

Conference report “Intergroup relations in the Russian Federation and Ukraine”, 14-15 May 2007, Berghotel, Amersfoort, the Netherlands

This conference was organised by researchers of ERCOMER (Poppe, Hagendoorn) in co-operation with MERM research master students (Cohen, Maliepaard) with the aim to disseminate the first results of the INTAS project “The quest for ethno-national identity: positive and negative effects”. Paper presentations and referent comments were given by scholars from the various universities that participate in the INTAS projects: Moscow State University (Sociology), Kyiv University (Psychology), National Taurida University in Crimea (Institute for conflict resolution), Trento University (Sociology) and Utrecht University (ERCOMER, MERM students).

Louk Hagendoorn opened the conference by introducing the aim of the INTAS project, the history of the co-operation with the various foreign scholars, the role of the various scholars in the INTAS project and the subgoal of the conference that is to bring together the MERM students who had worked on the INTAS data set with the scholars who were responsible for the data collection and who are regional experts on intergroup relations in Ukraine and Russia. The first paper presentation was given by Anca Minescu on minority rights and group interest in the Russian Federation. Her analysis showed that there were no differences between Russians and titulars inside the autonomous republics of the Russian Federation, while titulars support minority rights stronger when they live outside their republic, and in particular when they perceive more relative deprivation in economic terms. Furthermore, she concluded that there is more support for separatism when multiculturalism fails. The discussion after the presentation focused on the asymmetric divided minority rights in Russia, some titulars have more rights than others (due to negotiations that took place with the federal government in Moscow) inside but also outside their republics (e.g., Tatars and Bashkirs are well organised in some Russian oblasts in which they have schools that are instructed in their own language), while Russians have no specific rights or privileges in oblasts or republics. Liudmila Karamushka presented a work in progress paper in which the differences and similarities between Russians and Ukrainians in Ukraine were revealed in terms of identification, prejudice and trust in government. Furthermore she showed that young people in Ukraine trust the national government more and are more positive about the outgroup and the economic situation. The intergroup relations in Ukraine were further specified in the presentation of Lotje Cohen who found that groups in majority position (Ukrainians in Ukraine, Russians in Crimea) perceive more intergroup competition and conflicts on cultural issues, while groups in minority position (Ukrainians in Crimea, Russians in Ukraine) perceive more competition and conflicts on economic issues such as finding a job. Furthermore, she showed that the most vulnerable group in terms of numerical size and economic deprivation is the most susceptible for the influence of a politician to reinforce intergroup conflicts. In her referent comment Irina Bondarevskaya pointed at the specific tense intergroup situation in one of the cities in Crimea (Sevastopol) with a strong pro-Russian propaganda in the newspapers and by local politicians. Other discussion points referred to new ways to measure the influence of a politician, the interrelationship between cultural and economic conflicts for Russian (i.e. shift to Ukrainian language will affect job opportunities as well) and the possibilities for Russians to learn the Russian language. In her presentation Olga Papadoupoulou discussed the strong religious identification among the Muslim population of Bashkortostan and Tatarstan and in how far it is related to intergroup tensions with the Russians in these republics. Moreover, she showed that religious identification, more than ethnic identification, reinforces the support for separatism. In the referent comment Alla Stremovskaya put forward that it may not be separatism but support for a common Islamic state. The presentation of Enzo Loner focused on statistical models that

fits the various forms of identification among titular groups in the Russian Federation and the factors affecting the identification pattern. The comments and discussions afterwards focused on the role of chauvinism in the model, whether it is part of identification or a consequence and whether age or duration of residence is a factor that is associated with assimilation. The last presentation of the first day was given by Fenella Fleischmann who showed that the relationship between Russians and titulars in the various contexts of the Russian Federation and Ukraine can be considered as a social dominance relation in that the correlation between civic and ethnic identification varied across contexts. However, she showed that it is more difficult to explain the variations in social dominance relations by the contextual factors that were available in the data set. The first presentation of the second day was given by Louk Hagendoorn on the nature and explanation of intergroup relations in the republics of the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The findings indicated that the level of social distance from outgroups and intergroup trust appeared to be related, in a complex manner, to numerical size of the outgroup, cultural differences and trust in the government thereby supporting and refining theoretical insights from contact theory and distinctiveness theory. The discussions afterwards dealt with the differences found between perceptions at a societal level (stereotypes and social distance) and at an interpersonal level such as was measured by the trust variable. Niels Schenk presented his study on another trust variable, measuring the decision to place trust in game theoretical situation. He found out that it matters if one has to place trust in an ingroup member or in an outgroup member and that it varies according to the manipulated temptation and risk of placing trust. However, the patterns were not consistent across the various republics of the Russian Federation and therefore they generally did not confirm theoretical expectation, for instance that respondents with a particular pro-social orientation are more likely to place trust or that people base their trust on guilt. The presentation of Alla Stremovskaya also pointed to a remarkable finding opposite to the main social identity theory, namely that Russians sometimes favour the outgroup above the ingroup, in particular in the republics in which they are a clear numerical majority. She suggested that Russians in these locations do not perceive cultural threat and therefore can be (more) positive about the outgroup. The discussion afterwards focused on the meaning of outgroup favouritism among Russian, is it because they are more tolerant towards other groups or because they are more negative about their own group. This last argument is partly in line with the study of Schenk who found that Russians in some republics trust individual outgroup members more than members of the Russian ingroup. The last presentation of the conference was done by Oscar Mora who focused on detail about the effects of outgroup size in culturally homogeneous and heterogeneous republics of the Russian Federation. One of his most interesting findings is that perceived size of the outgroup in the country leads to perceived threat in particular cultural threat and thereby to more social distance, whereas size at lower levels such as city and neighbourhood leads to more contact and thereby to less social distance between Russians and titulars. Furthermore his results indicated different effects of size and cultural threat on social distance in culturally more heterogeneous republics (in which both groups are orthodox) and culturally heterogeneous republics (in which the titulars are Muslim).

An important aspect of the conference was the active participation of MERM students. Five MERM students presented their thesis and presented their referent comments to the papers presented by the scholars from Russia, Ukraine and Italy. Furthermore, two MERM students co-organised the conference and were closely involved in preparing the programme, maintaining contacts with the participants before and during the conference, day-chairing the conference and organising a social program for the foreign guests in the city of Amsterdam. The conference was attended by almost all second year MERM students and a few first year MERM students.

## **Programme INTAS Conference MAY 2007**

### **Monday, May 14**

- 09:30-09:45** Opening by Louk Hagendoorn
- 09:45-10.30** Minority Rights and Group Interests in Russia  
Author: Anca Minescu  
Referent: Pierangelo Peri & Oscar Mora
- 10.30-11.15** Ukrainian-Russian relations in Ukraine  
Authors: Lyudmila Karamushka  
Alena Fil  
Kira Tereshchenko  
Referents: Olga Papadopoulou & Lotje Cohen
- 11.15-11.45** Coffee/Tea Break
- 11.45-12.30** Possibilities of politicizing intergroup conflict in the Ukraine  
Author: Lotje Cohen  
Referents: Lyudmila Karamushka & Irina Bondarevskaya
- 12.30-14.00** **Lunch**
- 14.00-14.45** Religious Identification among Muslims in the Russian Federation: The cases of Bashkortostan and Tatarstan  
Author: Olga Papadopoulou  
Referents: Alla Stremovskaya & Sergei Tumanov
- 14.45-15.30** Ethnic identity in the former Soviet Union social groups  
Authors: Pierangelo Peri  
Enzo Loner  
Referents: Fenella Fleischmann & Edwin Poppe
- 15.30-16.00** Coffee/Tea Break
- 16.00-16.45** The relationship between ethnic and civic identification: A test of Social Dominance Theory across multi-ethnic contexts  
Author: Fenella Fleischmann  
Referent: Anca Minescu & Alena Fil
- 18.30** **Dinner, Restaurant "Het Moment"**

**Tuesday, May 15**

- 09.30-10.15**     Trust in Government and other determinants of ethnic relations in Russia and the Ukraine  
Authors:     Louk Hagendoorn  
                 Edwin Poppe  
*Referents: Alexander Gasparishvili & Sergei Tumanov*
- 10.15-11.00**     Interethnic trust in the Russian federation and Ukraine: Integrating behavioral game theory with intergroup perceptions.  
Author:     Niels Schenk  
*Referent: Enzo Loner & Anca Minescu*
- 11.00-11.30**     Coffee/Tea Break
- 11.30-12.15**     Degree of ethnic tolerance in USSR republics  
Authors:     Sergei Tumanov  
                 Alexander Gasparishvili  
                 Alla Stremovskaya  
*Referents: Louk Hagendoorn & Niels Schenk*
- 12.15-13.00**     The effects of Outgroup Size, Contact and Threat on Social Distance in four autonomous republics of the Russian Federation.  
Author:     Oscar Mora  
*Referents: Alla Stremovskaya & Pierangelo Pieri*
- 13.00-14.30**     **Lunch**
- 14.30-17.00**     Meeting INTAS teams on "Final report INTAS"
- 19.00**             **Dinner, Restaurant "Tollius"**

## **Participants INTAS Conference, 14-15 May**

### ***Moscow State University:***

Sergei Tumanov  
Alexander Gashparishvili  
Alla Stremovskaya

### ***Academy of Science Ukraine:***

Lyudmila Karamushka  
Alena Fil

### ***National Taurida University, Crimea***

Irina Bondarevskaya

### ***University of Trento:***

Pierangelo Peri  
Enzo Loner

### ***Utrecht University:***

Louk Hagendoorn  
Edwin Poppe  
Maykel Verkuyten  
Jeroen Weesie  
Anca Minescu  
Mieke Maliepaard  
Lotje Cohen  
Olga Papadopoulou  
Fenella Fleischmann  
Niels Schenk  
Oscar Mora  
Maïke Gieling  
Karina Velasco Gonzalez  
Petra Helmond  
Claudia Zilli Ramirez  
Pauline Kwik