The Political Effects of Immigrant Naturalization

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Abstract

Recently, scholars have argued that becoming a citizen causes immigrants in Europe to become more politically engaged. However, existing research relies on cross-sectional data, making it difficult to distinguish the factors that cause immigrants to select into citizenship from the effects of becoming a citizen. This paper uses longitudinal data, and finds limited evidence that acquiring citizenship promotes political engagement, beyond the realm of electoral politics. I conclude by discussing the implications of the findings for future research, and by explaining how the results advance our understanding of citizenship.