

Donna Bahry

Abstract

For ethnically diverse societies, as in Russia, the post-communist economic transition implies a restructuring of the old cultural division of labor – the distribution of occupations and rewards among ethnic groups. The Soviet commitment to affirmative action policies for non-Russian regions and their resident minorities unraveled along with the USSR. And without central controls over employment and wages, education, and investment, the federal government has far fewer levers to impose quotas or to push industrial and urban development into minority areas. The question, then, is who bears the burden of economic dislocation and who benefits from new economic opportunities? This paper uses survey data to explore the connections between ethnicity and economic transition in three republics of Russia – Tatarstan, North Ossetia and Sakha (Yakutia).