

## **Russophobia is a new problem in Europe.**

European Center for Democracy Development has been analyzing Xenophobia for many years, including anti-Semitic and Islamophobic manifestations in Europe. In 2017, we recorded a further increase in these manifestations actually in all countries of our Monitoring.

Along with such traditional problems like anti-Semitism, anti-Roma prejudices and Islamophobia, which become just more acute with the years, we have to state that in recent years a new problem has emerged, whose name is Russophobia.

In fact, nothing new is here.

Just like in the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s, the authorities made Jews responsible for Israel's actions (and this led to an outbreak of State anti-Semitism in the USSR), just like in Europe today radicals declare responsibility of European Jewry for the Israeli policy (and this led to a jump in anti-Semitic manifestations in Europe at the last years), the authorities and the society of a number of countries are trying to make representatives of the Russian linguistic minority living outside Russia responsible for Russian policies.

By adopting laws that clearly provoke Russians worldwide, such as the law of heroizing Bandera and collaborators in Ukraine, limiting the right of the Russian linguistic minority to education in their native language, as it does in Ukraine and Latvia, trying to create unbearable living conditions for Russians, suspecting them of disloyalty for any positive statements about Russia, which is typical of many Western countries, the authorities make a big mistake. Not only because democracy implies the existence of different points of view, as well as value orientations and cultures, but also because in the end they get a real growth of protest moods and radicalization. Those, by our actions, we really create the Russian "fifth column", the Russian threat inside ourselves. This is typical for almost all countries of the West, including the United States. But especially this is typical for those countries where there is a large Russian irredenta, which always very painfully perceives an attack on its rights. Today in Europe we are creating a new problem, which we will solve for a long time and unsuccessfully, as today we unsuccessfully solve the problem of the growth of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

It is surprising that there is no response to the well-known manifestations of Russophobia on the part of OSCE senior officials. The question arises involuntarily: is this organization only needed to release steam from a boiling kettle, what we are doing now, or you can really influence something? After all, the limitation of the right of the Russian linguistic minority to education in their native language only can lead to a mass exodus of Russian-speaking people and to their equally massive Radicalization. And it is naive to believe that all of them will rush to Russia. I would like to turn to the leadership of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights to take under control the situation with developing Russophobia in Europe.