

# Gender Differences in Russia's Job Mobility and Its Rewards

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02 December 2019

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## Abstract

This article uses data from Russia’s Longitudinal Monitoring Survey to consider age and gender differences in the probability and consequences of quits and promotions. Russia’s relatively liberalised labour market should have high rates of job mobility. However, IMF figures suggest that mobility in the early 2010’s is on par with mobility recorded in the 1980’s. Beyond this, little has been said on who is mobile in Russia and whether mobility has any impact on wages, once personal characteristics of movers are omitted. Results show significant difference between age and gender groups regarding both exits and internal promotions. Regarding promotions, when several personal and job characteristics are held constant, instances of promotion are higher for men when compared to women. Further, age is a strong predictor of the likelihood of promotion, even among 18-35 year olds, promotions are less likely for older respondents (closer to 35) than they are for younger respondents (closer to 18). Regarding firm exits, when several personal and job characteristics are held constant, instances of exit are again higher for men when compared to women. Here too, age differences suggest that younger respondents are more likely to experience exit when compared to older respondents, even within groups of respondents aged 18-35. In general, the early stages of a respondent’s career are marked by periods of high mobility in Russia, which is similar to the experience of young workers in other countries. However, after this period, mobility becomes increasingly unlikely. Part of this result could stem from the premiums tied to promotion. I find that after controlling for individual heterogeneity (through the use of fixed effects estimation), firm exits do not improve immediate wages although promotions contain significant wage premiums, at least in the short term. Results help to understand processes of inequality in wages and conditions that occur due to sorting, and the importance of promotions (internal job changes with the same employer) as “life chances” which improve earnings in the immediate sense. Gender differences in securing these life chances may help to understand wider gender gaps in earnings, which emerge later.

## Introduction

Russia’s liberalised economy gave workers more employment options and a wider spectrum of potential wages and conditions (IMF 1991; Clarke 2002, 2000; Kozyreva and Sabirianova Peter 2015). As a result, theorists assumed that workers would increase their job mobility in order to correct their earnings and conditions (Keith and McWilliams 1995, 1997; Cha 2014; Clarke 2002). Such corrections are an important part of *job searching* and *job matching* theories of inequality (Schmelzer 2012; Schmelzer and others 2011). Despite these predictions, Russian job mobility rates in 2010 were lower than they were in the 1980’s under the Soviet Union (IMF 1991). Although the labour market saw significant churn immediately after reforms in the 1990’s, this rate gradually declined and returned to previous levels, with workers preferring to remain in the same job with the same employer (Clarke 2000). As a result, Russia presents an interesting puzzle to researchers, one where wage inequality is relatively high, but job mobility is relatively low.

This article has two aims. First, we will focus on predicting mobility, estimating group differences in who moves and who remains in the same job with the same employer. Do gender differences in Russia’s job mobility exist, and if they do are these the product of gender, or gender differences in occupational sorting or firm size? Further, is mobility confined only to younger workers, or do certain occupations contain mobility patterns that cannot be explained by age differences between workers alone? Second, having established these differences, we consider the effects of job mobility on wages. Does mobility reward workers, in that after we consider the characteristics of those most likely to move, do premiums exist in the earnings of workers, and do those differ by mobility within and between firms? Again, I pay attention to the gender differences in the effects of mobility on earnings, asking whether men and women benefit equally from the change.

We will use the Russia Longitudinal Monitoring Survey (RLMS) throughout as a representative sample of the country’s workforce. This approach has two strengths which are relevant to the wider discussion of job mobility. First, the survey explicitly measures firm exits and promotions which occurred in the last twelve months. Previous authors discussing mobility often operationalise promotions and exits in complex ways (Kalleberg and Mastekaasa 2001; Keith and McWilliams 1995, 1997). Second, by using longitudinal data we will focus on the effects of mobility on wages, instead of comparing the wages of movers to non-movers (Cha 2014; Reichelt and Abraham 2017).

The article has three main findings . . . summarise here.

The article is structured as follows. The first section summarises the theoretical literature on job mobility. The second section summarises the empirical findings between age, gender, and job mobility. This section also presents Russia as an important case in the studies of job mobility. The third section summarises the data and the approach of estimating the likelihood of mobility, and the effect of mobility. Section four presents the results, while a brief discussion concludes the article.

## Review

### Job searching and Job matching

Studies of job mobility rely on two theoretical approaches, *job-searching* and *job-matching*. Both suggest that poor work environments either from inadequate pay or inadequate conditions, push workers to search for new positions (Kalleberg and Mastekaasa 2001; Gesthuizen and Dagevos 2008; Schmelzer and others 2011). The *job searching* approach considers the *Reservation Wage*. This is the minimum wage a worker accepts before moving to a new position, given their skill set. *Reservation wage X* draws employees out of unemployment and is the minimum wage that he or she will accept before taking a job. *Reservation wage Y* where ( $X < Y$ ) draws employees to new positions either within or between firms; it is the minimum wage that a worker will accept before changing positions. If a previously unemployed worker accepts *Wage X* that is below *Wage Y*, they are assumed to continue searching until they secure *Wage Y* (Schmelzer 2010; Burdett 1978). *Wage Y* is typically greater than *Wage X* for several reasons including the fact that job-searching is costly to workers. Most importantly however, workers searching for new positions have access to wider networks of information and wider knowledge about possible reservation wages. There may be gender differences in these networks, which can lead to differences in reservation wages after the change.

On the other hand, the *job-matching* approach is one where workers take time to evaluate whether they have a good amntch between their skills and their tasks at work. Since work is an experience good, workers must try several jobs before finding a match. The large rates of mobility that workers see in the early stages of their career, is them navigating the labour market, trying individual employers and jobs and comparing their experience with rprevious experiences (Sørensen 1977; Thurow 1975).

How do the theories above explains the large differences in mobility between workers? Both understand that workers are most mobile in the early stages of their career. However, in the job searching approach, individuals try to secure their reservation wages as they establish themselves in the labour market and gain the experience and networks needed to evaluate new positions. As they gradually close the gap between their given wage and their reservation wage, they become less mobile (Sørensen 1977, 1975; Kalleberg and Sørensen 1979). The job-matching approach is slightly different in that it does not expect a wage premium tied to mobility, only that the subjectively evaluated match between a worker and her position should improve following mobility. This approach also anticipates the large rate of mobility in the early stages of a person's career, but in this mechanism workers are "experiencing" the type of work they would like to do. It is possible that this mechanism affects men and women differently, in that men would be more driven by wages, and women be more driven by work life balance or their experience at work. This is likely especially true if women hold the majority of care responsibilities in the home (Keith and McWilliams 1997).

### Gender differences in mobility and its returns

#### Gender and mobility

Considering both theories together, neither explicitly notes a gender difference in job mobility. In the empirical literature too, the findings are generally mixed, even when considering young workers. Blau and Duncan (1981) find that young women are more likely to quit compared to young men in a sample of US workers. Using more recent data, Hachen (1988) finds women are less likely to exit, but are even less likely to receive promotion relative to men, even when controlling for a range of measures including share of women in an occupation.

Gesthuizen (2009) finds that women are more likely to exit the firm and more likely to secure promotion, compared to men, but that measures of workplace dissatisfaction explain both of these differences. In these results it seems that dissatisfaction is a stronger predictor of exit for women, when compared to men and that dissatisfaction with working hours and dissatisfaction with the job are stronger predictors of promotion for women when compared to men. Keith and McWilliam (1995) do not find a gender difference when predicting “economic quits”. However, they find that “family-related quits” are more common among young women, compared to young men, and that involuntary exit was more common among men than it was among women. Keith and McWilliams (1999) also note a gender difference in job searching behaviour, reporting men are more likely to explore new positions than women. Job searching behaviour was particularly important as it brought a significant wage premium for both men and women who changed jobs. In general, results tend to suggest that differences in mobility between men and women can be explained by other factors like workplace dissatisfaction.

### **Gender and returns to mobility**

The theories above also do not consider gender differences in the returns to mobility. Here too, authors have produced mixed findings, with some supporting and some refuting gender differences in returns to mobility. Keith and McWilliams (1999, 1997) reports no gender difference in the effects of job mobility on wages, assuming the mobility occurs for “economic reasons”. Gesthuizen (Gesthuizen and Dagevos 2008) also finds no significant difference between men and women in subjective premiums tied to mobility within and between firms. Kronberg (2013) finds a gender difference in mobility’s effect on earnings using US data. She notes that men gain more from a voluntary exit to a new employer when compared to women, although women see a premium also. Crucially Kronberg (2013) notes that the effect applies only to men and women in “good jobs”, characterised as those in high paying occupations with benefits and insurance.

Part of this effect may also stem from family types and other household characteristics. Cha (2014) reports a difference between single women and women with children regarding the effect of a quit on earnings. According to Cha (2014) women with children see almost no rewards after the change, compared to women without children who see significant premiums. However, since the study does not consider men, it is not possible to comment on gender differences in quit and promotion premiums. Fuller (2008) considers the effect of mobility and wages for both men and women, finding that early quits during the first five years of one’s career yield an equally positive result for both men and women. This result also emerges for early career movers with children, both men and women saw a positive increase in earnings after the change and no gender difference was detected. When Fuller (Fuller 2008) substitutes marital status for children a similar result emerges, men and women see similar returns to job mobility regardless of their marital status. In short, results suggest some premium tied to voluntary mobility exists, however, this premium appears equally likely for both men and women, according to the literature.

### **Gender and Russia’s labour market, as a case**

Most of the papers above rely on US data, and so may not apply to Russia easily. Gerber and Mayorova (2006) for example, contradict many of the findings above, reporting that throughout the 1990’s women relative to men, had higher rates of layoff and labour market exit, and higher odds of starting in low-quality jobs. Further, they find that women reported lower odds of voluntary job mobility overall, and lower odds of holding good quality jobs. In short, while Russia’s transition to a market economy may have improved women’s access to jobs, women remain at a disadvantage relative to men (Gerber and Mayorova 2006).

Separately, Clarke (2002) notes the sharp rise in wage differences most of which is located within occupations, regions, and similar positions. Clarke (2000) also notes that despite the high rates of wage inequality and job mobility in the 1990’s, job mobility has declined without a corresponding fall in wage differences. He hypothesises that Russia is a country where *“there are significant barriers to labour mobility that are preventing the erosion of these differentials”* [in wages]. Again, this large inequality in wages is particularly strange because it occurs within occupations and within regions, suggesting that workers have much to gain from local job mobility, if only in terms of wages and not other factors like housing or access to employer sponsored childcare. Clarke concludes (2000) that personal acquaintances and individual networks are particularly important in securing high wages in the wider labour market, this mechanism has led to

a “closing” of the Russian labour market since the 1990’s, making Russia a particularly interesting case for study.

## Methodology

This article uses five rounds of Russia’s Longitudinal Monitoring Survey (Rounds 20-24) as a representative and longitudinal sample of Russia’s population (Kozyreva and Sabirianova Peter 2015). This approach covers years 2011 to 2015 and avoids the European Debt Crisis, but partially includes the Russian financial crisis between 2014 and 2015. Using this sample we draw on objective measures of earnings and job mobility for men and women, we also use respondents age to consider broad age categories for young workers, middle aged workers, and older workers. We will consider two estimation techniques for both of the aims stated above. When predicting group differences in job mobility, we consider multinomial logistic regression with clustered standard errors. When estimating the effects of different types of mobility on earnings, we will use fixed-effects linear models. We will discuss each of these details in the subsections below.

## Sample

The RLMS is a longitudinal study of Russian respondents (Kozyreva and Sabirianova Peter 2015; Kozyreva, Kosolapov, and Popkin 2016). Data is collected at the household level annually. The survey contains a rich range of questions on employment and earnings, including simple measures of job mobility over the last twelve months. The survey is particularly useful to this article because both internal and external job changes are captured by the survey. I define the sample as; observations where respondents are in employment throughout the five waves; observations where respondents are not in self-employment, education, or inactivity; and observations where respondents have no missing values for job history and mobility. The final data frame takes the form of a person-year file, which ignores households and focuses on individual responses. It contains 15,700 respondents and 42,400+ observations.

## Variables

This section considers three different sets of variables; job mobility, wages, and a standard set of controls mentioned in the literature review above. The article’s definition of job mobility relies on three variables within the RLMS dataset. The first asks respondents whether they changed jobs since November of the previous year (IXNEWJOB). Using this measure we can capture the most basic form of mobility, whether respondents remain in the same job with the same employer, whether they changed jobs with their employer, and whether they changed employers. The next measure asks respondents whether they received a promotion since November of the previous year (IXPROMOT), allowing us to separate promotions from other internal moves, such as lateral changes. The final measure asks respondents whether they experienced a lateral move since November of the previous year (IXMOVOA), which allows us to capture lateral changes which occur within the same employer, but which are not promotions. As a result we are left with a four category measure of mobility, capturing respondents in the same job with the same employer, respondents who exit the firm, respondents who receive a promotion, and respondents who experience a lateral move within the same firm. One limitation of this measure is that we cannot distinguish between voluntary and involuntary firm exits. Thus we must assume that the majority of exits from a given employer are voluntary changes to a new employer.

Regarding wages, we consider monthly net wages from the respondent’s primary job (IXWAGELM). This considers monthly earnings in rubles; if respondents are paid in a different currency they are asked to convert the monthly amount to rubles. We specifically focus on wages from the main job; and ignore other measures like total monthly income (IXINCLMO). This is to capture the reservation wage mentioned above. Income from other sources like returns on savings, or returns on rental properties, do not encompass a reservation wage, and should be ignored.

Finally, we consider a set of controls for models predicting mobility and models predicting wages. The literature above notes that Russian wages tend to change quickly over time. Although the majority of authors above mention the Russian labour market of the 1990’s, it is clear that wages, in an aggregate sense, tend

to change over time. As a result we control for annual changes using survey round dummies (ROUND). Beyond this, authors mention the importance of human capital and experience; while we cannot measure a respondents full labour market experience directly, we can capture some of this effect using a respondent's age and age squared (IXAGE). Further, we note the importance of tenure as a measure of firm specific human capital, or the level of internal labour market experience reported by respondents. We capture this measure using the year the respondent started with their current employer (IXJBSYR), and the current survey year. We also want to capture "pure" mobility effects (Le Grand and Tåhlin 2002), and so we controls for occupational differences (IXILPJB8) in mobility as well as the effects of occupational mobility on wages. By "pure mobility effect" we mean the change of jobs between and within firms while remaining in the same occupation (Le Grand and Tåhlin 2002). Finally we consider whether respondents hold supervisory positions within the same occupation (IXPRISUB), in an effort to avoid changes in responsibility within the same role.

## Estimation

We will consider two sets of models throughout the article. The first predicts the likelihood of promotion or firm exit, relative to staying in the same job with the same employer. The second estimates the effects of job mobility on the log wages of respondents.

Logistic regression

$$L = \log_b\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2$$

In order to estimate the predicted effect of moving on wages we will turn to fixed effects linear regression. This formula is listed below.

$$y_{it} - \bar{y}_i = \beta(X_{it} - \bar{X}_i) + (\alpha_i - \bar{\alpha}_i) + (u_{it} - \bar{u}_i)$$

This approach models average deviation in wages ( $y_{it} - \bar{y}_i$ ) for individual  $i$  at a given time  $t$ . The model also considers person specific deviations from a set of controls, which include job mobility  $\beta(X_{it} - \bar{X}_i)$ . Importantly, the model omits the influence of person-specific errors like motivation or upbringing, and avoids individual heterogeneity tied to job mobility ( $\alpha_i - \bar{\alpha}_i$ ). The remaining level-2 errors are tied to differences over time that are not person-specific ( $u_{it} - \bar{u}_i$ ).

## Results

This section is split into three parts. First, I present gender differences in mobility, and the wages tied to certain mobility responses. Second, I explore gender differences in mobility using multinomial logistic regression. Finally, we explore the effects of mobility on earnings using fixed-effects linear regression.

### Descriptive statistics

Figure 1 considers gender differences in mobility types focusing on observations rather than individuals. Overall, respondents are largely immobile although women (0.814) are less mobile compared to men (0.762). Both men and women (0.044) are equally likely to list a promotion in a given year, although promotions are uncommon in general. Respondents are much more likely to list exiting a firm, with men (0.182) listing more exits than women (0.130). Lateral changes within the firm are the least common and do not appear to have a gender difference. Considering the confidence intervals in Figure 1, it seems gender differences are most prominent in terms of firm exits. Unfortunately we are not able to discern voluntary from involuntary exits, which are particularly important for discussions of reservation wages. However, this category, along with promotions, likely contains the job mobility which is driven by reservation wages.

Figure 2 considers the age differences tied to the changes in Figure 1. We note that younger respondents are more likely to experience promotions and exits. Both of these measures gradually decline as we consider

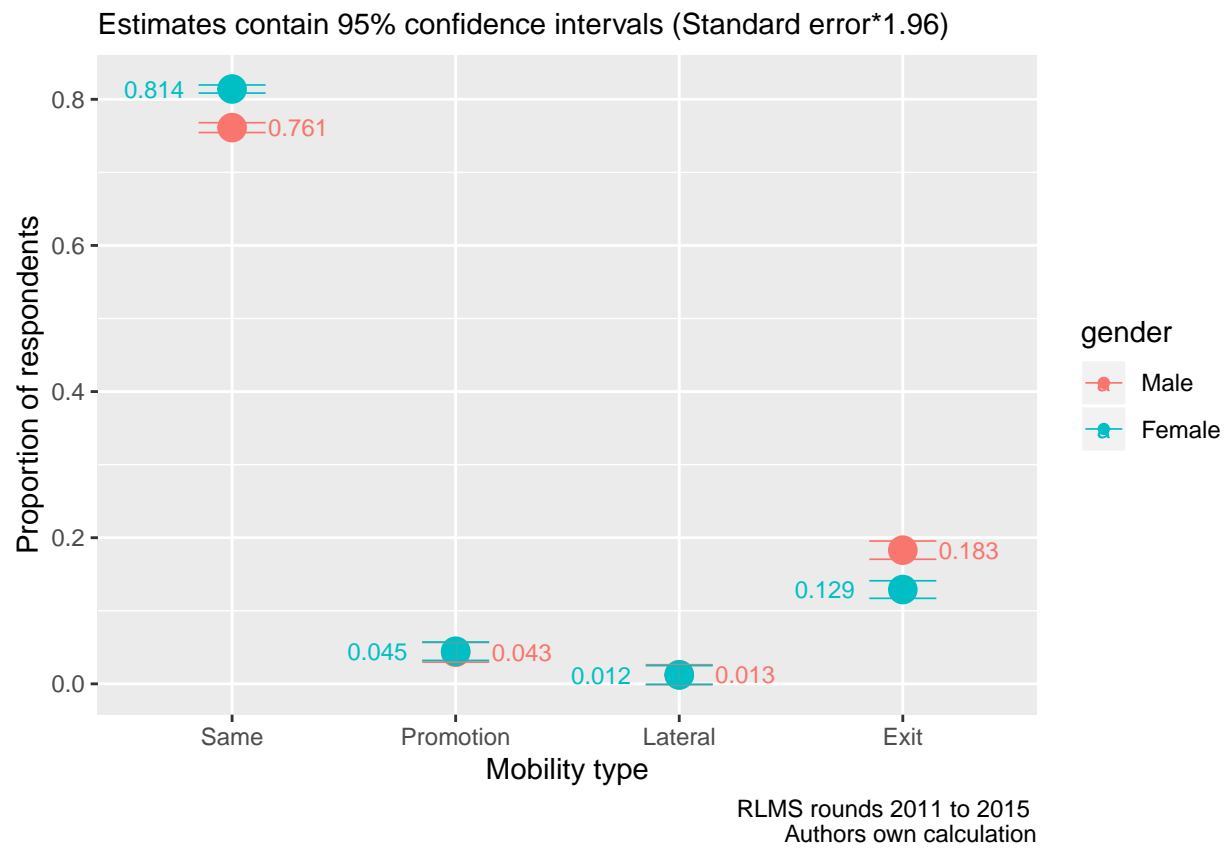


Figure 1: Proportion of respondents citing mobility type by gender

older groups. Notably, gender differences in quits dissapear for older respondents, but remain for younger respondents. This effect stems from the sharp decline in men’s likelihood of quitting.

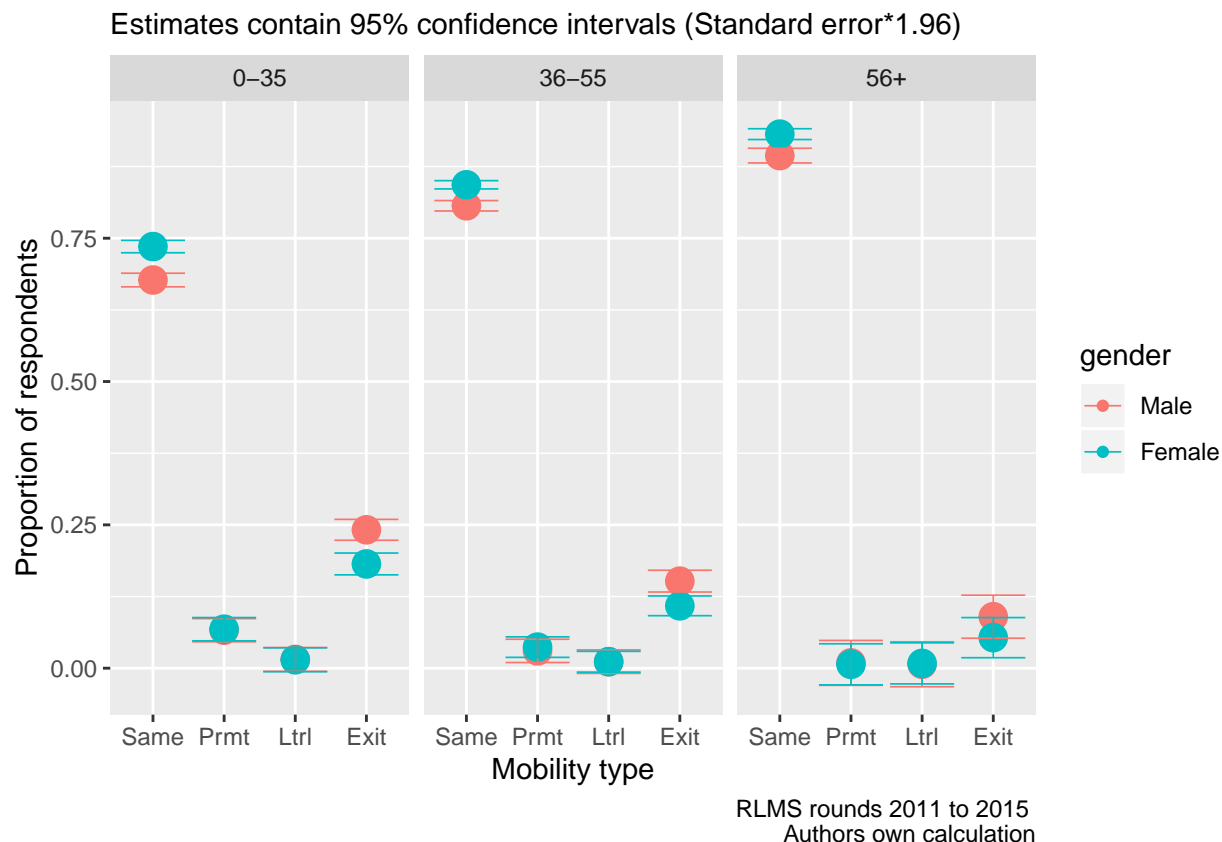


Figure 2: Age and gender differences in mobility

Generally, there is a gender and age effect tied job mobility, with younger workers being more mobile than older workers, and younger men being more mobile than younger women. We now turn to the wage differences between these groups. Importantly, we will not consider the effect of promotion or exit on wages, focusing instead on the average wage associated with a given gender and a given mobility type.

Figure 4 captures three important differences. First, there is a gender difference tied to pay, with men earning more than women in each mobility category. Second, there is a mobility difference in pay, with respondents who experience a promotion in the survey year citing significantly more in terms of average earnings, compared to respondents citing a different mobility type in a given survey year. Third, there is a pay penalty among respondents who cite employment exit, but this difference is only significant for men. This effect likely stems from women’s pay reaching a “floor”. We consider the age differences in this effect below.

Thinking of the patterns in Figure 4, respondents appear to gain the most from mobility aged 36-55, although the premium only appears to apply to men. Surprisingly, older groups report the lowest income and also the lowest return on mobility. Older women appear to make significant gains when citing promotion, however the large confidence intervals suggest this premium is not significantly different from other age groups.

## Multinomial logistic regression

We now consider some explanatory measures tied to job mobility differences.

```
## # weights: 56 (39 variable)
```



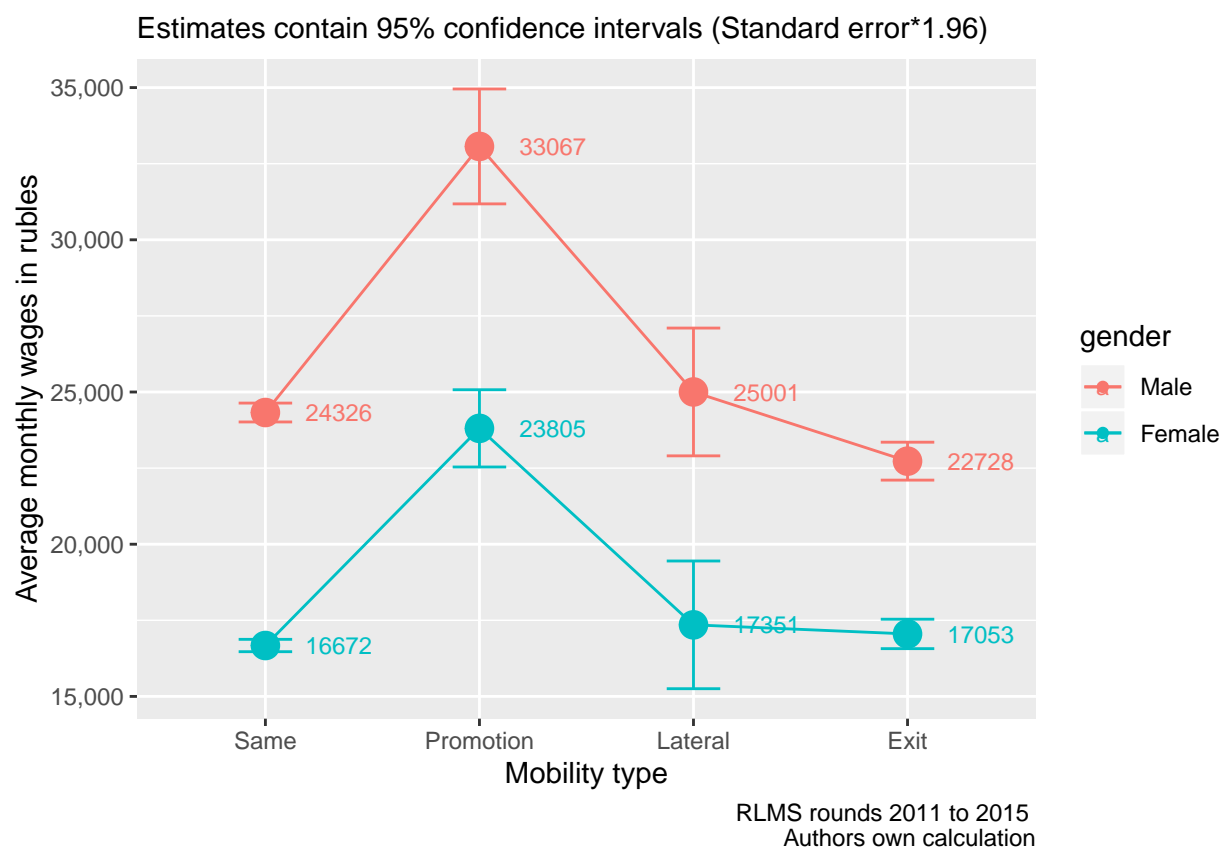


Figure 3: Wage differences between gender and mobility groups

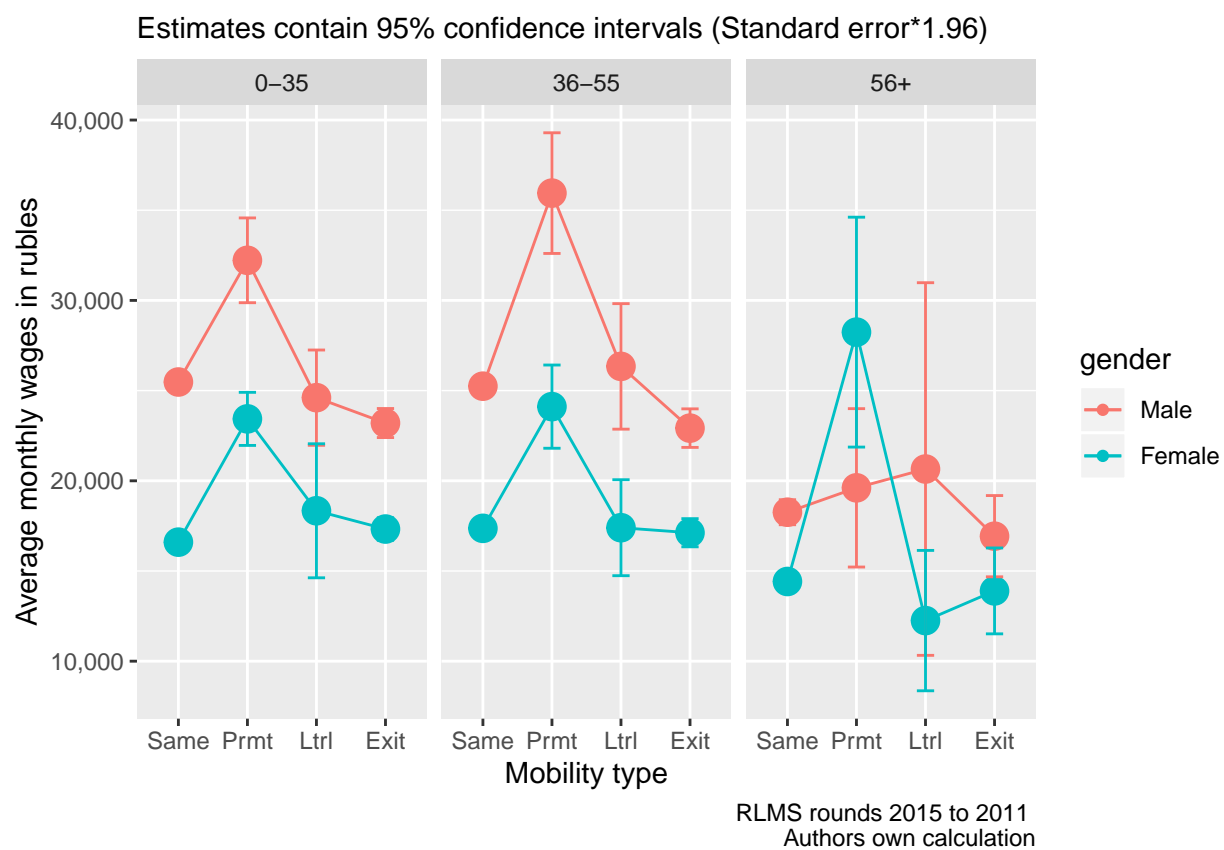


Figure 4: Wage differences between age, gender, and mobility groups

```
## initial value 24194.995485
## iter 10 value 15198.413660
## iter 20 value 12825.827925
## iter 30 value 11033.381264
## iter 40 value 9364.747182
## iter 50 value 8745.453097
## iter 60 value 8688.474393
## iter 70 value 8688.462885
## final value 8688.462498
## converged

## # weights: 56 (39 variable)
## initial value 28504.984653
## iter 10 value 10406.909361
## iter 20 value 9346.944671
## iter 30 value 8638.267319
## iter 40 value 8280.466393
## iter 50 value 8062.223475
## iter 60 value 8062.076532
## final value 8062.075135
## converged
```

term	Age 18-35				Age 36-55			
	estimate	std.error	p.value	signif	estimate	std.error	p.value	signif
<b>Promotion</b>								
(Intercept)	2.325	0.276	0.002	**	1.546	0.324	0.179	
genderFemale	0.811	0.069	0.003	**	1.099	0.090	0.292	
age	0.940	0.009	0.000	***	0.945	0.007	0.000	***
tenure	0.953	0.011	0.000	***	0.976	0.005	0.000	***
<b>Lateral change</b>								
superNo	0.224	0.071	0.000	***	0.250	0.092	0.000	***
factor(isco08)2	1.284	0.131	0.056	.	1.379	0.130	0.013	*
factor(isco08)3	1.224	0.125	0.107		1.086	0.128	0.518	
factor(isco08)4	0.875	0.175	0.446		0.630	0.240	0.054	.
<b>Exit</b>								
factor(isco08)5	0.811	0.144	0.147		0.682	0.171	0.025	*
factor(isco08)6	0.000	0.000	0.000	***	1.102	0.530	0.855	
factor(isco08)7	0.552	0.168	0.000	***	0.473	0.225	0.001	***
factor(isco08)8	0.514	0.171	0.000	***	0.688	0.184	0.042	*
factor(isco08)9	0.217	0.317	0.000	***	0.420	0.289	0.003	**
(Intercept)	0.032	0.664	0.000	***	0.006	0.677	0.000	***
genderFemale	0.901	0.147	0.478		0.916	0.160	0.584	
age	0.973	0.017	0.110		0.994	0.012	0.590	
tenure	0.952	0.022	0.024	*	0.997	0.008	0.701	
superNo	0.835	0.180	0.317		0.925	0.182	0.669	
factor(isco08)2	2.314	0.490	0.087	.	3.715	0.489	0.007	**
factor(isco08)3	2.190	0.483	0.104		3.853	0.482	0.005	**
factor(isco08)4	2.706	0.521	0.056	.	5.043	0.531	0.002	**
factor(isco08)5	1.949	0.498	0.180		3.009	0.507	0.030	*
factor(isco08)6	0.000	0.000	0.000	***	0.000	0.000	0.000	***
factor(isco08)7	2.072	0.509	0.152		4.766	0.504	0.002	**
factor(isco08)8	2.702	0.500	0.047	*	2.958	0.508	0.033	*
factor(isco08)9	1.114	0.595	0.856		5.370	0.516	0.001	**
(Intercept)	4.592	0.258	0.000	***	2.539	0.239	0.000	***
genderFemale	0.727	0.069	0.000	***	0.837	0.066	0.007	**
age	1.014	0.007	0.034	*	0.989	0.005	0.025	*
tenure	0.096	0.045	0.000	***	0.383	0.022	0.000	***
superNo	0.887	0.094	0.201		1.132	0.090	0.165	
factor(isco08)2	0.771	0.190	0.172		1.119	0.152	0.460	
factor(isco08)3	0.998	0.181	0.992		1.136	0.143	0.374	
factor(isco08)4	0.884	0.204	0.544		1.191	0.177	0.322	
factor(isco08)5	0.939	0.188	0.739		1.101	0.149	0.518	
factor(isco08)6	0.470	0.720	0.294		0.488	0.696	0.303	
factor(isco08)7	0.962	0.195	0.844		1.126	0.160	0.457	
factor(isco08)8	0.817	0.194	0.298		1.080	0.154	0.617	
factor(isco08)9	0.883	0.205	0.546		1.032	0.158	0.844	

<sup>1</sup> RLMS rounds 20-25. Model considers all respondents together

<sup>2</sup> \*\*\* p < 0.001, \*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05, . p < 0.1

## Fixed effects estimation

We now turn to the question of how mobility affects earnings

### scraps

this occurred because workers were not being paid, rather than their desire to improve pay between two employers (Clarke 2002). In fact Clarke (2002) noted a sharp rise in Russia's real wages during reforms, that also led to significant variance in wages. He noted however, that the beneficiaries of these wages were respondents who remained in relatively successful firms which protected workers from instability.

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