

# ANASTASIIA ARBUZOVA

270 Bay State Rd

B08

Boston MA 02215 USA

Cell: (857) 384-9404

Email: [arbuzova@bu.edu](mailto:arbuzova@bu.edu)

Web site: [anastasiaarbuz.github.io](https://anastasiaarbuz.github.io)

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## EDUCATION

Ph.D., Economics, Boston University, Boston MA, May 2025 (expected)

Dissertation Title: *The Economics of Autocratic Elections*

Dissertation Committee: Raymond Fisman, Benjamin Marx, Martin Fiszbein

B.A., Economics, New Economic School, Moscow, Russia, 2019

Exchange Student, University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands, Fall 2018

## FIELDS OF INTEREST

Political Economy, Development Economics

## WORKING PAPERS

“Fraud and Legitimacy: The Economics of Autocratic Elections,” October 2024. Job Market paper.

“Gendered Differences in Mobility and the Demand for Transport in Ethiopia,” (with Tigabu Getahun, Ammar A. Malik, Mahesh Karra), August 2024.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

“Social Networks and Solving Collective Action Problem”

## PRESENTATIONS

International Political Science Association, Lisbon, Portugal, September 2024

International Conference on Empirical Economics at Pennsylvania State University at Altoona, online, August 2024

Urban Economics Association, Copenhagen, Denmark, June 2024

Addis Ababa University, online, March 2024

African Transport Research Conference, Cape Town, South Africa, March 2024

## FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Summer in the Field Fellowship, Global Development Policy Center at Boston University, 2024

Abdala Fieldwork Research Grant, Institute for Economic Development at Boston University, 2023 & 2024

Early Career Researchers Grant, International Growth Center, 2021

## WORK EXPERIENCE

Intern, Moody's Investors Service, Moscow, Russia, 2017-2018

## REFeree EXPERIENCE

*Review of Economics and Statistics, African Transport Studies*

October 2024

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, Summer Challenge: Economics, Summer Term, Boston University, Summer 2024  
Instructor, EC101 Introductory Microeconomic Analysis, Department of Economics, Boston University, Summer 2023  
Teaching Fellow, EC101 Introductory Microeconomic Analysis, Department of Economics, Boston University, 2021-2024  
Teaching Fellow, EC320 Economics of Less-Developed Regions, Department of Economics, Boston University, Fall 2023  
Teaching Fellow, EC328 Urban and Regional Economics, Department of Economics, Boston University, Fall 2023  
Teaching Fellow, EC102 Introductory Macroeconomic Analysis, Department of Economics, Boston University, Spring 2022  
Teaching Fellow, Calculus II, Department of Economics, Higher School of Economics, 2017

## LANGUAGES

Russian (Native), English (Fluent), Spanish (Proficient), German (Intermediate)

**COMPUTER SKILLS:** ArcGIS/QGIS, LaTeX, Python, STATA

**CITIZENSHIP/VISA STATUS:** Russia/F1

## REFERENCES

**Professor Raymond Fisman**

Department of Economics  
Boston University  
Phone: (617) 353-6821  
Email: [rfisman@bu.edu](mailto:rfisman@bu.edu)

**Professor Benjamin Marx**

Department of Economics  
Boston University  
Phone: (617) 353-4123  
Email: [bmarx@bu.edu](mailto:bmarx@bu.edu)

**Professor Martin Fiszbein**

Department of Economics  
Boston University  
Phone: (617) 353-9583  
Email: [fiszbein@bu.edu](mailto:fiszbein@bu.edu)

**Professor Mahesh Karra**

Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies  
Boston University  
Phone: (617) 358-0197  
Email: [mvkarra@bu.edu](mailto:mvkarra@bu.edu)

## ANASTASIIA ARBUZOVA

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### **Fraud and Legitimacy: The Economics of Autocratic Elections** (Job Market Paper)

Why do autocracies employ seemingly excessive electoral fraud when victory is virtually guaranteed? This paper examines whether an autocratic government can use fraud to improve its perceived legitimacy, especially when it is damaged by unrest or unpopular policies. Through a survey experiment with a representative sample of Russian voters, I demonstrate that reported election outcomes can influence voters' perceptions: information about high (low) turnout increases (decreases) trust in the government. Next, analyzing data from the 2021 Russian legislative elections, I identify electoral manipulations via the excess integer values method and hypothesize that legitimacy concerns can explain their spatial distribution. Utilizing a novel dataset on the 2018 anti-pension reform protests, I show that protests informed fraud allocation: places with higher protest participation experienced higher electoral fraud in the subsequent legislative elections.

### **Gendered Differences in Mobility and the Demand for Transport in Ethiopia** *with Tigabu Getahun, Ammar A. Malik, Mahesh Karra*

We assess the extent to which travel demand varies by gender, particularly for women, with the introduction of high-quality transport in urban Ethiopia. A total of over 1,000 married couples in Addis Ababa were offered an allowance for on-demand, private taxi services over a two-month period. The allowance recipient was randomized to be either the woman, the man, or the couple jointly. Additionally, the total allowance amount was randomized between Low (ETB 1540) and High (ETB 4100). We document significant baseline gender differences in mobility, with 80 percent of men traveling daily or almost every day compared to less than 40 percent of women. As a result of the intervention, we find no significant differences in taxi service utilization measured by allowance take-up, total trips made, the proportion of credit spent, and the average trip cost between the Woman and Man arms, suggesting that the improved transport option may have contributed to closing the gender gap in physical mobility.

### **Social Networks and Solving Collective Action Problem**

This paper investigates whether social connectedness can help opposition overcome the collective action problem by facilitating spread of a unified voting strategy. I construct a social network graph using public profiles from VKontakte, one of Russia's most popular social media platforms, and calculate measures of social connectedness (density and average path length) at a city level. My findings reveal that higher connectedness amplifies the effect of opposition presence, a proxy for voting strategy utilization, and is associated with a lower incumbent vote share.