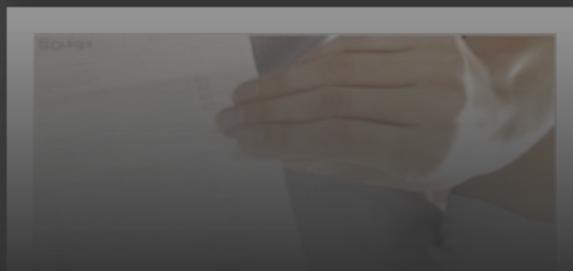
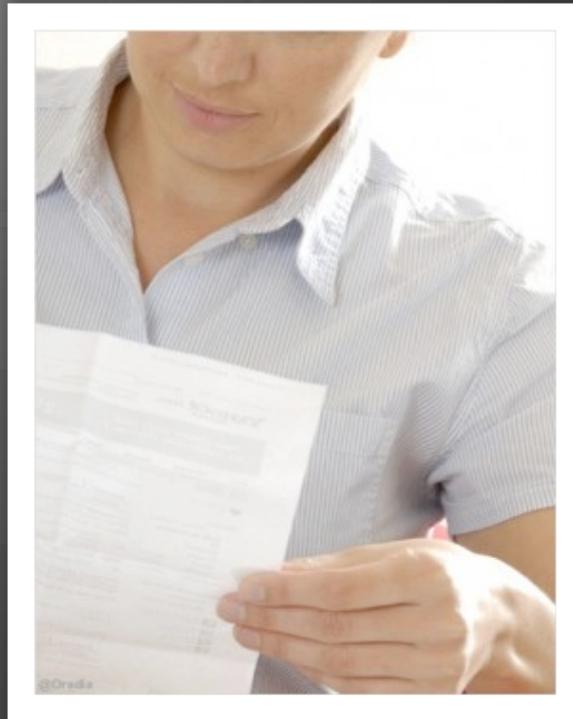


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Hiring discrimination among ethnic minorities and exhaustiveness of applications

Correspondence testing among Algerians in France vs. Turks in Germany

Kevin Tschirhart, Soc 738



A- Specifics aims of the study

Hiring discrimination rates in Germany seem to be lower than those of other countries, including France. However, no consistent studies have yet been conducted across countries to validate these trends. One hypothesis that could be put forward to explain this anomaly in discrimination is the content of job applications. In fact, German applications are generally more comprehensive than those of any other country in Europe. Therefore, could discrimination be due to the variation in the exhaustiveness of the applications? Are applications with recommendation letters less likely to be discriminated against?

The main goal of this field experiment is to estimate the extent of racial discrimination in two major European labor markets and to determine if the exhaustiveness of written applications can impact levels of discrimination.

The specific aims of the proposed research include:

- (1) An estimate of the extent of racial discrimination of among young, entry-level graduate candidates in the French and German labor markets
- (2) A comparison of the level of discrimination between two major ethnic minorities: Algerians in France and Turks in Germany. Thanks to similar testing methods, we obtain consistent and comparable measures between countries to highlight the potential differences and similarities between the two countries.
- (3) Determine if the level of information contained in an application can decrease race-based discrimination in recruitment practice. Does detailed hard-evidence

information about various skills or personality, like transcripts or recommendation letters, reduce the level the discrimination?

(4) An identification of some of the key factors that might influence the strength of discrimination: size and location

B- Background

Over the past few years several field studies exploring ethnic discrimination on the job market have been conducted in various countries. Several of these experiments were conducted via “correspondence testing¹”. This type of experiment tests the access to opportunity for ethnic minorities compared to equally qualified persons from the majority population. Matched written applications are sent to real job vacancies, with ethnicity as the only variable that randomly differs. Interestingly, the measured degree of differential treatment varies remarkably with the respective context.

In the U.S., Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) found that applications with white sounding names receive 50 percent more invitations for interviews than the ones with African–American sounding names. In France, the Discrimination Observatory (Amadieu, 2006; see section C) found that candidates with Arab-sounding names were almost three times less likely than candidates with French-sounding names to get an interview. In Greece, Drydakis and Vlassis (2007) analyzed the difference in job opportunities between Greeks and Albanians. The results showed that Albanians are 43 percent less likely to be offered a job than Greek. The

¹ Bovenkerk (1992), in *Combating discrimination against migrant workers and ethnic minorities in the world of work* has done an extensive work on the subject.

same year, another study of Carlsson and Rooth (2007) in Sweden demonstrated that 25 percent of employers actually discriminate against Arabs. In 2009, a study conducted in British cities (Wood & al., 2009) found a similar net discrimination of 29 percent between white name applications and equivalent applications from ethnic minority candidates. As we can observe, discrimination rates against ethnic minority varies broadly across countries, with ethnic minorities facing between 25 and 50 percent less chance to obtain an invitation for an interview.

On the contrary, Germany consistently registers lower discrimination rates. In two major studies on discrimination in the labor market conducted in Germany in 1994 and 2010 (Goldberg and Mourinho, 1994; Kaas and Manger, 2010; see section C), net discrimination has been below 15 percent. Therefore, we can legitimately ask why German employers seem to be less likely to discriminate than others.

C- Preliminary studies on hiring discrimination in France and Germany

This paper seeks to compare hiring discrimination in France and Germany for a few reasons. First, they are the two largest European labor markets in Europe. Second, they both face similar general problems of integration with their largest ethnic minority: Algerians in France and Turks in Germany. In fact, both minorities often face various types of discrimination *de facto*: in employment, but also in education, housing, etc... In France, for instance, a recent study showed that 39 percent of second generation (parent immigrants or natives of DOM-French Overseas Department) Algerians have at least sometimes been “discriminated against or treated unfairly” over the past five years (Beauchemin and al., 2010). Although they are neighbors, France and Germany are at two different extremes in terms of hiring discrimination levels. A brief summary of the main correspondence testing studies that have been conducted recently in the two countries follows.

France

In France, besides a few studies conducted by nonprofits with convenient sampling, we had to wait until the mid-2000s to see the first wide-scale field experiment to measure hiring discrimination. In 2004, a field experiment conducted by the temporary agency Adia and the Discrimination Observatory (Amadieu, 2004) measured the hiring discrimination among salespersons in the Paris area. Between April and May 2004, 1806 CVs were sent out; among them, 258 received at least a positive answer. A salesperson with an Arab-sounding name had only one-fifth the chance of getting an interview as did a white person with a French-sounding name.

From autumn 2005 to autumn 2006, Adia and the Discrimination Observatory (Amadieu, 2006) conducted a more exhaustive study, measuring hiring discrimination in France among various sectors and across five variables: age, gender, origin, handicap, and physical appearance. The group in charge of the study sent out 6,461 CVs, applying for 1,340 job offers. The “reference” candidate had a French-sounding name, was aged between 28 and 30, and no photograph was added to the CVs. As for the race variable, an Arab-sounding first and last name was used to measure ethnic-based discrimination. The results of the studies showed that discrimination based on origins arrived just after age discrimination. Someone with an Arab-sounding name had 2.7 times less chance of getting an interview compared to a white person with a French-sounding name. The higher the level of responsibility and qualification is, the stronger the discrimination. When the reference candidate received 100 invitations for a job interview, the blue-collar or white-collar applicant with an Arab-sounding respectively received only 47 and 17 positive answers. Applicants with Arab-sounding names are less discriminated against in the primary sector (49 positives

answers for industry/construction jobs) than in the tertiary sector (only 31 positives answers in the services sector). Smaller companies (20 to 199 employees) as well as some regions (like the East of France) reinforced ethnic-based hiring discrimination.

Germany

In 1994, the first wide scale study on discrimination against Turkish workers was carried out for higher qualified jobs in the Rhine-Ruhr region and in Berlin (Goldberg and Mourinho, 1994). Three professions were tested: caring professions (nurse...), commercial professions (sales assistant, industrial merchant, banking...) and technical professions (construction draughtsman, lay-out worker). The test subjects were German and Turk job applicants, aged 20 and 25, with equivalent education and qualification. They only differed by their nationality (German vs. Turkish-sounding names). The application was made of a CV and short introduction letter of few lines (that did, however, not constitute a proper “cover letter”). Out of the 2,633 paired applications sent out, 1,094 received only negative answers (for both candidatures) and 299 at least one positive answer. The hiring opportunities between native Germans and Turks with a migration background were not statistically significant², with an overall net discrimination of 9.7 per cent. However, if we look at the data by branch, there was a strong and statistically significant discrimination rate against Turks at 43.2 per cent in the commercial professions. This percentage also varied significantly according to the legal structure, with a net discrimination rate ranging from 25 percent in private companies down to 3.7 percent in semi-public companies, proving that discrimination was more pronounced in private undertakings.

² The same study measured the discrimination against Turkish workers for semi-skilled jobs via telephone vacancy applications between 1993 and 1994. An overall significant net discrimination rate of 19 per cent against Turks was found for semi-skilled workers. However, we prefer not to compare these results with the others since the mode effect (telephone vs. written application) might bias the results.

Another recent field study was conducted in the German labor market for student internships (Kaas and Manger, 2010). The study was also focused on a specific high-skilled segment of the labor market: the candidates were second-year students, aged 21 to 22 and aiming at a bachelor's degree in business economics. Using a correspondence testing (one German-sounding candidate and one Turkish-sounding applicant), they sent out paired applications to 528 job offers in two waves (December 2007/January 2008 and December 2008). Importantly, the standard application sent to employers was quite complete: a CV, but also a cover letter and some transcripts). It was found that an application with a German-sounding name is on average 14 percent more likely to receive a callback, a level comparable and very similar to the one found by Goldberg and Mourinho 16 years ago. Differential treatment was particularly strong in smaller firms, where the German names received 24 percent more callbacks. A particularity of this last study is that two slightly different applications were sent to the employers: one with two previous letters of reference of former employers, and one without. For applications that included reference letters containing information, it was found that German and Turkish applicants achieved almost identical callback rates (respectively 37.4 vs 36.9 percent), while a significant difference at a five percent level was noticed between the candidates with standard applications (respectively 41.8 vs 32.5 percent). In other words, discrimination seems to disappear when applications contain more detailed information about each candidate, including reference letters. Therefore, the variation in discrimination between France and Germany could come from a difference in the level of hard-evidence information about the candidate's skills and personality.

D - Research Design and Methods

Online Recruitment

Over the past few years, there has been significant growth of online recruitment (“recrutement online”/ “Online-Bewerbungen”). Both small and large companies are increasingly using Internet to post vacancies online, on their own websites or on online job databases. Posting jobs online has become a lot less expensive and more efficient than using magazine or newspaper ads. It enables companies to connect quickly with qualified candidates, ensuring fast and flexible hiring. On the other hand, using online websites is now a popular way of searching for and applying for work, especially among younger people.

As far the limits of online applications, many companies, especially in some specific industries like hospitality, employers still expect candidates to apply in person. Moreover, applicants with lower education as well as older applicants might be less friendly with the online recruitment process. However, since we are interested in young, entry-level candidates, this tool seems to be the most well adapted and more cost-effective than any other.

There are two main ways to apply for a job online. The first option for candidates is to apply online via a job board, such as Monster.fr. or JobScout24.de. These employment websites allow any employer to post job requirements for a position to be filled. Prospective candidates can then locate and fill out job applications to postulate for advertised positions. Monster, for instance, the largest jobs search engine in the world³, counts over 150 million resumes in its global database and over 63 million job seekers per month. The second option is to apply online directly at the company's web site, especially for larger companies.

³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monster.com>. Retrieved on December 21, 2010

In order to apply to the maximum amount of job vacancies and increase our sample size, both methods will be used for the purpose of the study. Most of the job offers will be found on large job boards, since most companies use them to maximize the visibility of their job postings. In most job search platforms, applicants are required to register and to create an employment profile to have access to job offers. Therefore, we will build profiles and use “search agents” (which alert candidates when new jobs corresponding to their profile are posted) to facilitate the job search. For the purpose of our research, several job search engines can be used. This will enable us to somewhat standardize the research process in these two countries, making it easier and less time-consuming. The most popular in France are Pole-emploi.fr⁴, Monster.fr, Apec.fr⁵ and Keljob.fr⁶. In Germany, Monster.de, JobScout24.de, Stellenanzeigen.de and StepStone.de⁷ are among the most popular in Germany. However, since a few very popular or large companies receive large amounts of applications might not post their vacancies on job boards, applying directly on their websites might be the only way to test them. For that reason, this method will be used as a complementary way to cover a larger part of the jobs available online.

Applications

Sales/retail sector

We will choose to limit our analysis to the sales/retail sector since it is one that

⁴ Pôle emploi (“employment pole”) is a French governmental agency that registers unemployed people and helps them find jobs. Their employment website offers about 129,000 job posted online.

⁵ The APEC (French executive employment agency) is a private association for employment of managers and executives. More than 26,000 executive-level jobs are currently posted on their website and close to 7,000 employments are especially posted for young graduates.

⁶ According to a ranking realized in July 2008 (<http://meilleursiteweb.com/emploi.htm>), Anpe.fr (former website of Pole-emploi.fr) had about 400,000 unique visits per day, against 100,000 for Monster.fr and 65,000 for Apec.fr.

⁷ <http://www.jobzing.com/job-sites/germany/>

empirically has one of the highest levels of hiring discriminations (Goldberg & Mourinho, 1994; Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Amadieu, 2004, 2006). Employees in this branch are systematically in contact with clients at various level and thus more likely to be subject to racist behaviors (Amadieu, 2006).

Two similar profiles

In order to isolate the discrimination factor, each two-paired application submitted to an employer has to be identical, reflecting equal levels of education and experience, with the exception of racially distinctive names. This is to ensure that the observed callback rates from employers actually come from a race effect. Therefore, we will create two slightly different applications for each candidature with the same key characteristics.

Both candidates are between 24 and 25 years old. They are all applying for full time, entry-level jobs in sales, retail, or business development. They both have done two six months full time internships in large companies. The type of company, duration, and title describing their professional experience are very similar. Each candidate pair had the same level of responsibilities and comparable notable achievements. As far as education, they share the same (or equivalent) certificates or diplomas, but went to slightly different schools, located in two different regions. In order to have a satisfying response rate from employers, school and university grades ranked between good and very good. Both have French or German as a native language, as well as fluency in English, since it is a growing pre-requirement in Europe. The Algerian and Turkish candidates have a good command of Arabic and Turkish additionally. Both candidates are also computer literate, with a good knowledge of operating systems and software programs. The other minor variations

between the applications are the individual school and university grades as well as hobbies, interests and leisure activities. Some minor differences in the presentation (colors, typologies and presentation/ layout) are added too. A photo, although not compulsory, is still very common in both countries, if not requested in Germany. Consequently, a photograph is added to the CV in order to maximize the callback rate. To avoid any bias, a photograph for each profile that can fit both a native French/German candidate and an applicant from an Algerian/Turk minority is selected. The photograph is then randomly associated with the French/German or Algerian/Turk profile. This method guarantees that the photograph does not influence the callback rate.

Visible minorities and second generation

In our experiment, we want to study the discrimination of “visible minorities”, that are French or German citizens but have an Algerian or Turkish sounding name, with a migration background. As children of immigrants (or a person born in a French overseas department of France), they represent the “second generation” or “third generation”. Algerian and Turkish immigrants that are born abroad from non-French or non-German parents and currently living in France or Germany are not the focus of the study. In fact, they are less assimilated (they have often done their study abroad, in different and potentially less recognized school...) and are more likely to have a language issue (for Turks). These two factors might actually interfere with the discrimination variable (it’s a “handicap” that is not due to race) and they are more likely to be discriminated. Therefore, the tested candidates were born and raised in France and Germany and have French and German as a mother tongue. They respectively did their study in French and German schools and potentially

already have some working experience in these countries.

The element of differentiation: Names

Every company that presents a reasonable job offer will receive two applications, a majority based application and one from the ethnic minority. A name (French or Algerian/Turk or German) and a type (A, B or C; see following section) are randomly assigned to the first application to be sent. The second application is then assigned the complementary name and type. We only send applications per two in order to reduce the risk of suspicion due to a significant number of very similar applications.

In order to select first and last name of the candidates, we use a register of names. For the native candidates, we look up the 20 most common first and last names in the birth year of the candidates in France and Germany (between 1986 and 1987). For the applicant from the ethnic minority, we use the same method. Both names have to be evident enough to make it easy for the recruiter to deduce the ethnic background, without being too stereotypical or appearing to be a caricature. In France, for instance, we stay away from last names like Martin, Bernard or Dubois for native candidates, since they are currently the most common names⁸ and could raise suspicion.

Comprehensiveness of the Applications

The main method of applying for jobs in France and Germany differs significantly. In France, the standard method includes a one to two page CV and a cover/application letter. In Germany, contrary to the rest of Europe, the application

⁸ Most common last names according to a sample of 11 millions French people:
<http://www.linternaute.com/femmes/nom-de-famille/>

process is extremely formal and bureaucratic. Besides the standard CV and a cover letter, a comprehensive application package (“*Vollständige Bewerbung*”) has to be included along with the standard application⁹. This information package has to be very exhaustive and specific since German employers usually expect to know exactly what the candidate’s academic and vocational qualifications and experiences are before making a decision. Candidates without the requested documents are often rejected. Moreover, it’s also a way to drive interest to an application and make the employer want to look at it more in detail. Depending on the level of professional experience and the type of job, this application package is between 8 to 15 pages long.

Therefore, there is a huge gap between the standard French application (one to two page CV and a one page cover letter) and the German comprehensive application package (8 to 15 pages). In order to test the effect of the comprehensiveness of the application in reducing discrimination, we have designed three types of applications according to their level of comprehensiveness:

Comprehensiveness of the Applications

	CV + Cover letter	Transcripts	Two recommendation letters
(1) TYPE A: Basic French standard application	X	-	-
(2) TYPE B: German standard application	X	X	-
(3) TYPE C: Comprehensive application package	X	X	X

Type A: Basic French standard application

This application, the least exhaustive one, is made of a curriculum vitae and a cover letter. The *curriculum vitae (or CV)* consist of a one or two page summary of the

⁹ http://www.entrypark.com/career_advice/147/country_profiles/germany/work/application_process/

skills and qualifications, experience and education, presented in reversed-chronological order. In order to send similar CVs in France and Germany, the model can be inspired from the Europass CV¹⁰ established in 2004 by The Council of Europe and the European Union. The **cover letter** is one page motivation letter to introduce the candidate to potential employers and to explain their suitability with the desired position.

Type B: German standard application

This application include all the elements of the type A plus some hard-evidence of the candidate's grades. The **transcripts** include copies of secondary school and university certificates and diplomas. They also consist of proof of professional training periods, and courses and language certificates are submitted (about 9 to 10 pages).

Type C: Comprehensive application package

This application incorporates all the elements of the type B plus two **recommendation letters**. These letters are one or two page written references offering information about character, work history, and or/academic history. The recommendation letters come from former employers (from an internship supervisor or a part-time employer) or from teachers (in the case with a lower level of education). They contain positive statements about the candidate's personality: commitment, capacity for teamwork, sociability, capacity to meet deadlines, and conscientiousness. The letters also contain the email and telephone number of the persons of reference¹¹.

¹⁰ <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>

¹¹ Each of the the four cover letter will have a fake contact information that will be redirected to the voicemail.

Balance between standardization and customization

According to the various types of jobs in sales/retail, some details will be systematically adjusted to match job-specific requirements. If most of the CVs, transcripts, and recommendation letters remain the same across applications, the cover letter will systematically be modified to be in-line with job requirements. The basic framework of the cover letter remains the same, but a part of it will be tailored to match specific job descriptions. For instance, if a job offer recommended (or even required) candidates to have a strong interest in cars, the application is tailored to better fit the employer's expectations. This approach aims at finding a good balance between standardizing the cover letters as much as possible - to avoid differences between applications and facilitate the application process - and tailoring them - in order to maximize the response rates of employers. Always with the objective of maximizing the callback rates, two people (one French, another German), specializing in recruitment with a strong Human Resources background, will be in charge of writing and revising the applications.

Control of translation

In order to make sure that the French and German applications are similar (for all the standardized documents), a back translation of all the elements of the application is performed. One translator conducts a first translation, from French to German for instance, and a second translator, independent from the first one, interprets the document previously translated into German back to French, the original language. This method ensures a complete quality check of the original translation and allows us to make the necessary adjustments. It also gives a particular

attention to sensitive translation problems between the French and German cultures and would ensure a very high level of quality and accuracy.

Validity check

All emails sent out to employers as well as online application directly filled out will be kept by date to ensure the validity of the paired letters. Once the study completed, all applications that receive only one answer - the discrimination cases in other words - will be double checked to make sure that no significant differences could have had an influence on the outcome of the study. In particular, we will make sure that a mistake accidentally made in the customized part of a cover letter could not have influence the decision of the employer to callback one candidate rather than another. Similarly, colors, typologies and layout used will be verified to make sure that refusal did not occurred in large numbers particularly with one type of letter.

Timing

Even if the application process is getting shorter via the Internet, an application can still take over a several weeks or even months to be processed, especially with the current depressed job market situation in Europe. It is necessary to give some time to companies to get back to the candidate. Therefore, callbacks are registered in the following four months of the first application

Three waves of applications will be conducted: one in spring 2011 (April - May 2011), another in fall 2011 (September - October 2011), and a last one in winter 2012 (January - February). These periods usually correspond to key recruitment circles, where employers use large-scale efforts to recruit new graduates.

Application process

We will apply to all the reasonable job offers where the candidate's profiles meet the hiring specifications. All the information of the candidate will be scanned and merged into one single pdf document (CV, cover letter / transcripts / recommendation letters), in order to make it easier for employers to process the applications. However, a significant portion of firms, especially the one large ones and the ones that receive the most candidatures, do not accept email applications. They have their own standardized process of application and require applicants to complete multiple pre-defined online forms. In this particular case, the forms are filled out with the information available in the CV and cover letter and the documents are attached when possible. Each candidate profile has an individual e-mail address and a personal cell-phone number. Instead of answering a call directly, companies are redirected to the cell phone of the candidates where there are politely asked to leave their message and contact information. As a result, a company can reply to the candidate via email or telephone. Only when a company shows an actual interest in the application (via email or telephone) is the reply considered as a "callback". In fact, neither a standard automatic reply email (confirming the receipt of the application) nor a contact to request additional (or missing) information is considered as a callback. All the possible reactions will be registered: positive (callback), negative (rejection), demand for additional or missing information, or absence of response within the four months following the application. As for positive answers, applications are politely withdrawn within 48 hours of the callback.

Number of applications sent and sample size

In our field study, the final sample size of usable applications (at least one of the to application receive a callback) entirely relies on the number of positive reaction

received from companies. Empirically, at least half the applications sent do not receive any answers from the employers, and when they do receive one, in an overwhelming majority of cases, both applications are turned down¹². The poor economic situation and the current employment crisis in Europe might make the current situation even worse. Therefore, we aim at sending 3,600 applications per country that is 1,200 applications for each type of candidature A, B and C per country (three waves of 400 applications for each type of application A, B, and C). This should enable us to end up with 120 to 300 usable cases per types of applications¹³. This sample size should give us enough statistical power to be able to discern differences in treatment between the native candidate and the candidate with a migration background at a 5 to 10 percent significance level.

E - Analysis

When the company rejects both applicants or does not even reply to the application, candidates are considered as equally treated: whether both applications have been reviewed and do not meet the job requirements; or they have not, for instance because the company simply didn't have time or because the vacancy was already filled. In any cases, both candidates have been equally and fairly treated.

On the other hand, if only one candidate receive an answer, there are no plausible explanations for the difference in treatment found between native and ethnic minority names other than racial discrimination. Consequently, we can calculate the

¹² In Germany, when candidates actually receive a valid answer (in opposition to an absence of response) from an employer, it was mostly to reject both candidates: 78.6 percent of the time in 1994 (Goldberg & Mourinho) and 51.1 percent in 2010 (Kaas and Manger)

¹³ Based on previous German example, for 1,200 applications sent, a minimum of 600 will get at least one answer of the employer. Among these 600 cases, between 50 and 80 percent are likely to receive two negative answers. Therefore, between 120 ($0.2 \times 600 = 120$) and 300 ($0.5 \times 600 = 300$) should receive at least a positive reaction from the employer and be directly usable in our sample.

net discrimination rate against the Algerian and Turkish minorities and report these results in a summary table.

Summary Table of the Analysis

Discrimination in France								
	Both received a refusal	At least one call back	Equality of treatment	Only French receive an invitation	Only Algerian receive an invitation	Net discrimination	Net discrimination (percent)	X ² test
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Overall								
Type A								
Type B								
Type C								
Size								
Large (>500)								
Medium								
Small (<50)								
Location								
Paris and area								
North West								
North East								
South West								
South East								
Discrimination in Germany								
	Both received a refusal	At least one call back	Equality of treatment	Only German receive an invitation	Only Turks receive an invitation	Net discrimination	Net discrimination (percent)	X ² test
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Overall								
Type A								
Type B								
Type C								
Size								
Large (>500)								
Medium								
Small (<50)								
Location								
East								
West								
South								

Here are the details of table:

- Both received a refusal:** the company does not show any positive reaction towards any of the candidates
- At least one callback (“usable” applications):** at least one applicant receives a positive callback. The second candidate whether receives a negative or no response at all within the four months following the application.
- Equality of treatment - positive reaction:** both applicants receive a callback
- Only French/Germans received an invitation:** the company prefers the native, mainstream candidate

5. **Only Algerians/Turks received an invitation:** the company prefers the candidate with a minority background
6. **Net discrimination against Algerians/Turks:** we calculate the net discrimination as the difference in callbacks among “usable applications” between candidature with a native and candidature with a migration background
7. **Net discrimination (per cent):** net discrimination divided up by the number of “usable applications”, multiplied by a hundred.

We will then conduct a Chi-square test (χ^2) based on the two treatments that receive the native candidate (column 4: only French/Germans received an invitation) and the candidate with a migration background (column 5: only Algerians/Turks received an invitation). The null hypothesis (H_0) of equal treatment is rejected if the application with the native-sounding name is preferred significantly more often than the foreign one.

F - Human subjects

In order to make sure that no individual suffers any adverse consequences as result of this fieldwork, we will make sure that none of the names selected for the field experiment correspond to a real person in France or Germany.

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