

Arriving LATE: Access to citizenship and Economic Integration

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**Discussion:
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Summary

The paper looks at the impact of liberal reforms in access to citizenship in Germany on economic integration outcomes of first-generation immigrants in Germany

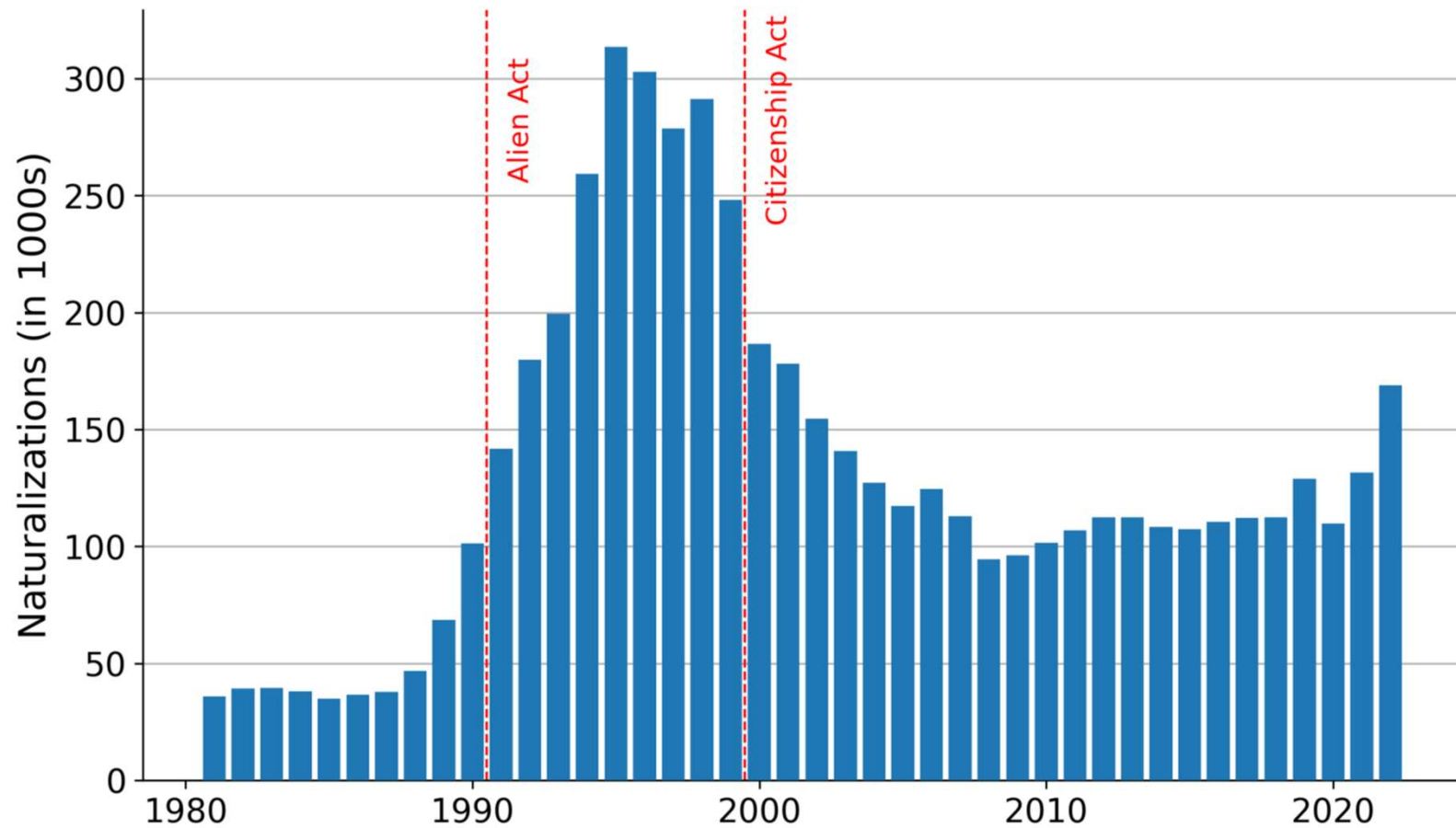
It uses advanced econometric methods (Local Randomization and Fuzzy RDD) to identify LATE effects

It finds evidence of catalyst effects on accessing better jobs and on the labor force participation of women

Overall very interesting, super well executed and written, ambitious paper contributing to better inform naturalization and integration policies

Methodology

Exploit two reforms in 1991 and 2000



Methodology

- Local Random Approach and Fuzzy RDD to identify causal effects of having to wait 8 years (for those arriving at age 14) v. 15 years (for those arriving at age 15) (ITT) and actually naturalizing (LATE) thanks to earlier access to citizenship
- Insist more that the main contribution v. previous literature is that you observe take-up (while previous did age-cohort comparisons)
- Tell us more about the consistency/discrepancies between ITT and LATE effects. Is every thing coming from take-up (compliers), do we see contamination (eg, the option to naturalize impacts those who don't) and how this speaks to mechanisms (eg, signaling effect – Govind et al -- see later)

Comment 1: Crown v. catalyst

- There is already lots of evidence on catalyst effects (including from you guys for Germany, Govind for France, Hainmueller et al for Switzerland)
- The policy debate is about crown v. catalyst, and about the magnet effect/selectivity effects of citizenship reforms.
- Can your paper speak to the crown hypothesis? Are there elements in the reform (eg, language requirements) that speak to the crown hypothesis?

Comment 2: Take-up

- Take-up remains comparatively low in Germany in spite of the reforms, and the effects of the reforms on take-up are low. Why?
- Since the main contribution compared to previous literature is the fact that you observe take-up (and move from ITT to LATE), you should analyze take-up much more. 2 suggestions:
- Endogenous take-up: take-up rate is higher for women, and women gain more from naturalization – maybe this is endogenous? I don't see that you address this (beyond... ITT). LS (more incentive)/HS? Consistent story for a range of heterogeneous effects?
- Selectivity in take-up (beyond gender): country of origin beyond EU/non-EU (e.g., allowing for dual citizenship or not), religiosity, intermarriage, etc.

Comment 3: mechanisms

- The literature on the catalyst is about the mechanisms as much as it is on causal identification: lower discrimination? Longer time-horizon? Attachment and cultural assimilation? Political engagement? Investment in local-specific HC? Better acceptance from natives?
- Section 6 on “explaining gender differences” could simply be “mechanisms”, using gender differences to rule out/select relevant mechanisms?
 - for example: discrimination does not seem a relevant mechanism (no impact on men)