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RUSSIAN-SPEAKING DIASPORA IN FINLAND AS A PUBLIC DIPLOMACY TOOL

ABSTRACT. The article deals with complex studies of the Finnish case particularly migrants' inclusion analysis into local cultural and political environments (as conditions to cultural and political environment stability) as well as public diplomacy impact evaluation of an important «soft power» tool where migrants role is rather high. Authors scrutinize migrants' interaction with the environment, outline cause-and-effect links of this interaction, and unveil external factors that influence the respondents' political behavior. The research method is based upon interviews, which result in respondents' typology development, political information channels were defined, and the influence of education and social inclusion upon political communication was characterized. This method helps to perceive migrants' integration policy at example of Finland, the fourth most attractive country in the world in accordance with the Migrant Integration Policy Index. Finnish experience could be highly useful for Russia in terms of both national migration policy development. The resulting characteristics of migrants' political communication might be of high interest in terms of migration policy regulation and understanding the issue of migration quotas, help to predict structural changes in society, also to provide the basis for making decisions on the effective use of public diplomacy tools.

KEYWORDS: sustainable development, political communication, migration policy, integration policy, migrants' survey, public diplomacy

CITATION: Maria A. Pitukhina, Oleg V. Tolstoguzov and Irina Chernyuk (2019) Russian-speaking diaspora in Finland as a public diplomacy TOOL. *Geography, Environment, Sustainability*, Vol.12, No 2, p. 6-17
DOI-10.24057/2071-9388-2018-31

INTRODUCTION

In 2017 the number of migrants reached 258 million people. Over the past 17 years the total number of migrants has increased from 173 million by 49% according to the International migration report (Un.org 2017). The growth of migrants' mobility and the impact of migration flows on almost all countries' development include the international migration issue.

Migrants' studies (including surveys) are highly important in terms of migration policies analysis in the European countries. They are performing migrants' surveys regularly for accessing migrants' living conditions, political preferences etc. The best foreign practice has shown that migrants' studies are highly important in terms of society structural changes projection.

Migrants not only affect population dynamics, change its structure, but also to some extent influence local community life: the larger the proportion of migrants, the greater their impact on the local community.

In order to obtain up-to-date information on both state and socio-cultural perspectives a competent migration policy development is highly necessary taking into account different aspects of globalization phenomenon.

Therefore, it is necessary to research migrants' inclusion mechanisms in local cultural and political environment as a condition for socio-cultural sustainability as well as public diplomacy as the most important «soft power» tool where migrants' role is rather high.

The goal of the article is both to research on problems dealing with the Russian-speaking diaspora in Finland as well as public diplomacy tools (media analysis, social networks, social groups) aimed at migrants' integration policy upgrading in local communities.

Nowadays (both in Russia and in the world) the research is not enough devoted to migrants' political communication. In particular, in Russia political communication is scrutinized in the following areas: power as a political communication (Timofeeva 2010), political communication theory (Timofeeva 2012), sociology of political communication (Diligensky 1994), psychological aspects of political communication (Zimichev 2010; Olshansky 2001; Shestopal 2002; Yurev et al. 2005), information security impact on political communication (Panarin 2012), political communication as a way to deploy political order events (Anohina and Malakanova 2001); political communication as an independent phenomenon not as a function, but as a process (Solov'iev 2002); use of information and communication technologies (Zazaeva 2012).

Based upon a wide-known theoretical approaches in the field of migration - the so-called general migration theory (E. Ravenstein, Stoufer, E. Lee etc.), we shall consider the Russian-speaking diaspora integrating problems in Finland as well as some public diplomacy tools as a soft power resource

(J. Nye) (E. Ravenstein 1889; S. Stoufer 1940; E. Lee 1966; J. Nye 1989). The issues of migrants' integration in local communities are unveiled in papers of S. Abashin, E. Varshaver, A. Rocheva, V. Mukomel etc. (S. Abashin 2012; E. Varshaver, A. Rocheva 2016; V. Mukomel 2011). Papers of St. Petersburg sociologists (O. Brednikova, O. Tkach, O. Zaporozhets) shall be also mentioned in terms of cross-border practices and neighborhood phenomenon analysis by the examples of Finland and Russia (Kaizer, O. Brednikova 2004).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Official statistics both of the UN and national states is widely applied (Un.org 2017; EUROSTAT 2013 etc.). Migrants' survey is the most important tool that allows to identify structural changes in society and to evaluate reasons for these changes (European Social Survey.org 2014). Migrants' surveys allow to supplement and provide more detailed information on statistics obtained from public information sources.

The research is also dealing with Migrants Integration Policy Index developed according to Barcelona Center for International Affairs and Migration Policy Group. This method embraces 7 areas of migrants' integration – labour market mobility, family reunion, education, political participation, long-term residence, access to nationality, anti-discrimination (according to Migrant integration policy index). Migrant integration policy index helps us to evaluate migrants' rights and wellbeing, analyze state migration policy, state's responsibility as well as develop recommendations on migrants' integration policy. This article deals with the one of the 7th integration areas in accordance with the Migrant integration policy index – migrants' political participation, in particular, Russian migrants' political communication in Finland (our case).

The research is based upon interviews, which result in respondents' typology development, political information channels were defined, and the influence of education and social inclusion upon political communication was characterized. Thus, for example, in Finland, migrants' personal data upon age, gender, country of origin, immigration country,

religion, marriage, date of entry is obtained from a variety of sources accumulated in one information system "Population Information System" under Statistical Agency of Finland. Information on migrants is accumulating from different confessions' parishes, hospitals and the Migration Service of Finland. In Finland, migrants need to obtain ID card necessary for work or medical assistance, and for this each migrant has to undergo a mandatory registration procedure in "Population Information System". Every year "Population Information System" staff is serving migrants and thus checking their residential address. In 2014 it turned out that 99% of migrants have the same address. Each month the information system generates final reports on changes occurred for the last month - «Population statistics service». At the end of each quarter the information system provides provisional statistics on population changes for the year («Quarterly population statistics»). Statistics on migrants is published annually: in electronic form in May and in paper form in June of each year («Population structure and vital statistics by municipality»).

Migrants' surveys allow to supplement the information system data from open sources and is used to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) to access detailed information on various parameters
- 2) to identify migrants sentiments
- 3) to define migrant problems
- 4) to get information that demands the response (for example, which materials migrants are reading).

The authors developed a questionnaire in order to achieve the research goal. The questionnaire included 30 questions and was divided into five main categories: political

information sources, political dialogue, use of sources of information through the Internet, political participation, social status etc. Secondary questions were related to international news, national government, economic news, community events, and editorial columns of the local news.

RESULTS

Europe remains migrants' most attractive region. Largest migrants groups consist mostly of people coming from the Middle East and Africa. At the same time, migration is being characterized with irregularity: migrants' distribution across Europe can be characterized with both low and high concentrations. Rather different situation is being witnessed in Northern Europe.

Increase in both migrants' flows and concentrations reduces naturally the share of a recipient community: there is a significant increase of Arab origin population in France, of Turkish-Arab origin in Germany, of Indopakistan and-Arab origin in the UK.

Hereby we apply the Pareto rule in order both to analyze and evaluate influencing factor effectiveness. Migrants' excess of over 20% is known as a threshold after which socio-cultural relations structure changes significantly. The interval amounting to "10-20%" is a transition zone. It shows migrants increasing influence till a critical value. This is not an exact criterion, but rather a mnemonic rule that identifies an important meaning, namely a serious shift in a social environment.

Fig. 1-5 below provides data (Un.org 2017) for various European countries and regions, hatchina corresponds to focus areas.

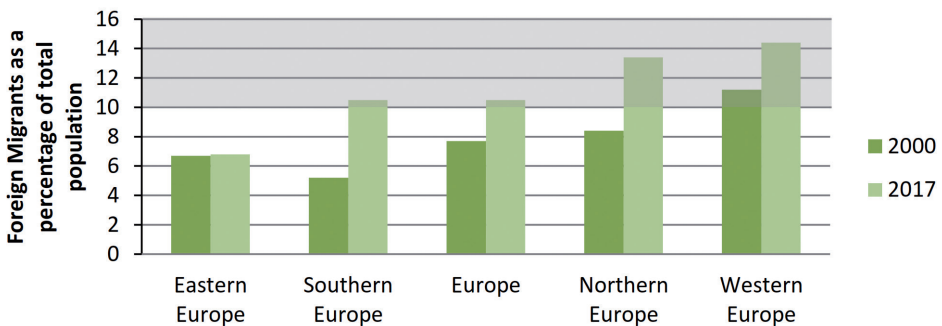


Fig. 1. Foreign migrants as a percentage of total population of Europe

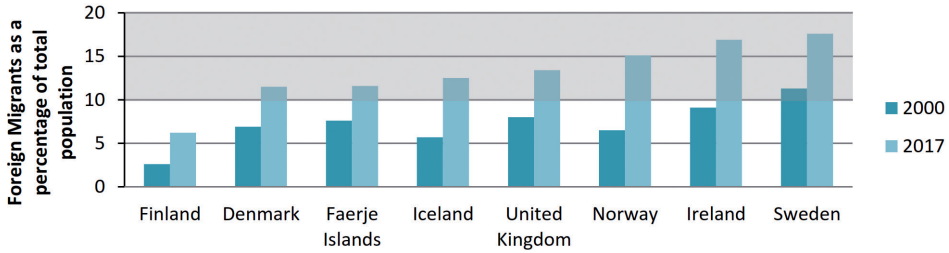


Fig. 2. Foreign migrants as a percentage of total population of Northern Europe

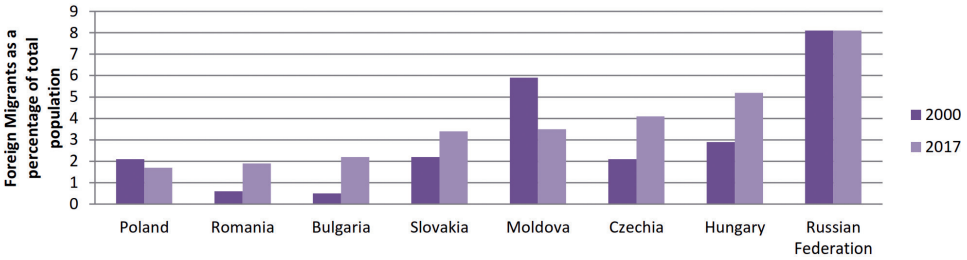


Fig. 3. Foreign migrants as a percentage of total population of Eastern Europe

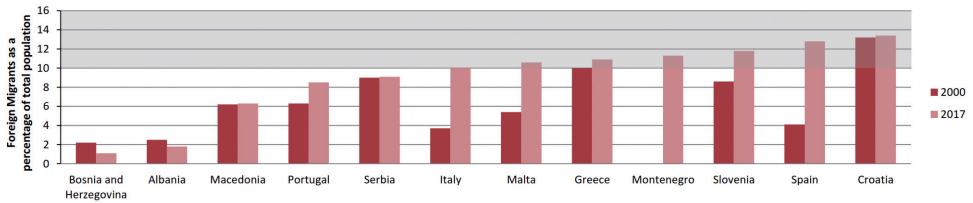


Fig. 4. Foreign migrants as a percentage of total population of Southern Europe

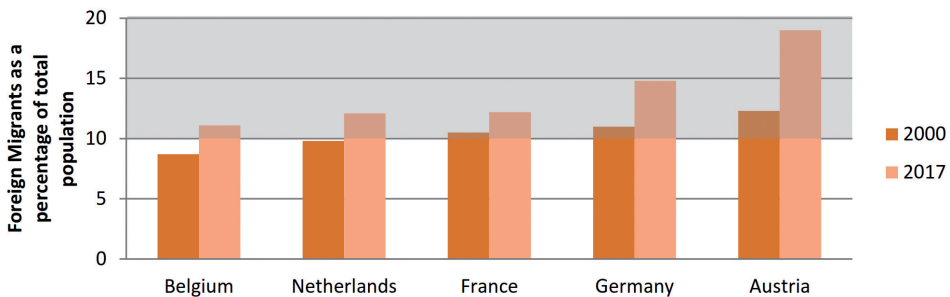


Fig. 5. Foreign migrants as a percentage of total population of Western Europe

There are three groups of countries to be shaped based upon Fig. 1-5 mentioned above. The first group of countries are without any significant migration challenges (migrants make up less than 10% of the recipient community in Finland and Central Eastern Europe), second group where migration challenges are pretty visible (migrants make up 10-15% in Croatia, Spain, Slovenia, Iceland, Denmark) and a third group, where migration challenges are highly critical (more than

15% of migrants in Germany, Sweden, Ireland, Austria, Norway).

Figures show that serious difficulties in trend preserving are being witnessed in Western and Northern Europe (in accordance with Pareto rule), while Northern Europe alongside with Southern Europe are showing much higher migrants' growth rates.

Finland stands out quite separately out of a number of some other Northern Europe countries, which is undoubtedly an interest for the research. Finland borders with Russia possessing a large diaspora of the Russian-speaking population (29,000 people) which turns out to be a serious public diplomacy resource in promoting “Russian world” abroad. Migration policy in Finland is considered to be highly adaptive, balanced, primarily preserving national interests and human capital. While analyzing reasons for Finland’s success we are highlighting the main aspects - high human capital quality of foreign migrants coming to Finland, successful information dissemination for migrants coming to Finland, successful migrants’ integration in a Finnish labour market.

Therefore, this region is highly attractive both from the point of view of migration impact upon local community as well as taking into account multiple economic and cultural ties with Russia. Therefore, it is important to explore some possibilities for public diplomacy tools application using Russian diaspora resource.

Among Northern Europe countries’ Finland is of the great interest as a neighboring country having a large number of migrants from Russia, and as a country that pursues a successful migration policy aimed at local community sustainability. Finland’s Future of Migration 2020 Strategy (Ec.europa.eu 2013) has been recently adopted and announces the following principles:

- Diversity will be valued as Finland’s internationalization continues.
- Equality and equal opportunities will apply to everyone.
- Migration will enhance the wellbeing of the population and boost Finland’s competitiveness.
- Migrants will be able to use their skills and contribute to the future development of society.
- Migration will be foreseeable and controlled.

Starting from the 1st of January 2015 an updated Finnish Non-Discrimination Act (Finlex.fi 2014) came into force

authorizing the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman. Nowadays in Finland there are Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Equality Ombudsman and Ombudsman for children, all three institutions are also aimed at migration policy regulation.

In accordance with Finnish statistics Russians were the largest migration group till 2010 (29 500) according to Statistics Finland (Stat.fi 2013). Nowadays the situation has changed. Russians (29 800) are the second largest groups after Estonians (38 000) (International Migration Outlook 2013). Today migration flow in Finland is mainly represented with 2 largest groups of migrants – 49% of Estonians and 39% of Russians according to International Migration Outlook (Oecd-ilibrary.org 2013).

For the last 5 years (2010-2015) migration outflow has dried out from Russia to Finland. For a long period starting from 1990-ies and till 2010 (about 20 years) basic reasons for active labour migration in Finland were: Inkeri Finns repatriation, international marriages, and refugees. However currently Finnish immigration policy is changing drastically—foreign labour migration flows from Russia are significantly reducing. One of the basic reasons is that Finnish government has fully stopped Inkeri Finns repatriation from Russia starting from the 1 July 2011. As a result Finnish migration policy has changed significantly.

Currently Russian diaspora in Finland is not studied well though, especially Russian migrants peculiar political communication traits. In this term, these characteristics are highly valuable from the point of view of migration policy regulation.

Russian migrants are the second largest group of migrants in Finland influencing potentially the political process. Here we have in mind that Russian migrants in Finland have a very strong instrument of influence - right to vote at municipal elections. According to the Finnish law – the Election Act (Finlex.fi 2016) – any citizen of any state has a right to take part in municipal elections. There is however additional two conditions which are living in the municipality in which the

vote is held (at least 51 days before election day) and stay in Finland for at least two years.

Let's consider Russian migrants' living in Finland survey results in order to identify their political communication characteristics. The research of Russian migrants organized in Finland is a qualitative one and allows both to develop and prepare basis for the more in-depth study. The aim of the research is to identify Russian migrants' relations with politics.

In general, 122 respondents took part in interviews. No doubt obtained data demands further approval by quantitative data but this research is mainly qualitative and aimed at analyzing interaction of the target group with an ambient environment.

Respondents were selected in accordance with the snowball effect. The respondent profile is presented with a Russian migrant living in Finland for more than 3 years, of Russian nationality, of full legal age. Age, education level and income level were not taken into consideration. The interview also revealed some additional characteristics of the sample.

After interview it became clear that 45% of respondents were not interested in politics ("idle respondents"), 45% - became "active respondents" were actively using political communication channels (media, social networks, internet, TV, social circles (family, job)). 10% of respondents were rather negative towards politics ("blocking respondents"): "I am interested only in my close people, I do not see any reason to spend my time on politics". 13% of respondents participated in municipal voting. Finnish law is ensuring migrants' participation in municipal elections - "for those migrants who live at least 2 years in Finland and at least 51 days in the commune in order to involve them in the processes of integration" according to Election Act.

The most popular expression that served as a motive for respondents' typology was "try to follow up all the news". Thus, the respondents ranged from actively watching political events «to be in the swim» to

never participating in elections, signing/creating petitions "because that doesn't help", and never be interested in news but participating in elections "of course it's my duty, I have to vote" or "it is necessary to do something, chose if you remain silent this will happen all the time". In summary, 3 main types of respondents could be identified based upon their interest in politics: active, idle and blocking.

Active respondent. Most active respondents have aspiration to compare different sources of information, interest in politics of both Finland and Russia, as well as international and local political issues. Those, whose interest in political issues is high, can be divided to two further groups:

- those, who actually like to discuss politics with peers;
- and those, who are actively looking for political news but they are not that open to discussions and consider this knowledge only for their personal development.

Moreover, willingness to compare different sources of information often correlate with higher education.

Idle respondents are those, who would listen about political issues in the general daily news flow but would not try to find information about political topics themselves. They would listen to political discussion and even might slightly participate to it but would not initiate it themselves. Politics for them is a parallel world to which they never seek to interfere, but always watch it how it changes.

Blocking respondent. Mentioning politics brings negative emotions to members of this group. They generally have a skeptic approach towards political affairs. They would not participate to political discussions and would try to avoid them.

Thus, respondents' answers gave us an opportunity to categorize migrants' in accordance with the above mentioned types, and also to allocate channels of political information for migrants.

There were outlined 4 main channels of receiving political information by Russian migrants in Finland - internet, TV,

newspapers and social circles. It should be noted that information obtained by Russian migrants living in Finland is performed through a wide range of channels. However, it should also be mentioned another peculiar feature. Thus, for some respondents who don't know Finnish language or possess low knowledge it is difficult to access news in Finnish. Despite this, it is still believed that the most favorable conditions for migrants are established in Finland which is actively working on migrants' integration including Russian migrants also.

This is also proved by a wide range of news presented in Russian, for example, Internet news resources "YLE" and "Spectrum", information portals «Russian.fi», "Fontanka.fi", "Russian Finland", radio news in Russian language – "Sputnik".

Thus, the variety of sources from which the respondents received information on political events is reduced to the following basic 4 channels:

1. Newspapers (both printed and electronic) are divided in 3 groups:

- Russian newspapers: «Novaya gazeta», «Argumenty I facty», «Snob»;
- Finnish daily newspaper «Aamulehti» (second popular newspaper in Finland after «HelsinkiSanomat» and «TurunSanomat»);
- Finnish resources in Russian language «Spector» и «YLE».

2. Television - respondents prefer watching Russian channels such as ORT, NTV, RTR, TNT, Channel 5, the channel "Spas". Respondents particularly noted such political programs browsing as «K Bariery» on RTR channel and «Pyaterkapoekonomike» on «Spas» channel.

3. Internet sources used by respondents in order to learn political news - Newsru.com, Yandex.ru, Euronews, Facebook, Vkontakte, Odnoklassniki.

4. Small groups - another popular method of respondents political communication with co-workers and family members.

Migrants' surveys results draw the following conclusion - newspapers (in electronic and printed form) were used by active and idle respondents. There is also a study outlining that newspapers reading as well as participation in discussions motivate to participate in political activities (Sotirovic and McLeod 2001). At the same time it prevents from entertainment television programs viewing. Thus, according to the results people with higher interest in political events prefer to read newspapers and analytical articles, but refuse to participate in any political activity. Those who prefer TV programs to newspapers are trying to participate in the elections.

Different channels influence upon political communication intensity was also studied. Frequency of turning to different information sources (number of days per year when sources were viewed in relation with the total number of days) was used as an indicator characterizing migrants' political communication intensity. Thus, "1" is presented as a maximum (daily frequency) and minimum is corresponding to "0.03" which is several times per year.

The Fig. 6 shows the mean intensity of migrants' political communication depending on the type of source.

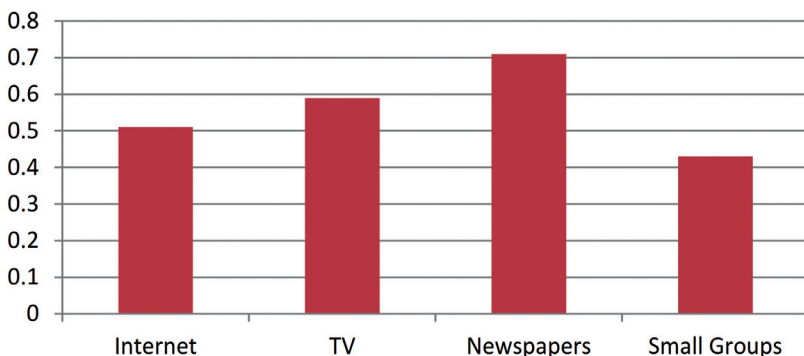


Fig. 6. Political communication intensity of Russian migrants in Finland based upon information channels

It is visible from the Fig. 6 that political communication is getting more intensive when a migrant gets information from newspapers. In part this might be due to predominant position of Finnish newspapers that usually publish much details on municipality/city life in Finland. Second place goes to TV, third – to Internet.

Migrants' survey results showed that migrants' political communication evaluation is highly important since it allows to identify the underlying trends in political preferences, to obtain information for a rapid response in certain cases as well as identify areas where migrant needs support or assistance.

DISCUSSION

The article is analyzing interaction of the target group with ambient environment, cause-and-effect relationship together with factors influencing respondents' behavior are outlined. Besides, migrants' interviews dealing with political communication trends will help to perform the projections of various shifts in the society.

According to study of Mutz and Mondak (2006), the most likely place for the policy debate is a working place. However, data obtained under the interview indicates that the situation has some limitations for Russian migrants in Finland. In the workplace, both in mixed teams (with Russian and Finnish colleagues) and in teams where only Russian migrants work there are some discussions on political topics. Colleagues discuss political events not only in Russia and Finland but also on international arena; however, in companies with international staff political themes often get avoid.

The probability of discussion upon conflicting topics is much higher within the family members, since the level of trust is high. In the workplace, employees often prefer to avoid such issues, though it is not an absolute rule, and if there's trusting relationship between colleagues it is quite possible to exchange opinions.

Under the interview it was also defined that the role of small groups has an impact on Russian migrants' political communication in Finland.

Under the interview, the correlation between level of integration into the host society and choice of an interesting event in Russian and Finnish societies was found. For example, young migrants (students, young migrants in a labour market), who grew up in Finland and are fluent in Finnish language, have a higher degree of social inclusion, which allows them to understand more easily what is happening in political arena.

Senior migrants often lack language skills, socialization experience in the new society (no work, no new education), often prefer to concentrate on Russian political events, obtaining information mainly from Russian media. However, this is not a widespread rule. In Finland there are Russian migrants who are active in the pre-retirement and retirement age. They continue to familiarize themselves with the host society, and to stay up to date with its main events. For some Russian migrants Finnish news daily newspaper "Aamulehti" is the main source of information, and they read it, even if you have to use the dictionary constantly.

Migrants survey's results confirmed previously identified relationship between level of education and breadth of political interests (see Hillygus 2005; Price and Zaller 1993) and have showed that migrants with higher education seek to educate a wider range of political topics. They used a wider range of information, including analytical programs and magazines. These respondents refer to news critically and compare news from various sources. The results of conducted migrants' interviews confirm this relationship again. Thus, "active" respondents with higher education are more eager to talk about information analysis from different (or even multilingual) sources ("I compare information from different sources, in particular, the Finnish sources – YLE, Russian news channels in Internet, British sources, then I can skype with my friends and ask how it is in reality").

Thus, the analysis of a wide range of news gives a clearer picture of the situation in a political world, and can provide a more solid basis for political communication and political participation later.

The research also proved the fact that migrants' social inclusion into host society is highly dependent on language knowledge. For confirmation of the hypothesis a causal analysis of the social inclusion impact upon political communication intensity was conducted. As an indicator, which characterizes Russian migrants' social inclusion we use factor of foreign languages knowledge, including Finnish and English. The final indicator for political communication intensity became the frequency of interaction with information sources (access to Internet sources, reading newspapers, watching TV, small group discussion etc.)

Knowledge of Russian language is accepted as a minimum factor of migrants' social inclusion. Knowledge of one foreign language (English or Finnish) correlated to average value of migrants' social inclusion. The maximum value of the factor is the knowledge of two or more foreign languages.

Fig. 7 below shows migrants' political communication intensity depending on foreign language knowledge.

Fig. 7 shows that migrants' political communication intensity is higher if

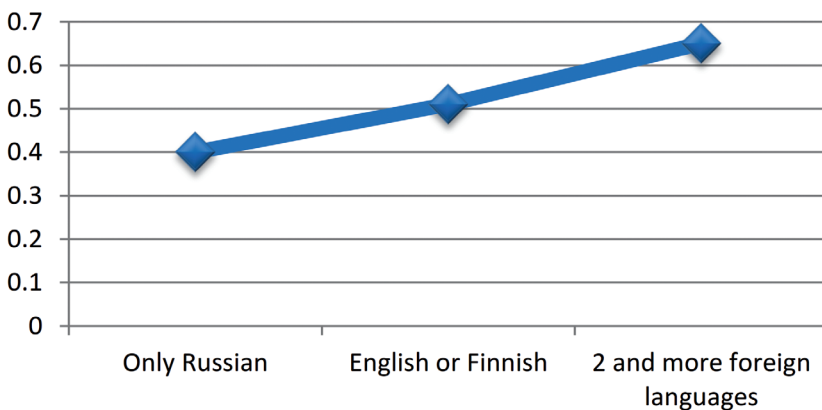


Fig. 7. Political communication intensity of Russian migrants in Finland depending on foreign language knowledge

a migrant knows one or more foreign languages, accordingly, he/she has an opportunity to get acquainted with a wide range of multilingual sources.

These results confirm the theory Sotirovich and McLeod (2001) that: "Education provides both knowledge and skills to work with information, and therefore, improves access to political process, at least, makes political participation more likely".

The survey results have showed that workers with higher education in general, seek to familiarize with a wide spectrum of political topics, and thus analyze events critically (see also (Kyhä 2011).

CONCLUSION

Complex studies of the Finnish case were performed dealing with migrants' inclusion into local cultural and political environments (as conditions to cultural and political environment stability) as well as public diplomacy impact of an important «soft power» tool where migrants' role is rather high.

In this research we've investigated some unknown features of Russian migrants' political communication in Finland. We've identified some characteristics of political communication by applying interview method. The main factors that would influence interpersonal communication in politics among Russian migrants in Finland are explored.

Theoretically the research allowed both to analyze such an important aspect of migration policy as migrants' political communication and identify its key features.

It is worth noting that research has proved the fact that migrants' social inclusion into society is heavily dependent upon foreign language skills. The following characteristics of migrants' political communication were outlined as a result of survey data processing:

- respondents are distributed according to the following types of political communication: «active» – 45%; «idle» – 45%; «blocking» – 10%;
- relationship is found between level of education and both quantity and quality of media sources accessed by respondents, for example, only migrants with higher education accessed analytical journals;
- positive correlation between number of foreign languages and migrants' political communication intensity is found;
- following priorities for the use of political information sources among migrants is identified: Internet – 64%; TV – 45%, newspapers – 27%; small groups – 18%;
- impact of various information channels on political communication intensity of Russian immigrants in Finland is estimated;
- role of small groups in migrants' political communication is discovered.

So, at the workplace and, in particular, in companies with an international team, despite the presence of small groups

(colleagues), political topics are shot out by tolerant reasons. On the contrary, political situation is discussed more frequently within the family.

The resulting characteristics of migrants' political communication might be of high interest in terms of migration policy regulation and understanding the issue of migration quotas. The findings would also help to predict structural changes in society, to assess the level of radicalization in society, provide the basis for making decisions on the effective use of public diplomacy tools. The growth of anthropogenous mobiles (movement of people, influence of cultures) is a phenomenon with many security contexts: it aggravates interethnic and interreligious contradictions between different ethno-cultural groups of the population, increases social tension, defragments the local community through the formation of ethnic enclaves.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Within the framework of the RAS Presidium program «No.1.53 on fundamental scientific research within the framework of Fundamental Scientific Research Program of State Academies of Sciences for 2013-2020 «as well as the RFBR project» Live, work or go? Youth-well-being and viability (post) of extractive Arctic industrial cities in Finland and Russia". ■

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