

## **Geographies of Urban Multilingualism in Europe**

Dr Virginie Mamadouh, Associate Professor of Political and Cultural Geography

[v.d.mamadouh@uva.nl](mailto:v.d.mamadouh@uva.nl)

Department of Geography, Planning and International Development Studies ([GPIO](#))

Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences (FMG) University of Amsterdam (UvA)

Research affiliations:

Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research - Geographies of Globalizations

([AISSR GoG](#))

Centre for Urban Studies ([AISSR-CUS](#))

Amsterdam Centre for Contemporary European Studies ([ACCESS Europe](#))

### **PhD Project Geographies of Urban Multilingualism in Europe (mid2014- mid2018)**

Cities are increasingly super diverse, linguistically speaking, due to multifaceted globalization and Europeanization processes. Multilingualism is also replacing the individual and collective monolingual norms that have emerged in Nineteenth century Europe: “one language, one nation, one state, one territory”. This is highly visible in cities where the official language endorsed and promoted by the nation-state coexists with English as language of international communication (in business, higher education, and transnational media) and with large numbers of migrant languages.

The PhD position is part of a European FP7 research programme entitled “Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe” (MIME) that will be launched in March 2014 for five years and will be coordinated by the University of Geneva. The multidisciplinary consortium consists of 20+ universities and other partners from 16 different countries. The PhD project at the Department of Geography of the University of Amsterdam focuses on geographies of urban multilingualism. A parallel project will start at the Department of European Studies of the University of Amsterdam focusing on language policies.

The project “Geographies of Urban Multilingualism in Europe” contributes to the multidisciplinary programme with a study of the role of place in relation to identity-building and linguistic diversity. It will focus on the local level: the city and the neighbourhood as sites of renegotiations of place-based or territorial identities at different scale levels (including national, transnational and European identification) in sociolinguistic settings that are characterized by an increasingly complex (linguistic) diversity. The project foregrounds political and cultural geographical aspects of urban multilingualism, but economic and social aspects are important too.

The project aims at exploring the key issues regarding the relation between linguistic diversity, mobility and place-based feelings of belonging and integration, especially regarding the role of places and territories at different scales in identification processes, the role of languages, linguistic landscapes and soundscapes in place-making, as well as

the linguistic aspects of (local, national and European) policies aimed at fostering civic and inclusive place-based identities. More specifically it will examine the linguistic aspects of (local, national and European) policies and (bottom up individual and collective) strategies aimed at fostering civic and inclusive place-based identities.

The project aims at analyzing diverse aspects of urban multilingualism in several European cities and different groups of established and newcomers in the city (including migrants, asylum seekers, expats, exchange students, “natives” with roots in the city and “natives” from other regions), different languages (including English as global lingua franca, national languages, recognized and/or protected regional languages, and migrant languages) and various domains such as :

- public space and linguistic landscape,
- native speakers and the new language diversity
- expats (and their families) leisure activities and their engagement with the city,
- migrants and sociocultural activities
- higher education English, exchange students and the urban university,
- social housing and the challenge of linguistic diversity in housing complexes and neighbourhoods,
- social services and communication with clients, especially in the health sector
- education, home languages and the use of languages other than curriculum languages at school,
- local politics and linguistic diversity, citizenship, participation and integration
- safety and multilingualism (112, access to police fire brigade etc., safety at work)
- local cultural industries geared towards interlinguistic communication (translators, interpreters, legal linguists, language schools, homework aids, mediators...)
- communication for tourism
- shops and markets (and the importance of language skills),
- multilingualism at the work place and language issues involved with delocalizing and outsourcing economic activities.

The PhD candidate’s tasks will include:

- conducting empirical research on individual and collective strategies to deal with multilingualism, mobility and inclusion in European cities;
- writing and completing a PhD dissertation within four years;
- participating in the AISSR and/or NETHUR PhD programmes;
- 10% teaching;
- contributing with supervisors to tasks related to urban multilingualism in the EU funded FP7 programme Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe (MIME)
- collaborating with supervisors and peers in research and publications;
- participating in conferences, workshops, seminars and other scholarly activities.

More information about the PhD position for the project “Geographies of Urban Multilingualism in Europe” can be found at

<http://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/working-at-the-uva/phd-positions/item/14-029.html>

Deadline for application 17 February 2014

More information about the PhD position for the parallel project “The Politics of Language Policies” directed by László Marác at the Faculty of Humanities (European and Transnational Studies) can be found at <http://www.uva.nl/en/about-the-uva/working-at-the-uva/phd-positions/item/14-016.html>

Deadline for application 10 February 2014