

Diaspora-making processes on the example of Ukrainian communities in Poland. An anthropological study

The aim of the project is to explain how diasporas are formed and how diaspora-making processes work in a country inhabited by a historical ethnic minority, in which the minority's co-nationals arrive. This is the case of Central and Eastern Europe, where, due to borders changes, historical ethnic/national minorities of non-immigrant origins live. Since the fall of communism, and especially since the accession to the EU, these countries (such as Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania) have been facing migration of – among others – citizens of neighboring countries. As a result, the hitherto emigration countries become immigrant ones, and interesting processes take place there, involving the encounter of minorities and migrants-co-nationals. The project will answer the following research questions:

- 1) If and in what way diasporas are being established/created on not-only-immigrant ground?
- 2) If, how and what kind of diaspora-making processes can be identified at the junction of immigrants and rooted minority?
- 3) If and how are 'groups' and 'communities' of immigrants/members of minorities formed and how are symbolic boundaries between them being established?

The subject of the research will be the diaspora-making processes taking place in Ukrainian environments in Poland. Ukrainian citizens are currently the most numerous group of immigrants. However, migrants from Ukraine do not find themselves in the ethnic 'vacuum', because Poland is home to a relatively large community of people of Ukrainian origin - citizens of the Republic of Poland, whose ancestors were not migrants but natives in south-eastern and eastern Poland, forcibly displaced in 1947 to the former German lands in western and northern Poland. Today they live in many parts of the country. Further research questions are:

- 4) What mutual imaginations do minority members and immigrants construct of themselves?
- 5) Can we distinguish 'one Ukrainian diaspora' in Poland, or rather different diasporas?

The research will take place in several cities: Warsaw (with the specificity of the centrality of 'Ukrainian life', both migrant and minority), Kraków (popular among students from Ukraine and young professionals, with a less active minority community), and Przemyśl/Rzeszów (as examples of towns on the eastern border with an active minority community and the presence of numerous immigrants).

In order to explain whether and how the Ukrainian diaspora is established in Poland, we will examine the places, manifestations and contexts of meetings between migrants and 'local' Ukrainians and their mutual perceptions (who is 'this other Ukrainian'). We do not assume that the sense of ethnic community is the most important (or the only, or necessary) factor in shaping ties in the diaspora. So we will discover how 'groups' and 'communities' are formed and what factors decide about it (e.g. languages, region of origin, migration networks, social class, cultural and social capital, religion, age and generation, gender, everyday practices and habits, collective memory, the influence of historical and current political contexts, etc.).

The project will explain an extraordinarily important phenomenon taking place before our eyes: the formation of numerous Ukrainian communities and the internal Ukrainian-Ukrainian dialogue taking place in Poland. The project will result in the development of a new research model for contemporary diasporas based on diaspora-making processes.