

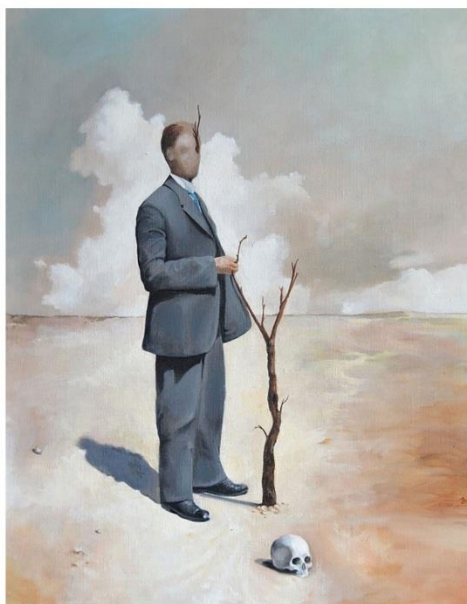
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# **Ethnic and migration components of social practices: opportunities to regain trust**

**Irina V. Glushko<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Azov-Black Sea Engineering Institute – the branch of Don State Agrarian University in Zernograd, Russia. e-mail: [glu-ir@mail.ru](mailto:glu-ir@mail.ru)

**Irina M. Lavrukhina<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup>Azov-Black Sea Engineering Institute – the branch of Don State Agrarian University in Zernograd, Russia. e-mail: [Lavrukhina\\_i@inbox.ru](mailto:Lavrukhina_i@inbox.ru)

**Tatyana M. Zueva<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>3</sup>Azov-Black Sea Engineering Institute – the branch of Don State Agrarian University in Zernograd, Russia. e-mail: [tmzue@yandex.ru](mailto:tmzue@yandex.ru)

**Irina A. Ostapenko<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>4</sup>Azov-Black Sea Engineering Institute – the branch of Don State Agrarian University in Zernograd, Russia. e-mail: [kppostapenko@rambler.ru](mailto:kppostapenko@rambler.ru)  
tel.: +8 9281415914

## **Abstract**

The research objective is to reveal the influence of migration processes on interethnic relations and opportunities for achieving civil peace and inter-ethnic stability in multinational states. The leading method is analysis and generalization of sociological data. As a result, the attributes of a common citizens' identity – the common state, the common history and territory, language and culture – have the consolidating potential in the respondents' opinion. In conclusion, the creation of effective mechanisms for withdrawal of inter-ethnic tensions and for increasing confidence in the authorities presupposes painstaking work and consists of activities that may seem small in terms of Big Politics.

**Keywords:** Distrust, Ethnicity, Interethnic Relations, Migration.

# Componentes étnicos y migratorios de las prácticas sociales: oportunidades para recuperar la confianza

## Resumen

El objetivo de la investigación es revelar la influencia de los procesos de migración en las relaciones interétnicas y las oportunidades para lograr la paz civil y la estabilidad interétnica en los estados multinacionales. El método principal es el análisis y la generalización de datos sociológicos. Como resultado, los atributos de la identidad de un ciudadano común (el estado común, la historia y el territorio, el idioma y la cultura comunes) tienen el potencial de consolidación en la opinión de los encuestados. En conclusión, la creación de mecanismos efectivos para la retirada de las tensiones interétnicas y para aumentar la confianza en las autoridades presupone un trabajo minucioso y consiste en actividades que pueden parecer pequeñas en términos de la Gran Política.

**Palabras clave:** desconfianza, etnicidad, relaciones interétnicas, migración.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the present context, the ethnic factor often exerts a decisive influence on the formation of the socio-political situation and the nature of socio-economic and political processes. Strengthening internal social harmony, provision of interethnic peace is important indicators of the effectiveness of the governmental activity in the social field. Civil peace and inter-ethnic stability are essential, and

often the leading conditions for the successful development of the state and society.

Meanwhile, the formation of a civic identity based on shared values, civic responsibility, and solidarity, respect for the law, awareness of (to some extent) involvement in the fate of the country of residence, is a necessary condition for maintaining the territorial integrity and unity of a multinational country.

One of the reasons for the increase in inter-ethnic tensions and the emergence of difficulties in public administration is the insufficient cognition of ethno-social relations in social practices. This is manifested, first of all, in the inadequate comprehension of the degree and nature of the impact of migration processes on the particularities of interethnic relations. This makes the problem of studying the ethnic component of social practices of immediate interest. Its decision will create opportunities for overcoming mistrust in a crisis of collective, national and civic identity (DANKIN, 2012).

As the main subjects of interethnic relations, ethnic groups of different demographic scales were traditionally considered; such groups could both successfully interact in intercultural exchange and be in acute confrontation and conflicts. The modern global socio-cultural situation demonstrates the intensification of the processes of mistrust towards the state, authorities, traditional religions, and social networks. The basis for limiting confidence and growing distrust is the increasingly evolving psychological antithesis of friend-or-foe (GORSHKOV & TIKHONOV, 2005).

The experience of the national policy of Russia in the context of the stated problems will be of much interest and use. The relevant regulatory documents define the main goals, principles, priorities, and tasks of the state national policy of the Russian Federation. The main strategic goals of the national policy are the formation of an all-Russian identity and the strengthening of the unity of the nations of Russia. Particular attention is paid to the fact that in the sphere of interethnic relations there are unsolved problems caused by both profound social transformations in the process of formation of a free open society and a market economy in modern Russia and some misjudgments in the state national policy of the Russian Federation. The problems related to manifestations of xenophobia, interethnic intolerance, ethnic and religious extremism, and terrorism remain urgent (EMELKINA, 2011).

The last decades have shown that the countries of Western Europe have also faced the problems of preservation of civil and national identity. The causes of the emergence of these problems were mass migration processes that turned previously monoethnic states into multinational communities.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

In the global world, international migration is increasingly active. It occurs not only in the Post-Soviet states and in the European Union, but throughout the whole world. According to the UN data,

since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the migration process involved the population of more than 250 countries; today almost all states are involved in these processes. By the middle of the century, the number of migrants could reach half a billion. Essential here is that migrants are becoming an independent, poorly predicted factor in the development of both countries hosting migrants and donor countries. It is possible to estimate the number of migrants only in a very approximate fashion, however, strangely enough, the extent and nature of migration can be judged from the state of interethnic relations of the countries involved.

Having at first economic or demographic background, migration later turned out to be a powerful factor, influencing interethnic relations in countries that resulted in polyethnic states. As a rule, mass migration leads to the complication and aggravation of inter-ethnic relations and, as a consequence, to the rise of nationalism. For example, refugees began to arrive in Europe not so long ago, but the national confrontation has already started, and crime rate has grown several times. The events of 2016 New Year's Eve in Cologne indicated that the foe may well become the object of aggression, which is quite justified by the person himself.

The severity of the problem is partially disavowed, because in the sphere of the economy - migrants and natives occupy jobs of different levels and pay rates. Interethnic relations, however, are built at the macro level and at the micro-level. In the relation between ethnic groups, mental beliefs or mistrust of relations agents are developed, which largely determine the stability and integrity of a multi-ethnic

state.

The migration policy of any state is aimed at increasing the level of tolerance to the culture of the host country by migrants, as well as providing conditions and motives for social adaptation of newcomers. Both the former and the latter require a high degree of trust between the parties. The difficulty of this has been demonstrated by the situation with migrants in France and Great Britain, for example.

Migration processes have become a serious cause of social and demographic problems in modern France. The country has the largest Muslim community in Europe; more than 3 million people have come from Africa. The fastest-growing number was of Algerian immigrants – and it should be noted, that they did not experience the language barrier. France's 1974 decision to temporarily suspend the entry of migrant workers into the country due to the economic crisis led to the opposite result: migrants wished to remain in France, and this gave birth to the problem of their reunification with the immediate family members. As a result, the number of African migrants has increased almost by half.

A certain mechanism was jump-started for the establishment of Muslims on the traditionally non-Muslim territory and further admittance to citizenship. They formed relatively closed communities, keeping in touch with the homeland, but still being stranger to the French society. The demographic characteristics of the country changed under the influence of African migrants and their descendants, but there was no actual assimilation. This is still reflected in the territorial segregation of migrants, the possibility of their



employment only for low-paid and low-skilled positions; the image of Islam in France is also somewhat negative.

French integration policy has proved ineffective, although in legal terms for the integration of migrants all legal conditions have been created: Muslims have citizenship and constitutional rights to religious and cultural particularities, immigrants are provided with a minimum subsistence, unemployment benefits are also measured in quite decent figures.

In our opinion, one of the main reasons for ethnic segregation is the unresolved personal and psychological friend-or-foe dichotomy. Xenophobia is based on fear of losing own cultural and national identity and individuality. Safety and comfort are achieved by being in the community of people similar by ethnicity, occupation, religious beliefs, social status and place of residence. Insulation from the rest of the communities leads to the emergence of ethnic and religious solidarity, and to the common isolation of the Muslim population, which is not always constructive.

Having developed a sufficiently detailed set of legal measures at the macro level, the state power could not develop mechanisms for civil and national consolidation at the micro-level. Certainly, in this situation the absence of centuries of experience in a multi-ethnic country, has had an impact.

The migration situation in England combined complex factors too. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the flow of migrants from Asia and Africa, former colonies and dominions, poured into Britain. Only in 2011, the total number of

Indian immigrants reached almost 1.5 million people, and migrants of African descent- about 1 million people. Migration flows increased sharply after Eastern European countries entered the EU. The number of migrants to the UK in 2014 reached 900 thousand. And that did not contribute to the strengthening of the British national identity. According to the 2011 population census, 572,000 people residing on the territory of the United Kingdom considered their native language to be Polish. Welsh was native, according to the same census, to 562 thousand people, which clearly shows that nowadays there are more Polish people than Welshmen (DOUGLASS, 1990).

The population of Great Britain is mainly negative about migration. According to a survey conducted by the Daily Mail in February 2014, 70% of the country's population oppose immigration, 21% came out for a complete cessation of migration. However, for themselves the British reserved the right to free movement around the European Union: 56% of respondents stood out for freedom of movement across the EU.

Great Britain, since its accession to the EU in 1973, foreseeing unpredictable consequences of migration, had a special position and did not sign the Schengen Agreement. However, they preferred to fight against migration in the other way than France – they toughened the rules of migration. At the end of 2013, the government introduced new rules for migrants: upgraded requirements for knowledge of the English language; end of free medical care for migrants, etc. And such tightening of measures to control migration continues today: EU-migrants must receive an official job offer before entering the country,

migrants can receive social and tax benefits only after working in the country for 4 years, unemployment terms are limited to 6 months with further deportation, which can be appealed only after the deportation procedure itself has occurred (DYACHENKO, 2016).

Theoretically, the inevitability of migration and subsequent adaptation of migrants to a different socio-cultural environment was substantiated at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by (GLUSHKO, 2016).

Such adaptation is a long-term socio-psychological process for the migrant; it involves the reconciliation of personal expectations and the capabilities of the sociocultural environment, the opportunity to live in a conflict less and productive way and work in a new place, and to a large extent correspond to the new role settings of the current socio-cultural environment, namely - to experience the state of self-fulfillment.

It should be noted that the process of consolidation of any multi-ethnic state – with respect to its regional features and national and civil identity of its population, is time-consuming and financially costly. The result of this process is the establishment of trusting interpersonal relations that ensure the integrity, stability, and dynamism of the development of the multinational community. Such relationships are formed at the macro and micro levels of social practices. The analysis of these practices should not be omitted.

Adequate analysis of the state of interethnic relations and early warning of conflict situations in this area presupposes the existence of state and municipal monitoring systems. Their goal is to determine the attitudes of the population towards representatives of other

nationalities, as well as to identify possible prospects for the development of interethnic relations. Of particular interest would be the sociological polls respondents' answers to the questions about the attitude to towards representatives of other nationalities, their assessment of the causes of interethnic conflicts, their attitude to inter-ethnic marriages, and the assessment of how the interests of different nationalities are taken into account in multi-ethnic areas.

### **3. RESULTS**

Trust and mistrust are the mental attitudes that ensure the efficiency of social practices at any level. In this light, their ethnic specificity emerges, namely - the ambivalence of trust in socio-ethnic practices.

On the one hand, the call to solve the problem of public consolidation and integration on the basis of weakening and overcoming religious, national, political intolerance and suspicion - raises the urgent demand to strengthen the atmosphere of trust and the expansion of social practices associated with it.

On the other hand, the same tasks, as a solution, imply the intensification of intolerance and suppression of attempts of religious extremism, chaos, criminality, terrorism and other similar negative phenomena, which are intensifying today, including due to a significant inflow of migrants. As a result, society forms both bundles

of trust and mistrust, based on, among other things, prejudices and ethnic stereotypes.

Microsocial practices of civil and national identity within the framework of mass culture replicate standardized schemes of social roles, offer mass audiences accessible and simplified templates for acting and effectively achieving legitimate goals. These archaic social identification practices make it difficult to master more complex, formal institutionalized social practices.

As for social practices at the macrosocial level, the friend-or-foe dichotomy may not be among the obvious pressure points of the society, as demonstrated by the recent Soviet past. The absence of division into friends and foes was officially declared in the documents of the Communist Party and the Soviet government in such terms as the Soviet people and national cohesion (LAVRUKHINA, 2017).

The selection totality of the respondents was 72, with 55.8% of men and 42.2% of women. The ethnic composition of the respondents is represented by Russians (73.1%), Meskhetian Turks (11.5%), Armenians (11.5%) and representatives of other nationalities (3.9%).

The existence of the problem of interethnic relations in the region was recognized by less than half of the respondents (44.2%). However, to the question Have you ever had a dislike for the representatives of any nationality? more than 60% of the respondents gave a positive answer. As the most often causes of such dislike, Russians named a demonstratively loud conversation of representatives of other nationalities in their native language, violation

of the order, disrespect for the rules adopted in the society, as well as concerns related to the growth in number of non-indigenous people.

Most respondents (71.2%) did not take into account the nationality of people within the daily communication framework but focused on their personal qualities and behavior. Cultural and religious differences, violation of the rights of particular nations (38.5%), economic problems (13.5%) were cited as reasons for ethnic conflicts.

The positive role of interethnic marriages, which contribute to the rapprochement of nations and the strengthening of friendship, was noted by 57.6% of respondents. Negatively assess interethnic marriages 21.2% of respondents, believing that they are weakening and destroying the nation.

And, finally, the answer to the question Should indigenous people have advantages over other nations residing in this territory? differed in various age groups. The least supporters of providing benefits to the indigenous population were in the age group of over 50 (25%); in the age group of under 30 - there were already 40% of them. The age group from 30 to 50 in the majority favored giving advantages to the indigenous population (62%). It can be assumed that this testifies to fears about the aggravation of competition in the social and labor areas.

Being generalized, the results of the above sociological studies showed that the attributes of a common citizens' identity – the common state, the common history and territory, language and culture – have the consolidating potential in the respondents' opinion. The notion of national and ethnic identity, according to Russian-Soviet

sociologist Mikhail GORSHKOV (2013), expresses part of the overall process of people's self-identification, while the formation of identity itself presupposes such a degree of subjective perception of traditions, customs and standards in which the acting individual does not separate oneself from a particular social group or community, perceiving everything as being related not only to him/her personally but also to a particular social group or community, that is, to a certain “We are” (GORSHKOV & SEDOVA, 2015).

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

It is appropriate to assume that the creation of an efficient mechanism for regional governance can create a positive image of the elite among the population, and increase the level of trust in the government power.

Prospects for achieving a balance of optimal levels of trust and mistrust in any country are in place, and they are linked to an effective alliance of renewed governmental and civil society institutions that can influence the government through various civil initiatives. This alliance will take action towards creating a balance of social interests. Today, the main task of both the modern Russian state and the states of Western Europe is the restoration of trust to them. Power must restore trust, which is possible through effective mechanisms of state and regional government.

The course of history for the last three to five years, which have become a reaction to mass migration processes, have shown the disinclination of the Western world to resist the negative consequences of migration. July 14, 2015, Hungary officially began to erect a barbed wire fence on the border with Serbia, with a total distance of 175 km. However, the experts are sure that the wall will not stop anyone. Migration flows will roll through Croatia and Romania, and the price of the migration tranche will increase.

The border closure and the forthcoming strengthening of border police control, the creation of migration camps, the refusal to allow migrants to enter the state territory testify to the absence of real mechanisms for relieving interethnic tensions in the West European space and of increasing confidence in the authorities.

The creation of effective mechanisms for withdrawal of interethnic tensions and for increasing confidence in the authorities presupposes painstaking work and consists of activities that may seem small in terms of Big Politics, however, they allow, if not eliminate, then significantly weaken the personal and psychological friend-or-foe dichotomy.

First of all, it is essential to create a nationwide and municipal system for monitoring the state of interethnic relations and early warning of conflict situations. The goal of the government national policy of any multinational state is to ensure real interethnic harmony in polyethnic regions. Such consent is achieved through the establishment of trust-based interpersonal relationships.



This precedes the painstaking work of governmental authorities and municipalities in many areas: the study of the current state of ethnic cultures, the dynamics of their development – and the mechanisms of reproduction in the regional aspect; the organization of the educational process with respect to the ethnic composition of the population, the inclusion of national and regional components in the curricula of educational institutions - and in the educational process of programs to study the history, culture, customs and traditions of nations, residing on the entrusted municipality territories; consolidated efforts on stabilization with religious associations; and monitoring of the ideas of nationalism and extremism in social networks in order to counteract them.

Such events as ethno-festivals, historical-cultural, mass-sports events, Academic Olympics, contests, flash mobs – seeming insignificant from the point of view of Big Politics, however, they are capable of building trust relations between representatives of various ethnic groups. This is also facilitated by the implementation of significant projects of ethno-social orientation.

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