Assessing the Role of Immigration Policy for Foreign Students: the Case of Campus France

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RÉSUMÉ

This paper studies the intended and unintended effects of a specific policy conducted by the French Government around 2006 aiming at boosting the number of foreign students admitted in French universities. The Campus France program aimed at facilitating the application process of foreign candidates from some particular countries and applying in specific universities. We develop a small theoretical model that allows for the existence of capacity constraints in order to analyse the potential effects of such a policy in terms of student inflows and in terms of selection. Using a Diff-in-Diff-in-Diff approach, we test the impact of Campus France on the magnitude of inflows. We pay attention in terms of heterogeneity of these effects across types of universities. We find that the Campus France policy led to a global increase of inflows of foreign students around 8%. The increase is concentrated on universities outside the top 150 of the Shanghai Ranking, suggesting a higher selection from better universities. We also use the CF policy as a way to test the potential crowding-out effects on native students while taking care of the usual endogeneity concerns in terms of location. We do not find any impact of crowding-out, either on native students or on foreign students coming through the traditional channel.

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