwelcome (to say the least) or even seen as enemies. Nonetheless, the field of cultural participation is least often indicated as a space of unequal or discriminatory treatment. Therefore, it should be seen as a refuge, a safe zone. However, an analysis of the research data proves that discriminatory experiences, so common in many aspects of young migrants' lives, are generalised to one shared attitude of Poles towards Ukrainians. Accordingly, our interlocutors avoid interactions with Poles. Cultural participation is one of these circumstances.

In the case of Ukrainian educational migrants, one more factor strengthens concultural practices and cultural non-participation in the mainstream culture. It is the postcolonial relation between Poles and Ukrainians. On the one hand, Ukrainians have just begun the process of becoming *subalterns who speak* (Spivak 1988). The students we spoke with are the first generation brought up in decolonised Ukraine rooted in anticolonial nationalism (Hnatiuk 2016). On the other hand, Ukrainian students in Warsaw experience Polish neocolonialism on a daily basis as they are immersed in the municipal discourse about migrants' integration whose values reflect multicultural orientation. This discourse resembles narration about the Polish borderland that could be perceived as oppressive.

One of our interlocutors recalled a situation at the university when a professor said (in front of his classmates):

> that I was supposed to say that Volhynia was something... that I was supposed to apologise, something in this sense, or that: 'what is this Ukrainian language?!, They took a little bit of Russian and Polish and they mixed it' (...)Or the history of Ukraine appeared and the question 'How old is Ukraine really?' Because the fact that the Soviet Union collapsed does not mean that these people and this awareness were not there. Well, those kinds of things in general. (A_M_4)

As already explained, conculture is caused by moving towards safety and comfort, as well as seeking refuge from intercultural tensions between Poles and Ukrainians and their internal identity split as they tend to prove that they are at least as competent as their Polish peers. Nevertheless, Ukrainian students experience many obstacles while rejecting the subaltern part of their identities. In their homeland, most of them represent a well-educated middle-class; they are thus taught to be proud of themselves. In Poland, they clash with stereotypes and through discourse and discrimination again become subaltern peasants. As we learn from the interviews, this situation causes either anger or resentment towards Poles who are trying to oppress them, and towards those Ukrainians who are subordinate (performing subordinate jobs).

Accordingly, in the case of Ukrainians, conculture can be a practice that not only allows them to avoid intercultural tensions between different migrant minorities and

dominant culture, but also serves as a postcolonial resistance strategy. Within this strategy, a few minor resistant practices can be distinguished: becoming invisible, rejecting the multicultural idea, searching for individual difficulties, pointing out structural obstacles, and creating or searching for alternative ways of experiencing culture.

Conclusions – conculture as a response to cultural closure in urban policy

As we have already suggested, our research reveals that despite the fact that Warsaw's policy provides for the presence of migrants from Ukraine as recipients of cultural offer, this offer is not adapted to the needs of young Ukrainians and is not participatory or multi-level in nature. Additionally, the educational background of migration from Ukraine brings out discrimination practices within the academy and media discourse and thus enhances resistance practices applied by this group. As a result, lacking a sense of being invited to cooperate in the field of culture, this new group of young migrants begins to create its own conculture in the space of the city, in its new place of residence, emerging from the national cultural script of the group. Such activities seem to contradict an approach of inclusion in migration in the context of the global discourse about human rights and participation in increasingly culturally diversified societies (see: Blank, Gögercin, Sauer, Schramkowski 2018). Moreover, conculture created by the young people reveals the need for the deconstruction (in the field of urban policies) of the obvious and widely accepted order of tolerating "others" rooted in the multicultural approach. It also exposes the need for the deconstruction of an approach based on differences, and hence oppositions, which divide rather than bring people together.

This in turn reveals the challenges in the area of (local) urban policy emerging in the context of conculture. The first of them is the need to recognise concultural practices as a process of acculturation of individuals, which simultaneously reflects a phase in the formation of a new Ukrainian diaspora in Warsaw. Young Ukrainians want to nurse their collective identity remaining invisible. It is related to the second challenge of conculture as a strategy of avoiding intercultural conflict in the urban space. In the municipal discourse of social cohesion that is present in Warsaw, it is extremely difficult to find space to talk about national differences and tensions caused by them. The third, equally important problem refers to the fact that conculture – with a simultaneous lack of participation and cooperation oriented towards intercultural openness – can become a potential road to ghettoization and a diaspora-initiated resistance strategy of young educational migrants.

Research results indicate the need for openness to migrants resulting from an intercultural orientation (Schröer 2007) in the increasingly multicultural character of Warsaw. However, openness on the level of providing information about institutional

practices and the accessibility of this information in the languages of migrants, or diagnosing migrants from the perspective of the majority, is not sufficient. It is necessary to change the orientation and approaches fitting into so-called soft power relations, implemented from the perspective of the majority about minorities to an orientation and approaches including migrants as co-authors of intercultural practices and diagnoses relating to their situation and needs. This in turn generates a need for an urban management of change that perceives migrants as a resource, not as a problem. It is management that refers to intercultural orientation based on migrants' participation in the area of urban policy, administration, churches, education, economy, health services and culture (see: Schröer 2018).

Concultural practices of young educational migrants are a challenge to Warsaw's intercultural openness. They point to the need for a redefinition of the intercultural openness of cultural institutions in the context of local urban policies strictly connected with the growing mobility and migration processes. The key to solving basic problems connected with "the absence of those present" (migrants) as participants and creators of culture lies in discarding differences and tokenism, and providing for migrants' full participation, perspectives and initiatives. The second level of recommendations indicated in our research involves the "domestication" of cultural institutions. This requires a redefinition of institutions working "with" rather than "for" migrants and thus taking a participatory approach to initiating and designing the cultural offer. An interesting and noteworthy solution could also involve enhancing the offer of events in the category of "difficult", sensitive subjects and in a form that integrates through urban multiculturalism. Conculture is part of the process of separation from the majority. This aspect stresses the importance of local policies of the intercultural openness of societies, institutions and services, with a clear need for the recognition and acknowledgement of migrants' potential.

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