Ethnic hierarchy in the Russian labour market

A field experiment

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Project description

- A field experiment (correspondence test) to study ethnic hierarchies and discrimination in the Russian labour market
- Funded by the British Academy (2016-19)
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Correspondence (audit) studies

- ▶ Experimenal identification of discrimination
- ▶ The idea is to randomly assign a signal (indicating ethnicity, age, etc.) to fictitious resumes and measure differences in employers' response
- ▶ Pioneered in England in the 1960s (Daniel, "Racial Discrimination in England", 1968)
- ▶ Reinvented by Bertrand and Mullainathan in the USA (2004)
- ▶ Since then there were hundreds of correspondence studies all over the world
- ▶ We report the results of the first such experiment conducted in Russia

Study background

- Immigration to Russia from the early 1990s
- Native ethnic minorities and ethnic federalism

Research questions

- Does ethnic hierarchy exist in Russia?
- If yes what ethnic groups are at the top and at the bottom?
- Does it vary across locations with different ethnic composition of the population and insitutional arrangements for titular ethnic groups?
- Does ethnic discrimination vary by gender?
- Does ethnic discrimination vary by occupation?

Ethnic hierarchy

- Studies in social psychology showed that in many societies there is a universal ethnic hierarchy where northern and western European groups have the highest status, followed by Southern and Eastern Europeans and then by Asians and Africans (Hagendoorn)
- Three components of ethnic hierarchies
    1. In-group preference: contact within the group is preferred
    2. In-group consensus: members of the ethnic group generally agree on the hierarchy of their preferences in regard to other ethnic groups
    3. Intergroup consensus: all ethnic groups generally accept this hierarchy, i.e. even members of the low status groups generally prefer contact with high status groups

Ethnic federalism

- Benefits of the titular status in national republics, including access to the labour market
- Priority given to titulars? (Martin 2001, Gorenburg 2003, Guiliano 2011)
- Both the ethnic hierarchy and ethnic federalism theories predict that in-groups will be given preference
- But will the ethnic hierarchies look similar otherwise across different location?
- Influence of religion or cultural proximity?

Innovations

- ▶ Theoretical: focus on the ideas from the social psychological literature (ethnic hierarchies, group threat) rather than statistical vs. taste-based discrimination
- ▶ Methodological and theoretical: regional heterogeneity in ethnic preferences; the role of ethnic federalism
- ▶ The first correspondence study conducted in Russia, with one of the largest sample sizes in the international literature

Study design: choosing ethnic groups

- ▶ To study ethnic hierarchies we want groups with different regions of origin
- ▶ We cannot have too many groups (design limitations)

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

Signalling ethnicity

- Do people recognise ethnic names?
- We conducted a survey using a non-probablity sample recruited on the social media websites to explore this (n = 861)

Ethnic names recognition

Ethnic group	% correct	% broadly correct	% not Russian
Georgian	91	98	100
Armenian	90	96	100
Russian	88	90	12
Ukrainian	82	92	95
Jewish	72	84	99
Tatar	57	90	99
German	42	62	85
Latvian	35	65	100
Lithuanian	22	73	100
Chechen	20	83	99
Uzbek	19	91	100
Azeri	16	90	100
Tajik	12	84	99

Locations (1)

- Two locations where ethnic Russians are a majority of the population (Moscow and St Petersburg)
- Two locations with more ethnically mixed population (Kazan and Ufa)
- Must be big cities to generate enough vacancies

Locations (2)

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%)

Occupations

	Skills level	
	skilled	non skilled
Contact with customers		
regular contact	sales manager	salesperson
rare contact	computer programmer	cook

Design

- Multiple accounts created on two job search websites
- We had to combine some ethnic groups together: Azeris/Chechens, Latvians/Lithuanians, Tajiks/Uzbeks
- Full factorial design
- 10 ethnic groups x 2 genders x 4 cities x 4 occupations = 320 accounts
- Cluster randomised design

Power analysis

- ► We conducted power analysis to find the sample size we needed
- ► Statistical power is our ability to identify effects of a given size as statistically significant
- ► Assuming power of 0.8 and effect size of 10 pp (difference between 35% and 25% contact rate) we estimated that we needed about 8,000 job applications to make pairwise comparisons between the cities (i.e. Moscow/St Petersburg vs Kazan/Ufa)
- ► The final sample size was about 9,500 job applications

Results: contact rates
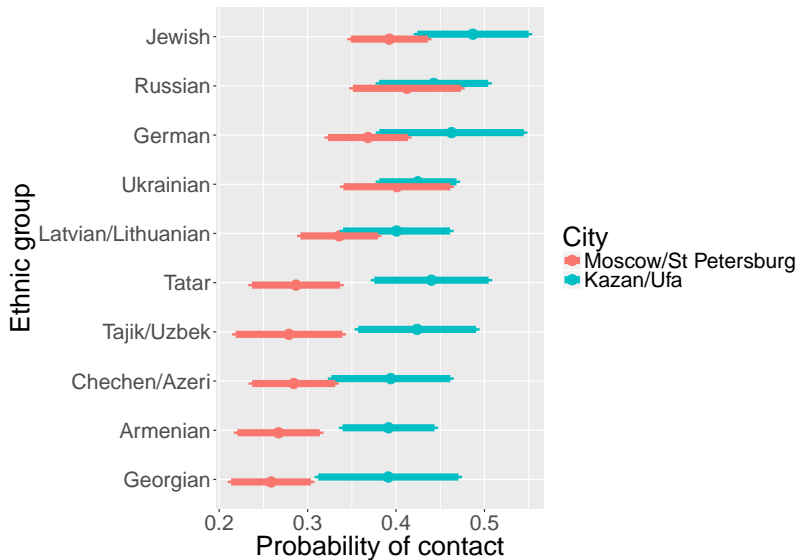
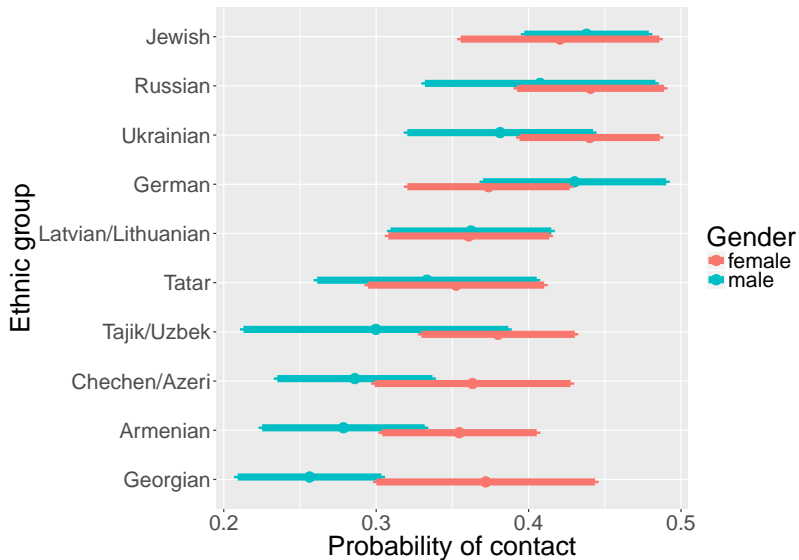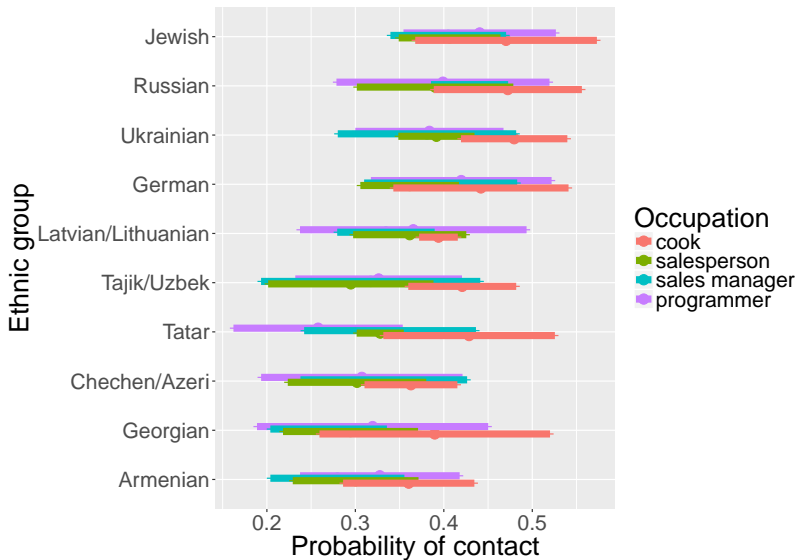| Applications	Response rate	on the phone	on the website
9684	0.37	0.21	0.24

Contact rates by ethnic group
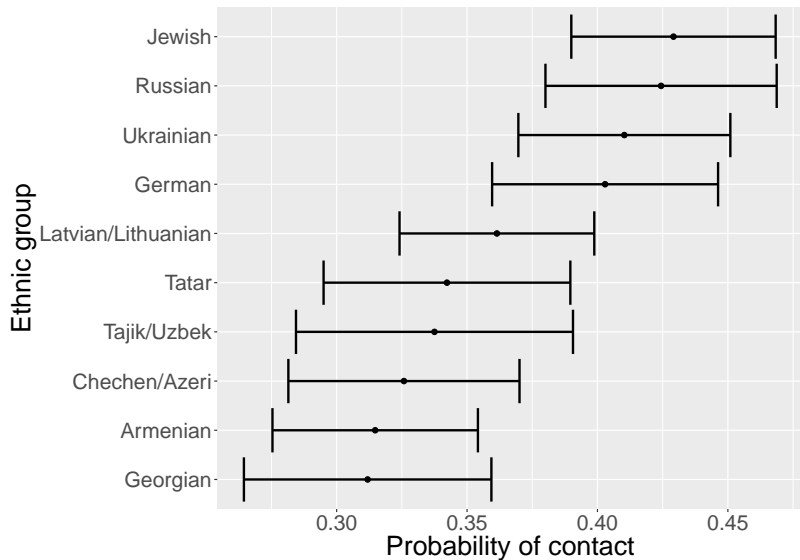
Contact rates by ethnic group and location

Contact rates by ethnic groups and gender

Response rates by ethnic groups and occupation

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.

Conclusions

- ▶ Employers prefer groups of European origin over groups of Asian/Southern origin, but only in Moscow and St Petersburg
- ▶ No evidence of ethnic hierarchy in hiring in Kazan and Ufa: the effect of ethnic composition or ethnic federalism?
- ▶ Consistent with the results of an experiment in China (Maurer-Fazio 2012) where the was no discrimination against Mongolian and Uyghur applicants in Hohhot and Urumqi
- ▶ Gendered ethnic stereotypes
- ▶ Explnations: ethnic composition of the population; ethnic federalism and the history of the regions; recent migration