

Ethnic hierarchy in the Russian labour market

A field experiment

Alexey Bessudnov (University of Exeter),
Andrey Shcherbak (HSE University)

ECSR 2018 conference, Paris

29 October 2018

Main contributions

- ▶ Labour market discrimination varies by ethnic group
- ▶ There is no discrimination in locations with ethnically mixed population and institutionalised status of ethnic minorities
- ▶ Discrimination is stronger for ethnic minority men than women
- ▶ First field experiment on discrimination conducted in Russia

Correspondence tests of racial and ethnic discrimination

- ▶ Focus on separating taste-based from statistical discrimination (is this the only possible question?)
- ▶ Often include only two or at most three ethnic groups
- ▶ Lack external validity
- ▶ Usually are detached from the literature on stereotypes, prejudice and group threat

Ethnic hierarchies in multiple-group systems

- ▶ Hagendoorn (1995): social distance studies show that in many Western societies Northern European groups have the highest status, followed by Southern and Eastern Europeans Asians and Africans
- ▶ We can see correspondence tests as a measure of prejudice, as reflected in hiring decisions
- ▶ Does the extent of discrimination against different groups vary?
- ▶ Oreopoulos (2011): in Canada discrimination against applicants with Greek names was about as strong as against Indians, Chinese and Pakistani
- ▶ Booth et al. (2012): in Australian applicants with Italian names had higher callback rates compared to Chinese and Middle Eastern names

Group threat and contextual factors

- ▶ Group threat literature (Blumer 1958, Quillian 1995): the size of out-groups may be associated with prejudice against them
- ▶ Contact hypothesis (Allport 1954): more contact with out-groups improves attitudes (under certain conditions)
- ▶ Little research on the effect of contextual factors in the discrimination research
- ▶ Acolin et al (2016): stronger ethnic discrimination in the rental market in French regions with larger share of ethnic minorities
- ▶ Maurer-Fazio (2012): Mongolians and Uyghurs do not get discriminated in Inner Mongolia and Urumqi in China

Russian context

- ▶ About 80% of the population are ethnic Russians and there are multiple ethnic minorities both of indigenous and immigrant origin
- ▶ Ethnic regions where “titular” ethnic groups have institutionalised status and often constitute ethnic majority (media in local languages, teaching local languages in schools etc.)
- ▶ This allows us to study multiple groups and explore spatial heterogeneity in discrimination

Design

- ▶ Over 9,500 vacancies, nested in 320 CVs created on two job search websites (clustered design)
- ▶ 10 ethnic groups, 320 names
- ▶ Data collection: June 2017 - January 2018
- ▶ Ethnicity signaled by name only; we conducted a survey to test how well the ethnic names are recognised
- ▶ Two treatments: ethnicity and gender
- ▶ Four locations across Russia: Moscow and St Petersburg (large metropolitan areas) and Kazan and Ufa (capitals of “titular” ethnic republics in the Volga region)
- ▶ Full factorial design: 10 ethnic groups \times 2 genders \times 4 cities \times 4 occupations = 320 accounts

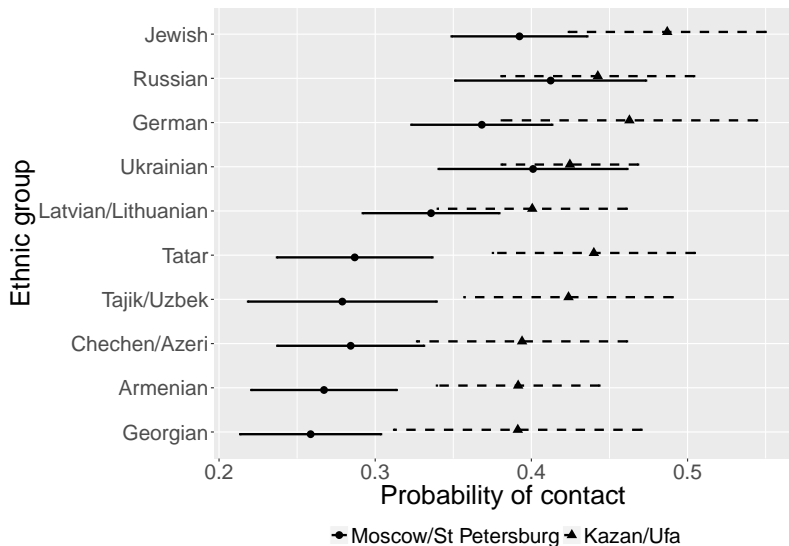
Ethnic groups

| Ethnic group | Size in Russia in 2010 (thousand) | Region of origin |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Ethnic Russians | 111,017 | European Russia |
| Armenians | 1,182 | Caucasus |
| Azeris | 603 | Caucasus |
| Chechens | 1,431 | Caucasus |
| Georgians | 158 | Caucasus |
| Tatars | 5,311 | Volga region |
| Tajiks | 200 | Central Asia |
| Uzbeks | 290 | Central Asia |
| Germans | 394 | Western Europe |
| Jews | 157 | Eastern Europe |
| Latvians | 19 | Eastern Europe |
| Lithuanians | 31 | Eastern Europe |
| Ukrainians | 1,928 | Eastern Europe |

Locations

1. Moscow (12 m): Russians (86%), Ukrainians (1.3%), Tatars (1.3%)
2. St Petersburg (5 m): Russians (92%), Ukrainians (1.5%), Tatars (0.7%)
3. Kazan (1.2 m): Russians (49%), Tatars (48%)
4. Ufa (1.1 m): Russians (49%), Tatars (28%), Bashkirs (17%)

Contact rates by ethnic group and location



Formal test: ethnic hierarchy

| | Moscow/St Petersburg | Kazan/Ufa |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Jewish | -0.02 (0.04) | 0.05 (0.04) |
| Ukrainian | -0.01 (0.03) | -0.005 (0.04) |
| German | -0.04 (0.03) | 0.04 (0.04) |
| Latvian/Lithuanian | -0.07** (0.03) | -0.04 (0.04) |
| Tatar | -0.12*** (0.03) | 0.01 (0.04) |
| Tajik/Uzbek | -0.13*** (0.03) | -0.02 (0.04) |
| Chechen/Azeri | -0.13*** (0.03) | -0.04 (0.04) |
| Armenian | -0.14*** (0.03) | -0.03 (0.04) |
| Georgian | -0.15*** (0.03) | -0.04 (0.04) |
| Observations | 5,937 | 3,747 |

Note: Linear probability model. Ethnic Russians are the reference group. Control variables: gender, occupation, city, website, research assistant. Cluster-robust standard errors in parentheses.

Interacting ethnicity and gender

| | Moscow/St Petersburg | Kazan/Ufa |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Southern | -0.07*** (0.02) | -0.02 (0.02) |
| male | -0.001 (0.03) | 0.01 (0.03) |
| Southern:male | -0.08*** (0.03) | -0.03 (0.03) |
| Observations | 5,937 | 3,747 |

Note: Linear probability model. Groups of European origin and women are the reference groups. Control variables: occupation, city, website, research assistant. Cluster-robust standard errors in parentheses.

Probability of phone contact (vs. website)

| | Moscow/St Petersburg | Kazan/Ufa |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Jewish | -0.11** (0.05) | -0.08* (0.05) |
| Ukrainian | -0.06 (0.05) | -0.001 (0.05) |
| German | -0.11* (0.06) | 0.06 (0.05) |
| Latvian/Lithuanian | -0.17*** (0.05) | -0.02 (0.06) |
| Tatar | -0.20*** (0.07) | -0.06 (0.08) |
| Tajik/Uzbek | -0.22*** (0.05) | -0.07 (0.07) |
| Chechen/Azeri | -0.22*** (0.05) | -0.001 (0.06) |
| Armenian | -0.16*** (0.06) | -0.03 (0.05) |
| Georgian | -0.17*** (0.06) | -0.02 (0.05) |
| Observations | 1,955 | 1,597 |

Note: Linear probability model. Ethnic Russians are the reference group. Control variables: gender, occupation, city, website, research assistant. Cluster-robust standard errors in parentheses.

Probability of explicit rejection

| | Moscow/St Petersburg | Kazan/Ufa |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Jewish | -0.02 (0.02) | 0.04 (0.03) |
| Ukrainian | -0.005 (0.03) | 0.05 (0.04) |
| German | -0.03 (0.03) | 0.02 (0.03) |
| Latvian/Lithuanian | 0.02 (0.03) | 0.03 (0.03) |
| Tatar | -0.004 (0.02) | 0.03 (0.04) |
| Tajik/Uzbek | 0.06*** (0.02) | -0.004 (0.03) |
| Chechen/Azeri | 0.08*** (0.03) | 0.02 (0.03) |
| Armenian | 0.03 (0.02) | 0.07* (0.04) |
| Georgian | 0.05** (0.02) | 0.05 (0.04) |
| Observations | 3,982 | 2,150 |

Note: Linear probability model. Ethnic Russians are the reference group. Control variables: gender, occupation, city, website, research assistant. Cluster-robust standard errors in parentheses.

Findings

- ▶ Employers prefer groups of European origin over groups of Asian/Southern origin, but only in Moscow and St Petersburg
- ▶ No evidence of an ethnic hierarchy in the labour market in Kazan and Ufa
- ▶ Gendered ethnic stereotypes

Why regional differences?

- ▶ Ethnic composition of the population: unlikely (most employers are ethnic Russians)
- ▶ Tightness of the labour market: unlikely (no occupational differences)
- ▶ Preferred explanation: ethnic composition of the population and the status of titular groups

Project description

- ▶ Funded by the British Academy (2016-19)
- ▶ Supported by the HSE Scientific Fund grant and the Laboratory for Comparative Social Research
- ▶ Thanks to research assistants: Alisa Alieva, Sergey Konontsev, Vladislav Kostin, Anastasia Roud, Pavel Savchenko, Darya Smirnova
- ▶ Working paper available at SocArXiv:
<http://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/2qzus/>
- ▶ Data and replication materials available on Github:
<https://github.com/abessudnov/ruAuditPublic>