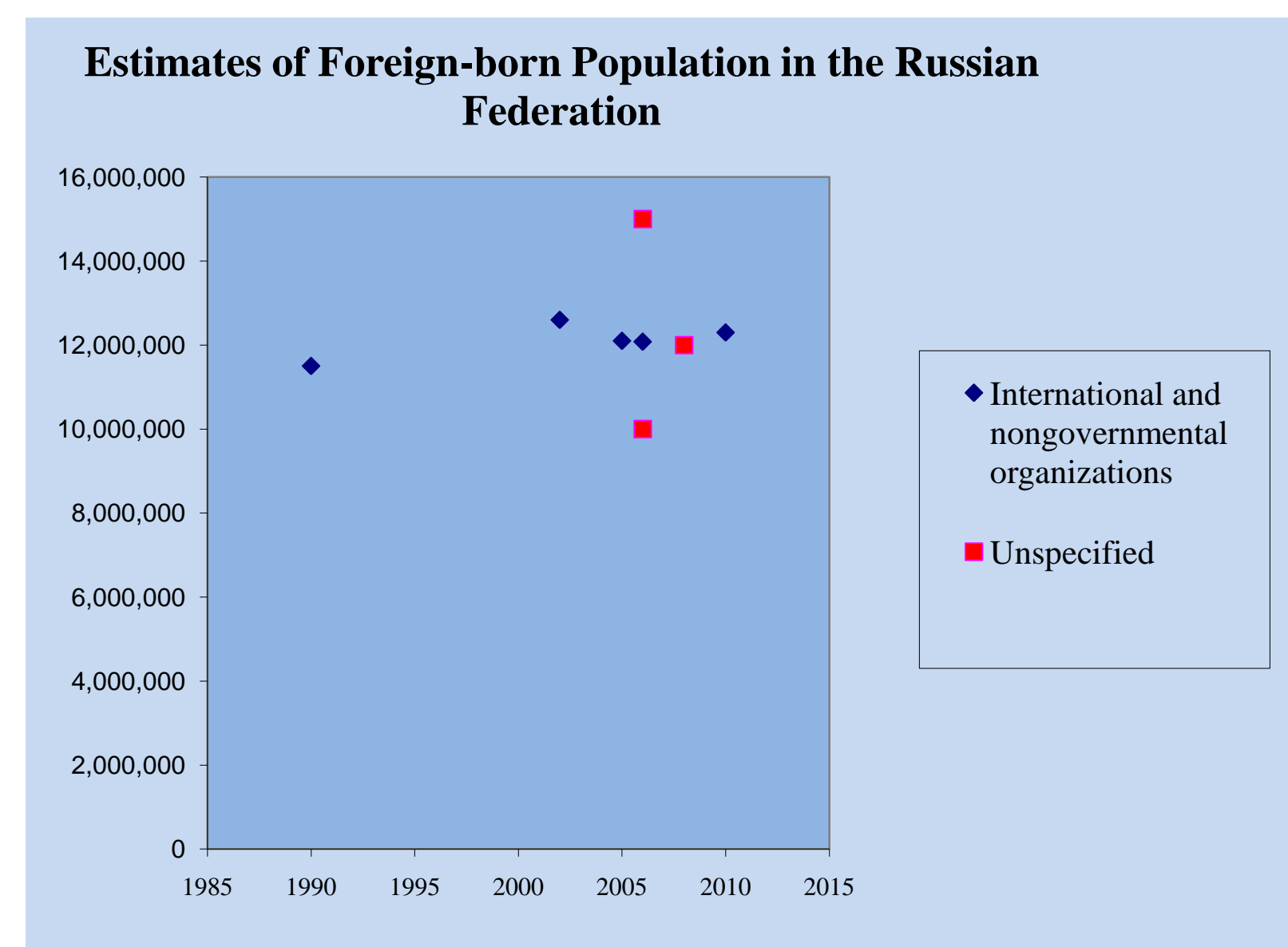


Learning to Fit In , Or Already Meeting the Standards? Nativity and adherence to idealized social norms in the Russian Federation

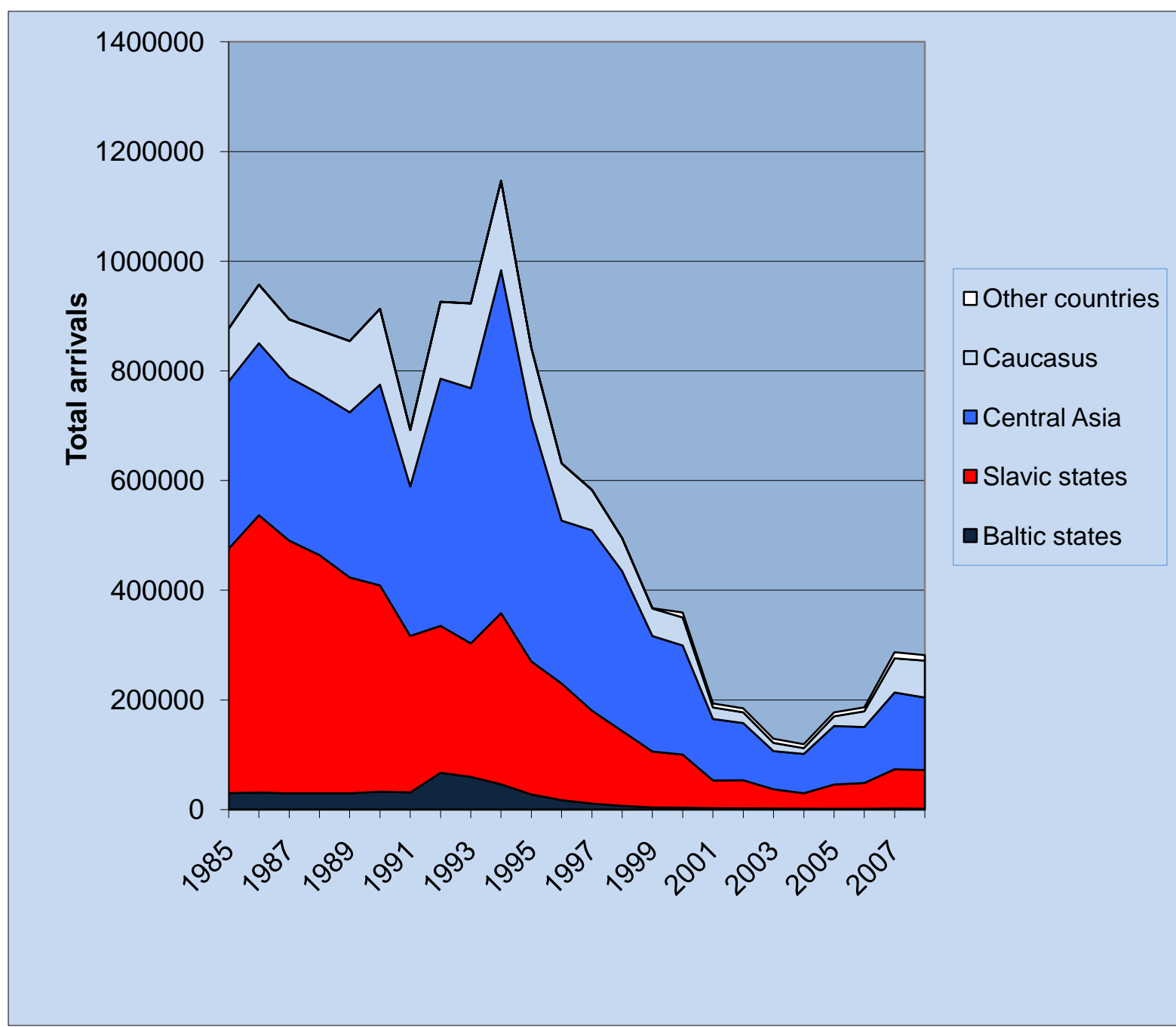
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ABSTRACT

The Russian Federation is second only to the United States in the number of foreign born residents. As elsewhere, migrants into the Russian Federation are identified as contributing to a variety of social ills, and challenging Russian cultural and social identity. In this study we utilize content analysis of media, government pronouncements and public opinion surveys to identify core idealized social norms and cultural practices, particularly the idealized social norms used to stigmatize immigrants. Employing Wave I of the Russian Gender and Generation Survey (2004), we examine, empirically, whether the foreign born within the Russian Federation report social attitudes that differ from idealized norms. We compare markers of these idealized norms between the native and foreign born. Our findings for the Russian Federation indicate that the foreign born display significantly greater adherence to idealized norms, such as fertility and religious participation than the native born, but the effects vary by region of origin. Our results highlight the disjuncture between often politicized immigration fears, and the socio-cultural attitudes and practices of the foreign born, informing theories of integration and challenging the simplistic, negative framing of migrants.



- Officially registered migration into Russia peaks in 2004
- Substantial unofficial migration continues, including large labor migrant flows from Central Asia and the Caucasus
- Estimates for unregistered migration vary markedly, from 10 to 20 million in 2009
- Mass media reports rarely differentiate among migrants



“‘Migrant-phobia’ among Muscovites is more of a virtual phenomenon, related to images circulating in the media, than an attitude that has been formed based upon the experience of daily contact with immigrants of other cultures.”

Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 10/8/10.

Increasing negative framing of migrants

In 1995, nearly 57% of RF citizens opposed the slogan, “Russia for Russians.” By 2009, less than 30% of citizens surveyed found the slogan objectionable.

Levada Center

“One in 5 offences in Moscow is committed by or with the complicity of foreign nationals.” Andrey Reznikov, Moscow Criminal Investigations Dept., qtd. in *Itar-Tass*, 12/7/04.



In the wake of metro bombings in 2004, conservative politician V. Zhirinovsky called for “all immigrants from the Caucasus region to be deported from the capital.” *Moscow Times*, 2/9/04.

“1 in 10 migrant workers suffers from infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis or hepatitis.” –Min. of Health and Social Dev., M. Zurabov qtd. in *The Moscow Times*, 2/26/07.

How You Need to Live: Constructing Idealized Social Norms

St. Petersburg and Moscow have published “cultural guides” for foreigners stressing behavioral norms, including only speaking Russian in public places, avoiding “ethnic garb,” and prohibiting “national cultural practices in public areas.

The Russian Orthodox Church has cast the demographic decline in religious and moral terms, calling for a return to religion and increased attention to spirituality.

“Supporting families, motherhood, and the nurturance of our children is our common duty, it’s a responsibility we owe to future generations, to our motherland, and before God.”

-Russian First Lady, Svetlana Medvedeva, 11/19/10.

“A society’s attitude to senior citizens is an indicator of its social responsibility and the morality of its policies.”

-Prime Minister V. Putin’s speech to Veterans, 1/19/07.

Central questions

1. What are the key characteristics and behaviors identified in the mass media as idealized social norms?
2. How do the characteristics and behaviors of the foreign born, an often stigmatized group, compare to these idealized norms?
3. What are the differences in adherence to idealized norms between the native and the foreign born?
4. What can this comparison tell us about the processes of assimilation and exclusion in this increasingly important destination state?



Recent restrictions have decreased migrant labor opportunities in markets

Data and methods

In addressing Question One, we use a content analysis of 678 articles referring to migration and/or social values in 2004 (the year of the RGGS) identified from EastView’s database of the Current Digest of the Russian Press and Russian Central Newspapers. We also reviewed 829 articles on migration issues in Russian newspapers from 2004 using the World News Connection database. Approximately 46% of the articles mentioning migration cast migrants negatively. The assessment of core articles yielded the following central factors:

- Women’s central place within the family
- Importance of children/fertility
- Responsibility of the family for elder care
- Religion/Return to spirituality
- Russian language

In addressing Questions 2 and 3, we examine these core characteristics and nativity with the 2004 Russian Gender and Generations Survey, a nationally representative household based sample of 11,261 respondents (1,117 or 9.9% foreign born).

<http://www.unece.org/pau/ggp/Welcome.html>

- Looking after a home or family is as fulfilling as working for pay (strongly agree)
- Women has to have children in order to be fulfilled (strongly agree)
- Family should provide financial support for older people in need (not State)
- Yearly attending religious services (4 or more)
- Russian language identified as native tongue

Analysis

Adherence to Idealized Norms, RGGS 2004, by Nativity and Region of Origin	Native (N=9190)	Slavic (N=1111)	Kazakhstan (N=274)	Central Asia (N=292)	Caucasus (N=164)	Other (N=230)
Housework is as valuable as paid work	10.5%	10.0%	10.7%	8.8%	15.3%	12.2%
Women need children/fulfillment	25.0%	28.2%	28.8%	28.8%	32.5%	27.5%
Families should support elders	36.5%	37.8%	37.1%	36.8%	31.3%	33.0%
4 or more religious events/year	16.0%	15.1%	14.2%	18.0%	26.2%	27.0%
Russian Primary Language	91.8%	91.1%	95.6%	92.7%	68.0%**	80.0%*

*=.05, **=.01

The foreign born follow idealized social norms in the Russian Federation at rates similar to the native born. The level and effect differs by region of origin.

Logistic Regressions Assessing the Link between Adherence to Idealized Social Norms and Socio-Demographic Indicators and Nativity, RGGS 2004

	Model 1: A woman must have a child to be fulfilled	Model 2: Attends religious services 4+ Times per Year	Model 3: Looking after home/family as fulfilling as working for pay	Model 4: Support for the elderly is the responsibility of the family
Immigrant from a Slavic CIS state	1.23^ (.13)	1.14 (.19)	1.27 (.19)	.41** (.12)
Immigrant from a non-Slavic CIS state	1.21^ (.14)	1.34^ (.21)	1.21 (.19)	0.9 (.22)
Immigrant from a non-CIS state	1.02 (.21)	0.99 (.31)	1.32 (.36)	0.54 (.28)
Non-Russian ethnicity	1 (.07)	0.85 (.09)	1.13 (.10)	4.45*** (.48)
Male	.84*** (.04)	.42*** (.03)	.89^ (.06)	1.13 (.12)
Very difficult to make ends meet	.92^ (.05)	0.9 (.07)	1.03 (.08)	.76** (.09)
Higher education	1.17** (.06)	1.21* (.10)	1.22** (.09)	1.25^ (.15)
Missing education	0.97 (.05)	0.94 (.08)	0.87 (.07)	1.26^ (.16)
No social support	1.06 (.06)	1.1 (.10)	1.03 (.09)	1.12 (.16)
Lived in Russia for 10 years or less	1 (.17)	0.87 (.22)	0.71 (.18)	0.57 (.25)
N	10,666	10,666	10,666	10,666
Pseudo R-squared	0.003	0.023	0.0033	0.0508
Source: RGGS (2004) ^ p<.10 * p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.001				

- ❑ Foreign born hold more pro-natalist beliefs, migrants from non Slavic areas have higher rates of religious participation, and Slavic migrants are not very supportive of the elderly.
- ❑ Men are less norm adherent and the education tend to be highly adherent.
- ❑ Recent migrants (less than 10 years) are not significantly different from other respondents.

Conclusions

- ❑As campaigns to promote idealized social norms continue in the Russian Federation, increased attention to how these norms are followed across various social groups can provide valuable empirical evidence against stigmatizing stereotypes, particularly against the negative framing of migrants.
- ❑Future analyses assessing behavioral and attitudinal differentials across country of origin, ethnicity, and type of migration are needed.
- ❑Enhancing detailed research and assessment of the foreign born can contribute valuable evidence-based data and improve public and political discourse concerning migration into the Russian Federation.