Segregation and integration in Czech cities: interaction between migrants and majority at the local level

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Immigrant spatial concentrations

- increasing number and diversity of immigrants in Czech cities and towns

- development of immigrant spatial concentrations
  - mostly low proportion and small number of immigrants – however, also places of segregation
  - inner diversification of the immigrant populations
  - evolving places - indefinite characteristics of immigrant spatial concentrations
Emerging immigrant and ethnic places

- diverse situations of immigrant residential concentrations:
  - foreign labor residential concentrations in the vicinity of manufacturing plants (Pardubice, Mladá Boleslav, Benešov nad Černou)
  - ethnic economy related localities with dense ethnic networks and institutions (Praha-Libuš)
  - tourism oriented places with diverse groups of lifestyle and economic immigrants (Karlovy Vary)

Driving forces behind demographic trends in Visegrad countries, Prague, 10.-11. September 2015
Foreign labor residential concentrations

- Localities of **simple** and **cheap accommodation** for foreign manual workers in manufacturing industry (automotive, electronics, etc.)

- **Unstable** and dynamically **changing places**: immigrant fluctuation, changes in size and diversity of immigrant population

- **Variety of situations**:
  - Some places are **rather integrated** into urban structures
  - Some have (temporarily) **vanished**
  - Others persist and are **endangered** by segregation
The development of the localities: competition state and foreign direct investments

- characteristics of competition state
  - increased marketization ‘in order to make economic activities located within the national territory... more competitive in international and transnational terms,’ and
  - a diminishing capacity (in the wake of welfare retrenchment) to support communal bonds, which in turn leads to society’s fragmentation (Cerny 1997)
- competition with spaces in different states by creating advantageous conditions for capital so as to secure its flow (Jessop 2002)
  - need to import particular migrant labor in order to sustain capital accumulation (Peck 1992, Miles 1986)
Hůrka in Pardubice

- located **on the edge of Pardubice**, separated from the residential development

- segregated locality; administrative spatial unit „Hůrka“ has 794 inhabitants, 97% foreigners
Hůrka in Pardubice

- previously military barracks; double/triple rooms, shared facilities
- around 600 foreign manual workers, mostly temporary, from Central and Eastern Europe (Rumania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Poland)
The role of electronics producer Foxconn

- **Foxconn**
  - electronics production (a plant also in Kutná Hora)
  - lean production (just-in-time, etc.), production fluctuations, high levels of flexibility
  - main clients – HP, Cisco
- temporary **work agencies** in Foxconn CZ (Andrijasevic, Sacchetto 2014)
  - two main subcontractors/temp agencies
  - external labour control strategy
  - migrant labour recruiters
- provision of accommodation and control of workers, dormitory labor regime (Smith, Pun 2006)
Social and economic position of migrant workers

- vulnerability of immigrants on labor market
  - precarious work with negative social and economic consequences for the workers and their families (insecure income, limited possibility to become a core employee, etc.)
  - loss of work leads to loss of accommodation
  - high turnover of workers - instability

- residential segregation
- socio-cultural disadvantage (lack of language knowledge, tension around immigrant local accommodation)
- lack of social embeddedness in the locality (split families)
Everyday interaction and cohabitation with immigrants

- the adjacent **Dubina housing estate** - the area of everyday mundane interaction and activities of Hůrka inhabitants

- **fleeting contacts** at bus stops, supermarkets, retail shops, restaurants, bars, etc.
Barriers of social interaction

- Identified **barriers** reducing opportunities for social interaction and further worsening segregation
  - By the **inhabitants of Dubina**
    - developed xenophobic and racist discourse towards immigrants
    - foreigners seen as burden - associated with vandalism, mess, noise, and petty criminality
    - negative perception and lack of knowledge of Hůrka
  - By the **labor immigrants in Hůrka**
    - workload, work instability
    - language barriers
    - occasions of discrimination (also rude and violent comments) by the majority population
Potentials of interaction and cohabitation

- **Processes** and **potentials** encouraging social integration of immigrants
  - **no open conflicts** in everyday interaction
  - occasions of **friendship** with the majority population
  - **immigrants perceive** mutual **contact** rather **positively**, and do not experience systematic discrimination
  - **immigrants** are **not a frequent topic** in the locality, they are rather ignored
Conclusions

- Hůrka is
  - an **evolving** and **unstable locality**, which existence is related to industrial production
  - a rather **segregated locality**, in comparison to other foreign labor residential concentrations
- The local interaction and cohabitation
  - is mostly characterized by **fleeting** and **unproblematic contact**
  - is limited by **structural barriers** (geographic isolation of Hůrka, mobility and fluctuation of immigrants, socio-cultural and socio-economic disadvantage of immigrants)
  - cannot solve segregation but provides **some new opportunities** for **integration** (everyday banal interaction, occasions of friendships, immigrant positive perception of the majority, no open conflicts)