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Ethnic and Religious Discrimination in the Wedding Venue Business: Evidence from Two Field Experiments in Germany and Austria

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ABSTRACT

We add to the current debate on ethno-religious discrimination by studying to what extent discrimination in the wedding venue business is based on religious or ethnic grounds. Do the two reinforce each other? Does the explicit mentioning of a non-religious wedding help to reduce ethnic discrimination in a secularized society? We draw on two field experiments in Germany and Austria. We sent 805 valid emails to wedding venues. We randomly varied two traits, the names (Arabic-origin and native-origin) and whether the wedding was religious (Islamic or Free Church) or not. Using linear probability models and ordinary least squares regressions, we predicted the likelihood of receiving a confirmation, the response time from venues, the length, formality, and tone of the emails as well as the prevalence of mistakes in the emails. Our analyses showed that couples with Arabic-origin names, celebrating an Islamic wedding, received significantly fewer confirmations compared to couples with native-origin names. Celebrating a non-religious wedding of couples with Arabic-origin names reduced the disadvantage. The study suggests statistical discrimination based on religiosity that is inferred from Arabic-origin names.

KEYWORDS: discrimination; Islam; religion; Europe; weddings.

Discrimination in a variety of arenas prevents immigrants from participating equally in society and is widespread in labor and rental markets as well as public-sector bodies (for an overview, see [Pager and Shepherd 2008](#)). Discrimination constitutes a serious social problem and remains salient, particularly against Muslims or people of Arabic origin. This applies to the United States (e.g., [Gaddis and Ghoshal 2015](#)) as well as Europe (e.g., [Adida, Laitin, and Valfort 2010](#)). There are different fields in which native residents might undermine social contact with them: they might not hire them as employees, not rent out apartments, not date or engage in business with them. As Muslim minorities

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make up a significant part of the population in the western hemisphere (PEW Research Center 2017) and have perceived severe discrimination (e.g., Schaeffer 2019), we focus on this group.

We are interested in the following question: To what degree are Muslims with names of Arabic origin discriminated against when they are about to form a family and search for wedding venues? This is relevant for two reasons: First, marriage is of very high importance to Muslim minorities. Compared to native residents, a higher share of adults of Muslim origin are married and they possess strong family values (see EURISLAM data, Tillie et al. 2013). Compared to other fields of application, the role of religion is undeniable in the context of marriage. There is hardly any sphere of life that is more affected by religion than marriage; religion plays a role in other rituals such as burial and baptism, but these usually have designated spaces within religious communities. However, in the case of marriage, religious minorities in Germany, Austria, and other countries have to largely rely on the willingness of the majority group to rent out their spaces. Yet, native owners of wedding venues might hesitate to rent out their venues to Muslims as the majority follow religious dietary requirements, nearly half abstain from drinking alcohol, and they are perceived as distinct in terms of religion and gender values (Tillie et al. 2013). Besides Islamophobic tendencies, renting out the venues might be connected to a loss in profit, for instance, due to not selling alcohol or self-organized halal catering, and thus results in discrimination. In countries with a better religious infrastructure, for instance, the United Kingdom, but also the United States, venues that cater for the needs of religious minorities are gaining increasing visibility in the developing wedding venue business (Cavendish Banqueting 2015; Grand Sapphire 2016; Howard 2008:178–219; Huffington Post 2013). With rising sensitivity towards the religious needs of Muslims, their growing share of the population and persistent discrimination, these venues might become a more relevant business niche outside of the Anglo-Saxon countries. However, if minorities are pushed to establish their own venues, this might increase societal separation and strengthen group boundaries.

To investigate the degree of discrimination, we chose Germany and Austria where we find some of the biggest Muslim minorities in Western Europe (Laurence 2012). Besides the linguistic and cultural proximity, these countries share similar migration histories involving predominantly guest workers as well as family migrants arriving from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia (Bade and Oltmer 2007; Weichselbaumer 2017). Large numbers in these groups adhere to Islam and have names signaling their ethno-religious origin (Gerhards and Hans 2009).

Empirical support for discrimination against ethnic minorities, particularly the Turkish minority, is abundant (e.g., Auspurg, Hinz, and Schmid 2017; Kaas and Manger 2012; Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration 2014). Two of the remaining challenges are first, to assess the degree of discrimination in the wedding venue business and second, to disentangle religious and ethnic discrimination (e.g., Wright et al. 2013). Discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation is forbidden by the General Act on Equal Treatment called the *Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz* (AGG) in Germany and the *Bundesgesetz über die Gleichbehandlung* in Austria (GIBG). Despite these laws, religion can still act as a stronger symbolic marker than ethnic belonging in secularized Western European societies compared to the United States (Foner and Alba 2008). A recent study revealed that religious discrimination is significantly higher than ethnic discrimination (Weichselbaumer 2016). Yet one question that puzzles current researchers is whether religious discrimination results from a general hostility towards religious minorities who are perceived as culturally different in their family and social life, or whether religious discrimination arises only against people of immigrant origin. In this case, showing signs of secularity might prove an advantage for minorities from Muslim-majority countries living in secularized Western European countries.

The contribution of our study is fourfold. First, we vary the level of religiosity by randomly varying the type of wedding between non-religious, Islamic, or Free-Church in addition to varying names of the subjects of the study (Arabic and German). Second, we also include a native religious minority (Free Church members), whereas previous research conflated native origin and majority religion.

Free Church members can be counted as a native religious minority representing less than one percent of the population in Germany and Austria ([Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung 2012](#); [Statistik Austria 2007](#)). By using members of the Free Church as a comparison group, we are selecting a group that shares the fact of being a religious minority in their country with Muslims. Various Protestant branches have merged into the Free Church, which is organizationally independent from mainstream Protestantism. They are officially recognized as a public corporation ([Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland K.d.ö.R. 2018](#); [ORF 2013](#)). Third, we further extend existing knowledge on discriminatory behavior to the private sphere by studying the wedding venue sector. [Gerhards, Sawert, and Tuppatt \(2020\)](#) have pointed out that it is important to study different social fields, as mechanisms might operate differently. Fourth, and last, we assess discrimination with a broad set of variables to uncover subtle forms of discrimination. Some of the studies have employed, for instance, an analysis of the tone, the errors, and the formality of the emails (e.g., [Hemker and Rink 2017](#); [Olsen, Kyhse-Andersen, and Moynihan 2020](#)), as well as the length (e.g., [Hemker and Rink 2017](#); [Wright et al. 2015](#)), response time (e.g., [Grohs, Adam, and Knill 2016](#); [Hemker and Rink 2017](#); [Kaas and Manger 2012](#); [Weichselbaumer 2017](#); [Wright et al. 2015](#); [Zschirnt 2019](#)) and represent an assessment of the quality of responses. Venues might make a greater effort in responding to natives compared to minorities, which can be visible in fewer errors in emails, longer responses, faster responses, a more friendly tone, and an adherence to salutations. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study that brings together all of those elements (varying the religiosity, a native minority, the field of application, and the inclusion of the rarely used operationalizations (particularly the tone)).

As mentioned above, one of our contributions is a novel composition of comparison groups. We distinguish between the following groups: (1) couples with Arabic-origin names who are seeking a venue for their Islamic wedding; (2) couples with Arabic-origin names who wish to celebrate their non-religious wedding there; (3) couples with German-origin names but who have a Free Church wedding; (4) a control group of couples with German-origin names having a non-religious wedding; and (5) an additional control group in the Austrian field experiment consisting of a couple with Arabic-origin names where no religious affiliation is indicated. Overall, 387 valid emails were sent to wedding venues in Germany and 418 valid emails were sent to wedding venues in Austria.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

We define discrimination in line with previous research as the unequal treatment of individuals or groups based on their ethnicity or religious origin ([Pager and Shepherd 2008](#); [Quillian 2006](#)). Our study investigates three different scenarios: first, all religious couples are discriminated against, which we coin *theophobia*; second, only ethnic minorities are discriminated against; or third, only certain ethno-religious groups are discriminated against. In case of theophobia, religion might be perceived as a threat to liberal values in relatively secular societies. If, on the contrary, discrimination focuses on certain ethno-religious groups, this could be linked to a disapproval of specific religious behavior that might clash with liberal values of majority-group members. Previous research showed that the divide seems to be between political liberalism and religious fundamentalism, but that Muslim fundamentalists are also the least liked group, particularly among conservatives ([Helbling and Traunmüller 2018](#)). Hence, ethnicity and religion seem to play a role. Most studies assumed, but did not explicitly test for, religious discrimination, or they did not try to disentangle religious and ethnic discrimination. Overall, religion is rarely used in field experiments ([Wright 2018](#)).

Where possible, previous studies on discrimination distinguish between statistical ([Arrow 1971](#)) and taste-based discrimination. Statistical discrimination appears when individuals have, for instance, incomplete information about the productivity or reliability of an applicant and infer it from group memberships (for a review, see [Quillian 2006](#)). If additional information, for instance in the form of recommendations or pictures, were provided in previous studies on ethnic discrimination, the

likelihood of being (statistically) discriminated against was reduced (e.g., [Kaas and Manger 2012](#); [Tjaden, Schwemmer, and Khadjavi 2018](#)). Compared to statistical discrimination, taste-based discrimination is not reduced through the provision of additional information. More deeply rooted preferences and dislike result in the avoidance of contact with members of the relevant groups irrespective of the financial loss ([Becker 1995](#)).

Turkish minorities in Germany and Austria are more likely to experience statistical as well as taste-based ethnic discrimination in the labor market (e.g., [Kaas and Manger 2012](#); [Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration 2014](#); [Weichselbaumer 2016, 2017](#)), the rental market (e.g., [Auspurg et al. 2017](#); [Lütkenhöner 2014](#); [Sawert 2019](#)), in welfare offices ([Hemker and Rink 2017](#)), online auctions ([Przepiorka 2011](#)), schools ([Sprietsma 2013](#)), carpooling ([Carol et al. 2019](#)), and the dating market (e.g., [Lütkenhöner 2014](#)). Two studies discovered discrimination against Turkish minorities in interaction with gender on the market for student housing ([Diehl et al. 2013](#)) and in dealing with public-sector bodies when requesting information on child care and mobile homes ([Grohs et al. 2016](#)). In other countries, including the United States, similar results have been found for Arabs when it comes to housing (e.g., [Gaddis and Ghoshal 2015](#)), labor (e.g., [Blommaert, Coenders, and van Tubergen 2014](#)) and dating markets (e.g., [Jakobsson and Lindholm 2014](#)), assuming that Arabic names signal an Islamic origin.

If there is a general dislike of people with Arabic names (e.g., due to personality characteristics or traditions including music or food) and the name is treated as an indicator for ethnic origin, *we should see ethnic discrimination reflected in a rejection of both types of couples (those with an Islamic or a secular wedding) (H1)*. Anticipated language issues and the additional effort required due to a higher number of guests or food preferences could lead to potential ethnic statistical discrimination by venues. However, this should be partly alleviated by adapting the number of guests to the venue's capacity, mentioning in the emails that the venue's food is accepted, and sending grammatically correct emails.

In addition to ethnic discrimination against people with Arabic names, religious discrimination might come on top, or ethnic and religious belonging might coincide. A handful of studies have revealed that religious discrimination against Muslim minorities when it comes to schools and the labor market (e.g., [Adida et al. 2010](#); [Di Stasio et al. 2019](#); [Drydakis 2010](#); [Koopmans, Veit, and Yemane 2019](#); [Olsen et al. 2020](#); [Pierné 2013](#); [Valfort 2018](#); [Weichselbaumer 2016](#); [Wright et al. 2013](#)) is undeniable and sometimes comes on top of ethnic discrimination. This also extends to Muslim organizations as lost-letter experiments in Germany ([Koopmans and Veit 2014](#)) and Switzerland ([Berger and Berger 2019](#)) show. However, most of these studies have focused on countries other than Germany and Austria as well as other fields and designs.

Why are individuals of Muslim origin more likely to be discriminated against? Overall, Muslims belong to one of the least liked groups outside of Muslim-majority countries, particularly in Western Europe ([Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007](#)). We can identify two key mechanisms related to statistical and taste-based discrimination on the grounds of religion: first, a symbolic threat that relates to values that might be in conflict with European values. Non-Muslims perceive people from Muslim-majority countries as remarkably different in their family and gender values ([Tillie et al. 2013](#)). Indeed, previous studies have pointed out that differences relate to *eros* rather than *demos* ([Inglehart and Norris 2003](#); [Norris and Inglehart 2012](#)). Wedding venues might attribute these characteristics to couples originating in Muslim-majority countries. This can result in the avoidance of contact and taste-based discrimination when it comes to couples identifying with Islam. Moreover, the media primarily connect Islam to social problems such as terrorism and the oppression of women and their rights ([Giugni 2010](#)). In accordance with media reports, non-migrants frequently associate violence with Islam ([Pollack 2014](#)). Wedding venues might disapprove of these characteristics and fear their implications, such as damage to the venue or misbehavior.

This brings us to a second key mechanism related to the costs of ethno-religious accommodation and statistical discrimination on the grounds of religion (see also [Pfaff et al. 2018](#)). Muslims are assumed to be more religious in a relatively secularized Europe which has been shaped by Christian

traditions. They commonly refrain from drinking alcohol, follow certain dietary rules by eating halal, and females are more likely to cover their heads (Tillie et al. 2013). These perceptions might directly affect the willingness of wedding venues to offer their services to Muslim minorities as it might 1) result in a loss of profit, due, for instance, to not selling alcohol; 2) it might also turn away customers who disapprove of Islam; and 3) religious ceremonies might imply an uncertain and increased amount of effort. This can relate to the food (e.g., provision of halal food), requirements for additional decoration or gender-sensitive seating arrangements, and also to capacity, since Islamic Arabic weddings are perceived as larger, as they are more traditional (e.g., Kochuyt 2012; Ramdya 2010; Toprak 2002:138–98). All of these factors might then cause issues in terms of the capacity of the venue or special requirements that come with religious weddings. From both insights, we can deduce our second hypothesis which states that *Muslims or couples with Arabic-origin names, who seek to celebrate a religious wedding, are more likely to be discriminated against compared to other religious and ethnic groups (H2).*

However, previous research has also shown that we are not talking about Islamophobia, per se, but that there is strong hostility towards specific Islamic rights such as wearing the headscarf (e.g., Carol 2018; Helbling 2014). Helbling and Traunmüller (2018) revealed that this hostility primarily targets fundamentalist Muslims, as their values are perceived as a threat to progressive gender and democratic values. Yet, those studies used survey data or survey experiments and were not able to investigate the actual behavior of natives towards people from Muslim-majority countries. Nevertheless, stereotypes linked to Islamic weddings should be altered when secularity is mentioned. In this way, statistical discrimination can be reduced and this can result in greater approval for secular couples with Arabic names. Taste-based discrimination on the grounds of religion can also be reduced because natives might treat a secular wedding among couples with an Arabic name as an indicator of assimilation into a largely secularized society (see also Fossati, Liechti, and Auer 2020), and consequently rank them higher in their ethno-religious hierarchies than Muslim believers due to homophily (preferring other secular people). Hence, they might be less inclined to discriminate against secular weddings for couples with Arabic names. We will therefore test a refined hypothesis that states that *couples with Arabic-origin names who explicitly mention a non-religious wedding are less likely to be discriminated against compared to couples with Arabic-origin names celebrating an Islamic wedding (H3).* This will allow us to empirically investigate the claim of hostility towards Muslim roots within natives' perceptions of Muslims' greater religiosity.

METHODS

Data

We combined two field experiments to test our hypotheses. One field experiment was carried out in Germany and one in Austria. To investigate ethnic and religious discrimination in the wedding venue business, we follow a 2x2 factorial design (in Germany) for which we randomly vary the ethnicity and religion. Ethnic background was indicated by the first and family names (native, i.e. German/Austrian and Arabic-sounding names). We can consider names of Arabic, and hence Muslim, origin to be among the most distinctive names in German-speaking regions (see Gerhards and Hans 2009). We chose the names from lists with common Arabic-origin and German-origin names (Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur 2018; Bielefeld 2018a, 2018b; Forebears 2014; Statistik Austria 2018; Telefon ABC 2018). For the first names, we focused on popular names in more recent birth cohorts, particularly the birth cohort of 1980–1990.

To disentangle the religious and ethnic discrimination, we added the information that a religious wedding ceremony (Islamic or Free Church) is being celebrated. We generated email accounts for four fictitious couples from Germany and five couples in Austria on www.gmail.com. The fifth couple, where the name indicated a non-Austrian ethnic origin, allows us to see whether owners equate

Table 1. Profiles of “Wedding Couples”

	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Austria</i>
Native-origin name / Free church wedding	Vanessa Wagner and Manuel Bauer	Anna Gruber and Stefan Pichler
Native-origin name / no religious wedding	Caroline Winkler and Matthias Kühn	Sophie Müller and Lukas Huber
Arabic-origin names / Islamic wedding	Arzu Mansour and Karim Amin	Leyla Haddad and Amir Rahman
Arabic-origin name / no religious wedding	Elif Malik and Ahmed Haddad	Elif Mansour and Achmed Nasser
Arabic-origin name		Meryem Aziz and Yusuf Malik

names of Arabic origin with Islam and therefore discriminate against them as much as they discriminate against couples celebrating an Islamic wedding. [Table 1](#) shows the names of each couple.

Thus, we created one religious couple within each ethnic group (Arabic-origin and native-origin). Venues were approached with the following email (originally in German):

Subject: Venue Request

Dear Sir/Madam,

We have had a very positive first impression of your venue. We would like to know if it is still available for our wedding on the [28/29 September 2017/8]. We expect [number] guests and would like to celebrate a [Muslim / Free Church / non-religious wedding ceremony]. The catering can be arranged by yourselves or us.

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Best regards,
[Names]

Each venue randomly received only one profile. The number of guests was adjusted to the capacity of the venue to avoid a rejection due to the size of the location. Venues were identified based on internet searches and lists (locationguide24.com, mein-traumtag.de; eventsofa.de; fiylo.de; locationagent.de; eventinc.de; wo-heiraten.de; zankyou.de; hochzeit.click and hochzeits-location.info). These venues included hotels, restaurants and castles, and, of course, specific wedding venues. The ceremony (or *Nikaah* in the case of Muslims) could also take place at those venues ([Muslim Wedding Venues 2015](#)). 88 percent of the emails were sent to venues in the nine largest cities in Germany in terms of population. These cities (Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, Cologne, Stuttgart, Düsseldorf, and Dortmund) also host large numbers of minorities (Statistisches [Bundesamt 2018:37–45](#)). Furthermore, we added Dresden and Leipzig in East Germany to the sample. The venues were assigned to cities based on the postal code. Frankfurt was excluded, as we conducted our pretest there (15 requests per couple). In total, 387 emails were sent to German venues with valid email addresses. In Austria, the cities of Vienna, Graz, Linz, Salzburg, and Innsbruck were included. As Austria is less urbanized than Germany ([Central Intelligence Agency 2018](#)), many wedding venues are located outside of the major cities. We therefore drew a sample of wedding venues in the countryside (61 percent) to achieve a comparable sample size. Overall, 418 emails were sent to valid email addresses.

As we received 90 percent of the responses during the pretest within seven and ten days, we limited the field time to seven days in Germany and ten days in Austria. We sent emails between

November 17, 2016, and November 24, 2016, in Germany and January 30–31, 2018, in Austria. Later responses were not included in our analyses. At the end of the experiment, venues received—for ethical reasons—a friendly response saying that we were grateful for the quick [and positive] response but that we had decided in favor of a different venue and apologized for any inconvenience.

Operationalization

We measured our dependent variable, discrimination, by means of six variables. First, we investigated whether couples received a “confirmation” or “no confirmation.” The variable takes the value 1 if venues confirmed the date and 0 if they declined or sent no response. With a subset of our sample (only cases where we received a response), we investigated the remaining five dependent variables. Second, the *number of words* was counted as an indicator of how much effort the venue made in responding to the different types of couples, no matter whether they confirmed or declined the request. We also included in the word count email attachments that contained information about weddings at the location. Third, we operationalized discrimination through a comparison of *response times* (in days) across groups. Fourth, we investigated differences in the *formality of emails*. We distinguished between 0 (“email without individual salutation and complimentary closing”), 1 (“email with individual salutation or complimentary closing—also including more informal salutations e.g., ‘Hello’ combined with the name”), and 2 (“email with individual salutation and complimentary closing”). Fifth, we counted the number of spelling and grammatical *errors*. Sixth, and last, we looked at the *tone* of the emails. As there were no negative or rude emails, we distinguished only between 0 “rather neutral” and 1 “positive.” In the analyses, we used the row mean of three coders. We achieved a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.8 and thus have a reliable measure of the tone. We coded the tone of the emails as positive if the location included individual salutations (instead of impersonal salutations such as ‘Dear Sir or Madam’), thanked the sender for the request, included positive adjectives (e.g., nice, great, happy) or, in the case of a decline, sent wishes, gave a reason, and thanked the sender.¹

Our independent variables are dummies for our *treatment* (couple with Arabic-origin names with and without a religious ceremony, couple with a native-origin name and a religious ceremony) and control groups (couple with a native-origin name without a religious ceremony and a couple with an Arabic-origin name only, without reference to the ceremony); the *capacity* of the venue (measured by the number of seats, \bar{X} 142 seats, SD 157); whether *catering* is offered (0 “no,” 1 “yes,” 2 “outsourced” based on information on websites), and *region*. In Germany, we distinguished between 1 “East Germany” and 0 “West Germany.” In Austria, we differentiated between 1 “cities” and 0 “countryside.” In supplementary analyses, we also controlled for the *popularity* of the venue on a scale from one to five stars (to capture the demand and competition couples might face) and the number of *ratings* retrieved from www.google.com. Moreover, we created dummy variables for the onomastic *origin* of the owner’s name. The variable measures whether a name is of German origin (0 “no,” 1 “yes”).²

1 Example of a positive tone: Dear Ms. Gruber & Mr. Pichler, thank you very much for your kind inquiry and interest in our venue. It is a pleasure to send you our offer for your wedding ceremony on 28 September 2018 and some pictures of the location to get a first impression. We would be very happy to welcome you here. Have a nice day and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Kind regards, [name].

Example of a neutral tone: Dear Ms. Mansour & Mr. Amin, unfortunately, our venue is not available on that date. Sincerely, [name].

2 Control variables that could not be included in the main analyses due to missing values were used in robustness checks (Table A2-3 on ethnic origin of the owner’s name and popularity of the venue). Among the cases for which we identified the names, 13 percent (46 cases) of the owners in Germany and 5 percent (17 cases) of the owners in Austria did not have a German name. In addition, we distinguished between Arabic and non-Arabic names (not shown) but the number of cases is very low. 4 percent (13 cases) of the owners in Germany and 1 percent (2 cases) of the owners in Austria have an Arabic-origin name. Our results remain largely stable if we include those variables.

Method

We apply ordinary least square regressions combined with robust standard errors. With our binary dependent variables *confirmation* and *tone*, we employ linear probability models.³ We run separate regressions for Germany and Austria, as these two field experiments are, by design, not directly comparable due to the different field times and an additional control group in Austria. We first show results without control variables (Table 3) and then include the control variables *capacity of venues*, *whether catering is offered*, *outsourced or not offered*, and *region* for Germany (Table 4) and Austria (Table 5). We estimated six models for each country consisting of one model for each dependent variable.

RESULTS

Confirmations

We observed the most substantial ethno-religious differences when we looked at the confirmations versus the rejections that couples received.

Contrary to the first hypothesis and in line with our second hypothesis, we indeed saw that couples with Arabic-origin names celebrating an Islamic wedding in Germany and Austria received the least amount of confirmations from venues (44 percent in Germany and 35 percent in Austria, Table 2). By contrast, more than three out of five couples with German-origin names and around half of the couples with Austrian-origin names received confirmations. These differences were significant as Figure 1 and Table 3 (Model 1) illustrate. There was no significant distinction between couples with native-origin names celebrating a religious or non-religious wedding. Thus, we do not observe theophobia (discrimination against all religious couples) in our data.

We found descriptive (Table 2) and multivariate (Table 4 and 5, Model 1) support for our third hypothesis stating that couples with Arabic-origin names celebrating a non-religious wedding are less discriminated against compared to those with an Islamic wedding. In fact, they are treated equally to couples with native-origin names in Germany and Austria alike, meaning there are no significant differences and thus not all couples with an Arabic name are discriminated against (see also Table A1 in the appendix).⁴ While an affiliation with a Free Church does not hamper couples' opportunities to celebrate their wedding at a venue, Islamic affiliation is clearly the driver of discrimination. And an Arabic name is equated with an Islamic origin because couples who did not refer to the religiosity of the wedding were not treated much differently from couples with an Islamic wedding in Austria (Table 5, Model 1). This suggests that discrimination runs along ethno-religious lines.⁵

3 Linear probability models (LPM) are OLS-regressions using a binary dependent variable. According to Mood (2010), LPM has an advantage over logit and probit models, because the estimated effects can be compared across groups and the models and are not affected by unobserved heterogeneity, which arises from omitted variables. This poses a problem in logit models where the estimates always depend on the other included variables and their variances.

4 In addition to linear probability models, we conducted specification curve analyses. When estimating models, the variables that are included in models can be selective and potentially lead to biases if only the variables that are producing the desired outcome are considered. However, different combinations of variables might produce very different results. Specification curve analysis checks the robustness of results against different combinations of variables and includes an inferential component. This shows the range of possible results for a linear probability model of the treatment and control variables relating to confirmations. Each estimate represents a different combination for random samples of varying size and control variables. Across models, we see the negative effect of being Islamic on confirmations independent of the control variables. This effect is largely stable across estimations (not shown).

5 We also tested regional differences in religious discrimination between Austrian cities versus the countryside as well as the former Federal Republic of Germany (abbreviated as West Germany) versus the former German Democratic Republic (abbreviated with the term East Germany) due to stronger prejudice in East Germany (e.g., Yendell 2014). We can summarize that there are almost never any significant differences between the former East and West Germany (Table 4) or Austrian cities and the countryside (Table 5). However, our analysis provides tentative support for a higher level of xenophobia in East Germany (results available upon request).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	Confirmation %	Length of response (words) Mean (SD)	Response time in days Mean (SD)	Formality of email Mean (SD)	Errors in email Mean (SD)	Positive tone of email %
Germany	60	207,8 (465,1)	1,4 (1,5)	1,9 (0,3)	1,1 (5,0)	74
Native-origin name / Free church wedding (n=97)	70	244,0 (574,1)	1,6 (1,4)	2,0 (0,2)	0,5 (1,3)	81
Native-origin name / no religious wedding (n=101)	64	269,0 (560,7)	1,1 (1,7)	1,9 (0,3)	2,1 (9,3)	69
Arabic-origin names / Islamic wedding (n=91)	44	128,4 (139,9)	1,4 (1,7)	1,8 (0,4)	1,2 (3,0)	71
Arabic-origin name/ no religious wedding (n=98)	59	174,1 (400,0)	1,5 (1,3)	1,8 (0,4)	0,6 (0,9)	74
Austria	48	533,2 (1176,6)	1,2 (1,6)	1,7 (0,5)	1,6 (3,2)	61
Native-origin name / Free church wedding (n=83)	52	551,0 (1191,3)	1,1 (1,5)	1,8 (0,4)	1,4 (1,8)	64
Native-origin name / no religious wedding (n=88)	51	708,9 (1367,6)	1,4 (1,6)	1,8 (0,4)	1,2 (1,3)	60
Arabic-origin names / Islamic wedding (n=82)	35	124,5 (204,8)	1,1 (1,7)	1,8 (0,4)	1,6 (2,6)	55
Arabic-origin name/ no religious wedding (n=83)	54	532,5 (1182,0)	1,0 (1,2)	1,7 (0,5)	1,5 (2,4)	61
Arabic-origin name (n=82)	48	761,3 (1438,2)	1,4 (1,8)	1,5 (0,5)	2,1 (5,8)	66

Length of Replies

With regard to the length of replies, ethno-religious differences were more subtle. We see that replies to couples with native-origin names who were not having a religious wedding were the more wordy ones (~269 in Germany and 709 in Austria, [Table 2](#)). Their emails contained, on average, 141 additional words compared to couples with Arabic-origin names and an Islamic wedding in Germany and about 584 additional words in Austria ([Table 2](#)). In fact, couples with Arabic-origin names (without any indication of a religious or non-religious wedding) received the longest answers in Austria (761 words on average, [Table 2](#)). In Austria, couples with Arabic-origin names and an Islamic wedding received significantly shorter responses than other couples. In Germany, these differences were also significant (except for couples with Arabic-origin names and no religious wedding) ([Table 3](#), Model 2).⁶ Yet, differences can partly be explained by venue characteristics and whether venues declined or confirmed the requests ([Table 4](#), Model 2).⁷

Response Time in Days

The response time in days is our third dependent variable for investigating discrimination. In Germany, couples with native-origin names who were not having a religious wedding received the

6 We used the prevalence of email attachments as an alternative measure. In Germany, venues discriminate against couples through sending attachments with all other groups being significantly more likely to receive an attachment compared to couples with an Islamic wedding. However, in Austria, venues do not differentiate among groups when attaching files (results available upon request).

7 Although previous research has found variation within Austria, we primarily observed significant variation in the length of emails but not in the share of confirmations or other dependent variables across groups and regions in robustness checks. Austrian venues in the countryside discriminated more against couples with Arabic-origin names and an Islamic wedding. Responses to all other groups were significantly wordier in the countryside. This difference was less pronounced in Austrian cities. This is also not related to rejections as this was controlled for (results available upon request).

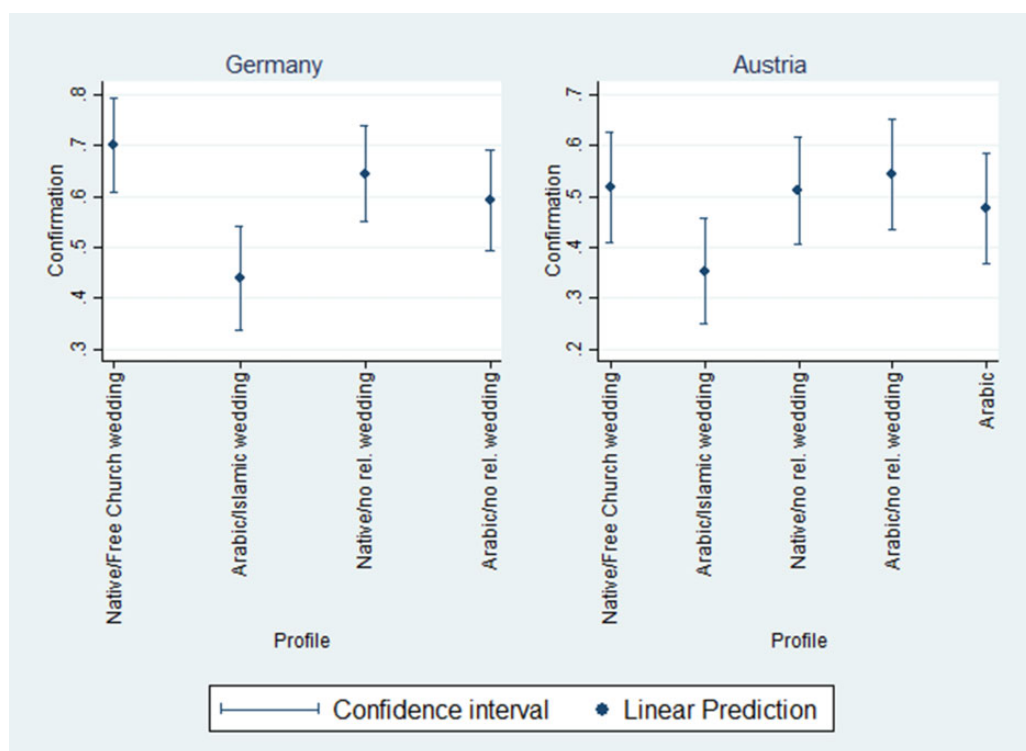


Figure 1. Confirmations in Germany and Austria Note: Predictive margins from Table 3, Model 1

fastest response (within a day), whereas all others including Free Church couples received their replies on average after one and a half days (Table 2). The picture is fuzzier in Austria. More or less, all couples received their replies within a day (Table 2). Overall, there is no significant variation across couples and countries (Table 3, Model 3).

Formality of Emails

Differences emerged with regard to the formality of the emails, meaning whether venues included salutations and/or complimentary closings in their emails (Table 2). We observed that venues had a tendency to write more formal emails to couples with native names in Germany. This favoritism was not seen in Austria (Table 3, Model 4). The patterns remain stable if we control for venue characteristics and whether venues confirmed or declined the request. As the German language requires a declination of “dear” by gender in the salutation, venues might have skipped the salutations with Arabic names because they had greater difficulties in determining the gender based on the first name.

Errors in Emails

Descriptively, the number of mistakes slightly varied across groups in Germany with emails to couples celebrating a Free Church wedding, and couples with Arabic names and no religious wedding, containing fewer mistakes. Couples with native-origin names and who were not having a religious wedding contained most mistakes (two mistakes per email on average). In Austria, most mistakes were found in emails to couples with Arabic names where there was no indication of the type of wedding ceremony (2.1 on average) (Table 2). Yet, these patterns were largely random and not of statistical significance (Table 3, Model 5).

Table 3. Discrimination in Germany and Austria

	(1) <i>Confirmation</i>	(2) <i>Length of emails (words)</i>	(3) <i>Response time in days</i>	(4) <i>Formality of email</i>	(5) <i>Errors in email</i>	(6) <i>Tone of email</i>
Germany						
Arabic/Islamic wedding (ref.)						
Native/Free Church wedding	0.261*** (0.070)	115.591+ (66.940)	0.195 (0.263)	0.137* (0.055)	-0.687+ (0.403)	0.098+ (0.058)
Native/no rel. wedding	0.204** (0.071)	140.604* (65.870)	-0.298 (0.285)	0.123* (0.059)	0.922 (1.114)	-0.020 (0.065)
Arabic/no rel. wedding	0.152* (0.072)	45.683 (49.100)	0.125 (0.256)	0.003 (0.066)	-0.627 (0.388)	0.033 (0.062)
Constant	0.440*** (0.052)	128.422*** (17.468)	1.375*** (0.210)	1.813*** (0.049)	1.219** (0.374)	0.708*** (0.045)
Observations	387	297	297	297	297	297
AIC	540.004	4494.250	1094.639	185.850	1804.583	248.811
Austria						
Arabic/Islamic wedding (ref.)						
Native/Free Church wedding	0.164* (0.077)	426.448** (145.893)	-0.057 (0.280)	-0.006 (0.071)	-0.292 (0.401)	0.091 (0.073)
Native/no rel. wedding	0.158* (0.075)	584.420** (184.445)	0.296 (0.300)	0.036 (0.071)	-0.461 (0.378)	0.049 (0.077)
Arabic/no rel. wedding	0.189* (0.076)	408.007** (145.797)	-0.100 (0.259)	-0.142+ (0.080)	-0.095 (0.446)	0.061 (0.076)
Arabic	0.122 (0.077)	636.803*** (185.948)	0.311 (0.313)	-0.262** (0.086)	0.426 (0.809)	0.104 (0.072)
Constant	0.354*** (0.053)	124.508*** (26.219)	1.115*** (0.213)	1.803*** (0.051)	1.639*** (0.335)	0.552*** (0.055)
Observations	418	315	315	315	315	315
AIC	608.721	5346.136	1177.791	395.558	1625.881	335.436

Robust standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.10$,* $p < 0.05$,** $p < 0.01$,*** $p < 0.001$ *Tone of Emails*

In Germany, emails to couples with a native-origin name and Free Church ceremony received more often an email with a positive tone (81 percent). For other groups, the share was around 70 percent in Germany (Table 2). This distinction was statistically significant in bivariate and multivariate analyses (Table 3 and 4, Model 6). Interestingly, there was no clear disadvantage for couples celebrating an Islamic wedding in Germany. In Austria, we see this disadvantage (55 percent) only descriptively (Table 2).

CONCLUSION

Despite strong attempts by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights to combat ethnic discrimination, there is still plenty of evidence being presented all across the globe in various fields (e.g., Pager and Shepherd 2008). Although the majority of studies have focused on ethnic or racial discrimination, the recent public discourse has shifted to religion and the presence of Muslim minorities (e.g., Dolezal, Helbling, and Hutter 2010). The tenor of the academic debate suggests that

Table 4. Discrimination in Germany Including Controls

	(1) Confirmation	(2) Length of emails (words)	(3) Response time in days	(4) Formality of email	(5) Errors in email	(6) Tone of email
Arabic/Islamic wedding (ref.)						
Native/Free Church wedding	0.269*** (0.069)	82.732 (66.889)	0.260 (0.285)	0.165** (0.056)	−0.868+ (0.455)	0.109+ (0.059)
Native/no rel. wedding	0.218** (0.070)	109.279+ (64.751)	−0.254 (0.300)	0.144* (0.059)	0.737 (1.114)	−0.021 (0.066)
Arabic/no rel. wedding	0.145* (0.073)	23.465 (45.986)	0.148 (0.260)	0.014 (0.065)	−0.741+ (0.413)	0.035 (0.062)
East Germany (ref. West Germany)	0.022 (0.073)	−70.452+ (41.426)	0.047 (0.306)	−0.085 (0.072)	−0.344 (0.280)	−0.052 (0.069)
Capacity	−0.000* (0.000)	−0.036 (0.067)	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.001)	0.000 (0.000)
No catering (ref.)						
Catering	−0.011 (0.076)	51.533 (36.051)	−0.666* (0.317)	0.004 (0.063)	0.032 (0.456)	−0.062 (0.063)
Outsourced catering	−0.294* (0.139)	−25.457 (41.102)	−0.706 (0.513)	−0.120 (0.148)	0.011 (0.517)	−0.182 (0.144)
Confirmation		130.979*** (35.612)	−0.044 (0.224)	−0.105** (0.040)	0.766* (0.328)	−0.035 (0.053)
Constant	0.507*** (0.088)	20.360 (47.540)	1.977*** (0.401)	1.903*** (0.084)	0.724 (0.460)	0.783*** (0.085)
Observations	387	297	297	297	297	297
AIC	537.554	4497.983	1098.655	187.564	1813.278	255.367

Robust standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.10$,* $p < 0.05$,** $p < 0.01$,*** $p < 0.001$

cultural difference, including religiosity, has indeed become a prominent explanation for discrimination (e.g., Lancee et al. 2017). In previous studies, the role of religion was mostly addressed only implicitly or approximated by using Arabic-origin names (e.g., Gaddis and Ghoshal 2015). This study attempts to fill this gap by studying couples with Arabic and native-origin names requesting a wedding venue for their religious or non-religious wedding. Compared to previous research that used Arabic-origin names only, we indicated religiosity explicitly by mentioning the type of wedding (Islamic or Free Church).

We investigated discrimination by means of six variables and found the clearest indication of discrimination through binary operationalization, measuring confirmations versus rejections. For the other variables (length, response time, formality, errors in emails, and tone) ethno-religious differences were less pronounced. Importantly, our analyses reveal that findings can be generalized to neighboring countries with similar immigrant groups: In both countries, Germany and Austria alike, couples with Arabic-origin names celebrating an Islamic wedding were least likely to receive a confirmation compared to couples with native-origin names. German and Austrian venues explicitly discriminated against couples with Arabic-origin names and an Islamic wedding compared to couples with native-origin names or Arabic-origin names and a non-religious wedding. This discrimination is

Table 5. Discrimination in Austria Including Controls

	(1) Confirmation	(2) Length of emails (words)	(3) Response time in days	(4) Formality of email	(5) Errors in email	(6) Tone of email
Arabic / Islamic wedding (ref.)						
Native/Free Church wedding	0.162* (0.077)	380.731* (160.246)	−0.097 (0.277)	−0.013 (0.073)	−0.380 (0.401)	0.076 (0.074)
Native/no rel. wedding	0.146+ (0.076)	504.499** (180.019)	0.195 (0.302)	0.029 (0.076)	−0.584 (0.377)	0.019 (0.079)
Arabic/no rel. wedding	0.183* (0.077)	359.111* (146.869)	−0.133 (0.259)	−0.149+ (0.082)	−0.166 (0.450)	0.034 (0.075)
Arabic	0.118 (0.077)	587.780** (177.855)	0.268 (0.316)	−0.269** (0.086)	0.338 (0.767)	0.087 (0.071)
Austrian cities (ref. countryside)	0.064 (0.050)	−82.614 (136.219)	−0.100 (0.176)	0.042 (0.053)	−0.177 (0.386)	0.052 (0.047)
Capacity	0.000* (0.000)	−0.151 (0.217)	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.000 (0.001)	0.000 (0.000)
No catering (ref.)						
Catering	0.019 (0.072)	122.405 (172.975)	−0.333 (0.305)	0.038 (0.081)	0.449 (0.322)	0.124+ (0.067)
Outsourced catering	−0.003 (0.121)	6.336 (279.164)	−0.654+ (0.352)	0.032 (0.121)	−0.346 (0.429)	0.273* (0.106)
Confirmation		265.161* (120.488)	0.285 (0.188)	0.020 (0.054)	0.318 (0.349)	0.098+ (0.051)
Constant	0.293*** (0.085)	−48.535 (168.418)	1.321*** (0.377)	1.761*** (0.090)	1.281** (0.455)	0.366*** (0.081)
Observations	418	315	315	315	315	315
AIC	613.467	5351.674	1182.776	404.181	1633.347	332.699

Robust standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.10$,* $p < 0.05$,** $p < 0.01$,*** $p < 0.001$

not motivated by a general theophobia as Free Church couples were not rejected more often than couples with native-origin names and a non-religious wedding.

What does this tell us about the types of discrimination? We tentatively conclude that it is a mixture of statistical and taste-based discrimination. The absence of a general dislike of people with names originating in Muslim-majority countries points towards statistical discrimination as couples with names of an Arabic origin but who are having a secular wedding are not discriminated against compared to those with an Islamic wedding. Moreover, owners equated Islamic religiosity with an Arabic-origin name and therefore offered their venues less often to couples with Arabic-origin names who did not refer to their religious affiliation (as well as those who were having an Islamic wedding). However, as these findings were not substantially altered by the number of guests or catering, we also seem to be dealing with taste-based discrimination when it comes to couples celebrating an Islamic wedding where venues are willing to sacrifice a potential financial gain to avoid contact. Thus, we believe that discrimination around Muslim marriages does not emanate from owners' skepticism regarding the size of the wedding. First of all, we adapted the number of guests to the venue and second, the size of the venue was significant but the coefficient close to zero. If the size of the wedding had been a reason to refuse the wedding, the discrimination should have been lower in larger venues who

can host larger weddings too. It could also be that venues refuse Islamic weddings because they have a financial interest in doing the catering themselves and are afraid of losing financially by hosting a wedding where halal food might be required. To avoid this possibility, we explicitly mentioned in the emails that catering can be done by the venue. In addition, we controlled whether catering is offered by the venue, optional, or not offered. This variable is mostly statistically insignificant. Overall, venues were very careful in their responses. Instead of directly referring to their lack of willingness to accommodate an Islamic wedding, they usually stated that the venue would not be available. This is also reflected in the neutral tone of the emails. We therefore conclude that discrimination is a very subtle process which is mostly visible in different acceptance rates rather than the reasons that are provided or the tone of the emails. This provides an answer to how majority-group members discriminate.

Future research could contribute to the field by investigating why companies discriminate (e.g., due to perceiving Muslims as a threat to safety or due to an understanding of national belonging that excludes Muslims; see [Gerteis, Hartmann, and Edgell 2019](#)), which goes beyond the scope of this paper. By exploiting geographical variations between countries and regions as well as market conditions (the popularity of venues), we made some attempts to approach the question of “why.” As very few discrimination experiments have been conducted in multiple countries, our study is novel in this sense. Moreover, the combination of two field experiments helped us to compensate for the potential shortcomings of one.

We also contribute to the literature by trying to disentangle the ethnic and religious discrimination of Arabic minorities by including a native minority religion. However, the minority *religious denomination* Free Church is still confounded with ethnicity. A study of religious minorities of immigrant origin who also belong to a Free Church (e.g., Sub-Saharan immigrants) would complete this endeavor. Ideally, studies should also include couples with native names and an Islamic ceremony to disentangle ethnic and religious discrimination strictly speaking, as well as a more clearly fundamentalist Christian stream to investigate whether discrimination is rooted in a general dislike of fundamentalist forms of religiosity independent of Islam. However, as those are rare cases, such a study might be at a greater risk of detection. We can disentangle *religiosity* and ethnicity though by investigating whether the secularization of persons from Muslim-majority countries (often carrying Arabic-origin names from the religious scriptures) fosters their acceptance by the native population. As the social distance between natives and Muslims partly results from natives’ objections towards certain religious symbols and habits ([Carol 2016](#); [Helbling 2014](#); [Helbling and Traunmüller 2018](#)), we were able to test whether secularity really provides an advantage in the process of cultural integration. We can conclude that it is beneficial for couples with an Arabic name to emphasize their secularity in a secularized context. An assimilation of first names would certainly also help to reduce this bias (see [Gerhards and Hans 2009](#)), but it is, of course, questionable whether this is the right way to proceed or, rather, whether natives need more education towards tolerance.

Situating our research within the literature on the discrimination against Muslims in Germany (e.g., [Di Stasio et al. 2019](#)) suggests that secularity provides an advantage, whereas an Islamic affiliation has negative consequences, no matter if we look at the callback rates in the labor market or confirmations in the wedding-venue business. However, a major difference compared to other fields (e.g., housing and labor market) remains; statistical and taste-based discrimination are much harder to disentangle in the field of wedding venues. Usually, we could conclude that it must be taste-based discrimination if two applicants are equally qualified and additional information is provided to prevent discrimination based on stereotypes (e.g., reputation, reliability etc.). Yet, in this case, a couple of Muslim origin who is not religious and therefore does not require special services can hardly be called Muslim anymore. Moreover, both mechanisms generate similar predictions in this case (religious couples being more likely to be discriminated against).

The importance of secularity can also vary by country. Given the longer history of Islamic accommodation in Austria (e.g., [Dolezal et al. 2010](#)), the discrimination against couples with Islamic weddings in Austria is admittedly surprising. One could have expected higher levels of tolerance in

Austria. But in light of the lower levels of secularization compared to Germany (Pickel 2010), the predominance of Catholicism (Statistik Austria 2007), recent political developments, and right-wing parties gaining strength (Backes 2018), it is perhaps not too surprising anymore. Moreover, negative attitudes towards Muslims have been more widespread in Austria compared to Germany over the last decade (Halm and Sauer 2017; Heath and Richards 2019; Ribberink, Achterberg, and Houtman 2017). It is also unlikely that the stronger sentiments in Austria are an outlier and were tied to the “refugee crises” because Austria functioned mostly as a transit country for refugees primarily originating in Muslim-majority countries, whereas Germany hosted most refugees in absolute terms (Tagesspiegel 2015).

The political shift in Austria and the immigration of refugees leads us to the question of whether we would expect the same findings if we carried out the field experiments at a different time. We are confident that the latest wave of refugees did not bias our results because the peak of the wave was reached in 2015, at least a year before we gathered the data (Brücker, Rother, and Schupp 2016). Moreover, it seems that respondents differentiated between Muslims and immigrants on the one hand and asylum seekers on the other hand, because attitudes towards Muslims in Germany remained relatively stable during that period (between 2014 and 2019 (Zick, Küpper, and Berghan 2019)), while attitudes towards asylum seekers have changed in Germany (Zick et al. 2019) and in Austria (own calculations based on the ESS 2014 and 2016). To sum up, the secularization of the German and Austrian societies, in combination with Islamophobic tendencies, seems to offer a more convincing explanation for the exclusion of couples looking to have an Islamic wedding.

Last but not least, besides the crucial implications of these findings for the integration of Muslim minorities in Western Europe, the study also generates important insights into the field of application—the marriage market. Given the significantly lower likelihood of couples with Arabic names receiving a confirmation from venues, it is not unlikely that minorities, for whom marriage remains the dominant relationship status, will start to build up their own wedding venue businesses in Germany and Austria in order to cater for the needs of their community in a similar way to Jews and African Americans in the United States (see Howard 2008). This might further increase ethno-religious separation and reduce the opportunities for experiencing intergroup contact. As anti-discrimination measures mostly tackle the public arena (e.g., the housing and labor market), our study raises awareness of the relevance of these measures for businesses and the private domain.

APPENDIX

Table A1. Discrimination in Germany and Austria (Changed Reference Category)

	(1) Confirmation	(2) Length of emails (words)	(3) Response time in days	(4) Formality of email	(5) Errors in email	(6) Tone of email
Germany						
Arabic/no rel. wedding (ref.)						
Native/Free Church wedding	0.109 (0.068)	69.907 (79.256)	0.070 (0.215)	0.134** (0.051)	−0.060 (0.182)	0.065 (0.055)
Arabic/Islamic wedding	−0.152* (0.072)	−45.683 (49.100)	−0.125 (0.256)	−0.003 (0.066)	0.627 (0.388)	−0.033 (0.062)
Native/no rel. wedding	0.052 (0.069)	94.920 (78.355)	−0.423+ (0.241)	0.120* (0.056)	1.549 (1.054)	−0.053 (0.062)
Constant	0.592*** (0.050)	174.105*** (45.888)	1.500*** (0.146)	1.816*** (0.045)	0.592*** (0.103)	0.741*** (0.042)
Observations	387	297	297	297	297	297
AIC	540.004	4494.250	1094.639	185.850	1804.583	248.811
Austria						
Arabic/no rel. wedding (ref.)						
Native/Free Church wedding	−0.024 (0.078)	18.442 (202.895)	0.043 (0.235)	0.135+ (0.079)	−0.196 (0.368)	0.030 (0.072)
Arabic/Islamic wedding	−0.189* (0.076)	−408.007** (145.797)	0.100 (0.259)	0.142+ (0.080)	0.095 (0.446)	−0.061 (0.076)
Native/no rel. wedding	−0.031 (0.077)	176.414 (232.168)	0.396 (0.258)	0.178* (0.079)	−0.366 (0.343)	−0.012 (0.076)
Arabic	−0.067 (0.078)	228.797 (233.364)	0.412 (0.273)	−0.121 (0.092)	0.521 (0.793)	0.043 (0.071)
Constant	0.542*** (0.055)	532.515*** (143.420)	1.015*** (0.147)	1.662*** (0.062)	1.544*** (0.295)	0.613*** (0.053)
Observations	418	315	315	315	315	315
AIC	608.721	5346.136	1177.791	395.558	1625.881	335.436

Robust standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.10$,* $p < 0.05$,** $p < 0.01$,*** $p < 0.001$

Table A2. Owner with Non-German Name and Popularity of Venue

	(1) Confirmation	(2) Length of emails (words)	(3) Response time in days	(4) Formality of email	(5) Errors in email	(6) Tone of email
Arabic / Islamic wedding (ref.)						
Native/Free Church wedding	0.249*** (0.072)	94.039 (70.412)	0.212 (0.301)	0.172** (0.059)	-0.898+ (0.483)	0.112+ (0.062)
Native/no rel. wedding	0.183* (0.074)	116.943+ (69.375)	-0.278 (0.317)	0.165** (0.062)	0.785 (1.186)	-0.007 (0.068)
Arabic/no rel. wedding	0.127+ (0.077)	24.266 (50.615)	0.164 (0.278)	0.014 (0.069)	-0.697+ (0.402)	0.039 (0.064)
East Germany	0.020 (0.077)	-96.210* (45.525)	0.118 (0.336)	-0.096 (0.079)	-0.164 (0.279)	-0.085 (0.074)
Capacity	-0.000* (0.000)	-0.009 (0.074)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.001)	0.000 (0.000)
No catering (ref.)						
Catering	-0.024 (0.080)	80.242+ (43.281)	-0.782* (0.337)	0.015 (0.068)	0.054 (0.520)	-0.080 (0.062)
Outsourced catering	-0.318* (0.145)	-21.396 (41.567)	-0.869+ (0.525)	-0.107 (0.151)	-0.124 (0.561)	-0.194 (0.146)
Owner with German-origin name	-0.065 (0.075)	76.490 (60.080)	0.100 (0.245)	0.027 (0.081)	0.457 (0.529)	0.036 (0.070)
Rating	0.023 (0.067)	73.940+ (44.513)	-0.303 (0.289)	-0.004 (0.054)	-1.073+ (0.637)	0.098 (0.062)
Number of ratings	-0.000*** (0.000)	-0.051** (0.020)	0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Confirmation		133.159*** (37.361)	-0.055 (0.233)	-0.107* (0.042)	0.694* (0.332)	-0.052 (0.051)
Constant	0.539+ (0.301)	-368.429+ (216.508)	3.329* (1.289)	1.878*** (0.254)	4.962+ (2.718)	0.355 (0.293)
Observations	357	278	278	278	278	278
AIC	493.456	4230.643	1043.603	189.099	1720.505	237.515

Robust standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.10$,* $p < 0.05$,** $p < 0.01$,*** $p < 0.001$

Table A3. Owner with Non-Austrian Name and Popularity of Venue

	(1) Confirmation	(2) Length of emails (words)	(3) Response time in days	(4) Formality of email	(5) Errors in email	(6) Tone of email
Arabic / Islamic wedding (ref.)						
Native/Free Church wedding	0.183* (0.083)	358.971* (165.612)	−0.185 (0.305)	−0.001 (0.081)	−0.360 (0.459)	0.087 (0.079)
Native/no rel. wedding	0.096 (0.087)	411.744* (194.331)	0.356 (0.378)	0.139+ (0.079)	−0.651 (0.454)	0.069 (0.090)
Arabic/no rel. wedding	0.140+ (0.084)	414.738* (171.072)	−0.079 (0.290)	−0.090 (0.084)	−0.264 (0.537)	0.095 (0.078)
Arabic	0.098 (0.083)	639.338** (196.743)	0.193 (0.351)	−0.161+ (0.093)	0.339 (0.966)	0.143+ (0.075)
Austrian cities (ref. countryside)	0.037 (0.061)	−241.944+ (129.661)	−0.193 (0.220)	−0.063 (0.064)	−0.698 (0.640)	−0.003 (0.058)
Capacity	0.000 (0.000)	−0.070 (0.661)	−0.000 (0.001)	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.001 (0.002)	−0.000 (0.000)
No catering (ref.)						
Catering	−0.027 (0.082)	46.326 (208.007)	−0.335 (0.353)	0.032 (0.080)	0.317 (0.386)	0.196** (0.075)
Outsourced catering	0.017 (0.131)	−50.127 (338.841)	−0.888* (0.385)	0.102 (0.121)	−0.459 (0.535)	0.409*** (0.108)
Owner with German-origin name	−0.134 (0.125)	−550.391 (491.878)	0.316 (0.230)	−0.248** (0.081)	−1.345 (1.138)	−0.156 (0.095)
Rating	−0.154 (0.112)	−49.638 (386.134)	−0.215 (0.370)	−0.158 (0.118)	−1.162 (1.322)	−0.024 (0.096)
Number of ratings	−0.000 (0.000)	−0.014 (0.019)	−0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000** (0.000)
Confirmation		262.231* (133.085)	0.278 (0.206)	0.037 (0.056)	0.257 (0.387)	0.098+ (0.053)
Constant	1.162* (0.544)	826.663 (1704.301)	2.100 (1.648)	2.743*** (0.560)	8.254 (5.762)	0.568 (0.458)
Observations	339	261	261	261	261	261
AIC	504.109	4439.631	999.325	304.843	1400.647	267.643

Robust standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.10$,* $p < 0.05$,** $p < 0.01$,*** $p < 0.001$

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