

Elif Erbay

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Istanbul University, Department of Economics

eliferbay.econ@gmail.com

Research Interests

Economics of education, Migration, Gender economics

Academic Positions

Research Assistant, Istanbul University

Oct 2018 - present

Research Assistant, Dogus University

Sept 2017 - Sept 2018

Education

Ph.D. in Economics of Education, University of Zurich

2024 - 2026 (expected)

8th Course Programme for Doctoral Students in Economics of Education

Ph.D. in Economics, Istanbul University

2020 - 2025 (expected)

Thesis Title: Three Essays on Intergenerational Educational Mobility and Inequality

M.A. in Economics, Bogazici University

2017 - 2020

Thesis Title: The Effect of Syrian Refugees on the School Enrollment of Youth in Turkey

B.A. in Economics, Bocconi University (Erasmus program)

2015 - 2016

B.A. in Economics, Bogazici University (Double major)

2014 - 2017

B.A. in Management, Bogazici University

2012 - 2017

Publications

"[Women Empowerment through Compulsory Schooling Reform: The Case of Türkiye](#)" (2024) in B. Balın, D. Mumcu Akan, F. Karagöz Özenç, and Ö. Garan (Eds.), *Pursuing Sustainable Development Goals*, IU Press.

"[Syrian Refugees and Human Capital Accumulation of Native Children in Turkey](#)" (2023) *joint with Murat Kırdar and Selcen Çakır*, Journal of Human Capital, 17(4), 557-592.

"[The Effect of Covid-19 on Primary School Enrollments: Evidence from Turkey](#)" (2023) in M. Baykal, J. Haddock, and A. Dayanır (Eds.), *Post Covid Era: Future of Economics and World Order*, IU Press.

Working Papers

"Pathways to Progress: The Gender Roles and Intergenerational Educational Mobility in Turkey,"

Abstract: This paper examines intergenerational educational mobility among females in Turkey, leveraging data from four waves of the Turkish Demographic and Health Surveys (TDHS) from 2003 to 2018 to quantify absolute mobility metrics. Our analysis reveals a significant upward trend in educational mobility for individuals born after 1985, largely attributable to extensive educational reforms aimed at increasing access to schooling. This trend is particularly pronounced in rural areas, suggesting that policy interventions have been effective in reducing regional disparities. In addition to highlighting the impact of educational expansion on mobility dynamics, this study explores the influence of regional, historical,

and gender-specific factors. The findings contribute to the broader literature on educational mobility and underscore the importance of continued policy efforts to promote educational equity and socioeconomic advancement in developing countries.

“All the ‘Missing’ Ladies: Competition Intensity and Political Selection,” *joint with Selcen Çakır and Konstantinos Matakos*

Abstract: How does political selection respond when electoral competition intensifies? Who gets to represent us? We study the effect that changes in the intensity of electoral competition has on women’s political representation in Turkey. We leverage occurrence of two consecutive legislative elections within few months as a natural experiment giving rise to a DiD strategy which allows us to identify JDP’s changes in its list composition and rank as a response to heightened competition. We find that the latter led to a wholesale removal and demotion of women candidates from its lists, bucking the previous trend of increasing female representation. Heterogeneity analysis further reveals that most of the women candidates were removed from electable seats and safe (conservative) districts. While this is consistent with theories of statistical discrimination, the removal of women even from inconsequential positions also reveals taste-based discrimination that has a compounding effect. A counterfactual exercise shows that had lists remained unchanged between the two elections, JDP’s female representation in parliament would have been up by 50%, thus highlighting the role that *male-dominated* regional party committees play in exacerbating gender-based discrimination (*own-gender bias*) in political selection.

“Prolonged Guesthood: The Effects of Syrian Refugees on Voting Behavior in Turkey,” *joint with E. Kübra Usta*

Abstract: Following the onset of the Syrian humanitarian crisis, millions of Syrians sought refuge in Turkey with the hope of returning home when the conflict subsides. A decade later, 3.2 million Syrians live in Turkey under temporary protection status and their prolonged presence initiated a nationalist and anti-refugee sentiment. This study investigates the effect of Syrian refugee inflow on the voting behavior of natives focusing on parliamentary elections between 2002-2023 in Turkey. We utilize administrative data at the provincial level, employ a difference-in-differences strategy for the identification and distance-based instrumental variable to account for the endogenous refugee settlement. We find a positive and significant effect of refugees on the far-right nationalistic party’s (MHP) vote share, while there are no effects on the vote share of the incumbent party (AKP) and the main opposition party (CHP). Although MHP’s stance is not explicitly anti-refugee and has an alliance with incumbent AKP (announced the open-door policy), the increased support for the far-right party can be explained through the perceived threat that natives experienced especially after 2015 due to increased polarization and extraordinary times that the country went through. In the context of a non-Western developing country, these findings resonate with the globalization-related shocks and the surge of populism and anti-refugee parties in the West.

Work in Progress

“The Effect of Parental Education on the Early Childhood Development: Causal Evidence from Turkey”

“Religious Attire and Political Representation: A Study of the Headscarf Ban in Turkey,” *joint with Selcen Çakır and Konstantinos Matakos*

“Did Covid-19 Deepen the Educational Inequalities?,” *joint with Murat Birdal*

“Who was the Most Affected by the Pandemic? Reshaped Poverty Dynamics in Turkey,” *joint with Emine Tahsin*

“Intergenerational Mobility and Inequality: Great Gatsby Curve for Education”

Workshops and Conferences

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| 30th Conference on Economics, Turkish Economic Association, Turkey | Nov 2023 |
| CAGE Summer School, University of Warwick, UK | June 2023 |
| Difference-in-Differences, <i>Instructor: P. Sant'Anna</i> | Jan 2023 |
| Difference-in-Difference with Panel Data, <i>Instructor: J.M. Wooldridge</i> | Dec 2022 |
| International Growth Center Virtual Ph.D. Course, <i>Modules on Education; Credit, insurance, and risk; and Migration</i> | Spring 2022 |

Fellowships and Grants

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| The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, Ph.D. Scholarship | 2021 - present |
| The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, M.A. Scholarship | 2018-2020 |
| Bogazici University, High Honor Degree in Graduation | 2017 |

Languages

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| English (advanced), Turkish (native), Italian and Spanish (beginner) |
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Computational Skills

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| Stata, R, Python, and L ^A T _E X |
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References

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prof. Murat Kırdar, Bogazici University, Department of Economics | murat.kirdar@boun.edu.tr |
| Prof. Murat Birdal, Istanbul University, Department of Economics | muratbirdal@gmail.com |
| Assoc. Prof. Emine Tahsin, Istanbul University, Department of Economics | eminetahsin@gmail.com |
| Assoc. Prof. Tolga Aksoy, Yıldız Technical University, Department of Economics | toaksoy@yildiz.edu.tr |
| Assist. Prof. Selcen Çakır, Bogazici University, Department of Economics | selcencakir1@gmail.com |