



ELSEVIER

Available online at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

 ScienceDirect

---

---

**Communist and  
Post-Communist  
Studies**

---

---

Communist and Post-Communist Studies 41 (2008) 79–91

[www.elsevier.com/locate/postcomstud](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/postcomstud)

# Identity, autonomy and conflict in republics of Russia and Ukraine

Karina V. Korostelina

*Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, 3330 N. Washington Blvd.,  
Truland Building, 5th Floor, Arlington, VA 22201, United States*

Available online 19 February 2008

---

## Abstract

This paper discusses the results of the survey conducted in co-operation with the European Research Center for Migration and Ethnic Relations, concerning identity in the Autonomous Republics of Russia and Ukraine. The survey queried 6522 residents of such republics as Bashkortostan, Karelia, Komi, Sakha (Yakutia), and Tatarstan in Russia, and Crimea in Ukraine. It examined the construction of social identities, common narratives regarding threats and deprivations, confidence in public institutions, the prevalence of views toward national minorities as ‘fifth columns’, ethnic stereotypes, ethnocentrism, and other conflict indicators. An early warning model, built on the basis of the results, measured the potential for conflict based on these factors, and found that it was most pronounced in Bashkortostan and Crimea, and to a lesser extent in Tatarstan. Conflict was less likely in Sakha, Karelia, and Komi, although there were still certain indicators that suggested potential problems, including moderate support for independence in these republics.

© 2008 Published by Elsevier Ltd on behalf of The Regents of the University of California.

*Keywords:* Russia; Ukraine; Ethnic; National; Regional and religious identity; Autonomy; Conflict; Stereotypes; Threat; Trust; Deprivation; Ethnic minorities

---

## Introduction

Since the fall of the USSR, several Autonomous Republics of the Russian Federation have been seeking increased autonomy from Moscow. In the beginning of the

0967-067X/\$ - see front matter © 2008 Published by Elsevier Ltd on behalf of The Regents of the University of California.

doi:10.1016/j.postcomstud.2007.12.005

1990s, Bashkortostan, Tatarstan, and Sakha, among other republics, proclaimed their sovereignty and independence. The government of the Russian Federation used various means of pressure and negotiations to sign agreements that provided the republics a greater degree of autonomy from Moscow. There are still some secessionist movements in most republics, but these are generally not very strong. Considering the republics' resources, wealth, and growing importance for the Russian economy, one can anticipate an increase of conflict intentions in the quest for independence in these areas in the near future.

While territorial autonomy and federalism are presented throughout academic literature as mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution, some evidence shows that autonomy can instead produce tensions and initiate conflict (Anderson, 1991; Gellner, 1994; Gurr, 1970, 1993; Horowitz, 1985; Rothchild, 1991; Smith, 1991; Tilly, 1978, 1994). Since an almost ubiquitous characteristic of a nation is the residence of its citizens within a common territory, many individuals in newly formed nation-states became members of these nations only because they resided within their borders. Brubaker (1996) stresses that ethnic identity politics and minority grievances can lead to tensions under these circumstances; the formation of a nation in a newly independent state evokes the conflict activities of national minorities and their proclivity to initiate conflict. As Kelman (1997) points out, national identity, national self-determination and the establishment of new states represent major sources of human dignity and self-esteem for a population, but also can create incentives for ethnic homogeneity and thus systematic efforts to marginalize ethnic "others."

This paper presents the results of a survey conducted in 2005–2006 in six republics, including Bashkortostan, Karelia, Komi, Sakha (Yakutia), and Tatarstan in Russia, and Crimea in Ukraine. The aim of this study is to analyze the potential for conflict in these republics based on a set of early warning indicators which includes salience of identities, concepts of national identity, economic and relative deprivation, violence, economic threats, threat to culture, confidence in institutions, stereotypes, perception of a "fifth column," level of tolerance, distrust of others and social distance, ethnocentrism, ethnic mobilization, and desire for independence.

### **Short overview of republics included in the survey**

#### *Bashkortostan*

The Bashkir national government was formed in 1917, and in 1921 the Bashkortostan region was made an autonomous Soviet republic within the Soviet Union. In 1990 the republic proclaimed its sovereignty, and in 1991 it declared its independence. After negotiations, in August 1994, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Bashkortostan signed an agreement entitled "On the Division of Areas of Jurisdiction and Mutual Delegation of Authority between Government Bodies of the Russian Federation and Government Bodies of the Republic of Bashkortostan." A new version of the Constitution of the Republic of Bashkortostan was adopted on November 3, 2000.

The titular ethnic group of the republic, Bashkirs, comprises 29.8% of the region's population. The Bashkir ethnicity includes Turkic, Mongol and Finno-Ugric-Hungarian elements. Their religion is Sunni Islam. The Bashkir language is the language of the native population of the Republic of Bashkortostan. Today the Bashkir language is less widespread than it was in the late 19th century; Russian has become more prevalent in Bashkortostan, and only two thirds of Bashkirs claim Bashkir as their "mother tongue." Russian remains the official language. Bashkortostan hosts a variety of fuel and mineral resources; its mineral resources are considered to be sufficiently plentiful to provide raw materials for the fuel and energy complex. The republic is one of the key petroleum producing areas in greater Russia. Bashkortostan's dominant export is fuel, while its dominant import is machine equipment.

### *Tatarstan*

In 1918, a Tatar-Bashkir Soviet Republic was established. In 1990 Tatarstan became the first of the autonomous republics to adopt a declaration of sovereignty, not recognized by the Russian Federation. In 1992 the Tatarstan government organized a referendum on the sovereignty of Tatarstan; 61% of the population voted in favor of state sovereignty and the republic adopted its own constitution. In 1994 the presidents of Russia and Tatarstan signed a bilateral power-sharing treaty.

The titular ethnic group of the republic, Tatars, comprises 52.9% of population. Their religion is also Sunni Islam, and Tatar is the official language of the republic. Tatarstan is one of the most economically developed republics of the Russian Federation. In addition, Tatarstan is the leader in the production of some key industrial goods in Russia. The republic is located in the center of the largest industrial region of the Russian Federation, 800 km east of Moscow. Due to historic, geographic, and natural conditions, as well as other important factors, the Republic of Tatarstan has developed as a major scientific, educational, and industrial center recognized in Russia and worldwide.

### *Karelia*

In 1920, the Karelian Worker's Commune was established, and in 1923 this became the Karelian Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic. In 1941, after the Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union, it was renamed the Karelian-Finnish Socialist Soviet Republic. In 1956, the Finnish element was abandoned and the name reverted to the Karelian Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic. In 1991, it became the Republic of Karelia.

The titular ethnic group in Karelia, Karels, comprises just 9.2% of population. Much of the original Finnish population of the Russian side of Karelia has either been resettled and integrated into Finland, or Russified and dispersed into Russia. The Karels' religion is Orthodox Christianity. Karels speak the Karelian language, of the Finno-Ugric group, while Russian remains the official language of the republic. Karelia produces about a quarter of Russia's total output of paper.

### *Komi*

In 1935, the Northern Territory was reorganized into the Northern Region and also a separate Komi Autonomous Region. In 1936, this region was transformed into the Komi Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (Komi ASSR). In 1992 the Komi Republic was formed.

The titular ethnic group of the republic, Komi, comprises 25.2% of the population. Their religion is also Orthodox Christianity. Komi, of the Finno-Ugric group, is an official language in the republic together with Russian. The number of Komi has been increasing in Russia during the last century, but the knowledge of their native language has been decreasing. The Komi Republic's major industries include oil processing, timber, woodworking, natural gas and electric power industries.

### *Sakha (Yakutia)*

In 1922, the Yakut ASSR was proclaimed. In 1990, Yakutia declared itself "sovereign within the Russian Federation," claiming a real economic, cultural and political autonomy. Two years later, in 1992, it was recognized in Moscow as the Sakha (Yakutia) Republic. In 1995, following the example of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, Sakha set up bilateral relations with Russia, based on treaties and agreements.

The titular ethnic group, Yakuts, comprises 45.5% of the population. Orthodox Christianity as well as Shamanism are practiced by the group. Their language, Yakut, belongs to the Northern Turkic group and is an official language in the republic, along with Russian. Diamond, gold and tin ore mining are the major focus of the economy.

### *Crimea*

After the Russian Revolution, Crimea was independent from 1917 to 1918 and then incorporated into the Soviet Union as an autonomous republic of the Russian Federation in 1921. In 1945, The Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was abolished and transformed into the Crimean Oblast (region) of the Russian Federation. In 1954, the oblast was transferred to the Ukrainian republic. In 1992, Crimea proclaimed self-government but later agreed to remain within Ukraine as an Autonomous Republic.

In May 1944, 200,000 Crimean Tatars, 9620 Armenians, 12,420 Bulgarians, and 15,040 Greeks were deported to the Uzbek SSR, Mariisk ASSR, and the Gorky, Sverdlovsk, and Kostroma regions (Gabrielian et al., 2001). In 1989, the restrictive measures preventing the return of all these deported ethnic groups to Crimea were nullified. The declaration of the Supreme Council, issued on November 14, 1989, declared the actions taken against deported ethnic groups as illegal, criminal activities. Starting at the end of the 1980s, the massive return of the Crimean Tatars, Armenians, Germans, Bulgarians, and Greeks changed the ethnic composition of Crimea. Today, ethnic Russians comprise 64% of the population, 23% are Ukrainians,

% are Crimean Tatars, and 3% are Belorussians, Armenians, Greeks, Germans, Jews, and others. Crimea is the only large-scale administrative-territorial unit of Ukraine where the ethnic majority is Russian. At the same time, the Crimean Tatars consider Crimea to be their only motherland, where they forged their ethnic group.

## Methodology

Our survey of identity and autonomy in the Autonomous Republics of Russia and Ukraine was conducted between 2005 and 2006 in co-operation with the European Research Center for Migration and Ethnic Relations. This research was supported by INTAS (The International Association for the Promotion of Co-operation with Scientists from the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union). The sample was stratified by location, number of resettlements, and rural–urban status. There were a total of 6522 respondents, including 832 from Ukraine, 832 from Crimea, 965 from Russia (non-republic territories), 785 from Bashkortostan, 775 from Karelia, 789 from Komi, 776 from Sakha (Yakutia) and 768 from Tatarstan. About 49.3% of the participants were male while 49.7% were female; 26.5% of the subjects were aged 25 years and younger, 29% were ages 25–44, 26.3% were ages 45–59, and 18.2% were 60 and older. The survey measured salience of social identities (national, Soviet, regional and religious ones) as well as the concepts of national identity (ethnic, multicultural and civic) held by the respondents. It also explored the populations' experiences of threats and deprivations, their confidence in institutions, as well as the existing stereotypes and conflict intentions among the groups.

The salience of all identities was measured by scale from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree. The salience of Soviet identity was measured by one statement "I am a Soviet person/citizen of the USSR." This identity was measured because, even after the fall of Soviet Union, many people still consider themselves to be Soviet (Korostelina, 2007). The salience of regional identity was measured by two statements including "I am a citizen of the Republic" and "I am attached to the Republic." The salience of ethnic identity was measured by two statements including "I am a representative of my ethnic group" and "It is of great importance for me to be [ethnicity]." The salience of religious identity was measured by two statements: "I am proud to be a [religion]" and "It is of great importance for me to be a [religion]." The salience of national identity was also measured by two statements: "I am proud to be a citizen of the Russian Federation/Ukraine" and "It is of great importance for me to be a citizen of the Russian Federation/Ukraine."

The ethnic concept of national identity (a perception that a nation is built around a core ethnic community into which ethnic minorities should assimilate) was measured by one statement: "The fewer ethnic groups in a society the better" (responses ranged from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree). The multicultural concept of national identity (a perception of a nation as multicultural, with equal rights for all ethnic groups and some elements of autonomy and self-governance) was measured by two statements: "Ethnic groups should be helped to preserve their culture" and "People should learn more about the cultures of different ethnic groups" (responses ranged from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree). The civic concept

of national identity (a perception of citizenship as a contract between the people and the state concerning both rights and obligations) was measured by one statement “Russian/Ukrainian citizenship should be granted to anyone who has been living in this territory” (responses ranged from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree).

Economic deprivation was measured by such two questions as “In what way has the economic situation in your [republic/country] changed during the last two years?” and “In what way has your private economic situation changed during the last two years?” (responses ranged from 1, became rather better, to 5, became rather worse). Relative deprivation or the perception that other ethnic group has more resources and power in comparison with own ethnic group (Gurr, 1970, 1993) was measured by two statements including “The [outgroup] in [republic/country] have better job opportunities than the [ingroup] people” and “The use of [outgroup] language at schools reduces the educational opportunities of the [ingroup] people in this republic” (responses ranged from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree).

Threat was measured by four statements including: “I am afraid that violence and crime will grow in [republic/country],” “I am afraid that the economic prospects in [republic/country] will deteriorate,” “I am afraid that in the future it will become more difficult for people like me to get a good job in [republic/country],” and “Today the threat to the [Russian/Ukrainian/titular] culture is growing” (responses ranged from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree).

The level of distrust in communities was measured by the following questions: “How much confidence do the following state bodies and social institutions deserve: the president, the Orthodox Church, the parliament/Duma, city authorities, national government, police, and the press/mass media.” Responses were rated on a scale from 1, full confidence, to 4, no confidence at all.

Ethnic stereotypes within groups were measured by the following question: “How many [ingroup and outgroup members] have the following characteristics?” (a) honest, (b) smart, (c) deceitful, and (d) lazy. Respondents were asked to present their answers as a percentage from 0% to 100%. The perception of Russians as a “fifth column” was measured by the two following questions: “How many Russians in your [republic/country], do you believe, feel closer to Russia than to the [republic/country]?” and “How many Russians in your [republic/country], do you believe, serve foremost the interests of Russia, even if this has negative consequences for the [republic/country]?” Respondents were again asked to present their answers as a percentage from 0% to 100%.

The measurement of conflict intentions included several indicators with responses ranging from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree. Intolerance to cultural differences was measured by one statement: “One should be careful with people who act differently.” Intolerance to behavior was measured by one statement: “People who live in this republic should act like [dominant group].” Intolerance to changing rules was measured by one statement: “Rules are for people to follow, not to try to change.” Distrust of others was measured by the statements like: “I doubt the good intentions of others” and “Most people take advantage of me if they can.” Social distance was measured by a statement like: “How acceptable is it for you to have a [outgroup person] as a neighbor?” Ethnocentrism was measured by a statement

like: “There are no better people in the world than the [ingroup].” Ethnic mobilization was measured by one statement “The interests of [titulars] in this [republic] are in conflict with those of the Russians.” Independence was measured by one statement “The [republic] should become fully independent from [Russia/Ukraine].”

### Social identities

The results show that Sakha, compared with the other republics, has less developed social identities (see Table 1). The Soviet identity has the lowest salience in Sakha ( $M = 2.08$ ) and Tatarstan ( $M = 3.17$ ), while its salience is higher in Russia ( $M = 3.51$ ). In terms of regional identity, the highest salience was recorded in Karelia ( $M = 4.53$ ) and the lowest in Russia ( $M = 2.42$ ). The salience of ethnic and religious identities is similar in the republics, while Russian respondents show highest salience. National identity is less salient in Sakha ( $M = 3.00$ ) and is most salient in Russia ( $M = 4.01$ ). When it comes to concepts of national identities in the republics, the ethnic concept is least developed in Komi ( $M = 2.66$ ), the multicultural concept is least developed in Bashkortostan ( $M = 4.24$ ) and Tatarstan (4.25) and the civic concept is least developed in Tatarstan ( $M = 3.90$ ), Sakha ( $M = 3.91$ ) and Bashkortostan ( $M = 4.13$ ).

In terms of Soviet, ethnic and religious identity, there is higher salience in Russia than in Ukraine. Regional identity, on the other hand, has higher salience in Ukraine ( $M = 3.95$ ). Soviet ( $M = 3.34$ ), regional ( $M = 4.37$ ), and religious ( $M = 4.14$ ) identities have higher salience in Crimea.

In Bashkortostan, Russians have less salient regional and religious identity and more salient national identity than Bashkirs. Also, both Bashkirs and Russians in the republic have more salient regional identity and a less developed ethnic concept of national identity than Bashkirs and Russians in Russia generally. Bashkirs in Bashkortostan also have less salient national identity than people generally throughout Russia.

In Tatarstan, Russians have less salient regional and religious identities and more salient national identity than Tatars. Tatars and Russians in the republic both have more salient regional identity and less developed multicultural and civic concepts of national identity than Tatars and Russians in Russia generally. On the other hand, Tatars and Russians in Tatarstan have less salient national identity than others throughout Russia.

Table 1  
Salience of social identities in the Autonomous Republics (means)

	Bashkortostan	Karelia	Komi	Sakha (Yakutia)	Tatarstan	Russia	Ukraine	Crimea
Soviet identity	3.48	3.59	3.64	2.08	3.17	3.51	2.73	3.34
Regional identity	4.15	4.53	4.17	3.72	4.1	2.42	3.95	4.37
Ethnic identity	3.45	3.55	3.54	3.28	3.43	4.47	3.71	3.26
Religious identity	4.17	4.12	4.01	3.53	4.07	4.23	3.77	4.14
National identity	3.73	3.67	3.58	3.00	3.56	4.01	3.41	4.27

Source: calculated by the author.

In Karelia, Russians have less salient regional identity and more salient ethnic and national identities, as well as a more developed ethnic concept and less developed multicultural and civic concepts of national identity than their Karel counterparts. Karels in the republic have more salient ethnic and regional identities, less salient Soviet and national identities, and a less developed ethnic concept of national identity than Karels throughout Russia. Karels throughout Russia, on the other hand, demonstrate low regional identity salience and high national identity salience.

In Komi, Russians have less salient ethnic, regional, and religious identities and more salient national identity than do Komi. Komi and Russians in the republic have more salient regional identity and a less developed ethnic concept of national identity than Komi and Russians in Russia generally. Komi throughout Russia has less salient national identity and more salient regional identity than Russians throughout Russia.

Russians and Yakuts in Sakha have similar identities. Yakuts in Russia have less salient Soviet, regional, religious and national identities and a more developed multicultural concept of national identity, along with less developed ethnic and civic concepts, in relation to Komi, Karels, and Tatars.

Ukrainians in Ukraine and Russians in Crimea have more salient ethnic identity than Russians in Ukraine and Ukrainians in Crimea. Russians in Ukraine have low salience of ethnic identity, while both Russians and Ukrainians in Ukraine have a more developed ethnic concept and less developed multicultural and civic concepts of national identity.

### **Threats and deprivations**

There are various forms of threats and deprivations faced by ethnic communities in Autonomous Republics of Russia and Ukraine. These include economic deprivations, which are due to negative changes in the economic situation witnessed in the last two years (see [Table 2](#)). The highest levels of economic deprivation are in Bashkortostan ( $M = 2.91$ ) and Russia ( $M = 2.73$ ) while the lowest is in Sakha ( $M = 2.31$ ). The highest levels of relative deprivation are found in Sakha ( $M = 3.21$ ) and Bashkortostan ( $M = 3.02$ ) with the lowest in Karelia ( $M = 1.81$ ). People feel most threatened by violence in Karelia ( $M = 3.94$ ) and Komi ( $M = 3.99$ ) and least in Sakha ( $M = 2.29$ ). Similarly, people feel most economically threatened in Karelia ( $M = 3.48$ ) and Komi ( $M = 3.61$ ) and least in Sakha ( $M = 2.21$ ). Another parallel finding is that the threat to jobs is also felt most in Karelia ( $M = 3.44$ ) and Komi ( $M = 3.12$ ) and least in Sakha ( $M = 2.06$ ). The highest level of perceived threat to ingroup culture is in Komi ( $M = 3.40$ ) and lowest in Sakha ( $M = 1.62$ ). In Russia, there is observed a greater sense of threat from violence and economic problems than in Ukraine. In Ukraine, on the other hand, there experienced a greater threat to ingroup culture ( $M = 3.17$ ). In Crimea, there is notably higher economic deprivation ( $M = 3.10$ ) and less relative deprivation ( $M = 1.89$ ) as well as higher perceived threat of violence ( $M = 3.45$ ) and economic threat ( $M = 3.50$ ).

Table 2  
Mean levels of deprivation and threat in the Autonomous Republics

	Bashkortostan	Karelia	Komi	Sakha (Yakutia)	Tatarstan	Russia	Ukraine	Crimea
Economic deprivation	2.92	2.82	2.87	2.31	2.69	2.73	2.77	3.04
Relative deprivation (jobs)	3.02	1.81	2.24	3.21	2.83	2.33	2.33	1.89
Threat: violence and crime	3.6	3.94	3.99	3.29	3.42	3.79	3.3	3.45
Threat: economic prospects	3.27	3.48	3.61	2.21	3	3.33	3.18	3.5
Threat: jobs	3.21	3.44	3.12	2.06	2.9	3.26	3.23	2.89
Threat: ingroup culture	2.67	3.13	3.4	1.69	2.55	3.06	3.17	3.22

Source: calculated by the author.

In Karelia, both groups have the same perceptions of threats. Karels outside Karelia, however, describe higher threat levels. In Bashkortostan, Russians experience higher relative deprivation and threat for their jobs and perceive more threat of violence. Bashkirs emphasize threats to their culture, especially in Russia outside of Bashkortostan. In Bashkortostan, both groups perceive less threat of violence than in Russia. In Tatarstan, Russians experience higher relative deprivation and threat for their jobs, in addition to perceiving more violence. Tatars experience more economic deprivation and threat to jobs. However, in Russia, Tatars do not perceive any significant threat to their culture. Russians in Crimea and Ukrainians in Ukraine perceive higher threat to their culture than Ukrainians in Crimea and Russians in Ukraine. In addition, Russians in Ukraine experience high economic and relative deprivation as well as great perception of economic threat.

### Level of distrust

Results show that there is a low level of distrust toward the president of Russia, especially in Bashkortostan ( $M = 1.75$ ) and Sakha ( $M = 2.08$ ); with the highest level in Tatarstan ( $M = 2.32$ ). There is high level of distrust, however, toward the republican parliaments, city authorities and police, especially in Karelia and Komi. There is a low level of distrust toward the Orthodox Church in Komi (2.08) and Karelia ( $M = 2.06$ ), and higher levels in Bashkortostan ( $M = 2.24$ ) and Sakha (2.48). There are significant differences in confidence in the president, the national government, the Orthodox Church, and city authorities between Ukraine and Russia. The level of distrust toward the president is higher in Ukraine ( $M = 2.57$ ) than in Russia ( $M = 2.06$ ). Similarly, the level of distrust toward the Orthodox Church is higher in Ukraine ( $M = 2.24$ ) than in Russia ( $M = 2.04$ ). The same finding holds for levels of distrust toward national government, which is also higher in Ukraine ( $M = 2.83$ ) than in Russia ( $M = 2.64$ ). In Crimea, there is high distrust for national government ( $M = 3.30$ ) and the president (3.47), and less distrust toward the Orthodox Church ( $M = 2.15$ ).

In Bashkortostan, similar patterns of distrust are noted among Russians and Bashkirs. However, it is notable that there is higher confidence in the Orthodox Church among Russians. People express less confidence in city authorities, the police and the media than in other institutions. The same pattern is observed in Tatarstan, except for a lower confidence level in national government and the president. In Sakha, Yakuts have less confidence in the Orthodox Church and more confidence in the parliament and city authorities than Russians. In Ukraine, Russians have less confidence in national government and the president.

### **Ethnic stereotypes**

Among Russians, the most negative stereotypes were expressed toward Ukrainians and Bashkirs, while Karels, Yakuts, and Komi were regarded as more honest and smart. In addition, Tatars were generally seen as less lazy, while Karels, Komi, and Yakuts were perceived as less deceitful.

Russians were perceived mostly positively by Yakuts, whereas the most negative perception of Russians was among Tatars. Russians were perceived as honest by Yakuts while Tatars, Ukrainians, Komi, and Bashkirs perceive them as dishonest. Yakuts also view Russians as smart while Tatars, Ukrainians, Karels, and Bashkirs see them as less so. Tatars, Ukrainians, and Karels also have the strongest perception of Russians as lazy. Ukrainians and Karels generally perceive Russians as a very deceitful group.

The perception of Russians as a “fifth column” is higher in Komi, Crimea, and Bashkortostan and lowest in Tatarstan and Sakha. Russians perceive themselves as less loyal than other ethnic counterparts perceive them in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Karelia. Yakuts in Sakha and Ukrainians in Ukraine perceive Russians as even less loyal than Russians perceive themselves.

### **Conflict intentions**

Results show that there is most tolerance in Sakha and least in Crimea (see Table 3). On the other hand, distrust of others is high in Bashkortostan ( $M = 2.99$ ), Tatarstan ( $M = 3.13$ ), and Komi ( $M = 3.02$ ). In addition, there are higher rates of social distance between Russians and titular groups in Bashkortostan ( $M = 1.91$ ) and Tatarstan ( $M = 1.99$ ). This may explain why ethnocentrism is also high in Bashkortostan ( $M = 2.77$ ) and Komi (2.63). However, in Sakha, ethnocentrism is low despite the fact that ethnic mobilization is high in the same region. Ethnic mobilization is also high in Crimea, Bashkortostan and Tatarstan. The desire for independence is highest in Crimea, followed by Bashkortostan, Tatarstan, and Sakha. The highest levels of ethnocentrism ( $M = 2.73$ ), distrust ( $M = 3.51$ ), and social distance ( $M = 2.01$ ) were found in Ukraine.

In Bashkortostan, Bashkirs have higher ethnocentrism and show more support for independence while Russians have a higher level of ethnic mobilization. In

Table 3  
Conflict indicators in the Autonomous Republics

	Bashkortostan	Karelia	Komi	Sakha (Yakutia)	Tatarstan	Russia	Ukraine	Crimea
Intolerance to cultural differences	4.04	3.89	3.81	2.93	3.63	3.85	3.34	3.74
Others should act like us	3.34	3.5	3.28	2.89	3.25	3.51	3.62	3.8
Others should accept our rules	4.17	4	4.05	3.4	3.72	4.03	4	3.96
Ethnocentrism	2.7	2.55	2.63	1.76	2.19	2.44	2.73	2.55
Distrust of others	2.99	2.62	3.02	2.9	3.13	2.93	3.51	2.84
Social distance to others	1.91	1.76	1.79	1.6	1.99	1.86	2.01	1.68

Source: calculated by the author.

Tatarstan, results show lower levels of intolerance and ethnocentrism than in Russia. Tatars have a higher level of ethnocentrism than Russians in Tatarstan, and Tatars more strongly support independence for the republic. In Sakha, Russians show less intolerance to different behaviors and ethnocentrism, but higher social distance and a higher level of ethnic mobilization. Yakuts show more support for independence. Similar patterns are evident for Russians and Komi, with the exception that Russians show higher level of social distance. In Karelia, Russians show higher levels of intolerance and ethnocentrism. In addition, there is reported greater ethnic mobilization among Russians in Crimea.

### Conclusion: potential for conflict

The results of this research provide a sufficient basis for the development of an early warning model for the Autonomous Republics of Russia and Ukraine. The early warning model considers 15 indicators including salience of identities, concepts of national identity, economic and relative deprivation, economic threats, threat of violence, threat to culture, confidence in institutions, stereotypes and the perception of a fifth column, level of tolerance, distrust of others, social distance, ethnocentrism, ethnic mobilization and desire for independence.

In Bashkortostan, the research revealed 11 conflict indicators.

- Less developed multicultural and civic concepts of national identity
- High economic deprivation
- High relative deprivation
- Negative stereotypes of Russians among Bashkirs and of Bashkirs among Russians
- Perception of Russians as a “fifth column”
- High level of distrust to government and institutions
- High social distance
- High level of ethnocentrism

- High level of ethnic mobilization
- Desire for independence
- Threat: Russians feel more economically threatened and deprived while Bashkirs feel their culture is threatened.

Ten conflict indicators were also uncovered in Crimea.

- High salience of Soviet, Russian, and regional identity
- High economic deprivation
- Threat of violence and economic threat
- Threat to culture
- High distrust of national government
- Russians' negative stereotypes
- Perception of Russians as a "fifth column"
- Low tolerance
- High level of ethnic mobilization
- Desire for independence

In Tatarstan, the research found eight conflict indicators.

- Less developed multicultural and civic concepts of national identity
- Low confidence in the Russian president
- Tatars' negative stereotypes of Russians
- Distrust
- High social distance
- High level of ethnic mobilization
- Desire for independence
- Threat: Russians feel more threatened and deprived.

In Komi, the study discloses seven conflict indicators.

- Threat of violence and economic threat
- Threat to culture
- Komi feel more economically threatened and deprived
- Low confidence in regional authorities
- Perception of Russians as a "fifth column"
- High level of distrust
- High level of ethnocentrism

Four conflict indicators were revealed in Sakha.

- Low salience of national identity
- High relative deprivation
- High level of ethnic mobilization
- Desire for independence

Nevertheless, high level of tolerance in Sakha and low level of ethnocentrism can reduce the impact of conflict indicators.

Three conflict indicators were found in Karelia.

- High salience of regional identity
- Threat of violence and economic threat
- Low confidence in regional authorities

Thus, the research indicates that, among the Autonomous Republics of Russia and Ukraine, the highest potential for conflict exists in Bashkortostan and Crimea. Tatarstan and Komi are less likely to face conflict but still reflect possible tensions. Sakha and Karelia are characterized by lower potential for conflict and greater tolerance.

## References

- Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed. Verso, London and New York.
- Brubaker, R., 1996. *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Gabrielian, O., Korostelina, K., Shorkin, A. (Eds.), 2001. *Mezhethnicheskoe soglasie v Krymu: puti dostizeniya. (Interethnic Co-existence in the Crimea: the Ways of Achievement)*. Dolya, Simferopol.
- Gellner, E., 1994. Nationalism and modernization. In: Hutchinson, J., Smith, A. (Eds.), *Nationalism*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Gurr, T.R., 1970. *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.
- Gurr, T.R., 1993. *Minorities at Risk: a Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflict*. United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C.
- Horowitz, D.L., 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. University of California Press, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London.
- Kelman, H.C., 1997. Nationalism, patriotism, and national identity: social–psychological dimensions. In: Bar-Tal, D., Staub, E. (Eds.), *Patriotism in the Lives of Individuals and Nations*. Nelson-Hall, Chicago.
- Korostelina, K.V., 2007. *Social Identity and Conflict: Structure, Dynamics and Implications*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY.
- Rothchild, D., 1991. *Ghana: the Political Economy of Structural Adjustment*. Lynne Rienner, Boulder Colorado.
- Smith, A.D., 1991. *National Identity*. University of Nevada Press, Reno.
- Tilly, C., 1978. *From Mobilization to Revolution*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Reading, MA.
- Tilly, C., 1994. States and Nationalism in Europe 1492–1992. *Theory and Society: Renewal and Critique in Social Theory* 23 (1), 131–146.