

### **France in Focus:**

#### Exploring the Relationship between Proximity to Ethnic Enclaves and Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

The recent wave of terror attacks and ongoing refugee crises push the topic of immigration into the global spotlight. Notably in the European context, this heightened focus consequently affects public sentiment towards people of differing origins. This research project seeks to identify how coexisting alongside ethnic minorities affects French natives' feelings towards immigration in their national context. Given the conflicting theories in the literature, my study tests two competing hypotheses: that proximity to concentrated ethnic groups increases anti-immigrant sentiment, and that proximity to concentrated ethnic groups decreases anti-immigrant sentiment. In using votes for the extreme-right 2012 presidential candidate Marine Le Pen of the *Front National* (FN) as a proxy for anti-immigrant sentiment in France, my research provides a tangible example of how quantitative electoral results represent a more qualitative variable - anti-immigrant sentiment. In order to test these competing hypotheses, I used a two-tier methodological approach. The cross-city comparison uses a statistical model to evaluate the relationship between percentages of immigrants in the arrondissements of Paris, Marseille, and Lyon and votes for Le Pen. In the Paris case study, I introduce a new explanatory variable: ethnic enclaves. After defining ethnic enclaves and their adjacent populations, I classify the 869 Paris voting bureaus in relation to such enclaves, and explore the relationship between proximity to these areas and voting patterns. By conducting both a cross-city level comparison and an in-depth exploration of Paris, the findings collectively support the hypothesis theorizing that proximity to greater immigrant populations (immigrant-populous arrondissements across the three cities, and voting bureaus in close proximity to ethnic enclaves in Paris) decreases anti-immigrant sentiment. The results of the study suggest that interaction between different groups is beneficial to improving attitudes towards immigrant populations in France.