



PISM

POLSKI INSTYTUT SPRAW MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH
THE POLISH INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

No. 80/2025, 27 NOVEMBER 2024 © PISM

SPOTLIGHT

Russia has adopted a National Policy Strategy until 2036

Anna Maria Dyner

Approved by Vladimir Putin on 25 November this year, the document sets out the Russian state's priorities in shaping nationality policy and building a multi-ethnic identity, including in the occupied regions of Ukraine, which Russia considers part of its territory. At the same time, the authors of the strategy identified Russophobia and activities targeting Russian history and language as one of the most significant threats to Russia's security, which means that Russia will tighten its policy towards countries that, in its opinion, engage in such activities.

What are the most important changes compared to the previous strategy?

The National Policy Strategy is a key document, published since 1996, outlining the actions to be taken by the Russian state in this area. It is also an important supplement to other strategic documents, such as the [National Security Strategy](#), and responds to the challenges identified by the Russian authorities in this area. The current version of the document differs significantly from the strategy adopted in December 2012 for the years 2013-2025. The current authors identified as priorities the need to build national unity in the face of external threats, among which they particularly emphasised Russophobia (equating it, among other things, with neo-Nazism) and attempts at "ethnic destabilisation" by Russia's adversaries. The document also pays particular attention to the need to assimilate the inhabitants of the four regions of Ukraine illegally annexed by Russia as a result of [pseudo-referendums](#) in September 2022, as well as those who found themselves on Russian territory as a result of military action. The new version of the document also includes provisions clearly indicating the need to "defend" Russians living abroad and the Russian language and history, which is a signal to neighbouring countries that Russia will pay attention to their policies in this regard.

What is the context of the document's publication?

The document was prepared in the context of the nearly four-year war with Ukraine and the occupation of its eastern territories. The authors of the strategy blamed these events on the "neo-Nazi Ukrainian leadership", which forced Russia to "restore the unity of the historical territories of the Russian state". The publication of the strategy also coincided with the ongoing [negotiations](#) to end the war in Ukraine, which is further confirmation that one of Russia's goals is to gain international recognition of its sovereignty over the territories it has illegally annexed. It can also be concluded that, regardless of the final shape of the agreement with Ukraine, Russia will maintain its demands regarding, among other things, the special status of the Russian language and the Russian Orthodox Church. The strategy also clearly emphasises the importance of nationality and identity issues for guaranteeing Russia's security, stressing the need to "intensify" the patriotic education of citizens. According to the authors of the document, this is particularly important in the face of external attempts to destabilise the state.

What does the strategy mean for Russia's internal development?

For the first time, quantitative criteria for the objectives set out in the strategy have been introduced. Its authors assumed, among other things, that by 2036, the level of "all-

PISM SPOTLIGHT

Russian civic identity” would reach 95%, and the percentage of Russian citizens satisfied with the security of their “national and cultural” needs would be 80%. The document also states that at least 2,560 people living in the four annexed regions of Donbas will take part in “all-Russian events” during this period. Both the central authorities, by introducing appropriate legal changes and guaranteeing adequate funds for the necessary measures, and the entities of the Federation, which are obliged to adopt regional planning documents in this area, will be responsible for achieving these objectives. Achieving the target indicators will therefore mean a further increase in the scale and intensity of the state apparatus’s activities towards the militarisation of Russian society. These activities will be carried out, among others, by schools actively building national identity, a wide network of state-related institutions, as well as the organisation of a series of events and activities on the internet and in the media. At the same time, the document pays very little attention to addressing the needs of ethnic minorities and economic migrants living in Russia, which indicates that the authorities are unable to respond adequately to internal ethnic issues.

What does the publication of this document mean for European security?

The current shape of the strategy confirms the growing importance of nationality policy for the Russian authorities.

This reflects the changes that have taken place in recent years, including intensified patriotic and militaristic propaganda based on the concept of Russia’s confrontation with “aggressive” and “Russophobic” Western countries. The content of the document leaves no doubt that for the Russian authorities, the ideology of the “Russian world” (*русский мир*) will remain one of the fundamental pillars of its foreign policy, used not only rhetorically but also as a justification for practical actions towards other countries. This may undermine the security of countries inhabited by Russian-speaking minorities, such as Moldova, the countries of Central Asia and the South Caucasus. Using this strategy, Russia will seek to interfere in their internal politics, especially over linguistic and social issues, creating the appearance of legality for its actions. The content of the strategy also indicates that we should expect an intensification of confrontational actions against countries such as Poland, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia, which, in the opinion of the Russian authorities, are pursuing a Russophobic policy aimed, among other things, at the Russian language and the history of the Great Patriotic War. Thus, we can expect a further intensification of the information war against these countries, as well as attempts to use the alleged discrimination against the Russian minority in the Baltic states to destabilise the situation there, including the threat of military intervention.