

The Wind of Change? Two Mechanisms of Protest Mobilization in Russia 2011-12. An Instrumental Variable Approach

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Introduction

- Context and Research Puzzle
- Competing Theories and Hypotheses
- Data and Method
- Results and Discussion

Context and Research Question



Figure: Rally at the Sakharova Avenue in December 2011

Competing Theories and Hypotheses



The Murder on the Orient Express

Why these protests occur only in 2011? What is the mechanism that lies behind this contention?

Competing Theories and Hypotheses

The List of Suspects:

- Echo of economic crisis of 2008-9? (Dmitriev and Belanovsky 2011, Rogov 2011)
- Rising middle class? (Ross 2015)
- International linkage and leverage? (Bunce and Wolchik 2010)
- Connective power of Internet? (White and Rose 2013, Polischuk et al. 2014)
- Electoral malpractice and a lack of procedural justice? (Rose and Sedziaka 2015)

Data and Method

Data

New Russia Barometer surveys, December 2011 and March 2012

Method

Ordered logit and OLS regression + IV regression

Dependent VAR

Approval of anti-regime protests (4-item Likert scale)

Main Independent VARs

Perception of fraud, political leanings

Analysis. Descriptive Statistics

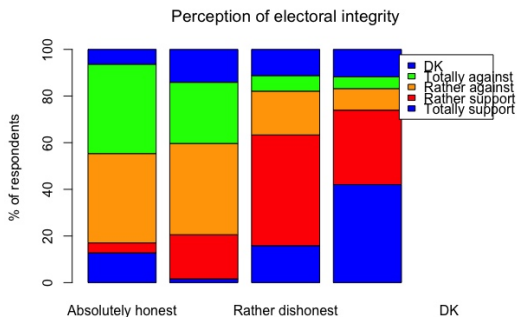


Figure: Approval of post-electoral protests by perception of malpractice.
Source: New Russia Barometer 2011. $N=654$

Analysis. b-coefficients compared

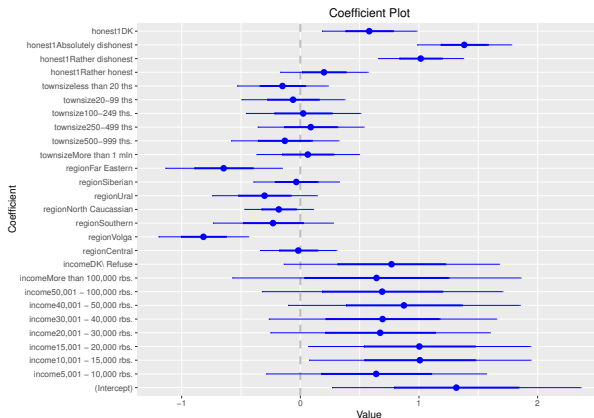


Figure: Approval of post-electoral protests by perception of malpractice.

Analysis. Regression estimates.

table:					
	leanings (1)	anti-West (2)	Support for protests pressure (3)	media (4)	frank (5)
Disapprove of Putin	0.34*** (0.12)				
URLsupport					
Support but no more than the other	0.16(0.14)				
Indifferent	0.35** (0.14)				
To some extent I am against	0.48*** (0.16)				
Against this party	0.49*** (0.17)				
Never heard about this party	0.50 (0.78)				
Sympathy toward opposition					
Rather yes	-0.12(0.27)				
Rather no	-0.62** (0.26)				
Certainly no	-0.81*** (0.26)				
DK	-0.52** (0.26)				
The main reason why people protest					
Influenced by the West		-0.51*** (0.17)			
They want more democracy in the		0.41*** (0.14)			
Do you discuss political issues?					
Yes, but I don't participate			-0.30** (0.14)		
No, they are not discussed			-0.28** (0.12)		
No			-0.22* (0.13)		
Persuaded to vote?					
By whom No			-0.23* (0.19)		
By power authorities No			-0.52*** (0.17)		
Primary source of news					
Russian private TV channels				0.53*** (0.16)	
Internet				0.11 (0.17)	
Foreign sources of news				-0.20 (0.44)	
State newspapers				-0.37 (0.40)	
Private newspapers				0.73 (0.63)	
Radio				0.19 (0.30)	
Family, friends, neighbors				-0.28 (0.45)	
internet_news				0.26* (0.15)	
internet_country				-0.39** (0.17)	
internet_communication				0.14 (0.14)	
Ykontakte				-0.04 (0.14)	
Odnoklassniki				-0.27* (0.14)	
Facebook				-0.18 (0.22)	
Rather honest					-0.01 (0.19)
Rather dishonest					0.48** (0.21)
Absolutely dishonest					0.54** (0.25)
Rather satisfied					0.36*** (0.14)
Rather unsatisfied					0.33** (0.17)
Totally unsatisfied					0.45*** (0.21)
Constant	2.97*** (0.71)	2.77*** (0.75)	3.92*** (0.79)	3.05*** (0.78)	2.56*** (0.88)
Observations	334	336	336	336	283
R ²	0.40	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.55
Adjusted R ²	0.39	0.26	0.24	0.24	0.49

Endogeneity? Instrumental Variable Approach

How to instrument perception of fraud?

A variable z is called an instrument or **instrumental variable** for the regressor x in the scalar regression model

$$y = x + u$$

if (1) z is uncorrelated with the error u ; and (2) z is correlated with the regressor x .

Instruments:

- How widespread do you think bribe-taking and corruption are? (q7a, NRB 2011)
- Do you think that the Federal Government controls the situation in Chechnya now? (q99A, NRB 2012)
- The speeches of what public figures, scientists, journalists, writers, actors, or culture representatives do you remember the most? Stanislav Govorukhin mentioned (q78.38, NRB 2012)

Analysis 2. IV Regression estimates.

Table: 2SLS vs OLS Regression Estimates: Approval of Protests in December 2011

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Support for protests	
	OLS (1)	2SLS (2)
Perception of electoral malpractice	0.45*** (0.05)	0.46** (0.18)
Disapprove of Putin's performance	0.40*** (0.09)	0.40** (0.17)
Assessment of economic situation	0.01 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.06)
Sex	-0.15** (0.07)	-0.13* (0.07)
Age	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)
Education	0.004 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Region	-0.04** (0.02)	-0.04** (0.02)
Constant	1.16*** (0.25)	1.16*** (0.34)
Observations	573	550
R ²	0.31	0.31
Adjusted R ²	0.30	0.30
Residual Std. Error	0.82 (df = 565)	0.82 (df = 542)
F Statistic	36.33*** (df = 7; 565)	

Note:

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01



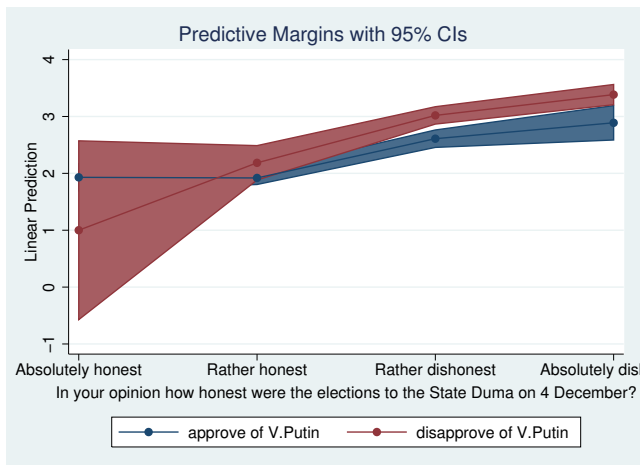
Table: 2SLS vs OLS Regression Estimates: March 2012

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Support for protests	
	OLS (1)	2SLS (2)
Perception of electoral malpractice	0.56*** (0.08)	0.71** (0.28)
Sex	-0.16 (0.13)	-0.20 (0.13)
Age	-0.01 (0.004)	-0.01 (0.004)
Education	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.04 (0.04)
Disapprove of Putin's performance	-0.03 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
Constant	1.91*** (0.39)	1.68** (0.66)
Observations	155	145
R ²	0.29	0.23
Adjusted R ²	0.27	0.21
Residual Std. Error	0.78 (df = 149)	0.79 (df = 139)
F Statistic	12.22*** (df = 5; 149)	

Note:

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

Predicted support for protests: Interaction effect



Discussion

- There is a causal link between perception of electoral malpractice and procedural justice in general
- Alternative explanations do a worse job explaining the outcome
- There are two major mechanisms of mobilization:
 - Core participants (anti-regime sentiments+perceived fraud)
 - Swing participants (no clear political leanings+perceived fraud)

Thank you for your attention! Margarita.Zavadskaya@EUI.EU or
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