

Mariana Sheketa ¹

ETHNOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS AS A MODERN PROBLEM OF EUROPEAN SECURITY

ABSTRACT:

The article analyzes the results of a comprehensive study of a modern ethno-political processes in Europe and their impact on European security. In the context of its dynamic reveals that there is a strong connection between ethnic and political confrontation of individual groups. The article highlights the ethnic and political specificity and nature of conflicts in Europe, causes and factors of their occurrence and the impact on national security. Examined the modern level of linguistic, cultural, political and religious orientations and preferences, regional identity and characteristics of the social behavior of the European region's population. Grounded set of proposals on improving the prevention and elimination of the most significant hazards. The article's first goal is to understand the causes of ethnic conflicts in Europe. Why some potential ethnical conflicts do not happen at all, while others can produce violence, warfare and, even, in some cases, genocide? Why some ethnic conflicts get resolved and others do not? One more goal is to find out how we can predict and, perhaps, prevent ethno-political warfare. The EU is trying to be successful in resolving these conflicts through legislation system of those countries where conflicts are most acute. Europe has many problem areas. The most developed countries – UK, Spain, Belgium and Denmark – have also some kind of ethnic instability inside which causes some kind of ethnic instability inside their countries. National governments are trying to solve ethno-political conflicts on their own. However, the spirit of nationalism, disobedience and personal freedom are very strong in these places. The local population is not going to give up in their aspiration for independence and, sometimes, calls for separatism. The article suggests some possible solutions for these conflicts where the government and local communities can be involved. In this article also describes possible effects that can be caused by European ethno-political conflicts. Anyway, the most dangerous consequences is spontaneous uncontrolled migration inside Europe and international terrorism.

INTRODUCTION.

The problem of forming a stable security policy on the European continent arose immediately after the end of World War II. This prompted the leading European states to develop their own defense strategy, which would include all preventive measures to warn and eliminate possible dangers. After the Cold War ended, the number of possible threats and challenges to stability in Europe

¹ Postgraduate Student at the Department of International Relations
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, UKRAINE



increased, forcing the European Union to start developing a security policy.

In the modern world the processes of globalization, intensive interaction of peoples and cultures are opposed by the rapid development of nationalism, which has become one of the most influential ideologies. In many countries movements of national minorities are intensifying, protesting against «discrimination» and seeking for political and cultural self-affirmation. They arise as a reaction to the processes of globalization and integration, to the fear of losing their language and traditions, to dissolve in the faceless «world» community. The growing popularity of radical nationalist forces in the last elections in the European countries shows that even democratic, economically developed countries are unable to ensure harmonious interethnic relations. The vast majority of states are faced with the problem of real or potential conflict of ethnic groups on their territory, which indicates the urgency of the problem of guaranteeing ethno-political security and developing measures to resolve interethnic relations. Nevertheless, there are almost no monoethnic states in the modern world, it is to some extent fair to consider that the polyethnic composition of any country's population is a potential threat to its national security, which requires a well-thought-out and far-sighted state ethno-national policy.

The problem of threats and challenges to European security in the third millennium found its main reflection in the works of P. Ermakov [1], T. Panas [2], O. Marukhovskaya-Kartunova [3]. They analyze the new system of European security and the causes of ethno-political conflicts in Europe. However, events in Ukraine have shown that the problem of security threats on the European continent requires more in-depth study. Based on the analysis of sources and theoretical research, we will try to develop a holistic approach to solving the problems of modern ethnopolitical conflicts in Europe.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION.

The signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and the formation of the EU posed many different threats to everyday life, not only for EU member states, but also for every inhabitant of a united Europe. Modern European security architecture has come through a long way of development and formation. It is some kind of reflection of certain historical features of the region. In 1950, Schuman's plan provided for the creation of a single organization that would deal with the constant control in the security field [4]. For decades, the problem of European security has been a key link in the policies of Europe's leading

powers, forcing them to resort to various methods, both military and diplomatic. With the accession to the third millennium all the problems of Old Europe require detailed study, analysis, understanding and solution. Some local and ethnic conflicts are major dangers that require close attention. The list of European problems is much broader but, anyway, ethno-political conflicts concern the European community and affect civil society. It is worth mentioning that the united Europe is the result of interests integration of a large number of states for establishing peace and stability. Some countries and authorities are against of spreading European influence to the other regions and point to the EU's internal problems [5].

Among them, there is a big issue with religious and ethnic minorities. They are among the challenges for Europe because they can pose a significant threat of escalation into large-scale military conflicts. It should be noted that the ethnos means a community of people that has historically developed in a certain area and they have special features of culture, language, psychological composition and understanding its difference from the others. The idea of common origin, common historical destiny is the basis of ethnic identity and group identification. One of its ostents may be the ideology of nationalism. Nationalism is an ambiguous phenomenon. From one hand, may be patriotism which is expressed in people's desire to protect their language, culture and sovereignty, but, from the other hand, xenophobia (fear and hostility to everything else) and chauvinism. Nevertheless, nationalism can be manifested in separatism – in the people's desire for sovereignty and the desire to create their own independent state [6].

Among the main causes of ethnopolitical conflicts are the following:

- the historical heritage of interethnic relations (wars between peoples, insults, causes of deportation);
- unauthorized drawing of borders that do not coincide with the borders of ethnic settlement;
- forcible inclusion of ethnic's group territory in another state; lack of real conditions for the development of national culture, education in the native language;
- imposed paternalism – policy based on the idea of archaic lifestyle of the small nation and an attempt to instill them cultural models of the developed nation;
- stereotypes of negative perception and superstitions.

It is well known that some EU countries have domestic problems among the local population. Europe's most famous conflicts are in Denmark, Spain and,



of course, the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

Belgium as a country is divided into two districts, Flanders, home for 6 million Dutch-speaking Flemings, and Wallonia, home for 4,5 million French-speaking Walloons and «independent» capital district. That is why Flemish and Walloon are the official languages in Belgium. The fact is that since Belgium got its independence in 1830, the country has been dominated by French-speaking Walloons for more than 100 years. The French language occupied a dominant position, the French-speaking politicians led the country. Wallonia was more economically developed than Flanders. Instead, the Flemings, although a majority of the population, were considered as a lower caste. However, in recent decades the situation has changed significantly. Metallurgy, which was the crutch of Wallonia's economic prosperity, collapsed. Later, Flanders successfully developed post-industrial production and became the richest region of the country. Since then, Flemings have increasingly wondered: «Why are we feeding these French-speaking freeloaders ?», which has led to ethnic conflict in the center of Europe [7].

Another center of ethnic conflict in Europe is the Kingdom of Spain. Catalan nationalist seek to secede from the kingdom and form their own independent state.

On November 9, 2014, Catalonia held a referendum on self-determination of its region. The results of the referendum were stunning! After counting 96,8% of ballots it turned out that 80,76% of respondents want Catalonia to become an independent state. Arthur Mass, the former president of the district of Catalonia, happily called the results of the poll as «a celebration of democracy» [8].

Most analysts believe that Catalonia will lose a lot of its independence. It will automatically withdraw from the European Union, thus the jurisdiction of all European legislative and regulatory bodies will not extend to its territory. As a result, the number of investments decreases sharply and the prosperous region will literally go bankrupt [9].

Despite all the warning not only from the Spanish government, but also from the governments of the member states of the Council of Europe, on October 1, 2017, a referendum was held in Catalonia, which raised the following question: «Do you want Catalonia to become an independent state in the form of republic ?» The results of this referendum was the support of the independence of Catalonia for at least 90 % of the participants. The turnout, according to official Catalonia, was 42,3%. About 7.83% of the participants in the referendum are against independence, but the real opponents of independence and the region's secession from the Kingdom of Spain simply boycotted the referendum. [10]

King Philip VI of Spain and the Prime Minister have officially declared that the referendum in Catalonia is illegitimate. After that, the referendum in Catalonia was not recognized by any EU country, as well as Ukraine [11].

The new round of escalation of separatist movement in Catalonia took place on October 20, 2019. Spanish Supreme Court sentenced Catalan referendum organizers from 13 to 9 years in prison. The main defendants were Carlos Puigdemont and Oriol Junqueras, who received the longest prison term. This decision of the Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court of Spain was ambiguously perceived by the population in Catalonia. Proponents of the region's independence immediately went to the streets with mass protests, which sometimes escalated into clashes with police. The protests resulted in the arrest of about 50 participants, as well as those who disagreed with the decision of the Supreme Court of Spain, blocked one of the largest airports in Spain and Europe in the city of Barcelona El-Prat [10]. Such events once again demonstrate to us the importance of studying and resolving the problem of ethnopolitical conflicts.

It is worth mentioning another conflict region in the Kingdom of Spain – the Basque Country. It is believed that the Basques are an ancient indigenous nation who inhabit the Iberian Peninsula. Sabino Arana became the ideologue of Basque nationalism. He preached hatred for everything Spanish, as Spain allegedly turned the Basque Country into its colony and threatened the existence of Basque «race». Arana demanded full independence of the Basque lands by creating a confederation of four Spanish and three French provinces [12]. This ideology became the basis of Basque nationalism.

The long struggle of the Basques people for their independence also took place with the help of ETA armed forces. ETA («Euskadi Ta Askatasuna» or «Basque Homeland and Liberty») was armed Basque nationalist and separatist organization in the Basque Country. The group was founded in 1959 and later transformed to a paramilitary group engaged in a terrorism. Its goal was gaining independence for the Basque Country. ETA was the main group within the Basque National Liberation Movement and was the most important participant in the Basque conflict. ETA activities during 1965-2017 were transformed from a simple separatist to an active terrorist. ETA victims included not only politicians, but also civilians. Anyway, ETA played a significant role in the development and course of ethno-political conflict in the Basque Country. Its representatives for a long time tried to heat up the conflict to satisfy their own interests. However, it was only in 2017 when the Spanish authorities managed to achieve the complete elimination of ETA's terrorist activities. The result of



the long struggle of the Basques was the adoption of a constitution which for the first time took into account their interests and the right to self-determination [13].

Nowadays, the difficulty of resolving the interethnic conflict lies in the lack of unity within the Basque nationalist movement. Today, no region has such autonomy as the Basques. They have their own parliament, police, their own education and tax system. Nevertheless, it is too early to talk about ending the conflict, as negotiations are still ongoing [14]. The resolution of ethno-political conflicts in the Kingdom of Spain depends on the consolidation of all political forces, as well as on the aspirations of the local population.

Another source of instability and disintegration in Europe is Denmark. At first glance, it is a country where people who have their own ancient traditions and established way of life, but this is only at first glance. Few people know that in the territory of this state there is a free city of Christianity. This is an area in the center of Copenhagen at the entrance to which are two large stones. A group of young people in the mid-70's, on the wave of hippie influence, settled in communal premises in the center of Copenhagen and began to live there [15]. The inhabitants of this city follow the same lifestyle as hippies in the 70's. Everyone can freely but soft drugs on the streets, hippie music sounds everywhere, many different flowers growing on the windows. Every tourist can visit this phenomenon of «local self-government». However, we should not forget that in the territory of Christianity the laws of civilized European society do not apply, but its own «unwritten» rules prevail. The Danish authorities have repeatedly tried to combat the existence of such a «city», but all attempts to prevent it ended in complete failure. The territory of Christiania has been declared as an «experimental zone» by the central government and its inhabitants must pay a fixed tax to the state treasury. The state decided that it is better to have one such place under its control than to allow such a way of life to spread throughout Denmark [16].

The Ulster problem in the United Kingdom arose from the dissatisfaction of English Catholics with the division of Ireland in 1921 and their less important social and economic status compared to Protestants. The main reason for this issue, in their opinion, is the wrong territorial division. It is clear to say that this ethno-confessional conflict has a significant impact on British policy. The main components of the Ulster problem are the different approaches of the Catholic and Protestants minorities to determining the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. These differences can easily be explained by the fact that each member of a minority has different political views, formed in accordance with



their own ideology. Some radical groups tried to achieve their goal by armed forces (for example IRA). So, there is another problem – a security problem. The policy of the central British government is aimed at finding a compromise and reconciliation between the two communities [17].

The most difficult was to choose the right strategy to ensure peace in Northern Ireland. The British government held a series of talks with radical paramilitaries and reformed the police, which significantly increased the level of confidence in it. Britain rejected the claim that Ulster is solely its own domestic problem and brought it to the international arena. Advisory group have been set up with the Republic of Ireland to resolve this conflict and a number of agreements have been signed to expand the powers of local self-government [18]. Scotland is another problem on the map of Great Britain. On September 18, 2014, a referendum on Scottish independence was held. The project of holding a referendum has been planned since 2009, and in 2010 a bill was published and submitted for discussion. On October 15, 2012, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom David Cameron and the Minister of the Regional Government of Scotland Alex Salmond signed an agreement on the procedure for holding a referendum on Scottish independence in autumn 2014. According to a poll in 32 Scottish regions that took part in the referendum, about 55% of respondents voted against and 45% voted for independence [19].

CONCLUSION.

Thus, ethnic and religious conflicts in Europe continue to damage its integrity and security. They exist due to historical factors, the impossibility of a certain ethnic and religious community to live separately, isolated from others. To sum up, it is fair to say that nationalism is becoming a popular ideology in the modern world, and therefore the main task of any state is not to allow ethno-political conflicts to deepen and become the greatest threat to their security. To reduce tensions in the areas of greatest conflicts, certain measures are being taken: global information security policy, legitimizing laws on national minorities and the applying of minority languages in the legal field. It should be noted that public opinion in the troubled regions absolutely excludes the path of struggle for autonomy by terrorist methods, and relies only on interethnic political dialogue in a democratic society. In the modern world, the processes of globalization, intensive interaction of peoples and cultures are opposed by the rapid development of nationalism, which has become one of the most

influential ideologies. In many countries, movements of national minorities are intensifying, protesting against discrimination and seeking political and cultural self-affirmation. The growing popularity of radical nationalist forces in the last elections in European countries shows that even democratic, economically developed states are unable to ensure harmonious interethnic relations. The vast majority of states are faced with the problem of real or potential conflict of ethnic groups on their territory, which indicates the urgency of the problem of guaranteeing ethno-political security and developing measures to resolve interethnic relations. In the modern world there are almost no monoethnic states, so it is fair to say that the polyethnic composition of the population of any country is a potential threat to its national security, which requires a well-thought-out and far-sighted state ethno-national policy.

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