

Support for Territorial Integrity: Prosperity, Culture, and External Threat

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Support for territorial integrity

- Why do states sometimes fight secessionist movements and sometimes settle their differences peacefully?
- Previous researchers emphasized the role of elites (Cunningham 2014; Spruyt 2005), institutions (Bunce 1999; Hale 2004), and other structural factors (Walter 2006)
- This paper explores **the popular underpinnings of the core state's reaction to secession**

Cultural differences and public goods

- Most secessionist claims involve some cultural differential between the core state's population and the secessionist group
- Public goods provision is lower in culturally heterogeneous societies (Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly 1999)
- Individuals are reluctant to share their resources with those who are unlikely to reciprocate (Habyarimana et al. 2007)

Valuable shared resources

- Members of the secessionist group might not reciprocate after taking the valuable shared resource
- The more scarce the valuable economic resource is, the more protective of it the population of the core state should be and less willing to share it \implies
- The more concerned about the shared resource, the more willing to part with the secessionist region the population of the core state should be

Cultural differences and biases

- Human brain processes differently *out-group* and *in-group* individuals (Harris and Fiske 2006, 2007)
- Depicting cultural others as “subhuman” lowers the psychological costs associated with inflicting extreme hardship on them (Bandura et al. 1996)
- The greater the perception of cultural distance, the more willing the core state population should be to support territorial integrity of the state

External threat

- External threat allows governments to mobilize individuals (Gibler and Miller 2014; Gibler and Tir 2014)
- But individuals themselves should have greater propensity for mobilization too when they sense a foreign threat
- Secessionist regions are both “cushions” against foreign invasion and a war “resource”
- The more fearful of a foreign power individuals in the core state are, the more willing they should be to hold on to the secessionist region

Survey data from the South Caucasus

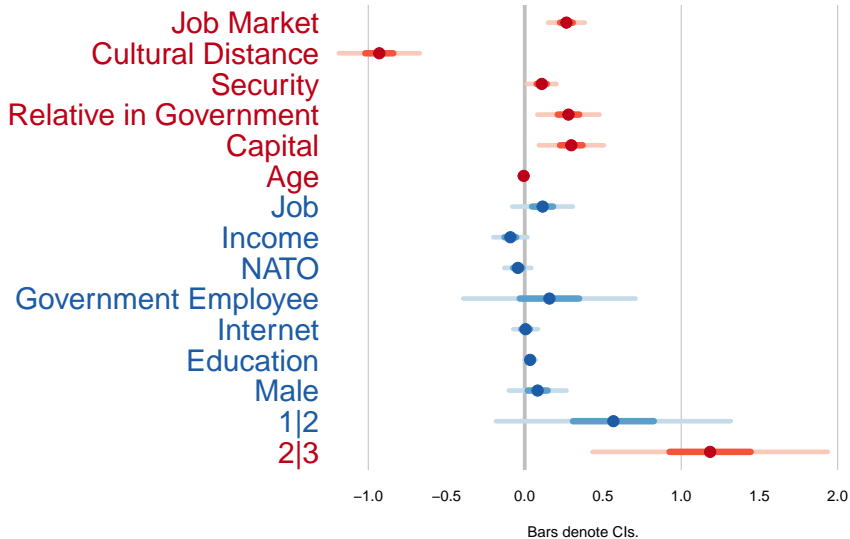
- Secessions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from Georgia, Nagorny Karabakh from Azerbaijan
- 2009 Caucasus Barometer survey
- Core state populations of Georgia and Azerbaijan, $\sim 3,800$ observations

The dependent variable

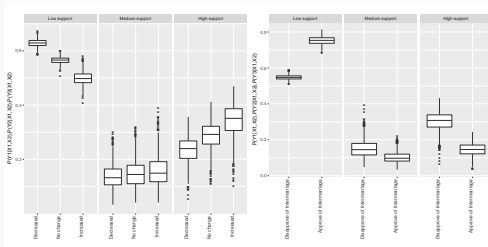
- “What is the most important issue, the country faces?”
- “What is the second most important issue, the country faces?”
- Support for territorial integrity

Independent variables

- Valuable scarce resource – Job availability
- Subjective cultural distance – the view of intermarriage with the members of the secessionist group
- External threat – the need to counter Russian influences in the country
- Control variables: having a job, income, NATO, government employee, relative of a government employee, internet, lives in the capital, age, education, gender

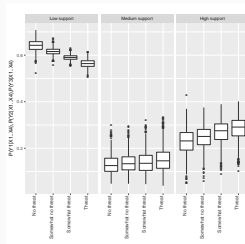


Marginal effects



(a) Shared resource

(b) Distinction



(c) Security

Conclusions & future research

- The perception of cultural distance, state of the economy, and external threat affect individual support for territorial integrity and potential violent action against secessionists
- Public attitudes \neq government policies
- The role of different shared economic resources might be different
- Measurement prior to de-facto secession might yield different results

Questions?

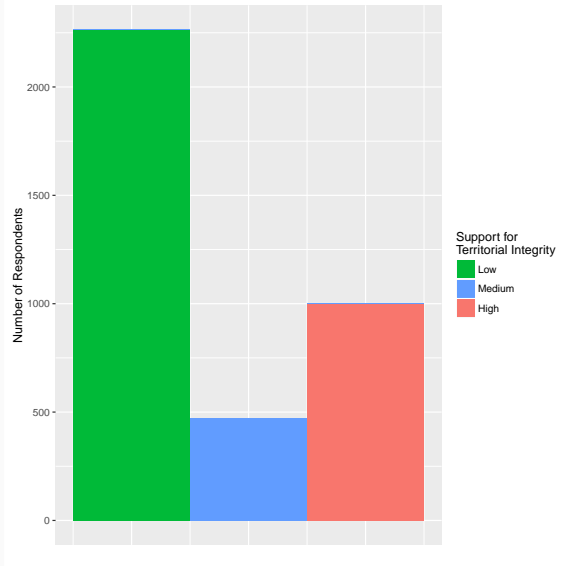
Public support for territorial integrity. Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Ordinal Models

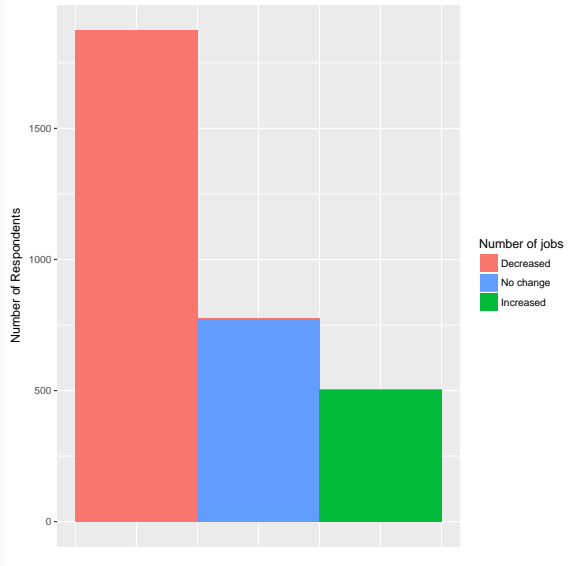
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Job Market		0.23*** (0.05)	0.27*** (0.06)
Cultural Distance		-0.81*** (0.11)	-0.93*** (0.13)
Security		0.08* (0.04)	0.11* (0.05)
Job	0.19* (0.09)		0.11 (0.10)
Income	-0.09 (0.05)		-0.09 (0.06)
NATO	0.00 (0.04)		-0.04 (0.04)
Government Employee	0.33 (0.26)		0.16 (0.28)
Relative in Government	0.39*** (0.09)		0.28** (0.10)
Internet	-0.06 (0.04)		0.01 (0.04)
Capital	0.26** (0.09)		0.30** (0.11)
Age	-0.01*** (0.00)		-0.01* (0.00)
Education	0.03 (0.02)		0.03 (0.02)
Male	0.10 (0.08)		0.08 (0.09)
1—2	0.06 (0.31)	0.59*** (0.13)	0.57 (0.38)
2—3	0.67* (0.31)	1.17*** (0.13)	1.18** (0.38)
AIC	4749.17	4771.87	3634.95
BIC	4819.45	4801.19	3718.92
Log Likelihood	-2362.59	-2380.93	-1802.48
Num. obs.	2582	2601	1993

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

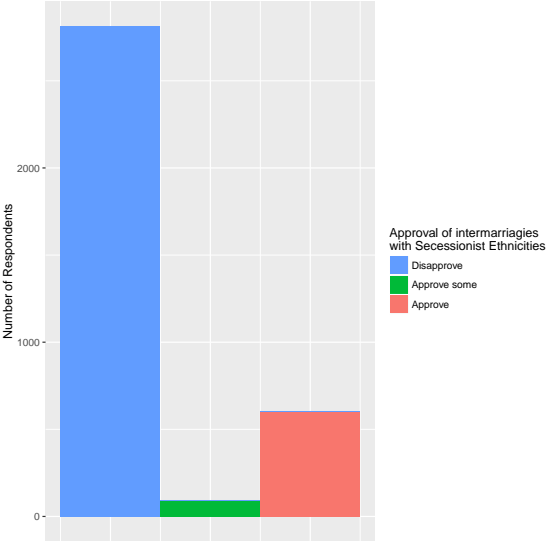
Support for Territorial Integrity (DV)



Number of Jobs for the Past Year



Approval of Inter-marriage



Country Needs to Be Protected against Russian Influence

