

Turkey seeks to strengthen its presence in the east of Syria, including at the expense of ethnically close fighters that is connected, first of all, with the aspiration of Turkey, not to allow creation of the Kurdish autonomy within Syria.

It should be noted that affiliation of the Uyghur jihadists with fighters “Hayat Tahrir al- Sham” (HTSh) can be costly for Uyghurs as this association where together with Jabhat al-Nusra other organizations of fighters joined, gained reputation of the most aggressive part of the armed Syrian opposition. HTSh which in November, 2013 was announced the only legal representative of Al-Qaeda in Syria is accused of numerous war crimes. Therefore wherever it is – in Idlib or in the east of Syria – it will be destroyed.

Nevertheless, the Uigur fighters have no other way out. Those who managed to leave Idlib earlier perhaps already moved to Afghanistan or Pakistan, but Beijing which does not want to return Chinese jihadists home, will try to make maximum effects to solve this problem outside China.

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The article analyzes the dynamic changes of the Muslim population in Finland in historical retrospective and reveals the process of its ethno-cultural self-organization and the level of integration in Finnish society.

The authors turn to the history of the appearance of Muslims in Finland. The presence of representatives of Muslim religion in Finland has deep historical roots and is connected with the events of the early 19th century, namely, with the gradual process of resettling Finland and it becoming part of the Russian Empire due to the outcome of the Russo-Swedish war of 1808–1809. The ancestors of the present Tatars living in Finland began to resettle from the Russian Empire to Finland in the 19th century. Among the first were Tatar army soldiers dispatched to the fortresses of Vyborg and Sveaborg. In the 1870s – 1920s Tatars were moving to Finland from Sergach districts of Nizhni-Novgorod province on the Volga. As a rule, among them were quite a few merchants trading in furs and textiles. They settled in such Finnish cities as Helsinki, Turku, Rauma, Tampere, Pori, and others. At the turn of the 20th century the Tatar community in Finland numbered about 1,000.

After the proclamation of independence of Finland in 1917 the Tatars living there received Finnish citizenship and on the legal basis were named “historical traditional religious-ethnic minority.” Their number reached 800 and the overwhelming majority lived in Helsinki and Tampere. The Tatars are completely integrated in Finnish society, but at the same time they continue to preserve the

traditional features of their ethnic culture. On Finnish territory an Islamic Society of Tatars was set up in 1925, whose members also speak the Tatar language. The Society makes a tangible contribution to the preservation and development of the Tatar language and culture, organizes courses to study the foundations of Muslim religion and the native language, and issues the only Tatar-language magazine *Mahalla habarlale* (News of the Community). There is also a Tatar Cultural Society which organizes artistic performances, poetic readings, etc. since 1935. Prayer rooms for Tatar Muslims have been opened in several cities. The only mosque with a minaret working in Finland was built in Jarvenpyaya in 1943. The House of Islam was opened in Helsinki in 1960, which is the venue for official meetings and ethno-confessional functions. The official authorities of Finland consider the integration of Tatars in Finnish society very successful. The Finnish Tatars are working practically in all branches, as entrepreneurs, lawyers, engineers and teachers, some of them hold high posts of the country's economy, including industry and cultural sphere. Tatars are represented in the Consultative Commission on ethnic relations at the Ministry of Justice of Finland. The Islamic community of Finland is taking part in the activity of the National Forum of cooperation of religion in Finland.

GORE, Finnish name – ISKOT, which unites representatives of three confessions – Christianity, Judaism and Islam – is called upon to help harmonize relations between representatives of different religions and the protection of the rights of religious minorities.

However, modern world realities, namely, differences in demographic development, intensification of migration processes, and greater scope of regional conflicts have considerably changed the number and ethnic composition of the representatives of Muslim religion in Finland. Finland has agreed to receive refugees from “troubled spots.” At the end of the 1980s Finland began to accept forced migrants from Somalia, Afghanistan, Bosnia, and

Kosovo Albanians. Simultaneously, there was an inflow of labor migrants from Turkey. As a result, in the period between 1990 and 1995 the number of people from Muslim countries coming to Finland reached 12,270. A big influx of refugees from Iraq, Syria and other countries has also reached Finland on the wave of the European migrant crisis. As a consequence, by 2016 the number of the Muslim population of Finland reached 82,000. Their share among the country's population grew from 0.05 percent in 1990 to 1.5 percent in 2026. At present the total number of foreign dwellers in Finland is 354,000, or 6.4 percent of the entire country's population. Twenty-three percent of them are Muslims, primarily Arabs from Iraq, Turks, Iranians, Kosovo Albanians, and people of Somali origin.

There are functioning mechanisms of interaction of state power with representatives of the Muslim communities in the country. For example, in 2006, at the Finnish government initiative the Islamic Council of Finland was set up, whose aim was to consolidate ethnically heterogeneous Islamic communities. The country has evolved mechanisms of socio-cultural adaptation of migrants, however, the efficiency of integration policy is determined by the duration of migrants' stay in the country and the level of their knowledge of the country's languages. Due to the weak incorporation of Muslims of the new wave in Finnish society, they are unable, so far, to become full-fledged citizens of the country and are subjected to a certain discrimination as far as employment is concerned. Trades and professions in which immigrants are engaged are mainly in the sphere of service and do not require high skill. The main problem of integration of Muslims is the language barrier.

Against the backdrop of a powerful migrant influx of the past few years Finnish society displays serious concern in connection with possible negative consequences of the phenomena, besides, nationalist sentiments have increased in the country.

The data of the sociological poll carried out by the Finnish newspaper Helsingin Sanomat show that 52 percent of Finns call

for the restriction of the number of migrants accepted by the country. After the terrorist act on August 18, 2017, in Turku committed by a migrant from Morocco, who had been denied permission to enter Finland earlier, concern of the country's population has noticeably grown.

Summing up, the authors of the article note that the Muslims living in Finland are represented by Tatars and migrants of a new wave at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. During the period from 1990 to 2016 the number of Muslims in Finland grew by 24 times over, from 0.05 percent to 1.5 percent. At present, it is only the Tatars that have been fully integrated in Finnish society. The adaptation centers are unable to cope with the influx of migrants of the past few years. Interethnic relations are made still more difficult by a poor knowledge of the native languages of Finland and penetration of extremist views with religious tint in Finnish society. A dialogue has been established and developed between the authorities and representatives of ethnic minorities and confessions, conditions have been created for the preservation and development of ethnic cultural public organizations. At the same time, this is accompanied with increasing xenophobic and nationalistic sentiments and manifestations, which put the need to correct Finnish migration policy to the fore.

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