Local Identity as a Component of Urban Citizenship: Ukrainian Migrants in Poland (Based on the Example of Wrocław)

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Abstract

The article addresses the issue of urban citizenship discussed in the context of Ukrainian migration to Poland, which is important in the process of migrant integration. The scale and dominance of migration from Ukraine in Poland make this theme particularly important. The concept of urban citizenship presupposes certain conditions to be met for its implementation. They allow us to take into account the component of practices, social relations and local identity. We associate the latter with the sense of being a city dweller (identification with the local community). Referring to the results of the qualitative research (FGI) carried out in 2022 with the inhabitants of Wrocław who have Polish and Ukrainian state citizenship, we have presented the conditions (necessary) for being a citizen of the city – the initial values that should be fulfilled by the citizens of Wrocław (irrespective of their ethnic origin and state citizenship held). By comparing the criteria for Poles with those for Ukrainians, we were able to identify a battery of objective and subjective, inclusive and exclusive indicators, as well as those that are more or less important for representatives of a given national category due to their realizing in the local community (and thanks to it) autotelic and instrumental needs.

Keywords

local identity, urban citizenship, Ukrainian migrants, Wrocław

Introduction

In the past decade, Poland has changed from an emigration country to an immigration one. A major role in this process was played by migratory movements from Ukraine, which have been on the rise since 2014 and ultimately – after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine – have become a concentrated influx of people leaving their country of origin (Błaszczyk et al., 2023). Thus, what can be described as commonplace in other European countries – which have experienced several waves of migration and have had migrants present in the political, economic, and social realm since the 1960s – is a new experience for the Polish population (Martiniello, 2006). For this reason, the changes that Poland has undergone are characteristically different than those from Western Europe.

This transition towards an immigration country occurred within a particular political context created by the right-wing populist government of the Law and Justice party (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, 2015–2023). The party waived the then binding document, which specified Polish migration policy, and failed to enact a new one. The lack of central solutions addressing the issue has put the burden of managing migrations on the host cities. Hence, Polish cities have joined the geographically and temporally varied list of cities of migration, which had to manage the arrival of foreigners (Pisarevska & Scholten, 2022) and faced the challenge of determining who constitutes an urban resident and what is their role in the city. Despite being a political and ideological issue, migration remains, first and foremost, a social process, and therefore one well within the scope of sociological

research. Because one of the stages of migration, if not its end result, is tightly bound with the urban context, the discussion presented herein is centred around the concept of urban citizenship.

In identifying the phenomenon in question, social sciences often reach for the concept of integration, utilising it to describe the interactions between the host population and those arriving (i.e. the development of the processes and their severity). Calls for 'closer integration' have also permeated public discourse. Integration, however, includes a normative element (Spencer, 2022) – it points to a desired end goal, which in Poland is difficult to specify for several reasons. Firstly, there is the issue of interpretative authority. Who should decide that a particular effect of integration is positive, desired, or acceptable? (and for whom? The host population or those arriving?). Secondly, due to high political polarisation and the change in attitude towards foreigners – from very positive in the 1990s, when the Polish population was ethnically homogeneous, to moderate or negative in times of ethnic diversification (Dolińska, 2016) – working out a consensus on the effects of integration seems impossible. Furthermore, the perspective of integration seems to emphasise differences, while the perspective of urban citizenships helps to shift the balance away from migrants towards entire communities.

Cities bearing the practical consequences of migrants' arrivals is not the sole reason behind focusing on urban citizenship. As shown by research on local models of integration, conducted as part of the local turn in migration studies, explorations of urban citizenship are more pragmatical (Pisarevska & Scholten, 2022). It can be argued, therefore, that the concept of urban citizenship makes it possible to avoid the pitfalls of accepting hidden normative premises and, simultaneously, to focus on the effects that the diversification of ethnic social structure has on Polish cities.

Cities and migrations

Cities, called the 'the main hubs or portals for migration', are "the places where diversities and mobilities become the most manifest" (Pisarevska & Scholten, 2022, p. 249). At the same time, they are "sanctuary cities", providing protection for asylum seekers, undocumented immigrants, and individuals with temporary residence permits – that is to say, people who do not have full political rights (Kowalewski et al., 2024, p. 223). Hence, the diversification of urban population heightens the need for discussion on how ethnic foreigners use the city and how they participate in its creation – on their "right to the city" (Lefebvre, 1967), as a general idea, which includes not only access to what is already available, but also the right to shape the existing structures (Harvey, 2003). A city is a public resource and as such provides benefits to its residents. Consequently, cities "need to be opened up as 'spaces of potential' for all kinds of social groupings and activities" (Painter, 2005, p. 20). This involves, on the one hand, top-down solutions enacted through city politics, which can negotiate cultural differences and political disputes that hinder achieving a shared vision of urban development. On the other hand, there are bottom-up initiatives connected with the day-to-day life of the residents and their urban experience – in all its aspects (Painter, 2005, pp. 20–21).

Within the local turn in migration studies and discussions on migrant participation in urban life and the growth of an urban community, attention has been drawn to the varied configurations of ethnic diversity in urban settings, as this impacts local policies on migration. The social landscape of cities should be analysed not only through the lens of its diversity – the percentage of the "ethnically others" in the population structure and its heterogeneity due to, *inter alia,* country of origin, language, religion, transnational practices, migration status, gender, and age. It is also necessary to take into account the relational aspect of urban diversification, i.e. the level of social segregation caused by diverse relations between migrants and non-migrants in different public and private realms, where relations are established, and the ways in which migrants and non-migrants treat each other (Pisarevska & Scholten, 2022, pp. 253–256). It should be noted that the heterogeneity of a local community co-created by migrants is also influenced by scale. The differences between small-scale and large-scale cities – and, by extension, the dynamics of local participation and the ways in which the host population respond to challenges posed by migration – are the rationale for exploring migrant engagement in the life of local communities in more than just large urban areas (Triviño-Salazar, 2020, p. 93).

Importantly, migrant engagement in local communities and migrant participation in reshaping urban environment, in accordance with the “right to the city”, is decided outside of the urban context. Although local governments have a tendency (based in practical considerations) for adopting the intercultural approach (Pisarevskaya & Scholten, 2022, p. 257), urban policy is determined by the national government as part of public policy. Nevertheless, day-to-day life in cities of migration and the ‘local turn’ in migration studies point to a need for exploring how cities of different scale solve the issue of building local, ethnically-diverse communities – in other words, how migrants are engaged in urban affairs. Crucial in this context is the issue of urban citizenship.

Urban citizenship

National citizenship emphasises state boundaries, especially in the case of migration, as it stresses the difference between the insiders and the outsiders (Bauböck, 2006). In contrast, urban citizenship cannot be boiled down to a traditional (national) concept of belonging, which reaches as far back as antiquity, despite modern cities being founded on it (urban citizenship cannot, of course, be analysed without acknowledging the state and national policy, because it relies on this broader context and might even be a function of it, as will be shown later in this paper). What both concepts – urban citizenship and national citizenship – have in common is the civic virtues that can be discerned through urban participation and activities undertaken for the city as well as in the feeling of attachment to the urban community (Szymański, 2015). These areas constitutive of urban citizenship suggest its greater openness and lesser formalisation, as “social citizens substantively assert rights to citizenship through social practices rather than through law” (Çağlar & Glick Schiller, 2018, p. 151). Drawing on the concept of urban citizenship allows us to avoid answering the question whether special legislation for migrants needs to be enacted (Joppke, 2002). Also, urban citizenship should not be equated with naturalisation, i.e. being granted national citizenship (which does not guarantee full rights).

If the concept of urban citizenship is to be analytically relevant, it must, despite this being highly problematic, refer to all categories of residents – urban citizens in the formal sense (those who are registered, pay taxes, and have voting rights), citizens-residents (who live in the city but are registered elsewhere), and temporary users of the city (those who work there or use it during the day but live outside the city) (Kowalewski, 2016, p. 39)[1]. This entails participation in *policy* rather than *polity* (Szymański, 2015, p. 101), which, in simple terms, would rely on urban citizens’ ability to make decisions and their desire to do so. For this purpose, political, economic, and social inclusionary practices may be used as part of the policy/strategy of coexistence (Indovina, 2022).

Shifting the focus on the local effects of migration (the locality turn in migration studies) has led researchers to introduce different frameworks, which demonstrate the disparities in defining the factors involved in shaping migrant cities. All of these frameworks refer to the notion of citizenship (civil citizenship, social citizenship, cultural citizenship, multicultural citizenship, residential citizenship). On this theoretical basis, we propose using the concept of urban citizenship, which synthesises the priorities identified in the literature.

Firstly, urban citizenship should be considered gradable – i.e. from strong to weak – as not all migrants wish to become urban citizens and decide to concentrate on private and professional life instead (Biernath, 2008, p. 184; Grzymała-Kazłowska & Łodziński, 2011), similarly to some life-long

[1] Urban citizenship extends beyond the administrative boundaries of the city and as such can be an effective way of encouraging new residents to engage with it. The phenomena of metropolisation, suburbanisation, and competition between cities for new residents also promote interest in urban citizenship. Providing access to social services, granting rights and facilities to new residents, and sharing transport services with suburban municipalities constitute the daily challenges faced by metropolitan managers (Kowalewski et al., 2024, p. 223). There is no doubt that this is related to treating citizenship not in terms of practices and identity, privileges or moral rights, but in economic terms – as an investment that brings profits to the city; thus, it is an instrument of city management – property and access that are supposed to attract residents (Kowalewski et al., 2024, p. 224; Kowalewski, 2023, p. 108). This way of thinking forms part of a long tradition of urban citizenship dating back to the Middle Ages and the early modern era. At that time, citizenship depended on owning a property and paying taxes, which resulted in greater political rights (mainly access to higher public offices and participation in elections) as well as economic opportunities than those enjoyed by non-citizens (Prak, 2018, pp. 27–49).

members of the host population. Secondly, urban citizenship should be constituted in three key areas: practice, relations, and identity.

Practice (participation)

Construing cities as pluralist urban communities, in which migrants are included, assumes – and this might be pointed to as the defining feature of urban citizenship – political engagement of migrants and their participation in the locality. Such local participation entails being included in decision-making and having the ability to voice one's expectations and demands through formal channels (e.g. taking part in public consultations, debates, and committees, or signing petitions) and informal ones (organising and participating in protests or *ad hoc* groups) (Triviño-Salazar, 2020, p. 95). It also includes migrants forming and joining associations to accomplish common goals (Szymański, 2015, p. 106). Importantly, "Immigrant associations also easily become part of a larger network, for instance with the city authorities and welfare institutions. Isolated individuals are reached and activated to join in gatherings and to voice their demands" (Martiniello, 2006, p. 97).

Participation extends beyond activities that change the city and its inhabitants. It also involves access to urban infrastructure – public services, various institutions, local media (Painter, 2005), as well as "obtaining resources provided through social policy, i.e. employment, minimum wage, welfare, and housing" (Szymański, 2015, p. 99).

Relations

Ethnic diversification within cities is a fact even if not all urban inhabitants are granted national identity. For them to become part of a local community – understood as *gemeinschaft* – they have to not only inhabit a particular space, but also develop social relations more advanced than those fostered by impersonal everyday interactions. Precisely this "dense fabric of relations that constitute humans as social beings who coexist with their fellow beings in and through conflict and cooperation that undergird norms, laws, and customs" (Isin, 2008, p. 282) should form the foundation for the practices and rights of urban citizens. Focusing on social relations (formed between whom, in what circumstances, in what spaces?) brings together the host population and those arriving as a social unity (Çağlar & Glick Schiller, 2018).

Social relations in a city are ethnically determined only to a certain extent, being also influenced by gender, language, cultural capital, religion etc. Adopting this intersectional perspective (Pisarevskaya & Scholten, 2022) demonstrates that urban citizenship is a highly democratic/egalitarian way of managing cities of migration. Viewed through the lens of urban citizenship – in which common are the tensions between different characteristics of residents – ethnicity becomes yet another such characteristic. In particular contexts, ethnicity might, of course, prevent the establishment of social relations between migrants and non-migrants, reinforcing inequalities and limiting identity and urban citizenship practices – a problem that should be diagnosed, giving consideration to other characteristics of both the receiving society and the migrants themselves (Spencer, 2022).

Identity

What eludes the regulators in discussions of citizenship is the sense of belonging to a community, which goes beyond the frequently brought-up categories of residents' rights and obligations. This conception – in contrast to the legal, substantial view of urban citizenship (Kowalewski, 2016, p. 29) – assumes that activities are undertaken not (only) to meet formal requirements, but, rather, to satisfy "social expectations, identity, consciousness, practices, and, above all, a pervading sense of agency" (Kowalewski, 2016, p. 30).

Identifying with the city enables "not only develop a sense of belonging to several societies, regions, cities, ethnic and cultural traditions or religious and political movements; they can also feel to belong to imagined communities located in a distant past or future. Modes of belonging will, however, not be purely subjectively defined since they always refer to some socially constructed

entity and are shaped by discourses within these about who belongs and who does not" (Bauböck, 2006, p. 19). Urban identity, which facilitates migrants' functioning in the social, economic, and political life of a community, might be adopted by them as one of their identities, without clashing with their national identity. Thus, local identity becomes an emotional (individually experienced) and functional (resulting from disparate and even conflicting interests) component of urban citizenship (Szczepański, 2005). It can "offer new opportunities beyond those of the often more rigid national conceptions of national identity and citizenship" (Pisarevska & Scholten, 2022, p. 257).

A sense of belonging can be undercut if means for participation remain superficial, e.g. if they are a tool for political manipulation (allowing citizens to join inconsequential advisory boards), are purely therapeutic (parents taking part in school classes on more effective parenting), or are symbolic (informing citizens, merely consulting with them, or placing a small group of representatives in city councils, committees, or agencies) (Szymański, 2015, p. 99).

The ethnic diversity of Polish cities – the historical context and proposed methodology for analysing urban citizenship in the ethnic context

Democratisation processes initiated in Poland in 1989 created favourable conditions for gradual change of ethnic structure to occur in the Polish society (locally, regionally, and nationally) and for institutionalising ethnic diversity through the europeanisation of policies towards minority populations (Łodziński, 2011). At the same time, two types of ethnic diversity developed within the public realm. The first one is the 'old' one, which came about as a consequence of raising awareness that ethnic and national minorities exist in Poland. In 1945–1989, the otherness of such minorities had not been visible or experienced publicly due to the then adopted policy of creating a homogeneous national identity. The secondly type is the 'new' ethnic diversity, which is a result of migrants settling in Poland (Łodziński, 1999). In terms of 'old' ethnic diversity, Poland remains the most ethnically homogeneous European state, if we take into account the percentages of national and ethnic minorities. National census respondents who declared a nationality other than Polish constituted 1.23% of entire population in 2002, 1.55% in 2011, and 1.1% in 2021.

The visibility of ethnic diversity, as well as the forming of local communities, was significantly impacted by the influx of migrants in the 1990s. Large-scale cities with a population of at least 100,000 residents constituted (long-term) migration destinations. In 1989–2002, most immigrants lived in Warsaw; they were also present, albeit in much lower numbers, in Kraków, Wrocław, and Białystok (GUS, 2004). In the early 2010s, immigrants still settled mostly in large metropolitan areas, which is in line with the insular character of migration: "It affects only certain parts of the country, while in other regions the presence of foreigners remains incidental. (...) Immigrants can [still] be found predominantly in those parts of the country, where unemployment is lowest, i.e. in the capital and its surrounding area, in Wrocław, and Kraków" (Pędziwiatr, 2014, p. 141).

However, the issue of ethnic diversity in cities garnered more interest only several years later, in the late 2010s, when more and more foreigners started coming to Poland – i.e. with the migration transition of 2016. "As a result [of migration transition – K. D. & J. M.], Poland, for the first time in its modern history, is taking in more people as immigrants than sending out as emigrants" (Kubicki, 2024, p. 1). Migration has had a consistently 'insular' character – Warszawa, Kraków, Wrocław, Lublin, Gdańsk, and Poznań are the cities in which most migrants settled. The migratory movements were intensified in 2022 due to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Within a year, most Ukrainian migrants were living in Warsaw, Wrocław, Kraków, and Poznań. Some of them, however, have joined other, smaller local communities.

Changes that the ethnic structure of Poland has been undergoing translate not only to how migrants are perceived, but also, more importantly, how they are seen as active members of an urban community – as residents with the ability to influence city life and participate in decision-making, along with determining the extent of their 'right to the city'. Equally important is the migrant perspective – how migrants see their own role in co-creating the community, what kinds of city activities they want to engage in, and to what extent 'the right to the city' is meaningful to them. To investigate this, we must establish a set of indicators that will allow us to determine whether migrants consider

themselves urban citizens and are accepted as such by the receiving society. The proposal outlined below concerns the ethnic dimension of urban citizenship[2].

The participation component:

a) Using available means of participation:
   – joining and forming associations;
   – voting in local government elections;
   – activity in terms of participation in the municipal participatory budget, such as submitting project proposals and voting, and participation in public consultations;
   – taking part in demonstrations, protests, urban movements; bringing claims regarding practices or identity to local authorities;
   – undertaking activities as part of a religious community;
   – caring for communal spaces (e.g. their functionality, aesthetics).
b) Using urban infrastructure (and the extent of such use):
   – using public services, namely public transport, medical and educational facilities, cultural and scientific institutions, clubs and sports halls, etc.;
   – using resources offered through social policy, i.e. employment, minimum wage, welfare, housing.
c) Fulfilling obligations towards the city and its residents:
   – paying taxes;
   – caring for communal spaces;
   – initiating and carrying out projects that aim to improve urban living standards.

The relational component:

   – formal and informal interactions;
   – interactions in private and public spaces (workplaces, schools, government offices, cultural institutions and places of leisure, public transport);
   – interethnic social bonds, friendships, marriages;
   – experienced ethnic differences;
   – ethnic niches and enclaves.

The identity component:

   – whether one identifies as a resident and forms a connection with the city and its inhabitants;
   – how strong one's sense of belonging is (feeling 'at home' or 'out of place');
   – how one sees themselves perceived by the receiving society (as 'one of their own' or 'an outsider', as a resident or guest).

The role of self-identifying with the city in the process of becoming an urban citizen

The identity component is subjective. On the one hand, it seems personal and hard to grasp, measure, or verify, which leads some to conclude that it has little influence on everyday experience of migrants living in a city. On the other hand, being accepted into a community and recognised (by oneself and others) as a resident is construed as indispensable to being granted (or even striving for) certain rights, allowing oneself and others to exercise certain privileges. The issue we want to address in the empirical part of this paper concerns the necessary and sufficient conditions for the residents of Wrocław to accept Ukrainian migrants as 'one of their own' – and for the migrants to self-identify as residents.

The study described here is comparative and applies the focus group interviews (FGI) method. It was conducted in 2022 as part of the project titled *Obywatele w wielokulturowym mieście? Proces integracji Polaków i Ukraińców we Wrocławiu*[3] [*Citizens in a Multicultural City? The Integration*

[2] Most of the proposed urban citizenship indicators, which have been conceptualised and operationalised in relation to external migration, could also be used to study urban citizenship in relation to internal migration, i.e. city residents who are Polish citizens but not formally registered.

[3] This project received funding from the University of Wrocław's 'Inicjatywa Doskonałości – Uczelnia Badawcza (IDUB)' research programme (second edition) under internal grant agreement no. BPIDUB.42.2022 entered into 01.03.2022.

Process of Poles and Ukrainians in Wrocław]. The participants included Poles and migrants from Ukraine[4]. The FGI with Polish residents concentrated on migrants' participation in city life and the extent to which they used urban resources (institutions and infrastructure, namely public transport, cultural institutions, medical and educational facilities, playgrounds, shops, etc.); the degree of migrants' autonomy in matters related to sociocultural practices; the Polish residents' expectations of Ukrainians (as to their activity and extent of participation); and issues of local identity. The FGI carried out with the Ukrainians was concentrated on their day-to-day experiences in the city; how they use urban institutions and infrastructure (listed above); what their expectations of city authorities and the residents are; and on issues of their identity, specifically how they co-create local communities and what their plans for the future are. The need to compare migrants' perspective with that of the receiving society stems from the assumptions about the relational nature of integration in ethnically diverse societies. The empirical data gathered to answer the question of local identity posed in this paper allowed us to distinguish and compare the following criteria:

– criteria for self-identifying as an inhabitant of Wrocław, as defined by the Polish residents;
– criteria for self-identifying as an inhabitant of Wrocław, as applied to Ukrainian residents and defined by the Polish residents;
– criteria for self-identifying as an inhabitant of Wrocław, as defined by the Ukrainians.

We would like to emphasise that the research was exploratory in nature. In the short history of migration processes in Poland and related research, the criteria for city residency have not been addressed yet. Conducting qualitative research was, therefore, an obvious way to explore this topic. Focus group interviews were chosen, because they allow a large amount of in-depth data to be collected in a relatively short time through free discussion, which proved particularly effective for eliciting the respondents' views on topics they did not usually consider.

Poles about themselves

How do Poles understand being 'an inhabitant of Wrocław'? What forms the basis for their self-identification as members of an urban community? In this regard, views of the Polish population are based on **feeling a connection to the city** as well as on the city being a place where they **live their day-to-day lives**:

> There are these places that you come back to. I like this city, very much. I love it even;
>
> It's this kind of strong identification with the city;
>
> This is where the most important things in my personal life took place. My child was born here, I fell in love for the first time, you know, these kinds of things... I think this is where I met the women of my life and the where the most things in my life happened;
>
> I was raised here, attended a local school, sang in the choir as a kid. Different things happened... And it's what keeps you here.

Other criteria mentioned by the Poles include the city being their **place of birth** (impossible to fulfil by migrants), **a feeling of security** stemming from the fact that 'this is their place', and a specific ***genius loci*** of the city, which makes one want to be a part of it:

[4] A total of six group interviews were conducted: three with Polish citizens who had lived in Wrocław for at least ten years and three with Ukrainian citizens who had lived there since at least 2018. One interview with Ukrainian participants who could communicate freely in Polish was conducted in Polish; the other two were conducted in Ukrainian or Russian. Each group consisted of three to four women and three to four men, making a total of seven people. The groups were diverse in terms of age, with 2–3 people in each of the following categories: 18–35 years old, 36–60 years old, and over 60 years old. The participants were also selected on the basis of their education, family situation, and type of work. People working in the advertising, media, PR or marketing research industries were not recruited for the study. A total of 41 people took part in the study. The interviews were conducted by a professional research company and consent to participate was obtained during recruitment. Participant data was also collected and processed by the study organiser. At the beginning of the interview, the moderator reminded the participants of the voluntary nature of their participation and that their anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained when the researchers use the collected data. The participants received remuneration for their participation.

> I drive here, get out on the streets, and I get the feeling that our traffic jams are perhaps unbearable and some parts of the city are perhaps awful, but... it all seems to fit together somehow, you know. One thing just clicks with another. You go out and you know that you're at home and at peace. There's no danger lurking around or anything. You really feel this peace of mind. You know that this is your place;

> I've come here since I was kid, with my mom. My aunts and uncles, the little houses, the gardens – I always associated that with happiness, bliss. A sense of calmness and safety. So when 30 years ago I was presented with an opportunity to move here and didn't think twice about it.

Poles about Ukrainians

Do Ukrainian migrants have the right to self-identify as Wrocław inhabitants? What expectations are imposed on them by the receiving society? Similarly to what they think about their own claim to urban citizenship, Poles assume that Ukrainian migrants are justified in self-identifying as inhabitants of Wrocław when they **feel a connection to the city** and choose it as a place to **live their day-to-day lives** (with special emphasis put on having a family and a job):

> (...) they want to stay, they don't want move back and forth between different cities. Because this is where they feel best. It's the first step for them to identify as inhabitants of the city, at least in how they feel about themselves;

> I think they [the Ukrainians – K. D. & J. M.] have integrated into our way of life. They're fully-fledged inhabitants of Wrocław. They've got families, houses, jobs, their own businesses... Yeah, I think they are.

However, Poles also set different – and more numerous – requirements for Ukrainian migrants if they are to acquire a local identity. Migrants can self-identify as inhabitants of Wrocław on several conditions: they must **work in the city** (stable employment is seen as having the potential to keep them in the city for longer), **learn Polish** (whether this condition has been met seems fairly easy to verify), **settle down in the city** and **get to know it** – such knowledge is taken as proof that migrants have made a meaningful connection to the city (interestingly, Poles do not require this of themselves).

> If they're here in Wrocław and they've got jobs that suit them, it's easier for them to feel that they belong in the city; (...) if they know the language, then the sky is the limit;

> If you've come to Poland and demand god knows what from us, at least learn to speak our language;

> It seems to me that for someone to feel good in a city then it's a matter of... He's got to learn to know the city somehow, feel it.

The **volitional factor** related to **participation in the local community** (interpreted as a sign of integration) is also considered important:

> Of course, it depends on the attitude. So if they're working... working together with these people, they can feel this way;

> Well, they [the Ukrainians – K. D. & J. M.] don't want to change anything, to assimilate with people; it's not a matter of time, it's a matter of assimilating with the group. It's their call.

For migrants, the place of birth – which Poles consider important when determining their own local identity – is substituted with the notion of **time spent living in the city**, made more objective by setting a specific numerical value, namely the number of years that would give a migrant the right to feel an inhabitant of Wrocław:

> The longer they... the greater the chance that someone settles down; if someone came here with their parents as a child and attended a local school, went to university, and so on, then that's probably a given. They will feel that way... since they've grown up here and so on.

> But I think that it's too soon to call someone, who's lived here for like 5 years, an inhabitant... For example someone who just graduated and has now idea where life will lead them, it to early to say... because there's a lot of factors.

Ukrainians about themselves

Do Ukrainian migrants self-identify as inhabitants of Wrocław? What is the basis for their self-identification as city residents? This belief is formed, as with the Poles (and partially their expectations of what can constitute a basis for the migrants to form a local identity), on **feeling a connection to the city**, **living their day-to-day lives** in the city (which undoubtedly strengthens the connection), and **a feeling of security** (both social and financial):

> I'm going to Ukraine, but I'll come back. This is my home. I've taken root here. I've got a lot of friends.
>
> Wrocław is my city because here – and I'd like to come back to this topic – there are many old houses, and as a history teacher I find this fascinating.
>
> I say to myself: try here. Stay here. And I'm torn. I don't know the Ukrainian city as well as this one. I live here with my family. I work here.

Another important factor for the Ukrainians, equally emphasised by the Poles, is the 'spirit of the place', the ***genius loci***, which makes them want to be a part of the city:

> And the history... I'm a point when you teach about the dwarfs[5], how many you know. And not all inhabitants of Wrocław know how many there are and what each of them means (...) Yes, I think it's a very interesting city. I like it here and I think we're going to stay.

The conditions which migrants impose on themselves in the process of creating a local identity overlap with the expectations that Poles living in Wrocław have of them, namely **having a job** (and it's important for them to be working with Poles); **learning Polish**; **settling down in the cit**y (connected with the sense that they are being needed here), **and getting to know it**:

> Does knowing the language help in identifying as an inhabitant of Wrocław? Yes, to feel good here, feel at home. Sure;
>
> I'd feel needed here. Feeling needed, as in putting down roots? I feel that [I'm an inhabitant of Wrocław – K. D. & J. M.];
>
> Let me put like this, I've driven around, worked as a courier, cab driver, and I know the city. (...) Not everyone knows where each district is.

One condition mentioned by the migrants was conspicuously absent from the list of requirements set by the Poles (both for themselves and the migrants) – **owning an apartment:**

> I also know the city and I've lived in different parts of it. The only downside is that I don't have my own apartment;
>
> I'll feel like an inhabitant when I've paid off my mortgage.

Table 1. The criteria for being an inhabitant of Wrocław mentioned by the Poles and the Ukrainian migrants

Poles about themselves	Poles about Ukrainians	Ukrainians about themselves
feeling a connection to the city	feeling a connection to the city	feeling a connection to the city
important day-to-day matters	important day-to-day matters	important day-to-day matters
–	work	work
–	knowing Polish	knowing Polish
–	settling down	settling down
–	getting to know the city	getting to know the city
security	–	security
genius loci	–	*genius loci*
birth	–	–
–	time spent in the city	–
–	–	owning an apartment

Source: Own elaboration.

[5] Wrocław Dwarfs (or gnomes) are tiny, charismatic statues found all around the city. They are eagerly sought out and 'collected' (e.g. photographically) by tourists and residents alike.

Looking at the criteria for being an inhabitant of Wrocław (being seen and self-identifying as such) through the eyes of the receiving society and migrants allows us to distinguish the criteria that apply to all residents, regardless of their formal status – ones that were mentioned by both the migrants and the Polish interviewees with regard to themselves and the Ukrainians. These criteria, however, also include ones that apply only to migrants; still, the migrants and the Poles were largely in agreement when it comes to the expectations that migrants should meet to be considered/ identify as inhabitants of Wrocław. Some of the self-imposed criteria were also mentioned by both the Poles and the migrants. A summary of all the requirements mentioned by the Poles and the Ukrainian migrants is presented below:

Discussion and conclusion

The development of local communities, caused by globalisation and social diversification, changed the way we think about them. They are no longer defined in terms of tradition or social bonds, but instead by turning to collective action and common goals that benefit the entire community. This new type of local communities is strictly connected with the public realm, and their functioning is based on the civic activity of their members. Rather than being centred around forming close bonds with neighbours, such communities value interrelatedness and cooperation. Members of these communities join on their own accord instead of being assigned to them (the communities are inclusive in the same way as the public realm). When investigating these new local communities, it is important to look beyond the participatory element – the psychological, psychosocial, and cultural elements are equally important. An actively cooperating community whose members feel responsible for its well-being (i.e. a responsive community), helps develop a sense of belonging, mutual trust, and social cohesion (Klekotko, 2024).

The discussion presented in this paper follows a paradigm that proposes substituting the concept of citizenship as a legal status or active civic participation with a fuzzier criterion of self-identification with the city (Džankić & Vink, 2022). Thus, attention is shifted away from formal solutions – external to the individual – towards informal, subjective, and internal ones (Isin, 2008). In this paper, we put even greater emphasis on identity and identification, because it is – as shown in our study – deemed important by both the receiving society and the migrants.

The interviewees mentioned subjective and objective factors for identifying as a city inhabitant. The first category includes *day-to-day activities performed in the city* (easily verifiable, even though they apply also to those residents, especially in large-scale cities, who have not been formally accepted into the urban community – who do not own an apartment, because as, e.g., students they rent one or whose residence has not been registered with the local authorities; these day-to-day activities apply equally to some inhabitants of suburban areas, who spend the day in the city, but stay the night in the surrounding counties and also pay their taxes there); *being born in Wrocław* or *time spent living in the city* (depends on the status of the resident, as the criterion of *birth,* which Poles set for their fellow citizens, becomes *time spent in the city* when directed towards Ukrainians); knowing Polish (a requirement set for migrants), and owning an apartment (seen by migrants as a way to establish a firm connection to the the place they are living in). The remaining criteria are subjective and based on the loyalty and emotional connection to the locality, i.e. on highly idiosyncratic constructs.

The subjective criteria were found to be of greater importance than the objective ones. Particular emphasis was put on *feeling a connection to the city* (regardless of the resident status), which ties into the category of *genius loci* – the ‘protective spirit of the place’ creating favourable condition for living. This criterion has an influence on the *feeling of security* and *settling down,* which are also correlated with *getting to know the city*. It is worth mentioning that Poles do not perceive *knowing the city* as a prerequisite for or a facilitating factor in settling down when it comes to their fellow citizens, but they set this criterion for migrants. The migrants themselves also declare *getting to know the city* as important.

Given the beliefs on building a local community expressed by the receiving society and the migrants, we argue that engagement in urban life should be driven not only by external factors and objective needs (extrinsic values), but also by the internal needs of the individual (intrinsic

values). *Gesellschaft* – a community formed around a common goal, co-existing in conflict and co-operation – has to be based on norms and customs, i.e. internalised values (Isin, 2008, p. 282). Engagement in urban life should be driven not only by the recognition of certain values but also by their adoption (only then will it function fully and properly for both sides), and subjecthood as an element of citizenship must include an identity component – subjective (Kowalewski, 2016) and shaped at the level of both cognitive and emotive processes (Niedźwiedzki, 2016, p. 125). Bauböck claims that political citizenship in contemporary liberal democracies has to compete with related types of affiliation e.g. to organisations, associations, and communities constituting the civil society (Bauböck, 2006), but urban citizenship is non-competitive; owing to the identity component and practices fostering a sense of attachment to the city, individuals become residents who think about their belonging in the long-term perspective rather than incidentally.

Discussion of the criteria for residence allows us to draw one more conclusion: the expectations as to what criteria have to be fulfilled to become a Wrocław inhabitant are not independent of the resident's status (and of sociodemographic characteristics other than ethnicity). Poles require less from their fellow citizens than from migrants, but also migrants set the bar for self-identification as inhabitants higher than Poles.

We would like to supplement the above conclusions with a brief reflection on the research that has been carried out and partially presented. Its distinctive feature is that it is comparative and covers the two largest ethnic groups in Wrocław. While sociological research usually focuses on either migrants or the host community, this study provides a more comprehensive view by considering both perspectives. This makes it a good starting point for developing urban migration policies. The discussed results indicated the existence of a community of values and beliefs among the host community and migrants, based on shared criteria for being a Wrocław resident. This provides municipal authorities with practical, specific information on which to base activities aimed at community integration, and it builds or verifies the residents' ideas about the shape of the community.

The obtained results also provide an incentive to repeat and deepen the exploratory research. Although the study was conducted in July 2022 – after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine – it focused on the situation prior to this event. The respondents were asked to base their responses on the period before intense war migration from Ukraine, and if they wished to address more recent issues, they were asked to indicate this. Therefore, it seems that the time has come to repeat the study of both social categories, as macrostructural changes may be relevant to beliefs formed at the micro level. The increase in the Ukrainian community's share in the city's structure, nationwide changes in the host community's attitudes from very favourable and supportive to more indifferent and reluctant towards numerous migrants, and the introduction of various systemic solutions facilitating the migrant community's integration into Polish cities may all have had the greatest impact on the change in beliefs.

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