

Problems of discrimination against Roma and other small ethnic groups in Latvia

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Considering the problem of the Roma, we have to understand that this is a common problem for all small ethnic groups that do not have internal mechanisms of social development in today's complex world. The threat of assimilation and marginalization of these ethnic groups are forced to withdraw into themselves and often use as a defense, the mechanisms of anti-social behavior. Antisocial in our plan, but not from their point of view.

Here is an example in Latvia. When I was preparing a book I have not been able to find material for the destruction of the Roma during the war, it is not there. And when I made a film about the events of the Second World War, it was found that there are no witnesses who can clearly explain these events. The Jews of Latvia has a collective memory of the Holocaust (books, movies, museum), while Roma have experienced the same tragedy, no.

Roma is an example of how a small ethnic group has closed to the outside world, capsule. But there are many other people who are facing the same threat of assimilation and possibly marginalized. Especially face ethnocratic modes, such as exists in Latvia.

In Latvia, there ethnicity Latgallians, which has about 300-350 thousand people, or 10-15 % of the population. I'm talking about, because in the census of the population it simply is not isolated. Language of the people in our country do not recognize independent, and only dialect Latvian, although it is fixed in the international system of classification of languages ((ISO 639-3:ltg)). In this language, you cannot submit a formal appeal court and get an answer on it, although the law is not explicitly prohibited. In their native language Lettigallians cannot send their children to public schools , although such a practice existed in Latvia until K.Ulmanis Fascist coup in 1934 In 1991, it was restored this dictatorial practices . Books, who publish Lettigallians on the money cannot be found in public libraries. Recently, the Catholic Church (Lettigallians Catholic), under pressure from the state was to curtail service on Latgale language , it is more practically used in a great magazine "The Catholic life » (Kotolu dzieve).

A few days ago Lettigallians celebrated the 900 anniversary of the first mention of them in the chronicles. So in the Latvian media about the PDE, an important event no one wrote.

It seems to me that Latgale awaits the same fate as that of the Roma. They must be either assimilated or marginalized - to live in enclaves and so on.

On 11 and 12 session, I talked about the threat of assimilation and marginalization of Russian in Latvia. However, we have the mainland - Russia, which supports us in the language and culture. We latgal mainland Latvia, but it behaves towards them as a stepmother.

This example Latgalians I gave to the members of the OSCE, the organization's leadership in the development of programs for further work on the problem of the Roma has seen the threat of marginalization and the rise of anti-social activities is also facing a number of other small ethnic groups. I believe that the support program for the Roma should be expanded, it is necessary to include other small nations , in particular latgal in Latvia.