

## ***To the European Sociological Association and ESA National Associations Council***

European Sociological Association (ESA) in its mission statement sets as one of its aims “to give sociology a voice in European affairs”. It also expresses the belief that “ESA has an important role to play in organising the European debate and setting the agenda”. Currently, the most burning issue in Europe is the Russian aggression toward its peaceful neighbour Ukraine. People are killed and forced to flee, cities are bombed, and the cultural and scientific heritage of Ukraine is in danger of destruction. ESA issued its official statement in which it abhorred the Russian armed invasion and called it “an unprecedented and unacceptable breach of international agreements and standards of reciprocity”.

We are deeply concerned regarding the letter of the Russian Society of Sociologists (ROS) in which Russia’s aggressive invasion is called “the conflict situation in the Ukraine”. We also believe that stating that both ROS and ESA are not political organizations is an attempt at silencing the sociology voice in European affairs. ROS’s letter is purely political – it pretends that horror of war is just a conflict situation that is repeating Putin’s propaganda. The involvement of sociologists in public debates has always political dimension and we cannot and do not want to escape it.

It is true that European societies ignored many other horrors happening in our continent and its vicinity. One example is the war in Syria and the lack of compassion toward refugees in 2015. Exactly for these reasons we cannot be silent about the suffering caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

It is shocking for us that immediately after letter of the Sociological Association of Ukraine regarding the war since February 24, 2022, when Russian missiles and air bombs hit their cities and civilian infrastructure every day, ROS immediately replayed with the same letter: “thinking in terms of not only the current tragic situation, but also the prospect of its normalization”. This wording does not seem, that ROS belongs to those in Russia, mentioned in The Israeli Sociological Society (ISS): “who have bravely raised their voices against this war, and have defended democracy, civil rights, human rights — and human life”. The discursive construction of the sentence of ROS letter seems to be very contrary – asking to normalize the war. Because there is no “tragic situation” in Ukraine – it is full scale war and many country leaders and international bodies are stating that this unjustified invasion of Ukraine must be investigated as war crimes.

If ESA will not react to ROS letter in any way – ESA is already silenced. Those words for solidarity with those affected are just words in ESA statement. Abhor of armed invasion – also just words, if ROS as ESA member clearly asks ESA to be silent and is using very neutral “conflict situation” and seemingly compassionate “tragic situation” (but followed with far less clear “its normalization”), and there is no ESA and ESA National Associations Council reaction at all. ROS letter seems to us in clear disagreement with ESA statement which clearly condemns Russia’s armed invasion of Ukraine and also not in line with ESA Ethical Guideline 1: “The aim of the Association to support the development of a democratic, egalitarian, peaceful and hospitable Europe should be reflected in the inclusive means we in the ESA adopt and use to achieve this end.” We ask ROS sociologists explain their stance in greater detail and invite ESA President and the chair of the ESA National Associations Council coordinate ESA reaction to ROS letter and stance.

On behalf of Polish Sociological Association, Latvian Sociologists association, Estonian Association of Sociologists and Lithuanian Sociological Association

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*A letter from Russian Society of Sociologists for the ESA NA meeting*

The Russian Society of Sociologists (ROS) is expressing strong hope and confidence in the peaceful settlement of the conflict situation in the Ukraine. ROS is assisting in every possible way in this matter.

ROS is not a political organization and European Sociological Association is neither. Both are professional associations representing scientific communities of thousands sociologists. ROS was one of the founders of the European Sociological Association, and is currently its member as well as a member of International Sociological Association in good standing and has numerous membership. Sociologists are those who can contribute in preventing further escalation of conflict and help to maintain international dialogue by using analysis and professional work instead of being under a danger of a trap of media creating parallel realities.

ROS is addressing its emphasis on thinking in terms of not only the current tragic situation, but also the prospect of its normalization, the restoration of peace and relations of cooperation.

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Российское общество социологов (<https://www.ssa-rss.ru>), Президент Валерий Андреевич Мансуров

Проект постановления Правительства Российской Федерации «О публикациях, индексируемых в международных базах данных (Web of Science, Scopus)», 2022.03.11.

<https://www.ssa-rss.ru/files/File/Projekt%20postanovleniya%20Pravitelstava%20RF%20o%20WoS%20i%20Scopus.pdf>