

# SLAVIC DIASPORAS OF SOUTHERN RUSSIA: SOCIO-CULTURAL AND INTERNATIONAL FACTORS OF REPRODUCTION OF IDENTITY

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## ABSTRACT

*The present study analyses the reproduction of the Slavic diaspora communities in the two southern Russian regions of Rostov Region and Krasnodar Territory with the prevailing Russian population in the ethno demographic structure of the society. The state of socio-cultural reproduction of the ethnic identity of the Slavic diaspora groups in the region (Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Poles and Bulgarians) is determined by the nature of development of political processes in the post-Soviet environment and in the states of Eastern Europe.*

*The worsening of the Russian-Ukrainian and Russian-Polish relations aggravates a stable assimilation trend in the processes of reproduction of the identity of representatives of the Ukrainian and Polish ethnic groups in the Southern Russia. This trend is accompanied by the spreading of new types of ethnic phobias in the region (for example, Ukrainophobia), which provokes the diaspora's segmentation based on the loyalty of its representatives to the state of citizenship or the state of historical origin neutralizing the efforts of state authorities to preserve the existing palette of ethnic diversity in the region. The migration factor does not have a significant impact on the state of demographic reproduction of the Slavic diaspora groups in the region, but acts as an additional source of tension in the system of interethnic communications of the regional society. The basis for overcoming these negative trends is the expansion of dialogue between the state, national cultural associations and the media based on the rejection of ethnic markers in covering the domestic and international political agenda.*

**Keywords:** Ethnic Diasporas, National and Cultural Associations, Ukrainian Diaspora, Belarusian Diaspora, Polish Diaspora, Interethnic Relations.

## INTRODUCTION

Polytechnic societies are considered as a social environment with a high degree of risk of interethnic conflicts. The international experience shows that even between linguistically and culturally close ethnic groups within the local and regional communities conflicts can occur, which are provoked by negative information or international environment, an increased social inequality or competition for limited resources. Such conflicts have spread in the Balkans, the Pyrenees and the British Isles. The situation is aggravated by the diaspora status of representatives of certain ethnic groups.

The territory of the Rostov Region and the Krasnodar Territory belong to the category of the most multinational regions of Russia. Therefore, according to the results of the All-Russian Population Census of 2010, representatives of more than 220 ethnic groups reside on this territory, which is traditionally attributed to the region of Southern Russia (Results of the All-

Russia Population Census of 2010, 2013). The existing ethno-cultural mosaic of the regions includes representatives of autochthonous South Russian ethnicities (for example, the Adygs), the rooted Slavic population (primarily Russians and Cossacks), as well as numerous ethnic diasporas formed historically (for example, Poles and Greeks) or emerging ones (for example, Arabs). Along with them, in the regions of Russia there emerged the phenomenon of post-Soviet Diasporas: Ethnic groups that acquired the states of their mother's ethnic group as a result of the collapse of the USSR. This happened with Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Moldovans, Armenians and other peoples. The phenomenon of the post-Soviet diaspora causes the ambivalence of their collective identities, which only now are beginning to manifest their diaspora orientation requiring the establishment of stable ties with their historical homeland.

This fact is mediated by the current development of ethno-social processes in the regions in question, which is explained by their border position (Kolossova, 2016), close proximity to conflict zones (primarily south-eastern Ukraine) and post-conflict areas (the region of Southern Caucasus), the involvement in the orbit of the international political process (Syrian refugees, including those from the Circassian diaspora of the Middle East), the internal post-Soviet ethnopolitical crisis, the model of transformation of the national and migration policy of Russia at the present time.

The post-Soviet diasporas and their national and cultural associations faced the need to fulfil the role of an independent subject of political process articulating the positions of the people, including on international affairs (Bedrik, 2016). In this regard, the role of national cultural associations has increased not only as a factor of preserving ethnic identity, but also as an actor of the state national policy, which is stipulated by the goals of the State National Policy Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2025 approved by the decree of the President of the Russian Federation (Garant, 2012).

The purpose of this article is to study the influence of the current trends and the contradictions of socio-cultural reproduction of the Slavic Diasporas in the South of Russia, as well as the influence of the contemporary agenda of international relations on the state of interethnic interactions. The factors that determine these processes of socio-cultural reproduction of the Slavic Diasporas in the region are the following:

- The degree of cultural and social distance of the group and its representatives to the ethnically prevailing part of the population in the regional society (Comay, 2000);
- The level of institutionalization of the community and its incorporation into the activities of official institutions (consultative, public-state, etc.) (Fischer-Lescano, 2012);
- The nature of international relations between the country of citizenship of representatives of the diaspora and its historical homeland/state of the "ethnic core" (Visram, 2002);
- Articulation in the public discourse and the media of ethnic phobias and stereotypes, which forms the information environment of interethnic communication, determines the possibilities for consolidation and the risks of confrontation (Gottschlich, 2008). Together, these factors determine the ethno-social structure of the regional community, explain the trends and contradictions of interethnic relations in it (Werbner, 2002).

## **METHODOLOGY AND RESOURCES OF EMPIRICAL INFORMATION**

The methodological construct of the research is based on the cognitive potential of two basic sociological approaches. Firstly, the sociocultural approach, which makes it possible to consider the reproduction of the identity of diaspora groups from the position of language and cultural distance to the ethnic majority, which ensures or, on the contrary, neutralizes their

mutual assimilation potential. At the same time, the sociocultural approach makes it possible to consider intra-ethnic mobilization, interethnic consolidation or confrontation in accordance with the level of the group culture modernization, socio-psychological parameters of communities, the state of historical memory and a set of identical components of material and spiritual culture. Representatives of this area in the Russian sociology are Akhiezer (1997), Lapin (2000), Toshchenko (2003) (Akhiezer, 1997; Lapin, 2000; Toshchenko, 2003). This makes it possible to investigate interethnic relations in their multidimensional projection providing a greater level of objectivity of the obtained results.

Secondly, the institutional approach that makes it possible to consider the formal and informal associations of the members of ethnic diasporas as factors in the reproduction of their collective identity, to maintain an up-to-date level of ethnic culture, to strengthen ethnic boundaries, to build intra-ethnic and interethnic interactions, including with the subjects of the political and legal field, the media, civil society institutions, diplomatic structures and national states, etc. This approach is disclosed in the publications of North (1990), Radaev (2001), Korel (2005) (Korel, 2005; North, 1990; Radaev, 2001). Together, the socio-cultural and institutional approaches provide the most valuable study of the range of interethnic interactions in the context of a multicultural community integrating ethnic subjects with different socio-historical and political-legal status.

In addition, in the analysis of the state of socio-cultural reproduction of the community, the preservation and loss of ethnic identity, the development of assimilation and segregation processes, we use the achievements of the methodology of social constructivism of Barth (2000), his concept of ethnic boundaries introduced into the scientific discourse within the framework of the methodological paradigm (Barth, 2000). The constructivist methodological apparatus was developed in the publications of Leonard (2007), Bennett (1975), Banton (1983) and others (Banton, 1983; Bennet, 1975; Leonard, 2007).

The geographical boundaries of the study include the territory of two subjects of the South of Russia: The Rostov Region and the Krasnodar Territory. These regions of Russia are indicative in the examination of the state of interethnic relations in the South of Russia, the nature of which determines the state of the national question in the Russian society as a whole. In addition, the presence of Slavic Diasporas in these regions ensured their acculturation with the Russian population, giving rise to sub-ethnicization within the framework of the Russian macro ethnos. In such conditions, the preservation of ethnic identity by the Slavic Diasporas is vulnerable to assimilation risks.

The study is based on the following methods:

Analysis of the state statistical data characterizing the national composition of the population of the Rostov Region and the Krasnodar Territory, as well as the migration dynamics of the population in these regions for the period from 2010 to 2016.

Analysis of regulatory legal acts of the Russian Federation, as well as of the Rostov Region and the Krasnodar Territory regulating the implementation of the national and migration policies at the federal and regional levels.

Analysis of the results of focus-group research conducted in Rostov-on-Don and Krasnodar in April-June 2017. Participating in focus-groups were the leaders and activists of the regional and local national-cultural associations (public organizations, national-cultural autonomies, communities, national-cultural centres). Each focus group was attended by 8 to 12 people.

Analysis of the results of in-depth interviews with the leaders of the national-cultural associations of the Rostov region (Poles, Ukrainians, Belarusians), as well as in-depth interviews with the heads of state authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation (Rostov region and Krasnodar region) responsible for the implementation of the national policy. In-depth interviews were conducted in April-June 2017 in Rostov-on-Don and Krasnodar.

The results of the sociological survey of the population of the Rostov region, conducted in June-August 2017 using a standardized questionnaire interview. The sample size was 950 respondents. Only the stationary population of the region aged between 18 and 65 was questioned. The territorial coverage of the sample was Rostov-on-Don and 8 municipalities of the Rostov Region. The representativeness of the conducted research procedures was ensured by the implementation of a multistage stratified sample (type of settlement, territory of the settlement, gender of respondents, age subgroup and level of education).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Slavic component is the main component in the ethno-demographic structure of the population of the regions and territories of the South of Russia. In the structure of the Slavic peoples we can conditionally distinguish three groups. First of all, these are Russians, who are the absolute majority in the regions and territories of the South of Russia and the population of the Republic of Crimea and the Republic of Adygea. Secondly, the Slavic post-Soviet diasporas (Ukrainians and Byelorussians), who belong to the category of traditional population and considering the Russian-Ukrainian borderland and the official status of the Ukrainian language in the Crimea, the representatives of the Ukrainian community may well be regarded as the indigenous population of the Don, Kuban and the Crimea. Thirdly, the Slavic Diasporas of the far abroad includes the Poles, Bulgarians and Czechs. The analysis of the results of the population censuses of the RSFSR/RF in 1989, 2002 and 2010 and the modern demographic processes in the region shows a negative dynamics of the reproduction of the diaspora groups of the Slavic ethnoses throughout the post-Soviet period. They become the main assimilation donors for the Russians, whose numbers, despite a negative natural increase and decline in migration, are growing. The results of the decline in the number of Slavic Diasporas were several times higher than the gross regional indicators of negative natural growth and migration outflows.

Therefore, the Ukrainians lost the status of the second largest ethnic group in the Krasnodar Territory and in the Rostov Region. The overall decrease in the number of Ukrainians in the Kuban for the post-Soviet period was -54.0%: From 182,128 people in 1989 to 83 746 people in 2010. If according to the results of the first intercensal period (1989-2002) the depopulation of the Ukrainians in the province was -27.6%, then in the next shorter period (2002-2010) the depopulation intensified and was already -36.4%. In the Don region the loss of the status of the second largest ethnic group by the Ukrainians occurred later, but the rate of decline was no less intense. In the period from 1989 to 2002 the number of Ukrainians decreased by 33.7% (from 178,803 to 118,486 people) and in the next period it decreased by 34.3% and amounted to 77,320 in 2010. In the same period similar processes were characteristic for the Belarusians.

In the first intercensal period the Belarusians living in the Krasnodar region decreased by 24.3% (from 34,688 to 26,260 people) and in the next period - by 35.7% (up to 16,890 people). Therefore, the decrease in the number of Belarusians in the province was more than twofold. At the end of the Soviet era in the Rostov region there were 38 005 Belarusians and in 2002 their

number decreased by 30% (26,604 people). By 2010 their number was reduced by another 38% and amounted to 16,493 according to the census results (Rostovstat, 2005).

The most visible vector of depopulation reproduction of the Slavic diasporas is the example of diasporas of the far abroad—the Poles, Bulgarians and some other peoples. In the late 1980's in the Krasnodar region there were 3,399 Poles, 3,531 Bulgarians and 1 078 Czechs and in the Rostov region—2,315 Poles and 1,370 Bulgarians. During the first intercensal post-Soviet period in the Krasnodar region the number of Poles decreased by 13%, Bulgarians by 11.1% and Czechs by 32.1%. During the next intercensal period the Poles in the Krasnodar region lost 33.4%, the Bulgarians 29.7% and the Czechs 43.2% amounting to 1,969, 2,204 and 416 respectively.

In the Rostov region the reduction of the Polish population in the first post-Soviet census was 23.1% and in the next period—39.7%. By 2002 in the population of the Don region the Bulgarians lost 21.6% and by 2010—another 30.6%. According to the results of the last census in the Rostov region, there were 1,074 Poles and 745 Bulgarians. The only exception in the post-Soviet period (albeit very insignificant from the demographic point of view) is the reproduction of the Serbian ethnos in the Krasnodar region, which has grown over the entire reviewed period: From 35 in 1989 to 236 in 2002 and 302 in 2010 (Rostovstat, 2005).

It should be noted that most representatives of the Southern and Western Slavic ethnic groups inhabiting the Krasnodar and the Rostov regions reproduce their ethnic identity exclusively during the census, without demonstrating the knowledge of the national language and not participating in the national cultural associations, etc.

The relevance of their ethnic identity can be explained by two reasons. Firstly, it is the retrospective aspect of historical memory, the respect for the memory of ancestors, etc. Secondly, it is the desire to emphasize their distinctiveness identifying themselves with the peoples, who at the level of public opinion are perceived as the peoples of the European culture and the way of life. The number of national-cultural associations of the Poles and the Bulgarians is insignificant and amounts to several dozen people (in the Rostov region) to two or three hundred people (in the Krasnodar region). At the same time, these organizations can accept as members not only ethnic Poles or Bulgarians, but also all persons, who are interested in the cultures of these peoples, their language and history, which makes these organizations polyethnic. The reproduction of the Poles, the Bulgarians and the Czechs is accompanied by a process of demographic aging of the general data. The complete loss of the Polish or the Czech identity is partly offset by their ethno-confessional nature: The historical affiliation of these ethnic groups with Catholicism (Lubskiy, 2016).

According to the results of a series of in-depth interviews with the leaders of national and cultural associations of the Ukrainians and the Belarusians of the Kuban and the Don regions, one can identify several reasons for the accelerated assimilation reduction in the number of these peoples. Firstly, the children born in the Russian-Ukrainian or the Russian-Belarusian marriages take the identity of the Russian parent, which, moreover, corresponds to the identity of the ethnic majority of their region of residence. Moreover, such marriages themselves are not perceived by spouses as interethnic with the mother tongue, the language of everyday communication and the upbringing of children being Russian and with no cultural distance between the parents. Secondly, the maintenance of the identity of the Ukrainians and the Belarusians in the Soviet period, especially in the context of the cross-border and cross-cultural regions, was of an artificial nature, since it served as an illustration of the Soviet ideology about the brotherhood

and equality of all the peoples of the USSR, for whom all the conditions for preserving and developing their national culture were created.

Deactualization of the ideological factor in the early 1990s became one of the main reasons for the change of identity. Moreover, the ethnic identity of the Ukrainians and the Belarusians in the South of Russia was mainly of a census type and was accompanied by the real ethno-cultural practices of everyday level. Therefore, the reduction in the number of the two East Slavic ethnic groups cannot be fully considered as the result of the assimilation processes. At the present time one can observe a tendency towards the rejection of the Ukrainian identity, which is provoked by the modern development of international relations between Russia and Ukraine reinforced by the retransmission of negative ethnic stereotypes towards Ukrainians, the Ukrainian language and the Ukrainian national culture (Tishkov, 2015). Even the increase in the inflow of refugees from Ukraine to Russia in 2014-2015 cannot significantly change the representation of the Ukrainian ethnos in the ethno-demographic structure of the population of the regions in question, since the share of the Ukrainians in the flow does not exceed 1/4.

The international factor only increases the risks for the functioning of Diasporas. This situation is vividly illustrated by the example of the Ukrainian diaspora. Before the events of EuroMaidan of 2013-2014, the subsequent changes in the statehood of the Crimea and the outbreak of a military confrontation on the territory of Donbass, the Ukrainian diaspora in most Russian regions (including the Rostov Region) had the status of a formal national and cultural association whose function was limited exclusively to the development of the national arts and crafts. In many regions the Ukrainian identity of some part of the population was mainly of the "census" type, that is, statistically considered during the census, but not manifested at the level of real everyday sociocultural practices. This acquired an ambivalent character and in most cases was identified with the Russian identity while Russian-Ukrainian marriages were not considered as interethnic alliances. This explains the fact that each post-Soviet census recorded a reduction in the number of Ukrainians in the regions of the Russian Federation.

The nature of such depopulation was predominantly assimilative. Despite this, in the regions of the South of Russia the Ukrainians have traditionally been among the largest ethnic communities occupying the second or the third position in the ethno-demographic structure of the population. The status of such a large ethnic community required institutionalization in the form of a national and cultural autonomy or public organization, which was supported by regional and local authorities, encouraged by the consular structures of Ukraine, but was hardly perceived as an actual necessity by the representatives of the ethnogroup itself. The situation changed dramatically after the internal political crisis in Ukraine and the polarization of the Russian-Ukrainian relations at the international level. The Ukrainian community in Russia experienced an identity crisis, which had two forms. The first form manifested itself in the denial of its Ukrainian nationality by that part of the population for which it was previously ambivalent. The second form characterizes that part of the Ukrainian diaspora, whose ethnic identity manifested it in opposing itself to the political elite of the state of its mother ethnos. The very functionality of national and cultural associations of the Ukrainians began to change sharply towards expansion of their mediator content while the diaspora increasingly acquires the features of an institution of public diplomacy. At the same time, the Ukrainian diaspora encountered a completely new phenomenon of Ukrainophobia, which acquired ethnically negative markers of identification ("ukrops") and is actively used by some media outlets and marginal public associations. Reproduction of the same socio-cultural identity within the diaspora is complicated by the severance of ties with the state of the mother's ethnic group, which is manifested, in

particular, in the refusal of the diplomatic services of Ukraine to establish contacts with the diaspora.

However, if at the level of international relations the Ukrainian diaspora experiences a lack of interaction practices, then at the level of vertical and horizontal ties within the country and its regions, such contacts are growing. The vertical projection of ties is expressed in the interaction of the community and the authorities. In this case, the authorities see the diaspora not as an agent of influence, but as an instrument for changing public perceptions of the conflicting nature of relations between the two states. For the authorities, it is important that within the country and on the international arena the Russian-Ukrainian contradictions do not look like an interethnic conflict. Therefore, the regularity of contacts and mutual support of the Russian authorities and the Ukrainian diaspora institutionalized into national cultural associations neutralizes the claims of the modern political elite of Ukraine and of certain social circles that the factor of Russian nationalism plays an important role in the conflict with Russia.

The horizontal connections are expressed in the expansion of contacts of the Ukrainian diaspora not only with the national-cultural aspects of other peoples of Russia, but also with the Russian public organizations, the Cossacks, the Russian Orthodox Church, educational and cultural institutions, etc. The expansion of the public presence of the Ukrainian national cultural associations is becoming an integral part of the modern public sphere, including in the regions of the South of Russia and is aimed at changing the distorted perception of the contradictions between Russia and Ukraine as contradictions between the Russians and the Ukrainians.

Similar processes characterize the institution of diaspora in the case of far abroad countries. However, in this case, the situation is aggravated by the lack of a long experience of belonging to one state, which was accompanied by the establishment of common forms of identification, the development of formal and informal interaction practices, the lack of historical memory of the common heroic past (as in the case of the Great Patriotic War), etc. It should be noted that classical Diasporas of foreign countries in Russia include, first of all, the Germans, the Jews, the Poles, the Greeks, the Assyrians, the Koreans and some others, that is, the groups that have completed the process of acculturation and lacking linguistic or other socio-cultural barriers to communication with the main ethnic group of the Russian population.

Accordingly, any negative nature of Russia's international interaction with the country of the mother's ethnic group is neutralized by the absence of any significant social or cultural distance between the Diasporas and the indigenous population within the country. This situation, for example, distinguishes the Poles, who during the years of Stalin's repression in the overwhelming majority lost their religious, cultural and linguistic identity, but some of whom retained their ethnic identity (Gautam, 2013). These communities are characterized by the reduction in their demographic totality experiencing the consequences of the assimilation process and the aging of the population while interethnic clashes involving these ethnic groups in the post-Soviet period were not recorded.

The results of the sociological survey of the population of the Rostov region testify to the geopolitical determination of interethnic relations in the structure of the Slavic component of the population of the region while the internal political process in Ukraine and the nature of international relations between Russia and Poland are projected onto the perception of the Ukrainians and the Poles in the public consciousness of the population.

In the assessment of the Russian-Ukrainian relations the overwhelming majority of respondents (more than 90%) characterize them as tense and hostile. Similar data were obtained on the state of the Russian-Polish relations, but in this case negative assessments constituted

84%. For the respondents the relations with Ukraine and Poland are not lost, but they pose a potential threat to the interests of Russia's stability and security. Most respondents take a restrained position: Realizing that the anti-Russian government was established in Ukraine and that the situation in the country is developing according to the negative scenario for the Russian-Ukrainian relations, they express sympathy for the inhabitants of the Donbass (45.2%). At the same time, more than 40% do not welcome the violent outcome of the events and would like to reduce the suffering of ordinary people so that the Russian state structures would pay more attention to humanitarian aspects (assistance to refugees from the territory of Ukraine). At the same time, the level of civic activity, where respondents could engage in volunteering, does not exceed 17.6%.

Demonstrating support to the state policy of the Russian Federation towards Ukraine, the respondents are oriented towards a position of sympathetic waiting at the level of humanitarian contacts and in the interpersonal sphere. The shifting of the research towards interethnic perception reveals the tendency of growth of Ukrainophobia. 14% of respondents assess the representatives of the Ukrainian part of the population of Russia in the negative connotation while 33% expressed their negative attitude to the Ukrainian culture in general and to how it is propagated in Ukraine. An attempt by the Ukrainians to preserve their ethnic identity in Russia is viewed by this part of the respondents as artificial and devoid of prospects. It can be said that the respondents' perception of the Ukrainians and Russian-Ukrainian relations is assessed in the context of a civic and patriotic position, the approval of the policy of the Russian leadership towards the present-day Ukraine. At the same time, the majority of respondents are not ready for their own participation in the implementation of programs for restoring good-neighbourliness and cooperation, limiting themselves to the position of symbolic support.

The study revealed the fact that one of the factors that strengthens anti-Ukrainian sentiments among the population of the region, is the migration factor (Table 1). The wave of stressful migration from Ukraine to the territory of Russia determined the presence of several hundred thousand Ukrainian refugees in the Russian regions. At the same time, the trend of public opinion regarding the settlers from the territory of the conflict regions of Ukraine shifted rather quickly from the pole of the need to help the former compatriots to a defensive model of the perception of new flows of migrants that are viewed as competitors on the labour market, a factor in the deteriorating criminal situation, additional burden for regional budgets in conditions of economic recession.

<b>Subject of the Russian Federation</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>
Krasnodar region	4,167	8,454	5,698	1,003	1,024
Rostov region	3,874	6,238	4,189	1,443	1,028

At the end of the active phase of the fighting in the Donbass (June 2016) in the Rostov region more than 25 thousand Ukrainian citizens were settled, of which more than 11 thousand became employed in the region. As of July 2017 a return migration was 32%.

The presented data testify to a certain mythologization of the migration factor, which, according to its objective parameters, is not able to significantly change the situation on the labour market or in the social sphere in the region. The annual balance of the Russian-Ukrainian migration in the pre-conflict period was about 3.5 thousand people, which did not cause any



outbursts of anti-Ukrainian sentiments in the regional society. The contemporary growth of Ukrainian migrant-phobia in the region is conditioned by the distorted perception of the media's information by public opinion and incidental observation of the Ukrainian refugees at railway stations, social and medical centres.

## CONCLUSION

In the post-Soviet period the share of Slavic Diasporas in the ethno-demographic structure of the population of the Rostov region and the Krasnodar region has steadily declined. The sources of depopulation of the Slavic peoples on the territory of the South of Russia were their negative natural growth and migration outflow against the background of positive migration and natural growth of representatives of the Caucasian and Turkic peoples. The situation in the Rostov region was exacerbated by the depressive state of the coal-mining areas and the stagnant economic process in the southern and south-eastern agricultural parts of the region, while in the Krasnodar Territory it was not compensated even by the sustainable migration growth from other regions of the Russian Federation.

In addition, the reduction in the Slavic population of the region was due to the strengthening of assimilation trends, their consolidation with the ethnic majority—the Russians. The assimilation potential is currently assessed as high for representatives of the Ukrainian, Belarusian and Polish Diasporas. Its strengthening is associated with the identification of the ethnic and geopolitical identity. The expansion of ethnophobia towards some Slavic diasporas (primarily, the Ukrainians) in the South-Russian society also contributes to their desire to abandon their own ethnic identity in favour of the Russian. However, the general civil consolidation of the population of the South of Russia is impossible without taking into account the traditions and specific features of the culture of the region's Slavic peoples in order to preserve the historical mosaic of polyethnic society.

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