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## Development of Theoretical Provisions on the Adaptation and Integration of Migrants

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*Recently, the terms “adaptation and integration of migrants” are often found in scientific and public literature. However, there is still no unified opinion and clear understanding of the essence and content of these concepts, their distinctive features, which negatively affects the formation and implementation of the state policy of adaptation and integration of migrants and requires development of theoretical provisions on these processes.*

*The purpose of this article is to develop theoretical provisions on the adaptation and integration of migrants, as well as on the state policy of adaptation and integration, the formation of a holistic view of these phenomena and processes.*

*The article is devoted to the theoretical understanding of such concepts as adaptation of migrants, integration of migrants, state policy of adaptation and integration of foreign citizens. The author’s vision of these phenomena is also presented. In the course of the study, general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis were used, as well as a systematic approach, methods of comparisons, etc.*

*The conclusion of the article contains the main theoretical positions that form a systemic view on the adaptation and integration of migrants, the state policy of adaptation and integration, which create a holistic view on these processes.*

*Keywords: migration, migration processes, migration policy, adaptation, integration, state policy of adaptation and integration, theoretical provision on adaptation and integration of migrants.*

*Research area: sociology.*

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## **Introduction**

In the face of growing global migration of the population on the planet, the issues of social adaptation and integration of migrants have become the most important topic of foreign and Russian scientific research. Such international organizations as the UN, the IOM, as well as a large number of regional and national scientific, educational and scientific centres work in this direction. Scientists analyse the most relevant social problems of adaptation and integration, including forecasting and evaluating the success of the socio-economic development of modern states. This article attempts to develop theoretical views and ideas about the processes of adaptation and integration of migrants.

## **Theoretical framework**

A large number of scientific papers are devoted to the problems of population migration and the issues of adaptation and integration of migrants (Mukomel, 2016). Among them, some of the works are focused on theoretical understanding of world population mobility (Shenfeldt, 2018; Tormosheva, 2018; Bernard, 2017). Another part of works is devoted to the problems of refugees in Europe (Bernard, 2017). There are works on the following issues: illegal migration (Eule, 2018), internal migration (Piper, 2018; Van Hear, 2018), internal labour migration (Schapendonk, 2018; McCollum, 2018; Preibisch, 2016) and international labour migration (Piper, 2018). The scientific article “Social capital and acculturation strategies from the Central and Central Asia in the Moscow region” (Tatarko, 2018) analyses the influence of the social capital of migrants on the choice of their sociocultural adaptation strategy, while the issues of theoretical understanding of the essence of sociocultural adaptation were not considered in the work. A number of scientific articles (Potudanskaia, Borovskikh, Kipervar, 2018; Venhorst, 2018) raised issues of staffing labour migration, as well as the gender issues. The scientific article “Pursuing the capabilities approach within the migration – development nexus” (Karachurina, 2018) analyses the problems of state migration policy.

The authors of the above-mentioned scientific works, like many other scientists, considered the aspects of adaptation and integration of migrants that were interesting

only at the empirical level, without delving into theoretical arguments about their content. As a result, these concepts have not evolved for a long time and, in the end, their semantic meanings did not reflect the real processes of adaptation and integration in the new conditions. This circumstance actualizes the need to develop theoretical views and ideas about the adaptation and integration of migrants.

### **Statement of the problem**

Despite the heightened interest of scientists in the processes under study, unfortunately, up to the present time there has not been formed a single opinion regarding their essence and content. In the scientific literature and state acts, the terms *adaptation* and *integration* of migrants are always used together, without any clear conceptual distinction between them. For this reason, there are distorted ideas about these processes, which complicates the development of migration legislation, adversely affects the state policy of adaptation and integration of foreign citizens, as well as the work of local governments with migrants. All this points to a *problem*: many states, including Russia, amid growing migration and threats caused by it, came up with a need to modernize the policy of adaptation and integration of migrants, which cannot be successfully implemented due to the low theoretical level of understanding of these processes. The solution to this problem is seen in the development of theoretical views and ideas about the adaptation and integration of immigrants as the final stage of migration processes.

### **Methods**

Our research is based on general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, system analysis of the study of social phenomena and processes, the method of comparison. The authors used the concepts of the social environment, socio-cultural systems and migrant communities.

### **Main part**

**Adaptation of migrants** (from Latin – *adaptatio*). Many researchers understand it as a **process of person's adjustment to new living conditions** (Adaptation, 2018), where the key word is "*adjustment*".

No one doubts that migrants themselves are the **object of adaptation**. It is they who adapt to local conditions. In our opinion, almost all categories of migrants have to adapt: *return migrants* (labour, forced migrants who decide to go back to their

homeland when there will be favourable conditions for returning) and *non-return migrants* (voluntary migrants, migrants under state programs, forced migrants who decide to become citizens of a new country). An exception may be transit migrants, business travellers, tourists and some other categories of migrants who do not have any reason to adapt to local conditions. *Illegal migrants* also tend to adapt, but their adaptation is mostly criminal in nature, which is a subject for special study.

Today, the following point of view dominates in respect of the *subjects of adaptation*: migrants are an object of adaptation, and the state is a subject of adaptation of migrants. In our opinion, this point of view represents adaptation too simplistically and distorts the essence of this process. In our opinion, the composition of subjects of adaptation of migrants is much broader.

**Subjects of adaptation.** *The main subjects of adaptation* are the migrants themselves. Despite the fact that they are related to objects of adaptation, at the same time they are actors of this process. It is the migrants when deciding to migrate to another country and coming to a new place of stay/residence who are interested in quick adaptation to new conditions; it is they who are making monumental efforts to overcome adaptation problems. The result of adaptation largely depends on the will of a migrant, his ability to adapt to the new environment.

In our opinion, the following entities are also *subjects of adaptation*: 1) state; 2) local governments; 3) local population of the territories of migrant settlements; 4) public and political organizations dealing with the problems of migration; 5) business structures; 6) migration environment in the territory of settlement, etc.

Each of the subjects listed above forms its own adaptation expectations, pursues its own goals in the process of adaptation.

The main goal of *migrant's* adaptation is to **get comfortable** in the new habitat by solving the following *tasks*:

- 1) to feel familiar with the new environment;
- 2) to stay/reside in the territory of settlement without conflict;
- 3) to productively carry out labour or other activities in accordance with the goal of entry into the country;
- 4) to achieve the goal of migration, for example, to earn a certain amount of money (for labour migrants), to become a citizen of the country of residence (for immigrants), etc.

*Adaptation is necessary for a migrant so that he and his family members can **get used** to the new environment as quickly as possible.* Otherwise, conditions for conflict situations inevitably arise: conflicts with local population, employers, government

officials and representatives of the migration diasporas. And, as a result, the migrant's dissatisfaction with his position deepens, which is fraught with radicalization of his moods, manifestations of extremism and terrorism, as well as high risks of his transition to illegal migration.

In terms of content, the adaptation process has a multi-vector character. Modern scientists identify the following types of adaptation: climatic (adaptation to the climatic conditions of the territory of settlement); political and legal (adaptation to the peculiarities of political and legal relations of the territories of settlement); economic (adaptation to economic conditions); socio-cultural (adaptation to the socio-cultural environment of the host society); biomedical; other types of adaptation.

Adaptation of a migrant for each type allows him to solve the tasks confidently enough and, eventually, to get used to the new conditions.

*For the state, the main goal of adaptation* is to order the processes of adaptation of migrants in the interests of the socio-economic development of the country and its territories, ensuring state and public security, respect for the rights of migrants and citizens.

*For local governments, the main goal of adaptation* is to ensure quick and high-quality adaptation of migrants to the conditions of the territories of settlement in the interests of the socio-economic development of the territories and the non-conflict stay/residence of migrants among the local population. Local governments participate in the implementation of the state adaptation programs and, at the same time, independently work with migrants. The work is carried out directly with migrants, as well as with other subjects of adaptation: government agencies, population, public organizations, business structures, migration environment.

*For the local population, the main goal of adaptation* is to preserve the existing living conditions in the environment of the influx of foreign citizens, respectful attitude of migrants to the traditions and customs of the local population. For the local population, it is important to establish conflict-free communications with migrants in the process of their labour activity and ensure safety of the migration environment. The local population significantly affects the adaptation processes of migrants. Tolerant and positive perception of migrants significantly speeds up the process of their adaptation, and vice versa, negative attitude hinders the adaptation processes of foreign citizens.

*For public organizations involved in migration processes, the main goal of adaptation* is to assist migrants in solving problems related to adaptation. Public

organizations provide effective assistance to migrants in overcoming the difficulties of adaptation, designate and confront the authorities with the most pressing adaptation problems and provide public services to migrants through outsourcing.

*For business structures, the main goal of adaptation* is the ability to use migrants as a labour force as quickly as possible. Business structures provide migrants with jobs and establish a mode of their work.

It is not yet necessary to talk about *goals of the migration environment regarding the adaptation of migrants* due to the extreme heterogeneity of the environment itself. However, it is important to note that the migration environment in the territory of settlement always has strong influence on the adaptation processes. Among his compatriots, a migrant gains knowledge and skills he needs more quickly, with the help of compatriots he quickly overcomes adaptation difficulties and quickly begins to orient himself in a new environment. But sometimes the migration environment negatively affects the adaptation processes of migrants. Most often it happens when migrants join the ranks of illegal migration and get themselves involved in the criminal migration environment. In this case, they begin to pose danger to society.

Based on the above, the definition of “migrant adaptation” can be clarified. **Adaptation of a migrant** is a complex process of migrant’s adjustment to conditions of the host society, in the course of which the migrant seeks to **settle** in his new habitat. This definition reflects the essence of the adaptation process in modern realities more accurately. Adaptation takes place under the influence of the active activities of many subjects (actors), each of which tries to give its vector to the development of the process. This circumstance largely determines the nature and end result of adaptation.

**Integration of immigrants.** This concept in its essence and content is significantly different from adaptation. The term “integration” is derived from Latin – combination of any parts into a whole. In Russia and abroad, it is used to denote the process of inclusion of migrants in the host society (Adaptation, 2018). In scientific literature, there are various definitions of integration. Some scientists understand it as “*structural integration* – inclusion of migrants in the system of positions and statuses of the host society through gaining citizenship, participation in the labour market, the education system and social security” (Varshaver, Rocheva, 2018). Others view integration in three aspects: as “...*assimilation* (complete dissolution in the population of the host country); *cultural adaptation* to their new environment (migrants are not expected to abandon any manifestations of cultural background associated with their country of origin); *structural adaptation* of migrants to the new environment (a degree of their

involvement in the life of the host country when migrants practically do not differ from the majority of the local population by objective socio-economic indicators)” (Malakhov, 2015; Ledeneva, 2014) There are many other definitions of migrant integration. For example, I. Ivakhniuk considers it inappropriate to oppose the concepts of “adaptation” and “integration”, because adaptation, in her opinion, is one of the forms of the broader concept of integration. “Integration begins with adaptation. Integration can settle on adaptation or go further” (Ivakhniuk, 2015). In our opinion, this view of integration copies the Western approach to integration without clear delineation of adaptation and integration measures. Apparently, this approach is not entirely rational. Paired application of these two concepts, without pointing out their features, distorts the idea of the processes themselves. There is confusion in concepts and, as a result, a vague integration policy. Perhaps this approach was one of the reasons for the failure of the integration policy in Germany, France and Sweden.

Thus, it is necessary to state the fact that all the above definitions of integration do not form a clear idea of the essence of this process in the mind of a person. In our opinion, from the point of view of perception of the semantic meaning of this term, the following definition is the most successful: *integration of migrants is the activity of a certain subject/ subjects to **incorporate immigrants** into the structure of socio-cultural and economic relations of the host society*. Figuratively speaking, immigrants are like a foreign object in the body of the host society. Their integration seems like the activity of a certain subject/ subjects to implant a foreign body into the organism of the host society. Starting from this image of integration, we will define an object and subjects of this process.

Migrants are the **object of integration**. However, unlike the adaptation process, where the main objects are return and non-return immigrants, the objects of integration, in our opinion, are only those immigrants who have decided to permanently move to the receiving country and become its citizens, namely *non-return immigrants*. It makes no sense for the state to implant temporary workers (return migrants) into the socio-cultural organism of the host society, since sooner or later they will leave the receiving country. That is why it is quite enough for returnees to go through the process of adaptation to local conditions (to adjust), and migrants (return migrants) need not only to adapt to local conditions, but also to integrate into the receiving society, to become its integral part. This is the fundamental difference between our proposed approach to considering the integration of migrants from the Western approach, where the concept of integration applies to all categories of migrants (return and non-return). We believe that the use of the proposed approach in the migration policy of the state



will significantly reduce government spendings on the integration of foreign citizens (a significant proportion of migrants, namely return ones, will be excluded from the number of state-integrated migrants), which will improve the quality of adaptation and integration processes.

**The subjects of migrant integration** are: a state, local governments, public organizations, business structures, local population, and migrant environment in resettlement areas. Unlike the adaptation process, where a migrant himself is the main subject, *a state is the main actor of integration*. It is the state that establishes the legal norms of integration, determines how migrants are to be integrated into the structure of sociocultural relations of the host society, and establishes integration procedures. The remaining subjects of integration (local governments, public organizations, business structures, and the migration environment in resettlement areas) can only assist the state in the implementation of integration policies.

**Stages of migrant integration.** In our opinion, the process of integration of migrants should go through several stages: 1) a stage of stay/residence of a migrant in the status of a temporary residing foreign citizen (persons without citizenship); 2) a stage of stay/residence of a migrant in the status of a permanently residing foreign citizen (persons without citizenship); 3) residence of a migrant in the status of a citizen of the receiving country.

In Russia and many other countries, it is considered that gaining citizenship automatically means the completion of the process of integration of a migrant. In our opinion, this approach is not entirely correct. As practice shows, the integration process is sufficiently long in time, most of the non-return migrants continue to integrate even after gaining citizenship. According to American scientists, only the third generation of migrants can fully integrate into the host society.

For migrants who have decided to become a citizen of the receiving country (non-return migrants), but not adapted to local conditions, the first step towards integration should be the stage of their adaptation. In this case, adaptation should be considered as part of the integration process.

**Goals of integration.** For immigrants, as well as any foreign object in a body, there are two possible outcomes in the integration process: 1) rejection by the receiving society; 2) implantation in the social organism. Hence, for the state, there are two integration settings:

*An immediate goal of integration:* to prevent the rejection of migrants by the host society;



*An ultimate goal:* to integrate migrants into the structure of the political, economic and socio-cultural ties of the local population at lower cost and without conflicts, so that they become embraced by strangers.

**Integration models.** To achieve these goals, modern states apply various integration models in their integration policy. Western countries mainly use the multicultural model, which suggests the possibility of long-term coexistence of different cultures. In the process of integration, cultures of migrants and the local population slowly but gradually come closer, mutually penetrating into each other. This is an evolutionary path of integration. In our opinion, the multicultural model works quite well when a relatively small and controlled influx of immigrants enters the country. When mass and poorly controlled immigration occurs, as it has happened in European countries in recent years, the multicultural model shows its inconsistency. In this case, there is enclavization of migrants, radicalization of migratory moods, extremism raises its head, there are riots in the cities, and sometimes it takes national scale. This is confirmed by the mass popular unrest that occurred in Australia, Germany and France, caused by the discontent of the local population with the high level of crime in the migration environment. Apparently, therefore, today in the West there are more and more people who think that the multicultural model has shown its inconsistency, and demands are being made to look for other integration models.

In recent years, the integration model has become increasingly interesting. This model involves the integration of migrants into society according to pre-developed state and municipal integration programs (for example, programs for resettlement of migrants in the country, harmonization of migration relations; educational programs; programs for recruitment of migrants to military service, in-depth study of the receiving country language, etc.). It should be noted that the integration model is free from many shortcomings of the multicultural model, but at the same time it is more costly and requires more financial, material and other investments in the migration policy of the state. Unfortunately, in Russia, there are practically no programs for the integration of migrants; basically the case is limited to adaptation measures, and the integration of migrants at the stage of obtaining Russian citizenship is not considered at all.

## Conclusion

Summing up, it should be noted that in Russia, as in many other countries, the need to modernize the policy of adaptation and integration of migrants is largely constrained by the low level of theoretical understanding of the adaptation and integration of

migrants, the most important part of migration processes. The theoretical statements presented in this article develop and clarify ideas about these processes. Their use can give impetus to the further improvement of the state policy of adaptation and integration of migrants and migration legislation, which will reduce the risk of many manifestations of migration threats, including extremism and terrorism in migration processes.

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## **Развитие теоретических положений об адаптации и интеграции мигрантов**

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*В последнее время в научной и публицистической литературе часто встречаются термины «адаптация мигрантов» и «интеграция мигрантов». Однако в среде ученых до сих пор не сложилось единого мнения и четкого представления о сути и содержании данных понятий, их отличительных чертах, что негативно сказывается на формировании и реализации государственной политики адаптации и интеграции мигрантов и требует развития теоретических положений об этих процессах.*

*Целью данной статьи служит развитие теоретических положений об адаптации и интеграции мигрантов, а также о государственной политике адаптации и интеграции, формирование целостного представления об этих явлениях и процессах.*

*В статье проведено исследование на предмет теоретического осмысления понятий «адаптация мигрантов», «интеграция мигрантов», представлено авторское видение этих явлений. В ходе исследования использованы общенаучные методы анализа и синтеза, а также системный подход, методы сравнений и др.*

*Вывод статьи содержит предложение о применении авторских теоретических положений в государственной миграционной политике.*

*Ключевые слова: миграция, миграционные процессы, миграционная политика, адаптация, интеграция, государственная политика адаптации и интеграции, теоретические положения об адаптации и интеграции мигрантов.*

*Научная специальность: 22.00.00 – социологические науки.*

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