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Reversing the symbolic Order of Discrimination: Results from a Field Experiment on the
Discrimination of Migrants and transgender People in Theatre

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Abstract: Several field experimental studies have shown that people with a migration background and a non-heterosexual orientation are discriminated against in the labour market. However, most studies do not consider that modern societies are differentiated into various social subfields where different selection criteria can apply. In the field of art, for example, one could observe a broad and intense discourse on diversity that could have shaped human resource decision-makers' preferences which may subsequently lead to the fact that minorities are less disadvantaged, or even positively discriminated against. To test this assumption, we carried out a field experiment and sent out fictitious applications for an internship in dramaturgy at German speaking theatres. We only modified the information on the migration background and the gender identity of the applicants. The results show that people with a migration background and a transgender identity are not discriminated against in the field of theatre. People with a migration background even have a slight advantage. The results support the idea that we should differentiate between different social subfields of society and the labour market in future studies on discrimination.

Keywords: discrimination, migrants, transgender, experiment, social field

1. Introduction

In the past years, several field experimental studies have examined if and to what extent certain groups of people are discriminated against by the majority society – for example migrants or people with a non-heterosexual orientation or a non-binary gender identity. These studies aim at measuring the causal effect of belonging to a group on the probability of being discriminated against. To do so, fictitious applications are sent to e.g. job announcements or advertisements for a flat. It is then analysed, whether and how different applicant characteristics affect the probability of being invited to a job interview or a flat viewing. Therefore, the characteristics of the applicants are held constant (for example educational attainment, professional experience, age etc.) except for the one characteristic that one assumes the applicants are discriminated against. The results of these studies usually point in the same direction: Migrants with otherwise the same profiles are not as frequently invited to job interviews or flat viewings. This is interpreted as a sign of discrimination (Bertrand & Mullainathan 2004; Widner & Chicoine 2011; Kaas & Manger 2012; Jacquemet & Yannelis 2012; Diehl et al. 2013; Blommaert et al. 2014; Schneider et al. 2014; Hinz & Auspurg 2017; Auspurg et al. 2017; Horr et al 2018; Sawert 2019; for a meta-analysis cf. Zschirnt & Ruedin 2016; Auspurg et al. 2019). Even though there are fewer studies focussing on discrimination because of sexual orientation or gender identity, the results of most studies are the same: Homo- and transsexual applicants are discriminated against when compared to heterosexual candidates or people with a binary gender identity (Weichselbaumer 2003; Drydakis 2009; Tilcsik 2011; Drydakis 2014; Ahmed et al. 2013; Patacchini et al. 2015; Mishel 2016).¹

One major criticism can be formulated on these studies: They mostly focus on one occupational sector of the labour market only and generalise their findings, assuming that reactions to the

¹ The degree of discrimination however, tends to be lower compared to ethnic minorities; some studies do not find any sign of discrimination or even find a slight positive discrimination especially towards homosexual women (Bailey et al. 2013; Baert 2014).

fictitious applications will be the same in all social spheres of the examined society. If one assumes, however, that societies are differentiated into various subfields that are, for example, described by Niklas Luhmann as functional differentiated subsystems (Luhmann 2000) or by Pierre Bourdieu (1996) as different social fields, one can expect that discrimination structures vary depending on the social subfield. Field specific discourses can be assumed to have a significant impact on the definition of social categories which are perceived as being illegitimately disadvantageous. In the past decade, we have seen a broad debate on diversity, including a critical reflection on the discrimination of women, migrants and people with a non-heterosexual orientation or transgender identity in the field of academia and art (for a summary s. Gerhards & Sawert 2018).² We assume that this discourse and its implementation into institutionalised rules sets a standard of non-discrimination that increases human resource decision-makers' awareness and thus, impacts on their preferences, which subsequently leads to different minority groups being less discriminated against or maybe even positively discriminated against.

We use a field experiment within the field of theatre to examine to which degree discrimination structures, as they were verified in previous studies, can also be found in the field of theatre. Therefore, we sent out fictitious applications for an internship as a dramaturg to theatres in German speaking countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) and analysed how often people with a total of six different application profiles were invited to undertake an internship at a theatre. The cover letter and CV were identical for all applications. We only modified the information on the ethnic origin of the applicant (Germany, France, Turkey) and their gender identity (male, transgender).

² Although our study focuses on transgender identity only, we will summarise the state of research on the wider area of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Transgender). Whether the findings of our analysis also hold true for Lesbian, Gay and Bi is an open question that can be answered only by additional studies.

The results are surprising: in contrast to the results of many previous studies, we find that a migration background, especially one from Turkey, does not have a negative but a positive impact on the probability of being invited. In addition, applicants with a transgender identity receive slightly more although not significantly more invitations than male applicants. The field of art seems to be characterised by a fundamental openness and tolerance towards minorities and seems to partially turn the hegemonic order of discrimination around. These findings support our assumption that different social fields operate according to different criteria or “logics of the field”. Accordingly, future studies on discrimination should systematically differentiate between various fields of society and segments of the labour markets.

2. State of Research and Research Questions

2.1 State of Research: Discrimination based on ethnic Origin and sexual Orientation

Two theories are often used to explain discrimination in the access to the labour market: *statistical discrimination* and *discrimination based on preference*. Statistical discrimination is based on a lack of information. It is assumed that institutions and employers try to choose those applicants they expect to have the highest productivity (Phelps 1972). The actual productivity can however not be determined beforehand, but can only be estimated by looking at characteristics that are considered to be correlated with productivity. As soon as employers expect that one specific feature, for example belonging to a certain ethnic group, is associated with productivity, this becomes a relevant distinctive feature in the ascription of productivity to *any* member of this particular group. In the process of choosing the right applicants, the employers draw conclusions on individual applicants, based on average group features – for example the average educational level of an ethnic group – that can of course be wrong. In contrast, in preference-based conceptions of discrimination, people of an ethnic minority are disadvantaged because those who decide on the applications oppose migrants or have prejudices

against them, independent of applicants' productivity ("tastes for discrimination"; cf. Becker 1971).

There is a significant number of studies that examined whether ethnic or other minorities are discriminated against in the labour market. Field experiments are used as they allow to isolate the influence of one specific feature, for example the influence of belonging to an ethnic group, on labour market opportunities. These studies typically show that migrants are not only discriminated against because of a lack of information, but because preferences play a very significant role, too. In order to estimate the causal effect (Pearl 2010; Neumark 2012) of the characteristic of interest (e.g., migration background) and to infer, that discrimination is based on preference and not on assumed differences in the productivity of applicants, many characteristics (for example educational attainment, professional experience, age, etc.), that might indicate differences in applicants' productivity are held constant. Only the feature the focus is placed on is modified in the applications. Even under these conditions, applicants of minority groups are disadvantaged in the application process. It is therefore concluded that decisions are based on preference-based discrimination.

From the state of experimental research on discrimination, the following aspects are particularly relevant for our investigation:

a) Most studies refer to the analysis of the discrimination of ethnic minorities and especially of migrants from countries with a lower level of prosperity than the country of destination. We cannot mention all the different studies, but will rather limit ourselves to presenting the very good meta-analysis by Zschirnt and Ruedin (2016) that focusses on ethnic discrimination in the labour market. The two authors systematically summarise 43 experiments that were carried out in 18 OECD countries between 1990 and 2015. All studies show that migrants are less often invited to job interviews than applicants without a migration background: on average, migrants have to write 50% more applications to receive an invitation. At the same time, there are

differences in the degree of discrimination against different groups of migrants as well as against different countries, as the more recent meta-analysis by Lincoln Quillian et al. (2019) demonstrates. Zschirnt and Ruedin use the variance in the findings of different studies to examine whether discrimination goes back to statistical or preference-based discrimination.³

Their interpretation of the differences in the degree of discrimination against groups of different countries of origin is especially interesting for our research questions. Zschirnt and Ruedin assume that discrimination of migrants is stronger, the greater the social-structural and cultural distance of the countries of origin to the corresponding country of destination. The results of different studies conducted in Western societies show that Muslim or Arab migrants belong to the most discriminated groups (Carlsson & Eriksson 2015; Auspurg et al. 2019). Sawert (2019) compares for example Syrian, Turkish, US-American and German applicants for a flat. While Syrian and Turkish applicants are considerably less often invited than German applicants, there is only a slight difference between US-American and German applicants. We will come back to this result when formulating our research question.

b) Even though different studies have shown differences in the degree of discrimination against various migrant groups, all studies reveal that migrants are discriminated against and most of them assume that discrimination is not only based on statistical, but also on preference-based discrimination. However, most studies do not determine, which social field the respective job position is located in. It is usually assumed, that the findings can be generalised to other social fields. Thus, these studies do not take into account the possibility that different fields might have different rules, which might impact on the awareness and decisions of those who work in

³ For instance, the authors assume that second generation migrants are less discriminated against than first generation migrants, as the second generation has acquired more host country specific skills than the first generation due to a longer process of integration. Accordingly, the probability of statistical discrimination for the second generation should be lower. However, there are no empirical differences between the first and second generation when it comes to the degree of discrimination. Zschirnt and Ruedin conclude from this finding that discrimination is preference-based and not based on statistical discrimination.

the field. It is possible that social fields exist where structures of discrimination are different, with a lower level of discrimination, or even positive discrimination against migrants.

c) Most experimental studies focus on the analysis of discrimination processes against migrants, but in recent years some studies also analysed discrimination processes based on sexual orientation or gender identity⁴ (for a summary cf. Baert 2015; Baert 2017). In Sweden, homosexual applicants receive 12% less positive replies than heterosexual applicants with otherwise similar profiles; in an Italian study the difference amounts to 30% between the two groups, in the USA to 37%, in Greece to 65% (Drydakis 2009, 2014) and in Cyprus to 73% (Drydakis 2014). Results for transsexual people are similar even though only two experimental studies exist so far. Hannah Van Borm and Stijn Baert (2018) summarised the results of both studies and came to the conclusion that people, who openly define themselves as transgender, receive less job offers. However, studies that prove a discrimination of homosexual or transsexual people do not sufficiently specify social contexts either. Therefore, social fields with no discrimination based on one's sexual orientation or gender identity could exist.

2.2 Research Question: Discrimination based on ethnic Origin and Gender Identity in the Field of Art

Our study was inspired by a qualitative study based on group discussions with migrants living in Germany. In this study, different social contexts were specified in which migrants experienced discrimination (Gerhards & Buchmayr 2018). Even though almost all migrants described relevant discrimination experiences, some also perceived preferential treatment or positive discrimination. This was, for example, the case among persons working in the field of art. A marker signalling migration status (for example, the first name of the respondents)

⁴ In the following, we summarise the results of discrimination based on homosexuality and transgender, even though the two features reflect different aspects – sexual orientation on the one hand and gender identity on the other hand. In the current diversity discourse, we can see a shift from focussing on sexual orientation towards a focus on gender identity. This is why we focus on transgender in our experiment.

appears to correspond positively to the multicultural identity of the field of art. We take up the result of this qualitative study and try to systematically examine whether there is no or maybe even positive discrimination against minorities in the field of art compared to other social fields in which studies have been conducted so far.

This assumption is based on a more general premise. The studies presented above often do not differentiate between different social fields of society, and implicitly assume that the results can be transferred from one specific subfield to other fields as well. From a social theoretical perspective, this assumption can be doubted. Even though the words used to describe modern societies may vary depending on the theory of society, most prominent theorists agree when it comes to characterising the core structure of modern society. Max Weber (1963) talks about different value spheres of modern societies, Talcott Parsons (1971) and Niklas Luhmann (2000) assume that functional differentiation of subsystems is the key characteristic of modernity and Pierre Bourdieu (1983, 1996) assumes that modern societies are differentiated in various social fields, and that the preferences of actors acting in the respective field are influenced by the logic of the field. We follow these considerations and assume that different fields of society follow different rules that are constitutive for the actors in these fields and impact on their preferences. Even though the topic of openness towards minorities is not mentioned by the authors when they describe the rules of the fields of society, one can assume that the various social fields differ in the degree of whether discrimination against minorities is seen as legitimate or particularly illegitimate.

We are not able to systematically examine the assumption of a field specific discrimination logic. To do this, different social fields would have to be selected and compared. A point of comparison is however defined by the broad range of literature on discrimination described above. When focussing on the question of discrimination of minorities, the field of art is according to us a “least likely case” (Levy 2008). Since being differentiated and gaining

autonomy in the 19th century (Bourdieu 1983, 1996), highbrow theatre understands itself as a critical entity to observe and comment on developments in society (Fischer-Lichte 1993). Even though there are different groups and tendencies within the field of literature and theatre, ranging from l'art pour l'art-orientation that focusses on the work of art, to political theatre in the more restrictive sense of the word that is committed to those excluded in society (Bourdieu 1983). All groups however refer to current social developments and comment on them in a critical manner.⁵

This is also true for discrimination against women, ethnic minorities, refugees and people with different sexual orientations and gender identities – a topic that has been dealt with in many ways on stage but also in public statements by theatres in recent years. Without having conducted our own empirical discourse analysis on this topic, the central position of German speaking theatres can be seen by looking at the statements by the Deutschen Bühnenverein (the German Theatre and Orchestra Association), which represents individual theatres as an umbrella organisation. In the past years, the Bühnenverein has officially declared to foster gender equality and to oppose discrimination against minorities. For example, by supporting the “initiative cultural integration” in 2016⁶ or the “declaration of the many” in 2017.⁷ There it says: „The Association of the Many, DIE VIELEN, aims to strengthen opportunities for communication and action amongst artists, ensembles and agents within the performing arts and the fine arts. This is particularly pertinent to artists who understand theatre and art as a means of participation in creating a society made up of people of every skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, diverse needs and abilities, of every faith or non-faith and based on their

⁵ Bourdieu (1999) differentiates between orthodox, traditional and heterodox, representing the avant-garde, poles in his study of the literary field. One can assume that theatres that can be assigned to the heterodox pole tend to discriminate against minorities less than traditional theatres. Unfortunately, we cannot verify this hypothesis with our data because we miss the relevant information on the theatres.

⁶ <https://www.kulturelle-integration.de>. (29.9.2019).

⁷ <http://www.buehnenverein.de/de/publikationen-und-statistiken/kulturpolitische-statements/193.html?det=522/>. (29.9.2019).

equality.”⁸ Furthermore, the Bühnenverein and their represented theatres agreed upon a code of conduct and spoke out against any form of discrimination.⁹ Concerning the topic of migration, a new genre has developed with the so called post-migrant theatre that gives migrants and the topic of discrimination a stage (Sharifi 2014). By taking up postcolonial theories, the dominance of heterosexual white men is criticised, and a compensation is demanded by privileging women, migrant minorities and people with a non-heterosexual orientation. We assume that the anti-discrimination discourse in the field of art impacts on the awareness, and thereby on the preferences of actors that are embedded in the field and on the decisions they make. Based on these thoughts, we have two expectations with regard to our study:

1) As the theatre is very sensitive towards the topic of discrimination of minorities, we expect human resource decision-makers’ preferences to be influenced by the discourse which subsequently leads to the result that applicants with a migration background and/or a transgender identity are not discriminated against.

2) Furthermore, one can assume that the discourse in the field of art not only neutralises the existing symbolic orders of some social fields but reverses it by favouring minorities, who are discriminated against in society. With regard to the dimension of gender identity this means that applicants with a transgender identity are favoured compared to male applicants. With regard to the status of migration, this means that all applicants with a migration background, no matter which migration background, are favoured compared to German applicants. At the same time applicants with a migration background with a supposedly higher social-structural and cultural distance to Germany (for example a Turkish migration background) should be invited

⁸ <https://www.dievielen.de/en/dievielen/> (30.10.2019).

⁹ „As theatres and orchestras, we have shared values. We take a clear stance and encourage each other in our efforts to stamp out all forms of abuse or discrimination. Gender equality and equal opportunities are elementary for us. We set ourselves the challenge of reflecting the diversity of our society in our establishments – i.e. in our theatres, halls and other venues – and of putting it into practice.“ (u087_04-07-2018_anlage_1_values-based_code_of_conduct_for_preventing_sexual_assault_and_abuse_of_power_03072018.pdf, 28.10.2019)

more often than applicants with a migration background closer to Germany, like for example, a French migration background. The summary of the state of research has shown that discrimination by the majority society is stronger the greater the distance between the country of origin and the country of destination. Assuming that the theatre reverses the symbolic order of discrimination, minorities that are usually most discriminated against should be favoured most in the field of theatres.

3. Data and Methods of Analysis

To determine the influence of the migration background and gender identity of a person on the probability of being discriminated against in the field of art and theatre, we conducted a field experiment in which we sent out fictitious, applications for an internship as a dramaturg to all German speaking theatres and compared invitation rates between different profiles of applicants. In order to control for statistical discrimination and to measure preference-based discrimination, applicants did not differ in characteristics that might be interpreted as differences in productivity, but only in two features of interest, namely ethnic background and gender identity.

a) *Selecting the theatres:* We considered all public and private musical theatres and theatres in Germany, Switzerland and Austria as well as theatres that offer both plays and musical theatre.¹⁰ We did not consider dance theatres, commercial musical productions, puppetry, cabarets and revues, theatres for magic shows, amateur theatres and improvisational theatres. We also excluded theatres with clowning, dialect theatres or theatres with a regional focus (for example Sorbian, Turkish or English-speaking theatres). We only considered theatres with in-house productions, which therefore do not only host plays and have a permanent venue. We excluded

¹⁰ The field of theatre is structured less according to political borders than linguistic boundaries; the plays that are performed in the German speaking theatres of the three countries are very similar and the actors and directors often change between countries, so that one can speak of a common field of theatre. This assumption is confirmed by our empirical analysis; as the robustness checks show, they also hold if we consider the sub-sample of German theatres only (see Table A3 in the appendix).

theatres that are part of a drama school or theatre academy or explicitly do not offer any internships. We gathered the necessary information on the German-speaking theatres in Germany, Switzerland and Austria from the following sources: (1) theatres, that are listed as members of the Deutsche Bühnenverein (Deutscher Bühnenverein 2018); (2) theatres, that are listed in the theatre statistic (2016/2017) of the Deutsche Bühnenverein (2018); (3) theatres, that are mentioned on the private website “Deutsches Theaterverzeichnis” (list of German theatres);¹¹ (4) further research on official websites of cities with more than 300.000 inhabitants. In total, we contacted 462 theatres.

b) *Determining who to address*: The fictitious applicants submitted an unsolicited application for an internship as a dramaturg. We specified this because applications for a specific position have to refer to the advertised profile that varies depending on the advertisement. Hence, applications for advertised positions would have to differ to fit the advertised job, therefore making it difficult to compare the replies. Unsolicited applications however enabled us to send the same cover letter to all recipients without having to further specify its content. Furthermore, the internships we applied for were usually unpaid internships. This ensures that differences in the financial situation of the theatres did not influence their replies.

c) *Determining the applicants' profile*: In order to measure preference based discrimination that can be traced back to the specific discourse in the field of art, as many characteristics as possible that might indicate differences in applicants' productivity should be held constant: All fictitious applicants are the same age, were born and grew up in Germany, went to identical schools and universities, finished high school with the same grade, studied the same subject (theatre study) at identical universities, had identical work experiences and IT-skills and liked the same free-

¹¹ <http://www.theaterverzeichnis.de/> (12.08.2019)

time activities. To hold a potential influence of gender constant, we have only focussed on male applicants.¹²

There are two characteristics that distinguish the applicants: first, their ethnic origin, second, their gender identity. We vary both characteristics on two different levels. First, we vary the name of the candidates in the cover letter and the email address. Second, we give further information on the two characteristics in their CV attached to the email.

Migration background. All applicants were born in Germany. We differentiate between applicants with and without a Turkish or French migration background. By differentiating between applicants with a Turkish and a French migration background, we take up the studies that have shown that the higher the social-structural and cultural distance between the countries of origin and the countries of destination, the stronger the discrimination by the majority society. We used the first and last name of the applicants to mark their migration background.¹³ The French and Turkish applicants have typical French and Turkish first and last names, while applicants without a migration background have German first and last names. We also mentioned in the CV that applicants with a migration background also hold the French or Turkish citizenship and that they completed a two months internship at a migrant youth theatre, while the applicants without a migration background completed an internship at a youth theatre that was not further specified. Furthermore, applicants with a migration background do not only speak German (mother tongue), English and Spanish but also the language of their country of origin (French, Turkish).¹⁴

¹² Since most studies on discrimination focus on men and since we want to make sure that our study is applicable to the state of research, we only focussed on male applicants as well.

¹³ We chose names that are common in the respective country of origin and indicate this country in Germany.

¹⁴ One might argue that applicants with a migration background also have an extra qualification as they speak an additional language which might work against negative discrimination. We argue, however, that this resource does not seem to be a relevant advantage as previous studies have consistently shown. Furthermore, we assume that an additional language for an internship as a dramaturge is not a significant additional resource. The main task of

Gender identity. Unlike e.g. sexual orientation, transgender identity can be signalled via the name. We added the female first name “Gloria” in quotation marks to the respective clearly male first names of our fictitious applicants to signal a transgender identity. This additional name can already be seen in the cover letter as well as in the email address. In the next section we will discuss in more detail whether the additional name ”Gloria“ is recognised as an indicator of a transgender identity. There are two further indications on the gender identity of the applicants in the CV: for gender, *transgender* or *male* was stated. Furthermore, we mentioned that the applicants with the additional name “Gloria” completed an internship in a queer youth theatre in 2016/2017; the male applicants completed the internship in a youth theatre that was not further specified.

When combining these different characteristics, we have six profiles in total (see Table 1): (1) no migration background, male (2) no migration background, transgender (3) French migration background, male (4) French migration background, transgender (5) Turkish migration background, male (6) Turkish migration background, transgender.

[Table 1 near here]

d) Multi-layered random sampling: The six profiles were distributed to a total of 462 theatres. The criteria for the distribution were: Size of the city, size of the theatre, and whether a specific contact for applications exists. In a first step, we used the number of inhabitants (< 500.000 vs. min. 500.000) to define six layers. The distribution of large vs. small/medium cities was the same in each layer. In a second step, we randomly assigned the cases within each layer across the size of the theatre, using the information whether a theatre had an own ensemble or not. Finally, we analysed the stratification of the theatres and randomly assigned the treatment

dramaturges is to select plays and prepare them for a performance. Since almost all plays that are performed on German-speaking stages are performed in German, an additional language is probably of little importance.

conditions over the different stratification categories. All six layers had equal distributions of the three random-sampling criteria. Every application was supposed to be sent to 77 theatres on average. After excluding all missing values,¹⁵ every applicant profile was sent to 68 – 75 theatres. The final number of cases for the analyses is 427 cases.

e) *The process of data collection:* All theatres were contacted via email. Our aim was to contact the person responsible for internship applications at the respective theatre to increase the probability of receiving an answer.¹⁶ In case we knew the name of the contact person, we addressed her*him directly.

We generated six email addresses for the applications that corresponded to: “firstname.lastname@gmx.de”; for the transgender applicants we generated this email address: “firstname.gloria.lastname@gmx.de”. The theatres received a cover letter and a CV of the applicants. Applications were sent before the summer break between the 03.06.2019 and the 07.06.2019. If we did not get an answer within the first two weeks, we would send a friendly reminder. For our analysis, we considered all replies we received within six weeks after the reminder.

f) *Data evaluation:* Our dependent variable is the reply of the contacted theatres consisting of the following possibilities: (a) no answer, (b) rejection of the application, (c) clarifying question (for example further enquiry regarding paperwork), (d) positive answer or expression of interest (for example question on the applicant’s availability for a job interview). We used these categories to create a dichotomous variable that only distinguishes between a positive answer or an expression of interest (= invitation) and all other forms (= no invitation); hence, category

¹⁵ For instance, it turned out that some contact persons were in charge of several theatres and received more than one application. These cases had to be subsequently excluded from the analyses.

¹⁶ We created the following priority list for the contact with the theatres: 1. Contact person for internships as a dramaturg, 2. Contact person for internships in general, 3. Contact person for applications in general or contact person in Human Resources, 4. Contact in the dramaturg department, 5. General contact with administration, 6. General contact to the theatre, 7. Office of artistic administration, 8. General contact to the artistic department, 9. Theatre management, 10. Visitor service of the theatre.

(c) was coded as ‘no invitation’. We checked whether the analysis comes to different results if one excludes category (c) as these responses are neither clear rejections, nor invitations. The results for this alternative coding are presented as robustness checks in the appendix (Table A2). The central independent variable is the migration background of the applicants (none, French, Turkish) and the gender identity (male, transgender).

4. Results

We present the results of our field experiment in three steps. First, we analyse the differences in the invitation rate for a job interview based on ethnic origin. Second, we analyse the degree of discrimination based on gender identity. Third, we look at the interplay between ethnic background and gender identity, by analysing the potential interaction effects of both characteristics. We present the results of a linear probability model with robust standard errors, using only categorical explanatory variables.¹⁷

The response rate of all cases is high, with 78%, though it varies depending on the profiles between 67% (Turkish, transgender) and 89% (German, male). 33% of the applications received a positive answer, meaning a third of all applications led to an invitation for a job interview or a show of interest. The invitation rate varies between 26% and 41% depending on the profile.

Model 1 in table 2 shows the effect of ethnic origin on the invitation rate. The results support the assumption that ethnic minorities are positively discriminated in the field of art. Although the effects are not significant, having a French or a Turkish migration background increases the probability of being invited for a job interview by 7 (Turkish applicant) and 8 (French applicant) percentage points. We assumed moreover, that discrimination patterns in the field of art are the

¹⁷ Although our dependent variable is dichotomous, we decided to present the results of linear probability models (LPM) instead of logistic regression models. We thereby follow the critique of Mood (2010) on the use of logistic regression models for the interpretation of nested data and common practice in the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (see e.g. Sawert 2019). We calculated the average marginal effects derived from logistic regression analyses as robustness checks. The results are included in the appendix (Table A4) and do not substantially differ from the results of the LPM.

direct inverse of discrimination patterns in the overall labour market. The results do not support this presumption, as the applicant with the Turkish migration background does not have higher probabilities of being invited than the French one. We will come back to this finding when we interpret the results of the third model.

Model 2 in table 2 shows the effect of gender identity on the invitation probability. The findings support the presumption that persons signalling a transgender identity are not negatively discriminated against. However, they are not positively discriminated against either. The coefficient is zero, showing that transgender and male applicants have the same invitation probabilities.

[Table 2 near here]

Finally, we analysed the interaction effect between migration background and transgender identity (Model 3, table 2¹⁸). Looking first at the estimates of the main effect of migration background, we find an interesting pattern which is different from the one observed in model 1. The estimates of the main effect represent the effect of a migration background for male applicants only. The applicant without a migration background has the lowest probability of being invited (26%, see constant of model 3). The French applicant has a 5 percentage points higher probability of being invited, resulting in an invitation rate of 31%.¹⁹ The applicant with a Turkish migration background has a 14 percentage points higher probability of being invited and receives the most invitations (40%). The effect for the Turkish applicant is significant at $p < 0.01$ in a two-sided t-test. Hence, a migration background, especially one from Turkey, has a positive impact on the probability of being invited within the group of male applicants. In paragraph 2, we formulated the assumption that theatres can neutralise or even reverse the social

¹⁸ In Model A1 in the appendix (Table A1), migration background and gender identity are included in the model at the same time without estimating interaction effects. The estimates of model A1 show that the changes in coefficients between model 2 and model 3 (table 2) are not because of a mediation effect.

¹⁹ The invitation rate is based on the estimates from Model 3 (Table 2) by adding up the estimates for the constant (no migration background) and the respective β -coefficients.

symbolic order of the different groups of origin. Our results support this thesis. While other studies show that people from countries with a high social-structural and cultural distance to the respective country of destination are particularly discriminated against, the opposite is true for the field of theatre. Males with a Turkish migration background are more often invited to an interview than males with a French migration background in our data.

The coefficient of gender identity in model 3 shows the difference between the male and the transgender profile for the applicants without a migration background only. The profile with a transgender identity receives slightly more invitations than the corresponding male profile. The difference, however, with only 3 percentage points, is very small and statistically not significant. While the results of other studies have shown that people with a non-binary gender identity are discriminated against in the labour market, this does not seem to apply to the field of art.

Finally, a look at the interactions between migration background and a transgender identity reveals a partially unexpected pattern. If one assumes that the symbolic order of society was reversed in theatre, one would expect the following order: With regard to the migration background, we would expect German < French < Turkish and within the ethnic groups, we would expect male < transgender. Hence, among the applicants without a migration background, the applicant with the transgender identity should be more successful in the application process than the male applicant. Empirically this is the case. Likewise, the invitation rate for the profile with a French migration background and transgender identity should be higher than the invitation rate for male persons with a French migration background. Empirically this is the case as well, even though the difference of 6 percentage points is statistically not significant. However, and in contrast to our expectations, applicants with a Turkish migration background and a transgender profile receive less invitations than their male counterparts. One would have expected that people with a Turkish migration background and a transgender identity received

the most invitations of all applicants, but this is not supported by our data. In contrast, the invitation rate in this group is significantly lower than that of Turkish males. This surprising finding remains to be explained. We conducted a robustness analysis, which ruled out the possibility of a statistical artefact due to measurement error.²⁰ The robustness analysis revealed that the finding is robust and substantial. Unfortunately, its underlying mechanisms cannot be analysed with the collected data.

To check for the robustness of the overall results, we calculated four additional versions of model 3, including the size of the level of stratification of the theatre, the size of the city the theatre is located in and whether the theatre is located in Germany or Austria/Switzerland. We first estimated the effect of model 3 controlling for each of the control variables separately, finally including all of them in one common model. There are no substantial differences between the estimates presented in model 3 and the estimates controlling for these variables (see Table A1, Model A2-A5 in the appendix). Additionally, we performed robustness checks for an alternative coding of the dependent variable by excluding responses which fell into category (c) (clarifying question), as it is unclear whether asking for additional information indicates real interest in the applicant or not. It turns out that there are no substantial differences in the results if this alternative coding of the dependent variable is applied (see models A6-A10, Table A5 in the appendix).

Before we summarise the results of our study, we would like to discuss a methodological peculiarity of our investigation. We measured a transgender orientation of the applicants by

²⁰ We conducted a robustness analysis to test whether the Turkish transgender profile was less credible and therefore received less (positive) replies. For example, we found that the “Response Rate” was below-average for the Turkish transgender profile. This could be a substantial finding, but it could also be an indication that these applications were more often recognised as fictitious than the other “treatments”, and therefore did not receive an answer (measurement error). To further examine this, we compared the difference of the response rate before and after the reminder, which was sent out 2 weeks after the initial application in case the applicant had not heard back from the theatre. Assuming that a reminder increases the plausibility of the authenticity of the application, the “Response Rate” for the profile should go up after the reminder, if the credibility of the profile had been questioned before the reminder. This is not the case. On the contrary, the difference in response rates is even higher after the reminder for the Turkish transgender and all our profiles. We conclude, that this is a substantial finding, namely rejection, rather than a measurement error.

adding the name "Gloria" to the applicants' name, as well as by further specifying the gender identity in the CV. It is not clear whether those who received and answered the applications interpreted these signals as markers of transgender identity. As shown in table 2, transgender applicants were equally often invited to an interview as persons with a male identity. There was not even a slight difference between transgender and male profiles. One possible explanation for this could be that the transgender identity was not recognised by the added name "Gloria". In order to evaluate whether our treatment worked well, we looked at the form of address used by the theatres in their responses to the applicants. We classified the different forms of address used in the replies in four categories: (a) Gender-specific words, like "Sehr geehrter Herr" (Dear Mr.), (b) no gender-specific denomination of the applicant, but a gendered genus declination (e.g. "Lieber"). Categories (a) and (b) can both be considered using gender-specific addresses. In contrast, some replies used gender-neutral or gender-inclusive addresses: Gender-neutral addresses (c) avoid the use of gender-specific words and gendered genus declinations. Instead, gender-neutral addresses like "Hallo" (Hello) are used. Gender-inclusive forms (d) use addresses which include diverse gender identities (e.g. Dear Mr. or Mrs.). If gender-neutral and gender-inclusive formulations were more often used to address the transgender applicant than to address the male applicant, this can indicate that our treatment worked well. The distribution of the different form of addresses is shown in table 3. Whereas 94% of all addresses to the male applicant use gender-specific, male forms, this is only true for 34% of the replies to the transgender applicant. Hence, the performed tests indicate that our results are robust as well as valid.

[Table 3 near here]

5. Summary and Outlook

A number of field experimental studies have shown that people with a migration background and a non-heterosexual orientation are discriminated against in the labour market. Very often,

these studies are limited to one segment of the labour market and then transfer the results to all social spheres, presupposing a homogenously structured society in which actors of different social fields operate according to apparently comparable logics. However, these studies do not consider that modern societies are differentiated into various subfields. Niklas Luhmann for example describes them as functionally differentiated subsystems and Pierre Bourdieu uses the term social fields. Social fields consist of field specific norms and rules that shape the preferences of actors in the respective field. In the past decade, we have witnessed an intensive discussion on social diversity, discrimination of women, migrants and people with a non-heterosexual orientation or transgender identity in the field of art. We suspect that this discourse has led to a high level of sensitivity towards questions of discrimination that shapes human resource decision-makers' preferences which subsequently leads to different minority groups being less or maybe even positively discriminated against.

To test this assumption, we conducted a field experiment and sent out fictitious applications to German speaking theatres. In order to measure preference-based discrimination that can be traced back to the specific discourse in the field of art and to control for statistical discrimination, we tried to hold many characteristics constant that might indicate differences in applicants' productivity. We only modified the information on the migration background and the gender identity. Compared to the results of other studies, we do not find negative discrimination of people with a migration background in the field of theatre; in contrast, having a migration background is even an advantage. Regarding gender identity, we find a very slight, albeit not significant advantage of transgender applicants compared to male applicants. The field of art seems to be characterised by a general openness and tolerance towards minorities and partially even reverses the hegemonic order of discrimination in other social fields.

Our study is not only an analysis in the field of the sociology of art. It also has social theoretical implications as our empirical results support the assumption that field specific relevance criteria

exist that are of importance when selecting people. We are not able to systematically prove the assumption of a field specific discrimination logic; to do so, one would have to select different social fields and compare them on the basis of hypotheses that were formulated beforehand. This could be done in future research. Studies in the field of discrimination of women have shown that this approach can be useful. Monika Jungbauer Gans and Christiane Gross (2013) examined which factors influence the chance of being appointed a professorship in mathematics, law or sociology. They were able to show that, if controlling for all other factors, women have a higher, rather than lower chance of being appointed compared to men. The study by Mark Lutter and Martin Schröder (2016) found similar results for the field of Sociology in Germany. Dorothea Kübler et al. (2018) conducted a vignette study of German businesses on why applicants are chosen for an apprenticeship. The authors were able to show that women are disadvantaged compared to men when controlling for all other factors. At the same time, there are clear differences in the degree of discrimination between the different industrial sectors and the jobs as well. These results show that we should reflect and methodically consider social fields with their specific field logics in future studies.

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Table 1: Overview of the varied characteristics of the different applicant profiles

Applicant profile	Name (cover letter)	Gender (CV)	Citizenship (CV)	Youth theatre (CV)	Languages (CV)
Without mig. male	Lukas Steltmeier	Male	German	Youth theatre	German (mother tongue)
Without mig. transgender	Lukas „Gloria“ Steltmeier	Transgender	German	Queer youth theatre	English (fluent, written and spoken) Spanish (good command)
French mig. male	Matthieu Dubois	Male	German, French	Migrant youth theatre	German (mother tongue)
French mig. transgender	Matthieu „Gloria“ Dubois	Transgender	German, French	Queer migrant youth theatre	French (mother tongue) English (fluent, written and spoken) Spanish (good command)
Turkish mig. male	Hussein Özdemir	Male	German, Turkish	Migrant youth theatre	German (mother tongue)
Turkish mig. transgender	Hussein „Gloria“ Özdemir	Transgender	German, Turkish	Queer migrant youth theatre	Turkish (mother tongue) English (fluent, written and spoken) Spanish (good command)

Table 2: Probability of being invited to a job interview (LPM). Dependent variable: 0=no invitation, 1=invitation; robust standard errors are reported in brackets. N=427.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Migration background (Reference: German)			
<i>French</i>	0.08 [0.06]		0.05 [0.08]
<i>Turkish</i>	0.07 [0.05]		0.14* [0.08]
Gender identity (Reference: Male)			
<i>Transgender</i>		0.00 [0.05]	0.03 [0.08]
Interactions			
<i>French*Transgender</i>			0.06 [0.11]
<i>Turkish*Transgender</i>			-0.15 [0.11]
Constant	0.28*** [0.04]	0.33*** [0.03]	0.26*** [0.05]

Significance (two-sided test): ***0.01, **0.05, *0.1

Table 3: Form of address, differentiated according to gender identity signal. N=339.

In %	Male applicant	Trans. applicant
(a) Directly gendered response (e.g. „ <i>Sehr geehrter Herr</i> “)	60	18
(b) Gendered genus declination (e.g. „ <i>Lieber</i> “)	34	16
(c) Gender-neutral formulation (e.g. „ <i>Hallo</i> “)	6	36
(d) Gender-inclusive forms (e.g. „ <i>Liebe/r Herr/Frau</i> “)	0	30
	100	100