

# Webinaire junior sur l'économie des migrations

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Sarah Schneider-Strawczynski

## Hosting Refugee and Voting for the Far-Right: Evidence from

## France

### RÉSUMÉ

Does exposure to refugees change the political preferences of natives towards far-right parties, and how does this change in preferences occur? This paper examines the political economy of refugee-hosting. Using the opening of refugee centers in France between 1995 and 2017, I show that voting for far-right parties in cities with such opening between two presidential elections falls by about 2 percent. The drop in far-right voting is higher in municipalities with a small population, working in the primary and secondary sectors, with low educational levels and few migrants. I show that this negative effect can not be explained by an economic channel, but rather by a composition channel, through natives' avoidance, and a contact channel, through natives' exposure to refugees. I provide suggestive evidence that too-disruptive exposure to refugees, as measured by the magnitude of the inflows, the cultural distance and the media salience of refugees, can mitigate the beneficial effects of contact on reducing far-right support.

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[Sarah Schneider-Strawczynski](https://sites.google.com/view/sarah-schneider-strawczynski/accueil)(<https://sites.google.com/view/sarah-schneider-strawczynski/accueil>)

[Paris School of Economics \(PSE\)](https://www.parisschoolofeconomics.eu)(<https://www.parisschoolofeconomics.eu>)

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