

## Chapter

# Public Diplomacy in Cross-Border Cooperation

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## Abstract

The chapter deals with migration challenges, a burning topic crucial for both the EU and the world. Hereby, public diplomacy tools are of huge interest as a factor influencing social and cultural space sustainability, especially, of cross-border territories. This chapter deals with complex studies of the Finnish case particularly migrants' inclusion analysis into local cultural and political environments as well as public diplomacy impact evaluation of an important "soft power" tool where migrants' role is rather high. The research method of migrants as a "soft power" 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. 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 and help to predict structural changes in society and also to provide the basis for making decisions on the effective use of public diplomacy tools. At the same time, we believe that via public diplomacy tools it is necessary to rely on not only separate national cultural aspects but also the whole civilizational image-the so-called nation's gestalt.

**Keywords:** public diplomacy, cooperation, Finland, Karelia, Russian diaspora, social and cultural space

## 1. Introduction

Public diplomacy role has been growing in recent decades. Undoubtedly, public diplomacy strengthens sociocultural cooperation, good neighborliness and an atmosphere of security and serves as a tool of "soft power" that increases region/country attractiveness, language, culture and lifestyle. Means of "soft power" were interpreted by J. Nye [1, 2] as a process of achieving strategic interests by a state via positive attitude development in other states' society and its goals achieving through attractiveness. Active communication influences international life nature since it is determined by both beliefs and expectations that people have and that are established by social rather than material structures [3].

"Soft power" is presented with media, by educational organizations (operating in a framework of international cultural and educational programs), as well as by nongovernmental organizations engaged in public diplomacy in a form of various communications.

Soft power tools are also witnessed in Russian communications. It has become an integral component of modern international politics in Russia as a comprehensive toolkit for solving foreign policy issues based on civil society demands, information and communication, humanitarian and other alternative classical diplomacy methods and technologies [4]. Moreover, Russia has enormous potential for public diplomacy development. It's most important pillar is presented with a so-called Russian world when millions of people abroad feel a strong need to keep in touch with Russia, Russian language and its culture [5].

## **2. Migration challenge**

Soft power is important not only because of its influence on a sociocultural space but also because of increase in anthropogenic mobiles (moving people), which today are considered a tool of geopolitics.

We also consider migration challenge and associated use of soft power tools that cause disturbances in social ecology.

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 [6]. The growth of migrants' mobility and the impact of migration flows on almost all countries' development include the international migration issue.

Migration processes are dependent on a structure of social relations and cannot be studied in isolation from various social, economic and political phenomena in which they occur (according to a modern theory of migration considered from a geographical point of view [7]).

Migrants' studies (including surveys) are highly important in terms of migration policy 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's structural changes projection.

Migrants not only affect population dynamics, changing 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 sociocultural 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 sociocultural sustainability as well as public diplomacy as the most important "soft power" tool where migrants' role is rather high.

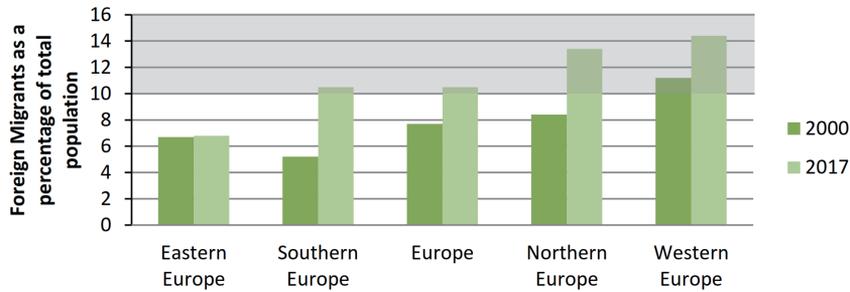
Europe remains migrants' most attractive region. Largest migrant groups consist mostly of people coming from the Middle East and Africa. At the same time, migration is being characterized with irregularity: migrants' distribution across Europe can be characterized with both low and high concentrations.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

Increase in both migrants' flows and a concentration 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 and of Indopakistan and Arab origin in the UK.

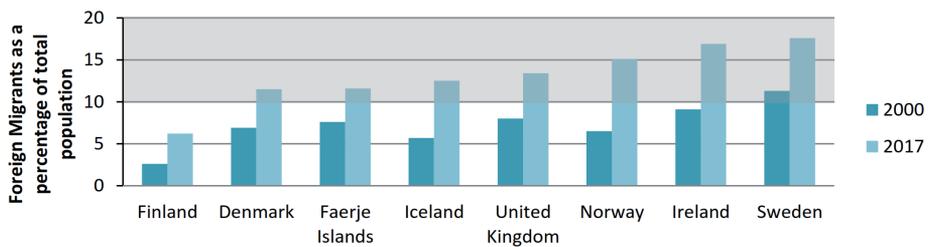
Hereby, we apply the Pareto rule in order both to analyze and evaluate influencing factor effectiveness. Migrants' excess of over 20% is known as a threshold

after which sociocultural relation 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.

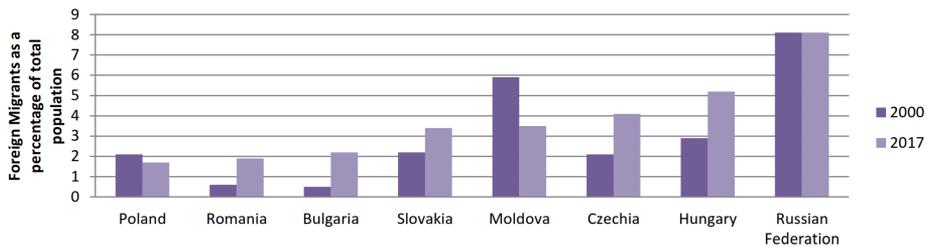
Figures 1–5 provide data for various European countries and regions [6].



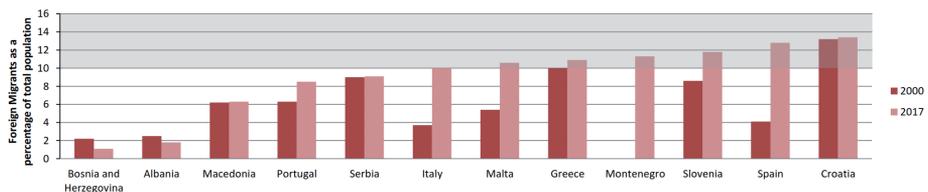
**Figure 1.**  
 Foreign migrants as a percentage of total population of Europe.



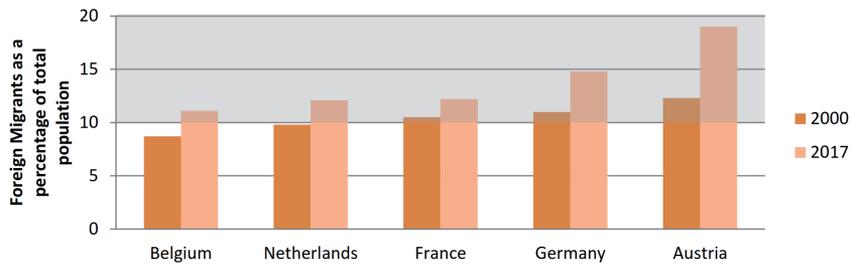
**Figure 2.**  
 Foreign migrants as a percentage of total population of Northern Europe.



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



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



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

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

The 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 is showing much higher migrants' growth rates.

These circumstances shall be taken into account, since soft power becomes an instrument not only for migrants' integration but also for mutual influence on representatives' identity coming from different cultures.

Finland stands out quite separately out of a number of some other Northern Europe countries, which is undoubtedly an interest for 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 and 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 and successful migrants' integration in a Finnish labor market.

### 3. Regional dimension: Karelia and Finland

Public diplomacy has a regional dimension as well. It also acquires special significance in terms of border areas, where it is necessary to maintain a climate of trust and stable international relations and use neighborhood for a balanced sociocultural development of its territories. Cross-border mobility and active communication practices are transforming sociocultural space of border areas [8, 9]. It transforms in terms of an increase in a number of border crossings, contacts between people and joint actions; its structure becomes diverse, open to interaction and adoption of social innovations.

The European vector of public diplomacy is represented with a large number of NGOs and a wide range of opportunities coming from the European Union (educational programs, Northern Dimension partnerships, cross-border cooperation programs, etc.) [10]. Public organizations represent different sectors of population interests in a social and cultural space in order to achieve social, charitable, cultural, educational, political, scientific and managerial goals.

Since 1996, Russia and Finland have been participating in regional cross-border cooperation programs actively. In 2000, the Karelia Euroregion was founded combining the Republic of Karelia of the Russian Federation and the Finnish border provinces of Kainuu, North Karelia and Northern Ostrobothnia. The Republic of Karelia has adopted a regional cross-border cooperation program—a response to cross-border initiatives of the European Union, in particular, the Interreg IIIB and Interreg IIIA programs (including the Interreg IIIA-Karelia subprogram). The role of an effective platform for discussing initiatives and coordinating plans for cross-border cooperation programs is presented by the Karelia Euroregion. Cross-border and multilateral cooperation programs are unique tools for developing local and regional territorial initiatives. For over 5 years of the program's implementation, 66 projects were implemented amounting to 42 million euros, 30% of which were used to finance infrastructure projects including modernization of the Mäpp Värtsilä-Niirala [10]. Such cooperation practices as a cross-border shopping tourism, joint projects implementation and public diplomacy are widespread here. The Karelia Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2014–2020 (Karelia/CBC) is ongoing currently. It is called upon to strengthen Russian-Finnish inter-regional cross-border cooperation with the support of the Russian Federation, Finland and the European Union. The program is cross-border in nature and contributes to the implementation of strategic and thematic tasks of cross-border cooperation at the European level, as set out in the European Neighborhood Policy [10].

In a survey by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), four factors that are critical for the development of cross-border cooperation were identified [11]. Given the current challenges, we reformulate them as follows: the transformation of global geospace; institutional order; institutional and social roots and an appropriate culture of cooperation; and identity.

At the same time, cross-border cooperation is considered as a form of population socialization in neighboring regions in a context of cultural diversity, a multiethnic community formation within transboundary spaces. Border zones are characterized with a specific cultural phenomena, readiness for its cultural interaction and a certain commonality of the world population outlook [12].

In this regard, it is necessary to apply soft power tools effectively. The latter is important not only because of sociocultural space sustainable development but also due to the increase in anthropogenic mobiles (moving people), which today are increasingly showing the property of a geopolitical tool and, in this regard, are becoming an important factor in relation to border territories affecting economy and social sphere.

Geopolitical challenges affect reality perception by residents of border regions and pose a choice of the cultural world to which they want to belong to. Modern globalization processes are associated not only with economic and political processes but also with cultural self-identification and social relations stability structure. Migration flows exacerbate and actualize the issues of sociocultural characteristics of communities introducing a different cultural and spiritual-value component that could change the existing social, cultural and psychological settings of the host community.

Border regions interaction leads to “the interpenetration of cultures, their mutual enrichment, contributing to a new sociocultural cross-border space.” Transboundary sociocultural space is also considered as a variety of intercultural interactions of sociocultural practices.

At the Republic of Karelia, there are lots of attributes produced in Finnish language—a sociopolitical magazine “Carelia” and a monthly children's magazine “Kipinä” (“Sparkle”). A number of Russian-language media are also active in Finland, of which the largest local Russian-language newspaper is “Spektr.” Finnish

language training is carried out by the Department of Baltic-Finnish Philology at Petrozavodsk State University, at secondary schools and preschools, as well as in a number of commercial centers for foreign language study. There has been a tendency toward an increase in the number of children learning national languages. In preschool educational institutions in the academic year 2017–2018, Karelian, Veps and Finnish languages were studied by 1166 pupils, and at schools by 6820 pupils [8].

In North Karelia (Finland), Russian language is taught both at schools and higher educational institutions. In 2017, there were about 3881 foreign citizens from 106 countries in North Karelia, of which the largest were Russians (43.2%), the next largest were Estonians (5.2%) and Somalis and Thais (a total of 3.8%) [13]. About 2344 foreign citizens lived in Joensuu, of which 955 were from Russia with a total population of 76,067 people [14].

In the framework of cooperation with Finnish partners, permanent organizers of the events are the friendship societies Karelia-Finland and Finland-Russia, literature and concert programs and exhibitions, a week of Finnish cinema, and touring activities of creative groups. The National Theater of the Republic of Karelia is the only theater outside Finland where performances are staged in Finnish, Karelian and Russian languages.

The greatest manifestation of cross-border sociocultural specificity is observed in the following areas: culture and art, project activities, education, tourism and information space [8].

The border position of the Republic of Karelia (Russia) and North Karelia (Finland) contributes to everyday neighborhood practices development, new forms of interaction emergence based on past experience. Cross-border interaction has a positive effect on the development of good neighborly relations and activates local communities not only to create networks of cooperation and establish direct ties, but also to develop initiatives of local communities, increase mutual understanding, trust and awareness.

The increasing role of border and cross-border territories in terms of sociocultural space transformation causes a significant research interest.

#### **4. Finnish case of migrants' inclusion analysis into local environments: materials and methods**

This and the following sections are devoted to comprehensive studies of the Finnish case [15]: migrants' integration into local cultural and political environment as well as public diplomacy impact assessing an important tool of "soft power" where migrants' role is quite high.

Finland is highly attractive both from the point of view of migration impact upon local community and 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.

Since Russian diaspora in Finland is relatively significant, its communications are of certain interest from the point of view of public diplomacy instruments. Soft power is becoming an instrument not only for cross-border cooperation development but also for influencing identity and a serious resource of public diplomacy in promoting the "Russian world" abroad.

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

Nowadays (both in Russia and in the world), the research is not devoted enough to migrants' political communication. In particular, in Russia, political communication is scrutinized in the following areas: power as a political communication, political communication theory, sociology of political communication, psychological aspects of political communication, information security impact on political communication, political communication as a way to deploy political order events; political communication as an independent phenomenon not as a function, but as a process; use of information and communication technologies [16].

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 [1, 17–19].

The research is also dealing with Migrants Integration Policy Index developed according to Barcelona Center for International Affairs and Migration Policy Group [20–22]. This method embraces seven areas of migrants' integration: labor market mobility, family reunion, education, political participation, long-term residence, access to nationality and antidiscrimination (according to Migrant Integration Policy Index). Migrant integration policy index helps us to evaluate migrants' rights and well-being, analyze state migration policy and state's responsibility, as well as develop recommendations on migrants' integration policy. This article deals with one of the seventh 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 and date of entry are 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 are 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 are 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 (e.g., 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 dialog, use of sources of information through the Internet, political participation and social status. Secondary questions were related to international news, national government, economic news, community events, and editorial columns of the local news.

Official statistics both of the UN and national states is widely applied [6, 23]. Migrants' survey is the most important tool that allows to identify structural changes in society and to evaluate reasons for these changes [24]. Migrants' surveys allow to supplement and provide more detailed information on statistics obtained from public information sources.

## **5. Research results**

Among Northern Europe countries, Finland is of 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 has been recently adopted and announces the following principles [25]:

- Diversity will be valued as Finland's internationalization continues.
- Equality and equal opportunities will apply to everyone.
- Migration will enhance the well-being 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 January 1, 2015, an updated Finnish Non-Discrimination Act came into force authorizing the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman [26]. Nowadays, in Finland, there are Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Equality Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Children; all three institutions are also aimed at migration policy regulation.

According to Statistics Finland, Russians were the largest migration group till 2010 (29,500) [27]. For the last several years, the situation has changed. Russians (29,800) are the second largest group after Estonians (38,000). Today, migration flow in Finland is mainly represented with two largest groups of migrants: 49% of Estonians and 39% of Russians according to International Migration Outlook [28].

For the last 5 years (2010–2015), migration outflow has dried out from Russia to Finland. For a long period starting from 1990s till 2010 (about 20 years), basic reasons for active labor migration in Finland were the following: Inkeri Finns repatriation, international marriages and refugees. However, currently, Finnish immigration policy is changing drastically-foreign labor 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 July 1, 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 [29]-any citizen of any state has a right to take part in municipal elections. There are however additional two conditions such as the living status in the municipality in which the vote is held (at least 51 days before election day) and staying in Finland for at least 2 years.

Let us 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 to both develop and prepare based on 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 the obtained data demand 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, and 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 the interview, it became clear that 45% of respondents were not interested in politics ("idle respondents"); 45% who became "active respondents" were actively using political communication channels [media, social networks, Internet, TV and social circles (family and job)]. About 10% of respondents were rather negative toward politics ("blocking respondents"): "I am interested only in my close people; I do not see any reason to spend my time on politics." About 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, three 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 into two further groups:

- Those who actually like to discuss politics with peers
- 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 correlates 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 in it but would not initiate it themselves. Politics for them is a parallel world in which they never seek to interfere, but always watch how it changes.

**Blocking respondent:** Mentioning politics brings negative emotions to members of this group. They generally have a skeptic approach toward political affairs. They would not participate in 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.

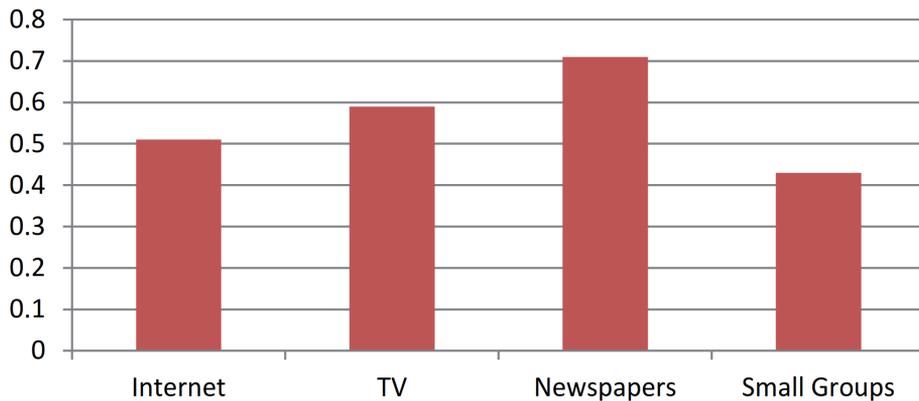
Four main channels of receiving political information by Russian migrants in Finland-Internet, TV, newspapers and social circles-were outlined. It should be noted that information obtained by Russian migrants living in Finland is performed through a wide range of channels. However, another peculiar feature should also be mentioned. Thus, for some respondents who do not know Finnish language or possess low knowledge of it, 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" and "Russian Finland," and 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 four channels:

1. Newspapers (both printed and electronic) are divided into three groups
  - Russian newspapers: "Novaya gazeta," "Argumenty I facty" and "Snob"
  - Finnish daily newspaper "Aamulehti" (second popular newspaper in Finland after "HelsinginSanomat" 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 and 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 are Newsru.com, Yandex.ru, Euronews, Facebook, Vkontakte and Odnoklassniki.
4. Small groups-another popular method of respondents' political communication with coworkers and family members.

Migrants' survey 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 newspaper reading and participation in discussions motivate to participate in political activities [30]. At the same time, it prevents from viewing



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

entertainment television programs. 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 on 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.

**Figure 6** shows the mean intensity of migrants' political communication depending on the type of source.

It is visible from **Figure 6** that political communication is getting more intensive when a migrant gets information from newspapers. In part, this might be due to the predominant position of Finnish newspapers that usually publish many details on municipality/city life in Finland. The second place goes to TV and the 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 migrants need support or assistance.

## 6. Discussion

The chapter analyzed the interaction of the target group with ambient environment, and cause-and-effect relationship together with factors influencing respondents' behavior is outlined.

According to the study of Mutz and Mondak [31], the most likely place for the policy debate is a working place. However, data obtained under the interview indicate 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 avoided.

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 and young migrants in a labor 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 the political arena.

Senior migrants often lack language skills and socialization experience in the new society (no work and no new education) and 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 preretirement 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 they have to use the dictionary constantly.

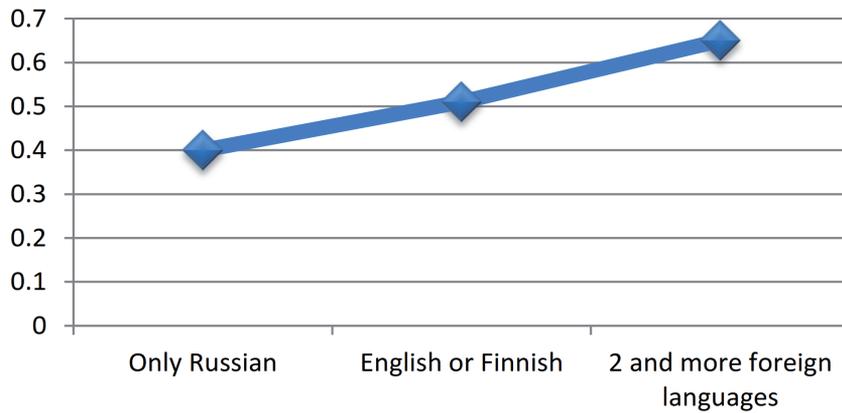
Migrants' survey results confirmed previously identified relationship between the level of education and breadth of political interests (see [32, 33]) and have showed that migrants with higher education seek to educate a wider range of political topics. They used a wider range of information, including 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.

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

**Figure 7** shows that migrants' political communication intensity is higher if a migrant knows one or more foreign languages; accordingly, he/she has an opportunity to get acquainted with a wide range of multilingual sources.



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

These results confirm the theory of Sotirovich and McLeod [30] 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 [34]).

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% and “blocking”—10%.
- Relationship is found between the 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 the number of foreign languages and migrants’ political communication intensity is found.
- The following priorities for the use of political information sources among migrants are identified: Internet, 64%; TV, 45%; newspapers, 27%; and small groups, 18%.
- The impact of various information channels on political communication intensity of Russian immigrants in Finland is estimated.
- The 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.

## 7. Conclusion

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

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

Theoretically, the research allowed both analyzing such an important aspect of migration policy as migrants' political communication and identifying its key features.

Interviews with migrants helped to understand the mechanism between political communications and shifts in local society.

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 and to provide the basis for decision-making on effective use of public diplomacy tools. The growth of anthropogenic mobiles (movement of people and influence of cultures) is a phenomenon with many security contexts: it aggravates interethnic and interreligious contradictions between different ethnocultural groups of the population, increases social tension and defragments local community through ethnic enclaves' formation.

Sociocultural space is considered to be an area of culture, norms and values, cross-cultural interactions. It is important to understand how ethnic group (subethnic group and local community) is able to maintain homeostasis in social relations structure and its recognizable ethnocultural profile—a kind of gestalt. This term undermines as a "structure," "image," "form" and "integrity."

Thus, we have not just a certain sum of social relations but some kind of stable semantic and visual constructions, a contour made up of identity markers—the "gravity center" for the Russian world gestalt.

A debatable question thus arises: how stable these semantic constructions are and how a subethnos that is a subject both to external and internal factors is able to maintain its "gestalt"? In a paper [35], a number of reasons listed to upset social relations structure in relation to other ethnocultural groups/religions and united by a single cultural code are presented by the example of Karelia. By virtue of its genesis, this core has not only a solid fundamental (invariant) part but also a variable part that evolves under the influence of various factors. Invariants (empirically measured identification features that remain relatively unchanged in temporal and spatial dimensions) and inversions of sociocultural space are revealed. In particular, Protestant, Catholic and Muslim inversions were identified in a sociocultural landscape of Karelia, where the Orthodox Christian faith dominates overwhelmingly.

In conclusion, we came up with the main two principal results.

Firstly, identity factors together with cooperation culture are critical (in relation to border area development). It is necessary to promote consolidation of local community in Russian ideological spirit and its cultural codes expansion given that the cooperation development leads to local communities' consolidation within the framework of cross-border structures in changing geopolitical conditions in order to protect national interests.

In this regard, soft power tools' application is important. Promotion of markers, in our opinion, is of public diplomacy. Its task is the development of the civilizational cultural code "Russian world" (people get a whole attractive civilizational image of the Russian world).

The basis of this thesis is the assertion that we cannot perceive the world around us directly—a person always interacts in a communication process.

Thus, social communication, on one hand, is a conscious, targeted and appropriate informational impact on partners, which can be either an individual person or groups of people who participate, or are going to participate in joint activities. On the other hand, it is a complex multifaceted process of establishing and developing contacts between people, connecting people not only with the information transfer but also with practical actions, elements of mutual understanding, feelings and emotions. Therefore, from political communications analysis, it follows that gestalt transmission requires the following elements for a communication diplomacy model: (1) a generator (encodes a semantic or visual construction); (2) message translator—translates encoded information; (3) channel—means of transmitting information; and (4) recipient—a person to whom the information is intended and who decodes it in a given sense.

Secondly, the border appears to be such kind of a zone where the development vector is aimed at economic and cultural space communications. At the same time, the border is not only a zone of cross-cultural communications but also of institutional matrices' conjugation where communications are carried out.

Currently, more than 160 Russian municipalities are partnering with more than 750 foreign local territories. At the same time, communication is being built in not a very convenient multiformat with different institutions, powers and partners functioning. Therefore, on the basis of cross-border interaction studies, it was concluded that in order to unify the procedure for local authorities to implement cross-border relations it is advisable to harmonize regulatory institutions and use public diplomacy tools to promote cultural code and organize effective cross-cultural communications.

## **Conflict of interest**

The authors whose names are listed immediately above certify that they have NO affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest (such as honoraria; educational grants; participation in speakers' bureaus; membership, employment, consultancies, stock ownership, or other equity interest; and expert testimony or patent-licensing arrangements) or nonfinancial interest (such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, knowledge or beliefs) in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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