

Voting abroad: analysis of 2024 Russian presidential election in
immigrant communities
Presentation for AQMSS II

Stepan Polikanov Vera Okisheva

Why should we care?

- The right to vote abroad is a recent, non-universal and heterogeneous phenomenon (Collyer, 2013), still debated normatively (Bauböck, 2006)
- Voters abroad are frequently misaligned with voters at home (Vintila et al, 2023; Battiston and Luconi, 2020; Szulecki et al, 2023)
- Political participation in home-country affairs matters for identity:
 - Migrant voter turnout is not determined by poor integration in the host society (Gherghina and Basarabă, 2024);
 - Studies emphasize homesickness and sense of belonging as motivators (Boccagni, 2011)
- Very few studies explicitly linking voting abroad to political out-migration or voting in protest
 - Autocracies generally extend voting rights to immigrants when they support the incumbent and restrict when they don't (Umpierrez de Reguero et al, 2021; Iams Wellman, 2020)

Broadening the scope

Russian data comes in handy for multiple reasons:

- Broad international coverage
- Unique multi-country exit poll with good by-station coverage
- Comparable data from 2018 (also with exit poll)

These enable us to estimate:

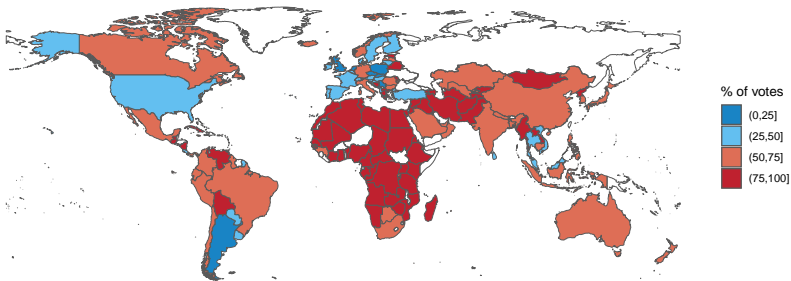
- Rough effects of war migration on the change in immigrant political preferences
- Selection processes in countries with and without exit polls
- Socio-economic determinants of external voting
- Destination countries' features' effect on voting

Data

- Central Election Committee results of the election by voting station:
 - 287 voting stations across 145 countries and 261 cities
- Exit poll
 - Results - 65 voting stations (= cities) across 44 countries
 - Raw data - 69261 respondents in total
 - Sex, age, time out of Russia, time to reach voting station, trust in the result and vote choice
- Other data sources for country-level characteristics

Results of 2024 Russian Presidential election abroad

Average percent of votes by country for Putin



What we want to test

Individual-level predictors

- Focus on time of migration (before and after Crimea, after 2022)
- Multinomial models (+ data imputation) and nested logit models

Country-level predictors of vote shares

- Multi-level models with country-level predictors and aggregated voting station/country-level models
- Military bases, offshore status, "unfriendly nations", cultural and physical (geopolitical) distance to Russia

Differences between previous and 2024 election results abroad

- Cumulative effect of war, politization and migration

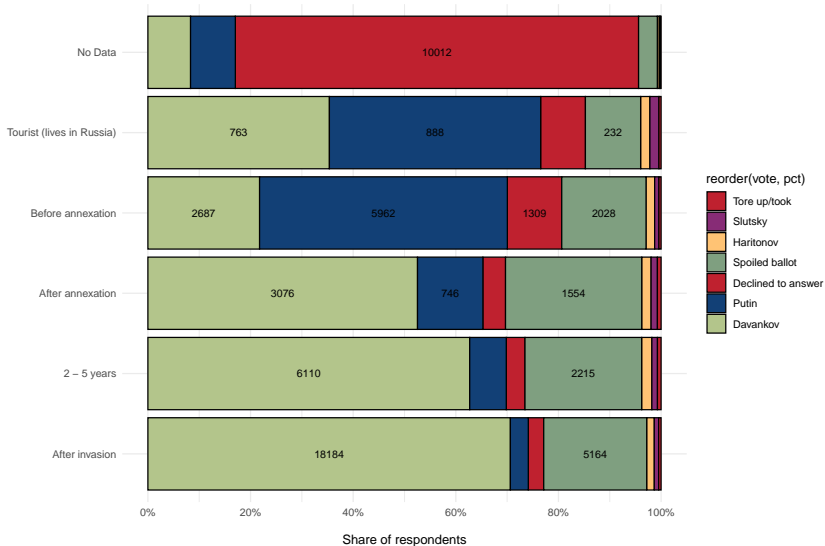
Differences between exit poll and official results

- Ecological analysis for fraud possibilities

Timing of migration

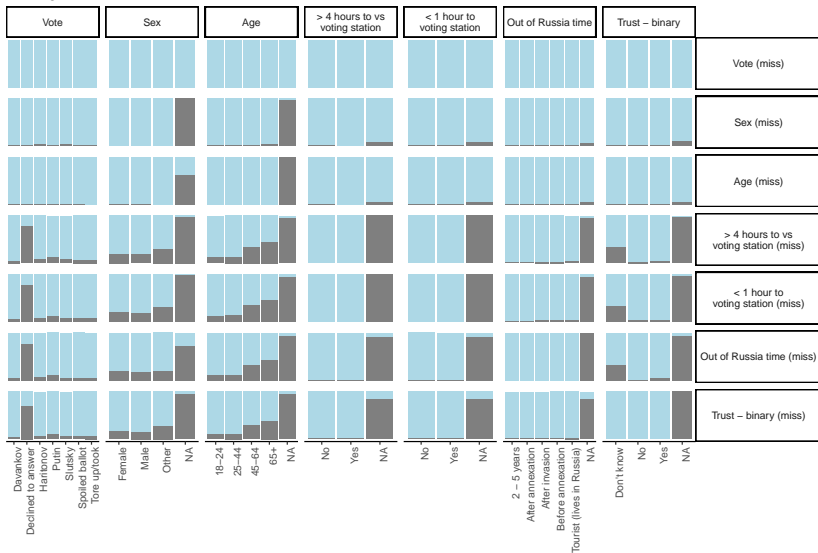
Time living outside of Russia, adjusted and vote choice

N = 68.593 with Australia and NZ excluded



Missing data pattern

Missing data matrix



Hypotheses

- H_1 : There are no substantive differences between demographic structure of those voting for the incumbent abroad and in Russia
- H_2 : Timing of migration as a proxy for average group-level political migration motives has a strong effect on voting choice
- H_3 : Share of 2024 vote predicted by previous elections varies with amount of political migration
- Other*: Country-level hypotheses still developing