

## Opposition to Immigration in Contemporary Russia

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## **Opposition to Immigration in Contemporary Russia**

### **Introduction**

The present paper aims to examine public opposition to immigration and its sources in contemporary Russia. Opposition to immigration (i.e. exclusionary attitudes), as was suggested by Gorodzeisky and Semyonov (2009), can be formed on two different grounds. On the one hand, exclusionary attitudes can be based on the grounds of national membership and directed at all foreigners, regardless of their racial or ethnic origin. On the other hand, exclusionary attitudes can be formed on the basis of race or ethnicity and directed exclusively at racially or ethnically different (from the majority host country population) foreigners. This is at least partially so because foreigners are often perceived not only as placing at risk the socio-economic interests of native citizens, but also as threatening a society's cultural and ethnic homogeneity and its national identity. Thus, in addition to examining opposition to immigration as a general concept, the current paper focuses on and compares two types of opposition to immigration in the Russian context: exclusionary attitudes based on the grounds of national membership and exclusionary attitudes based on the grounds of race or ethnicity, i.e. directed exclusively at the foreign population with non-Slavic or/and non-European origins.

In what follows, I first offer an overview of current immigration trends and attitudes toward immigrants and immigration in Russia. Next, I discuss theoretical explanations of the sources of anti-immigrant and anti-immigration attitudes as well as previous research on the topic. I then provide information on the survey data and variables used in the study and present findings of the empirical analysis that 1) focuses on the level and sources of opposition to immigration in contemporary Russia; 2) compares the two types of exclusionary attitudes (based on national membership grounds and on race or ethnicity criteria); and 3) situates the current level of opposition to immigration in Russia within over-time and cross-national

comparative perspectives. I conclude with a discussion of the findings in light of the theoretical framework and the social context of Russia.

### **Current Immigration Trends and Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Russia**

According to the UN (2015), in 2015, the foreign-born population in Russia reached 11.5 million, constituting about 8.1 percent of the total country population. However, this figure includes also people who moved to Russia from other Soviet republics as internal migrants before the collapse of the USSR, as well as ethnic Russians who returned to Russia from former Soviet republics shortly after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, mostly before 1996.

Opposition to international immigration in contemporary Russia, though, should be considered in light of recent immigration flows and the number of foreign citizens in the country in the past decade. Between 2001 and 2015, the net authorized permanent immigration to Russia from other former Soviet republics resulted in a population increase of 3.2 million, while nationals of former Soviet republics made up the overwhelming majority of the total immigration inflow to the country. In addition, in the 2000s, the temporary labour migration had grown substantially and become an important actor in the Russian labour market. In 2014, the total number of employment permits to foreign workers reached its peak, about 3.7 million, most of which were granted to citizens of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The number of undocumented temporary labour migrants was estimated to be slightly lower than that of foreign workers with employment permits. It should be noted, however, that the share of foreign workers in the Russian labour market fell by a third in 2015, following the 2014 economic crisis (Nozhenko, 2010; Chudinovskich and Denisenko, 2017; Denisenko, 2017).

Regarding the geography of immigration at the beginning of the 21st century, the inflow from the “near-abroad” (former-USSR countries) was not only dominant but also increasing, while the share of immigration inflow from the “far abroad” (countries outside the borders of

the former USSR, such as China, Turkey, and Vietnam) was declining (Nozhenko, 2010). At the same time, the ethnic diversity of the migrant population in Russia has increased significantly since the beginning of the current century. At the end of the 20th century, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova were the main source countries, but by the turn of the 21st century, the share of immigrants from Central Asian countries (mainly from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan) had grown steadily and considerably. During the 2000s, migration from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan to Russia was dominated by people belonging to the ethnic groups of Central Asia, rather than by those of European or Slavic origins. Notwithstanding the surge of migrants from Central Asia, Azerbaijan and Armenia became additional prominent source countries. Between 2011 and 2015, the migrant population from Central Asia and the Caucasus comprised almost 40 percent of all immigrants (Chudinovskich and Denisenko, 2017; Denisenko, 2017).

The recent military conflict in Eastern Ukraine, however, brought into Russia about 1 million Ukrainian citizens in the 2014-2015 period (Bessudnov, 2016). Although the migration from Ukraine to Russia was always high, this recent, significant influx substantially increased the Ukrainian migrant population in Russia. While the 2014 economic downturn in Russia made its labour market less attractive for migrants from some parts of the CIS countries (especially, from Kazakhstan), the ongoing conflict at home continued to provide incentives for Ukrainians to move to Russia (Denisenko, 2017). Thus, in mid-2015, the three biggest groups of foreigners in Russia included 2.6 million Ukrainian, 2.2 million Uzbek and 1 million Tajik nationals (Bessudnov, 2016).

In 2016, about 575 thousand people immigrated to Russia, almost 90 percent of them from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). A third of the immigrants from the CIS arrived from Ukraine, and more than 40 percent from Central Asian countries. Two main

source countries outside of the former USSR borders were China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (FSSS, 2018a).

The current post-Soviet migrants from Central Asia and the Caucasus generally have lower levels of education and Russian language skills, as compared to the previous generations of migrants. The overwhelming majority of temporary migrants perform low-paid and physically demanding jobs that are unattractive to the native population. They are employed in the fields of construction, domestic service or in unskilled jobs in such sectors as industry, transportation, agriculture and retail sales (Chudinovskich and Denisenko, 2017; Denisenko, 2017; Vishnevsky, 2011).

Recent studies on attitudes toward immigrants in Russia demonstrate that public attitudes toward immigrants in the country are far from welcoming (Malinkin, 2013; Pain, 2007). In fact, they are significantly more negative than in most other European countries (Gorodzeisky et al., 2015; Gudkov, 2006). The research also shows that attitudes toward non-Slavic and non-European origin immigrants are consistently more hostile than attitudes towards Slavic and European immigrants (Alexseev, 2010; Bessudnov, 2016).

A growing body of literature has investigated Russian attitudes toward immigrants and ethnic minorities (regardless of their migrant status), such as hostility, negative feelings, prejudice and perceived threat (e.g. Gerber, 2014; Gorodzeisky et al., 2015; Bessudnov, 2016; Herrera and Butkovich Karus, 2016; Chapman et al., 2018). Surprisingly, however, very few studies have systematically examined Russian attitudes toward the phenomenon of immigration itself, that is, native citizens' attitudes regarding admitting potential immigrants to their country (for a notable exception, see Bahry, 2016). In a comprehensive review of worldwide research on attitudes toward immigrants and immigration, Ceobanu and Escandel (2010) suggested that opposition to immigration should be conceptually distinguished from attitudes toward immigrants. The former not only pertains to anti-immigrant sentiment but also

captures views regarding immigration policies implemented by the state. Along these lines, attitudes toward immigrants can be seen as public perceptions about foreigners who already entered the country, while attitudes toward immigration can be understood as public perceptions about admitting foreigners at all. Ceobanu and Escandell (2010) further noted that the studies which consider two types of attitudes as distinct concepts have paid much less attention to attitudes toward immigration as compared to public views toward immigrants.

To bridge this gap, the present study focuses on opposition to immigration (i.e. exclusionary attitudes) in contemporary Russia, and compares exclusionary attitudes based on the grounds of national membership (i.e. directed at all foreigners) with exclusionary attitudes based on the grounds of race or ethnicity (i.e. directed only at racial or ethnic minorities). The distinction between the two forms of exclusionary attitudes has particular resonance in the Russian context in light of the growing share of racial and ethnic minorities in the immigrant population, high level of hostility toward Central Asian and Caucasus ethnic minorities (Alexseev, 2010; Bessudnov, 2016; Gerber, 2014) and often racist- and neo-Nazi attacks towards ethnic “others”, i.e. those with non-Slavic appearance, in the country (Kuznetsova, 2017; Alperovich and Yudina 2016).

### **Theoretical explanations: What drives opposition to immigration in Russia and other countries?**

#### *Micro-sociological explanations (non-attitudinal predictors)*

A large body of research conducted across Western societies (Western Europe, the United States, Canada) indicates that hostility toward immigrants and opposition to immigration is driven by fear of competition with members of out-group populations over both socio-economic and symbolic rewards and resources (Olzak, 1992; Espenshade and Hempstead, 1996; Fetzer 2000; Semyonov et al., 2004; Raijman and Semyonov, 2004; Gorodzeisky and

Semyonov, 2009; Castles, De Haas and Miller, 2013). Following this theoretical argument, researchers have defined a set of demographic and socio-economic individuals' attributes that are likely to predict anti-immigrant sentiment and opposition to immigration.

The first group of these characteristics refers to self-interests in the socio-economic sphere. The theoretical mechanism suggests that socio-economically vulnerable natives (i.e. low-income earners, those employed in blue-collar occupations, unemployed, less-educated) express higher levels of hostility toward immigrants and higher levels of opposition to immigration since they are more likely to compete with immigrants for scarce socio-economic resources. In Western societies, the results related to the effect of these socio-economic attributes are remarkably consistent (Espenshade and Hempstead, 1996; Esses et al., 2001; Scheepers, Gijsberts and Coenders, 2002; Raijman and Semyonov, 2004; Gorodzeisky and Richards, 2016).

The second group of individuals' attributes that explain anti-immigrant sentiment refers to concerns about collective identity, and the cultural and ethnic homogeneity of the society (Fetzer, 2000; Raijman and Semyonov, 2004). Research has demonstrated that individuals who are concerned with the cultural and ethnic homogeneity of their society, and hold more conservative views on their country's national identity (i.e. older people, rural residents, adherents of the main religious denomination in a country), are more likely to express anti-immigrant sentiments (Scheepers, Gijsberts and Hello, 2002; Gorodzeisky and Semyonov, 2016; Davidov et al., 2014).

Recent findings from post-socialist Russia, however, paint a rather different picture. The two well-established (in Western countries) micro-sociological explanations of anti-immigrant attitudes, presented earlier, have turned out to be poor predictors of attitudes toward immigrants in Russia (Gorodzeisky et al., 2015; Bessudnov, 2016; Gorodziesky and Glikman, 2017). There, individuals' socio-economic positions (i.e. education, income, labour market

position) and demographic characteristics (such as age, religion, rural place of residence) say little about their attitudes toward immigrants. Focusing on attitudes toward *immigration* (as opposed to immigrants), the present research asks whether such micro-sociological explanations (related to self-interests in socio-economic spheres and concerns about cultural and ethnic homogeneity of the society) play a meaningful role in explaining opposition to immigration and its different forms in contemporary Russia.

#### *Perception of collective/state vulnerability*

Herbert Blumer's group position theory (1958) stresses the role of collective interests and position of the dominant group, rather than the role of individuals' self-interests, in shaping attitudes towards out-groups. The approach suggests that intergroup competition over rewards and resources, leading to hostility toward out-group populations, is a zero-sum game: them against us (Blumer 1958; Bobo 1999). Following this line of argumentation, local majority group members are expected to express higher levels of hostility toward immigrant populations when the interests, position and structural conditions of their collective are undermined or/and made vulnerable. The theory underscores the central role of *perceived* (not actual) structural conditions and collective position (Bobo, 1999). A handful of studies that examined the perceived state's socio-economic and political conditions found a substantial effect of perceived collective vulnerability on attitudes toward immigrants, and racial and ethnic minorities in European countries and in the US (i.e. Semyonov, Raijman, and Gorodzeisky, 2008; Citrin et al., 1997; Evans and Need, 2002).

Departing from Blumer's group position theory, Gorodzeisky and Glikman (2017), for their part, have proposed that in post-socialist Russia, as a society undergoing a process of the reconsideration of national identity accompanied by economic instability and nationalistic resentment rhetoric (Breslauer, 2009; Smith, 2012; Blakkisrud, 2016), ethnic majority group

perceptions of state/collective vulnerability should play a much more important role in explaining anti-immigrant attitudes than individuals' demographic attributes and socioeconomic position (i.e., self-interests). Empirical results, based on data concerning attitudes towards immigrants in Russia in the 2006-2012 period, support this argument and demonstrate that perceived state/collective vulnerability in areas such as the economy, government functioning, educational system, and health services tends to notably increase anti-immigrant attitudes among ethnic Russians. Moreover, perceived state/collective vulnerability is more important for predicting anti-immigrant attitudes among ethnic Russians than individuals' socio-economic and demographic attributes (Gorodzeisky and Glikman, 2017). In this vein, the present study examines the role of perceived state/collective vulnerability in the formation of opposition to *immigration*, as a general concept, and in shaping the two types of exclusionary attitudes: those formed on the grounds of national membership and those formed on the grounds of race or ethnicity.

### *Human Values*

Affirming that individuals' demographic attributes and socio-economic characteristics hardly explain anti-immigrant attitudes in Russia, scholars have suggested that future research should explore additional explanations, including more personal psychological characteristics (Gorodzeisky, Glikman, and Maskileyson, 2015; Bessudnov, 2016). The present research takes a step in this direction by considering human values as a possible source of opposition to immigration in Russia.

Values are beliefs that some end-state is preferable over another; they transcend specific situations. Consequently, the number of distinct values is limited (Rokeach, 1973; Davidov et al., 2008). According to Schwartz' values theory (1992), basic human values are "desirable trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a

person...” (Schwartz, 1994, p. 21). Schwartz (1994) identifies ten universal value types: universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, security, power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation and self-direction. The values are hierarchically ordered in terms of importance in one’s value system. Some values are correlated, positively or negatively, while others are not (Davidov and Meuleman, 2012).

Immigration studies have shown the particular relevance of two value types for shaping attitudes towards immigrants and immigration, namely, universalism and conformity-tradition, as a unified value (Beierlein, Kuntz, and Davidov, 2016; Davidov and Meuleman, 2012; Davidov et al., 2014). The universalism value type comprises the motivation to appreciate and understand individual differences, and to protect the welfare of all people and the environment. The conformity-tradition value type, for its part, comprises the motivation to avoid the violation of conventional expectations and norms, and to respect traditional customs and ideas (Sagiv and Schwartz, 1995; Davidov et al., 2008). Universalism tends to be associated with positive attitudes toward immigration since immigrant admission is an opportunity to realize motivational goals like understanding and showing concern for the welfare of all people. The conformity-tradition value type, by contrast, tends to be associated with negative attitudes toward immigration, since immigration often brings along new traditions and norms, and challenges the end-state preferred by those who prioritize commitment to customs and honour social expectations (Davidov et al., 2008; Davidov et al., 2014; Sagiv and Schwartz, 1995). While studies across European countries have repeatedly found that universalism reduces opposition to immigration and a conformity-tradition orientation increases it (Davidov et al., 2008; Davidov et al., 2014), the present study is the first to systematically examine the effect of human values on attitudes towards *immigration* in Russia.

## **Data, Variables and Empirical Analysis**

The empirical analysis (which follows the Data and Variable section) is organized into three stages: the first stage investigates the opposition to immigration (as a general concept) and its aforementioned sources; the second stage focuses on the two types of opposition to immigration: exclusionary attitudes, which is formed on the basis of national membership, and exclusionary attitudes, which is formed on the basis of race and ethnicity; and the third stages briefly reviews the level of opposition to immigration in Russia from over-time and cross-national comparative perspectives.

The data for the main analysis (the first two stages) were obtained from the most recent round of the European Social Survey (ESS), conducted in 2016. The third stage also uses data obtained from five rounds of the European Social Survey during the 2006-2016 period. ESS is an academically driven and highly reputable cross-national survey that has been conducted since 2002; in 2013, the ESS was awarded European Research Infrastructure Consortium status. The ESS Central Coordinating Team aims to ensure the comparability and validity of their data. To guarantee that ESS data is collected using the highest methodological standards, the ESS Core Scientific Team (CST) undertakes a range of activities related to data-quality assessment, including validity and comparability tests. For more detailed information, see the ESS website: <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>

The data used in the study were collected via face-to-face interviews from a nationally representative Russian sample (age 15 and above). The analysis reported here was restricted to ethnic majority members who were born in Russia (i.e. non-immigrant ethnic Russians). Ethnic-majority belonging followed respondents' self-definition. The respondents were asked whether they belonged (or not) to a minority ethnic group in Russia. Self-definition is the most suitable operationalization of ethnic majority/minority for the purpose of the present research.

After excluding immigrants and ethnic minority members, the total sample in 2016 includes 1949 non-immigrant ethnic Russians.

***Independent variables:*** Demographic attributes (as predictors of attitudes) included: gender, age, rural versus urban type of residence and a series of dummy variable representing religious denomination (no denomination, Eastern Orthodox, i.e. dominant denomination, and other religious denomination).

Individuals' socioeconomic position was measured by three variables: education (in years), subjective household income (insufficient versus sufficient), and a series of dummy variables representing labor force position (professionals plus technicians and managers, blue-collar plus clerks and sales, unemployed, not in the labor force, and students).

Perceived collective (state) vulnerability variable was constructed as a mean value of the following four indicators: the respondent's level of dissatisfaction with the (1) country's present state of economy, (2) way that national government is doing its job, (3) country's education system, and (4) country's health services. Responses ranged on an 11-point scale from 0 (highest level of satisfaction) to 10 (highest level of dissatisfaction). The confirmatory factor analysis implemented by Gorodziesky and Glikman (2017) demonstrated sufficient validity of the measurement. The value of Cronbach's alfa in the present sample is .78.

Two basic human value types, namely, universalism and conformity-tradition, were measured by means of multiple indicators from the Portrait Values Questionnaire included in the ESS (Schwartz 2007). Each of the items is a verbal portrait describing goals or wishes of a hypothetical person that point to the importance of a specific value. Respondents were asked to indicate how much the person described is like them on a scale from 1 (not like me at all) to 6 (very much like me). Following previous recent studies (Davidov et al., 2014), I used the three universalism items that pertain to the importance of tolerance, equality and environmental concern; and five conformity and tradition items that pertain to the importance of following

rules, doing what one is told, behaving properly, as well as tradition and modesty. Following Schwartz's (n.d.) recommendation, for the analysis, I used value scores centred around overall scale mean. More detailed information about the human value scale, exact wording of each item, and syntax for calculating the value scores can be found here: <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/data/themes.html?t=values>.<sup>1</sup> Descriptive statistics for all independent variables are presented in the Appendix Table.

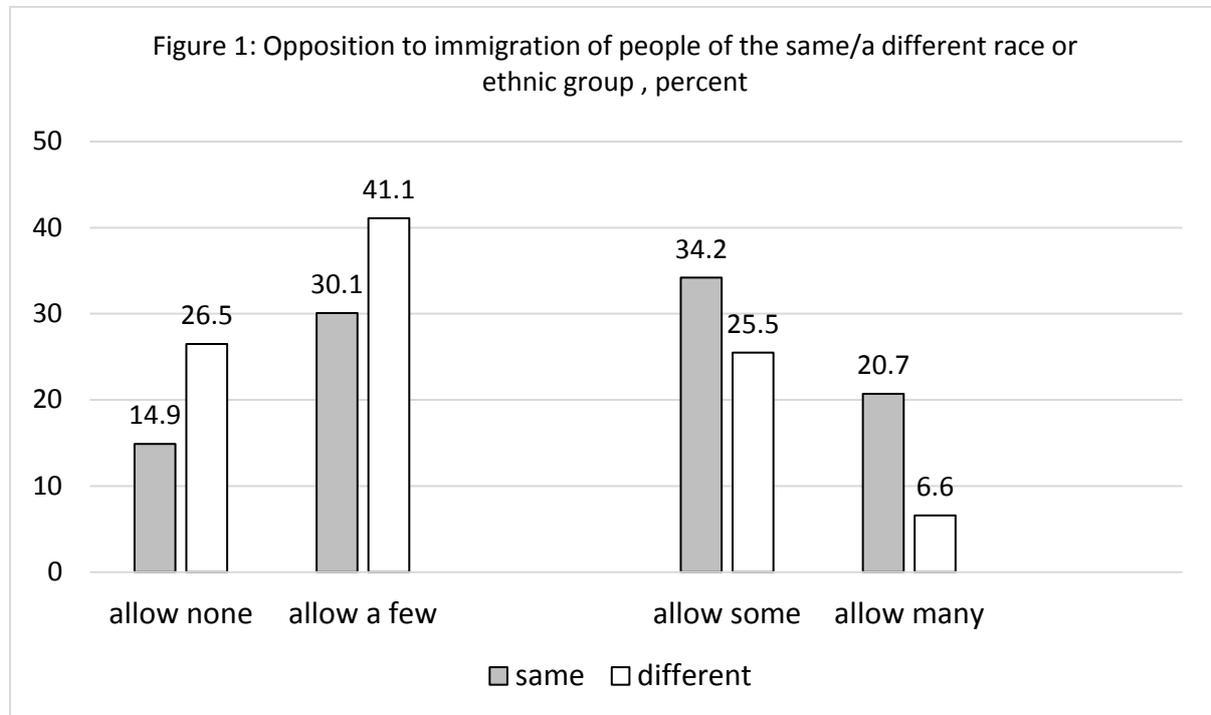
*Dependent variables* were constructed using respondents' answers to the following two questions: 'To what extent do you think Russia should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most [of] Russia's people to come and live here?' and 'How about people of a different race or ethnic group from most [of] Russia's people? The responses were: 'allow none,' 'allow a few,' 'allow some' and 'allow many.'

## **Findings**

### *Opposition to Immigration and its Sources*

Figure 1 displays attitudes toward immigration of people of the same race or ethnic group as most of the population in Russia and of people of a different race or ethnic group from most of Russia's people.<sup>2</sup> Almost 15 percent of respondents object to admitting into society any immigrant of the same race or ethnic group. An additional 30 percent would like to limit immigration of people like themselves to 'a few'. The opposition to the immigration of racially or ethnically different (from most Russian) people is even more widespread. More than twenty-six percent (26.5%) of respondents endorse exclusion of any immigrant of a different race or ethnicity; an additional 41.5 percent would like to restrict the number of potential immigrants from a different race or ethnic group to 'a few'. In general, the level of opposition toward immigration among ethnic majority members in contemporary Russia is very high. Yet, the level of exclusionary attitudes toward racially or ethnically different immigrants is 1.5 times as

high ( $26.5+41.1=67.6\%$ ) as that toward immigrants of the same race or ethnicity as most Russian people ( $14.9+30.1=45\%$ ).



In order to examine whether and to what extent factors discussed in the theoretical part of the paper (i.e. demographic characteristics, socio-economic position, universalism and conformity-tradition value types, as well as perception of collective/state vulnerability) affect opposition to immigration in Russia, I estimated three linear regression equation models. The dependent variable in model 1 - *opposition to immigration (as a general concept)* - is based on the mean score of responses to the two questions ('To what extent do you think Russia should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most [of] Russia's people to come and live here?' and 'How about people of a different race or ethnic group from most [of] Russia's people?') and ranges from 1 (lowest level) to 4 (highest level). The mean value is 2.64 (standard deviation is 0.84). The dependent variable in model 2 is based only on the responses to the question regarding the immigration of those belonging to the same race or ethnic group as most [of] Russia's people, while the dependent variable of model 3 is based only on the responses to the

question regarding the immigration of those belonging to a different race or ethnic group as most [of] Russia's people. The results of the linear regression analysis presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Coefficients (standard errors) of linear regression predicting opposition to immigration.**

	1 General Opposition to Immigration	2 Opposition to Immigration of People of the Same Race or Ethnic Group	3 Opposition to Immigration of People of a Different Race or Ethnic Group
Age	0.001 (0.002)	0.000 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)
Men	0.047 (0.043)	0.017 (0.050)	0.092* (0.045)
Rural residence	0.033 (0.050)	0.102 (0.059)	-0.029 (0.053)
Religious denomination (reference category: no denomination)			
Eastern Orthodox	-0.103* (0.042)	-0.154* (0.049)	-0.055 (0.044)
Other religion	0.079 (0.141)	0.148 (0.167)	-0.008 (0.148)
Education	-0.048* (0.009)	-0.050* (0.010)	-0.047* (0.009)
Insufficient income	0.052 (0.043)	0.009 (0.051)	0.115* (0.046)
Labor force position (reference category: Blue collar plus clerks and sales)			
Professional, technicians and managers	0.019 (0.057)	0.010 (0.067)	0.019 (0.059)
Unemployed	-0.006 (0.111)	0.107 (0.132)	-0.113 (0.116)
Not in the labor force	0.022 (0.061)	-0.008 (0.071)	0.037 (0.064)
Student	-0.054 (0.097)	-0.024 (0.114)	-0.053 (0.101)
Universalism	-0.134* (0.033)	-0.138* (0.039)	-0.133* (0.034)
Conformity-Tradition	0.035 (0.030)	0.058 (0.036)	0.032 (0.032)
Perceived state's vulnerability	0.086* (0.012)	0.081* (0.014)	0.083* (0.012)
Constant	2.781* (0.163)	2.700* (0.193)	2.898* (0.171)
R Square	0.08	0.06	0.08

The findings of model 1 (presented in Table 1) demonstrate that age, gender, place of residence, as well as income and labor force position, do not exert a statistically significant net effect on general opposition to immigration. The size of the coefficients also ranges from very small to negligible. However, opposition to immigration tends to decrease with level of education, as suggested by the negative and statistically significant coefficient ( $B=-0.048$ ). Opposition to immigration in Russia is less pronounced among respondents who belong to the Eastern Orthodox confession, the dominant religion, in comparison to those who do not self-identify as belonging to any religious denomination. However, there is no statistically significant difference in opposition to immigration between adherents of other religions and those who do not belong to any religious denomination. Before introducing the indicators of individuals' values and perceived state's vulnerability, the model (not shown) explained only four percent of the variance of the 'opposition to immigration' variable ( $R\ square=0.04$ ). Evidently, the demographic characteristics and individuals' socio-economic position have a very low explanatory power for predicting opposition to immigration in Russia.

As to the influence of individuals' values, model 1 reveals that, in line with the theoretical expectation, the universalism (value type) tends to decrease opposition to immigration, as shown by the statistically significant and negative coefficient ( $B=-0.134$ ). The conformity–tradition value type, however, exerts no statistically significant net effect on Russian attitudes toward immigration.

The findings of model 1 also demonstrate that perceived collective vulnerability is positively associated with opposition to immigration. The higher the level of perception of collective vulnerability, the higher the level of opposition to immigration. A comparison of standardized coefficients reveals that among all predictors (not shown), perceived collective/state vulnerability exerts the strongest net effect on opposition to immigration. A

change in the perceptions of collective vulnerability by one standard deviation is associated with a change in opposition to immigration by 0.18 standard deviations.

The results of models 2 and 3, predicting, separately, attitudes toward immigrants of the same race or ethnicity (as most Russian people) and attitudes toward racially and ethnically different immigrants, quite resemble each other (and the results of model 1). This is expected since these attitudes are interrelated – although, there are a couple of differences in the predictors that are revealed by the separate regression models. Specifically, adherents of Eastern Orthodoxy are less likely to oppose immigration of people of the same race and ethnic group (as most Russian people) than those who do not belong to any religious denomination. However, religious belonging is not associated with attitudes toward immigration of people of a different race and ethnic group. By contrast, opposition to immigration of people belonging to a different race or ethnic group is more pronounced among Russians with insufficient income. At the same time, income does not exert a statistically significant effect on opposition to immigration of people belonging to the same race and ethnic group.

#### *Racial Exclusionists versus Total Exclusionists*

In this section of the analysis, I apply a typology suggested by Gorodzeisky and Semyonov (2009, p. 406) to distinguish between two types of exclusionist populations: “exclusionists motivated by a national criterion (i.e. support the exclusion of all foreigners regardless of race and ethnicity, hereafter ‘total exclusionists’) and exclusionists motivated only by racial or ethnic criteria (i.e. support the exclusion of ethnic and racial minorities only, hereafter ‘racial exclusionists’)”. Table 2 displays a distribution of the Russian ethnic majority population across four categories of opposition/support to immigration.

The data displayed in Table 2 reveal that about a third of the Russian population is ‘pro-admission’; they are willing to admit both immigrants of the same race or ethnicity as well as

immigrants of a different race or ethnicity. Slightly over 42 percent of Russians object to admission of any immigrants, regardless of their race or ethnicity; these respondents are classified as ‘total exclusionists’. A quarter of respondents (24.6%) is willing to admit foreigners of the same race or ethnicity as most of Russia’s people but object to the admission of foreigners who belong to another race or ethnic group. They are classified as ‘racial exclusionists’.

**Table 2: Classification of opposition to immigration (i.e. exclusionary attitudes), %**

		Same race or ethnic group	
		Admission	Exclusion
Different race or ethnic group	Admission	Pro-admission 29.8%	Pro-diversity 1.7%
	Exclusion	Racial exclusionists 24.6%	Total exclusionists 42.6%

a. Restrictive responses: ‘allow none’ or ‘allow a few’ people to come to live in the country, are coded as support for exclusion; responses: ‘allow some’ or ‘allow many’ people to come to live in the country, are coded as support for admission.

In line with the offered typology, for multivariate analysis, I constructed a variable that distinguishes between three categories of the majority population: ‘total exclusionists’, ‘racial exclusionists’ and ‘pro-admission’. The small ‘pro-diversity’ category was omitted from further multivariate analysis. In order to examine the extent to which demographic characteristics, socio-economic position, individuals’ values and collective vulnerability perception affect support for different types of exclusionary attitudes, I estimated two series of multinomial logistic regressions. The first multinomial model estimates the odds of belonging

to the 'total exclusionists' and to the 'racial exclusionists' category, respectively, versus the 'pro-admission' category. Columns 1a and 1b in Table 3 refer to this model. In order to further explore the differences between the 'racial exclusionists' and the 'total exclusionists', in the second multinomial model, I changed the comparison category and estimated the odds of belonging to the 'racial exclusionists' and 'pro-admission' category, respectively, versus the 'total exclusionists' category. In column 2a in Table 3, I present only the part of the second multinomial model that refers to the odds of becoming 'racial exclusionists' versus 'total exclusionists'.

**Table 3: Odds ratio (95% CI) from multinomial regressions predicting odds of becoming total exclusionist/racial exclusionist versus pro-admission (1a and 1b) and odds of becoming racial exclusionist/pro-admission versus total exclusionist (2a).**

	1a Total exclusionists versus Pro admission)	1b Racial exclusionists versus Pro admission	2a Racial exclusionists versus Total exclusionists
Age	1.00 (0.99-1.01)	1.00 (0.99-1.02)	1.00 (0.99-1.02)
Men	1.03 (0.79-1.33)	1.10 (0.83-1.47)	1.07 (0.82-1.40)
Rural residence	1.16 (0.86-1.58)	0.80 (0.56-1.14)	0.69* (0.50-0.94)
Religious denomination (reference category: no denomination)			
Eastern Orthodox	0.72* (0.56-0.93)	1.20 (0.90-1.60)	1.66* (1.28-2.17)
Other religion	0.88 (0.38-2.01)	0.72 (0.25-2.10)	0.82 (0.31-2.20)
Education	0.88* (0.83-0.92)	0.92* (0.87-0.98)	1.05 (0.997-1.11)
Insufficient income	1.13 (0.87-1.47)	1.36* (1.01-1.82)	1.20 (0.92-1.58)
Labor force position (reference category: Blue collar plus clerks and sales)			
Professional, technicians and managers	1.07 (0.76-1.50)	1.09 (0.75-1.59)	1.02 (0.72-1.46)
Unemployed	0.75 (0.40-1.44)	0.55 (0.25-1.22)	0.73 (0.34-1.56)
Not in the labor force	0.93 (0.63-1.34)	1.00 (0.67-1.50)	1.06 (0.74-1.56)
Student	1.13 (0.65-1.99)	0.89 (0.45-1.75)	0.78 (0.42-1.47)
Universalism	0.69* (0.57-0.85)	0.79* (0.63-0.98)	1.13 (0.92-1.39)
Conformity-Tradition	1.198 (0.998-1.44)	1.02 (0.83-1.24)	0.85 (0.70-1.02)
Perceived state's vulnerability	1.25* (1.16-1.34)	1.12* (1.03-1.22)	0.90* (0.83-0.97)
R Nagelkerke	0.084		0.084

I shall start with a discussion of the results of multinomial logistic model 1 (presented in columns 1a and 1b in Table 3). Both forms of exclusionary attitudes, total exclusion (directed indiscriminately at all foreigners) and racial exclusion (directed only at racially or ethnically different foreigners) are likely to decrease with education and the universalism value, and to increase with the perceived collective's vulnerability. It seems that education, perceived collective/state's vulnerability and universalism has a slightly stronger effect on the odds of becoming 'total exclusionists' (versus 'pro admission') than on the odds of becoming 'racial exclusionists' (versus 'pro-admission'). For example, each year of education decreases the odds of becoming a 'total exclusionist' by 12 percent ( $(Exp(B) - 1) * 100 = (0.88 - 1) * 100 = -12$ ) and the odds of becoming a 'racial exclusionist' by 8 percent ( $(Exp(B) - 1) * 100 = (0.92 - 1) * 100 = -8$ ). Each point on the perceived state's vulnerability scale increases the odds of becoming a 'total exclusionist' by 25 percent and the odds of becoming a 'racial exclusionist' by 12 percent.

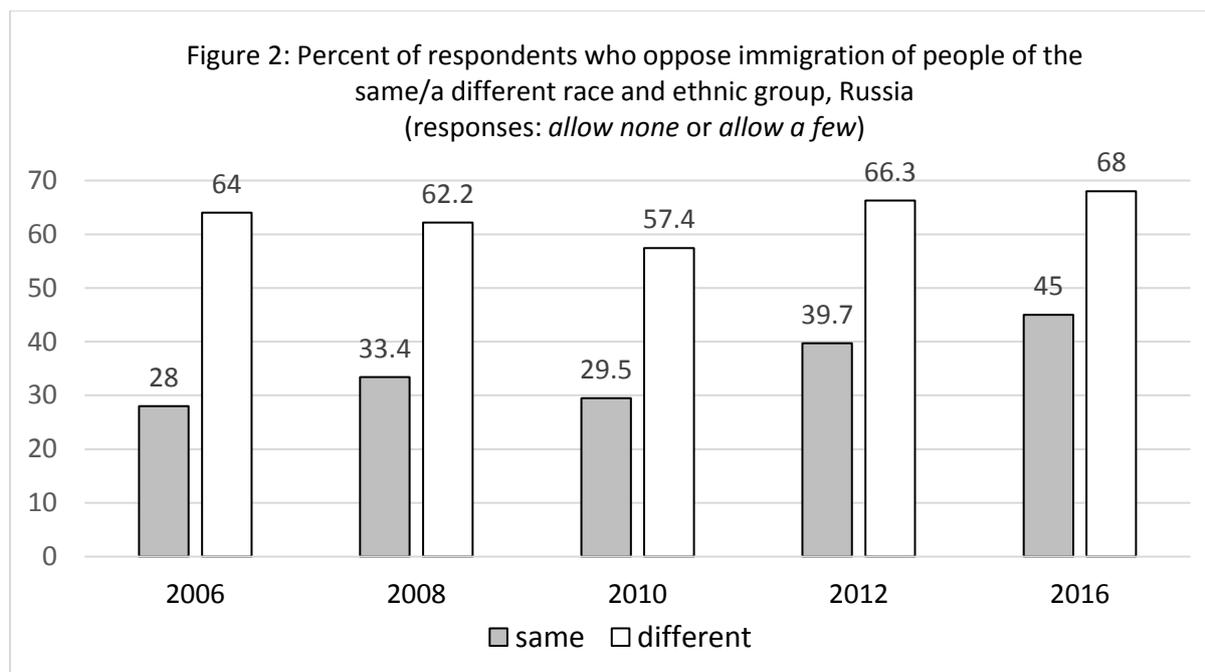
There are two notable differences between the predictors of endorsement of total exclusion and the predictors of endorsement of racial exclusion. Russians belonging to the Eastern Orthodox denomination have lower odds of becoming a 'total exclusionist' than those without a religious denomination (as shown by the statistically significant coefficient:  $Exp(B) = 0.72$ ). In contrast, belonging to Eastern Orthodoxy seems to increase the odds of becoming a 'racial exclusionist', although the effect is not statistically significant. Insufficient income exerts a positive effect on the odds of becoming both a 'total exclusionist' and a 'racial exclusionist' (versus 'pro-admission'), but the effect is statistically significant only for the 'racial exclusionists' category. I further explore these differences between the 'racial exclusionists' and the 'total exclusionists' in the next model and then discuss robust differences.

In column 2a, I present the results of the second multinomial logistic model in which ‘total exclusionists’ serves as a category of comparison. This model allows a deeper understanding of characteristics that differentiate ‘racial exclusionists’ from ‘total exclusionists’. The propensity to endorse exclusion based on race or ethnicity (versus exclusion based on national membership) is lower among the rural population ( $Exp(B)=0.69$ ). In other words, those residing in rural areas are less likely to be ‘racial exclusionists’ (versus ‘total exclusionists’) than those residing in urban places. Russians who identify themselves as Eastern Orthodox (i.e. the dominant religion in the country) have higher odds of becoming ‘racial exclusionists’ (versus ‘total exclusionists’) than Russians who do not belong to any religious denomination. Thus, Eastern Orthodox are more likely than those without a religious denomination to endorse exclusion on the basis of race or ethnicity (versus exclusion on the basis of national membership). By contrast, perceived state’s vulnerability tends to increase the odds of becoming a ‘total exclusionist’ (versus a ‘racial exclusionist’). Apparently, there are two different mechanisms at work. Perceived vulnerability of the collective (state), which pertains to the perceptions of collective’s deteriorated socio-economic conditions (in such areas as economy, education and health systems, and government functioning) prompts exclusionary attitudes directed at all foreigners, regardless of their race or ethnicity. However, self-identification with the Eastern Orthodox denomination as a sign of cultural identity in post-socialist Russia (Warhola and Lehning, 2007) is rather associated with exclusionary attitudes directed only at racially or ethnically different immigrants, that is, those who are perceived as ultimate outsiders by representatives of the dominant culture, and ethnic and national identity.

*Current Level of Opposition to Immigration in Over-Time Perspective*

This section provides an overview of the level of opposition to immigration during the past decade (2006-2016), briefly discussing the fluctuations in exclusionary attitudes in light of recent research on nationalism and xenophobia in Russia.

Figure 2 demonstrates that the level of opposition to immigration in Russia was widespread during the past decade. The level of opposition to immigration of racially or ethnically different (from most of Russia's population) people was much higher than that of potential immigrants of the same race or ethnicity and remained quite stable between 2006 and 2016. It declined slightly in 2010; the previous 2009 was mentioned as a year of increase in Russia's federal government's efforts to counteract racism and xenophobia, including closer monitoring of nationalist and anti-immigration rhetoric (Kozevnikova, 2010; Markowitzh and Peshkova, 2015). However, the level of opposition to immigration of racially or ethnically different immigrants reached its previous level and even exceeded it in 2012. Kingsbury (2017) provides a possible explanation for the trend. Noting that popular xenophobia rose sharply since the fall of 2011, when the approval rating for the government fell, Kingsbury (2017) suggests that the Russian government manipulated popular xenophobia to divert the attention of the masses from societal problems.



The data also demonstrate a meaningful rise in the level of opposition to immigration of people of the same race or ethnicity between 2006 and 2016. The rise between 2010 and 2012 was especially notable. Curiously, such a rise coincides with Putin’s return to the presidency and the emphasis placed by the Kremlin on the central role of ethnic Russians in the state- and nation-building project (Blakkisrud, 2016). During his 2012 election campaign, Putin, on the one hand, denounced the radical form of Russian ethnonationalism, and on the other hand, presented a national model that “differed significantly from the nonethnic Rossiiskii model promoted by the Eltsin Administration in the 1990s, and clearly focused on the historical role – indeed, ‘mission’ of the ethnically Russian people” (Kolsto, 2016, p.6). Repeatedly referring to Russia as a multi-ethnic country, Putin eschewed the term ‘Rossiisky’ – with its explicitly civic rather than ethnic meaning, encompassing all ethnic groups who reside within the borders of the country – and chose to call the Russian people ‘Ruskii’ – a term with a clear ethnic connotation; he emphasized the dominance of Russian culture in the country’s identity and portrayed the ethnic Russians as ‘state-forming people’ that ‘unite and bind’ the civilization (Torbakov, 2015).

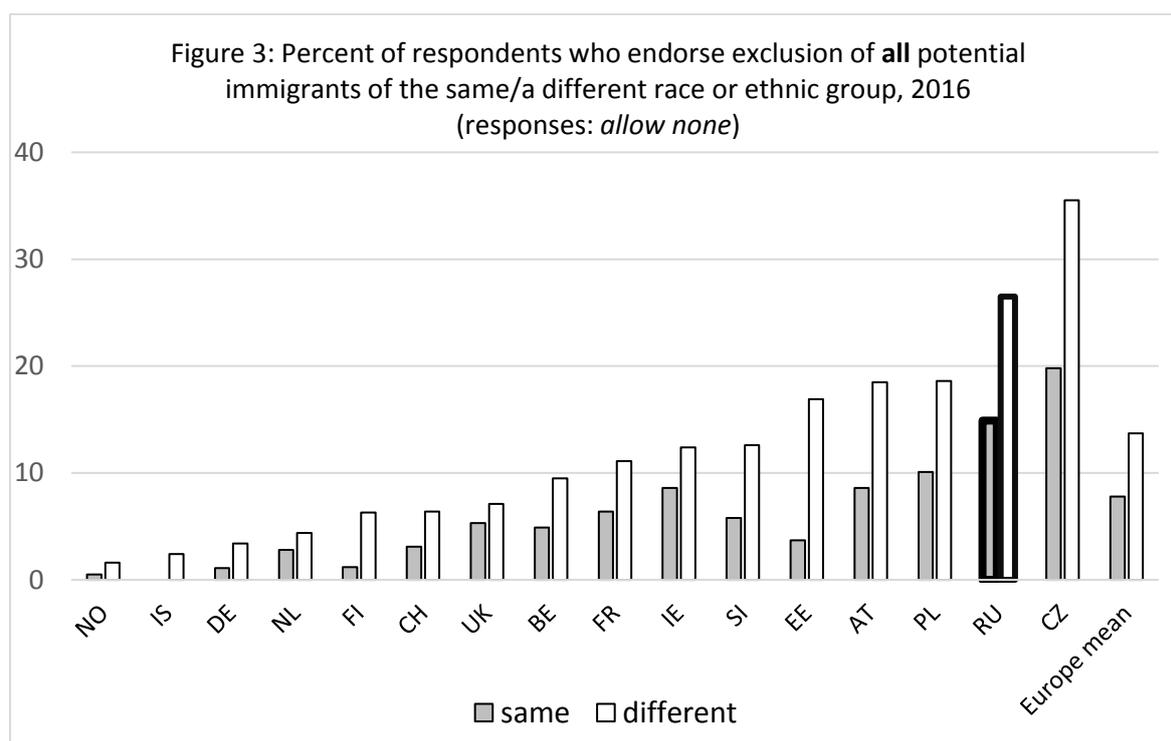
The further 2016 increase in opposition toward immigrants from the same race and ethnic group as most of Russia's people should be considered in light of the recent large inflow of Ukraine nationals to Russia. Following the 2014-2015 Eastern Ukraine armed conflict, the first Ukraine refugees to Russia were welcomed in the country and met with popular support and help. However, as the numbers of Ukraine refugees grew, and the authorities found themselves unable to meet their needs, the attitudes of host society members toward the refugees became less supportive. Furthermore, in recent years, attitudes toward Ukraine migrants, in general, deteriorated in Russia, despite a long tradition of viewing Ukraine migrants as desirable neighbours (Mukomel, 2017).

In general, the notable increase in exclusionary attitudes toward potential immigrants of the same race and ethnicity (as most of Russia's people) along with a slight change in such attitudes toward ethnically and racially different immigrants between 2006 and 2016 can be at least partially explained by a "ceiling effect." The opposition to immigration of racially or ethnically different people was already so widespread at the beginning of the period under study that it could not rise much further. By contrast, opposition to the immigration of people of the same race and ethnicity (as most of Russia's people) was much less pronounced and, thus, could rise when structural and political conditions prompted it. At the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, an economic decline and growing inequality and corruption, on the one hand, and elites' and mass media campaigns blaming the migrant population for societal ills, on the other, (Kingsbury, 2017) provided fertile ground for the growth of exclusionary attitudes toward potential immigrants.

#### *Russia from a Cross-National Comparative Perspective*

In order to put the level of opposition to immigration in Russia into a cross-national comparative perspective, I display in Figure 3 the level of opposition to immigration among non-immigrant ethnic majority members in all European countries that took part in the

European Social Survey in 2016. To obtain the highest possible level of cross-country comparability, I limit the comparative analysis to the most extreme and straightforward response category: ‘allow none’. Figure 3 presents the percent of majority-group members that are not willing to admit any immigrant of the same race or ethnic group (as most people in a country), and the percent of majority group members that are not willing to admit any immigrant of a different race or ethnic group.



The data demonstrate that the level of the most extreme support for exclusion of both groups (racially/ethnically same and racially/ethnically different immigrants) is meaningfully higher in Russia than that in all other Western and Eastern European countries, with one exception – Czech Republic (where the level of extreme opposition to immigration surpasses that found in Russia). These results are in line with previous research done on data collected in the first years of the 21st century (Gorodzeisky et al., 2015; Gudkov, 2006).

## Conclusions and Discussion

The article examined public opposition to immigration (i.e. exclusionary attitudes) and its sources in contemporary Russia. In addition to general opposition to immigration, the study focused on two types of exclusionary attitudes: endorsement of exclusion on the basis of national membership, and as such, directed toward all foreigners, and endorsement of exclusion on the basis of race or ethnicity, which is directed only at racially or ethnically different (from most of the country's population) immigrants.

The analysis reveals that a quarter of the ethnic-Russian majority population are classified as 'racial exclusionists'; they are willing to admit immigrants who share a race or ethnic group with most of Russia's people but object to the admission of racially or ethnically different immigrants – in other words, the non-Slavic/non-European immigrant population. Another 42 percent of ethnic-Russians are classified as 'total exclusionists'; they endorse the exclusion of all foreigners (i.e. non-nationals), regardless of their race or ethnicity. The high share of 'racial exclusionists' among the ethnic majority is especially alarming for ethnic relationships in a historically multi-ethnic society with a substantial proportion of non-immigrant ethnic minorities such as Russia. According to the 2010 Russian Federation Census, the country population composes 80.9 percent of ethnic Russians and 19.1 percent of ethnic minorities, which represents more than 180 different ethnic groups (FSSS, 2018). Moreover, the share of the Slavic (Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian) population in the country has been shrinking in the past few decades, and demographers predict its further decline (Kupiszewski, Kupiszewski and Brunarska, 2017).

Multivariate analysis demonstrates that, as in the case of attitudes toward immigrants (Gorodzeisky et al., 2015; Bessudnov, 2016, Gorodzeisky and Glikman, 2017), the role of individuals' socio-economic position and demographic attributes in the formation of general opposition to immigration among ethnic majority population in Russia is very modest.

Nonetheless, one should note the substantial negative effect of education on opposition to immigration. The effect of Eastern Orthodoxy warrants special attention. The findings of the present study reveal that adherents of Eastern Orthodoxy are less likely to oppose immigration in general, whereas previous studies found that Eastern Orthodox attitudes towards immigrants are not different (Bessudnov, 2016) or even more negative than attitudes of those who do not identify themselves with any religious denomination (Gorodzeisky et al., 2015; Gorodzeisky and Glikman, 2017).

Consistent with expectations, perceptions of collective (state) vulnerability play an important role in shaping opposition to immigration. These findings are in line with the theoretical argument suggesting that in Russia, a society under the process of reconsideration of national identity, accompanied by economic instability and nationalistic resentment rhetoric (Breslauer, 2009; Blakkisrud, 2016), the perceived vulnerability of the collective plays a more important role in shaping attitudes toward outsiders than self-interests, as reflected in individuals' demographic characteristics and socio-economic position (Gorozeisky and Glikman, 2017). In this matter, the results also echo Gudkov's argument (2007, 2013) that the high level of xenophobia in Russia can be at least partially explained by a general sense of dissatisfaction with the current economic and social situation in the country, discontent with government functioning and the humiliation that citizens of the former USSR – an ex-superpower – may experience as a collective.

The findings also reveal that Russians who prioritize universalism as a value are less likely to support opposition to immigration. The conformity–tradition value, however, does not exert an effect on attitudes toward immigration in the Russian context. It is interesting to note that previous research in European countries has repeatedly shown the high relevance of both values, namely, universalism and conformity-tradition, in predicting opposition to immigration (Davidov et al., 2008; Davidov et al., 2014).

Further multivariate analysis demonstrated some differences between the populations of ‘racial exclusionists’ and ‘total exclusionists.’ Eastern Orthodox Russians are more likely than their compatriots without any religious denomination to become ‘racial exclusionists’ (versus ‘total exclusionists’). Eastern Orthodoxy in post-socialist Russia is a sign of cultural rather than religious identity (Warhola and Lehning, 2007), while one of the main aims of the Russian Orthodox church is to foster the ethnic Russian national identity (Shnirelman, 2012). It is reasonable, then, that Eastern Orthodox individuals, by self-declaration, tend to oppose immigration of only ethnically or racially different immigrants, who are perceived as ultimate cultural outsiders by the ethnic majority collective in Russia and, thus, as a threat to its cultural homogeneity and national identity. At the same time, ethnic Russians, who do not identify themselves with any religious denomination, are more likely to oppose immigration of all foreigners, regardless of their race or ethnicity. The findings also show that perceived collective (state) vulnerability in socio-economic arena increases exclusionary attitudes that are directed ‘indiscriminately’ at all foreigners (as compared to those directed only at racial/ethnic minorities). Indeed, those who view their collective as vulnerable tend to react with opposition to admitting any immigrants, regardless of their race or ethnic origin; in other words, they are more likely to become ‘total exclusionists’ versus ‘racial exclusionists’.

It is important to note that the empirical results of the study are based on the statistical analysis of cross-sectional data that do not allow for a full determination of the temporal relationship between variables and restrict the making of causal inferences. In light of these analytical limitations, I hope that the conclusions of the study will be further tested in future research through systematic examination of a longitudinal panel data and/or via experimental designs.

There are, of course, additional potential sources of opposition to immigration in Russia that are beyond the scope of this paper, such as a perceived criminal threat often associated

with immigration (Ceobanu 2011; McLaren and Jonhson 2007) or exposure to negative media coverage of immigration (McLaren et al., 2017; Schlueter and Davidov 2013). Such sources represent another promising line of further study. Opposition to immigration and its sources in Russia deserves special attention considering the extremely high level of exclusionary attitudes in the country and Russia's labour market reliance on migrant labour. As the present article shows, while the forces that drive opposition to immigration in Russia resemble the forces that drive anti-immigrant sentiment, the two categories do not overlap.

In the past decade (2006-2016), the very high level of opposition to immigration of racially and ethnically different people increased slightly, while the initially lower level of opposition toward immigration of people from the same racial or ethnic group (as most of Russia's people) rose significantly. Evidently, during the past decade, a growing share of ethnic Russians objected to immigration as a phenomenon regardless of the racial/ethnic origin of potential immigrants. The economic crisis, nationalistic resentment rhetoric and Eastern Ukraine conflict contributed to such a trend. Putting Russians' opposition to immigration in a cross-national comparative perspective illuminates the great popularity of exclusionary attitudes in the country: in 2016, the level of objection to admitting any immigrant in Russia was substantially higher than in almost all other European countries and twice as high, on average, as in Europe.

Interpreting the findings in wider terms, it is reasonable to suggest that the very high level of opposition to immigration in general along with a recent rise in opposition to immigration toward people of the same race or ethnicity as most of Russia's people (e.g. Slavic and European origin) reflects a tendency toward a narrowing of boundaries for the evolving national identity in contemporary Russia and widespread appeal among ethnic Russians to 'protect' and tighten the borders of the collective membership. The notably salient role of perceived state's/collective's vulnerability in promoting exclusionary attitudes, especially

those based on the grounds of national membership, as compared to the role of self-interests (reflected in socio-economic characteristics or in motivational goals), provides additional support for the argument.

Extensive opposition to immigration across different economic, labour-force position and ideological strata of non-immigrant ethnic Russians toward culturally remote as well as culturally close immigrants demonstrates that the ethnic majority population of Russian society is struggling to incorporate any more foreigners and expects the state to implement strict immigration policies. Considering that there is still a net migration increase in Russia – by a quarter of a million in 2016 and slightly less in 2017, according to the census – the situation may lead to a further growth of tension between immigrant and local populations if serious efforts on the political and educational levels are not taken to facilitate immigrant incorporation and to foster relationships between locals and immigrants as well as between the different ethnic groups in the country.

Notes:

1. All regression models presented further in the paper were also re-estimated without value variables. Their results are presented in the Supplementary materials (Table S1 and Table S2).
2. The analysis is presented here and further implemented using the appropriate weight procedure recommended by ESS.

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