

## Socio-spatial diversity of Marseille at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century

**Anna Grzegorzcyk**

University of Warsaw, Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies Institute of Regional and Global Studies,  
Karowa 20, 00-324 Warsaw, Poland; phone: +48 225 523 237, fax: +48 225 523 227, e-mail: [anna.torbicz@uw.edu.pl](mailto:anna.torbicz@uw.edu.pl)

Grzegorzcyk, A., 2012: Socio-spatial diversity of Marseille at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.  
In: Szymańska, D. and Biegańska, J. editors, *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-economic Series*, No. 17, Toruń:  
Nicolaus Copernicus University Press, pp. 45–55. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/v10089-012-0005-5>

**Abstract.** In recent years, cities have significantly changed due to globalisation processes that influence also social aspects of their functioning. Hence, immigrant inflows are observed, social segregation and polarisation significantly increase, and city space is transformed by gentrification processes. Social conflicts seem to be an integral part of the functioning of contemporary cities, what can be seen on the example of French cities. The aim of the article is to show socio-spatial diversity of Marseille, the second largest city of France, with the largest port serving as an economic and immigrant gateway to the country, and as a consequence, making the city prone to socio-spatial restructuring. The study involves the analysis of the demographic and socio-economic diversity of the city's ZUS (*zones urbaines sensibles*) – districts delimited by local councils as objectives of urban policy due to social problems concentrated there. They are concentrated in the 'triangle of poverty' of Marseille. The districts highly populated by immigrants represent at the same time the highest level of deprivation. This residential segregation involves mainly Maghrebians. These foreigners overrepresented in the lowest social classes and in the poorest districts are an ethnoclass prone to ghettoisation. However, in contrast to other French cities, social conflicts that burst into riots of the *banlieue* were almost absent in Marseille in 2005. The reasons for this are the historically determined central location of the deprived districts and failure of the gentrification process, and the policy of local authorities.

### Article details:

Received: 15 November 2011  
Revised: 02 February 2012  
Accepted: 21 March 2012

### Key words:

France, Marseille,  
socio-spatial diversity,  
immigrants, ethnoclass,  
ghettoisation, gentrification.

© 2012 Nicolaus Copernicus University Press. All rights reserved.

### Contents:

1. Introduction .....	46
2. Material and research results .....	47
2.1. Social dynamics in Marseille .....	47
2.2. ZUS – zones urbaines sensible .....	49
2.3. Social diversity of zus in Marseille .....	50
2.4. Marseille's socio-spatial structure .....	53
3. Conclusions .....	54
References .....	55

## 1. Introduction

The aim of the article is to present socio-spatial diversity of Marseille, with the focus on ZUS (*zones urbaines sensibles*) districts, and to reveal the city's socio-spatial particularity, where in spite of significant foreigners presence, social tensions are weaker. The analysis is conducted for the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where strong transformations are present due to processes characteristic for the globalisation era, i.e.: immigrant inflow, revitalisation and gentrification of inner city, and growing social segregation and polarisation. These processes are deeply evident in Marseille, the second largest city in France and the largest port city, which additionally is located in the south of the country and in the north of the whole Mediterranean region – the gateway open to other countries, also to the Poor South.

G. Węclawowicz (2007) after P. Knox describes the following most significant differences between cities' socio-spatial diversity in North America and Europe: (a) the time of city's foundation and its influence on the physical structure; (b) the importance of minorities in cities; (c) the level of centralisation of city management and the delivery of services; (d) the role of state model; (e) and lastly, the role of spatial planning ideologies. Additionally, France in particular, unlike Anglo-Saxon and other European countries, was the first one to start substituting the state model for the community model as early as in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to this model, it is the state rather than the community that delivers services to the city's inhabitants, causing its cultural unification (Szul, 2011). Hence greater ethnic segregation and socio-spatial diversity in American cities in comparison to European ones and particularly French (and other Roman ones).

Multiethnicity is a characteristic feature of metropolises, what is a consequence of recent mass immigration of people of different origins who have not yet acquired the features of the host society. For example, W. Żelazny (2011) estimates that nowadays France, populated by approximately 65 million people, would have 20 million inhabitants fewer, taking the end of the First World War as a base year, if mass immigration had not taken place. France, an immigration country since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, hosted immigrants from Italy and Belgium, later from Spain, Portugal, Italy, Russia, Armenia, Greece, Poland, and Turkey (Gsir, 2007). After the Second World War these were mainly Algerians and immigrants from

Spain, Portugal, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Tunisia, and Morocco who came to settle in France. Nowadays, immigrants constitute 8% of the French population, which is almost 5 million people, 2 million of whom have the French nationality (INSEE, 2011). R. Szul (2011) distinguishes two types of metropolises: former imperial capital cities and current economy and services centres. Paris is the French example of the first type, where the waves of immigrants started during colonial times and continued in the decolonisation period (former colonies authorities, settlers, colonial authorities' co-operators and their families). This trend was strengthened by social and multiethnic policies. Hence racial and cultural diversity of Paris is observed. Being the second largest city and the first port, Marseille has features of both types of metropolises. On the one hand, the immigrants from the former colonies constitute an important part of the city's demographic structure, on the other hand there are immigrants who have been moving as a consequence of socio-economic attractiveness of the city. Their social profile is often very similar to that from the first group: less-educated, working on lower levels of job hierarchy and earning less, who are additionally willing to become permanent settlers, even though they had not been considered as permanent immigrants by the French state. This group of immigrants may be increased by the newcomers from Central Europe. The other group of immigrants also characteristic for the second type of metropolises, so-called metropolitan class (international institutions and corporations workers, well-educated and well-paid), is less numerous in Marseille, which is mainly the consequence of the city's dominant economic function. However, the situation may change in the future. Nowadays concentrations of metropolitan class are seen for instance in Strasbourg.

In France, assimilation (integration) policy is conducted (in opposition to multicultural/indifference policy) (a) by *ius soli* principle (automatic French citizenship for those born in France); (b) by school system, which is common, free, laic and in French also for illegal immigrants; and (c) by republican values (Szul, 2011). According to Jules Ferry Law, education is an important agent of integration. This policy has its origins in the French Revolution, it is a part of the French state centralisation system (*le jacobinisme*) and it was effective until a huge wave of immigration from outside the European cultural circle started. The significance of integration is revealed for example in the lack of statistical data concerning national or ethnic minorities who are not accepted by the state. Nevertheless, there was no specific integration policy

until 2002, when a special contract for foreigners (CAI – *Contrat d'accueil et d'integration*) was introduced. Nowadays, integration has been limited due to housing and social policies, both of which contributed to spatial concentration of impoverished people, mainly immigrants, in housing estates of *banlieues*, causing socio-economic segregation. Furthermore, strong foreign accent or lack of knowledge of the language, difficulties in acquiring job qualifications, and comparing the living standards between different class groups (not with the country of origin in the case of immigrants, like it used to be for the first generation newcomers) cause frustration and violence among immigrants' children. Cultural integration, defined as identification with the host country and acceptance of social rules, is inhibited (Szul, 2011). This reveals the weakness of the state which responds to the new situation using restrictions against newcomers and forced integration. It is also connected to the society's approach towards newcomers. W. Żelazny (2011) shows, after C. Beauchemin's research concerning autodeclaration of the discrimination acts, that 40% of immigrants and their children, that is, every second immigrant in comparison to every seventh French citizen, were victims of discrimination. The worst situation was among visible minorities, i.e.: the Africans and Arabs, and to a lower extent among the Turks and the Vietnamese. Only 13% of all respondents reported the discrimination acts to the police, which also reveals the immigrants' belief in the state's protection and strength. According to W. Żelazny (2011), affirmation of the immigrants' identity is a consequence of the rejection of their culture by the French society.

The socio-economic disintegration passes across ethnic divisions; however, certain ethnic groups are overrepresented in particular socio-economic classes and city districts. In France, for instance, the unemployment rate increased by 275% between 1975 and 1990 among the French citizens, and by 400% among the French residents, who are in fact mainly ethnic minorities (Żelazny, 2011). New phenomena are then seen: ethnoclass defined as a high correlation between ethnic and socio-economic groups participation with ethnic groups being often disconnected from the social rights, and ghettoisation, that is ethnoclass concentration in city's space (Szul, 2011). Hence differentiation of socio-spatial structure of French cities that used to be more unified. The article analyses its extent in Marseille.

## 2. Material and research results

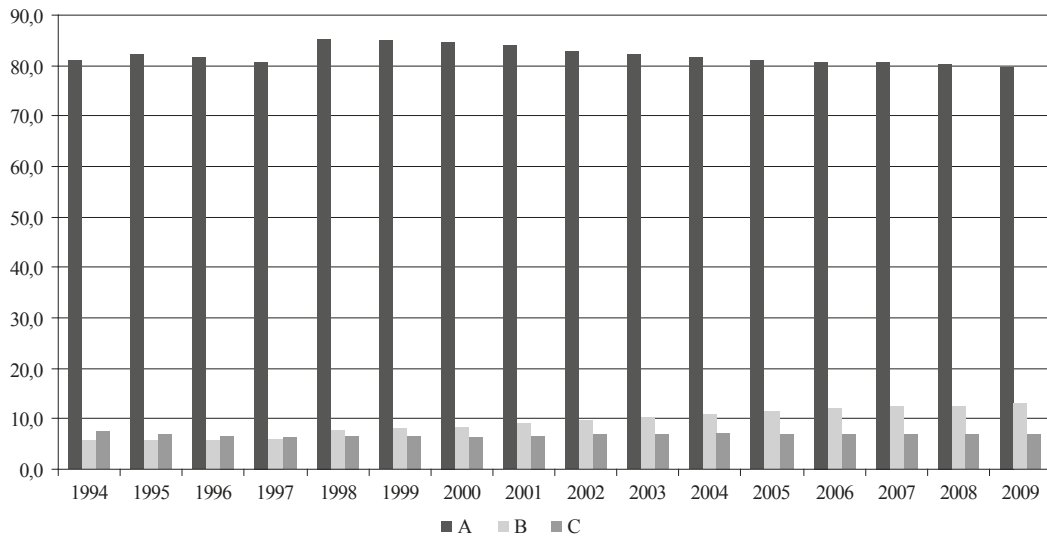
### 2.1. Social dynamics in Marseille

Marseille, like the whole region in which it is located, attracts immigrants of different origins and characteristics, hence its population has increased significantly since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, causing the socio-economic gap to deepen. The immigrants are the retired from France and other countries, French repatriates from Algeria after 1962, and employees from the Mediterranean region and other French regions. At the turn of 1980s, the trend ceased, mainly due to out-migration from the city reaching –1.3% in the 1990s, caused by the industry crises. The natural increase remained positive, oscillating between 0.2% in the 1970s–1990s period and 0.5% in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Recently the increase of the population is visible again, as a result of both natural increase and in-migration. However, the rate of foreigners remains lower in comparison to other French important cities. In 2007 there were 852,396 inhabitants in the city (INSEE, 2011).

In Marseille, there are around 5% of foreigners and 15% of inhabitants with French nationality who are born abroad, so 20% of people have migration background (Gsir, 2007). There is a steady increase of persons having one parent who is French and one coming from abroad, while the percentage of people having both parents French or foreign remains similar with some fluctuations (Fig. 1). The greatest part of foreigners comes from Africa, followed by Europe (Fig. 2). Among those, the Portuguese, Algerian and Moroccan are the most numerous (Fig. 3). The greatest waves of the Maghrebians and the Algerian-born French (so-called *pieds-noirs*) arrived to the city in the 1960s and 1970s.

There is no municipal integration policy targeted at foreigners but Marseille develops integration measures aiming at reintegrating deprived neighbourhoods and eradicating urban and social exclusion by urban contracts and large city projects (more: Gsir, 2007).

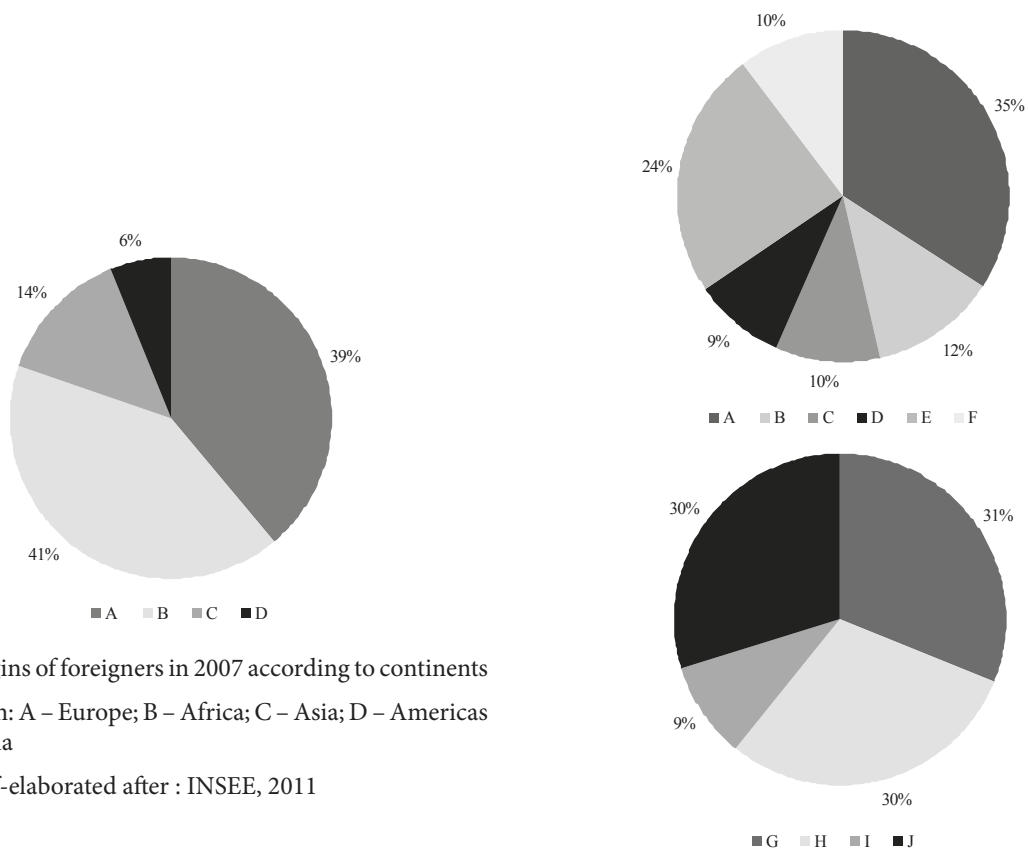
The size of households has been decreasing steadily since the 1960s, from 2.9 in 1968 to 2.3 in 2007. In the same year, the percentage of married and singles was similar – 42% and 41%, respectively. The share of single-parent families and couples without children increased to 22% and 37% respectively, while the share of couples with children decreased to 41%. The share of families with children just over 1 child has increased since 1999 (INSEE, 2011).



**Fig. 1.** Births according to parents' origins

Explanation: A – both French parents; B – French and foreign parent; C – both foreign parents

Source: Self-elaborated after : INSEE, 2011



**Fig. 2.** Origins of foreigners in 2007 according to continents

Explanation: A – Europe; B – Africa; C – Asia; D – Americas and Oceania

Source: Self-elaborated after : INSEE, 2011

**Fig. 3.** Origins of European and African foreigners in 2007

Explanation: A – Portugal; B – Italy; C – Great Britain; D – Spain; E – other EU-27 nationalities; F – other European nationalities; G – Algeria; H – Morocco; I – Tunisia; J – other African nationalities

Source: Self-elaborated after : INSEE, 2011

Primary places of residence have increased to 92% in 2007, while the share of second, occasional and vacant ones declined. In comparison to 1999 also the size of places of residence changed – only the share of places with 2 and 5 or more rooms increased. The share of places of residence inhabited by proprietors remained the same but those rented – increased at the expense of those inhabited for free. After Paris, Marseille has the highest costs for private rents, i.e. 11.3 € per square metre (Gsir, 2007). Also prices of new housing increased significantly. On the contrary, incomes of the population increased at a much slower rate, which is approximately 2,000 € monthly. As a result, 62% of households could apply for social housing or purchase dilapidated one (which means without bath or shower, or without a proper toilet) in private market – 17% in Marseille housing stock (Gsir, 2007). Although there are 22,000 demands for social housing, only around 1,000 such buildings are built per year (Gsir, 2007). In spite of the SRU law (*Solidarité Renouvellement Urbain*), dating from 2000 and encouraging social housing creation, Marseille does not reach the imposed level of 20% of social housing in the housing stock. Only 20% of households with income between 5,200 € to 6,000 € per month could afford new housing in the private market (Gsir, 2007).

The median of revenues accounted for 15,284 € in 2007. It was estimated that at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a half of the population was not paying taxes and a quarter was living under the poverty threshold (Andres, 2011). The greatest part of Marseille's inhabitants are clerks, middle managers and blue-collar workers, 17%, 13% and 10% in 2007 respectively. Only the percentage of middle managers has increased since 1999. There is also a significant number of retirees, reaching almost 25% in 2007, which supports Marseille's position as a retirees' place of destination. The unemployment rate decreased significantly from 23% to 18% between 1999 and 2007 but still remains high in comparison to the French average (8%). The greatest job decline was seen in the secondary sector. There is an opposite trend in part-time employed of women and men. The number of women employed part-time decreased from 29% to 25% while the number of men slightly increased from 8% to 9%. This trend may indicate worse employment conditions on the labour market and a greater women's involvement in the labour market as a consequence of the declining share of those having children (INSEE, 2011). In France part-time jobs are particularly common among women entering the labour market after maternity leave.

This short presentation of demographic and social dynamics in Marseille described above indicates processes common in cities of more economically developed countries in the globalisation era. On average there are smaller households (with the exception of families with over 1 child), immigration influx is significant (also from non-European countries), there are more multinational families, the share of those employed in industry decreases at the expense of service employees (middle managers), the security of employment is lower and the housing problem is more evident.

## 2.2. ZUS – zones urbaines sensibles

The more detailed analysis in the article focuses on sensitive urban zones (ZUS – *zones urbaines sensibles*) – intra-urban districts that were created in 1996 as priority zones for urban, economic and social policies. The zones are characterised by huge housing estates and degraded buildings as well as low employment rates. The policy focus is put there on ameliorating employment prospects. There are 2 types of zones: *zones de redynamisation urbaine* (ZRU) and *zones franches urbaines* (ZFU). The former ones are more numerous and are inhabited by around  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the ZUS population, while the latter ones are less frequent and need greater aid. Almost 400 of the most populated and with the highest socio-economic difficulties ZUS participate in the urban renovation programme (PNRU – *Programme national de rénovation urbaine*) that commenced in 2004. ZUS districts also take part in urban contracts for social cohesion (CUCS – *Contrats urbains de cohésion sociale*) financed by the state and local councils.

There were 4,361,000 inhabitants of all ZUS in 2006 – almost 7% of the French population and almost 5% of the population of the overseas territories. Their number decreased by 2.3% to 749 (717 in France and 32 in the overseas territories) between 1999 and 2006, so 0.3% per year. At the same time the urban population increased by 0.7%. Although the population of ZUS is decreasing, in Provence – Alpes – Côte d'Azur (PACA) region (and 4 others) population is increasing, measured in total numbers and in relation to the number of people per place of residence, as a result of these regions' total population increase. In PACA there were 8.2% people inhabiting 48 ZUS. Their size significantly varies, from around 1,000 to 50,000 people for the biggest ZUS – Centre Nord in Marseille (INSEE, 2011).

Young age structure is a characteristic feature of all ZUS with the population below 6 years old being  $\frac{1}{3}$  greater in comparison to an average urban population structure, below 20 years old  $\frac{1}{4}$  greater and over 60 years old –  $\frac{1}{4}$  smaller. However, PACA is an exception and has a relatively high percentage of the elderly. Young women are particularly overrepresented in these zones as their ability the elderly active urban life is inhibited, which is a consequence of high occurrence of single-parent families – almost 26% in comparison to 16% as urban average. There is also a high share of households with 5 members and over in comparison to total urban population – 13% and 7% respectively and lower of 1-member households – 34% and 37% respectively. Foreigners, especially from the Maghreb region, are particularly present in ZUS – 18% of the population with half of the Maghrebians and 10% of the French with acquired citizenship (INSEE, 2011).

The population of ZUS mostly inhabits council housing estates developments, so-called ‘housing at moderated rents’ (HLM – *habitations à loyer modéré*) – 60%, 3 times more than in urban areas in general. The HLM inhabitants are considered as more and more poor, i.e. 60% of them live with the income of 1,070 € per month or less and 19% have income below 400 € (HLM: des occupants pauvres, 2011). Additionally, these places, after being left by their inhabitants, are occupied by the even poorer newcomers, hence pauperisation follows. The places of residence are in general smaller, less frequently private and relatively old (before 1975) –  $\frac{3}{4}$  in ZUS and  $\frac{2}{3}$  in urban areas, as a consequence of great number of HLM built in the 1950s and 1960s. Very old (before 1950) and new buildings (after 1982) are rare – 14% and 10% respectively. Due to urban renovation programmes, the number of housing developments built after 2004 is increasing. Additionally, on the one hand the ZUS population is less mobile but on the other hand the immigrants are overrepresented – 22% living in ZUS (11% in urban areas) from which 24% in private housing developments and 23% in HLM. Almost 3% of immigrants lived outside EU 5 years before, which is twice more than in urban areas (INSEE, 2011).

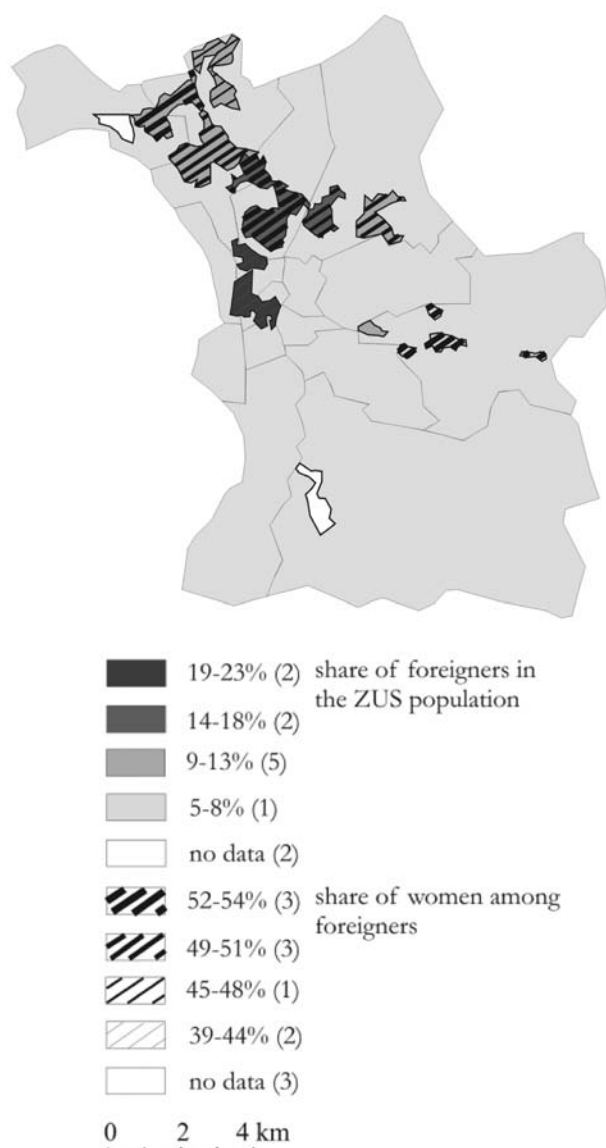
Even though the level of education measured by the share of college diploma holders (*brevet des collèges* – obtained after first 4 years of secondary education) increased in ZUS to approximately 50%, the gap between ZUS and urban areas deepened by 2.6% between 1999 and 2006. Activity and employment rates are worse in ZUS than in urban areas. Employment rate for foreigners between 25 and 49 years old in ZUS

accounts for 34%, while 60% for those in urban areas and 76% for the urban areas’ French population. The situation of women is also considerably worse in ZUS than in urban areas but for men it is similar (INSEE, 2011).

### 2.3. Social diversity of zus in Marseille

In Marseille, the greatest part of ZUS concentrates in the northern part of the city, mainly in Quartiers Nord. Centre Nord is the most populous one not only in the city but also in the whole country, accounting for over 55,000 inhabitants. It is followed by Saint Barthélémy, Le Canet, Delorme Paternelle ZUS north from the city centre. The other zones are significantly less populated (between 20,000 and 10,000). There are 3 zones of the size below 6,000: Les Hauts de Mazargues in the very south of the city, Airbel just east from the city centre and L’Estaque-Saumaty in the very west of the city, so in the districts not considered as problematic ones. In fact, the northeastern part of the city being a former industrial zone is the more deprived one. So-called ‘triangle of poverty’ is situated in the northern part of Marseille, with its base extending from La Rose to l’Estaque and its tip located on the south of Canebière street reaching the Old Port (Moore, 2004). Originally, these were the districts of working-class, occupied by foreign immigrants, mainly from North Africa. The districts are mostly covered by high-rise blocks of flats characteristic for French *banlieues* inspired by a design principle of modernist residential housing developed by a Swiss architect Le Corbusier who aimed at ‘giving sunlight and fresh air to city labourers’ (Caldwell, 2005). In contrast to the concept, the apartments appeared as places of pathology, causing alienation of their inhabitants by the way they were designed and joined to the city.

The greatest number of foreigners is concentrated in Centre Nord (21%) and in its nearest ZUS – Saint Mauront, Bellevue, Cabucelle (23%), while the lowest number in Vallée de l’Huveaune, Rouguière, Saint Marcel in the very east (Fig. 4), which seems to be logical taking into account the distance decay from the city centre where obviously foreigners concentrate, attracted by employment opportunities and unable to afford everyday transport costs. For Les Hauts de Mazargues and L’Estaque, Saumaty the statistical data are not available, which may also indicate low foreigners presence. The share of foreign women is in general higher in the ZUS further from the city centre, which may be connected to their place of work – they work mostly as housemaids.



**Fig. 4.** Foreigners in ZUS in 2006

Explanation: A – share of foreigners in the ZUS population;  
B – share of women among foreigners

Source: Self-elaborated after : INSEE, 2011

For the first six ZUS, where the share of foreigners is over 10%, there is a common pattern of existing poverty. The worst demographic and socio-economic situation is in Malpassé, Saint Jérôme and Saint Mauront, Bellevue, Cabucelle followed by Saint Antoine Est, Saint Barthélémy, Le Canet, Delorme Paternelle and La Rose, Frais Vallon, Le Petit Séminaire. There are two exceptions from this rule; on the one hand there is a high degree of deprivation also in Nord Littoral, in spite of the fact that the share of foreigners is around 10% there, and on the other hand in Centre Nord there is a high concentration of

foreigners but the demographic and socio-economic situation is relatively good. In these two cases probably the distance from the city centre is a crucial factor.

In general, the ZUS's highest deprivation level can be described as follows and is concentrated in the following districts: (a) steady increase of the population, seen in most of the districts analysed, with the most evident exception in Saint Mauront, Bellevue, Cabucelle, and Nord Littoral (Fig. 5). The situation of the former one can be explained by the city centre neighbourhood and an easier possibility of out-migration, while in the latter ZUS there is a high percentage of the French, who manage to enhance their socio-economic situation and enter other city districts; (b) high share of young population, accounting for around 40% in Malpassé, Saint Jérôme and Saint Barthélémy, Le Canet, Delorme Paternelle and relatively low of the oldest age groups – reaching 11% in Malpassé, Saint Jérôme; (c) high share of single-parent families who are most common in Malpassé, Saint Jérôme, Quinzième Sud, and Saint Antoine Est, reaching there almost 30%; (d) high share of numerous families (6 members and more), accounting for over 10% (Malpassé, Saint Jérôme, Saint Antoine Est, and Saint Mauront), which, co-existing with high deprivation, may be hazardous; (e) over 50% of council housing estates, especially common in the poorest ZUS furthest from the city centre; (f) low median revenues per household and high share of households with the lowest revenues but not receiving social aid (Saint Mauront and Malpassé, Saint Jérôme over 50%); (g) high unemployment rate accounting for over 30% in Saint Mauront, Centre Nord and Malpassé, Saint Jérôme; (h) over 80% of manual labourers with the highest percentage in Saint Mauront, Air Bel and Malpassé, Saint Jérôme. The activity rate among 25–65 years old does not show the situation in such an evident way.

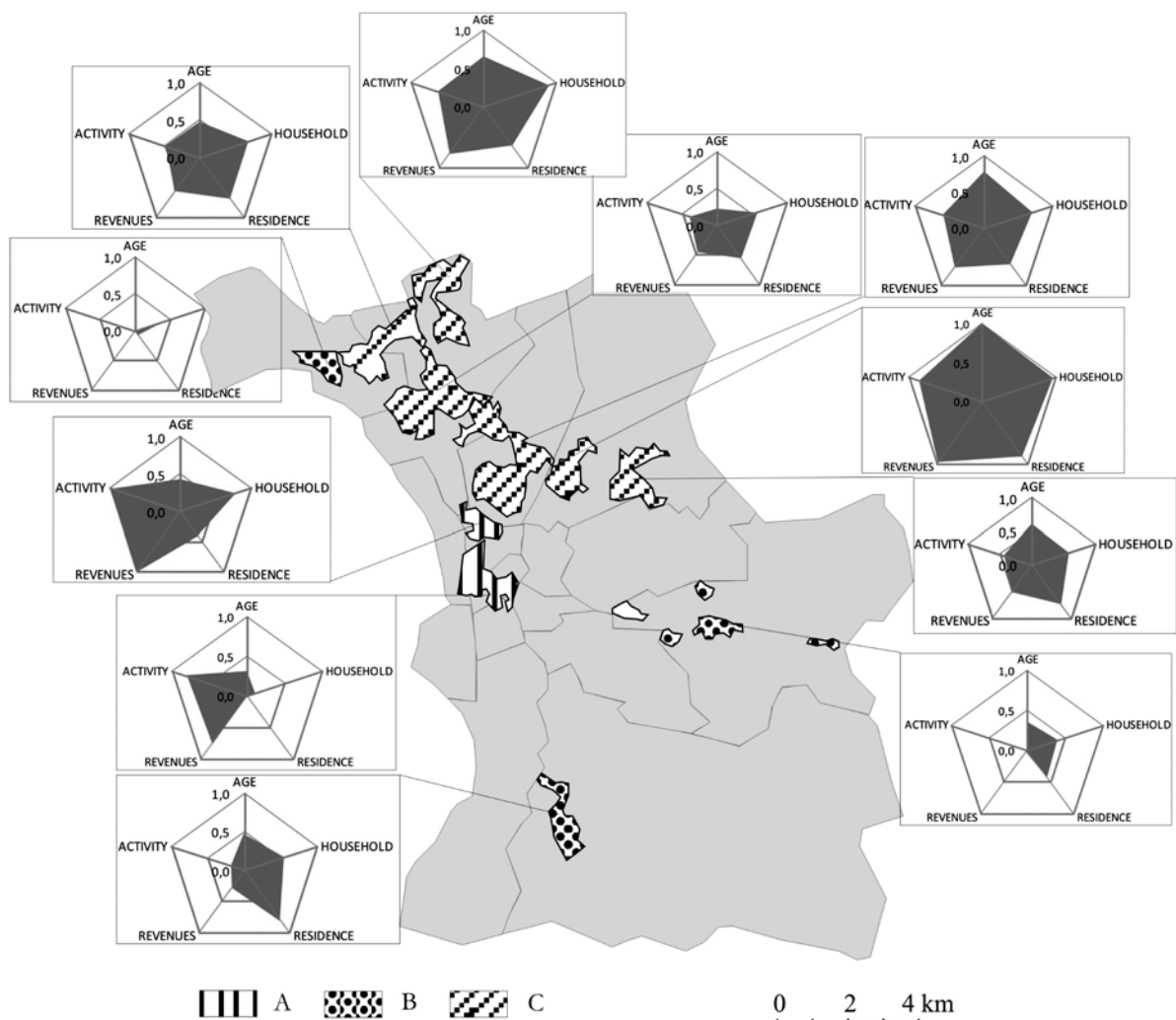
The demographic and socio-economic indicators were standardised to create 5 compound measures, which show 5 dimensions of poverty in ZUS: (a) age – the share of population below 20 years old and over 60 years old, where the higher the number of the young and the lower the number of the elderly, the higher the risk of poverty; (b) household – the share of single parent families and households with 6 people and more, where the higher the indices the higher the risk of poverty; (c) residence – the share of HLM houses and the number of people per housing, where the higher the values the worse social situation; (d) revenues – the share of people receiving minimum revenues but not covered by social aid and the median

of revenues per household, where the higher the share of people not covered by social aid and the lower the revenues, the worse economic situation; (e) economic activity – unemployment and activity rates, where the higher the first value and the lower the second, the worse economic situation.

On the basis of radar graphs showing aforementioned values, three types of ZUS were distinguished (Fig. 5). Type 'A' is characteristic for two central zones (Saint Mauront, Bellevue, Cabucelle and Centre Nord) with the highest percentage of foreigners. Although the demographic structure of their inhabitants is well diversified and there is relatively sufficient supply of various housing, the economic situation is negative, which can be explained by high competition on labour market and greater need for tertiary sector

employees, which may not correspond to foreigners competences. Type 'B' demonstrates the conditions of peripheral zones with the lowest percentage of foreigners (L'Estaque-Saumaty, Les Hauts de Mazargues and Vallee de l'Huveaune). In general, the situation is the best there in comparison to other zones analysed, with slightly negative demographic and social indices. The rest of zones belongs to the type 'C' and is characterised by the relatively high share of foreigners and the worst demographic and socio-economic situation in all dimensions analysed. Airbel is excluded from the analysis due to lack of data.

According to S. Gsir (2007), migrant workers in Marseille are spread unevenly, mainly in problematic neighbourhoods in the city centre – 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> districts with 54% of housings for migrant workers, and



**Fig. 5.** ZUS types according to demographic and socio-economic underdevelopment

Explanation: A – A type – good demographic and social situation, bad economic situation; B – B type – bad demographic and social situation, good economic situation; C – C type – bad demographic, social and economic situation

Source: Self-elaborated after : INSEE, 2011



in the Quartiers Nord – 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> districts with 25% of such housings. The retired migrant workers from North Africa mainly share houses in the city centre.

This analysis may indicate the existence of segregation and ghettoisation and to some extent also of the presence of ethnoclasses in Marseille. Foreigners, mainly from the poorest countries in their regions, i.e. Portugal, Algeria and Morocco are overrepresented in the poorest districts and lowest social groups. They inhabit the poorest city districts (ZUS) that are target districts for urban policy. Newcomers and natives, both representing the lower class, are excluded and marginalised, causing general social inequalities and social disintegration, which are additionally strengthened by racial discrimination in immigrants' case (Moore, 2004). The violence of 1995 that took place in Saint-Mauront district can be an example of a rebellion against such social exclusion, not 'an assertion of ethnic culture against that of the host society' and similar episodes can be more frequent as the sense of belonging to any social class is weakened (Moore, 2004).

However, even though Marseille has a significant concentration of young immigrants who may be ascribed to the ethnoclass living in some kind of 'ghettoes' and although in 1995 there was a violence episode, the October and November 2005 riots that spread over the country were almost absent in the city. The reasons for this phenomenon are seen in a few factors – one of them, the city's socio-spatial structure, is analysed to the greatest extent in the following part.

#### 2.4. Marseille's socio-spatial structure

Unlike in most French cities, consisting of neat urban cores and disordered peripheries, Marseille city structure resembles the socio-spatial structure of its American counterparts with their inner-cities and suburbia. The 19<sup>th</sup> century idea of removing the better-off from the southern part of the city and displacing the lower classes from the centre and north were unsuccessful. Additionally, the former port area passed through significant transformations in the 1960s. The port-industrial zones were displaced further to the west, towards the Etang de Berre and Fos as a consequence of containerisation, bulk cargoes and large-scale industries (Hoyle, 1989). As a result, the old port and industrial buildings with their surroundings started to dilapidate, which was strengthened by the

crises of the fordist model of economy in the 1980s. These parts were then mostly inhabited by the disadvantaged population, mainly the immigrants, and the ongoing pauperisation with high levels of unemployment and insecurity took place (Silvère, 2008).

The gentrification process that started at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century did not bring any change into the socio-spatial structure of the city, either. The process was commenced by the Euroméditerranée urban regeneration project, introduced in 1995 and expanded to new plots of land in 2007 to cover 483 hectares of unused industrial land. The aim of the project is to re-new the economy and the image of the city as well as its metropolitan rank in Europe by: joining the downtown with suburbs and the city with its harbour, creating attractive areas for new developments using its cultural and architectural heritage (the 19<sup>th</sup> century Haussmannian and 17<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century '*trois fenêtres marseillais*' styles) and diversifying the modes of transportation. Additionally, public spaces, transport corridors, and city places of interest are enhanced. The City, State, Euroméditerranée, major landowners, developers, and operators cooperate in the project. Considered as the largest in southern Europe, it is planned for a long timespan (more: Euroméditerranée, 2011).

Nevertheless, the upper middle class felt ignored during the regeneration process commenced by the American company Lone Star. The better-off showed their social distance from the traditional inhabitants of the city centre, and the image and collective memory of the place being inhabited by the poor was still strong. The investment failure seemed to be also a consequence of the cultural division of both social groups considered; the upper middle class searching for genuineness and the lower class looking for mass consumption. The last reason of gentrification failure is seen in the greater force of commercial gentrification rather than the residential one, e.g.: craft atelier, small boutiques or fashionable bars and restaurants. Therefore, the supposed gentrification is only an example of revitalisation process being far from the inhabitants' expectations. An exception is seen only in three cases (not covered by Euroméditerranée): l'Opera, Saint-Charles and le Camas districts, which are inhabited by the better educated, employed in the tertiary sector, more affluent, singles and couples without children (Silvère, 2008).

However, according to L. Andres (2011), the project has already brought some successes, for example creating attractive places for companies and enhancing property and office market. The author

on the one hand admits the previously mentioned weakness as disconnection from the local communities, omitting challenges related to socio-economic issues and finally lacking spatial coherence, but on the other hand underlines the importance of cultural mediation in regeneration process. Marseille is going to be the European capital of culture in 2013. Marseille-Provence 2013 project being a part of Euroméditerranée may significantly transform the urban fabric (more: MP2013, 2011).

Even though immigrants are segregated in Marseille, their places of residence are linked to the whole city structure simply by the proximity to the city centre, hence they are not excluded from the city life to such an extent as in other French cities. This situation may change in the future due to regeneration projects, also cultural ones, implemented in the city. However, it seems that it is not only the central location of the deprived districts but also the policy of local authorities that prevented the potential riots of 2005. The unofficial incorporation of social mediators selected according to ethnic background in the process of urban and social regeneration is the example (more: Moore, 2004). The city incorporated a wide range of measures concerning housing and urban structure development, which are targeted at the disadvantaged inhabitants so also at the people with migration background (more: Marseille.fr, 2011). According to officials, this housing policy is unique in France.

K. Mitchell (2011) indicates three factors responsible for the relatively peaceful situation in Marseille in 2005, which also correspond to above findings, these are: (a) Marseille's form of transnational, networked, ethnicity-based capitalism; (b) the specific geography, public infrastructure, and social organisation of the city; and (c) the cultural approach of local officials, called difference-oriented or communitarian.

### 3. Conclusions

Demographic and socio-economic dynamics in Marseille are characteristic for cities in more economically developed countries in the era of globalisation. There is a significant immigrants' presence from diverse destinations. Multinational families and smaller

households, where their members work mainly in services, are more and more common. Housing sector is becoming more insecure.

ZUS districts are located mainly in the northeastern part of the city, in the so-called 'triangle of poverty', which is the former industrial zone. This part of the city is traditionally highly inhabited by foreigners and low-income natives, who together constitute a lower social class. Nevertheless, not only is the high level of foreigners present in the poorest part of the city but also in the poorest ZUS districts located in this part. The following pattern is evident: in the zones of the highest degree of deprivation, there is also a high share of foreigners. Three distinguished types of ZUS confirm this statement – the highest shares of foreigners correlate with high shares of poverty, measured by 5 dimensions – type A and C, with some fluctuations characteristic for central location (type A). The lowest shares of foreigners correspond to low shares of poverty – type B. Then, as foreigners are overrepresented in the poorest districts, they may be called an ethnoclass.

ZUS created as target zones for urban policy may be considered as evidence of ghettoisation, where negative demographic and socio-economic trends dominate. In general, these are places of young, less educated and often unemployed inhabitants, also with high presence of women and immigrants mainly from Maghreb, the two most vulnerable groups. The common household model is either single-parent family or numerous family, which in combination with high share of smaller places of residence, mainly in council housing estates, and low revenues is disadvantageous. The worst socio-economic situation is in Malpassé and Saint Mauront. The relatively better-off ZUS are the least populated ones, on the city's peripheries.

This pattern of deprived inner city with industrial zone inhabited by lower social classes (also ethnoclasses) and more affluent peripheries describes Marseille's urban structure, less common in other French cities. It is conditioned by historical but also current processes, like the failure of the gentrification process. The central location of the deprived districts together with the policy of local authorities are the reasons of lower social exclusion and weaker social tensions in Marseille in comparison to other French cities. However, the situation may change in the future, followed by the current urban fabric transformation.

## References

- Andres, L.** 2011: Marseille versus Marseille Provence: local and regional challenges of 2013 ECOC, seminar held on the Mega-Events and Regional Development Workshop at the Maastricht University, 7 September 2011.
- Caldwell, C.** 2005: Revolting high rises. In: *The New York Times*, access on: [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), DoA: 1 April 2011. Euroméditerranée, access on: [www.euromediterranee.fr](http://www.euromediterranee.fr), DoA: 1 September 2011.
- Gsir, S.** 2007: Case study on housing. Marseille, France, European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions, access on: [www.eukn.org](http://www.eukn.org), DoA: 1 November 2011.
- HLM: des occupants pauvres, 2011, *L'Express*, access on: [www.lexpress.fr](http://www.lexpress.fr), DoA: 1 November 2011.
- Hoyle, B.S.** 1989: The port-city interface: trends, problems and examples. In: *Geoforum*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 429–435.
- INSEE (Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies), [www.insee.fr](http://www.insee.fr), DoA: 1 August 2011.
- Marseille.fr, Official website of Marseille city, access on: [www.marseille.fr](http://www.marseille.fr), DoA: 1 November 2011.
- Mitchell, K.** 2011: Marseille's not for burning: comparative networks of integration and exclusion in two French cities. In: *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 101, No. 2, pp. 404–423.
- Moore, D.** 2004: Migrants as mediators in a comparative perspective. In: Penninx, R., Kraal, K., Martiniello, M. and Vertovec, S. editors, *Citizenship in European cities. Immigrants, local policies and integration policies, research in migration and ethnic relations series*, Ashgate, access on: [books.google.com](http://books.google.com), pp.128–138, DoA: 1 April 2011.
- MP2013, access on: [www.marseille-provence2013.fr](http://www.marseille-provence2013.fr), DoA: 1 September 2011.
- Silvère, J.** 2008: Un cas aporétique de gentrification: la ville de Marseille. In: *Méditerranée*, No. 111, pp. 85–90.
- Szul, R.** 2011: Miasto a języki i narodowość. In: Jałowiecki, B. and Sekuła, E. editors, *Metropolie mniejszości. Mniejszości w metropoliach*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, pp. 15–47.
- Węclawowicz, G.** 2007: *Geografia społeczna miast*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Żelazny, W.** 2011: Tubylcy i Barbarzyńcy wieloetnicznych aglomeracji. In: Jałowiecki, B. and Sekuła, E. editors, *Metropolie mniejszości. Mniejszości w metropoliach*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, pp. 93–110.

