

Ahmet Gulek CV

<https://economics.mit.edu/people/phd-students/ahmet-gulek>

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Education

Massachusetts Institute of Technology – MIT

Aug. 2019 – Present

PhD. Student in Economics

Cambridge, MA, USA

Advisors: Joshua Angrist, Amy Finkelstein, Daron Acemoglu

M.A. Economics, Koc University, 2019

B.S. Mathematics; B.A. Economics, Koc University, 2017

Lycée de Galatasaray, 2013

Fields of Interest

Labor Economics, Health Economics, Development Economics, Econometrics

Working Papers

Driving While Hungry: The Effect of Fasting on Traffic Accidents

Abstract: I study the impact of fasting on traffic accidents by exploiting the institutional feature that, in Turkey, working hours are not adjusted during Ramadan. This allows traffic to remain unaffected by Ramadan during the rush hour. I find that driving while fasting at rush hour is associated with a significant increase in road traffic accidents. Consistent with these results being due to fasting, I show that the increase in accidents is greater when there is an exogenously longer fast due to daylight savings time and in more devout provinces where more people are likely fasting. Using existing survey evidence on fasting rates in Turkey, I conclude that fasting increases the probability of an accident by 25%, which is smaller than the effect of driving while intoxicated, but larger than the effect of mild sleep deprivation.

Formal Effects of Informal Labor Supply: Evidence from the Syrian refugees in Turkey

Abstract: I study the dynamics between informal and formal sectors by utilizing the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey. The key to my analysis is that the overwhelming majority of refugees did not have work permits and therefore could only work informally. Using an IV-DiD design where I instrument for refugee location choice with population-weighted distance from the border, I show that a 1 percentage point (pp) increase in the refugee/native ratio causes not only a 0.23 pp decrease in informal wage employment, but also a 0.13 pp decrease in low-skill formal wage employment among natives. I also find effects on formal firm entry, where I estimate that refugees reduce the number of newly registered small firms, which is consistent with marginal entrepreneurs choosing to remain informal. Using a modification of the canonical labor demand model, I formalize under which conditions an informal labor supply shock can reduce formal employment. My estimates suggest that informal and formal labor are highly substitutable, with an elasticity of substitution of 9. Lastly, I use the model to estimate a policy-relevant counterfactual in which all refugees are provided with work permits. As a benchmark, I predict that if refugees had the same formality rate as the natives, giving work permits would have created 112,000 formal jobs and increased government tax revenue by \$155 million per year.

Technical Skills, Activities, and Interests

Programming Languages: Matlab, R, STATA

Languages: Turkish (native), English (fluent), French (intermediate)

Interests: Basketball, Tango Argentine, Salsa, Fitness, Chess