

Discussion of:
“Crossing Borders: Unveiling the Transformative
Influence of Women’s Exodus from Bulgaria on Turkish
Women”

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Gender Norms and Women's Labor Market Outcomes

- Pivotal role of culture (religion and gender norms) in explaining cross-country differences in women's labor market outcomes
- Transforming gender norms with RCT's
 - ▶ “Reshaping Adolescents' Gender Attitudes” by Dar, Jain and Jayachandran, AER (2022)
- What about natural experiments?
 - ▶ Exogenous historical shocks to gender norms

This Paper

- Can exposure to more progressive gender norms improve women's labor market outcomes?
 - ▶ through *cultural transmission* and *social learning*
- Unique historical experiment with clear advantages
 - ▶ deeply ingrained progressive gender perspectives in the source country
 - ▶ strict regulation of emigration from Bulgaria between 1970-1989
 - ▶ a large and rapid influx
 - ▶ similar religious and linguistic backgrounds

On the Current Empirical Strategy

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

- Limitations of the current empirical strategy
 - ▶ drawbacks associated with aggregating data at the district center level
 - ▶ representativeness of the Census Data (5%) at the district center level
 - ▶ limited statistical power
- Comments and suggestions:
 - ▶ descriptives at the location level, i.e., Are settlement locations of ethnic Bulgarian Turks different in relevant aspects?
 - ▶ downward bias driven by differences in education levels
 - ▶ spatial adjustment for standard errors

Proposal of an Alternative Empirical Strategy

- A Bartik-type instrument
 - ▶ à la Goldsmith-Pinkham (2021), Borusyak (2021)
 - ▶ can deploy individual level data from WVS, TDHS, or HLFS
- Difference-in-Differences?
 - ▶ Reformulation of the treatment and control groups from men and women to geographical areas (provinces) with differential exposure to ethnic Turks from Bulgaria
- Geographical Regression Discontinuity Design?

Mechanisms

- What about the **men**?
 - ▶ The identification in Table 12 is unclear!
 - ▶ Are there spillover effects to gender attitudes of males?
- Is there any effect on marriage outcomes?
- Is the effect heterogenous across married and unmarried females?

Questions and General Comments

- Contribution with respect to other papers exploring the effect of cultural shocks to gender norms (e.g. German reunification)
- Map of settlements, and timeline of events
- Redistricting might have altered the population shares

THANK YOU!