

Habitability Conditions and Uses of Public Space Among International Migrants in Temuco, Chile

Condiciones de habitabilidad y usos del espacio público en migrantes internacionales de Temuco, Chile

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the article is to describe the living conditions of the international migrant population and their practices of use of urban public spaces in the city of Temuco, Chile. Under a non-experimental, exploratory-descriptive and quantitative design, a survey was applied to a sample of Temuco's foreigner residents (n=200), using descriptive statistics for the analysis. The results indicate that the local real estate market shows incipient signs of exclusion, while low rates of use of urban spaces are observed. These evidences are probably related to the nature of the recent migration flows in the city. The article contributes to the discussion on the relationship between urban space and migration from a statistical approach to the intermediate cities of southern Chile, still understudied. It is concluded that it is necessary to analyze the specific realities of neighborhoods to arrive at more concise answers.

Keywords: 1. international migration, 2. urban spaces, 3. habitability, 4. Temuco, 5. Chile.

RESUMEN

El objetivo del artículo es describir las condiciones de habitabilidad de la población migrante internacional y sus prácticas de uso de los espacios públicos urbanos en la ciudad de Temuco, Chile. Bajo un diseño cuantitativo no experimental de tipo exploratorio-descriptivo, se aplicó una encuesta a una muestra de personas extranjeras residentes en Temuco (n=200), para cuyo análisis se utilizaron estadísticas descriptivas. Los resultados indican que el mercado inmobiliario local muestra señales incipientes de exclusión, mientras que se observan bajos índices de uso de los espacios urbanos. Estas evidencias probablemente están vinculadas con el carácter reciente de los flujos migratorios en la ciudad. El artículo contribuye a la discusión de la relación entre espacio urbano y migración desde una aproximación estadística a las ciudades intermedias del sur de Chile, aún poco estudiadas. Se concluye que es necesario analizar las realidades específicas de los barrios para arribar a respuestas más concluyentes.

Palabras clave: 1. migración internacional, 2. espacio urbano, 3. habitabilidad, 4. Temuco, 5. Chile.

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INTRODUCTION

The field of study on international migration in Chile has developed steadily since the 2000s, yet with the exponential rise in migration since 2010, there was a significant increase in research, several of which has addressed the relationship between migration, territory, and housing, emphasizing the phenomena of public space appropriation and residential segregation (Stefoni & Stang, 2017; Tapia & Liberona, 2018). Most of these studies are of a qualitative approach, and mainly interested in the cultural, symbolic, and identity dynamics of the migrant's link with the city (Imilán et al., 2014; Márquez, 2013; Rihm & Sharim, 2019; Stefoni, 2013, 2015), while only a few, focused on the residential dimension, have included a quantitative design (Contreras et al., 2015; Contreras & Palma, 2015).

Most of the studies on migration in Chile have been carried out in the capital, wherein a biased, centralist, and metropolitan view of the phenomenon is held, this leading to the generalization of biased analytical tools (Guizardi & Garcés, 2014). However, research developed in the northern part of the country has called into question this trend, emphasizing the multiple particularities that international migrations adopt in different territories, thus urging the overcoming of this *methodological santiaguismo* (Tapia & Liberona, 2018). The present article follows this line, as it emphasizes the territorial specificities of the relationship between migration, housing, and public space in the city of Temuco, capital of the region of La Araucanía (Chile).

Temuco is an intermediate city in central-southern Chile that, similar to other intermediate cities in the country, has become a space of regional centrality with an important infrastructure for connecting flows that make it possible to, among other things, link with rural areas (Maturana et al., 2021).³ It also hosts an important urban dynamism characterized by an agglomeration economy produced by the polarization of the impoverished regional space, and marked by a progressive process of metropolization, which has in turn generated a strong dependence on nearby urban centers and an increasing daily mobility and internal migration (Maturana et al., 2018). Likewise, neoliberal land use zoning has practically doubled the urban area of Temuco in thirty years, under a logic of diffuse and unharmonious growth that has consolidated the historical spatial segregation of the city, and has resulted in a fragmentation of the urban fabric, the persistence of poverty, economic stagnation, and environmental pollution; all of this largely due to the lack or insufficiency of urban planning (Marchant et al., 2016; Maturana et al., 2021, 2018).

In terms of migrant population, the National Institute of Statistics (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, n.d.) estimates that out of the 300 618 inhabitants of Temuco in 2019, 3.7% corresponded to international migrants, while La Araucanía as a whole concentrated only 1.48% of the total migrant population of the country, a figure very similar to that of the rest of the central-southern regions.⁴

³ Although there is no single definition of an *intermediate city*, as such depends on the hierarchy of each national urban system, it is believed that, rather than by their size, intermediate cities should be understood in terms of their spatial functions in the territory. These are dynamic and networked urban centers with the capacity to generate intermediation, interaction, and exchange processes based on the concentration of local, regional, national, and global flows that in turn contribute to regional territorial development.

⁴ Between 2017 and 2019, foreigners residing in Temuco increased by 143.9%, going from 1.6% to 3.7% of the total population, substantially changing the distribution of nationalities: where in 2017, Argentinians (40.8%), Colombians (9.2%), Venezuelans (8%), and Peruvians (5.6%) were the most prevalent, in 2019, the

Indeed, given the rather limited scope of migration in La Araucanía, interest in its systematic analysis is only fairly recent (Canales, 2020b; Burón & Díaz, 2019; Sanhueza et al., 2019). For its part, the study of migrant housing and the uses of public space by the foreign population in Temuco is limited to a report that identifies the main obstacles to access formal housing (Instituto de Estudios Indígenas e Interculturales, 2018), and the document that presents the results of the survey on which this paper is based (Canales, 2020a).

Within this framework, the objective of this article is describing the particular conditions of housing habitability and the forms of use of public space of the international migrant population in the city of Temuco, based on the specific variables that have been particularly expressive for this purpose. The aim is to highlight the empirical evidence on the relationship of international migrants with the Temuco territory that could be more significant to project comparative analyses that may allow to understand the spatial dimension of the migratory reality in intermediate cities, specifically in center-south Chile.

Based on a survey applied to migrants in Temuco, some variables were selected so as to make it possible to approach the two dimensions of this paper: housing habitability conditions and the use of public space. The first is approached from the residential segregation of the migrant population and the slumization of housing; the second is related to the perception and use of the neighborhood territory, as well as to participation in community activities. Given the exploratory-descriptive nature of our study, these variables are not presented under an analysis of correlation. Still, it is pertinent to present them together, since they are central to describing the relationship between the migrant individual and space (private and public) in a comprehensive manner.

This article presents a theoretical-conceptual discussion of the central themes analyzed, together with a review of national research on the subject, followed by a description of the methodological design of our study. The results show an incipient level of housing slumization, as well as a positive perception of the neighborhood environment, which, however, does not translate into a systematic use (appropriation) of public spaces, nor into high levels of community participation. It is therefore concluded that evidence so far does not suffice to identify some kind of relationship between habitability conditions and the use of public space, and that, in order to arrive at such a result, it would be necessary to analyze the specific territorial dynamics of the neighborhoods. In spite of the above, the variables and indicators identified may be proven useful for future correlational studies in intermediate cities with recent migration flows.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Space, Territory, and Migrations

In current studies on urban migration, space is understood in terms of its contingent and historical nature, and is constructed based on the social interactions and cultural meanings that inhabitants mobilize, and that at the same time determine spatial limits (Bonhomme, 2021; Imilán et al., 2014; Magliano & Perissinotti, 2020; Sheehan, 2020; Simsek-Çaglar & Glick Schiller, 2018). After Lefebvre

most relevant populations were the Venezuelan (30%), Argentinian (19%), Haitian (18%), and Colombian (7%) (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, n.d.).

(2013), the production of space constitutes a relevant category for analyzing the forms of historical creation of social space, as it assumes space to be socially constructed according to the particular dialectical relationship—proper to each society—between spatial practices, representations of space, and spaces of representation.

Based on this conception, Haesbaert (2011) defines territory as the spatial dimension of power relations; that is to say, as relations of (material) domination and (symbolic) appropriation of space; this implies the coexistence and juxtaposition of multiple territories, giving rise to diverse experiences of space and, consequently, to different processes of reterritorialization. The simultaneous and/or successive experience of these territories is what Haesbaert (2011) terms *multiterritoriality*, in the current era involving more complex and rhizomatic forms of reterritorialization, due to the existence of discontinuous and fragmented spaces (network-territories) that can be accessed virtually.

Although access to multi-territorial *resource* is restricted for a large part of the subaltern sectors, the breadth and flexibility of the network-territories experienced by migrant populations gives them greater possibility of constructing multiterritoriality, especially so symbolically, as this sphere includes processes of remembrance and commemoration that, by being contained in memory, generate new (multi)territorial identities (Haesbaert, 2011). The above within the framework of a set of (material and immaterial) human flows taking place in a multipolarized relational space; that is, a complex dynamic of spatial configurations that involves the interdependence of distant places (of origin and destination), termed by Cortés (2010) as *migrant circulations*.

One way or another, there is a type of space in which subjects would not generate territoriality. Marc Augé (2017) introduced the idea of *non-place* to refer to places where individuals transit and whose devices favor an accelerated circulation of people. In contrast to the *anthropological place*—of an identifying, relational, and historical nature—nonplaces affirm the provisional, the ephemeral, and the uprooted, assuming a rupture between the subject and the space occupied or transited by, which prevents the former from recognizing and reencountering the sites he or she travels through, reinforcing his or her anonymity. Even if places and non-places “are palimpsests where the intricate play of identity and relation is endlessly reinscribed” (Augé, 2017, p. 84)—that is, they interpenetrate and intertwine and, therefore, never exist in pure form—, their coexistence makes visible the limitations faced by subjects who activate processes of reterritorialization.

Use, Appropriation of, and Participation in Public Space

Beyond the abstract notion of space, the concrete relationship of subjects with the territory is understood on the basis of the concept of public space. Conceived in opposition to private space, public space stands for the set of places openly accessible to people, especially in urban environments, wherein the right to free transit exists and constitutes a platform for the creation of a collective identity (Alguacil, 2008). Likewise, public space comprises a set of interrelated dimensions that include, in addition to the physical-territorial and legal-political one, also the economic, social—related to collective use—, symbolic-cultural—linked to meanings and identity—, virtual, and mobility dimensions, all directly related to the dynamics of appropriation developed by the individual (Garriz & Schroeder, 2014).

Understanding the appropriation of public space as the use of said space extended over time, Vidal Moranta & Pol Urrutia (2005) have identified two ways in which this takes place: the action of transformation, related to the practice of territoriality and personal space; and symbolic identification, linked to affective, cognitive, and interactive processes. In this sense, appropriation constitutes a dialectical process of interrelation between people and spaces—from the individual to the social level—which implies the construction of a symbolic place that may allow for the shaping of identity, the development of (affective) attachment, and the bonding with the inhabited site. Analogous to Haesbaert's (2011) notion of territorialization, under the modality of space appropriation, the approach of Vidal Moranta & Pol Urrutia (2005) assumes that this comprises a symbolic and a material dimension, both related to the meaning assigned to public space and its use, respectively.

From the point of view of the agency of individuals, the idea of public space appropriation can be associated with that of participation: if the use of such space implies an occasional or episodic participation in activities that take place in the city, appropriation would imply a rather regular and systematic one. Hence the idea that this process is consubstantial to the public sphere, to the strengthening of the social fabric, and to the construction of citizenship (Vidal Moranta & Pol Urrutia, 2005). Indeed, it has been argued that participatory urban practices—as opposed to individualistic or collective hindering logics—constitute mechanisms for the appropriation of public space, that in turn contribute to the reconstruction of urban democracy, based on participation as a right and necessity, which would allow for the recovery of public space as a political space for collective construction (Alguacil, 2008).

Habitability, Residential Segregation, and Migrant Housing

In terms of well-being and quality of life, the link between individuals and urban space has been addressed through the idea of habitability, which refers to both the environment and the housing unit. Alicia Ziccardi (2015) distinguishes internal habitability, referring to the quality of housing—which includes materiality, size, and access to services—, from external habitability, referring to the neighborhood. Both are closely related to the subjective dimension, which accounts for the satisfaction of needs and people's liking or taste, both in relation to housing and to rootedness, as well as to the services and networks provided by the environment.

In Latin America, barriers to basic habitability have made of slums a plausible solution for accessing land and housing, resulting in precarious forms of habitability that are generally to be found in the peripheries of cities (Salas, 2007). Linked to this reality is the notion of slumization, which refers to the serious deterioration in housing conditions, especially that of houses in the central and pericentral areas of cities, making them an alternative for access to the land market (Contreras et al., 2015). Indeed, one of the main problems produced by urban land rent is precisely housing segregation, that is, the unequal distribution of social groups along urban space, which arises from certain power relations, determined in this case by restrictions imposed on the part of those who control the land market (Rodríguez, 2014).

In this context, the combination of restrictions on access to urban land and ethnic discrimination makes it possible to understand the particularities of migrant housing. According to Martínez (1999), the real estate market's use of such discrimination strengthens access barriers for the foreign

population, and forces them to live under miserable living conditions, overcrowding, high prices, invisibility, and spatial segregation, reinforcing their social stigmatization. In the central or pericentral areas of cities, migrants tend to be located in transitional areas or housing, old rooms with precarious habitability conditions that constitute a real risk factor for their socio-spatial integration (Martínez, 1999), even though it has been observed that, in some Spanish cities, the migrant population has ample access to basic services (Guizardi, 2013). For their part, there are also some who opt for urban informality, and tend to concentrate in emerging precarious habitats or peripheral slums that, in turn, reinforce stigmatizing imaginaries (Marcos & Mera, 2018).

All these problems have motivated the study of the specificity of migrant residential segregation, for which spatial statistical indicators have been used so as to recognize the different residential distributions according to national groups (Martori et al., 2006). In any case, these forms of segregation have also been understood as a *subaltern urbanism* that emphasizes the agency capacity of migrants in the social production of habitat (Magliano & Perissinotti, 2020).

State of the Art: the Case of Chile

The spatial dimension of migration in the context of intermediate cities in central and southern Chile has been addressed from two studies: one conducted in Talca, an intermediate agrarian city perceived by the migrant population as quiet and with a population that is somewhat cautious of non-locals (Micheletti, 2016); and another in Punta Arenas, which describes a migrant residential spatialization distributed in different scattered neighborhoods not depending on the consolidation of migration projects (Margarit et al., 2019).

More detailed studies on the subject have been carried out in the capital and in the north of the country. These show that, unlike the low residential segregation of this group at the beginning of the millennium caused by the scarce foreign presence (Schiappacasse, 2008), the migrant population now tends to concentrate in central and pericentral urban areas, where there is a residential park of slum housing, which lacks basic conditions of habitability and wherein foreigners generally live in overcrowded conditions (Bonhomme, 2021; Contreras et al, 2015; Contreras & Palma, 2015; Margarit & Bijit, 2014; Razmilic, 2019; Sheehan, 2020). This slumization is a product of landlords' negligence, given the absence of regulations, which, jointly with their prejudices, favors the formation of a segregationist, informal, illegal, and racist market for access to housing (Bonhomme, 2021; Contreras et al., 2015; Contreras & Palma, 2015). It is in this framework that migrant populations have developed strategies associated with subletting and informality, generally relying on networks of fellow countrymen, which allows them to create their own forms of popular habitational spaces (Contreras et al., 2015; Contreras & Palma, 2015).

Much more developed works have addressed the relationship of the migrant with urban space. Focused on symbolic construction, these studies associate socio-spatial interactions with the shaping of identities, the meanings of places, and the practices of space appropriation (Garcés, 2015; Márquez, 2013; Stefoni, 2015). Here, the case of the Peruvian community in downtown Santiago has been paradigmatic (Ducci & Rojas, 2010; Garcés, 2015; Lube & Garcés, 2014; Stefoni, 2013, 2015). In this context, Márquez (2013) has made use of the concept of *translocal inhabiting* to designate the simultaneous capacity of individuals to territorialize memory landscapes and deterritorialize roots, and the idea of *mobile and translocal sovereignties*—highlighting the role of the experience of inhabiting places of origin—to refer to the tactics and strategies of territorial appropriation (reterritorialization). Likewise, it

has been argued that migrant processes of rootedness/uprooting are crossed by the links with places of origin and the persistence of migration projects (Gissi, 2017).

Research on how migrants develop ties to space has also evidenced the competition and conflict between local and foreign populations, an issue that triggers strategies of resistance and self-affirmation in the latter, expressed through practices of public space appropriation that enrich and destabilize urban spaces (Bonhomme, 2021; Garcés, 2015; Margarit & Bijit, 2014; Márquez, 2013; Stefoni, 2013, 2015). However, adaptation to local customs and practices (assimilation) also emerges as a strategy, including migrants distancing themselves from the migrant collectivity or, on the contrary, taking refuge in their own communities of reference indoors, and disengaging from public space, which implies the construction of a sense of belonging from the private sphere (Burón & Díaz, 2019; Rihm & Sharim, 2019), understood as *minimal or intimate communities* (Gissi, 2017).

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Research Approach

With the aim of coming to a general description and seeking reproducible analyses, the methodological preference of our study followed the quantitative approach and a non-experimental design of an exploratory-descriptive nature. The research was executed in the city of Temuco, and the collection of information for the survey was carried out through the application of a questionnaire during the period from October 2019 to March 2020.

Within the framework of a non-probabilistic convenience sampling, 200 people from countries such as Argentina (6%), Bolivia (3%), Brazil (2%), Colombia (17%), Cuba (3%), Dominican Republic (3%), Ecuador (6%), Haiti (7%), Peru (11%), and Venezuela (40%), among others (2%),⁵ participated in the study.

The questionnaire was designed by social science professionals, and consisted of 83 dichotomous, polytomous, Likert scale, and short open-ended preference questions. The preliminary instrument was tested on a sample of twenty individuals from the study population, and subsequently the questionnaire was applied in both Spanish and Kreyòl languages.

As for the application of the instrument and the analysis of information, a three-step strategy was implemented. First, a group of local interviewers was trained, emphasizing the intercultural link with the subjects of the study implied by the application of the questionnaire. Secondly, key informants associated with two migrant assistance foundations were contacted, these foundations becoming fundamental spaces for collecting information, combined with the application of the questionnaire in central public spaces in the city with a high flow of people. Finally, a descriptive and comparative analysis was carried out using SPSS version 24.

⁵ Coming from nations such as the United States, India, Italy, and Syria.

Study Participants

The criteria for choosing the research sample were the following:

1. Foreign citizens with at least one month of residence in Temuco at the time of answering the questionnaire.⁶
2. Having arrived in the country with the purpose of residing for a period of more than three months.
3. To be working or looking for a job at the time of the application of the instrument.

In sociodemographic terms, the sample (n=200) was made up of 114 men (57%) and 86 women (43%); the age range was between 18 and 58, with an average of 34 years; of the total number of interviewees, only 5% stated that they belonged to an indigenous people. In relation to marital status, most of the sample stated that they were “single” (69%), followed by the alternatives “married” (27%), “widowed” (2%), and “divorced” (2%).

As for the monthly net salary (in Chilean pesos),⁷ the option “150 000 or less” corresponded to 10% of the sample; “150 001 to 250 000” corresponded 19%; “250 001 to 500 000” reached 61% of the total; “500 001 to 750 000” had 7%; and “750 001 or more”, 3% of the responses. Regarding the highest educational level attained, 2% stated having “incomplete grade school”; 5% mentioned “grade school”; 14% corresponded to “incomplete high-school”; 42% stated “high-school”; 12% responded “incomplete college”; and 25% said they had a “college degree.”

Data Collection and Production

The research instrument was built around two dimensions of analysis with the objective of delving deeper into aspects that have been scarcely studied in the region before. The data obtained made it possible to characterize features related to the modes and conditions of habitability and living of migrants, relating them to sociodemographic attributes of the study sample. Thus, the operational definition of the two dimensions of analysis is as follows:

- a) Conditions of habitability: aspects that involve the domestic space of migrants, where housing characteristics play a central role and are directly related to the quality of life of foreigners in the city.
- b) Use of public space: activities and objects found in the environment close to the migrants’ place of residence, and closely related to the networks and community participation of the research sample.

Ethical Aspects

One of the main premises of this research was to safeguard the integrity and anonymity of the participants, for which several instances were generated to explain the objectives of the project. First, the key informants and migrant participants were informed in writing about the purpose of the study, the modalities of data collection, and the instructions for answering the questionnaire were explained in detail. Secondly, it was made clear that the confidentiality of the data collected would be safeguarded

⁶ Due to the exploratory nature of the study, and in order to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the residential situation of foreigners, it was decided to include all individuals who expected to stay in the city longer than the time granted by the tourist visa.

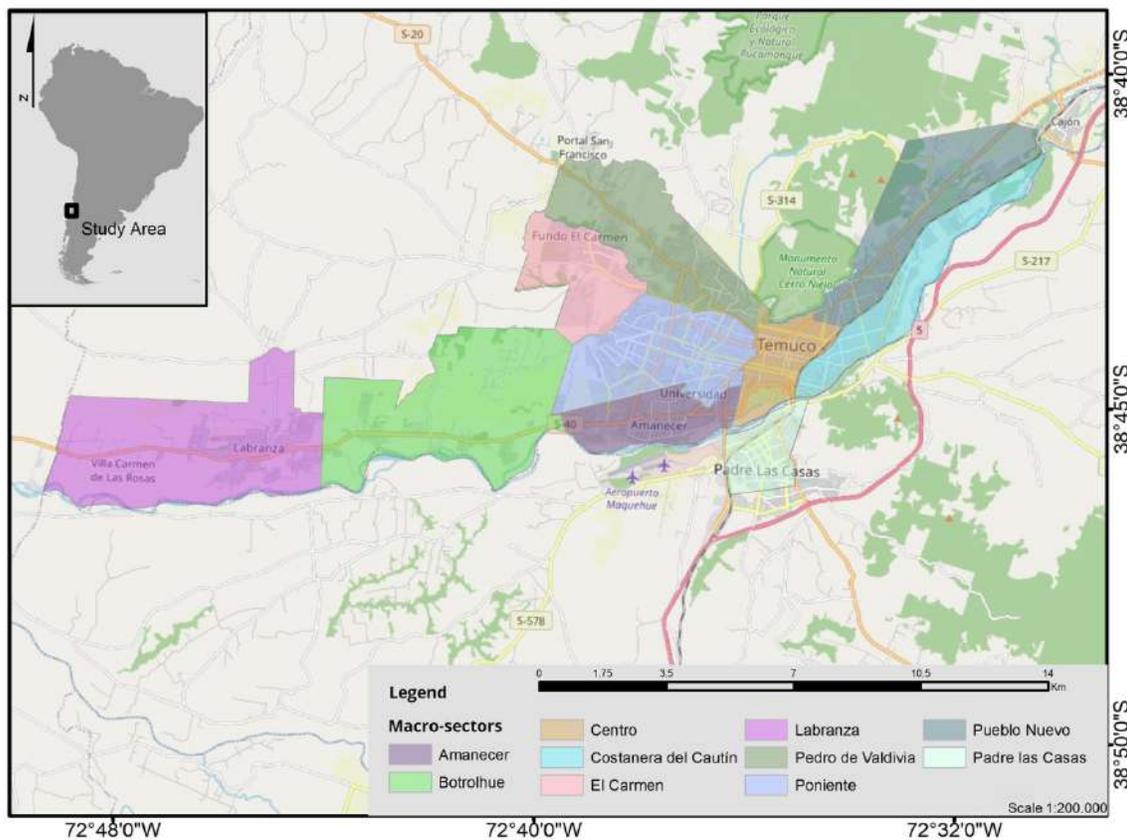
⁷ By March 2020, 1 000 Chilean pesos were equivalent to approximately US\$1.2.

by the research team. Thirdly, it was put forward that the data would not be used to harm the integrity of the participants or for purposes unrelated to the research. All participants agreed to participate after signing an informed consent form.

RESULTS

The municipality of Temuco is the capital and main urban center of the Araucanía region, located in south-central Chile. Together with the conurbation of Padre Las Casas, it is the sixth most populated urban area in the country. According to the territorial planning by the local government, the city is divided into nine *macro-sectors* (Map 1) that served as reference for this study, given that the location of the residential area is key to identify both the socioeconomic aspects implicit in the conditions of the urban environment, and the factors associated with the use of public space.

Map 1. Macrosectors Temuco-Padre Las Casas

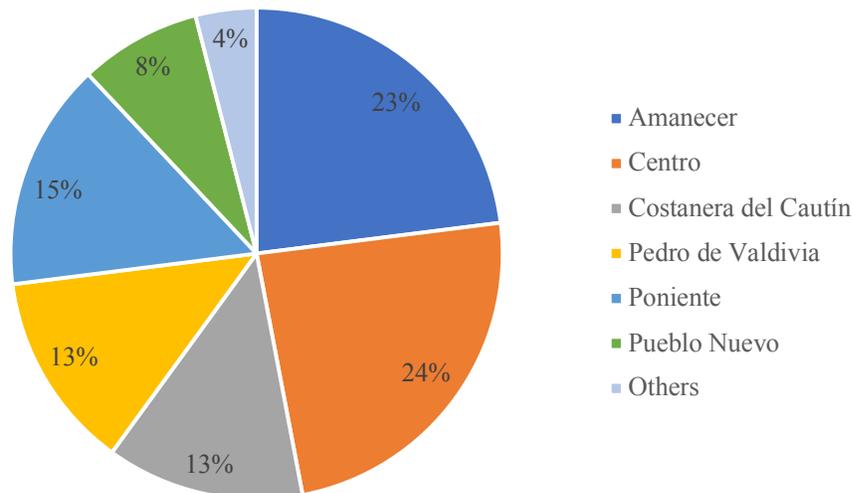


Source: Own elaboration based on the Regulatory Plan of the Municipality of Temuco (Dirección de Planificación, 2016).

As shown in Map 1, the spatial distribution of the sample is concentrated in six of the nine macro-sectors. The results show a greater grouping of migrants in the Centro (24%) and Amanecer (23%) macro-sectors, covering slightly less than half of the sample as a whole, while in Poniente (15%), Costanera (13%), and Pedro de Valdivia (13%), the sample is distributed in similar proportions, leaving Pueblo Nuevo with a lower percentage (8%). While Centro presents a heterogeneous character in its

socioeconomic composition, and Poniente concentrates for the most part—although not exclusively—high-income sectors (ABC1),⁸ the other four macro-sectors are characterized by housing more groups of lower-middle and low socioeconomic strata, even though they still are not socially homogeneous areas. Some neighborhoods of Costanera, Amanecer, and Pedro de Valdivia have been identified as sectors in the city where social housing is concentrated, in addition to socioeconomic strata D and E (Dirección de Planificación, 2016). It should be noted that 57% of the sample resides in these four macro-sectors.

Graph 1. Distribution of Participants According to Macro-Sectors of Residence



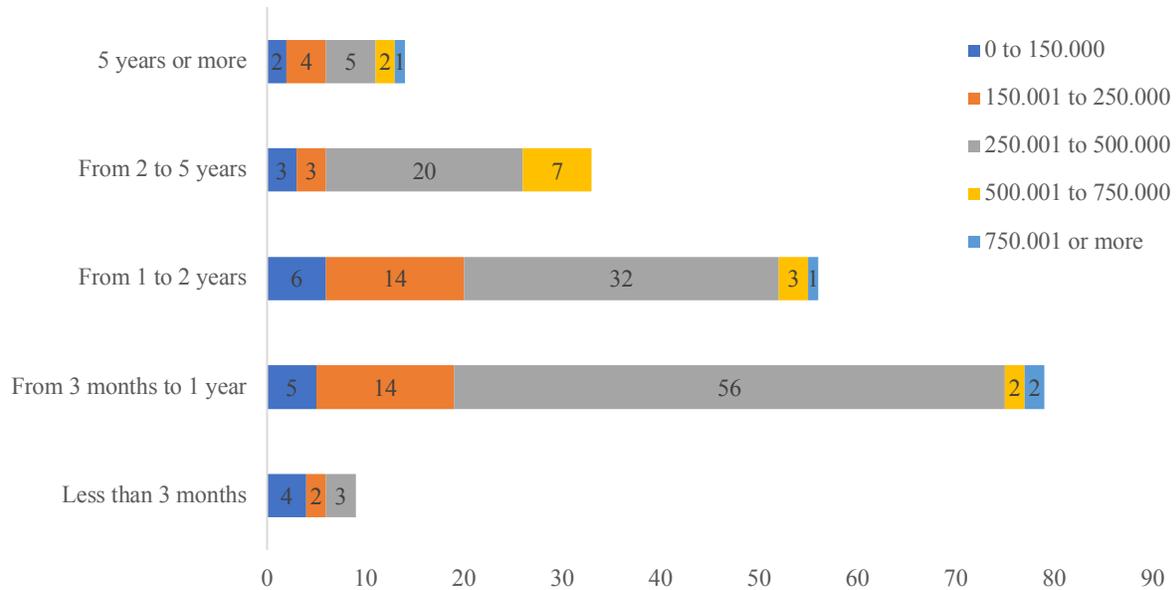
* Padre Las Casas, Fundo El Carmen, Labranza.

Source: Own elaboration.

When establishing relationships between macro-sector of residence and income level, grouping together Costanera, Pedro de Valdivia, Amanecer, and Pueblo Nuevo, monthly income is associated with the ranges “less than 250 000” (31%) and “from 250 001 to 500 000” (63%), while only 6% of the sample identifies with the ranges “greater than 500 001.” Considering Centro and Poniente as a whole, although they do show some variation with respect to the other four macro-sectors, the trend remains the same: 31% earn less than 250 000 Chilean pesos, 55% are in the range between 250 001 and 500 000, and 16% have incomes greater than 500 001 Chilean pesos.

⁸ In Chile, the classification of socioeconomic groups according to categories A, B, C1, C2, C3, D, E, and F, constructed based on income, sectors of residence, and other qualitative variables, is frequently used in public and private social studies, even though it comes from market studies and not from official demographic statistics.

Graph 2. Time of Residence in the Neighborhood and Income Level
 (Absolute Frequencies)



Source: Own elaboration.

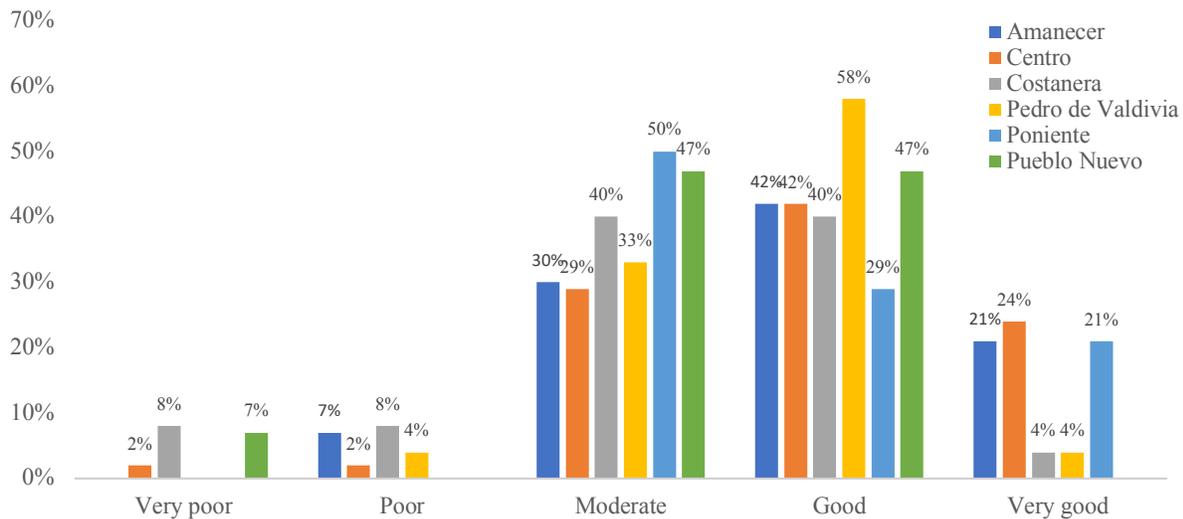
On the other hand, when crossing the years of residence and the income level of the participants, it is worth noting that there is no correlation between the greater the number of years of residence and the higher the salary. Likewise, Graph 2 shows that, when observing the number of cases in the sample, the salary tends to stabilize in the range between 250 000 and 500 000 Chilean pesos, regardless of the number of years of residence of the participants.

Habitability Conditions

When it comes to the first dimension of the study, structural aspects of the housing in which the participants live were accounted for in relation to economic and socio-spatial variables, emphasizing the mode of access to housing, the perception of its state of conservation, the size of the housing unit, and the basic services available.

As for the mode of access, out of the total number of respondents, 60% rent under a contract, 31% do so without a contract, 4% are owners, and the remaining 5% live in a housing unit rented by a third party. Considering that 9 out of 10 participants rent the housing they live in, one third of the sample does so informally.

Graph 3. Perception of the State of Conservation of Housing
by Macro-Sector of Residence



Source: Own elaboration.

Graph 3 allows us to analyze the generic level of perception of the state of conservation of the housing unit, according to the macro-sector of residence. In general terms, there is a positive opinion about the conservation of the residence, which is demonstrated by the option “good”, an alternative considered by most of the participants living in the Pedro de Valdivia (58%), Centro (42%), and Amanecer (42%) macro-sectors, while most participants opted for “fair” in Pueblo Nuevo (47%) and Costanera (40%). Only in the Poniente macro-sector is the alternative “good” (29 %) lower than “fair” (50 %), although it should be noted that the latter option exceeds 25% in all macro-sectors.

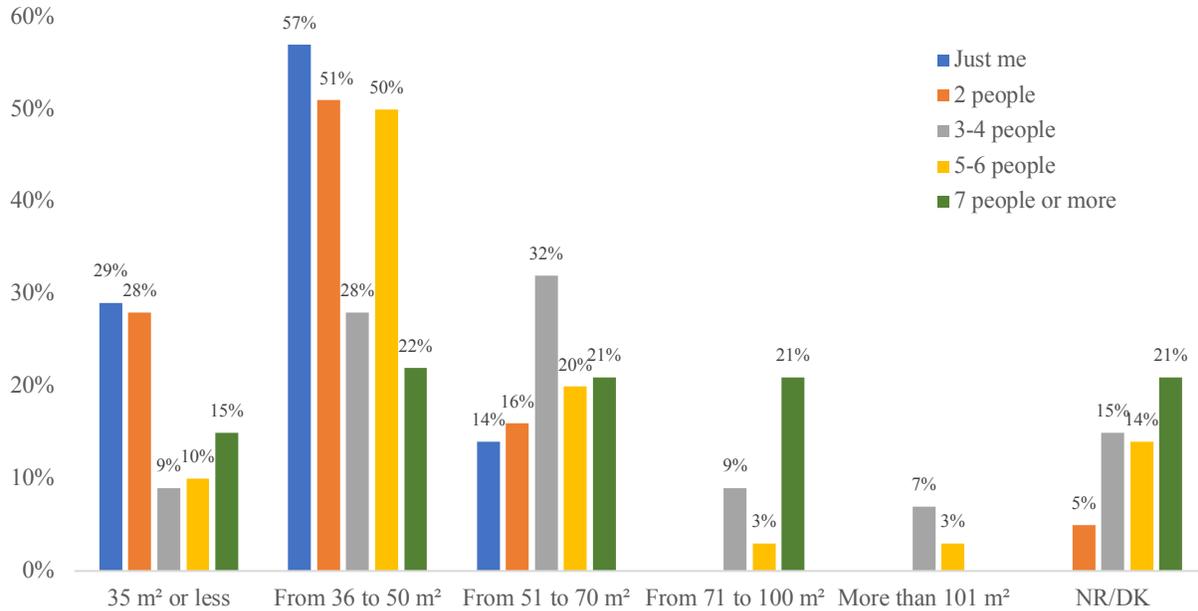
Looking at the extremes of options, it is noteworthy that more than 20% of the sample in the Centro, Amanecer, and Poniente macro-sectors selected the “very good” option, while the “bad” and “very bad” options do not exceed two digits in any of them. If we consider, however, the cumulative frequencies of the “very bad”, “bad” and “fair” values, together they exceed the grouping of “good” and “very good” in Costanera (56%) and Pueblo Nuevo (54%), precisely the macro-sectors where the “very bad” option is most significant.

There are multiple factors that would influence the positive evaluation of the state of conservation of the housing unit, among them, the size of the place, the nationality of the participants, the length of their stay, the number of people sharing the housing unit, or the neighborhood where it is located. However, it is presumed that the most significant factor would be the previous housing conditions, either in the country of origin or elsewhere in their migration path, since it is estimated that the subjects carried out a comparative work when evaluating the state of conservation of their current houses, which can be understood in the framework of *translocal inhabiting* (Márquez, 2013).

On the other hand, regarding the availability of basic services, the vast majority of the sample reported having electricity (100%), drinking water (97%), sewerage (96%), and hot water (85%). These data may be associated with the fact that all participants reside in urban areas, where there is ample coverage of these services (Guizardi, 2013). However, the availability of Internet is not as prevalent,

as 42% of the total reported not having it in their housing units, while the lack of heating systems in their homes—essential for Temuco’s winter conditions—reaches 26% of the participants.

Graph 4. Number of Persons in Relation to Housing Surface (m²)



Source: Own elaboration.

In terms of the number of people living in the housing unit in relation to its surface area, Graph 4 shows a greater demand for places between 36 and 50 m², where single-person households concentrate the greatest number of preferences, 57% of the total. For two-person households, 51% live in a housing unit of this size; for households with five or six persons, 50% live in this type of housing; for groups of three to four persons, 28%; and for households with seven or more persons, 22%. Likewise, as the size of the housing unit increases, the number of migrant individuals who opt for them decreases.

For the largest households, it was observed that those housing seven or more persons are distributed very similarly among all ranges of total housing area, the fact that 58% of them inhabit housing units of less than 70 m² being very telling. It is likewise quite telling that 60% of places housing five or six persons are no larger than 50 m². While it is true that the percentage of housing units with more than five persons reaches 25.9% of the sample, it could be inferred from the data that overcrowding represents a real problem for a large number of migrants.

Use of Public Space

To address this dimension of the study, the relationship of the migrant population with public space was accounted for based on three variables: perception of neighborhood habitability conditions, frequency of use of public spaces, and participation in community activities.

Table 1. Perception of Habitability Conditions in the Neighborhood/Nearby Environment (Percentage)

During the last 12 months I have witnessed	Never	Almost never	Sometimes	Almost always	Always
Noise pollution or noise nuisance in the neighborhood	58	19	16	4	3
Air pollution in the neighborhood	45	24	19	9	3
Water pollution in the neighborhood	90	8	2	-	-
Visual pollution in the neighborhood	47	26	19	5	3
Accumulation of garbage in the neighborhood's public space	35	21	31	8	5
Insect infestations and/or dangerous or abandoned animals in the neighborhood	64	16	10	8	2
Damage to homes or private vehicles in the neighborhood	63	21	11	2	3
People consuming alcohol and/or drugs in the neighborhood's public space	48	14	22	8	8
Drug trafficking in the neighborhood's public space	71	14	8	4	3
Street fights in the neighborhood	66	17	10	2	5

Source: Own elaboration.

In relation to the perception of space (Table 1), the data show a rather positive view of the neighborhoods, since less than a quarter of the participants visualize usual or permanent territorial problems, having recorded low rates of perception of insecurity and even lower rates of pollution. In seven of the ten indicators, more than two thirds of the sample stated having “never” or “almost never” witnessed situations that affect the habitability of the neighborhood. It stands out that 90% of the respondents have never perceived water pollution.

However, the other three indicators show a certain negative perception of the neighborhood environment: “air pollution”, “garbage accumulation” and “alcohol and drug consumption on public streets.” Although none of them exceed 45% of the at least occasional observations, they still make it possible for us to identify the neighborhood problems noticed by the study participants.

When it comes to the places in the immediate environment that the participants frequent, Table 2 shows the main spaces of social use in the sectors studied. Based on a five-category Likert scale, the use of different public places in the neighborhood was evaluated.

Table 2. Use of Public Places in the Neighborhood/Nearby Environment (Percentage)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Whenever possible, I use parks and squares in my neighborhood	10	10	36	13	30
Whenever possible, I use the courts and sports facilities in my neighborhood	5	10	26	11	48
I actively participate in the activities that take place in my neighborhood's social center	4	4	12	12	67
I usually shop in my neighborhood shopping malls and supermarkets	42	37	13	3	5
My family members attend the educational centers available in my neighborhood	12	2	6	5	75
I go to the health center that corresponds to my neighborhood for my medical check-ups	15	13	28	12	32

Source: Own elaboration.

The results show rather negative indicators regarding activities involving the use of squares, sports facilities, social centers, educational establishments, and health centers. Regarding these squares and neighborhood parks, it becomes evident that about one third (30%) “strongly disagree” in using them. When it comes to sports courts and facilities, the number of those who do not use them reaches almost half of the total sample (48%). As for activities carried out in the social center of the neighborhood of residence, 67% “strongly disagree” with having actively partaken of them. A final critical area of use is the attendance of family members at educational centers in the neighborhood of residence, where 75% of the total said they “strongly disagree” with the formulation.

In relation to positive indicators, only one axis is identified, the one pertaining the regular use of neighborhood shopping centers and supermarkets, a statement with which 42% “strongly agree.” Finally, for the statement referring to health centers, there is a similar level among the five options, although the figure increases for the “strongly disagree” one, 32% having chosen it.

The data in this table allows us to establish, among other things, a relationship with the quality of the services available in the surrounding areas, particularly in terms of health and education, since in many cases migrants choose to move to other areas of the city to meet these needs, as what they currently can access does not meet their individual and/or family requirements, or due to an over-demand that implies delays in the provision of care.

Table 3. Percentage of Participation in Community Activities Carried Out in the Neighborhood/Nearby Environment

In the last 12 months, own or a family member's participation	Never	Almost never	Sometimes	Almost always	Always
Recreational activities for children or teenagers	77	5	12	5	1
Activities for seniors	88	5	5	2	-
Sports activities	64	8	18	5	5
Religious activities	65	9	16	7	4
Artistic and cultural activities	73	10	11	3	2
Union and/or trade union activities	93	3	3	1	-
Political demonstrations	94	3	2	1	1
Public service promotion activities	94	3	3	-	-
Activities of migrant groups	66	13	17	3	1

Source: Own elaboration.

Concerning the activities carried out in public spaces (Table 3), it is evident that the vast majority of those surveyed stated that they do not take part in any of them. Even among those that involve greater participation, practically two thirds of the subjects of the study stated never doing so. We found of particular significance those indicators that relate to trade union and political activities, in which 90% of the sample stated to have never participated, similar as those referring to activities for the elderly (88%), and for children and teenagers (77%). In these last two cases, however, the alternative “never” is linked to the low presence of older adults and children in the family nuclei of the subjects.

On the other hand, when observing the responses of those who stated to indeed participate in public activities, 28% of the sample stated that they do so at least occasionally in sports activities (with 10% frequent participation), and 27% in religious activities (11% frequent participation), which are the ones that most attract the migrants in our study. In the case of activities organized by migrant associations, 21% participate at least occasionally, which contrasts with 66% of individuals who report never doing so.

DISCUSSION

Residential Segregation and Housing Slumization

According to the results of our study, the residential distribution of the participants is quite diverse and balanced, covering a large part of the city's territory. It should be mentioned that there is a clear preference for the macro-sectors Centro and those adjacent to it, with a slightly higher proportion in the former and in Amanecer, yet the disposition of the sample in the city space turns out to be rather equitable, which would indicate low concentrations of migrants, as has been shown for the case of Punta Arenas (Margarit et al., 2019). This evidence could matter of fact be explained from some factors typical of intermediate cities, such as the breadth and versatility of the local public transport system, the dynamicity in spatial connectivity and flows (Maturana et al., 2017), or the slow but progressive growth of the city's real estate market, a product of its metropolization processes (Maturana et al.,

2018). Moreover, this could also be explained by the low proportion of foreign inhabitants in the city and the socioeconomic heterogeneity of the macro-sectors.

Despite the fact that the local real estate market seems to have certain advantages, practically one out of every three participants rents the housing unit they live in informally. Although this can be considered a relatively limited phenomenon, it still is a clear indicator of exclusionary and stratifying logics in the real estate market, as well as of strategic responses that the migrant population finds in informality (Contreras et al., 2015; Magliano & Perissinotti, 2020; Marcos & Mera, 2018; Martínez, 1999). In any case, the manifestation of the phenomenon in specific neighborhoods is still to be identified, as is to visualize its relationship with the center/peri-center dynamics typical of intermediate cities, in order to better understand the behavior of the local real estate market.

With respect to living conditions, and particularly access to basic services, a rather small proportion of those surveyed reported deprivation. Despite this, it is symptomatic that 15% of the sample stated not having hot water at home, and 26% stated that their home does not have a heating system to face the winter season, which would show certain evidence of precariousness of the housing units inhabited by migrants and, therefore, glimpses of their incipient slumization (Contreras et al., 2015). The most critical point is Internet access at homes, but this service is anyway covered by buying cellphone plans with unlimited access to social networks, an instrument that has proved to be fundamental for the maintenance of transnational links and for the construction of *multiterritoriality* (Haesbaert, 2011) and *translocal sovereignties* (Márquez, 2013), these allowing to sustain migration projects altogether with processes of rootedness (Gissi, 2017).

Another relevant element regarding the housing situation among the study participants is the evidence found of overcrowding, even though this affects a smaller proportion of those surveyed—as has been shown—. Indeed, the lack of regulations governing housing rental and the non-existence of legal and financial instruments that facilitate the inclusion of migrants in the real estate market forces part of this population to seek access through informality and savings, a matter that, in this case, has an impact on overcrowding (Contreras et al., 2015; Martínez, 1999). Thus, even taking into account that the relatively low presence of migrant population in the city does not generate a particular pressure on the local real estate market, our study provides evidence of certain symptoms of overcrowding among respondents, with a significant percentage of informal leases as a backdrop.

Broadly speaking, this study yields little evidence regarding spatial segregation among the sample population, which contrasts with the reality of metropolises and cities with a high migrant presence (Contreras et al., 2015; Contreras & Palma, 2015; Magliano & Perissinotti, 2020; Marcos & Mera, 2018; Martínez, 1999; Martori et al., 2006; Sheehan, 2020). However, this does not imply that the habitability conditions of the participant migrants are optimal since the signs of overcrowding and problems of access to basic services represent signs of a certain precariousness in their habitability conditions, an issue understood here as incipient slumization. In this sense, the research shows that these incipient processes of slumization are distributed throughout the city, most evidently so in Costanera and Pueblo Nuevo, and are not limited exclusively to the central region. In any case, these critical observations should be weighed contrasting the generalized positive perception of the state of preservation of housing, which, strictly speaking, constitutes an important aspect of habitability itself (Ziccardi, 2015), even if one understands that such perceptions also respond to previous experiences and representations of housing acquired in the *translocal inhabiting* of individuals (Márquez, 2013).

*Perception, Use of Public Space,
and Community Participation*

In relation to the dimension of public space, the study showed that the participants have a generalized positive perception of the neighborhoods in which they live, which could have some common ground with the tranquility that migrants perceive of the city of Talca (Micheletti, 2016), although also, in this case, their positive perception can be associated with translocal representations of the territory (Márquez, 2013). In any case, a part of the participants identified some specific manifestations of environmental degradation (alcohol and drug consumption, and garbage accumulation), which would account for certain deficiencies in community habitability, particularly so in the macro-sectors with greater deficits in housing conditions, showing that habitability implies the relationship between housing unit and urban environment (Ziccardi, 2015).

With respect to the use of public space, although the subjects acknowledge a generally fairly low use of it, the indicators for the use of health centers are slightly higher, which could constitute a first clue as to their territorial relevance for the social and institutional interaction of the migrant population. However, much more significant is the use of shopping centers and supermarkets, which are frequently visited by four out of five respondents. Evidently so, their use is utilitarian, but it is still symptomatic that it is precisely in this prototype of the *non-place* (Augé, 2017) where individuals sustain a more permanent and systematic spatial link with the city. It is also indicative that this type of appropriation has more of an individual rather than collective character, a question that hints at a certain detachment towards public forms of sociability.

These linking practices of the migrant population with public space could partly explain their general positive perception of the environment, since the disengagement from urban spaces would imply a low knowledge of them and/or little interest in the events that take place therein. These socio-spatial dynamics contrast with the forms attributed to the appropriation of public space (Vidal Moranta & Pol Urrutia, 2005), including both the practices and the meanings associated with places, which would show the processes of reterritorialization that, in one way or another, dispense with the territories that Haesbaert (2011) considers more traditional and that would eventually be activated in network-territories.

This panorama is not very different when it comes to migrant participation in public activities, whose indicators are even lower. Only religious and sports activities show higher participation rates, which can be understood as the most accessible forms of social integration to the territory, linked to the most immediate sociability needs. However, both are among the activities that are furthest from the ideal of participation in public space as a place of political construction (Alguacil, 2008). On the other hand, migrant activities, which theoretically imply a valuing of one's own, show somewhat lower indicators. In this case, there is probably a certain tendency for individuals to dissociate themselves from migrant collectivities (Rihm & Sharim, 2019), although the level of linkage of these associations with the neighborhoods should be explored in order to make more accurate considerations. Similarly, and in a more global sense, the analyses presented here cannot ignore the diversity of migrant individuals and the limited time spent in the territory they inhabit, factors that eventually hinder the formation of collective referents able to mobilize migrant individuals to seek instances of sociability in public spaces.

In general terms, the low level of use and appropriation of public space evidenced by this study should be understood as the manifestation of the specific forms of territorial integration developed by migrant strategies, which, jointly with the strategies of insertion in the land market, show the particularity of *subaltern urbanism* (Magliano & Perissinotti, 2020) developed by foreign residents in Temuco. Likewise, these forms of appropriation of urban space must be weighed from two central elements: *translocal inhabiting* (Márquez, 2013), that is, the sustaining of differentiated but articulated links between two (or more) different social spaces, and the temporalities of *migrant circulations* (Cortés, 2010). This last idea acquires particular significance if it is taken into account that 62% of the research subjects have been living in the city for less than a year, and 84% for less than two years. Indeed, this variable would make it possible to understand, on the one hand, the incipient link with the urban public space and, on the other, the rather weak link with migrant collectivities—beyond sociability networks themselves—, individual relationships with the environment prevailing instead. In this sense, it does not seem appropriate to assume that this disengagement from public space necessarily implies assimilation, since, in addition to the persistence of transnational ties, the preponderance of private space would account for the relevance of *minimal communities* (Gissi, 2017) for the formation of identity and sociability places that allow dispensing with collective links to public space (Rihm & Sharim, 2019).

CLOSING REMARKS

This study has made possible a first approach to the spatial and housing dimensions of international migration in Temuco. It has shown that, although residential segregation and high rates of slumization are not observed among the participants in the study, the Temuco real estate market indeed shows signs of an incipient socio-spatial exclusion, expressed in the significant percentage of informality. Likewise, a low appropriation of the neighborhood public space by the subjects of the research has been evidenced, despite their positive perception of the immediate environment. These findings do not allow for us to establish relationships between the two dimensions of the study, even though both are crossed by the recent nature of migration flows. The merit of our findings, on the other hand, lies in having identified some elements that would facilitate the understanding of the link between migrants and urban space in intermediate cities: access to housing, overcrowding, perception of neighborhood public space, type of public places used, and type of community activities frequented.

Despite this, the evidence provided by the study allows us to argue that the particularity of the migrant population's link with the urban space of Temuco, far from assuming the a-territoriality of the migrant, indicates the presence of alternative strategies of reterritorialization, which would combine, in various forms, *minimal communities* (Gissi, 2017) and translocality (Márquez, 2013), resulting in a *multiterritoriality* mainly based on network-territories (Haesbaert, 2011). Consequently, the territories of migration in Temuco would be more in the orbit of private and virtual spaces than of (physical) public spaces.

It is understood that the migrant dynamics of reterritorialization and, therefore, of spatial appropriation, respond to historical and contingent processes determined by the specific social relations that produce space (Lefebvre, 2013). In the case of Temuco, the forms of territoriality of the foreign population, are therefore the result of the performance of migrant strategies conditioned by the

neoliberal development of an intermediate city marked by metropolization processes (Maturana et al., 2018) which, so far, constitutes a rather limited pole of attraction of international migration flows. In this framework, the local real estate market has not particularly excluded the migrant population, even when some signs of slumization and informality do appear, while the former has developed reterritorialization strategies focused more on network-territories and minimal communities than on urban public spaces.

In perspective, a more comprehensive analysis of the habitability conditions of the migrant population—accounting for both housing and the environment—and their use of public space, in addition to including the singularity of urban phenomena in intermediate cities, would require a more focused analysis of the specific zones and neighborhoods in which migrants settle, since it is there where they experience concrete socio-spatial dynamics and activate their particular reterritorialization strategies. In this sense, and taking into account the limitations of our study, we consider that future analyses should also address the translocal representations of housing, as well as individual factors that could be key to understanding the forms of linkage with the host space and the processes of uprooting/dislocation, such as transnational families or marriages between migrants and natives.

Translation: Fernando Llanas.

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