

ОРИГИНАЛЬНАЯ СТАТЬЯ

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## Межэтнический негативизм: в поисках путей выхода

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### АННОТАЦИЯ

Проблема межэтнического негативизма, возникшая в результате глобализационных изменений, остро стоит перед большинством стран мира, характеризующихся полиэтничностью и поликультурностью. Она вызывает рост социальной напряженности, приводит к увеличению числа межнациональных и межэтнических конфликтов. В статье приводятся данные социологических опросов в Российской Федерации и результаты исследований зарубежных стран, подтверждающие актуальность и глубину проблемы этнокультурных противоречий. Авторы изучают причины межэтнического негативизма и нетерпимости. В работе рассматриваются различные подходы к интеграции полиэтничного населения, ассимиляционная модель и модель признания различий – мультикультурализм – и их недостатки. Высказывается мысль о необходимости разработки новой модели, способной ослабить этнический негативизм и сформировать культуру межэтнического общения.

**Ключевые слова:** этнокультурный облик; однородный этнический состав; этнические общества; социальная напряженность; межэтническое согласие; социокультурная адаптация

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ORIGINAL PAPER

## Interethnic Negativism: Searching for Exit Routes

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### ABSTRACT

Many countries with multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism structure of the population, face today the problem of inter-ethnic negativism. It aroused as a result of globalisation change. Besides, it causes an increase in social tension and leads to an increase in inter-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts. The article presents the data of sociological surveys in the Russian Federation and the results of studies in foreign countries, confirming the relevance and depth of the problem of ethnic and cultural contradictions. The authors consider the causes of inter-ethnic negativity and intolerance. The paper examines various approaches to the integration of the multi-ethnic population, the assimilation model and the model of recognition of differences-multiculturalism, and their shortcomings. The authors suggest developing a new model able to weaken ethnic negativity and form a culture of interethnic communication.

**Keywords:** ethnocultural image; homogeneous ethnic composition; ethnic communities; social tension; interethnic concord; socio-cultural adaptation

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**G**lobalisation changes lead to increased migration processes, change the historical social and ethnocultural image of the state's population: they are becoming less and less uniform in their ethnic composition. Over the past 50 years, the number of international migrants has almost tripled. If in 1960, 75.5 million people were living outside the country of their birth throughout the world, then in 2000 it was 176.6 million, and at the end of 2009, there were already 213.9 million. According to UN experts, currently, every 35th inhabitant of the globe is an international migrant, and in the developed countries — already every tenth [1]. Thus, multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism are given that characterises most countries of the modern world. Such states are faced with an especially acute problem of the coexistence of several ethnic communities, since as a result of migration, ethnocultural contradictions between different groups of the population inevitably become aggravated, causing social tensions. Social tension, in turn, exacerbated by economic and political instability, leads to an increase in interethnic conflicts.

The multinational, multicultural and multi-confessional states fully apply to the Russian Federation. According to the 2010 All-Russian Population Census, representatives of more than 190 nationalities and ethnic communities live on its territory, “each of which is distinguished by its unique material and spiritual culture. The peoples traditionally living on Russian territory are indigenous peoples and have their historical role in the formation of Russian statehood” [2]. However, often socio-economic instability, a decrease in the standard of living of certain groups of the population, worsening of the crime situation, the threat of terrorism and religious extremism, intensify internal migration processes and force ethnic groups to leave their state (or administrative) entities. Their transfer to another cultural and linguistic reality sometimes leads to the generation of socio-cultural adaptation problems arising as a result of the difference in the cultures of the host society and other-ethnic migrants, their value systems, beliefs, and worldview features.

An example of this is the Saratov region, where more than 140 ethnic groups live. In contrast, the Russian population living on the territory of the main ethnic mass makes up 87.6 per cent of the

community. A cross-cultural study of the ethnic identity of Azerbaijanis, Armenians, Russians and Chechens living in this region was carried out. To assess the out-group, the broader concept of “people from the Caucasus” was used. One of the results of this study showed that the percentage of people who rated representatives of Caucasian ethnic groups from an extremely negative side among Russians was 9 per cent. Against the backdrop of the negative attitude towards the estimated representatives of Caucasian ethnic groups on the part of the in-group, the desire for ethnic isolation was manifested among 34 per cent of respondents. When assessing such a judgment as “persons of other nationalities should be limited in their right to reside in the territory of their country (republic)”, 48 per cent of Russians showed attitudes like national fanaticism. At the same time, from 23 per cent of answers from Armenians and up to 30 per cent of responses from Azerbaijanis and Chechens, negative assessments were revealed when characterising Russians. These indicators cannot but cause concern because they indicate “a high level of interethnic tension, a willingness to take any action in the name of ethnic interests, a denial of the right to use resources and social privileges to representatives of other nations” [3].

Moreover, according to indirect data, Russia has about 30 million people accumulated migration from neighbouring countries [4]. According to the indicators of the migration situation in the Russian Federation, only for January — March 2019, 8 704 649 citizens of foreign countries were registered with migration (<https://мвд.рф/Deljatelnost/statistics/migracionnaya/item/17595161>). The inability of visitors to adapt to new conditions of a different cultural environment, their unwillingness to perceive the cultural identity of the host community on the one hand, and sometimes the categorical demand for the adoption of local cultural norms by the Russians on the other, do not contribute to maintaining interethnic harmony.

In this regard, the results of surveys of residents of the city of Yekaterinburg and foreign ethnic migrants from Central Asian countries are indicative. They show the forms of interaction between the host community and visitors from other countries, reveal the problems of mutual rejection, leading to the growth of social conflicts. Most Yekaterinburg residents negatively perceive

labour migrants from Central Asian countries and disagree with the need for their presence in the city: 60.2 per cent of respondents negatively relate to the fact that the number of non-Russian migrants in Yekaterinburg is growing, more than a third unequivocally consider them “strangers” (33.4 per cent). *Table 1* shows the readiness of migrants and residents of Yekaterinburg to change their cultural habits for a safe life.

Survey data showed that the degree of readiness for change for the sake of calm and peaceful coexistence among local residents and migrants varies significantly. Residents of Yekaterinburg, as representatives of the host community, do not consider it necessary to change their socio-cultural norms of behaviour radically. At the same time, only a small part of migrants (11.7%) express their willingness to change their behaviour in a foreign country, participating in cultural integration based on the norms of the local population.

A mirror image of the problem of interethnic interaction in Russia is the situation in Estonia, where Russians are an ethnic minority, accounting for 26 per cent of the population. In 2011, the American research Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) published a report on the results of a sociological study. It showed that 34 per cent of Estonians are hostile to Russians living in Estonia, while a negative perception of Estonians is characteristic only of 8 per cent of representatives of the Russian ethnic group [5].

Obviously, Russia is not alone in spreading anti-migrant sentiments. According to the European sociological survey conducted in 2008 and 2010. In 30 European countries, 21 per cent of the population approved the eviction of migrants in our country (*table 2*). In Israel, Hungary, Portugal, as can be seen from the results of the survey, this figure is even higher [6].

In the UK, according to a Polish study, in recent years, emigrants from this country, especially after the decision to leave the United Kingdom from the European Union, are increasingly experiencing a hostile attitude, faced with racism and xenophobia [7].

It should be noted that there is no single modern society that is entirely free from xenophobia and “would not experience from time to time bursts of aggression against its “strangers”. The absence of barriers between those who are considered the majority of the population, “ours” and “not ours”, indifference, or weak repulsion

(or someone else’s attractiveness) would mean utter atrophy, amorphous social and ethnic solidarity relations, the indistinguishability of the important and the unimportant. It is challenging, if not impossible, to imagine such an anomic situation. A society without xenophobia is a utopia of an absolutely closed and isolated island community, something like the life of a tribe, squeezed into the dense forests of an abandoned mountain plateau, unaware of the road to its neighbours” [8].

Alertness, negative stereotypes, prejudice, rejection of an alien culture or lifestyle are not new. They are inherent in human nature. According to Walter Bagehot, British economist and political philosopher of the 19th century, who wrote in 1874 the essay “The Metaphysical Basis of Tolerance” humanity was originally characterised by intolerance and persecution, which were laid down by nature. In the 20th century, specialists in child psychology conducted experiments related to a comparative analysis of intolerance in children and adults. They reiterated W. Bagehot’s findings that “intolerant behaviour in society is constantly reproduced due to the indestructibility of infantile complexes generated by the need for faith, sacred customs and rituals, replacing a rational discussion of complex social problems” [9]. Interethnic negativity can be traced even in relations between neighbouring countries that have existed side by side for centuries. It is enough to recall the Portuguese proverb “From Spain, neither the good wind nor the wife” or “sworn friendship” of the inhabitants of Great Britain and France. When it comes to the attitude of the indigenous population towards ethnic minorities, it tends only to intensify. Numerous studies conducted in different countries confirm the existence of this phenomenon. For example, in Canada, the first country to enact a law on multiculturalism as an official state policy in 1988, negative stereotypes regarding the ethnic minorities of Canadian society are still prevalent among Anglo-Canadians [10]. In the Netherlands, the degree of confidence in the ethnic minority and the desire to communicate with its representatives on the part of the indigenous population is extremely small [11].

An example is Australia, the classic country of emigration. Nowadays, it takes 8th place in the world in the number of emigrants, which make up 29% of the population, while the number of original inhabitants is 2.8%. The country has extensive experience in terms of building the

Table 1

**The readiness of migrants and residents of Yekaterinburg to change their cultural habits for a safe life, %**

Variants of answer	Residents of Yekaterinburg	Migrants
Absolutely not ready to change my cultural habits	74.2	16.5
For the sake of safety, partially ready to change my cultural habits	12.2	35.5
Ready to change my culture cardinally	0.2	11.7
Do not know	12.6	35.1
Have no answer	0.8	1.3

Source: [4].

communication skills of citizens: the educational policy there is based on the recognition that multilingualism and political culture determine the socio-cultural situation. The training aimed at the formation of traditional types of communicative competence for Western countries is carried out, taking into account the tasks of intercultural communication. However, studies have shown that, even when the state has a mutual integration policy and implementation, children from the Anglo-Australian in-group of the ethnic majority rated themselves more positively than children from two other out-groups of the ethnic minority, natives of the Pacific Islands and Aboriginal [12].

Interethnic negativity manifests itself in social and economic spheres, at the household level and in business. Studies in this area have found that, for example, in China, in the practice of providing trade loans, there is a prejudice towards firms managed by compatriots from ethnic minorities [13]. In Israel, in turn, the results of a survey of the ethnic majority of this country showed a lack of confidence in Israeli Arabs, Bedouins and Palestinians, ethnic minority groups when it comes to activities related to deferred payments or payment of risky assets [14].

As you can see, the problems associated with the ethnic rejection of the minority by the majority, with intercultural communications and massive international migrations are relevant for most states, if only because there are practically no mono-ethnic countries in the world.

Throughout its history of development, multinational states have sought cultural homogeneity and single national state identity. There are different approaches to the integration of a

Table 2

**Isolationism against migrants  
None of the migrants to be allowed to enter the country, % of responses**

The Russian Federation	21.7
Israel	33.2
Hungary	32.1
Czech Republic	24.4
Portugal	22.6
Estonia	16.6

Source: ESS 2010.

multi-ethnic population: an assimilation model and a model for recognising differences. In the first case, migrants themselves generally bear the burden and experience the hardships of the integration process; in the second case, the emphasis is shifted to creating conditions for integration, i.e. on the efforts of the host.

In the late XIX – early XX centuries, the model of ethnic assimilation prevailed as an integration model in Europe and the USA. However, with its help, it was not possible to solve the problem of the formation of a single national identity, “including on an equal footing the identities of all citizens of the country”. The growth of interethnic and racial tensions in countries adhering to the policy of a “melting pot” meant that this theory did not work either for immigrants or an indigenous, racially different population” [15].

The search for new approaches to interaction with foreign ethnic populations in these countries

led to the concept of multiculturalism. However, it was also ineffective due to the opposition of the standards of this policy and the values of national cultural and religious identity [16]. The multicultural policy led to a split in society, which formed the basis of its failure and recognition of multiculturalism as failed. Many European leaders have criticised the policy of multiculturalism. For example, British Prime Minister D. Cameron said: "Following the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have contributed to the fact that different cultures lived an independent life, separately from each other and outside the mainstream of culture. We did not offer them a vision of the society to which they would like to belong. We were tolerant of these isolated communities whose behaviour was completely contrary to our values" (<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference>). A. Merkel said: "Attempts to build a multicultural society in Germany, in which representatives of different cultures will "live in complete agreement", have completely failed" [17]. Both American researchers and public figures noted the negative consequences of such a cultural policy. S. Huntington, for example, considers the policy of multiculturalism, implemented in the context of increasing ethnic heterogeneity of the United States, as "the desire to revise the American political, social and cultural history from the point of view of the" non-European "population of the

country" [18]. With this approach to the integration of a multi-ethnic population, the focus of migration policy problems is shifted to the socio-cultural sphere; new challenges arise in the interaction of societies with different traditions and cultures of interethnic interactions. There is a need to form a new cultural picture of the world, which is a combination of knowledge and ideas about the values of one's own culture and the culture of other ethnic groups.

It implies an understanding of national features, the characteristics of ethnic and religious mentality, knowledge of each other's traditions and customs. A new cultural picture of the world should serve as the basis for dialogue, within the framework of which interaction, interpenetration, mutual influence and mutual enrichment of multinational cultures, openness, preservation of national traditions of ethnic groups and orientation to preserve the diversity of life, but not to deny ethnic differences and the desire to erase them. "Such a multicultural environment is an effective tool for recognising the cultural identity of peoples and creating political tolerance, provides national integration and identification" [19]. It may serve as a successful alternative to ethnocentrism and ethno-isolationism, weaken ethnic negativity, reduce conflict potential, reduce the preconditions for interethnic confrontation, and create a culture of interethnic communication [20].

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