

ISCKMC 2020**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****CHALLENGES OF ENSURING ETHNOPOLITICAL STABILITY
IN SOUTH OF RUSSIA: FACTORS AND RISKS**

Inna Vadimovna Yurchenko (a, c)*, Mariia Vladimirovna Dontsova (b),
Natalia Nikolaevna Yurchenko (c) Victor Mikhailovich Yurchenko (d)

*Corresponding author

(a) Federal Research Center Southern Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 41, Chekhov Ave.,
Rostov-on-Don, Russia, ivyurchenko@mail.ru,

(b) Federal Research Center Southern Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 41, Chekhov Ave.,
Rostov-on-Don, Russia, dontsova_79@list.ru,

(c) Kuban State University, 149, Stavropolskaya, Krasnodar, Russia, nnyurchenko@mail.ru,

(d) Kuban State University, 149, Stavropolskaya, Krasnodar, Russia, nnyurchenko@mail.ru

Abstract

The article analyzes the latest factors affecting the regional situation in the South of Russia. The attention is focused on the risks of ethnopolitical stability in the context of individual political and economic projects of the states of the Black Sea area. The methodology for forecasting the regional situation has been determined. It has been established that in current conditions, the importance of anti-crisis project management in the internal and external spheres of interaction between actors of the political process is increasing. All this presupposes the further development of comprehensive regional development programs based on preliminary forecasting and conflict study of the regional foreign and domestic political situation in the context of identifying threats and risks for the sustainable development of social communities living in the study area. The methodology for forecasting the regional ethnopolitical situation includes a functional analysis of the structural elements of the studied regional communities and actors of the political process, determination of methods for diagnosing the state of the foreign policy environment, which influences the development trends of interethnic interactions. In the course of the study, the methods of problem forecasting, case studies, monitoring based on event analysis and scenario management of project management, taking into account the conflict expertise, analysis of political texts and media discourse on current projects, indicating the latest factors influencing the regional ethnopolitical situation, were used.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Ethno-political stability, regional situation, South of Russia, risk management, traditional factors, newest factors



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

1. Introduction

The conflict potential of the latest factors is almost always predetermined by novelty and innovation, which are not perceived by everyone as a value. Therefore, any modernization always causes socio-political conflicts. So, for example, the total informatization taking place before our eyes is developing into a process of all-encompassing digitalization. Both of these interdependent and interconnected phenomena attract the attention of both the general public and narrow specialists in the context of emerging new problems of crisis content. One of them is the problem of regional inequality, which is becoming even more severe in the new conditions, due to the manifested digital inequality.

The official authorities traditionally attached the most important to ensuring ethnopolitical security. The strength of Russia lies in the free development of all peoples, in diversity, harmony and cultures, and our languages and traditions, in mutual respect, dialogue between Orthodox Christians and Muslims, followers of Judaism and Buddhism. We are obliged to firmly oppose any manifestations of extremism and xenophobia, to protect interethnic and interreligious harmony. This process is the historical basis of our society and Russian statehood (Kremlin, 2016; Mastyugina et al., 2013). The ethnocultural policy was aimed at solving these problems. At the same time, ethnocultural can be defined as the culture of a specific region, in which the preservation of local ethnic norms directly occurs, as "a set of traditional values, attitudes and behavioural characteristics embodied in the material, spiritual, the social life of an ethnos, formed in the past, developing in historical sociodynamics and constantly enriching the culture with ethnic specificity in various forms of people's self-realization" (Afanas'yeva, 2009, p. 191). For adequately characterizing the internal policy of the state with ethnic communities and interethnic and interfaith interactions, it is necessary to understand that the most important factor of regional, including ethnopolitical security, is political stability. However, project management that actualizes innovative ideas can cause the most controversial reactions from various ethnic communities.

Retrospective expert assessments characterize the links between Krasnodar Territory and Adygea, which before the collapse of the USSR had the status of an autonomous region within the same territorial boundaries within the Territory, as useful in economic, socio-cultural, and political and legal aspects. Internal coherence and organic solidarity manifested itself in almost all areas of the life of this multinational region. A single national economic complex is necessary for our country today and above all in the territories adjacent to each other. Particularly noteworthy is the system of a single legal space, a single taxation system, business conditions, as well as favourable conditions for improving infrastructure and rationalizing the entire living space. Whether such a reform will be called an agglomeration or a cluster way of organizing a single socio-economic space is a separate issue for discussion. However, the fact that real reasons are ripe for reforming the conditions of the spatial development of many regions, including those considered in this study, in our opinion, is a prominent factor.

2. Problem Statement

An analysis of the current state of scientific developments on the issues under study shows that in the sociological and political science literature, there is no single generally accepted approach to predictive research. The high degree of influence of the conflict potential paradigm is clearly traced. Also,

more and more in demand in the system of applied research are monitoring based on event analysis and various methods of scenario engineering both in socio-economic and ethnopolitical forecasting. All this confirms the need for a further comprehensive study of the problems of ethnopolitical tension and conflicts, identification of risks affecting the ethnopolitical situation is steadily developing regions. If we talk about project management, then in many respects it is associated with the solution of issues of organization and development of living space, with the rationalization of spatial development. The cases considered in this study are analyzed in the context of the latest trends in the exploration and development of the spatial environment to optimize the intellectual and creative potential of social communities interacting with each other in the process of implementing these innovative projects.

3. Research Questions

The emergence of risks for regional stability as the likelihood of adverse consequences of political and socio-economic decisions made in conditions of uncertainty requires a case study. The problems of spatial development currently include a whole range of innovative ideas and, in particular, the creation of the so-called "Krasnodar agglomeration" and the megaproject for the construction of the Istanbul shipping canal, which was announced by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Consideration of these two cases, in our opinion, is necessary to analyze the latest factors affecting the regional situation and capable of disrupting ethnopolitical stability or, conversely, strengthening and accelerating integration and modernization processes in the region. In general, as one of the main trends of modern development, the development and rationalization of the habitat in the direction of the formation of agglomerations, according to experts, will lead to the fact that "by 2030, the "golden thousand" of global agglomerations will finally be formed, and in fact, global competition for resources and investments will go in between. However, in Russia, the main risk-generating factors that threaten the stability of the region under study, both internal and external, are associated with problems of historical memory, ethnoterritorial conflicts, and socio-economic inequality. Many supporters of the project of creating agglomerations believe that most of these factors will be gradually neutralized by solving a variety of socio-economic and infrastructural problems.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the risks to ethnopolitical stability in the South of Russia in the context of the latest factors affecting the regional situation. So, given that theoretically large agglomerations are a boon for the economy (as well as individual megaprojects for the construction of canals), agglomerations that form naturally are more reliable. Moreover, for regional security, it is necessary to study all possible social, environmental and ethnopolitical consequences of the decisions made. In particular, protest moods are dangerous, especially among young people, as well as the exacerbation of interethnic conflicts and the radicalization of public views in certain social groups.

5. Research Methods

In the course of the study, the methods of problem forecasting, case studies, monitoring based on event analysis and scenario management of project management, taking into account the conflict expertise, analysis of political texts and media discourse on current projects, indicating the latest factors influencing the regional ethnopolitical situation, were used. The latest factors affecting the regional situation in the South of Russia, as well as in the Caucasus and the Black Sea macro-region are associated with the following circumstance. In the modern open public space, there remains the threat of influence and harmful historical traditions that form the misanthropic attitudes that fuel modern radicalism and extremism, which poses a considerable danger to ethnopolitical stability in the region under study. The dissemination of these negative attitudes is carried out with the help of the latest information technologies, and thus traditional, and newest risk factors for regional security should be subjected to conflict expertise and critical discourse analysis in terms of identifying specific political practices and ways of influencing the regional ethnopolitical situation.

6. Findings

In society, natural mechanisms of self-organization always work. Naturally, mutually beneficial economic cooperation, cultural and educational exchange and common scientific interests of the relevant organizations in adjacent territories are formed. A single information space today brings together those regions that are geographically distant from each other. This phenomenon can be attributed to the newest risk factors, which requires an in-depth and comprehensive study. However, solving the problems of updating the infrastructure connecting different territories is the most urgent today. In the context of the conflictological paradigm, this problem can be viewed as a process of searching for conciliatory mechanisms in order to activate the transition to new models of spatial development, which will have effects in the socio-economic and humanitarian spheres. However, the discussion of this problem immediately aroused in the information field a reaction of nationalist-minded activists. They decided to raise the issue of threats not only of uniting the two regions but also of the absorption of the subjectivity of Adygea by the more economically developed Krasnodar Territory. As a result, there was a reason to provoke conditions for interethnic and interfaith conflicts in a territory that has traditionally been a territory of good-neighbourliness and cooperation.

The Expert Council of the Committee on Legislative Support of Economic Development in Municipal Formations developed a draft federal law "On Amendments to the Federal Law" On General Principles of Organization of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation "in terms of creating a legal basis for the creation and functioning of inter-municipal formations (urban agglomerations)". The proposed draft law introduced the concept of "inter-municipal formation (urban agglomeration)" – as a "voluntary association of an urban district with another urban district (or with other urban districts) and (or) with other municipalities for a joint resolution of issues of local importance and delegated state powers, created on the territory of the federal district, within the boundaries of one, two or more constituent entities of the Russian Federation, within the boundaries of two or more municipalities" (Moskalenko, 2020). The creation of a legal basis for the formation and functioning of urban

agglomerations was supposed to give local government a useful tool for the further economic and territorial development of our cities, to improve the quality of life of the population (Evlanov, 2019).

The Governor of the Krasnodar Territory Veniamin Kondratyev and the head of Adygea Murat Kumpilov announced plans to create an agglomeration that would include Krasnodar, nearby rural areas and the territory of Adygea adjacent to the regional capital on the other side of the Kuban River. The economic sense of joining forces is obvious. But almost at the start, political risks also made themselves felt – some Adygeyan activists, in connection with plans to create the Kuban agglomeration, immediately recalled the old initiatives to include Adygea in the Krasnodar Territory and warned that another such attempt was fraught with a protest reaction (Protsenko, 2018). At the same time, according to the estimates given in the draft Strategy of socio-economic development of the Republic of Adygea until 2030 on the website of the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia, the republic, despite the existing tourism potential, has a low investment attractiveness. The document noted the need for the development of the region in close connection with the Krasnodar Territory. The creation of an agglomeration will benefit the residents of Adygea, says Professor of the Faculty of Geography of Moscow State University N. Zubarevich (Gor, 2018) (Fig. 01).



Figure 1. Estimated Borders of the Krasnodar Agglomeration (Zakaeva & Gritsevich, 2020)

However, despite the advantages, many residents of Adygea are against unification with the Krasnodar Territory. "The economic integration and economic development of Adygea is certainly a positive factor, but the residents of the region do not want to unite with the Krasnodar Territory," public figure Adam Bogus is sure. According to the deputy chairman of the public organization "Adyge Khase" of the Krasnodar Territory A. Sokhta. "The association is not profitable for the authorities of Adygea and the Krasnodar Territory" (Gor, 2018, para. 5).

It should also be noted that many experts express rather harsh judgments about the territorial-subject reform. For example, Nikolai Silaev, a senior researcher at the Center for Caucasian Problems and Regional Security at MGIMO, notes that the territorial divisions of several federal departments have been moved from Adygea to the Krasnodar Territory. The unified energy system is managed by the Kubanenergo Company, which is located in Krasnodar. In this regard, N. Silaev asserts that for the internal structure of these departments, Adygea was united with the Krasnodar Territory several years ago. Naturally, this topic is painfully perceived by some residents of the region. Given these circumstances, many experts believe that the Kuban-Adyghe agglomeration, from an economic point of view, already exists. Such statements can aggravate the relations between the actors of the socio-political process. In this regard, examples are given from the events of the middle of the last decade, when a protest rally against joining the Krasnodar Territory was held in Maikop. At the same time, in the village of Yablonovsky, which is part of Krasnodar, but administratively related to Adygea, a rally was held for the accession and creation of a single subject of the federation (Protsenko, 2018). In the discourse of territorial and spatial development, the point of view of the mayor of Krasnodar E. Pervyshov, who proposed to create an agreement on the creation and development of the Krasnodar agglomeration in the territory of the Republic of Adygea, has become quite significant. At the same time, he argues that, in fact, it already exists there. However, in order to define a clearer responsibility for the future, it is necessary to specifically define the powers and obligations of each of the regions (Lukashov, 2018). At the same time, the leaders of the Krasnodar Territory believe that the Krasnodar agglomeration should become one of the zones of advanced development, that is, economic zones that are supposed to be created in the region as part of the regional development strategy until 2030, and in addition to the Adyghe territories, other Dinskoy territories adjacent to Krasnodar may also enter their district and even the city of Goryachy Klyuch (Zakaeva & Gritsevich, 2020). As the "Caucasian Knot" wrote, the then governor of the Kuban, Alexander Tkachev, spoke about the possibility of uniting Adygea with the Krasnodar Territory in December 2004, calling such a merger economically expedient. This statement caused a violent reaction in Adygea. Activists of the "Circassian Congress" movement described it as "an attempt on the Republic of Adygea," and the president of the republic, Khazret Sovmen, called the idea of the merger "a historical regression and a serious political mistake." On April 21, 2005, a rally of opponents of the unification of the republic with the Krasnodar Territory was held in Adygea, and in February 2006 A. Tkachev and H. Sovmen announced their intention to preserve the sovereignty of both regions (Zakayeva & Gritsevich, 2020). It should be noted that then politicians and many residents of the Republic of Adygea, as well as Circassian organizations in Russia and abroad, in particular, in Turkey and Jordan, opposed the unification of the two subjects. Moreover, since the world has always been fighting for living space, for control over territories, natural resources and geostrategic sea routes,

historically the South of Russia has continuously attracted the attention of regional and world powers seeking to establish their influence in this rich region. Furthermore, to strengthen external control, internal political instability is provoked, which, in particular, is manifested in separatist sentiments in the national republics. Any interethnic conflicts in the region are very beneficial for external players. Therefore any pretext is used for intensifying internal contradictions, and discussion of the problem of creating an agglomeration is a very convenient signal to start a new stage of disagreements. Socio-culturally close representatives of Islamic civilization – Turkey and Saudi Arabia, who strongly supported any separatist sentiments in the nineties of the last century – are showing particular interest in this region.

However, even today, the intentions of these countries, as well as the actions of globalists interested in controlling space, as can be seen from the events taking place, are becoming even more active. Suppose we consider the Turkish factor in the Black Sea region. In that case, it can be noted that Turkey, under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has huge ambitions and plans to restore its former greatness during the Ottoman Empire. Among other things, these plans include the so-called "civilization project" uniting the Turkic peoples, some of which live in the Russian Federation, in particular, in the North Caucasus and the Black Sea region" (Trukhachev, 2007).

The newest foreign policy factors affecting the regional situation in southern Russia, in our opinion, include the situation arising in connection with Turkey's grandiose plans to build a navigable canal designed to bypass the Istanbul Bosphorus Strait. In this regard, disputes around the megaproject announced by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan are increasingly flaring up in Turkey. He intends to build the Istanbul Canal as an artificial alternative to the Bosphorus, which should not only relieve the strait but also annually bring up to \$ 5 billion to the treasury. However, environmentalists and residents expressed dissatisfaction. If an artificial alternative to the Bosphorus appears, 8 million people will "be trapped on an island", in the zone most prone to earthquakes. Ecologists agree with him, who believe that the future canal may increase the level of seismic hazard in Istanbul. At the same time, the Agency for Disaster Management and Emergencies argues that there is no connection between the construction of the canal and the risk of new earthquakes. However, these words hardly convinced most of the city's residents. So, as shown by the results of a poll conducted by the Turkish Center for the Study of Public Opinion Artibir, 72.4 % of Istanbul opposes the construction of the Istanbul Canal, but 21.1 % support this project (Loginova, 2020).

Moreover, what are the risks for Russia and whether it is worth expecting additional NATO ships in the Black Sea, Izvestia sorted out, noting that Ankara seeks to become the master of the Turkic world. The most radical Turkish nationalists are confident that all Turks should unite around Turkey and live according to Turkish rules in the context of her interests (Loginova, 2019). Meanwhile, the struggle between different interest groups on the Istanbul channel that is flaring up leads to the intensification of the opposition, which has repeatedly stated that the primary goal of this mega project is to make big money on it, including by selling land and building expensive real estate. According to the plan of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, this will increase the traffic flow between the Black and Marmara Seas, as well as reduce the movement of oil tankers through the Bosphorus. Given the economic growth of Asian countries, more ships from Asia will be sent to Eastern and Northern Europe via the Black Sea.

In the next ten years, the number of tankers that want to cross the Bosphorus will reach 70,000 per year," said Turkish Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Mehmet Jahit Turhan. This megaproject has already received approval from the Turkish Ministry of Ecology and Urban Development. According to the head of the department, Murat Kurum, during the preparation of the report, environmentalists, representatives of NGOs and scientists were present at the meetings. However, the struggle over the project does not subside, and journalists of the opposition publication Cumhuriyet fear that the Istanbul channel will open the way to the Black Sea for NATO warships. So, in an article published at the end of December last year, they argue that "one of the most important goals of the United States is to settle in the Black Sea, and the Montreux Convention of 1936 prevents this". This document restricts the presence of warships of non-regional states in the Black Sea in terms of tonnage (up to 45 thousand tons) and duration of stay (no more than three weeks). With this agreement, Turkey and the Soviet Union closed the Black Sea to Western states. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Washington continued to try to implement its plan to deploy NATO ships in the Black Sea. In 2004, Romania and Bulgaria became members of the North Atlantic Alliance, and since then, the United States has been building up its military power in these states (8) (Loginova, 2020).

According to a researcher at the IMEMO RAN, them. EAT. Primakov, Associate Professor of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia V. Avatkov, Russia needs to understand the consequences, prospects and possibilities of its participation in this project. For Turkey itself, the construction of the Istanbul canal is essential not so much from an economic point of view as from a geopolitical point of view. Due to him, Ankara seeks to move from the category of regional to the status of world powers. Therefore, despite the resistance from the Istanbulites, the canal will undoubtedly be built, representatives of the ruling Justice and Development Party promise. The decisions of the city administration do not apply to such a large-scale construction, and this is a national project.

"Whether they like it or not, the Istanbul channel will be built," Erdogan usually says about this (Loginova, 2020).

7. Conclusion

Based on the analysis carried out, it can be concluded that economic integration and economic development are undoubtedly a decisive factor. However, concerns about the political consequences of management projects, if they are not sufficiently developed, can cause undesirable consequences in matters of ensuring ethnopolitical security. Nevertheless, in current conditions, the importance of social project management is increasing, involving the development of comprehensive programs for the strategic development of regions. In this regard, it is especially important to use adequate explanatory models for accurate characterization, comprehensive analysis and forecasting of the transforming conditions in which the supposed socio-economic and political innovations will be carried out in the direction of the projected management mechanism or the created artificial object in ecological harmony with the natural environment. The quality of the formulated scientific problem, corresponding to the practical interests of the development of regions, will reduce the dangers and risks for ethnopolitical stability, taking into account all the factors affecting the regional situation. The main problems of project management, which is actively being introduced into political practice, are the insufficient development

of analytical forecasting mechanisms and the limited use of scenario techniques. The formulation of this task in this work was based on the analysis of specific cases with the aim of the further factorial and criterial analysis of the management of socio-political risks in the context of socio-economic transformations and prevention of the exacerbation of ethnopolitical instability.

Acknowledgments

The publication was prepared within the framework of the implementation of the State Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences "Conflict analysis of the regional situation in the South of Russia" No. Project AAAA-A19-119011190170-5.

References

- Afanasyeva, A. B. (2009). Ethno-cultural education: essence, structure, problems of improvement. *Probl. of Pedag. and Psychol.*, 3, 189–195.
- Evlanov, V. L. (2019). Legislative support for economic growth and quality of life of the population at the municipal level. In *VIII Stolypin Readings. Fundamental and applied research of integration and disintegration processes in the political, economic and socio-cultural spheres* (pp. 6–13). Kuban State Univer.
- Gor, A. (2018). *The creation of the agglomeration reminded of the idea to unite Adygea and the Krasnodar Territory*. <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/324183/>
- Kremlin (2016). *Message from the President of the Russian Federation to the Federal Assembly*. <http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/53379>
- Loginova, K. (2019). *A kind of friendship: Turkey is pushing out Russia in the post-Soviet space*. <https://iz.ru/914828/kseniia-melnikova/kak-druzhba-turciia-vytesniaet-rossiiu-na-postsovetskom-prostranstve>
- Loginova, K. (2020). *Aki dry: Turkey is going to create an alternative to the Bosphorus. What threats the Istanbul project can carry for Russia*. <https://iz.ru/969897/kseniia-loginova/aki-posukhu-turciia-sobiraetsia-sozdat-alternativu-bosforskому-prolivu>
- Lukashov, M. (2018). *The agglomeration will be divided into two. Kuban and Adygea are planning to create an agreement on the development of border areas*. <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3719203>
- Mastyugina, T. M., Perepelkin, L. S., & Stelmakh, V. G. (2013). *National policy in Russia. XVI – early XXI century*. Forum.
- Moskalenko, A. F. (2020). *Problems of legal regulation of the formation of agglomerations in the Russian Federation*. <https://wiselawyer.ru/poleznoe/88740-problemy-pravovogo-regulirovaniya-formirovaniya-aglomeracij-rossijskoj-federacii>
- Protsenko, N. (2018). *Kuban for two: Krasnodar Territory and Adygea accepted the agglomeration challenge*. <https://eadaily.com/ru/news/2018/08/29/kuban-na-dvoih-krasnodarskiy-krai-i-adygeya-prinyali-aglomeracionnyy-vyzov>
- Trukhachev, V. (2007). *Pan-Turkism: the age-old threat to Russia*. <https://www.pravda.ru/world/248234-turkey/>
- Zakaeva, A., & Gritsevich, A. (2020). *Circassian activists called the idea of uniting Adygea and Kuban inappropriate*. <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/349844/>