

Development strategies of interethnic and interreligious interactions in the regional socio-cultural landscape

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Abstract — The socio-cultural landscape of the Volgograd region is an example of long-standing good-neighborly relations. The results of the monitoring the socio-cultural landscape of the region cited in the article suggest a stable tolerant interaction of ethnic and religious communities, both at the institutional and at the mundane level. The goal of the research is to identify strategies and mechanisms to counter extremism on national and religious grounds in the socio-cultural landscape of a particular region.

Keywords—tolerance, sociocultural landscape, interreligious interaction, interethnic interaction, regional space, Volgograd region.

I. INTRODUCTION

The introduction contains the relevance of the article and its goal setting.

The diversity of the socio-cultural landscape of the Volgograd region has evolved historically, under the influence of many prerequisites: economic, political and ethnic, peaceful and military. Despite the motley ethnic makeup, the frontier zone of the Volgograd region has not yet become the scene of serious interethnic and interreligious conflicts [1].

At the present stage, the Volgograd region continues to be a multicultural and multinational frontier region. On the territory of the Volgograd region today there are citizens of 100 nations and nationalities, 23 of which are the most numerous ones: Russians, Ukrainians, Kazakhs, Germans, Tatars, Belorussian, Chechens, Ingush, Chuvash, Mari, Azeri, Georgians, Armenians, Roma, Mordva, representatives peoples of Dagestan, Koreans, Poles, Tajik, Uzbek, Bashkir, Jews, Kalmyk. According to the Volgogradstat, in the Volgograd region (as of January 1, 2019), 421 faith-based organizations of 22 different denominations, 32 national communities and diasporas are registered.

At the same time, the situation in the sphere of intercultural collaboration is rather stable. The prerequisites for the emergence of tension in the sphere of interethnic relations were the intensification of hostilities during the

Chechen campaigns, the terrorist attacks of 2013. Currently, there is a calm situation in the field of intercultural interaction, characterized by the rise of tolerant consciousness, among the population and in the policies of the authorities [2]. The study of strategies and mechanisms for maintaining the peaceful coexistence of various peoples and representatives of confession of faith within a single socio-cultural regional landscape is relevant.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS (MODEL)

In the course of the study, a questionnaire is being conducted of the residents of the Volgograd region. Type of sample: random quota with distribution by sex and age. The sample size is 1500 respondents aged 18 years and over. The sample is representative of the area of residence, gender, age, urban and rural population.

The basis of the sample is the urban and rural population of 7 municipalities of the Volgograd region aged 18 years and older, living and having a permanent registration in the settlements of the Volgograd region in which the survey is conducted. The method of collecting sociological information used in the study: a personal patterned interview [3]. A quantitative study of communal relations on the territory of the Volgograd region was carried out by the method of personal interviews among the population aged 18 years and older, permanently residing in the Volgograd region.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In general, in the Volgograd region at the institutional level, there is a legal framework in the form of international treaties, federal and state legislation to effectively combat discrimination on the basis of nationality or relation to religion. In addition, in order to regulate relations with religious organizations in the Administration of the Volgograd Region have been established communication division and assistance to faith-based organizations of the office of the Head of Local Administration of the Volgograd Region and the Council for Theological Expert Evaluation. An interfaith round table is held periodically, where leaders of government authorities and faith-based organizations can discuss existing problems. It is important to note that in the

municipal structures of the region religious issues are handled by first deputy heads. Leaders of faith-based organizations have the opportunity to contact the administrative arrangements on emerging issues in irreligious activities. Main areas of work are:

- early warning and resolution of interethnic conflicts;
- development of ethnocultural traditions;
- assistance in the formation and development of the national education system;
- prevention of extremist activities and the formation of tolerance settings.

Among the main activities in the agreement are: attraction to the cooperation of local governments bodies, universities, public associations; development and implementation of specific combined action programs; organization of joint events [4]. Government authorities declared their intention to involve ethnocultural associations in the development of draft legal acts, to acquaint them with the results of scientific research and development, and other information on ethnic issues [5]. Ethnocultural associations expressed their desire to develop interethnic dialogue, tolerance and cooperation. In accordance with the agreement, they also pledged to refrain from participating in the activities of political parties and in election campaigns.

One can speak about tolerant moods of the population, based on the results of sociological research. The goal of research: obtaining reasonable, representative information about interethnic and interfaith relations in the Volgograd region and development of a set of recommendations to the authorities of the Volgograd region for the policy implementation in this area. One of the blocks of the mass survey questionnaire was devoted to the study of problems of tolerance in the region. The results of the study showed that 64.8% of the population of the Volgograd region stated that the principle of freedom of conscience and confession of faith was observed in the region, 12.5% considered the opposite and 22.8% found it difficult to answer the question. According to the survey results, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents assess the state of interethnic relations in the Volgograd region as neutral (48%) and favorable (36%). Only every eighth polled resident of the region (12%) is sure that interethnic relations are unfavorable and therefore conflicts are possible.

It is indicative that the prevailing majority of the respondents from the Volgograd region have a neutral (52%) or positive (40%) experience of communication with representatives of other nationalities. Only 8% of respondents indicated that they have a negative experience of communication with representatives of other nationalities.

These studies suggest that for the majority of the population of the Volgograd region (73%), confession of faith is not a significant factor as a basis for trusting relationships between individuals, since only 23% of the population trust believers and 1% of those surveyed trust unbelievers.

A completely different picture can be observed when considering the answers to the question “What do you think, all religions should have equal rights in the territory of the

Russian Federation?” The interrogated population (67%) of the region is sure that all religions in the territory of the Russian Federation should have equal rights. This is consistent with the constitutional principles of the activity arrangement of faith-based organizations in the Russian Federation. A quarter of the polled population of the region stands for the existence of one dominant confession. Of these, 15% support Orthodoxy as the dominant religion; 9.5% - Christianity, 0.4% - Islam and 0.1% - Jehovah's Witnesses. Among the 25% who support the dominance of one religion. The proposed variants of answers to the questions posed are also interesting, in which 0.6% of the population are inclined. Traditional multi-faith is distinctive for Russian society, that it is showing in the answers: “three main religions: Orthodoxy, Islam and Buddhism”, “Orthodoxy and Islam”, “Orthodoxy, Islam, and Judaism”, “there shouldn't be many religions: Orthodoxy and Islam”.

The study showed that among the entire mass of respondents, the respondents who ranked themselves as Islam were the most tolerant, 90.4% of them advocate equality of religions. Among the respondents who found it difficult to answer, the majority considered themselves to be less widespread in comparison with Orthodoxy and Islam. Respondents who called themselves Orthodox and Christians in response to the question “All religions should have equal rights” were answered in the affirmative for the most part (68.9% and 63.6%).

Thus, religious preferences do not affect tolerance towards other religions the majority of the population supports the equality of faith-based organizations.

According to a larger share of respondents, the strengthening of interethnic relations in the region can primarily be affected by the acquaintance of people with the culture of other nationalities through joint cultural events, holidays (17%), joint training of children of different nationalities in educational institutions (17%) and compliance equal rights of people of different nationalities (18%). The study by Russian people of the language and culture of representatives of other nationalities (2%) was the least-named factor that could influence the strengthening of interethnic relations. It is indicative that the share of respondents who believe that interethnic relations will not do anything better turns out to be small and amounts to 6%.

The survey noted that respondents are inclined to give neutral assessments of their attitude towards migrant workers who come to work in the Volgograd region from neighboring countries. Thus, half of the respondents (49%) indicate that they are neutral towards labor migrants who come to work in the Volgograd region from neighboring countries. Just over a quarter of respondents (27%) treat migrant workers negatively. And 20%, by contrast, have a positive attitude.

The study showed the population of the Volgograd region, for the most part, tolerant belongs to different religions. The religious identity of a person for 73.2% of respondents does not affect the degree of trust in another person interpersonal communication. At the everyday level, no conditions and prerequisites for religious-based disputes have been identified. By a majority of the inhabitants of the region, Orthodoxy is perceived as an integral part of the culture of their native country, Orthodox traditions have

become part of the everyday social and cultural life of many families. At the same time, other religions are not rejected, there is an interest in them. A significant part of the survey participants considered that all religions, all faith-based organizations operating on the basis of the laws of the country should enjoy equal rights and have all possibilities within the law for organizing their activities.

As a rule, respondents estimate their awareness of state policy in the sphere of interethnic and interfaith relations at the average level, indicating that they have heard something about it, but do not remember what it is (57%). The proportion of those who are poorly informed about the state policy in the sphere of interethnic and interfaith relations is quite high; he does not know anything about this (31%). Only 8% of residents surveyed indicated that they are well informed and aware of the measures taken.

The majority of respondents believe that the state does not impede the activities of faith-based organizations, but does not render significant assistance to them (39%). A quarter of respondents (26%) are confident that the state actively promotes the development and support of faith-based organizations. And 19% of respondents believe that the state's influence on faith-based organizations is insignificant.

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to make recommendations to the bodies of authority for the development of favorable interethnic and interfaith relations in the Volgograd region. The respondents expressed a rather large number of proposals that can be grouped in separate directions. Note that the leading proposals among the respondents were the restriction and prohibition of the entry of migrants, as well as an increase in the number and frequency of joint national-cultural events, concerts, and holidays. Based on the opinions of the respondents, we will describe and present a number of recommendations:

- conduct explanatory, preventive conversations with the population, in educational institutions;
- raise the standard of living of the population, to provide the population with workplaces, including the indigenous population;
- give more attention to the problems of the population, including indigenous peoples;
- place more information about interethnic relations in the media;
- increase public awareness of events;
- tighten control over the entry of migrants;
- increase the efficiency of migration policy;
- hold a greater number of national cultural events, joint celebrations;
- raise public awareness about the religions of other nations;
- pay more attention to the needs and concerns of the indigenous population;
- restrict or prohibit the entry of migrants into the region;

- pay more attention to the education of the younger generation;
- reduce corruption level;
- promote the establishment of friendly relations between representatives of different nationalities;
- provide quality and varied leisure, sports activities for young people and the general population;
- ensure the study of russian language migrants;
- control the financial flows of faith-based organizations;
- increase the effectiveness of national policies in the region;
- pay more attention to the russian population;
- ensure (develop special programs) the return of young people after training to their localities;
- ensure equality of all before the law, regardless of nationality.

The data show that people of different religions understand each other faith does not interfere with their communication, living together in the region [6]. The migration flows of the last two decades, which have complicated the multinational and multi-confessional composition of the population of the region, have not made significant changes in the daily life of people.

IV. CONCLUSION

The results of the analytical work allow us to conclude that the situation in the sphere of interethnic and interfaith relations in the Volgograd region is estimated by the majority of the population of the Volgograd region as calm, not causing concerns. Among the factors affecting the assessment of the interethnic and interfaith situation in the region, noted the age, main employment and social activity of respondents [7]. It is assumed that young people, respondents who do not have basic employment, as well as residents of the region who are not socially active, are more likely to have negative evaluations of relations between representatives of different nationalities and religions.

Among the most acute problems of interethnic and interfaith situations in the regional sociocultural landscape, there are large migration flows, the spread of radical sentiments among the religious part of the population. The expected approaches to strengthening interethnic and interfaith peace and harmony are: informational and awareness-raising (disseminating to broad sections of the population information about the cultural, social, historical and other features of the ethnic groups and religions represented in the region); interactional (strengthening of interaction between representatives of various national and religious groups through joint participation in cultural, educational, sports, charity and other events); behavioral (manifestation of positive behavioral practices in the field of interethnic and interfaith relations).

The preferred channels of information about the interethnic and interfaith situation in the region are different for representatives of different age groups. It is assumed that students and working young people prefer to receive

information via the Internet; middle-aged and older people through television and print publications.

Residents of the Volgograd region see a reserve in strengthening interethnic and interfaith relations in the region by expanding the information enlightenment of the population about the characteristics of various cultures, faiths and ethnic groups. In addition, according to residents of the region, harmonization of interethnic peace can contribute to the improvement of migration control by the relevant government agencies. The assessment of the situation in the sphere of interethnic and interfaith relations does not have a direct impact on the assessment of the social and political sphere of the region.

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