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Putting Interethnic Attitudes into Context: The Impact Ethnic Composition in the Micro-context on Interethnic Attitudes

Previous analyses have shown that the ethnic composition of residential areas affects interethnic attitudes. Yet, these studies suffer from two major problems. First, they measure ethnic diversity within administratively defined contextual units that may not be the level of aggregation relevant for interethnic attitudes. Second, they rarely address the potential self-selection of individuals with certain attitudes into certain contexts. We attempt to overcome these problems

by utilizing a Danish panel survey linked to data from the Danish national registers containing detailed information about everyone living in Denmark. The data from the national registers enables us to create flexible contextual units centered on each respondent. Specifically the contextual units are circles around each respondent with radiuses ranging from 80 to 2,500 meters. Combined with the panel survey data we are able to study how changes in ethnic composition in the respondents' vicinity relate to changes in interethnic attitudes over time. Moreover, given the flexible nature of data, we are able

to test theoretically derived mechanisms explaining the relationship between contextual ethnic composition and interethnic attitudes. This is done by means of various refined measures of contextual ethnic composition as well as by examining how the impact of this composition varies with individual level characteristics such as employment status and level of education.