

**Tiit Tammaru, Szymon Marcińczak, Maarten van Ham and Sako Musterd (eds). *Socio-Economic Segregation in European Capital Cities: East meets West* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).**

*Socio-Economic Segregation in European Capital Cities: East meets West* is an ambitious and fascinating volume published at an auspicious moment. The unfolding effects of the global economic crisis and European austerity policies, the impacts of Occupy movements, resurging concerns about gentrification and the debate generated by Piketty's "Capital in the Twenty-First Century" mean that there is an unprecedented demand for new evidence about urban inequalities. *Socio-Economic Segregation in European Capital Cities* takes a major step in this direction by examining how the residential segregation of socio-economic groups changed during the first decade of the twenty-first century in thirteen major European cities (Amsterdam, Athens, Budapest, London, Madrid, Milan, Oslo, Prague, Riga, Stockholm, Tallinn, Vienna and Vilnius). The book's geographic scope - especially the inclusion of five cities from post-socialist Europe - and its focus on socio-economic rather than ethnic divisions set the volume apart from most previous work on residential segregation.

The book begins with an introductory chapter in which the editors argue that the social cohesion of cities is undermined when people from different socio-economic groups live apart from one another in stratified and segregated neighbourhoods. They contend that the socio-economic segregation of urban space is likely to be an increasing problem across Europe as economic inequality grows, welfare support is curtailed and housing is increasingly commodified and distributed by the market. The introduction then outlines how structural factors (principally income inequality, globalisation and welfare/housing systems) and historical developments intersect to shape levels of socio-economic segregation across European cities. This conceptual framework and the book's emphasis on cross-national comparison are important innovations that make it far more cohesive than many edited volumes.

The introduction is followed by thirteen strong empirical chapters written by contributors. Each of these chapters analyses socio-economic segregation in a particular European city using census or population register data covering the first decade of the twenty-first century (several chapters also use data from the 1990s). To enable trends and patterns to be compared across cities a relatively harmonious set of familiar analytic tools such as indices of segregation, isolation and dissimilarity are applied in a similar fashion in each empirical chapter. There are also a large number of maps to help readers get a feel for the changing geographies of socio-economic segregation. Importantly, many (but not all) chapters build ethnicity or immigration status into their analyses to give a richer picture of the multi-dimensional nature of residential segregation. It is perhaps a pity that this was not attempted for all thirteen cities.

Although interpreting the book's comparative insights demands a cover-to-cover reading, national specialists will have little trouble concentrating only on particular city(ies) of interest as each empirical chapter is organised as a standalone and conventionally structured research paper. This format inevitably means that there is some duplication of material between and within chapters but overall the editors and contributors have done an impressive job of minimising repetition. Finally, the book

concludes with an illuminating editorial synthesis of the main findings. Broadly speaking the main conclusions are that:

1. Levels of socio-economic segregation in major European cities are modest but generally increasing.
2. Trends and patterns of socio-economic segregation vary considerably across major European cities in ways that are shaped by structural factors (most notably a city's position in the global economic system), institutional arrangements and uneven patterns of historical development (for example the legacy of socialism or the impacts of the recent global economic crisis).

While these conclusions perhaps come as little surprise, the main value of the book lies in the scope, depth and rigour of the evidence marshalled to support them. Nevertheless, readers may wish to reflect on a few points when interpreting the findings. One quibble possibly derives from the book's origins in a conference in that it is not entirely clear from the text why the thirteen case study cities were selected and why several other large and influential European capitals such as Berlin, Brussels, Paris or Warsaw were not examined. More importantly, all readers are strongly advised to thoroughly and critically review (a) the book's editorial introduction and conclusions and (b) the data and methods sections of all chapters of interest. This is important because these highlight the methodological issues and caveats that must be borne in mind when comparing findings across cities. Foremost amongst these is the complexity of comparing results when different definitions of neighbourhood and different measures of socio-economic status have been used in different cities. Although the editors explain why the contributors have used a range of measures of socio-economic status, several contributors argue strongly for the superiority of their own approach and a clearer editorial judgement about how best to conceptualise and measure socio-economic status in studies of residential segregation might have been helpful for future research.

Overall however these issues do not detract from what is an informative, accessible and important book that will be of enormous interest to anyone concerned about social and spatial inequalities in developed world cities. It will be extremely useful for scholars concerned about general patterns of social inequality as well as specialists studying socio-spatial division, gentrification or segregation (ethnic as well as socio-economic). The book could also be used to help teach courses on urban sociology/geography, housing studies or social policy. Although marketed to policymakers and practitioners, the absence of causal analysis and practical recommendations for combating socio-economic segregation mean that these groups may wish to confine their reading to the introduction and conclusion chapters freely available online (<http://www.tandfebooks.com>). These contain an excellent summary and synthesis of the main findings from each chapter. Indeed, given the timeliness of the book it is a shame that it is so expensive.

*Rory Coulter*  
University of Cambridge  
rcc46@cam.ac.uk