COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DETERMINANTS OF READINESS TO FIGHT FOR ONE'S COUNTRY IN UKRAINE AND RUSSIA

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

BA in Economics and Big Data, Social Sciences Department

Kyiv School of Economics

2026

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Abstract

Which factors are connected to an individual's readiness to fight for their country during wartime? A lot of existing studies link willingness to fight to national identity, patriotism, trust in state institutions, or economic security. However, comparative data across countries remains fragmented, particularly for post-Soviet societies. Earlier research frequently focused on either structural or attitudinal predictors within single countries, neglecting the influence of broader sociopsychological factors.

Based on the World Values Survey (Wave 7, 2017–2022) microdata, this research tests an integrated framework based on Social Contract Theory, Relative Deprivation Theory, National Identity Theory, and Political Context Theory. The dependent variable (readiness to fight for one's country) is modeled as a binary outcome, while independent variables include life satisfaction, financial well-being, confidence in government and armed forces, national pride, and subjective social class. Gender, age, marital status, education, and work sector are used as controls.

The analysis employs methods of descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, and binary logistic regression to identify determinants of willingness to fight for Ukraine and Russia and assess their relative predictive power. The combination of theoretical models and cross-country analysis proposes an integrated framework describing citizens' motivation under conflict and exploring how institutional, material, and identity-based factors influence readiness for national defense.

The findings contribute to understanding willingness to fight as a complex outcome shaped by different institutional, social, economic, and identity-related factors. By comparing Ukraine and Russia, the research helps clarify how civic commitment and willingness to defend the state differ in conflict-related contexts.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 RELEVANCE

At the beginning of 2022, Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine raised the question of national defence for millions of people. Whether to participate in military actions became a complicated decision not only for political and military figures, but also for ordinary individuals. In such a tough political situation, willingness to fight is drawing attention as a complex phenomenon, which can vary a lot depending on culture, society, or political system. It is not only a military issue, but it can also reflect the relationship between citizens and the state, as well as the level of political legitimacy or social cohesion.

In large-scale war conflicts involving mass mobilization, the motivation to join the armed forces becomes a key component of national resilience. It influences not only the availability of human resources for the military, but also the overall capacity of a society to sustain a prolonged conflict. In this sense, willingness to fight can be seen as an important indicator of how societies respond to existential threats and how strongly individuals identify with the state and its goals. It becomes a clear indicator on whether people are ready to accept personal sacrifices for a shared national goal. Therefore willingness to defend the country can show something deeper than military capacity alone. It helps to understand the social basis of resistance, especially in long wars, where the outcome depends not only on institutions and resources, but also on how strongly citizens feel connected to their country.

For Ukraine, this issue is directly linked to the country's survival, its ability to resist external aggression, and its future state-building trajectory. High levels of civic engagement and readiness to defend the country have been widely observed since 2022, reflecting strong social cohesion and a sense of collective responsibility. In contrast, in the Russian case, willingness to fight provides insight into how authoritarian governance, state-controlled media, and political narratives shape individual attitudes toward participation in war. Rather than being driven solely by personal

motivation, decisions to engage may also reflect institutional pressure, information constraints, or normative expectations.

It is important to note that since the WVS data for both Ukraine and Russia were collected before the full-scale invasion in February 2022, the analysis should not be interpreted as measuring wartime mobilization directly. Instead, it provides a baseline comparison of how willingness to fight was associated with economic, social, and psychological factors before the war entered its current stage.

Understanding these dynamics is important not only in the context of Ukraine and Russia but also for broader discussions on modern warfare and national resilience. In contemporary conflicts, where wars can be prolonged and resource-intensive, the willingness of citizens to participate becomes a critical factor shaping both military effectiveness and political stability.

Existing studies often highlight that national identity, civic nationalism, and related identity-based dimensions are associated with greater readiness to fight (Wang and Eldemerdash 745; Bukkvoll and Steder 245; Sundberg and Gustavsson 233). However, although the number of empirical studies on this topic is growing, much of this work focuses on specific country contexts or particular explanatory mechanisms, leaving other important aspects unexplored (Wang and Eldemerdash 745; Bukkvoll and Steder 245). There are several cross-national studies that examine readiness to fight using broad international surveys (Inglehart et al. 418; Anderson et al. 363). However, most of this work explores general patterns across Western democracies and other global regions rather than the Post-Soviet space, and rarely considers subjective perceptions such as life satisfaction or perceived social class. As a result, there is no comprehensive framework capturing how material, social and psychological factors together shape readiness to fight in societies experiencing war.

Moreover, willingness to fight may be even more complex, and factors such as national identity, institutional trust, or economic satisfaction can also play a big role. Although Ukraine and

Russia share a common Soviet past, including similar institutional legacies, economic structures, and social norms, over the past decades their trajectories have increasingly diverged, particularly in terms of political regimes, media environments, and state–society relations. Ukraine has moved toward a more open and pluralistic system, where civic participation and public trust have played an important role in shaping collective action. In contrast, Russia has developed a more centralized and controlled political environment, where public attitudes may be influenced not only by individual beliefs but also by institutional pressure. These differences suggest that even countries with shared historical roots can display substantially different levels of readiness to defend the state and distinct patterns in the factors shaping this attitude. That is why a direct comparison between Ukraine and Russia is both relevant and analytically valuable.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESES

This research aims to contribute to the study of willingness to fight by answering the question: which economic, social, and psychological factors influence people's willingness to fight for their country in Ukraine and Russia? The following hypotheses are examined:

H1: People who are more confident in state institutions are more likely to fight for their country. (Based on Social Contract Theory)

H2: Those who are less satisfied with life and their financial situation are less willing to fight for their country. (Based on Relative Deprivation Theory)

H3: Individuals who report stronger national pride and higher perceived social class are more willing to fight for their country. (Based on National Identity Theory)

H4: The relationship between the examined predictors and willingness to fight is expected to differ between Ukraine and Russia. (Based on Political Context Theory)

Microdata from the World Values Survey, Wave 7 (2017–2022), is used for this research, offering an opportunity to analyze and compare data for Ukraine and Russia. In Ukraine, the survey

was conducted from 25 July 2020 to 14 August 2020, whereas in Russia it was conducted from 7 November 2017 to 29 December 2017. It is important to note that this three-year gap, corresponding to different political and socio-economic contexts, could have influenced the results. In Ukraine, the survey took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly affected economic conditions and public trust in institutions. Ukrainian presidential and parliamentary elections in 2019 brought new political leadership, influencing institutional trust. In contrast, Russian responses reflect the political environment of late 2017, the period before the 2018 presidential election, with relatively stable political conditions, and before global disruptions caused by COVID-19. So, the results should be interpreted with caution, taking into account time-specific limitations.

The dependent variable represents readiness to fight for one's country in the case of a war conflict. Independent variables include life satisfaction, financial well-being, confidence in government, confidence in the armed forces, national pride, and subjective social class. Gender, age, marital status, education, and work sector are included as control variables. By applying descriptive statistics and binary logistic regression, the analysis assesses the significance of these factors and their relative predictive power across two countries.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Willingness to fight is often explored in political psychology or nationalism studies in the context of war conflicts and state-building. Recently, this topic has become especially pressing due to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Existing studies mostly define patriotism, institutional trust, or economic well-being as factors that determine whether people are ready to defend their country in times of war. However, they remain fragmented, lacking cross-country comparison among post-Soviet countries. That's why this research focuses on identifying the most relevant determinants of willingness to fight for Ukraine and Russia.

Existing literature often highlights the importance of national identity and patriotism. According to Huddy and Khatib, strong national attachment may foster broader civic commitment, which can be relevant for understanding readiness to act for the nation in times of conflict (63). Schatz, Staub, and Lavine distinguish between constructive and blind patriotism, which is relevant for willingness to fight because it shows that national attachment can have different meanings and may shape individuals' readiness to act for their country in different ways (151). These findings show that those having a stronger sense of national pride are more likely to be willing to fight for their country. However, most similar papers focus on Western regions and rely on qualitative studies. This way, they confirm the relevance of national identity, but lack quantitative cross-country analysis, especially for Ukraine and Russia.

Another strand of literature explains institutional trust together with political legitimacy, drawing on Social Contract Theory. Levi's work suggests that trust in governmental institutions can strengthen citizens' consent and compliance with state demands, making it relevant for understanding willingness to fight as a form of costly collective commitment (19). Although Godefroidt does not directly focus on willingness to fight, his work shows that external threats can reshape citizens' attitudes toward security and political authority, making it relevant for understanding why people may become more willing to support national defense during crises (22).

Together, these studies provide a theoretical basis for linking institutional trust, political legitimacy, external threat, and readiness to support national defense. However, they do not directly explain personal willingness to join the armed forces. Instead, they mainly focus on broader forms of political consent, compliance with state demands, and public attitudes toward security and authority. Cross-country comparisons of how these factors shape willingness to fight remain limited. Moreover, existing studies often treat trust in armed forces as part of broader institutional or governmental trust, without considering that in countries with different levels of corruption, institutional credibility, and propaganda, trust in the government and trust in the army may operate differently.

Relative Deprivation Theory states that economic conditions and subjective well-being are very important factors. Gurr suggests that perceived economic disadvantage can weaken individuals' attachment to the political order, making it relevant for understanding why some people may be less willing to make personal sacrifices for the country (37). Krieger and Meierrieks link economic inequality and relative deprivation to political grievances and conflict, making their work relevant for understanding how economic insecurity may affect willingness to defend the country (125). But also, there are other points of view: Lutz finds that military service is connected to class background and social opportunity structures, which is why people with lower levels of income may be more motivated to fight (167). This may raise concern about the contribution of economic well-being into willingness to fight. That's why there is a need for a more complex approach to clarify the influence of life and income satisfaction on willingness to fight.

A broader comparative perspective is offered by Inglehart, Puranen, and Welzel, who state that willingness to fight is connected to wider processes of cultural transformation (418). Exploring public opinion data from many countries, they found that higher levels of economic and physical security are associated with lower readiness to fight. Their explanation is connected to modernization theory: as societies become more secure and individual autonomy becomes more valued, citizens may become less willing to accept violence and personal sacrifice for collective

political goals. Their study is relevant to the topic, as it treats willingness to fight as a reflection of broader cultural values, instead of a response to an immediate military threat. Although Russia is included in their cross-national analysis, they do not directly compare Ukraine and Russia, which leaves room for a more focused country-level comparison.

Another important contribution is made by Anderson, Getmansky, and Hirsch-Hoefler, who examine the relationship between income inequality and willingness to fight (363). They show that higher inequality is associated with lower willingness to fight, and that class differences may influence who is more ready to accept personal risks for the state. This is directly relevant for the present research because it supports the inclusion of subjective social class and financial satisfaction as meaningful predictors.

The comparative analysis of Ukraine and Russia in terms of willingness to fight remains uncovered. Research on Ukraine often focuses on civic identity formation or democratization (Kulyk 588), while research on Russia explores the influence of nationalism in the Russian interpretation of Ukraine (Laruelle 272). The papers rarely use quantitative analysis or cover particular datasets, comparing these two countries. A citizen's self-reported desire to defend their country is rarely taken into consideration, and even when the data from surveys is used, it would be extremely hard to provide a meaningful comparison, because difference in question wording may play a big role. That’s why focusing on the World Values Survey gives an opportunity to address this gap and compare Russia and Ukraine.

After reviewing the literature, we identify a significant research gap in the field of cross-country analysis of willingness to fight for Ukraine and Russia with multiple determinants. Existing studies do not provide the evidence on how different factors shape individuals’ willingness to fight. By using complex survey data and logistic regression models, the research can provide a more grounded understanding of which factors influence willingness to fight and how these factors differ between Ukraine and Russia.

This study contributes to the existing literature by providing a comparative analysis of willingness to fight in Ukraine and Russia using individual-level survey data. Unlike many previous studies that focus on a limited set of explanatory variables or single-country cases, this research examines a broader range of factors. In addition, it explores how the effects of these factors differ across countries, enabling a more precise understanding of how political and social contexts shape individual attitudes toward participation in war. By combining multiple dimensions of analysis and directly comparing two countries with a shared historical background but divergent political trajectories, this study offers new empirical evidence on the determinants of willingness to fight in the context of contemporary conflict.

Chapter 3. Data and Methodology

3.1 DATA DESCRIPTION

This study uses data from the World Values Survey (WVS), Wave 7, a comprehensive cross-national survey assessing values, attitudes, and beliefs across different societies. Wave 7 was conducted between 2017 and 2022, depending on the country. The analysis focuses on Ukraine and Russia, making it possible to compare willingness to fight for one's country in two post-Soviet states with similar histories but different development trajectories. The World Values Survey uses nationally representative samples of adults aged 18 and above in each country. Sampling procedures and standardized questionnaires guarantee comparability across countries over the given period of time. All variables included in the analysis are derived from individual-level survey responses.

The dependent variable is willingness to fight for one's country, which describes individuals' readiness to join the armed forces during war conflicts. At the conceptual level, this variable represents a form of civic and national commitment when a society faces a military threat. At the empirical level, the variable is operationalized using WVS question Q151, which asks respondents whether they would be willing to fight for their country if war happened. The variable is measured as a binary outcome, where 1 indicates "Yes" and 2 indicates "No". For the analysis, the variable is recoded to 1 = "willing", and 0 = "not willing".

The first independent variable, confidence in government, captures individuals' trust in central political institutions and serves as an indicator of perceived strength of the social contract between citizens and the state. It is operationalized using WVS question Q71, which asks respondents to indicate the level of confidence they have in the government. Responses are measured on a four-point scale from 1 ("a great deal of confidence") to 4 ("none at all"), so that lower values indicate higher institutional trust.

The second independent variable, confidence in the armed forces, reflects individuals' trust in the military and is especially important for understanding attitudes toward national defense. This variable is based on WVS question Q65, which asks respondents to evaluate their level of confidence in the armed forces using the same four-point scale, from 1 ("a great deal of confidence") to 4 ("none at all").

The third independent variable, life satisfaction, reflects respondents' overall subjective evaluation of their quality of life. It captures individual well-being and general enjoyment, which can shape the desire to take part in high-cost collective actions, including participation in the military. Life satisfaction is measured using a ten-point scale from 1 ("completely dissatisfied") to 10 ("completely satisfied"), based on respondents' answers to the corresponding WVS question.

The fourth independent variable, income satisfaction, measures individuals' subjective assessment of their household's financial situation and represents perceived economic well-being. It is operationalized through a WVS question asking respondents how satisfied they are with their household income. Responses are recorded on a scale from 1 to 10, where higher values indicate greater satisfaction with one's economic situation.

The fifth independent variable, national pride, captures the strength of national identity and emotional attachment to the nation. It is measured using WVS question Q254, which asks respondents how proud they are of their nationality. Responses range from 1 ("very proud") to 4 ("not at all proud"), with lower values indicating greater national pride.

The sixth independent variable, subjective social class, reflects individuals' perceived position within the social hierarchy rather than objective socioeconomic status. It is operationalized using WVS question Q287, where respondents self-identify as belonging to one of five social classes: upper class, upper middle class, lower middle class, working class, or lower class. The variable is measured on a five-point scale, with higher values indicating lower perceived social status.

It is important to note that for several variables (confidence in government, confidence in the armed forces, and national pride), higher values indicate lower levels of trust/national pride. Also, for perceived social class, higher values correspond to a lower class. This coding is important for interpreting the regression results, as for these variables, negative coefficients will indicate positive relationships.

The following control variables are included to account for demographic and socio-economic differences that may influence willingness to fight:

Gender is measured using WVS question Q260, which records the respondent's sex. The variable is coded as 1 for male and 2 for female.

Age is measured using WVS question Q262 and is included as a continuous variable representing the respondent's age in years.

Marital status is measured using WVS question Q273, which captures the respondent's current relationship status. The variable includes categories such as married, living together, divorced, separated, widowed, and single.

Education is measured using WVS question Q275, which reflects the respondent's highest level of educational attainment. The variable is treated as a categorical measure capturing differences in educational background.

The work sector is measured using WVS question Q284, which identifies the respondent's main employment sector. The variable distinguishes between government or public institutions, private business or industry, and private non-profit organizations.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

In order to define the determinants of willingness to fight in Ukraine and Russia, the research uses quantitative methods. As the dependent variable (if the person is willing to fight for

their country) is binary, a logistic regression model is estimated separately for both countries. This approach helps to identify if the same factors have different effects for Ukraine and Russia.

Equation 1. Logistic Regression Specification for Willingness to Fight

$$\log\left(\frac{P(Q151P_i=1)}{1-P(Q151P_i=1)}\right)=\beta_0+\beta_1x_{1i}+\beta_2x_{2i}+\beta_3x_{3i}+\beta_4x_{4i}+\beta_5x_{5i}+\beta_6x_{6i}+\beta_7x_{7i}+\beta_8x_{8i}+\beta_9x_{9i}+\beta_{10}x_{10i}+\beta_{11}x_{11i}$$

Interpretation:

DV for country i – willingness to fight (recoded into 1 = willing, 0 = not willing)

x1 – confidence in government (Q71P, categorical, 1-4; higher values indicate lower trust)

x2 – confidence in armed forces (Q65P, categorical, 1-4; higher values indicate lower trust)

x3 – life satisfaction (Q49, categorical, 1-10)

x4 – income satisfaction (Q50, categorical, 1-10)

x5 – national pride (Q254P, categorical, 1-4; higher values indicate lower pride)

x6 – social class (Q287, categorical, 1-5; higher values indicate lower social status)

x7 – gender (Q260, 1 = male, 2 = female)

x8 – age (Q262, continuous, in years)

x9 – marital status (Q273, categorical: married, living together, divorced, separated, widowed, single)

x10 – education (Q275, categorical)

x11 – work sector (Q284, categorical: public, private, non-profit)

First, the data was prepared for analysis. The dataset was limited to respondents from Ukraine and Russia based on country identifiers. Only variables relevant for the analysis were selected. Invalid responses (coded as negative values such as “don’t know” or “no answer”) were replaced with missing values. Additionally, category “5” for the national pride variable was treated as invalid and also recoded as missing. All observations with missing values in the selected variables were excluded through listwise deletion to preserve consistency across the dataset.

In order to estimate if excluded values could have significantly impacted the model, the number and share of observations before and after data cleaning were compared across countries. Additional tests were conducted to examine whether excluded observations systematically differ from those retained in the final sample. T-tests were used for continuous variables, while chi-square tests were used for categorical variables.

Descriptive statistics were used to examine cross-country differences in key variables. Both means and medians were calculated, and frequency distributions were constructed for selected variables to examine their distribution across response categories. To visualize differences between Ukraine and Russia, distributions of the main variables were plotted using bar charts, which is appropriate since the variables take discrete values.

To examine relationships between key explanatory variables, a correlation matrix based on Spearman correlation coefficients was computed. It showed that there are no multicollinearity issues.

The empirical analysis relies on binary logistic regression models. First, models including interaction terms between each key explanatory variable and country were estimated separately. These models allow assessing whether the effect of each factor differs significantly between Ukraine and Russia, while controlling for other variables.

Second, separate logistic regression models were estimated for each country to provide country-specific results and facilitate interpretation. These models include all key explanatory variables as well as control variables.

To ensure the validity of the results, model diagnostics were conducted. Variance Inflation Factor was calculated using models without interaction terms to check for multicollinearity among explanatory variables. Additionally, McFadden’s pseudo R-squared was used to assess model fit.

To make the results easier to interpret, average marginal effects were calculated for the country-specific models. In addition, predicted probabilities of willingness to fight were estimated for the main explanatory variables. These probabilities were obtained by changing one variable at a time, while keeping all other variables fixed at typical values (the mode for categorical variables and the median for age). The predicted probabilities, together with their confidence intervals, were then plotted to show how the likelihood of willingness to fight varies across different levels of the key variables and between the two countries.

Chapter 4. Empirics and Results

4.1 ANALYTICAL SAMPLE AND SAMPLE COMPOSITION

The empirical part of the study is based on microdata from the World Values Survey, Wave 7, which covers the period from 2017 to 2022. The analysis is limited to respondents from Ukraine and Russia. The dataset makes it possible to examine several groups of factors that may be related to willingness to fight, including subjective well-being, economic perceptions, institutional trust, national identity, and perceived social class. The models also include a set of demographic controls: gender, age, education, marital status, and employment sector.

The analysis uses variables in their original coding. This is important because some scales do not move in the intuitive direction. For confidence in government, confidence in the armed forces, and national pride, higher numerical values correspond to lower levels of confidence or pride. For subjective social class, higher values indicate a lower perceived position in the social hierarchy. Therefore, increases in these variables should be interpreted as movement toward weaker trust, weaker pride, or lower perceived social status. The variables were kept in their original form to remain consistent with the WVS data, and all results are interpreted according to this coding logic.

The starting sample included 3,099 respondents. Before estimating the models, non-substantive answers were removed. These include responses such as “Don’t know,” “No answer,” “Not applicable,” and other negative-coded WVS values from −5 to −1, which are used to mark missing, invalid, or inapplicable responses. After this step, listwise deletion was applied to remove observations with missing values on the variables used in the analysis. As a result, the final analytical sample consists of 1,891 observations: 1,238 from Russia and 653 from Ukraine. This means that the Russian subsample was reduced by about 31.6%, while the Ukrainian subsample decreased by 49.3%. The loss of observations is therefore quite substantial, especially in the

Ukrainian case. However, using the same complete set of variables across all models makes the estimates more comparable.

Since the reduction in sample size is large, retained and excluded observations were compared across the main explanatory variables. This check suggests that the cleaning procedure did affect the composition of the final sample. Respondents who remained in the analysis tend to report slightly more positive evaluations of their personal and economic situation. For example, average life satisfaction is higher among retained observations than among excluded ones, at 6.50 compared with 6.14. The same pattern appears for financial satisfaction, where the corresponding averages are 5.43 and 5.09. This suggests that the final sample somewhat overrepresents respondents with higher subjective well-being and more positive assessments of their financial situation. For the other explanatory variables, the retained observations also differ from the excluded ones. Among retained observations, the average score is higher for confidence in government (2.31 compared with 2.13), confidence in the armed forces (3.03 compared with 2.92), and national pride (3.30 compared with 2.25). This suggests that the final sample includes respondents with somewhat weaker institutional confidence and national pride. A similar pattern appears for subjective social class: retained respondents have a higher average value than excluded respondents (2.71 compared with 2.47), suggesting a somewhat lower perceived position in the social hierarchy.

These differences are not only descriptive. Welch two-sample t-tests show that several of them are statistically significant. This applies to financial satisfaction, confidence in government, confidence in the armed forces, and subjective social class, all of which are significant at conventional levels ($p < 0.01$). The difference in national pride is weaker and only marginally significant ($p = 0.079$). Overall, these results suggest that listwise deletion was not fully random and that the final analytical sample does not fully mirror the initial sample. Therefore, the regression results should be interpreted as conditional on the complete-case sample rather than as fully representative of all respondents from Ukraine and Russia. This limitation should be kept in mind

when interpreting the findings, and future research could test the robustness of the results using multiple-imputation specifications or alternative missing-data strategies.

Additional tests based on Pearson's chi-squared statistics confirm differences in the distribution of several categorical variables between retained and excluded observations. Statistically significant differences are observed for gender ($\chi^2 = 21.95$, $p < 0.001$), marital status ($\chi^2 = 22.82$, $p < 0.001$), and education ($\chi^2 = 87.01$, $p < 0.001$, based on simulated p-values due to small cell counts). In contrast, no significant difference is found for the employment sector ($\chi^2 = 0.11$, $p = 0.945$). Overall, although the data cleaning procedure leads to some statistically significant differences in the composition of the sample, these do not appear large enough to substantially distort the relationships between the key variables of interest.

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE PATTERNS

The descriptive statistics indicate that self-reported willingness to fight is high in both countries. In Ukraine, 69.8% of respondents state that they would be willing to fight for their country, while in Russia, the share is slightly higher, at 73.7% (see Fig. 1). This suggests that readiness to participate in national defense is widespread in both cases. However, this result should be treated carefully. The variable measures what respondents say they would do, not actual behavior, and answers to this question may be influenced by social expectations connected to patriotism, loyalty, or national duty.

The two countries differ more clearly when looking at the explanatory variables. Russian respondents report somewhat higher levels of life satisfaction and financial satisfaction. The average life satisfaction score is 6.60 in Russia and 6.30 in Ukraine, with medians of 7 and 6 (see Fig. 2). A similar difference appears for financial satisfaction: the mean is 5.59 in Russia compared with 5.13 in Ukraine, while the medians are 6 and 5 (see Fig. 3). The response distributions follow the same pattern, as Russian respondents are more often concentrated in the higher categories of both variables.

Differences are also visible in institutional trust. Confidence in government appears higher among Ukrainian respondents than among Russian respondents. The mean score is 1.90 in Ukraine and 2.52 in Russia, while the medians are 2 and 3, respectively (see Fig. 4). This suggests that Ukrainian respondents are more often concentrated in categories associated with stronger confidence in government, whereas Russian respondents are more often located in categories reflecting weaker confidence.

Confidence in the armed forces shows a smaller cross-country gap. The mean value is 2.94 in Ukraine and 3.08 in Russia, and the median is 3 in both countries (see Fig. 5). This suggests that Ukrainian respondents report slightly stronger confidence in the armed forces than Russian respondents. However, the difference is small and should not be overinterpreted.

National pride looks fairly similar in the two samples. The mean value is 3.22 in Ukraine and 3.34 in Russia, while the median equals 3 in both countries (see Fig. 6). Overall, the Ukrainian sample shows slightly stronger national pride on average, although the difference is small. In both countries, most respondents are concentrated around categories 3 and 4, suggesting that the distributions are broadly similar rather than sharply different.

Perceived social class also varies only modestly between the two countries. The average value is 2.63 in Ukraine and 2.75 in Russia, with a median of 3 in both cases (see Fig. 7). This suggests that Russian respondents place themselves slightly lower in the social hierarchy on average, although the difference between the two samples remains small. The age structure of the two samples is almost identical: the mean age is 45.4 in Ukraine and 45.5 in Russia, with similar levels of variation. Education is also broadly comparable, although in both countries, respondents are mostly concentrated in the middle categories.

Overall, the descriptive results point to some differences, but they are not equally strong across all variables. The clearest contrast concerns confidence in government: Ukrainian respondents report stronger confidence than Russian respondents. By contrast, confidence in the

armed forces and national pride show more similar distributions across the two countries. Taken together, the descriptive patterns suggest that the two samples differ most clearly in institutional trust, while differences in military confidence, national pride, and perceived social class remain more modest.

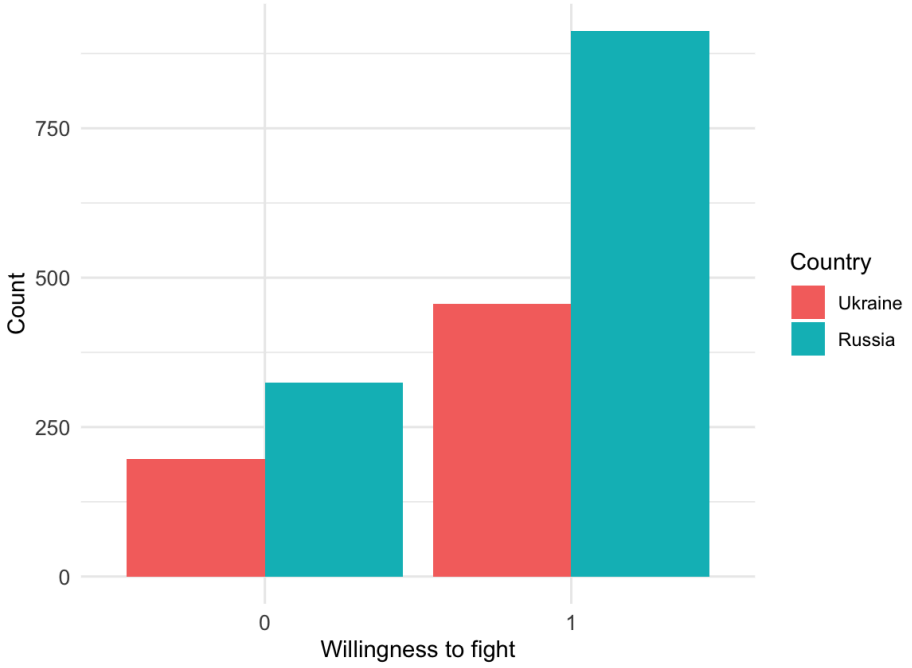

Fig. 1. Distribution of Respondents' Willingness to Fight by Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

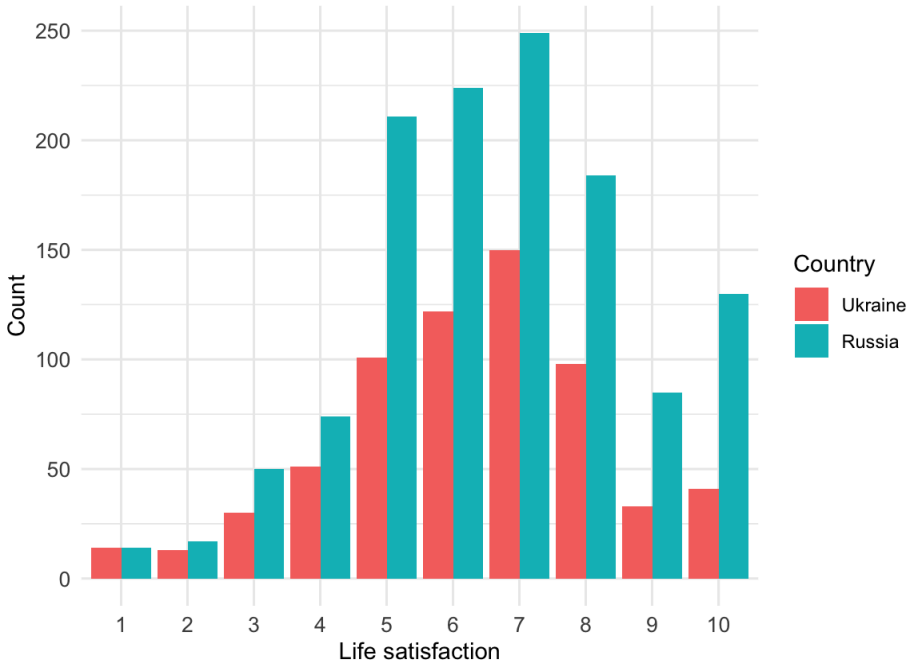

Fig. 2. Distribution of Life Satisfaction by Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

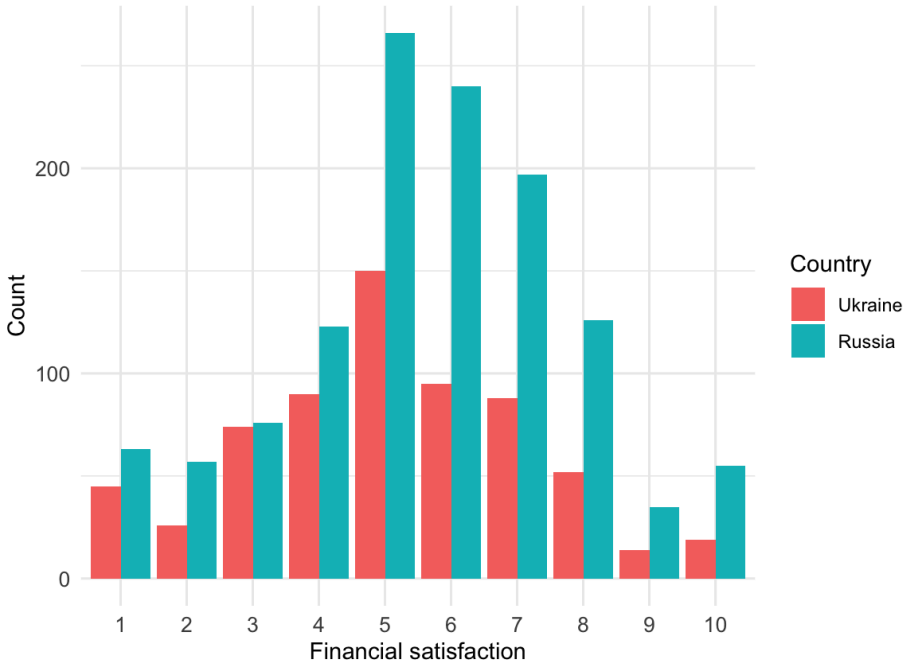

Fig. 3. Distribution of Respondents' Financial Satisfaction by Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

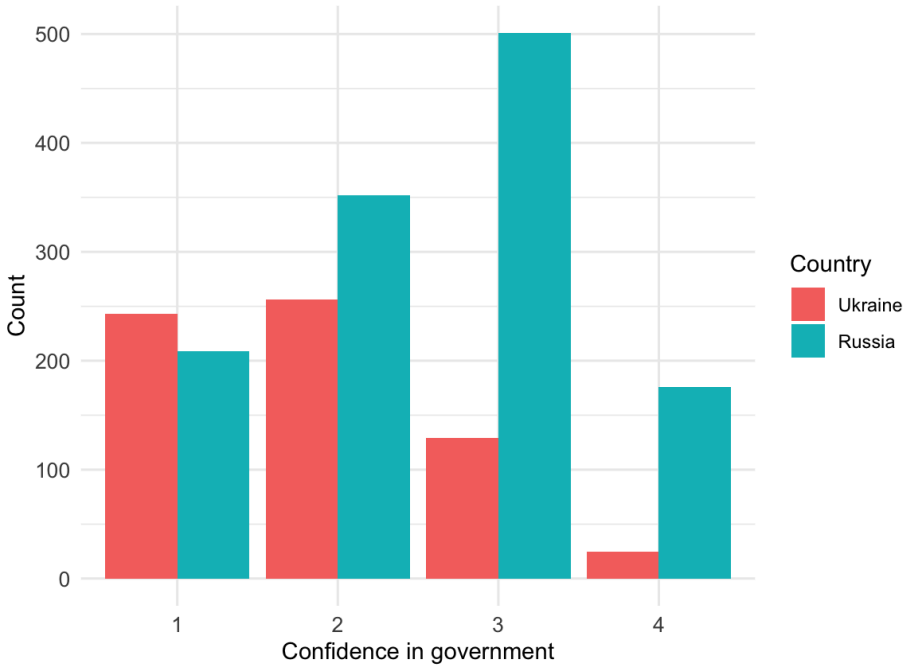

Fig. 4. Distribution of Respondents' Confidence in Government by Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

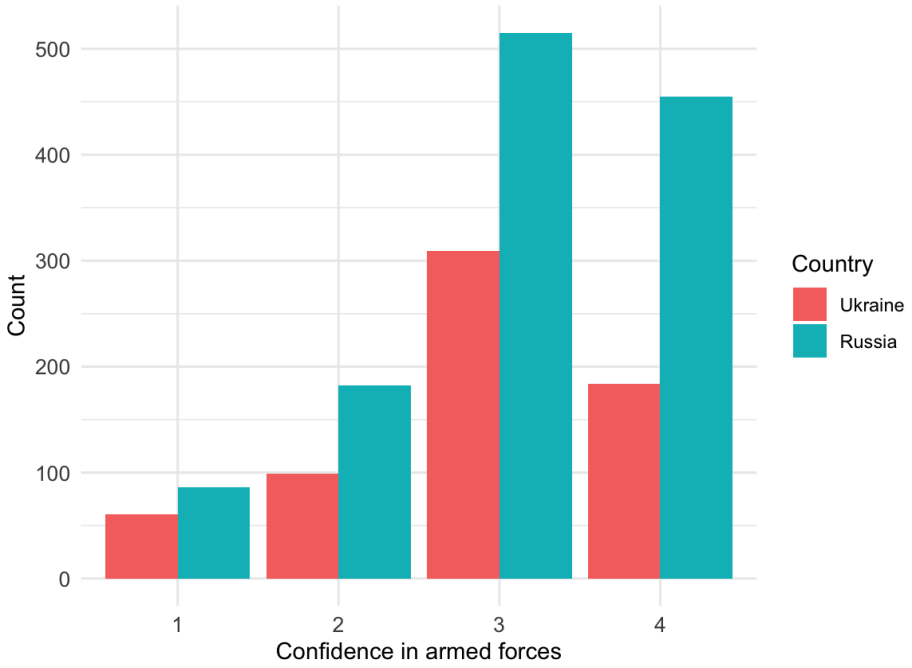

Fig. 5. Distribution of Respondents' Confidence in the Armed Forces by Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

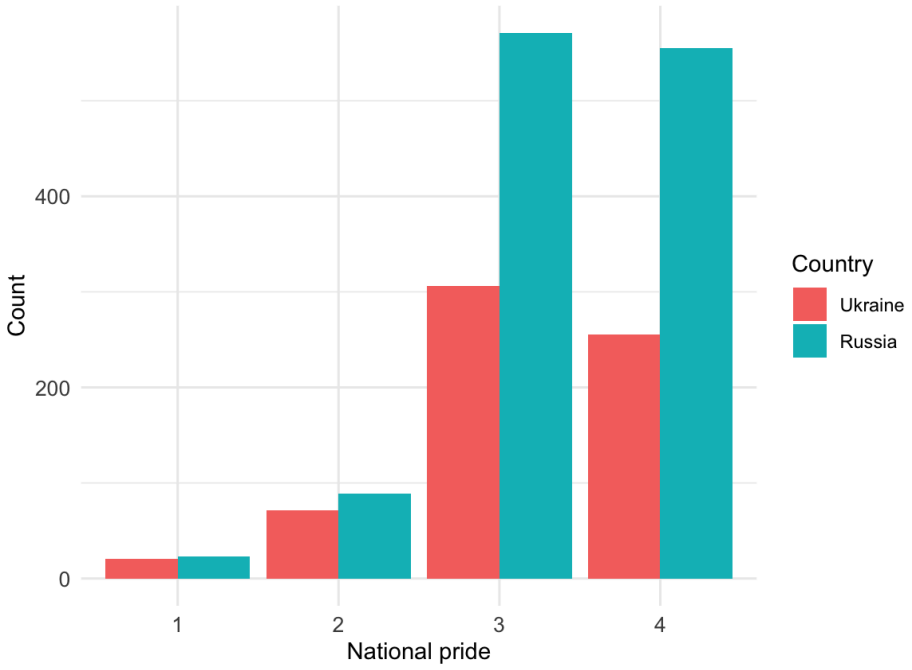

Fig. 6. Distribution of Respondents' National Pride by Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

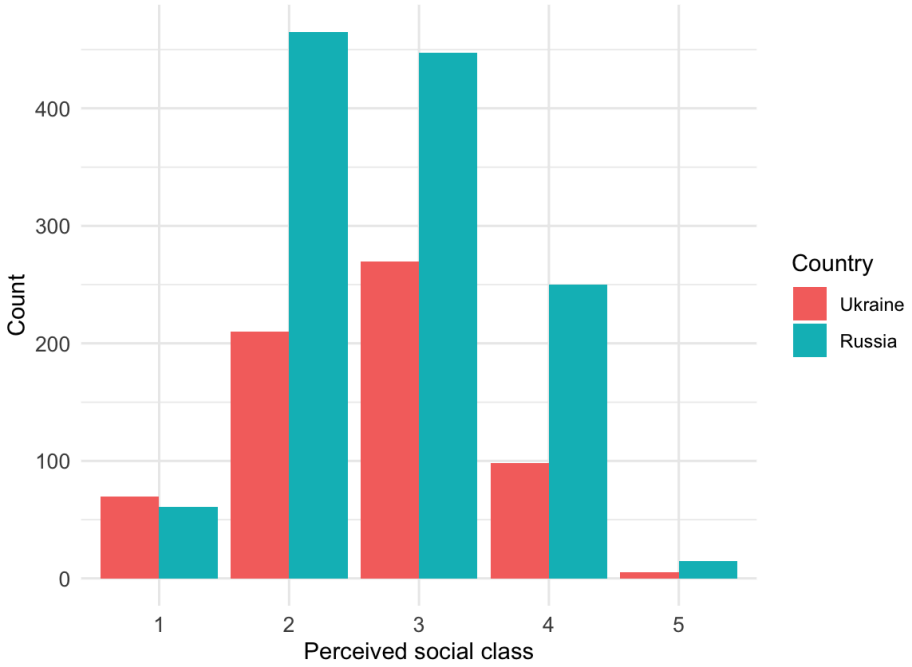

Fig. 7. Distribution of Respondents' Perceived Social Class by Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

The correlation analysis mostly confirms that related variables move together, but not strongly enough to raise major concerns (see Fig. 8). The highest correlation is between life satisfaction and financial satisfaction (r = 0.49), which is not surprising given that people's general evaluation of life is often connected to their assessment of household finances. Confidence in government and confidence in the armed forces are also positively related (r = 0.31), while confidence in the armed forces has a similar association with national pride (r = 0.34). Other relationships are weaker: financial satisfaction and perceived social class correlate at r = 0.28, confidence in government and national pride at r = 0.19, and life satisfaction and perceived social class at r = 0.17. Overall, the coefficients remain below 0.50, so the explanatory variables are not so closely related that they would create a serious multicollinearity problem.

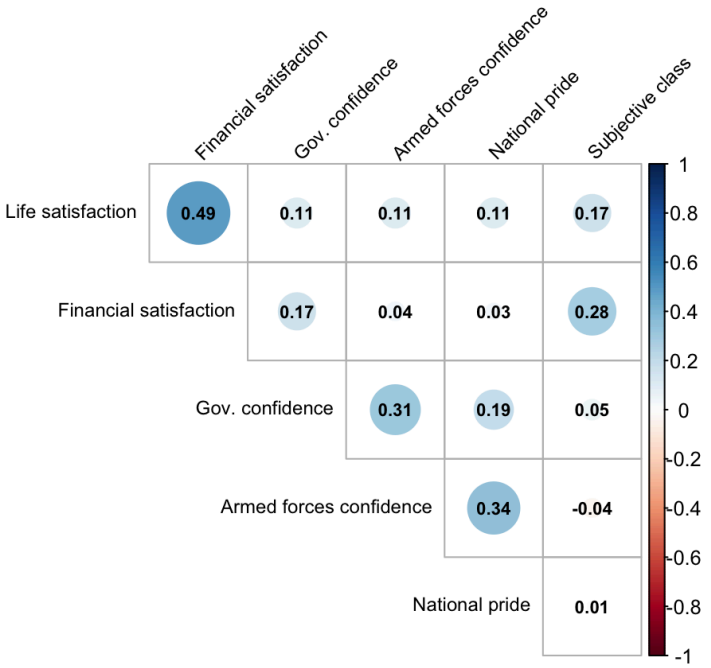

Fig. 8. Spearman Correlation Matrix of Main Explanatory Variables; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

4.3 MODEL DIAGNOSTICS

The empirical analysis is based on logistic regression, since the dependent variable measures whether a respondent is willing to fight for their country or not. In this model, the outcome is

estimated in terms of log-odds, which are then transformed into predicted probabilities. This is appropriate for a binary dependent variable, as the predicted values are restricted to the range between 0 and 1. The analysis follows the logistic regression specification presented in Equation (1) in Section 3.2. In the empirical part, separate specifications are estimated for each main explanatory variable. Each of these variables is interacted with the country indicator, which makes it possible to compare whether the association differs between Ukraine and Russia.

Multicollinearity was checked using Variance Inflation Factors (see Table 1). The VIF values are low across all model specifications: most of them are close to 1, and the highest value, observed for age, is around 1.35. These results suggest that the explanatory variables are not highly overlapping. Therefore, multicollinearity is unlikely to create serious problems for the interpretation of the regression results.

Table 1. Variance Inflation Factor Diagnostics for Logistic Regression Models; author's calculations based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Life Satisfaction	1.009				
Financial Satisfaction		1.014			
Confidence in Government			1.028		
Confidence in Armed Forces				1.017	
National Pride					1.015
Country	1.074	1.083	1.126	1.078	1.074
Perceived Social Class	1.050	1.055	1.046	1.045	1.045
Gender	1.048	1.046	1.046	1.049	1.047
Age	1.352	1.361	1.357	1.359	1.356
Marital Status	1.070	1.072	1.069	1.069	1.070
Education	1.028	1.028	1.027	1.026	1.027

Employment Sector	1.046	1.045	1.045	1.047	1.046

The pseudo R-squared values show that the models have limited but meaningful explanatory power. McFadden's R^2 varies between roughly 0.07 and 0.11, and the strongest fit is observed in the model with confidence in the armed forces. This means that the models capture some relevant differences between respondents, but willingness to fight is clearly not explained by these variables alone. Other factors, which are not available in the WVS data, may also play an important role. These could include political attitudes, regional exposure to conflict, perceived security threats, or direct wartime experience. If such factors are connected both to the explanatory variables and to willingness to fight, the estimated relationships may be affected by omitted variable bias. Therefore, the findings should be read mainly as evidence of statistical associations, not as proof of causal relationships.

4.4 LOGISTIC REGRESSION RESULTS

To examine cross-country differences, a series of logistic regression models with interaction terms between each key explanatory variable and country were estimated. Since logit coefficients are expressed in log-odds and are difficult to interpret directly, the substantive size of the effects is discussed using average marginal effects (AMEs). AMEs indicate the average change in the predicted probability of willingness to fight associated with a given category relative to the reference category, holding other variables constant.

Table 2. Statistically Significant Average Marginal Effects for Logistic Regression Models; author's calculations based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

Variable / contrast	M1: Life sat.	M2: Financial sat.	M3: Gov. conf.	M4: Armed conf.	M5: Pride

Life satisfaction: 2 - 1	-0.330** (0.115)				
Financial satisfaction: 10 - 1		0.145* (0.060)			
Confidence in government: 3 - 1			0.098*** (0.030)		
Confidence in government: 4 - 1			0.106* (0.043)		
Confidence in armed forces: 2 - 1				0.142** (0.049)	
Confidence in armed forces: 3 - 1				0.336*** (0.042)	
Confidence in armed forces: 4 - 1				0.335*** (0.043)	
National pride: 3 - 1					0.310*** (0.075)
National pride: 4 - 1					0.363*** (0.075)
N	1891	1891	1891	1891	1891
McFadden R^2	0.084	0.069	0.071	0.114	0.088

In the specification including life satisfaction (see Model 1), the results do not suggest a stable positive relationship between life satisfaction and willingness to fight. Compared to the lowest level of life satisfaction, most categories are statistically insignificant. The only statistically significant contrast is level 2, which is associated with a 33.0 percentage point lower predicted probability of willingness to fight (AME = −0.330, p = 0.010). Higher levels of life satisfaction, including levels 9 and 10, are positive but not statistically significant (AME = 0.099 and 0.101, respectively). Therefore, life satisfaction does not appear to be a robust predictor of willingness to fight once controls and country interactions are included.

$$\log\left(\frac{P(Q151P_i=1)}{1-P(Q151P_i=1)}\right)=\beta_0+\beta_1 Q49_i+\beta_2 Country_i+\beta_3(Q49_i\times Country_i)+\beta_4 Q287P_i+\beta_5 Q260_i+\beta_6 Q262_i+\beta_7 Q273_i+\beta_8 Q275_i+\beta_9 Q284_i+\varepsilon_i$$

Model 1. Logistic Regression Specification for Life Satisfaction

The model with financial satisfaction (see Model 2) points to a rather limited relationship. Most categories of financial satisfaction are not statistically significant, which means that the variable does not show a stable association with willingness to fight. The only clear exception is the highest category: respondents with the highest level of financial satisfaction have a 14.5 percentage point higher predicted probability of willingness to fight than respondents in the lowest category (AME = 0.145, p = 0.022). However, since the other categories do not move in a consistent direction, this result should not be overinterpreted. Overall, financial satisfaction offers only weak evidence of a positive relationship with willingness to fight.

$$\log\left(\frac{P(Q151P_i=1)}{1-P(Q151P_i=1)}\right)=\beta_0+\beta_1 Q50_i+\beta_2 Country_i+\beta_3(Q50_i\times Country_i)+\beta_4 Q287P_i+\beta_5 Q260_i+\beta_6 Q262_i+\beta_7 Q273_i+\beta_8 Q275_i+\beta_9 Q284_i+\varepsilon_i$$

Model 2. Logistic Regression Specification for Financial Satisfaction

Another model (see Model 3) focuses on confidence in government. Since the original WVS scale is coded so that higher values indicate lower trust, the positive marginal effects should be read as an association between lower confidence in government and higher willingness to fight. Respondents in category 3 have a 9.8 percentage point higher predicted probability of willingness to fight than those with the highest confidence in government (AME = 0.098, p = 0.001). A similar result is observed for category 4, where the predicted probability is higher by 10.6 percentage points (AME = 0.106, p = 0.021). This goes against the initial expectation that stronger trust in political institutions would be linked to higher readiness to fight.

$$\log\left(\frac{P(Q151P_i=1)}{1-P(Q151P_i=1)}\right)=\beta_0+\beta_1 Q71P_i+\beta_2 Country_i+\beta_3(Q71P_i\times Country_i)+\beta_4 Q287P_i+\beta_5 Q260_i+\beta_6 Q262_i+\beta_7 Q273_i+\beta_8 Q275_i+\beta_9 Q284_i+\varepsilon_i$$

Model 3. Logistic Regression Specification for Confidence in Government

The next model (see Model 4) examines confidence in the armed forces. The results are stronger here than in the previous model, but again, the direction is unexpected. Compared with respondents who report the highest confidence in the armed forces, those in category 2 have a 14.2 percentage point higher predicted probability of willingness to fight (AME = 0.142, p = 0.005). The difference becomes much larger in categories 3 and 4, where the predicted probability increases by 33.6 and 33.5 percentage points, respectively (AME = 0.336 and 0.335, p < 0.001). In substantive terms, lower confidence in the armed forces is associated with greater stated willingness to fight. This does not support the original expectation that higher military trust would increase readiness for national defense. One possible interpretation is that respondents with weaker confidence in the armed forces may see national defense as requiring more direct personal involvement, which could be reflected in their higher reported willingness to fight.

$$\log\left(\frac{P(Q151P_i = 1)}{1 - P(Q151P_i = 1)}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Q65P_i + \beta_2 Country_i + \beta_3 (Q65P_i \times Country_i) + \beta_4 Q287P_i + \beta_5 Q260_i + \beta_6 Q262_i + \beta_7 Q273_i + \beta_8 Q275_i + \beta_9 Q284_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Model 4. Logistic Regression Specification for Confidence in the Armed Forces

The last model (see Model 5) examines national pride as an identity-related predictor and assesses its association with willingness to fight. The AME results show that category 2 is positive but not statistically significant (AME = 0.124, p = 0.170). However, respondents in category 3 have a 31.0 percentage point higher predicted probability of willingness to fight than those who are “very proud” (AME = 0.310, p < 0.001), while category 4 is associated with a 36.3 percentage point increase (AME = 0.363, p < 0.001). Thus, in the original coding, lower national pride is associated with a higher probability of willingness to fight. This is also contrary to the expected positive relationship between national pride and willingness to fight, suggesting that the relationship may be more complex than was suggested before.

$$\log\left(\frac{P(Q151P_i=1)}{1-P(Q151P_i=1)}\right)=\beta_0+\beta_1 Q254P_i+\beta_2 Country_i+\beta_3(Q254P_i\times Country_i)+\beta_4 Q287P_i+\beta_5 Q260_i+\beta_6 Q262_i+\beta_7 Q273_i+\beta_8 Q275_i+\beta_9 Q284_i+\varepsilon_i$$

Model 5. Logistic Regression Specification for National Pride

Among the control variables, subjective social class is consistently positive and statistically significant across models. Therefore, the positive AMEs suggest that respondents who place themselves lower in the social hierarchy are more likely to express willingness to fight. Depending on the model and category, lower perceived social class is associated with approximately 10 to 24 percentage points higher predicted probability of willingness to fight compared to respondents who identify as upper class. Gender and age also show stable effects. Women are consistently less likely to report willingness to fight, with AMEs ranging from approximately −8.9 to −9.8 percentage points across models. Age is negatively associated with the outcome, although the effect is small: each additional year of age is associated with about a 0.3 to 0.4 percentage point decrease in the predicted probability of willingness to fight.

Overall, the AME results show that the strongest associations are observed for confidence in the armed forces and national pride. The positive marginal effects imply that lower institutional trust and lower national pride are associated with higher willingness to fight.

4.5 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC MODELS AND MARGINAL EFFECTS

To examine whether the same factors operate differently in Ukraine and Russia, separate country-level models were also estimated. The results show that the structure of associations is not identical across the two cases.

In Ukraine, willingness to fight is related to a wider set of variables. National pride is one of the strongest predictors, although the direction of the association is not the one initially expected. The results show that lower reported national pride is associated with a higher predicted probability of willingness to fight. The increase is substantial, reaching approximately 28–30 percentage points

across the higher categories of the scale. Confidence in the armed forces also matters in the Ukrainian model: lower confidence is associated with an increase in the predicted probability of willingness to fight by around 18 percentage points. Subjective social class shows another strong pattern, as respondents who place themselves lower in the social hierarchy are more likely to report willingness to fight, with predicted probabilities increasing by roughly 25–33 percentage points.

The results for economic and well-being variables in Ukraine are less straightforward. Life satisfaction becomes relevant only at some levels, mostly toward the higher end of the scale, but the relationship is not consistent across all categories. This means that subjective well-being does not operate as a stable predictor of willingness to fight. Financial satisfaction is even less clear. Its marginal effects vary across categories, and in some cases, the direction of the association is negative. For this reason, financial satisfaction cannot be treated as a robust predictor in the Ukrainian model. Among the control variables, gender remains important: women are about 10 percentage points less likely than men to report willingness to fight.

The Russian model looks different. Here, the results are much more concentrated around one variable: confidence in the armed forces. This predictor has large and statistically significant effects. Lower confidence in the armed forces is associated with an increase in the predicted probability of willingness to fight by approximately 32–36 percentage points. Other variables do not play the same role as they do in Ukraine. National pride is not statistically significant, while life satisfaction, financial satisfaction, and confidence in government generally show small effects that are not clearly different from zero.

Some demographic and social factors still matter in Russia, although their role is more limited. Age has a clear negative association with willingness to fight: each additional year is linked to a decrease of about 0.4 percentage points in the predicted probability. This suggests a stronger age gradient than in Ukraine. Gender differences are also present, with women being around 7–8 percentage points less likely than men to express willingness to fight. Subjective social class shows

only a weak and less consistent association. The increase appears mainly in the highest numerical category, which corresponds to the lowest perceived social status.

Taken together, the country-specific models show an important contrast. In Ukraine, willingness to fight is associated with a broader combination of identity-related, institutional, and socio-economic factors. In Russia, the pattern is narrower and is driven mainly by confidence in the armed forces.

These results provide partial support for H4. As expected, the determinants of willingness to fight differ between Ukraine and Russia. The Ukrainian case suggests a more multidimensional pattern, where willingness to fight is connected to identity, social position, and wartime conditions. In Russia, by contrast, the relationship is more concentrated around perceptions of the military institution. This supports the idea that political and wartime contexts shape how individual-level attitudes are translated into stated willingness to fight.

4.6 PREDICTED PROBABILITIES

Predicted probabilities are used to show how willingness to fight changes across different values of the main explanatory variables. They are calculated from the logistic regression models by changing one variable at a time and keeping the remaining characteristics fixed. For categorical controls, the modal category is used, while age is held at its median value.

The predicted values are first estimated on the logit scale and then converted into probabilities through the logistic transformation. To reflect uncertainty around these estimates, 95% confidence intervals are also calculated. They are based on the standard errors of the predictions on the link scale and then transformed to the probability scale. This makes the results easier to interpret because they show the expected probability of willingness to fight for different groups of respondents while holding other factors constant.

The pattern for life satisfaction differs between Ukraine and Russia (see Fig. 9). In Ukraine, the predicted probability of willingness to fight tends to rise at higher levels of life satisfaction, especially after the middle of the scale. This suggests that, in the Ukrainian sample, life satisfaction may be positively related to willingness to fight, although the relationship is not entirely smooth across all categories. In Russia, the predicted probabilities remain high across almost the whole scale, so life satisfaction appears to play a much weaker role there.

Financial satisfaction shows an even less consistent pattern (see Fig. 10). In Ukraine, the predicted probabilities move up and down across the scale rather than following a clear direction. The confidence intervals also become wider at the extreme values, which makes these estimates less certain. In Russia, the probabilities remain relatively stable across most levels of financial satisfaction. Taken together, this suggests that economic perceptions, at least as measured by this variable, do not play a strong role in explaining willingness to fight.

Confidence in government also shows only limited variation (see Fig. 11). In both countries, the predicted probabilities change only modestly across the categories, and there is no clear monotonic pattern. If political trust were strongly related to willingness to fight, one would expect a more systematic increase or decrease across the scale. Instead, the changes are small and statistically uncertain. Therefore, confidence in government does not appear to be one of the main predictors of willingness to fight in these models.

Confidence in the armed forces shows a more visible pattern than confidence in government (see Fig. 12). In both countries, lower reported confidence in the armed forces is associated with a higher predicted probability of willingness to fight. This pattern is especially clear in Russia, where the probability rises steadily across the categories and reaches its highest level among respondents with the lowest confidence in the armed forces. In Ukraine, the relationship is also positive overall, although the confidence intervals are wider, especially at the lower and upper categories. Therefore,

this result should be interpreted carefully, but it suggests that confidence in the armed forces is one of the more important predictors in the models.

National pride shows a clearer pattern than most other variables (see Fig. 13). Respondents with lower reported national pride are more likely to express willingness to fight, as the predicted probabilities rise across the categories. This pattern appears in both Ukraine and Russia. However, it should be interpreted cautiously because it goes against the initial expectation that stronger national pride would be associated with greater readiness to fight.

Subjective social class also shows different patterns across the two countries (see Fig. 14). In Russia, the predicted probabilities increase among respondents who place themselves lower in the social hierarchy, suggesting that lower subjective social status is associated with higher reported willingness to fight. In Ukraine, the relationship is less straightforward. The probabilities rise across some lower-status categories, but then decline in the lowest-status category. This makes the Ukrainian pattern more difficult to interpret and suggests that social class may operate in a less linear way.

Taken together, the predicted probabilities suggest that willingness to fight is not shaped by the same factors in Ukraine and Russia. In Ukraine, the outcome appears to be connected to a broader mix of variables, including subjective well-being, national pride, and perceived social status. In Russia, the pattern is narrower, with confidence in the armed forces standing out as the most important factor. However, the direction of some associations remains unexpected and should be interpreted carefully. In particular, the results for confidence in the armed forces and national pride do not support a simple theoretical explanation in which stronger trust or stronger pride automatically leads to higher willingness to fight.

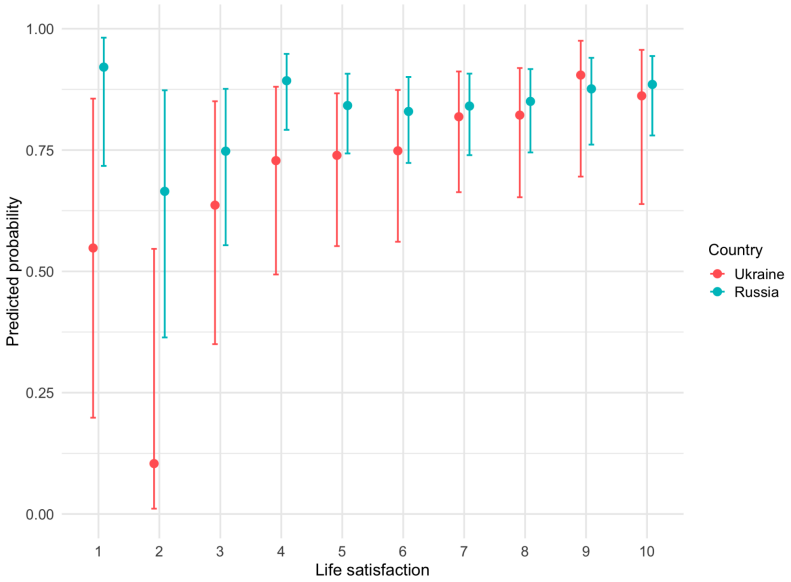

Fig. 9. Predicted Probability of Willingness to Fight by Life Satisfaction and Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

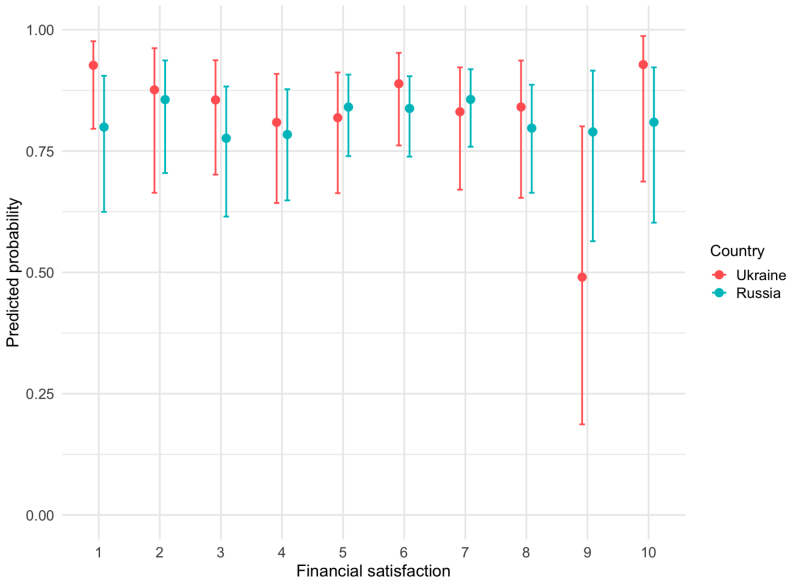

Fig. 10. Predicted Probability of Willingness to Fight by Financial Satisfaction and Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

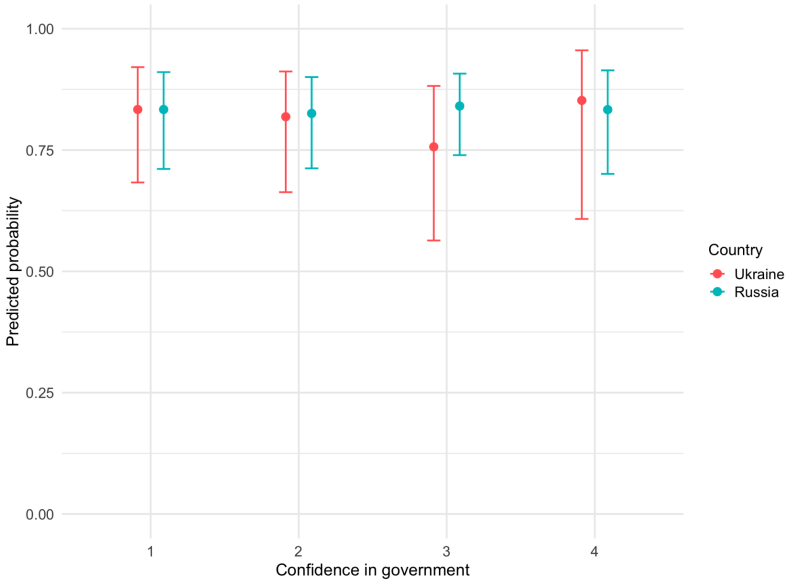

Fig. 11. Predicted Probability of Willingness to Fight by Confidence in Government and Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

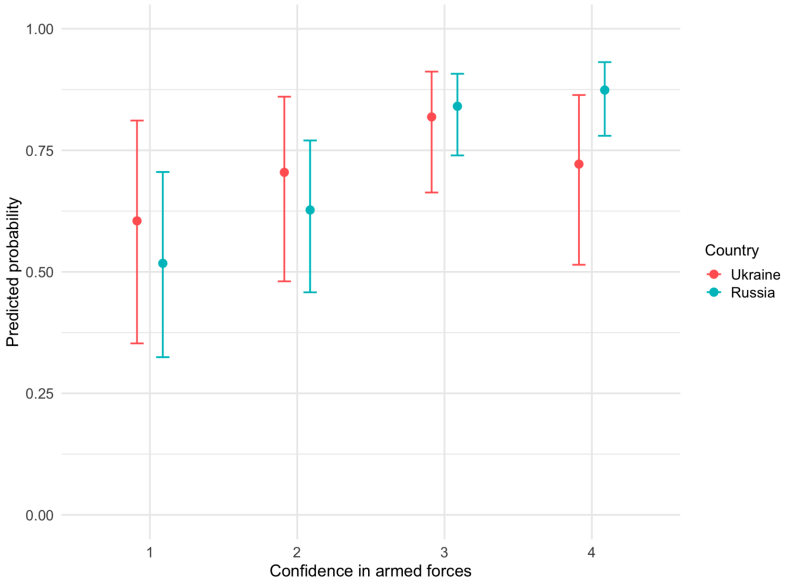

Fig. 12. Predicted Probability of Willingness to Fight by Confidence in the Armed Forces and Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

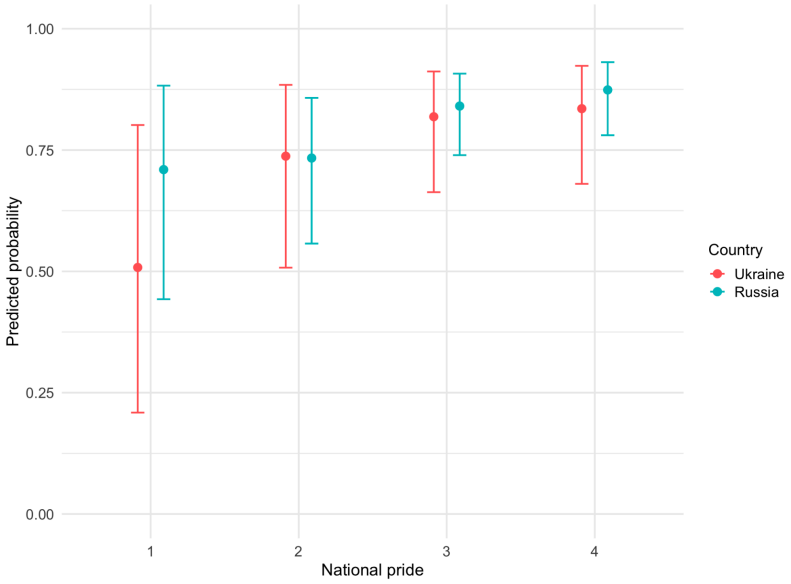

Fig. 13. Predicted Probability of Willingness to Fight by National Pride and Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

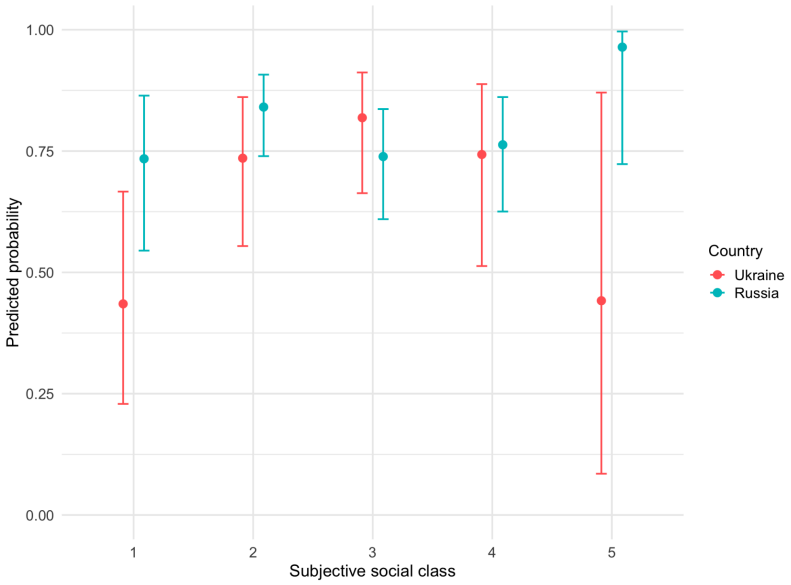

Fig. 14. Predicted Probability of Willingness to Fight by Subjective Social Class and Country; created by the author based on World Values Survey Wave 7 data and statistical analysis in R.

Chapter 5. Findings and Discussion

The study examined which economic, social, institutional, and identity-related factors are associated with willingness to fight for one's country in Ukraine and Russia. The findings suggest that willingness to fight cannot be explained by a single theoretical mechanism and is a multidimensional attitude. The hypotheses are only partially confirmed: some variables appear to be significant, but the effects of some variables are weaker or opposite to theoretical ideas.

H1 expected that higher confidence in state institutions would be associated with higher willingness to fight. Confidence in government appears to be a weak and inconsistent predictor. In some models, lower confidence in government is connected with a higher predicted probability of willingness to fight. This pattern contradicts the expectation that stronger political trust should increase readiness to defend the country. This means that willingness to fight does not depend directly on trust in the government as a political institution. Simultaneously, confidence in the armed forces shows a stronger relationship with willingness to fight. This finding is somewhat counterintuitive. Respondents with lower confidence in the armed forces are more likely to express willingness to fight, which goes against the initial expectation that stronger trust in the military would be linked to higher readiness for national defense. For this reason, the result should not be read as a straightforward trust effect. More likely, this relationship reflects factors that are not fully captured in the model. Respondents who feel that the armed forces are weak or insufficiently prepared may also perceive the security situation as more dangerous, especially if they live closer to conflict-affected areas or feel that the army needs additional support from citizens. In this sense, lower confidence in the armed forces may be linked not to enthusiasm for fighting, but to a stronger sense of threat and personal responsibility.

The evidence for H2 is mixed. The hypothesis suggested that lower satisfaction with life and household finances would reduce willingness to fight, but this relationship is not clearly visible in the results. Life satisfaction, in particular, does not behave as a stable predictor. Most of the

estimated effects are statistically insignificant, and the few significant ones do not create a consistent pattern. In the Ukrainian case, higher levels of life satisfaction are sometimes linked to a higher predicted probability of willingness to fight, although the wide confidence intervals make this result difficult to interpret with certainty. In Russia, willingness to fight remains fairly high across most levels of life satisfaction, which indicates that this variable has limited explanatory power there. Financial satisfaction shows a similarly unclear pattern. Most of the estimated effects are statistically insignificant, so the results do not provide solid evidence that financial dissatisfaction reduces willingness to fight. In fact, the highest level of financial satisfaction is associated with a higher predicted probability of willingness to fight, which does not fit well with the expectation derived from the Relative Deprivation Theory. Based on this sample, economic dissatisfaction cannot be treated as a reliable explanation for lower readiness to fight. At the same time, this does not necessarily mean that economic factors are unimportant. Their effect may simply operate through more specific mechanisms that the WVS does not capture, including regional exposure to conflict, labor market conditions, military incentives, or the perceived personal costs of fighting.

The findings for H3 are more complicated than initially expected. The hypothesis assumed that greater national pride and higher subjective social class would be linked to greater willingness to fight. However, the results do not fully follow this logic. National pride appears to be one of the more influential variables in terms of effect size, but the direction of the relationship is unexpected: respondents with lower reported national pride are more likely to express willingness to fight. This result does not fit a simple National Identity Theory explanation, where stronger pride would normally be expected to increase readiness for national defense. More likely, this pattern reflects the fact that national pride is not the same as willingness to protect the country in a crisis. Some respondents may be critical of the state or less likely to express pride in abstract terms, while still feeling that the country is under threat and needs to be defended. Therefore, the result should be interpreted less as evidence that lower pride causes willingness to fight, and more as a sign that the

relationship between national attachment and defense attitudes is shaped by unobserved factors such as perceived threat, political dissatisfaction, and wartime experience. This also suggests that the WVS question on national pride may not fully capture the kind of national attachment that becomes important during wartime. Subjective social class also works in the opposite direction from the original expectation. Respondents who see themselves as lower in the social hierarchy are more likely to report willingness to fight. This points to an important limitation of interpreting willingness to fight only through patriotism or civic duty. The result may also reflect differences in social position and available opportunities. For people with lower perceived status, readiness to fight may be shaped by material considerations, fewer alternative opportunities, or a different sense of obligation toward the state.

The cross-country comparison gives the clearest support to H4. The factors associated with willingness to fight are not the same in Ukraine and Russia. In Ukraine, the outcome is linked to a wider group of variables, including national pride, confidence in the armed forces, subjective social class, and some levels of life satisfaction. This suggests that readiness to fight in the Ukrainian case is shaped by several dimensions at once: identity, perceived social position, and the broader wartime context. In Russia, the results are more concentrated. Confidence in the armed forces stands out as the main predictor, while the other variables play a less visible role. This difference indicates that willingness to fight should not be treated as a universal attitude that works in the same way across countries. Its meaning depends strongly on the political and social environment in which respondents live.

The control variables also show patterns that are relatively easy to interpret. Women are less likely than men to report willingness to fight, which is not surprising given the gendered character of military participation. Age has a negative association with willingness to fight, meaning that younger respondents are more likely to express readiness to participate. These results show that demographic factors still matter, even after institutional trust, economic perceptions, and identity-related variables are included in the models.

These findings should be read with several limitations in mind. The Ukrainian and Russian surveys were not conducted in the same year, so part of the difference between the two countries may reflect the specific political and social conditions of each survey period. Another limitation is that the study measures self-reported willingness to fight rather than actual behavior. This is important because saying that one is ready to fight does not necessarily mean that a person will act in the same way in a real situation. The use of listwise deletion also reduced the sample size and may have affected the composition of the final sample, especially since retained and excluded respondents differ on several characteristics. Finally, the WVS data do not include several factors that could be highly relevant for this topic, such as exposure to propaganda, regional experience of war, ideology, perceived threat, or direct contact with violence.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

The research results show that people's readiness to fight in Ukraine and Russia cannot be explained just by economic well-being or high life satisfaction. The strongest connections were observed for confidence in the armed forces, national pride, and subjective social class. At the same time life satisfaction, financial satisfaction, and confidence in government are weak predictors. According to the findings, readiness to fight is formed by a complex interaction between institutional context, identity, social position and perceived threat.

Next research should further check these relationships using alternative strategies for dealing with missing values to capture more observations. Moreover, using more recent data can provide comparison of determinants before and after the escalation of the war and the transformation of political and social conditions in Ukraine and Russia. Adding other variables related to information environment and propaganda, ideology, and perceived threat would allow future studies to better explain the complex phenomenon of willingness to fight and contribute to understanding why some predictors operate differently from theoretical expectations.

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