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Keywords:

Tolerance, ethnic tolerance, ethnic group, ethnic relations, xenophobia, Transcarpathian region.

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THE LEVEL OF INTERETHNIC TOLERANCE OF THE UKRAINIANS IN THE TRANSCARPATHIAN REGION

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The article is devoted to the analysis of tolerance and xenophobia of the Ukrainians of the Transcarpathian region towards some ethnic groups. Based on the opinion polls conducted according to Bogardus method of measuring of social distance, the author analyzed the attitude to the Russian speaking Ukrainians, the Hungarians, the Romanians, the Russians, the Roma, the Slovaks, the Jews, the Americans and the Hindus. The survey results indicate that the Ukrainians of the Transcarpathian region mostly demonstrate their tolerance towards the Slovaks, the Americans and the Russian-speaking Ukrainians. The social distance to the Hungarians, the Romanians, the Jews and the Hindus can be characterised as alienation. There is an openly xenophobic attitude towards the Russians and the Roma people.

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In recent years Ukraine has faced a number of new phenomena and processes that have a great impact on the internal politics of the country. It is a large-scale relocation, that is migration, that leads to the increasing of ethnic, cultural and confessional diversity of the society. The mass migrations have inevitably resulted in different versions of the relationship between migrants and the host ethnic majority. Cultural and communicative, social and psychological characteristics, inherent in every ethnic community in practice leads to problematic interethnic communication. The participants, to some extent, face a difficulty interacting with those whose culture is different from their own. The beginning of the military confrontation in the East of Ukraine and Russian aggression under the guise of protecting of the Russian-speaking population actualized the study of inter-ethnic interaction and inter-ethnic tolerance in the Ukrainian society, as well as the changes in attitudes towards some ethnic groups caused by the war.

The research of the tolerance in the Ukrainian society has been regularly conducted by different researchers. During the 1992 – 2002

a Ukrainian Scientist N. Panina (Panina, 2005, Panina, 2005a) modified a Bogardus scale and conducted the research of the tolerance level in Ukraine. Thus it was concluded that the level of the tolerance was decreasing. In 2012 a comprehensive study of tolerance in the Ukrainian society was conducted (Regional tolerance, 2012). The results revealed a rather high level of alienation in Ukraine and identified ethnic/racial groups, the attitude to which was the most negative. In the Transcarpathian region tolerance measuring were made by O. Pelin (Pelin, 2011) who came to the conclusion that tolerance level of the Transcarpathian population is somewhat higher than in the rest of Ukraine. All the studies were conducted before the year 2014, and so a new factor, that is the Russian aggression, was not taken into consideration. Our study had as a goal to determine the change in the attitude of the Ukrainians of the Transcarpathian region towards different ethnic groups in the conditions of war.

Thus, the aim of our research is to study an inter-ethnic tolerance of the Ukrainians of the Transcarpathian region based on a sociological survey conducted in November 2014 - February 2015.

In Ukraine, the journalists, government officials and community leaders are mostly trying to avoid the recognition of the problem of interethnic tolerance, emphasizing only positive nature of these interactions. For example, the use of the phrase "Transcarpathian region is one of the most distinctive multiethnic regions of Ukraine, where the representatives of 100 nationalities live in peace and harmony" is a traditional one for Transcarpathia (Shutanych). So two factors were emphasised - the multiculturalism of the region and the high level of tolerance. Therefore, our aim is to determine the level of tolerance of the Ukrainians towards the ethnic minorities of Transcarpathia.

Presenting the main material. Tolerance (from the Latin. *Tolero, tolerare*) - to transfer, to hold, to endure (Pelin, 2011, p. 349). In sociology tolerance is understood as a social phenomenon caused by certain socio-economic and political relations and by the traditions of interethnic communication, as well as by the level of political and humanitarian culture of the society.

The Ukrainian researcher M. Dzera determines "tolerance" - as a tolerant attitude of political parties to the opinions of political opposition, the ability to admit its defeat in the political struggle (Dzera, 2007, p. 72). Another Ukrainian researcher Y. Shveda defines tolerance as a tolerant attitude to others' opinions, attitudes, points of view, beliefs, considering it as a mandatory rule of a constitutional state and democratic society (Shveda, 2005, p. 413).

If to appeal to the regulatory framework, "The Declaration of Tolerance Principles" defines tolerance as respect, acceptance and proper understanding of the rich diversity of our world cultures, our forms of expression and the ways of being human individuality. It is promoted by knowledge, openness, communication and the freedom of thought, conscience and belief (Declaration of principles). Thus, the ethnic tolerance means tolerance towards people of other ethnic groups, the absence of discrimination.

The most common and reliable method of measuring of sociological tolerance is considered to be the Scale of social distance created by Emory Bogardus. The author of the theoretical concept of measuring of ethnic (racial) distances Robert Park considered the social and racial distances to be the product of the biased attitude to "others". "We usually turn to bias, which later seems rough, instinctive and involuntary disposition to maintain a social distance. These distances in our democratic society are striving to move to exclusively individual level" (Park, 1924, p. 344).

The first measuring of ethnic distance was made by Bogardus in 1925. It showed virtual absence of distances between the ethnic groups that speak English (the English, Scots and Irish) and a considerable distance towards the Turks, Negroes, Mulattos and Japanese. Bogardus results are explained by the fact that the idea of these ethnic or racial groups based on stereotypes, not on their own experience of communication (Pelin, 2011). Thus, even the first experimental measurement of ethnic distance fully confirmed the theoretical assumptions of R. Park as to the bias in the evaluation of interethnic distances and the level of interethnic tolerance.

In Ukraine Bogardus methodology was refined and adapted by N. Panina. Exploring

Ukrainian interethnic tolerance within 1992 – 2002 she came to the conclusion that tolerance level was decreasing. This trend the researcher explained by the following: Ukraine, as a newly created state needed some strengthening of its independence, and this caused a negative attitude towards the minorities (Panina, 2005, Panina, 2005a).

Another Ukrainian researcher Paniotto came to similar conclusions. On his opinion the level of xenophobia in Ukraine during the period from 1991 to 2007 significantly increased. The least biased attitude of the population of Ukraine was observed towards the Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainians, followed by the Russian-speaking Ukrainians, then by the Russians and the Belarussians. Then, with a large margin they are followed by the Jews, the Frenchmen, the Canadians, the Americans, and then – with some margin, by the Negroes and the Roma (Paniotto, 2008, p. 211).

In 2012 the results of “Regional tolerance, xenophobia and extremism in Ukraine in 2012”, conducted by Kiev International Institute of Sociology on the request of the Human Rights and Prevention of Extremism and Xenophobia (IHRPEX) were published. The authors described the interethnic relations as moderately alienated. During 2012 they have undergone some minor changes, mainly in the direction of reduction of the distance towards the representatives of the Slavic ethnic groups, the Jews and the Caucasians (ethnic categorization which is broadcasted through the media was used while conducting a public opinion poll). The shortest social distance is kept towards the Ukrainians (the index of ethnic distance is higher for the Russian speaking Ukrainians compared to Ukrainian speaking) and the Russians. The greatest distance according to the scale of Bogardus is observed towards such groups as the Roma (5.8), the Negroes (5.6), the Asians and the Arabs (5.5), the Caucasians (5.3). Towards all these groups there is a latent xenophobic setting in the Ukrainian society (Regional tolerance, 2012).

A Transcarpathian sociologist O. Pelin asserted that interethnic tolerance of the population of the Transcarpathian region was in general higher than throughout Ukraine. This assertion was based on the fact that ethnics groups living in the region did not have any

significant conflicts over the 1991 – 2013. Indirectly, these results are confirmed by the findings of the non-government organisation “The Ukrainian peacekeeping school”. Exploring the potential conflict points of the Transcarpathian region, the experts have determined the most probable ones: civil society – government, inter-confessional conflicts and political conflicts. However, the experts did not consider any interethnic conflicts as a serious threat to the Transcarpathian region (Shveda, 2005).

In November 2014 – February 2015, in the Transcarpathian region there was some research in order to determine the level of ethnic tolerance. The conducted study was based on the Bogardus scale. The list of ethnic groups contained: the Ukrainians, the Russian speaking Ukrainians, the Hungarians, the Romanians, the Russians, the Roma (Gypsies), the Slovaks, the Jews, the Americans and the Hindus. The Russian speaking Ukrainians were put in a separate group as we tried to test the hypothesis that with the beginning of the war a language has become a marker of the detection a “friend/ foe”. The Hungarians are the largest minority in Transcarpathian region. They live compactly along the border with Hungary and are the most politically active ones. Their political activity is reinforced by the existence of two Hungarian parties, which are in fact politicized wing of their non-governmental organisations. Even though these political parties are competitors, but in the aspect of strategic issues they have mutual understanding. The strategic goal of the Hungarians is to achieve territorial autonomy – in particular by means of creating a separated Tysa Region. The Romanian minority is one of the most closed and compact living along the border with Romania. The Russians, according to the census of 2001 is the fourth largest minority, which has a distinct trend towards downsizing. During the 2000s the Russian minority’s influence has weakened. However, it was perceived by the Ukrainians of the Transcarpathian region rather positively. In the study, we were trying to check how the war has influenced the perception of the Russian minority by the Ukrainians. According to census of 2001, there are 14 thousand of Roma people. However, the Roma activists say that the real figure is 40 thousand. (Novakova, 2014, p. 29). The information of the

local doctors also indicates that the figure is close to 40 thousand. Therefore, to our mind, the figure of 40 thousand is a real one. Let us pay attention to the fact that during the census of 2001 the majority of Roma indicated Hungarian as their mother tongue – 62.3% (Molnár, 2005, p. 23). Given the negative attitude towards the Roma, probably most of them were trying to choose a more “prestigious” nationality in the census indicating a different nationality, mostly a Hungarian one. The leaders of the Hungarian minority are also interested in the idea of recording the Roma as the Hungarians thus the Hungarian minority is becoming the most numerous in the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine.

The Slovak minority is not numerous but well integrated into Ukrainian society. We included it in the study in order to determine the attitude taking into consideration intensive cross-border cooperation with Slovakia. Another ethnic group is the Jews. It is traditionally considered to be discriminated. It was also included in the study in order to determine the attitude of the Transcarpathian Ukrainians towards the Jews. It should be noted that the number of the Jews within the years 1990 – 2000's considerably reduced and their current amount is 568 people. We also included the Americans into our study, so we tried to see how the attitude of the Ukrainians to the Americans had changed in terms of military aggression. We have suggested that Americans receive a complementary attitude because of support provided to Ukraine by the US.

In the study we also included the Hindus. This is a collective term which includes citizens of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. They are not a traditional minority of the Transcarpathian region, but because of military actions in Eastern Ukraine a large number of Hindu students moved to the Transcarpathian region, where they continue their studies. We are interested in what will be the attitude of the Ukrainians of the Transcarpathian region towards the ethnic group, which is a new one and there is no experience of communication and interaction with it. In the study, we used the scale of social distance of Bogardus adapted by N. Panina in order to assess the state of interethnic relations in Ukraine and the relative level of ethnic / racial xenophobia. The index in the range of 1-3

is interpreted as proximity, 4-5 as alienation, 5-6 as latent and more than 6 as open xenophobia.

Chart 1. Interdependence of ethnical relations (based on the author's research in Transcarpathia, 2015)

Group	Urban	Rural	Average rate
The Russian speaking Ukrainians	2,7	3,2	2,9
The Hungarians	3,2	3,8	3,5
The Romanians	4,0	4,0	4,0
The Russians	5,2	5,5	5,35
The Roma (Gypsies)	5,8	5,9	5,85
The Slovaks	2,3	2,5	2,4
The Jews	3,4	4,2	3,8
The Americans	2,2	3,6	2,9
The Hindus	3,7	4,2	3,95

According to the results of the study the distance towards Russian speaking Ukrainians is 2.9, which is interpreted as proximity. However, there is some distrust to the Russian speaking Ukrainians. We tend to explain it by foreign policy factors, by the discrimination of Ukrainian population in Donbass as well as by the dissemination of the information by regional mass media about the unwillingness of immigrants from the East to get socialized in the Transcarpathian region. Basically it goes about the unwillingness to learn the Ukrainian language and the rumours of a large number of male immigrants who evade mobilization. In fact, at the time of the survey in the Transcarpathian region 3623 refugees were registered. Of these, 279 from the Crimea and 3339 from the zone of Antiterrorist Operation. Among them: 1573 – capable, that is healthy and able to earn for living on their own, 987 – children, 1063 – disabled. That is most of the migrants are people with children and disabled. Overall, their number is one of the lowest among the regions of Ukraine. So, we partly received the confirmation of our hypothesis that this was a marker called “friend/ foe”.

There is some longer distance can be observed towards the Hungarians. They are traditional and the largest minority. Overall the Hungarians are well perceived by the Ukrainians who consider them neat, family oriented and rich. Somewhat higher alienation can be explained by the insularity of the Hungarians, weak integration into Ukrainian society. The Romanians live compactly in Tyachiv and Rakhiv districts in total in 18 settlements. The

alienation towards them can be explained by the fact that many Ukrainians equate them with the Roma. The insularity of the Romanian ethnic group should also be emphasized. Although it should be stressed that the Romanian minority, primarily due to the positions of their leaders has always expressed the support to the Ukrainian majority. The attitude to the Russians can be characterized as latent xenophobia. It should be noted that sociological studies conducted before 2014 indicated that the attitude towards this ethnic group was proximate. In the course of the study we found that the main factor that influenced the negative perception was the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the annexation of the Crimea and the Donbas war. Therefore, the foreign policy factors were decisive in shaping the attitude towards the Russian ethnic group. It should be noted that changes in attitude to this group are characterized by the greatest dynamism. It is likely that the war ending will somehow reduce the level of negative attitude towards the Russians, but no radical improvement is expected.

The highest level of alienation, that is latent xenophobia we observe towards the Roma. It should be emphasized that the absolute rejection of the Roma is inherent in all age groups without exception. Slightly higher level of alienation is observed among rural population and lower one is among urban one. As the main reasons for the alienation the respondents indicated a lifestyle that is characterized as social parasitism, basically begging, refusal to work, the involvement of children in begging and others. The second factor that was specified is unkempt appearance and the third one is aggressive behavior of members of the Roma minority. Overall, the researchers determined such problems among the Roma population (Novakova, 2014, pp. 22 - 27).

The greatest proximity the Ukrainians of the Transcarpathian region identified towards the Slovak minority, which was somewhat unexpected. This phenomenon can be explained by good integration of the Slovak minority into Ukrainian society, language affinity and the absence of conflicts. The index of proximity towards the Jews was 3.8, it is lower in urban areas and much higher in rural ones. Most respondents described the Jews as intelligent and

educated people, but the negative reaction was caused by the idea of excessively high number of Jews among Ukrainian politicians and by blaming them in the country's difficult economic situation.

The high level of tolerance towards the Americans can be explained only by foreign policy factors. During the military conflict the US brings pressure on Russia and expresses its support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Therefore, the majority of respondents see the US as a guarantor of independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. This explains a high level of complementarity towards the Americans. It should be noted that we register more positive attitude to the Americans among the urban population rather than in rural areas. This can be explained by the fact that the urban population is more concerned with political problems.

The Hindus are a new ethnic group in Transcarpathia. They are concentrated in Uzhhorod, where they study at university. Most people could not clearly express their attitude to the Indians, therefore their perception was very careful. The greatest polarization was observed among the residents of Uzhhorod. Some of them treated Indians positively and the others extremely negatively, explaining that by the fears of the spread of exotic diseases.

Thus, the level of tolerance of the Ukrainians of the Transcarpathian region is selective. Most tolerance can be seen towards the Slovak minority due to its integration into Ukrainian society and the absence of conflicts. The high level of complementarity to the Americans can be explained by solely foreign policy factors and hope for political support to Ukraine from the US. The attitude to the Russian speaking Ukrainians is generally defined as proximity, but we can see the growth of the distance towards the group.

The attitude to the Hungarians, the Romanians and the Jews can be characterized as alienation. The first two ethnic groups are very poorly integrated into Ukrainian society in general and the relationship with them are influenced by both internal and external factors. For example, the state of relations between Hungary and Romania with Ukraine and their position as to the Russian aggression in Ukraine. The group of the Jewish population is

very small in number but the determining factor in the attitude to it is the situation throughout Ukraine and the stereotypes.

At the same time, openly xenophobic attitudes of Transcarpathian Ukrainians can be observed towards the two ethnic groups – the Russians and the Roma. The attitude towards the first is a direct consequence of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. So, the attitude to the Russians before the war was characterized as proximity. The xenophobic attitude to the Roma ethnic group is defined by a complex set of social factors that influence the perception of the Roma in the Ukrainian society.

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