

HDIM.CS/0536/19  
26 September 2019

Enclosed information material is submitted by European Center for Democracy Development

European Center for Democracy Development

**(Слайд 1) Modern Racism. Why a Compromise in International Politics no longer plays *on the side of Democracy?***

(Слайд 2) Modern racism does not operate with the concepts of "Race", but with the concepts of "[incompatibility of cultures](#)", "protection of indigenous "cultural values", "clash of Civilizations" etc., and it considers cultural diversity within the State as a threat only. (Слайд 3)

Back in 1954, an American psychologist, author of the Theory of Personality Traits, Dr. Gordon Allport, [wrote](#) that Cultural Racism arises when "one group declares its claim to determine cultural Values for the whole Society." Such an approach implies not only Ethnocentrism, i.e. making the culture and heritage of the main group the central value of this group, but also imposing this culture on other groups.

Opposition of "indigenous" peoples to "non-indigenous", based on [cultural arguments](#), plays a crucial role in this discourse. Thus, the concept of "Race" is replaced by the concept of "Culture", but all other components of racial theory [remain unchanged](#). Exactly this problem is the most acute in Europe today, as soon as many politicians and part of the society consider it politically correct and refuse to accept it as a problem of discrimination against minorities.

They believe that different racial and ethnic groups with different cultural codes have no chance to get along with each other. It is important to understand that, unlike America, in Europe and, partially in Asia and Africa, popular notions of "Race" and "Ethnic group" often merge and local racists do not distinguish between "Race" and "Ethnic group". In this case, racism [merges](#) with ethno nationalism completely and causes the dehumanization of diverse cultural "others" and ethnic cleansings, as it occurred in the 90s in the former Yugoslavia.

In the discourse of modern Racism, it is necessity the limitation of the influence of a minority culture upon the culture of the indigenous majority is generally accepted. Three methods are commonly used for this (Слайд 4):

- 1) Restricting the flow of people of other cultures into the country, including restricting immigration in order to limit the cultural influence of a minority.
- 2) Reducing the presence of representatives of another culture in the country. Variety of economic, political or cultural-educational tools are used for this purpose, forcing undesirable people of another culture to leave the country.
- 3) Cultural assimilation of minorities. Being a [declared benefit](#) for the national minority, it is replaced by the word "integration" more and more often. Although integration is a two-way street, assimilation is always a movement in one direction - towards the majority.

It is necessary to distinguish between voluntary and compulsory assimilation.

It is obvious that **voluntary assimilation** cannot be considered like a sign of modern Racism, due to the right of choice. It is absolutely normal when people have the right to choose their Cultural Identity.

**Forced assimilation** is a sign of Racism (Слайд 5), i.e. policies aimed at involuntary change of identity. It includes depriving national minorities of the right to choose in matters of their education and culture; no alternative obtrusion of majority culture on minorities; the destruction of the educational infrastructure of national minorities, including private schools and universities, accompanied by a total ban on education in the languages of national minorities; a ban on the use of the language of national minorities in communication with the authorities and even in everyday life.

So, modern Racism involves violent acts aimed at limiting the influence of another culture. The consequences of such actions are that minorities are forced to abandon their own culture and to be absorbed by the majority culture. I repeat, this is served like a boon to minorities. But the right of choice is not granted to them in this case, except for one thing - to leave their country.

Therefore, the classic racist openly says that he doesn't like the representatives of a certain Race, but the racist of the 21 century says, for example, that he doesn't like mosques because they spoil the look of European cities, and also calls for another identity to be imposed on the neighbor "for equal opportunities".

That all, repeat, is primarily about the countries where classical racism is no longer politically correct and outlawed. But can we definitely state that there are European countries which openly and consequently profess modern racism? No, but such trends are evident.

It is about refusing to accept refugees under the pretense of protecting the culture of the majority or the ban on Worship in any language other than the state one, like in Italy; citizenship deprivation of ex-immigrants without a court decision, like for example in Netherlands in 2016-17; more and more strict bans on wearing religious clothes in public places like in many European countries; targeted destruction of the existing infrastructure of bilingual education or education in the languages of national minorities; no alternative prohibiting teaching in national minorities schools in the languages of national minorities, including private educational institutions (like in Ukraine and Latvia), and the idea of criminal sanctions for calls for official multilingualism; targeted reduction of media in minority languages, like in Ukraine; emerging practice of removing Muslim children from their families for the purpose of acquainting (and actually imposing) European values, such as Christian Easter and Christmaslike in Denmark, etc.

It must be admitted that it is typical for countries with right-wing radicals as a part of the ruling coalitions, but the number of such countries is increasing. Why then right-wing regimes are introducing elements of modern racism into their policies?

First of all, they are afraid of large minority groups that they want to assimilate or force to emigrate. In addition, they solve electoral tasks, since the number of nationalist voters, frightened by migration processes, is growing rapidly. Often they motivate their actions with revenge for the evil that, according to the national tradition, was committed against the majority tens or even hundreds years ago, or revenge to the historical homeland of minorities. It has been proven long ago that splashes of anti-Semitism, initiated by the radicals in Europe, are [associated](#) with the aggravation of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the growth of anti-Islamic protests - with the terrorist activity of DAESH, and the escalation of Russophobia with the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. So, minorities become hostages of external circumstances that they cannot influence on.

This thesis is good to comment on the example of Ukraine.

According to the last census of 2001, 32.5 million Ukrainians were named the mother tongue of the Ukrainian language, and 15.3 million people of Ukraine found another mother tongue. Of these, 14.2 million named Russian as their native language, 228 thousand - Crimean Tatar, 181 thousand - Moldavian, 149 thousand - Hungarian, 138 thousand - Romanian, 131 thousand - Bulgarian, 54 thousand - Belarusian, 50 thousand - Armenian, etc.

In 2019, Ukraine adopted the law "**On ensuring the functioning of the Ukrainian language as the state language.**" The new law, supposedly written with the aim of protecting the Ukrainian language, deprives Russian and other languages of national minorities of regional status and drastically reduces the scope of their application in public life. Its main points:

- Since 2023, education starting from the fifth grade of the school will be conducted only in Ukrainian.
- 90% of programs on national channels from 7 am to 10 pm should be broadcast in Ukrainian.
- A publication in other languages must simultaneously produce an exact analogue in Ukrainian.
- At newsstands and other distribution points, at least half of the products should be in Ukrainian.
- All cultural events should be held in Ukrainian.

Penalties provided for in the bill:

- plans to introduce multilingualism, bilingualism, or to make official another language in a certain area or in the country as a whole are regarded as an attempt to overthrow the constitutional order;

- -Ukrainian language is equated with the state symbols of the country, its public insult entails punishment up to three years in prison;
- - “intentional violation of the requirements of Ukrainian spelling” in official documents is punished;
- Civil servants and deputies who refuse to use the state language in the workplace are fined.

At the same time, the number of Russian schools in comparison with schools of other national minorities decreased by almost five times over 4 years (Слайд 6).

As a result, we face with a whole group of new, but in fact *old*, risks.

First, there are political risks (Слайд 7):

1. *Racism returns to political discourse*, albeit in a different form.
2. Concept of a national state transforms in countries that allow manifestations of modern racism. These countries are gradually returning to the concept of the second half of the 19 century, according to which a Nation is presented as something cohesive, monolithic, thinking similarly. In the Society the nation is perceived as a collective personality with the sum of national values, including Language and Culture, which should be manifested in the behavior of each and everyone. *Such a society gradually moves towards homogeneity and monoculturicity.*
3. In the conflict between democratic values, such as the freedom of choice and diversity, and the interests of a monocultural society in countries influenced by modern racism, interests are gradually winning. This leads to a smooth transformation of democratic societies into universal states, which tend to control all spheres of society and, as a consequence, to a *deficit of democracy*.
4. Finally, the risks of interracial and inter-ethnic conflicts increase dramatically in countries forcibly imposing a majority culture on a minority. In addition, today [about 30% of Muslim migrants](#) in Europe and [85% of Eastern European irredentists, for example in Latvia](#), do not wish to assimilate. Precisely in this environment radical organizations are most effective, filling in the vacuum that has arisen after the state’s refusal to engage in educational issues, including religious, and minority cultures.

Secondly, these are socio-cultural risks (Слайд 8):

1. *The risk of a sharp decrease of the quality of education among minorities members.* There can be no equal chances for a child who studies in native language and a child who studies in a foreign language, especially in places of compact residence of communities where children have no experience of everyday communication in other languages. Characteristically, the authorities are well aware of this risk. In recent Abstracts of the Ministry of Culture of Latvia, which were announced by the Constitutional Court on the Law on the prohibition of education in the languages of

national minorities [said](#): "It will be not so bad if the schoolkids do not understand the physics, more importantly, that the role of the state language will be increased."

2. Accordingly, *the risk of unequal chances in the Labor market among graduates of the ethnic minority and majority who got education in their native language*. It is obvious that people with different levels of education may not have the same chance for a good job.
3. *The risk of mental disintegration and marginalization of children from minority families*. All the leading education experts believe that the conceptual apparatus of the child should be formed in their native language. In this regard, such a rude intervention in the educational process, when already in elementary school half of the subjects are taught in a non-native language, damages the development of child's personality.

International organizations should pay special attention towards the problem of new forms of racism ([Слайд 9](#)). It is necessary to support monitoring and research in this area in order to develop new (or to revise old) international documents aimed at combating racism and protecting the rights of national minorities.

They should take into account the following:

- It is necessary to recognize the presence of new forms of racism.
- Forced assimilation should be recognized as a form of modern Racism, an instrument of new racial policies aimed at destroying the culture of minorities. No justification of forced assimilation, such as interests of integration or equality, should not be acceptable. So, it is necessary to develop criteria of forced assimilation, which do not allow free interpretation.
- It is necessary to give a clear definition of a National Minority that does not allow a broad interpretation by the law enforcer. It should come from self-identification based on two factors - ethnic origin and native language and culture.

Today none of the international documents in this area provides a Definition of National Minority. This allows States, participating in various anti-racial conventions, to make Reservations about who is National Minority in their country and who is not. As a result, small indigenous ethnoses have the rights of the national minorities, but new minorities, which settled in Europe less than 100 years ago don't have them. In addition, almost all these international documents have loopholes to justify forced assimilation for sake of integration (for example, § 5.2. of the [Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the European Council](#)). ([Слайд 10-11](#))

It is obvious that international documents are usually the result of a Compromise, but today such a Compromise no longer plays on the side of Democracy.