

RIGHT-WING AUTHORITARIANISM AND SOCIAL DOMINANCE ORIENTATION AS TRIGGERS OF CHANGING SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

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Abstract. *In this study we have examined the main and interactive effects of right-wing authoritarian attitudes (RWA), social dominance orientations (SDO) and self-perceived economic status on social distances towards immigrants – Russians and Arabs. Both RWA and SDO were conceptualized as motivational schemes (triggers) in the perspective of the Dual Process Model and analyzed within the framework of Social Dominance Theory and Relative Deprivation Hypothesis. The study was a part of a larger survey, carried out in 2014, among a quota sample of $N = 1216$ respondents – representatives of Bulgarian, Turkish and Roma ethnic communities in 3 Bulgarian districts (Montana, Kardzhali and Stara Zagora). The findings confirmed that the perceived threat by Russian immigrants to the dominant position of the Bulgarian majority was positively related to the social distances of the poorest ethnic Bulgarians to Russians. Moreover, only ethnic Bulgarians who perceived themselves as the poorest were found to be unwilling to contact Arab immigrants. No such conditional SDO effects were found for the two ethnic minorities. The higher motivation for group order and security (RWA) was related to shorter social distances towards Russians only among Bulgarian Turks who regarded their economic status as the highest. Some unexpected findings about the triggers of changing social distances of Bulgarian Turks and Roma towards immigrants were also scrutinized.*

Keywords: social dominance orientation; right-wing authoritarianism; social distances; immigrants

The problem of how Bulgarian society treats immigrants in the country has become particularly relevant in the recent years in connection to the waves of refugees that flooded Bulgaria after the beginning of the war in Syria. Mainly social-psychological literature has examined the prejudices and attitudes towards immigrants. The explanation of their formation is confined to two main theoretical models that approach intergroup attitudes and prejudice. The first approach is based on the notion that people's generalized attitudes towards out-groups are marked by individual differences, i.e., personality traits (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). The second approach emphasizes the

situational determinants of negative attitudes (prejudice) and it argues that any individual may develop negative attitudes towards out-groups and outgroup members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

In this paper we combine these two approaches in the perspective of the Dual Process Model (Dual Process Model-DPM) (Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt & Sibley, 2009). Duckitt accepts the idea of Roy D'Andrade (Roy D'Andrade, 1992) and Claudia Strauss (Claudia Strauss, 1992) for "motivational diagram." According to them, the motivational schemes are activated by perceptions. These schemes are formed as a result of socialization processes and interpretation of the world

and the events in it. The motivational schemes are attached to the right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) and social dominance orientation (SDO) by Duckitt. RWA and SDO as ideological beliefs, social attitudes or values generate stable beliefs about the nature of the social world. There is a strong positive correlation between the indicators of social threat and authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1988), where people with high values RWA are assumed to perceive the world as dangerous and threatening. Studies have not shown association between SDO and RWA, which indicates clearly that they measure different constructs and relate to the ethno-centric prejudices and attitudes (Pratto et al.; Van Hiel & Mervielde, 2002).

According to the Dual Process Model, RWA and SDO are underpinned by different motivational goals (Duckitt, 2000, 2001). The model suggests that the RWA scale measures ideological attitudes that express the motivational goal of handling any threat to group/public peace, law, order and security. The SDO scale measures ideological attitudes that express the motivational goal of managing competitive environments, of gaining and maintaining group dominance, authority and superiority. Hence, individuals who report high values of RWA have prejudice against out-groups who are perceived as threatening to the in-group and in-group order, while those who report high values of SDO do not like and even depreciate out-groups that interfere with their competitive power of dominance, authority and superiority, i.e. to groups with legitimate low status that would claim to power and authority.

A few studies have been dedicated to examining the effect of both RWA and SDO, on one hand, and the effect of situational determinants as a complex generator of prejudice, on the other hand. An example is the study of Sibley et al. (2009) that encompassed *economic deprivation* and *number of immigrants* as objectively measurable situational factors.

A socio-contextual variable that interacts with the studied motivational schemes in predicting prejudice towards immigrants is the degree of economic deprivation in the local community. The existing theoretical models

suggest two opposing viewpoints on the interaction of economic deprivation and individual differences in motivational goals (SDO and RWA). The Relative deprivation theory argues that individuals in poor regions are more prejudiced against increased immigration than those in rich regions, depending on their perception of immigrants as rivals for their limited resources (Sherif, 1967).

Applying the relative deprivation theory to the problem of combining personality traits and situation shows that people who have a strong SDO and RWA and who live in poor areas should be strongly against increased immigration in their area. This argument is based on the assumption that migrants are perceived as people with a similar disadvantaged status and they are seen as competitive for the same limited resources (e.g., work, housing, etc.).

On the other hand, SDT (Sidanius and Pratto, 1999) suggests another perspective. According to this perspective, the higher the status of 'accepting' community members is (i.e., those who have more to lose), the higher motivation they would have to defend their privileged position in society.

They must therefore most strongly oppose immigration in their village, because they would accept immigration as a potential threat to their status. This hypothesis is particularly applicable when immigrants are perceived as relatively wealthy, living in high levels of an economic hierarchy. Studies (Duckitt & Sibly, 2010b) have shown that people with high levels of SDO were strongly opposed to immigrants when they were described as economically competitive. Thomsen and colleagues (2008) observed the effect of strengthening the status boundaries, where those with high SDO were most strongly against immigration groups which were actually ready for acculturation. The hypothesis of strengthening the group status boundary, proposed by SDT, argues that this is because these groups are most likely to challenge an existing social hierarchy by deleting differences between "us" and "them." The latest studies by Cohrs, Asbrock & Sibly (2012) have also supported this notion using the concept of categorization and has shown that people with high SDO tend to

make social categorization and identify similarities between people based on their competence and ability to compete.

Based on SDT (and contrary to the traditional view of relative deprivation), Sibley says that the motivation to reinforce the status boundary in people who believe that the social world is competitive jungle is activated most strongly among those who live in very affluent communities. Those with low levels of SDO are less motivated to reinforce the boundaries of status, as opposed to immigrants.

This study draws attention to the subjective assessment of one's own economic standing as a variable of the social context that could moderate the impact of SDO and RWA on social distances to immigrants. Bulgaria is in the specific context of one of the poorest countries in the European Union. The shifted values of SDO and RWA add to the features of the Bulgarian social context. SDO is shifted to lower values ($M = 1,98$, i.e. between "completely disagree" and "disagree" on a five-point Likert-type scale) and RWA – to higher values ($M = 4,36$, i.e. between "agree" and "completely agree"). Hence, the motivation of handling the threat to the maintenance and creation of group and public policy is much more salient than the motivation for dealing with the competitive environment and imposing group domination.

The features of the social context in Bulgaria are determined by the multi-ethnic environment that carries the distinctive culture of each ethnic group. Hence, the objectives and contribution of this particular study are:

- To examine the social distances towards Russians and Arabs in Bulgaria in association with SDO and RWA as motivational goals in an economically deprived and highly competitive environment;
- To study ethnic differences (among ethnic Bulgarians, Bulgarian Turks and Roma) in the effects of RWA and SDO on the social distances towards the two immigrant groups;
- To scrutinize the interactive effects between the motivational goals (RWA and SDO) and the subjective/perceived economic standing onto the social distances towards the immigrants.

Given the low levels of income, it is of key interest to study how the subjective assessment of economic standing moderates the motivational effects. The study addresses two groups of immigrants – Russians and Arabs who have different attributes of perceived threat to the country's citizens. The current immigrants of Russian origin are associated with wealth and power opportunities. This enhances the motivational scheme for competition to the group of immigrants who are perceived as a threat to the current order and group domination. Hence, SDO and RWA as triggers of changing attitudes and distances will be responsive to the group of Russian immigrants. Arabs, in turn, are associated with poverty and escape from war, terrorism and poor living conditions; people who bring very different culture and religion. This perception should activate RWA as a motivational scheme for public peace protection.

We tested the following hypotheses:

H1: Grounding on the SDT and on studies of Duckitt & Sibley, we expected that the stronger motivational goal of handling a threat to superiority of a group would be the longer social distance towards Russian immigrants (SDO). This effect was not expected for Arab immigrants (SDT, Duckitt & Sibley, 2010), as in contrast to Russians, who are perceived as rich, economically competitive and threatening to change the group dominance, Arab immigrants are perceived as poor refugees with different religion and culture.

H2: The stronger motivation to keep the group/public order and security (RWA) was expected to be associated with larger social distances towards both Russian and Arab immigrant groups.

H3: The effects of SDO and RWA on social distances towards immigrants were expected to be weaker among Bulgarian Turks and Roma, compared to ethnic Bulgarians, due to their minority position.

H4: With regard to the Relative Deprivation Theory, individuals of worse subjective economic standing were expected to keep at a larger distance towards Russians and Arabs, as they would feel more threatened by competitors upon allocation of limited resources,

in comparison to those of better economic standing.

H5: With regard to the studies of Sibley on the effect of the relative economic deprivation, we assumed that the more salient SDO would relate to larger social distances towards Russians among individuals of worse economic standing.

H6: The higher RWA was expected to be associated with shorter distances towards Russians and Arabs among individuals of better subjective economic standing.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Data from the study of main and interactive effects of authoritarian attitudes, social dominance orientations and the perceived economic standing on social distance towards immigrants (Russians and Arabs), which we present and analyze below, are part of a survey¹, carried out from June to August 2014, by using a standardized questionnaire among a quota sample of N = 1216 respondents, representatives of Bulgarian, Turkish and Roma ethnic communities in 3 districts with differ-

ent proportions of the three communities – Montana (respectively 86.3%, 0.1%, 12.7%), Kardzhali (respectively 30.2%, 66.2%, 1.0%) and Stara Zagora (respectively 86.2%, 4.9%, 7.8%), according to Census 2011 data (NSI, 2012). Grounding on these data, Bulgarian Turks were not interviewed in Montana and Roma were not interviewed in Kardzhali. Our quota sample was controlled for: ethnicity, gender, age and urban/rural region (See Table 1):

The standardized questionnaire, conducted as a face-to-face interview, was developed in three versions (for ethnic Bulgarians, Bulgarian Turks and Roma) by the project team of Swiss and Bulgarian researchers and includes adapted scales and items.

Social dominance orientations (SDO) of the representatives of the three ethnic communities were measured by 5 items, as follows:

- *“It’s acceptable that certain groups are at the top and other are at the bottom of the society”;*
- *“It’s acceptable if some groups have more of a chance in life than others”;*
- *“All groups should be given an equal chance in life”;*

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS (BY ETHNICITY, DISTRICT, SETTLEMENT TYPE AND GENDER)

District	Sample (N)	Ethnic Bulgarians						Roma						Bulgarian Turks					
		Total	Gender		Urban/ Rural		Total	Gender		Urban/ Rural		Total	Gender		Urban/ Rural		Total	Gender	
			F	M	U	R		F	M	U	R		F	M	U	R		F	M
Stara Zagora	512	192	96	96	96	96	160	80	80	72	88	160	80	80	88	72			
Montana	352	192	96	96	96	96	160	82	78	80	80	–	–	–	–	–			
Kardzhali	352	192	96	96	96	96	–	–	–	–	–	160	80	80	80	80			
Total	1216	576	288	288	288	288	320	162	158	152	168	320	160	160	168	152			

¹ This study was carried out under the project: „The Dynamic Nature of Interethnic Attitudes in Bulgaria: A Social Psychological Perspective”, BSRP; funded by SNSF and co-funded by MEYS, Bulgaria; coordinated by the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Lausanne, Switzerland; contractor: Department of Psychology, IPHS-BAS; April 2013 – March 2016.

- “No one group should dominate in society”;
- “We should strive at achieving equality among the different social groups [ethnic, gender, religious groups]”.

Three of the items were reverse coded so that a higher value corresponded to a more dominant orientation (adapted from Pratto et al., 1994). The respondents express their opinion of each of the statements on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from “Completely Disagree” (= 1) to “Completely Agree” (= 5). The scale was characterized by very good reliability coefficients in the three versions of the questionnaire, respectively $\alpha=.82$ for ethnic Bulgarians, $\alpha=.80$ for Bulgarian Turks, and $\alpha=.86$ for Roma.

Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) was measured by 3 items (adapted from Altemeyer, 1981) and also on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from “Completely Disagree” (= 1) to “Completely Agree” (= 5). In view of the best possible reliability of the scale, the following items were included:

- “To ensure law and order, one should act tougher against criminals and hooligans”;
- “Following the rules and respect toward one’s authorities are very important values”;
- “It is always better to trust the judgments/opinions of the proper governmental and religious authorities”.

Good reliability of the scale was obtained for the versions for Bulgarian Turks ($\alpha=.66$) and Roma ($\alpha=.67$), **although we did not succeed in achieving such reliability for the ethnic Bulgarian version of the questionnaire** ($\alpha=.44$). Hence, the results on the effect of authoritarian attitudes of ethnic Bulgarians on social distances towards immigrants were to be analysed with some caution and confirmed by further research.

Social distances to immigrant minorities, regarded as **an affective reaction of an individual to out-group members and as a phenomenon almost identical to attitude** (Bogardus, 1947), were measured by an adapted scale originally developed by Bogardus (1926). Three items, addressing each of the immigrant communities, were included:

- “Would you accept Russians/Arabs as neighbours?”;
- “Would you agree to work together with a Russian/Arab?”;
- “Would you marry or cohabitate with a Russian/Arab?”.

The respondents from the three studied ethnic groups respond to the questions on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from “Completely Disagree” (= 1) to “Completely Agree” (= 5). The social distance scale (both from Russians and from Arabs) was characterized by good reliability coefficients: from $\alpha=.72$ to $\alpha=.75$ and $\alpha=.80$ to $\alpha=.84$ in the three versions of the questionnaire. It was reverse coded due to logical reasons, so that a higher mean corresponded to a higher social distance.

The respondents’ perceived (subjective) economic standing was measured by 1 item on a 5-point nominal scale, ranging from “We have enough money for our needs and are able to save” (= 1) to “We have to cut back on consumption and we don’t manage on our earnings” (= 5), so that a higher value corresponded to a lower perceived economic standing.

The data were analyzed by quantitative methods, using SPSS v19 and PROCESS v2.13 (Hayes, 2014). The hypotheses of the main effect of authoritarian attitudes and social dominance orientations on social distances towards immigrants were tested by using a linear regression method. The hypotheses for the interactive effects of either authoritarian attitudes or social dominance orientations and the perceived economic standing, were tested employing linear regression-based moderation analysis.

RESULTS

THE EFFECT OF SDO AMONG THE LARGEST ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN BULGARIA ON THEIR SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

Linear regression results have demonstrated that social dominance orientations had a significant (still weak) positive effect on social distances towards Russians, but only among ethnic Bulgarians (See Table 2). The effect of social

dominance orientations on the social distance towards Arabs among Roma was also significant and weak, but negative. Such effects were not observed among Bulgarian Turks with regard to either of the immigrant communities in the country, either among Roma towards Russians, or among ethnic Bulgarians towards Arabs.

Table 2 shows that our H1 was partially supported only for ethnic Bulgarians. The higher motivation of ethnic Bulgarians to keep their dominant position in society was found to be weakly associated with a longer social distance towards Russians in the country. An opposite, but also weak effect was found for Roma towards Arabs – the higher SDO was associated with a shorter distance towards Arab immigrants. Still, we should emphasize the relatively low predictive power of SDO with regard to social distances towards both immigrant groups.

THE EFFECT OF RWA OF THE LARGEST ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN BULGARIA ON THEIR SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

It turned out that right-wing authoritarian attitudes also had a weak main effect on social distances towards Russians, but even weaker (insignificant) towards Arabs in Bulgaria. Their effect was significant (but weak) only among Bulgarian Turks, and only in respect of the social distance towards Russians (See Table 3).

Obviously and contrary to our Hypotheses 2 & 3, the stronger motivation for order and security might be associated to shorter (but not longer) distances towards Russians only among Bulgarian Turks. A similar tendency was observed among Roma, but not among ethnic Bulgarians towards either of the immigrant minorities.

TABLE 2
THE EFFECT OF SDO OF ETHNIC BULGARIANS, BULGARIAN TURKS AND ROMA ON THEIR SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS RUSSIANS AND ARABS IN BULGARIA (LINEAR REGRESSION, $p < .05$)

Ethnicity	DV	R^2	$Beta$	p
Ethnic Bulgarian	Social distances towards Russians	,019	,137	,013
Roma		,000	-,068	,990
Bulgarian Turk		,008	,245	,125
Ethnic Bulgarian	Social distances towards Arabs	,000	-,018	,740
Roma		,018	-,135	,016
Bulgarian Turk		,000	,001	,991

TABLE 3
THE EFFECT OF RWA OF THE LARGEST ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN BULGARIA ON THEIR SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS RUSSIANS AND ARABS IN THE COUNTRY (LINEAR REGRESSION, $p < .05$)

Ethnicity	DV	R^2	$Beta$	p
Ethnic Bulgarian	Social distances towards Russians	,007	-,082	,142
Roma		,011	-,102	,068
Bulgarian Turk		,023	-,151	,007
Ethnic Bulgarian	Social distances towards Arabs	,000	,001	,988
Roma		,004	,063	,258
Bulgarian Turk		,001	-,032	,573

*THE EFFECT OF PERCEIVED ECONOMIC
STANDING ON SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS
IMMIGRANTS: ETHNIC DIFFERENCES*

Results of the linear regression revealed that the perceived economic standing was a relatively weak predictor of social distances of Bulgarian Turks towards Russians in Bulgaria, as well as of social distances of ethnic Bulgarians towards Arabs in the country (See Table 4).

The table above shows that our H4 was partially supported only for the ethnic Bulgarians, as their lower subjective economic standing might predict the longer distance towards Arabs (but not towards Russians). On the contrary, Bulgarian Turks, who perceived their income as low, were not so distanced towards Russians, as those who perceived their income as high. This finding for Bulgarian Turks' attitudes has come to support the alternative view of SDT, based on the notion of "having more to lose". Such an effect of subjective economic standing on social distances towards immigrants was not found among Roma.

*THE INTERACTIVE EFFECT OF SDO AND
PERCEIVED ECONOMIC STANDING ON
SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS*

Our next step was to check whether there was an interaction of social dominance orientations / right-wing authoritarian attitudes and perceived economic standing in their effect on social distances towards immigrants and whether this interaction changes the strength or direction of the main effect of these factors. To check these interactive effects we employed linear regression-based moderation analyses (See Hayes, 2013).

The obtained results revealed that a significant interactive effect of the social dominance orientations and perceived economic standing on social distances towards Russians in Bulgaria was found out only for ethnic Bulgarians (See Table 5), but not for Arabs in the country. Such interactive effects were not found for Bulgarian Turks and Roma with regard to neither of the immigrant communities.

On the one hand, in support to H5 we found that the higher social dominance ori-

TABLE 4
THE EFFECT OF PERCEIVED ECONOMIC STANDING ON SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS
RUSSIANS AND ARABS IN BULGARIA (LINEAR REGRESSION, $p < .05$)

Ethnicity	DV	R^2	Beta	p
Ethnic Bulgarian	Social distances towards Russians	,000	,018	,743
Roma		,002	-,046	,409
Bulgarian Turk		,015	-,121	,030
Ethnic Bulgarian	Social distances towards Arabs	,032	,179	,001
Roma		,000	,015	,787
Bulgarian Turk		,002	-,042	,449

TABLE 5
THE INTERACTIVE EFFECT OF SDO AND PERCEIVED ECONOMIC STANDING ON SOCIAL DISTANCES
TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS (REGRESSION-BASED MODERATION ANALYSIS, $p < .05$)

Ethnicity	DV	R^2	p	R^2 - chng	Coeff.	t	p
Ethnic Bulgarian	Social distances towards Russians	,066	,004	,022	-,1158	-2,1379	,034

entation among ethnic Bulgarians was associated with a longer social distance towards Russian immigrants only for those ethnic Bulgarians who perceived their income as the lowest (effect = ,235; $t = 3,589$; $p = ,000$). On the other hand, the hypothesis was not supported with regard to the poorest representatives of both national minorities – Bulgarian Turks and Roma.

THE INTERACTIVE EFFECT OF RWA AND PERCEIVED ECONOMIC STANDING ON SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

Interactive effects of RWA and perceived economic standing on social distances towards Russians in Bulgaria were found out among the respondents from Bulgarian and Turkish ethnic origin and on the distances towards Arabs – only among Roma (See Table 6). It is necessary to note that despite the presence of an interactive effect, this explanatory model is more appropriate for Bulgarian Turks and Roma than for ethnic Bulgarians.

Table 6 shows that in support to H6, the higher RWA of Bulgarian Turks was related to shorter social distances towards Russian immigrants only among those who regarded their economic standing as the best (effect = -,519; $t = -2,392$; $p = ,017$). Contrary to our expectations, stronger motivation for public order and security of ethnic Bulgarians was associated with shorter social distances towards Russians among those who perceived their economic status as the lowest (effect = -,348; $t = -2,077$; $p = ,039$). Perhaps, this finding should be supported by further research, due to: 1. the low reliability of the RWA scale for ethnic Bul-

garians and 2. due to the insignificance of the model in spite of the significant conditional effect available. Furthermore, contrary to our expectations, the opposite effect was found for Roma of better (or moderate) subjective economic standing – the stronger RWA was associated to larger social distances towards Arab immigrants (effect = ,904; $t = 3,130$; $p = ,002$).

DISCUSSION

In our study we combined analyses of individual characteristics, socio-demographic characteristics such as the perceived economic standing and the phenomenon of social distance. The of analysis was based on the Duckitt's Dual Process Model, which created an opportunity to look for the influence of both right-wing authoritarianism /RWA/ and social dominance orientation /SDO/ on intergroup attitudes expressed in social distances towards immigrants. Although the measurement has been carried out at the individual level, social distances may be regarded as belonging to the category of social facts concerning attitudes at collective and group level as they directly address particular groups, i.e. ethnic groups in our case, and as they simultaneously reflect the normative climate in the country.

The perception of threat (Stephan & Stephan) or the anticipation of a status-threatening and a competitive group to a dominant by virtue of its majority, ethnicity, by a minority group as Russians, who have been expanding their influence, seems to withdraw ethnic Bulgarians from Russians and to make them more cautious in their contacts with Russians. It also comes to support some findings of

TABLE 6
THE INTERACTIVE EFFECT OF RWA AND PERCEIVED ECONOMIC STANDING ON SOCIAL DISTANCES TOWARDS RUSSIANS AND ARABS IN BULGARIA (REGRESSION-BASED MODERATION ANALYSIS, $p < ,05$)

Ethnicity	DV	R^2	p	R^2 - chng	Coeff.	t	p
Ethnic Bulgarian	Social distances towards Russians	„027	,103	,024	,6330	2,7028	,018
Bulgarian Turk		„047	,012	,029	-,3297	-2,6055	,009
Roma	Social distances towards Arabs	„038	,021	,028	,8731	2,7028	,007

studies in the perspective of the Dual Process Model (Duckit & Sibly, 2010b).

It seems more difficult to explain the unexpected finding of association between the higher SDO of Roma and their shorter distances towards Arab immigrants. Here, the discussion may turn into at least two directions: 1/ the strong discriminatory attitudes towards Roma in Bulgaria that might eventually foster compensatory dominance orientation to preserve the ingroup. Hence, the theory of Sidanius & Pratto has been supported in the opposite direction or “when there is nothing to lose” 2/ at the background of a higher SDO, shortening of the distances towards another ethnic group might imply striving for support from or empathy to a similarly discriminated outgroup beyond the ethnic majority and the national minorities, such as the Arab immigrants.

The results related to the impact of authoritarianism on the social distances towards other groups carry the features of the so called “right” and “left”, comprised in the political attitudes of Bulgarian citizens. Modern vs. conservative thinking appears in similar orientations, such as an amorphous attitude of security in the population passing through a transition to democracy that has been dynamically developing and highly controversial in view of the sense of order and security in the country. Hence, the desire for security is probably highly expressed in the majority of Bulgarian society and it underlines the influence of such a personality variable as authoritarianism. An inference may be that expectations and attitudes towards law and order occupy an abstract category in respondents’ minds and do not address other ethnic groups or their representatives. This fact should also imply shorter or at least not too large distances towards others (outgroup members). This is what the data from our study have shown – among Bulgarian Turks, but also as a trend among ethnic Bulgarians, shortening of the social distance towards Russians was found out. Obviously, further research and expanding the range of variables that influence the attitudes towards other ethnic communities is needed.

Deprivation in an economic aspect is the most immediate reason for any social group,

incl. ethnic group, to feel threatened by other groups/communities. Therefore, our expectation in such a condition of lower economic status was to increase the negative attitudes or at least to reduce the desire for immediate contacts with representatives of other ethnic groups. There is a sufficient number of objective factors in the country that worsen economic situation of individuals, families, etc. to influence intergroup relations and the willingness to live together, neighbourhood and common work, business, etc. Still, it appears that the relative economic deprivation hypothesis was explicitly supported only for the part of ethnic Bulgarians who perceived themselves as the poorest and only with regard to their unwillingness to contact Arab immigrants. The unexpected finding that Bulgarian Turks, who perceived their income as low, were not so distanced from Russians, as those who perceived their income as high, has come to support the alternative view of SDT, based on the notion of “having more to lose”.

We suppose that further research models should include mediators such as “intergroup competition”, as the degree of its markedness in an ethnic group could be an indicator of the extent to which Bulgarian Turks treat with jealousy their own socio-economic achievements and status. The moderation model analysis below brings us closer to this line of reasoning.

In analysing the moderating effect of perceived economic standing of respondents the picture is complemented by the personality factor – SDO. As expected, the higher threat was perceived by the numerous and rival Russian immigrants to the dominant position of ethnic Bulgarians in the country, the more distanced the poorest ethnic Bulgarians to Russians were. No such conditional SDO effects were found for the ethnic minorities. Why do only the data for ethnic Bulgarians show that when members of the majority are characterized by low income and attitudes towards social dominance, comprising representations about the current place of groups in the social hierarchy, and also about inequalities of various groups, they increase their social distance towards Russians? Although the strength of

this interactive effect is not high, its significance still allows the opportunity to speculate on other possible factors not studied here. On one hand, this finding supports the provisions of the classical theory of intergroup conflict and relative deprivation hypothesis that the community distances itself from potential competition. On the other hand, we may assume that the perception of the world and society as highly structured and hierarchical ones limits the view of the individual to perceive the ethno-national diversity as a contemporary social fact and as positive development of the modern society. Increased propensity in people with higher dominance to categorize the attributed images of the "other" in a prejudiced direction is not conducive to search for contacts and joint activities. The addition of low income makes expansion of their perceptions of social interactions even harder at an intergroup level. Hence, their contacts are immediately affected and the distance from others - extended. The prospect of personal prosperity and social development of this type of personality in similar socio-economic situation is not very good because through closing their social circle they close their possibilities for development too.

Some contemporary researchers indicate (Verkuyten, 2005) that it should not, although it is widely accepted to consider separate ethnic groups as internally similar in their behaviors and characteristics. Hence, it is necessary to analyze not only intergroup diversity and the majority-minority opposition, but also intra-group differences. Such intra-group differences have been outlined in our study. Initially, the analysis showed that the surveyed Bulgarian Turks, who perceived themselves as having high-income, demonstrated distances towards Russians at the same time. The subsequent moderation analyses specified that Bulgarian Turkish respondents, who revealed authoritarian attitudes and high income, kept short distances to Russian immigrants. That is to say, the internal differentiation of the respondents according to their characteristics and in combination with the overall group propensity can change the nature of intergroup attitudes and relations to other ethnic groups.

CONCLUSION

In this article we analyse a small part of the survey data on interethnic attitudes in Bulgaria. Such a partial presentation of research work, particularly on relations that develop dynamically in the current situation, inevitably provides some risk of distortion or at best – incomplete presentation of the surveyed phenomena. However, based on the model described above, the results may be summarized as follows:

- The trends in the effects of authoritarian and social dominant attitudes for a considerable quota sample of three ethnic groups in the country, in their willingness for cooperation and co-existence with other ethnic communities have been outlined
- A need for development of additional variables to the model has been clarified, including more factors of social-psychological nature, for example indicators of inter-group competition
- Searches for various and specific features of outgroup orientations and behaviors are needed to develop a more comprehensive model
- Research on intergroup attitudes, distances and conflicts will develop further to encompass an increasing number of new-coming groups and communities of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, as far as they are and will be a crucial factor in the social space that we should learn to willingly share with diversity of co-others.

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