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Social capital puzzle: Explaining little interpersonal trust toward strangers in contemporary Russia

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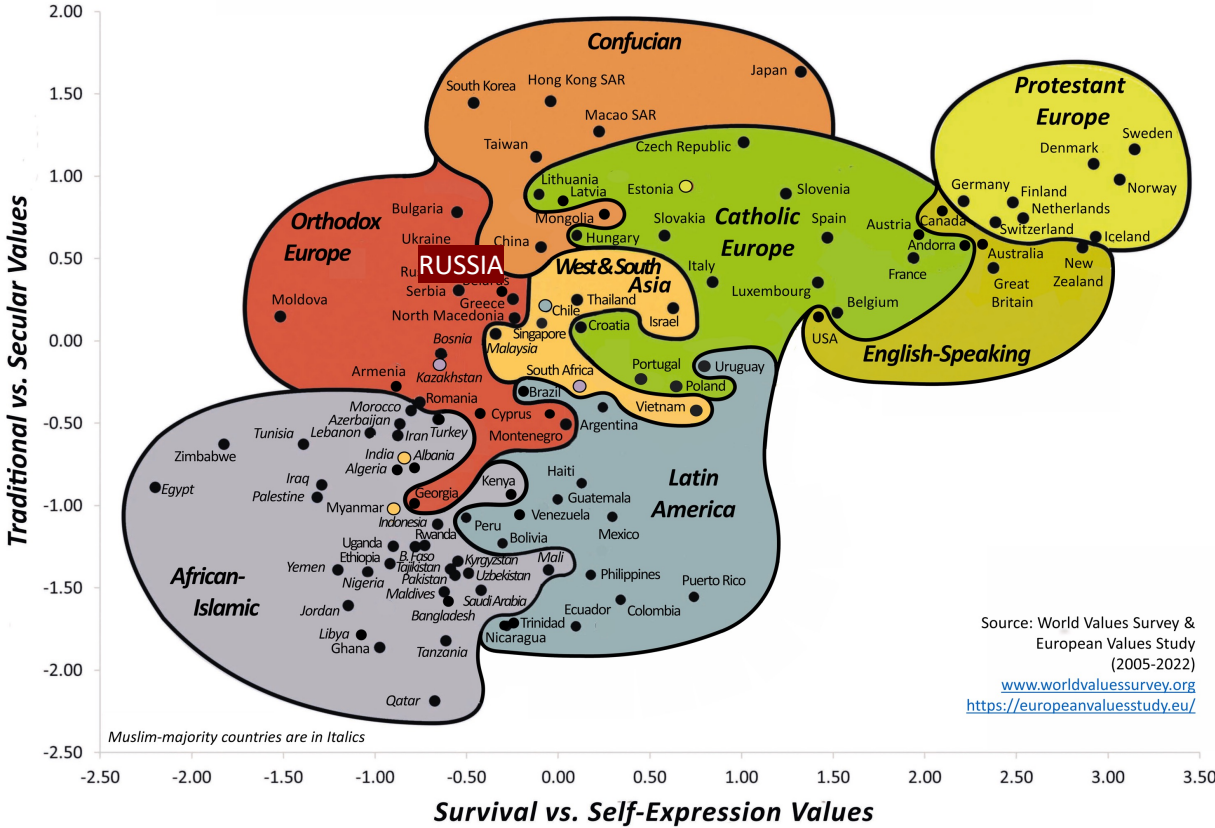
Draft version

Motivation

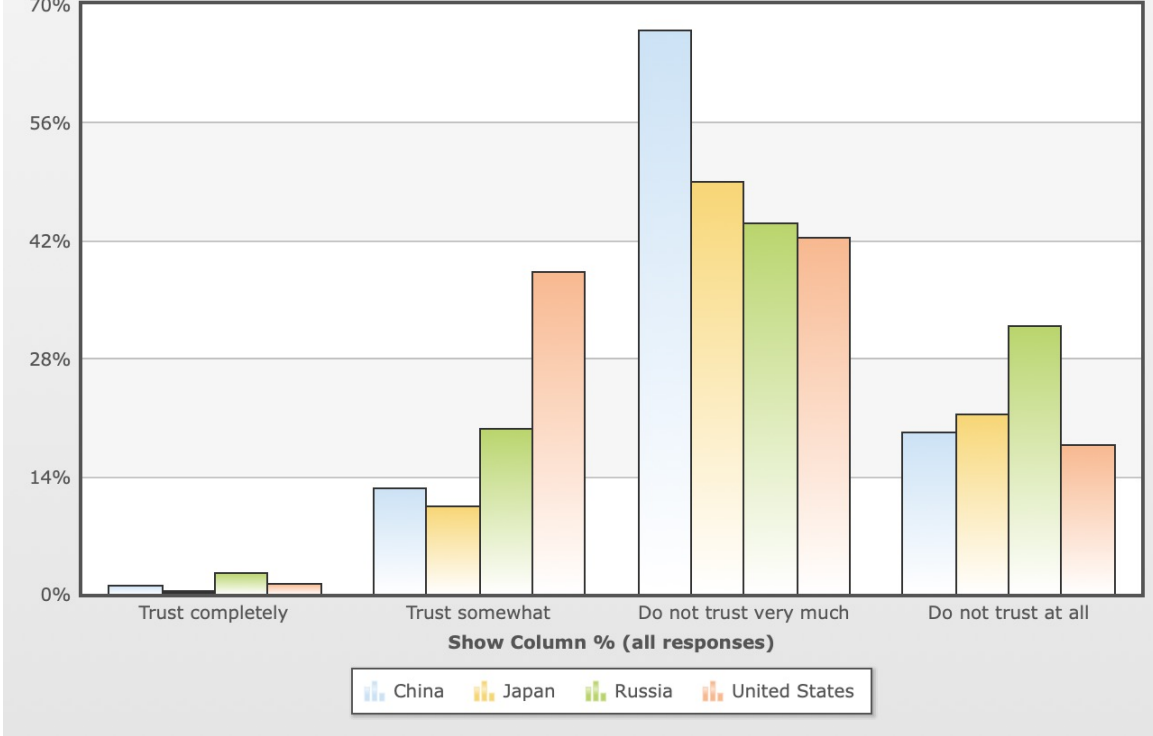
- Trust is one of the principal conditions of social relationships and the most important asset used by an individual
- Trust helps to make everyday life stable and secure (Sztompka, 2018)
- **Interpersonal trust** is the confidence that other people will not intentionally cause harm and, where possible, will consider the interests of others
- **Russia**
 - Controversial landscape of interpersonal trust; it varies from extremely high level of trust to family and friends to extremely low level of trust to strangers
 - Little interpersonal trust became a dominant social norm in new Russia

Motivation

The Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map 2022



Trust: People you meet for the first time



Source: China 2018 WVS, Japan 2019 WVS, Russia 2017 WVS, Sweden EVS, USA 2017 (11,830)

Research question

- What are the main determinants of little interpersonal trust to strangers (people you meet for the first time) in contemporary Russia?

Determinants of interpersonal trust

- Socio-demographics: Youth residing urban areas are more likely to express trust towards strangers than elders
- Social attitudes towards state: Those who support state tend are more likely to trust towards strangers
- Life satisfaction: When people are satisfied with their lives, they are more likely to express trust
- Optimism. The more optimistic Russians tend to trust more to strangers (Kuchenkova, 2022)

Data

All-Russia representative survey

Period: March, 2022

Method: CATI Stratified RDD-sample method

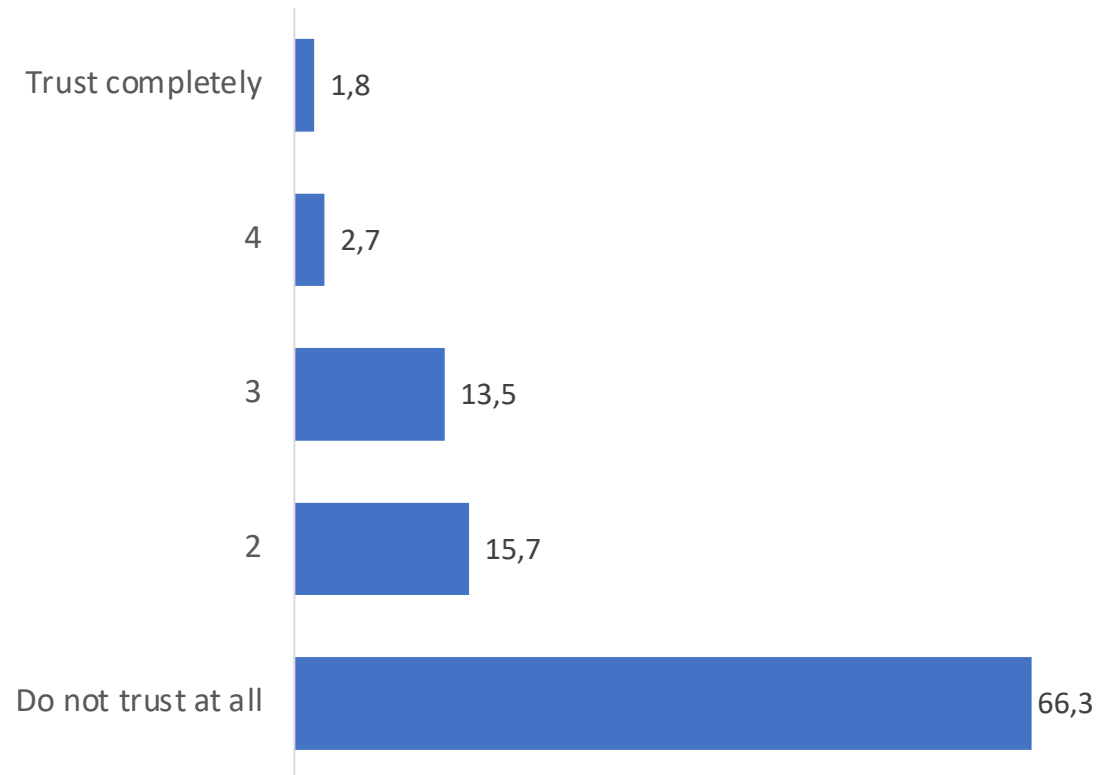
The sample is geographically stratified by eight federal districts, identical for the samples of mobile and land phones, and based on time-zone markers

The sample is implicitly stratified by every single region and then by telephone operator

Sample size: 1,700 individuals aged 18 and above

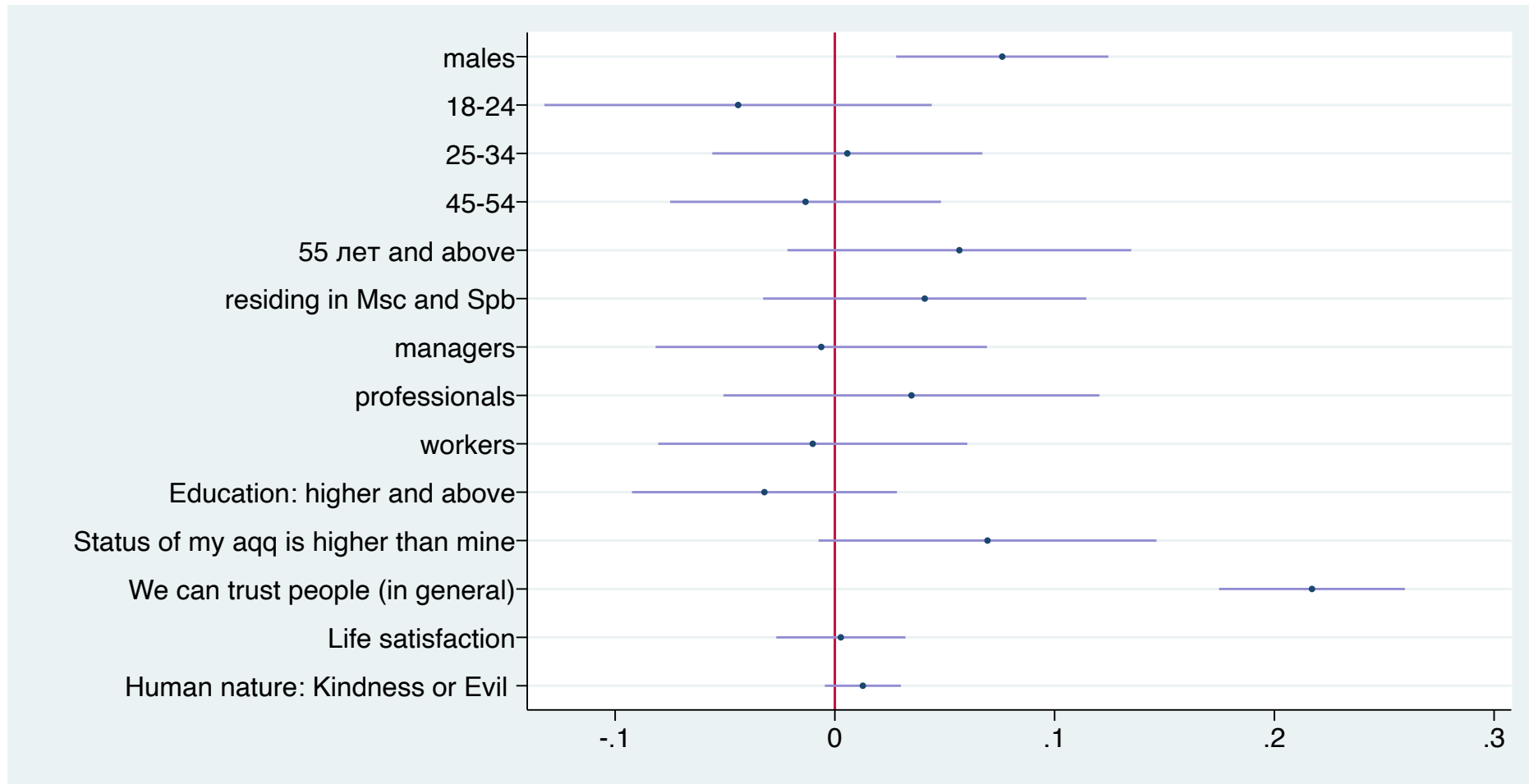
Interpersonal trust towards strangers

People you meet for the first time, %



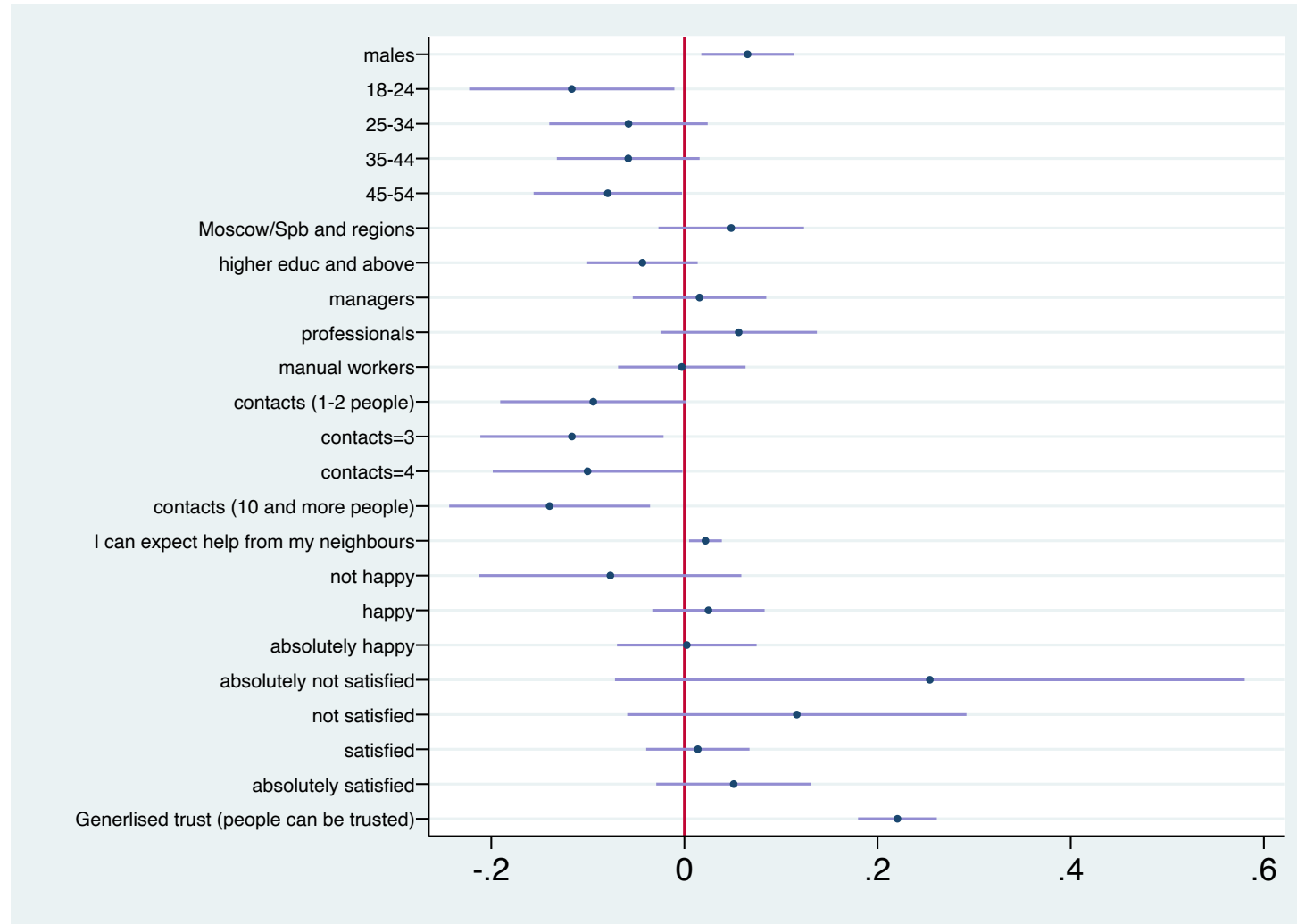
Trust toward strangers: what are the determinants?

AMEs with 95%CI



Trust toward strangers: what are the determinants?

AMEs with 95%CI



Conclusion

- Russia remains a country with low level of social capital
- As compared to Japan, Russia seems to be a country of *distrust*, whereas Japan is a country of *low trust*
- In general, males are much more likely to trust strangers than females, which means that males might be more responsible for transition of cognitive aspects of social capital into Russian families
- The more likely Russians trust people (in general), the more likely they trust people whom they meet the first time. It means that general trust may play important role in solving the puzzle of interpersonal distrust in a society