

Crossing Borders: Unveiling the Transformative Influence of Women's Exodus from Bulgaria on Turkish Women

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Introduction

- Labor market dynamics for women have changed significantly over the last century.
- Socioeconomic changes and technological advancements have driven increased women's workforce participation.
- Policy interventions, such as maternity leave and accessible child-care, have supported women in the labor market.
- Cultural and gender norms have deeply influenced female employment patterns and identity.

Introduction

- Developing nations, like parts of the Middle East and South Asia, show lower female labor market engagement.
- These differences are intertwined with cultural and religious norms, limiting women's participation.
- Questions remain about how these norms interact with female labor dynamics and whether they can be changed.

This Paper

- We offer causal evidence on the horizontal cultural transmission of gender norms in a society with deeply entrenched traditional perspectives.
- One of the first studies to explore social learning across peers and groups in the same locality, focusing on the evolution of female labor market dynamics.
- We investigate the impact of a significant influx of ethnic Turkish immigrants to Turkey who share linguistic and religious heritage but have more progressive gender roles and stronger female labor market engagement.

Study Methodology

- Ethnic Turkish immigrants settled predominantly in Western Turkey, creating spatial disparities.
- We use instrumental-variable strategy: The stock of Bulgarian repatriates in the 1985 census.
- Adopted difference-in-differences approach to compare outcomes between 1990 and 2000.
- Conducted placebo experiments over 1985-1990 for robustness.

Findings

Our analysis of outcomes (1990-2000) in affected regions:

- Significant gains in labor market outcomes for native Turkish women, no differential effect on men.
- Notable increases in labor force participation and employment.
- Particularly significant impact in the tradeable manufacturing sector.
- Suggests changing societal norms drive these effects, not local demand.
- Significant reduction in fertility among native Turkish women.
- No evidence of effects on schooling outcomes for either gender.
- Placebo checks (1985-1990) support the robustness of our findings.

Related Research: Horizontal Transmission of Gender Norms

- Our study is part of a broader body of research exploring how gender norms spread through populations.
- For example, Miho et al. (2022) studied the transmission of culture during Stalin's deportations in WWII.
- Miho et al. found that regions with more Protestant migrants, known for egalitarian gender beliefs, now have:
 - Enhanced female labor market attachment.
 - Higher prevalence of female business leadership.
 - Increased educational achievements for both genders.

Related Research: Sociocultural Implications of Germany's Unification

- Boelmann et al. (2022) and Jessen et al. (2022) investigate the effects of Germany's unification in 1989 on gender norms.
- Their research focuses on the interaction between East German women, influenced by socialist egalitarian principles, and their West German counterparts.
- Results show significant shifts in labor and familial patterns, including work hours, maternal employment, and parental leave duration in West Germany.

Contribution

- Among very few papers that study the effect of social learning within families, peers, and diverse groups in shared labor market environments
- Most of the papers in the field are theoretical papers, and use calibration models
- Among new papers that try to identify the causal effect with a natural experiment
- We contribute to this literature with
 - better identification
 - instrument
 - exogenous change happens in a very short period of time
 - involuntary migration
 - developing country context

Revival Process "Process of Rebirth"

- In the 1980s, Bulgarian government started to forcibly assimilate Bulgaria's sizable Turkish minority by eroding their unique cultural and ethnic heritage.
 - mandatory Slavic name changes
 - closure of mosques
 - prohibitions on the Turkish language and customs
- These suppressive actions sparked widespread dissent, and resistance and culminated in an unprecedented migration wave in 1989.
- Within a few summer months, between 320,000 and 370,000 ethnic Turks migrated to Turkey.

Ethnic Turkish Refugees vs Turkish Women

Ethnic Turkish Women in Bulgaria

- Shaped by Bulgaria's socialist regime (1946-1989)
- Female employment as a state mandate
- Achieved 87% female labor force participation
- Promoted higher education, especially in STEM fields
- Achieved gender parity in primary school education by 1988
- Strong workplace rights with maternity benefits, job security, and state-supported childcare
- Enhanced socio-legal rights, addressing post-divorce support and reproductive rights

Ethnic Turkish Refugees vs Turkish Women

Turkish Women

- Men as primary earners, and women limited to domestic chores and caregiving.
- Rooted in cultural and gender norms.
- Significantly lower female labor force participation.
- World Value Survey data highlights negative perceptions regarding maternal employment and gender norms.
- In 1980, most working women were unpaid, primarily in agriculture; only 12% in non-agricultural professions.
- By 1990, only 23% of Turkish women were in the labor force, despite economic development.
- University graduates, primarily employed in government, were the exception.

Ethnic Turkish Refugees vs Turkish Women

Bulgaria

- 76% of married individuals (both genders) agree that working mothers can foster equally warm and secure relationships with their children.
- Only 29% of married women believe men have greater employment rights than women.

Turkey

- Only 40% of men and 48% of women agree that working mothers can foster equally warm and secure relationships with their children.
- A significant 57% of married women believe men have greater employment rights than women.

Historical Migration Waves

- 1925 Agreement Migration Wave (219,000 individuals)
- 1950-1951 Migration Wave (154,393 individuals)
- 1968 "Close Relative Migration Agreement" (116,521 individuals)
- Emigration Restrictions (1970s-1989)

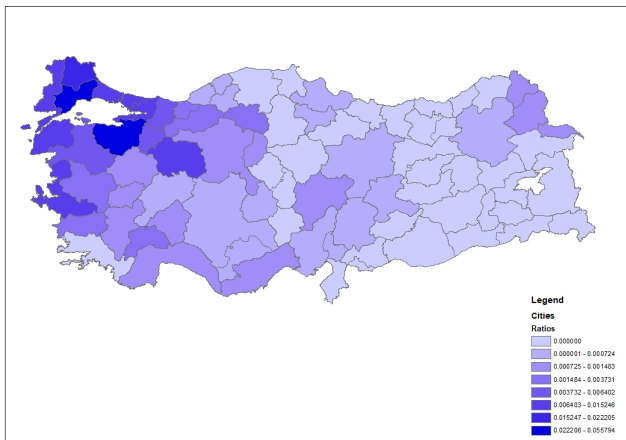
Turkish Government Response to the 1989 Migration Surge

- Humanitarian aid
- Conversion of Bulgarian funds to Turkish Liras
- Let repatriates bring in their vehicles
- Fast process of obtaining Turkish citizenship
- Housing campaign and extended resources to facilitate the smooth resettlement of these refugees

Settlement Patterns and Government Influence

- Predominant Settlement Areas
 - Northwestern and western territories of Turkey
 - Marmara region as a primary destination
- Historical Trends
 - 86% of the 1934-1937 migrants were settled by the government
 - 100% of the 1950-1951 migrants were settled by the government

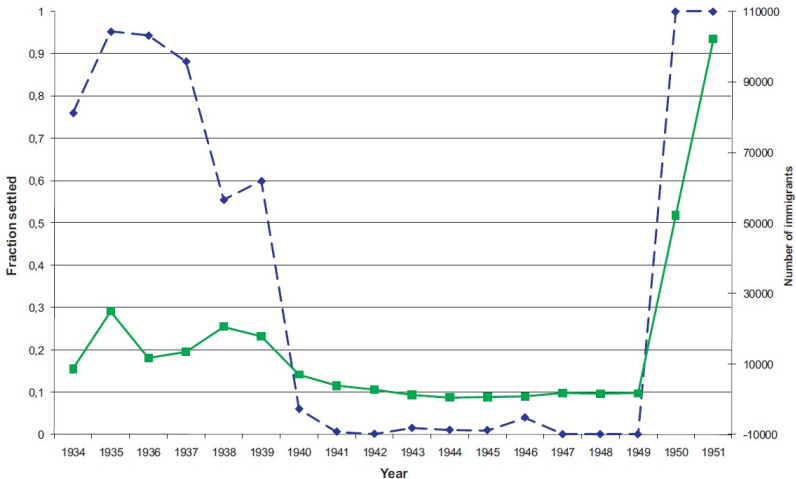
Settlement Patterns and Government Influence



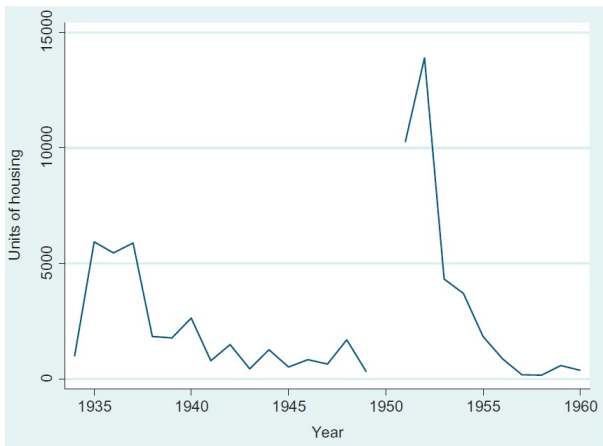
District Level Variation

City/Town	Province	% Change due to 1989
		Repatriates
Corlu	Tekirdag	10,37
Muratli	Tekirdag	10,36
Bursa	Bursa	7,39
Cerkezkoy	Tekirdag	6,38
Gebze	Kocaeli	5,14
Saray	Tekirdag	4,94
Orhangazi	Bursa	4,73
Yalova	Istanbul	4,00
Silivri	Istanbul	3,46
Luleburgaz	Kirklareli	3,13
Tekirdag	Tekirdag	3,07
Inegol	Bursa	2,54
Malkara	Tekirdag	2,16
Babaeski	Kirklareli	2,10
Edirne	Edirne	1,94

Settlement Patterns and Government Influence



Settlement Patterns and Government Influence



Exclusion Restriction?

Instrument: Bulgarian repatriates in the 1985 census.

- Initial location of pre-1989 Bulgarian immigrants largely determined by the Turkish government, not by repatriates' economic decisions.
- Earlier repatriates could have moved to other locations?
 - Comparison of settlement provinces for 1950-51 cohort and 1985 location shows a strong correlation.
 - The geographic dispersion of earlier repatriates is not a strong predictor of internal migration in Turkey.
- The location of residence of earlier repatriates did not respond to the changes in economic conditions before 1985 which could be correlated with changes in economic conditions from 1990 to 2000.
 - No evidence of an association between the ratio of repatriates to non-repatriates in 1985 and the unemployment rate in 1985.

Demographic Impact

- 1985 Census
 - 291,960 Bulgarian-born residents
 - 1,540 recent arrivals (within 5 years)
- 1990 Census
 - 460,560 individuals from Bulgaria
 - 169,260 recent arrivals (within 5 years)

⇒ 56% increase in Bulgarian-born population in Turkey

Data

- Data Sets
 - 1985, 1990, and 2000 Turkish Censuses
 - 1993 and 2003 Demographic and Health Surveys of Turkey
 - 1990 and 1996 World Value Surveys of Turkey
- Turkish Censuses
 - 5% random samples
 - Includes information on demographic and labor force outcomes
 - Labor force participation and employment rates match well with official rates from the Turkish Statistical Institute.
 - Identifies province, district, and area type (district center, town, or rural)
- Administrative Divisions in 1985
 - 67 provinces with 623 districts
 - Analysis in this paper is based on the 1985 classification of districts.

Empirical Framework

$$\Delta(\text{Nonrepat Outcome})_{it} = \alpha + \beta(\text{Repatriate/Nonrepatriate})_{i,90} + X_{i,90}\Gamma + \mu_p + u_i$$

- The unit of analysis the 623 province and district centers
- Sample: 18 to 39-year-old non-repatriates
- DV: the change b/w 1990-2000 in the share of non-repatriate women (men) (employed, in the labor market, employed in manufacturing, employed in services)
- Instrument: Ratio of earlier repatriates (+18) to non-repatriates (in 1985 census)
- Key variable of interest: Ratio of 1989 repatriates to non-repatriate population (18-39-year-old women).
- Province fixed effects
- X includes age groups, education groups, sectors of employment in the labor force, as well as log population in 1990
- Clustered at the level of the district.

First Stage

Ratio of 1989 repatriates to non-repatriate population

	Full Sample	Pop > 20,000	NUTS1 <= 9	NUTS1 <= 6	Pop > 5,000	Pop > 10,000
Repatriates/Nonrepatriates in 1985	0.399*** (0.037)	0.451*** (0.053)	0.398*** (0.037)	0.398*** (0.037)	0.407*** (0.039)	0.410*** (0.412)
N	623	225	465	289	526	382
R^2	0.923	0.951	0.922	0.922	0.927	0.931

Descriptive Statistics

	Women		Men	
	1989 Repatriate	Non-repatriate	1989 Repatriate	Non-repatriate
Agriculture	1.3	10.0	1.0	4.6
Mining and Quarrying	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.7
Manufacturing	66.3	22.9	50.0	22.3
Electricity, Gas, and Water	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.8
Construction and Civil Engineering	0.4	0.6	14.9	10.4
Wholesale and Retail Trade, Restaurants	10.0	8.5	10.5	16.8
Transportation, Communications, and Storage	0.4	3.1	7.7	7.1
Financial Institutions	3.1	12.7	2.6	4.5
Community, Social, and Personal Services	17.3	40.6	11.5	31.6
Unspecified Activities	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.2

Main Results

	Employed		In the Labor Force		In the Manufacturing	
	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS
Panel A: Impact on Non-repatriate Women aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.459** (0.206)	0.574** (0.267)	0.545*** (0.210)	0.713** (0.292)	0.884*** (0.173)	0.922*** (0.246)
Observations	623	623	623	623	623	623
R^2	0.685	0.684	0.648	0.648	0.637	0.637
Panel B: Impact on Non-repatriate Men aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Men aged 18-39	0.031 (0.230)	0.185 (0.272)	0.164 (0.137)	0.248 (0.176)	0.842** (0.370)	0.510 (0.374)
Observations	623	623	623	623	623	623
R^2	0.627	0.627	0.537	0.536	0.555	0.551
Panel C: Differential Impact by Gender on Non-repatriates aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.419* (0.242)	0.607** (0.259)	0.566*** (0.183)	0.750*** (0.232)	-0.113 (0.262)	0.350 (0.268)
Observations	623	623	623	623	623	623
R^2	0.442	0.442	0.491	0.49	0.402	0.394

Main Results: Population above 20,000

	Employed		In the Labor Force		In the Manufacturing	
	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS
Panel A: Impact on Non-repatriate Women aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.590** (0.254)	0.616*** (0.223)	0.665** (0.287)	0.739** (0.289)	0.850*** (0.210)	0.712*** (0.213)
Observations	225	225	225	225	225	225
R^2	0.846	0.846	0.810	0.810	0.791	0.790
Panel B: Impact on Non-repatriate Men aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Men aged 18-39	0.281 (0.318)	0.255 (0.309)	0.200 (0.221)	0.228 (0.254)	0.868* (0.502)	0.318 (0.425)
Observations	225	225	225	225	225	225
R^2	0.79	0.79	0.769	0.769	0.668	0.660
Panel C: Differential Impact by Gender on Non-repatriates aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.331 (0.359)	0.434 (0.286)	0.613** (0.277)	0.751*** (0.249)	-0.078 (0.316)	0.426* (0.250)
Observations	225	225	225	225	225	225
R^2	0.653	0.652	0.656	0.656	0.560	0.551

Placebo on Labor Market Outcomes: 1985-1990 Comparison

	Employed		In the Labor Force		In the Manufacturing	
	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS
Panel A: Impact on Non-repatriate Women aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.207 (0.208)	0.152 (0.271)	0.263 (0.232)	0.172 (0.275)	0.275** (0.110)	0.236 (0.145)
Observations	623	623	623	623	623	623
R^2	0.185	0.185	0.171	0.170	0.267	0.267
Panel B: Impact on Non-repatriate Men aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	-0.270 (0.169)	-0.013 (0.219)	-0.035 (0.130)	0.152 (0.144)	0.409 (0.255)	0.530 (0.343)
Observations	623	623	623	623	623	623
R^2	0.347	0.345	0.292	0.290	0.503	0.502
Panel C: Differential Impact by Gender on Non-repatriates aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.518** (0.230)	0.310 (0.282)	0.280 (0.241)	0.103 (0.283)	-0.233 (0.231)	-0.377 (0.287)
Observations	623	623	623	623	623	623
R^2	0.218	0.217	0.204	0.204	0.398	0.397

Urban Areas with Regional Restrictions

	Employed		In the Labor Force		In the Manufacturing	
	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS
NUTS1 \leq 9 (Excluding Eastern Turkey)						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates 18-39 in 1990 among Women aged	0.456 (0.373)	0.507 (0.318)	0.660** (0.297)	0.827*** (0.267)	-0.064 (0.324)	0.470* (0.257)
Observations	176	176	176	176	176	176
R^2	0.565	0.565	0.644	0.643	0.566	0.556
NUTS1 \leq 6 (Only Western and Central Turkey)						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.192 (0.422)	0.099 (0.373)	0.569* (0.338)	0.690** (0.309)	0.115 (0.334)	0.586** (0.285)
Observations	120	120	120	120	120	120
R^2	0.589	0.589	0.659	0.659	0.579	0.569

Placebo on Labor Market Outcomes (Urban): 1985-1990 Comparison

	Employed		In the Labor Force		In the Manufacturing	
	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS
Panel A: Impact on Non-repatriate Women aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	-0.112 (0.283)	-0.084 (0.239)	-0.031 (0.362)	0.034 (0.301)	0.134 (0.123)	0.019 (0.134)
Observations	225	225	225	225	225	225
R^2	0.361	0.361	0.362	0.362	0.441	0.438
Panel B: Impact on Non-repatriate Men aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	-0.338* (0.195)	-0.273 (0.179)	0.022 (0.135)	0.147 (0.107)	0.312 (0.382)	0.187 (0.388)
Observations	225	225	225	225	225	225
R^2	0.573	0.573	0.493	0.492	0.642	0.642
Panel C: Differential Impact by Gender on Non-repatriates aged 18-39						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.230 (0.328)	0.269 (0.258)	-0.033 (0.315)	-0.109 (0.249)	-0.164 (0.330)	-0.190 (0.311)
Observations	225	225	225	225	225	225
R^2	0.454	0.454	0.477	0.477	0.593	0.593

Effect on Fertility: Number of Live Births

	Full Sample		nuts 1 <= 9		nuts1 <= 6	
	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	-0.995* (0.554)	-1.138** (0.566)	-0.930 (0.573)	-1.077* (0.577)	-0.830 (0.553)	-0.942* (0.562)
Observations	623	623	465	465	289	289
R^2	0.496	0.496	0.433	0.433	0.419	0.419

Placebo on Fertility: 40-59 Old Women

	Full Sample		nuts1 <= 9		nuts1 <= 6	
	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.456 (1.155)	0.522 (1.515)	0.338 (1.103)	0.590 (1.497)	0.560 (1.174)	0.613 (1.556)
Observations	623	623	465	465	289	289
R^2	0.483	0.483	0.541	0.541	0.639	0.639

Placebo on Fertility: 1985-1990 Comparison

	Full Sample		nuts1 <= 9		nuts1 <= 6	
	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	0.935 (1.784)	0.059 (2.255)	1.220 (1.759)	0.196 (2.278)	1.495 (1.773)	0.990 (2.281)
Observations	623	623	465	465	289	289
R^2	0.323	0.323	0.380	0.380	0.391	0.391

Effect on Women's Schooling

	Middle School		High School		College	
	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS	OLS	2SLS
Panel A: Full Sample						
Ratio of 1989 Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	-0.576 (0.548)	-0.017 (0.511)	-0.280 (0.446)	-0.503 (0.441)	-0.102 (0.236)	-0.088 (0.236)
Observations	621	621	622	622	623	623
R^2	0.346	0.345	0.341	0.341	0.185	0.185

- robust for all regional restrictions

Effect on Gender Norms and Attitudes

Panel A: DHS Surveys (1993 and 2003)

	Man Can Beat Woman	Woman Decides on Spending Money	Woman Should not Argue with Man	Woman Decides on Contraceptive Use
Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	-84.709*** (8.690)	320.691*** (61.834)	-265.234*** (12.131)	368.327*** (56.842)
Observations	5,040	1,122	4,942	760
R ²	0.074	0.104	0.055	0.128

Panel B: World Value Surveys (1990 and 1996)

	Autonomy Index	Defiance Index	Equality Index	Voice Index	Employed	Work is Important	Approves Men's Priority in Jobs
Repatriates to Non-Repatriates in 1990 among Women aged 18-39	5.514*** (1.953)	3.024** (1.228)	117.086 (78.679)	6.085*** (1.592)	11.031*** (2.237)	8.256** (3.791)	-10.774*** (2.282)
Observations	892	887	554	863	809	842	834
R ²	0.042	0.076	0.185	0.049	0.067	0.083	0.117

Conclusion

- In this study, we examined the causal impact of exposure to progressive gender norms on local women's labor market, fertility, and schooling outcomes.
- We focused on the forced migration of approximately 350,000 ethnic Turks from Bulgaria to Turkey in 1989.
- Exposure to the migration wave led to a significant increase in female labor force participation and employment in Turkey.
- Native women in affected regions experienced substantial gains in labor market outcomes, particularly in the manufacturing sector.
- Fertility rates of native Turkish women exposed to repatriates decreased significantly.
- Our results emphasize the malleability of gender norms and the potential for cultural transmission, even in contexts with entrenched traditional values.