

Workshop: Emerging Questions in Migration Research

Supported by the ESRC Research Centre on Micro-Social Change (MiSoC) and the Department of Sociology

5 October 2017 - ISER Large Seminar Room

The University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ

EXTENDED PROGRAMME – ABSTRACTS BELOW

9:00 – 9:45 **Welcome and Coffee**

9:45 – 10:00 **Opening Words – Shamit Saggar (ISER)**

10:00-11:15 **How do immigrants become citizens? [Political participation and naturalization of foreign born and their children]**

Neema Begum (Bristol); Silvia Galandini (Manchester), David Bartram (Leicester), Hector Solaz (Essex Government)

11:15 - 11:30 *Refreshment break*

11:30- 12:45 **Is there an “Immigrant Achievement Paradox”? [Immigrants and their children in work and school]**

Hector Cebolla-Boado (UNED) and Yasemin Soysal (Essex Sociology), Sarah Carol (Cologne); Malcolm Brynin and Wouter Zwysen (ISER)

12:45 – 14:00 *Lunch / PhD Poster Presentation*

14:00 – 15:15 **How can we understand the refugee experience? [Rights, welfare, and outcomes of involuntary immigrants]**

Maja Korac (UEL), Anna Getmansky (Essex Government), Renos Papadopoulos (Essex CPS)

15:15 – 15:45 *Refreshment break*

15:45 – 17:00 **What are the challenges and opportunities of immigration for social cohesion?**

David Voas (Institute of Education), James Laurence (Manchester), Merlin Schaeffer (Cologne), Alita Nandi (ISER) and Renee Luthra (Essex Sociology)

Concluding comments: Renee Luthra (ISER)

17:00-18:00 *Wine and Nibbles*

18:00 **Conclusion**

ABSTRACTS

SESSION 1: How do immigrants become citizens? [Political participation and naturalization of foreign born and their children]

Ms Neema Begum

PhD candidate, School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies, University of Bristol

“Ethnicity and Voting Behaviour in the 2016 EU Referendum”

This paper will present preliminary findings from 8 focus groups with ethnic minority and white Remain and Leave voters which will be conducted during July-September 2017 in England. This project seeks to move away from questions of whether class ‘trumps’ ethnicity or ethnicity ‘trumps’ class in ethnic minority electoral choices through operationalising an intersectional analysis which accounts for the intersections of ethnicity, class, gender in the vote choices of ethnic minority and white voters.

The qualitative focus group phase will be followed by a quantitative phase where existing secondary datasets will be utilised including the British Election Study series, the 2010 Ethnic Minority British Election Study (EMBES) and Understanding Society EU Referendum data, especially the ethnic minority boost sample on whether participants thought the UK should leave or remain a member of the EU. Based on the issues surfaced during the qualitative phase, this quantitative phase will be used to uncover wider patterns in ethnicity and electoral behaviour.

Dr Silvia Galandini (with Laurence Lessard-Phillips)

Research Associate, Cathie Marsh Institute for Social Research, University of Manchester

“The Effect of Families on Civic-Political Inclusion among Ethnic Minority Youth”

Abstract: In a context of increasing ethnic diversity the integration of ethnic and immigrant minorities into the civic and political life of the receiving societies has become a salient issue. Such participation is deemed to be not only a crucial component of the integration process, but also a necessary condition for social inclusion, cohesion and democratic representativeness. The paper wishes to contribute to this debate by exploring one of the relevant drivers of civic-political inclusion, i.e. the family. Political socialization within families is known to play a crucial role in shaping civic-political behaviors and attitudes (Dowse & Hughes 1971; Davies 1965). This is generally due to the effect exerted by the important economic and non-economic resources that are generated within this context. The concept of family capital aggregates the wide array of relevant financial, social, cultural, political resources potentially available in families and has been suggested as an effective tool to represent all these stimuli and emphasize the context (i.e. families) in which they are rooted (Gofen 2009). More research is needed to explore the relevance and complexity of family influences on civic-political inclusion.

In this paper we aim to explore (1) the effect of family capital (in its various forms) on civic-political inclusion at specific points in time and over time, and (2) whether this influence varies across ethnic minority and majority groups as well as by family composition types and characteristics. To do so, we focus on ethnic and immigrant minorities in the UK (and more specifically on young people) and adopt a longitudinal approach by drawing on data from Understanding Society, a nationally representative panel survey that entails extensive information about families (i.e. households),

including both parents and children (with specific modules for young people), as well as an ethnic minority boost sample. The paper sheds new light on the role played by families in the complex process of civic-political inclusion, which has important implications for more general issues of social inclusion and representation.

Dr David Bartram

Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Leicester

“The UK Citizenship Process: Political Integration or Marginalization?”

The UK ‘citizenship process’ subjects immigrants to a set of requirements ostensibly intended to enhance their identification with ‘British values’. What impact does that policy have on the immigrants themselves? Proponents of the policy suggest it will facilitate their integration: as they learn about ‘life in the UK’, they will become better able to understand and navigate core institutions. Many external observers, by contrast, believe that the requirements exacerbate marginalization, by constructing immigrants as objects of presumptive suspicion and concern.

For the most part, this debate has been conducted via analysis of policies and documents. In this article I adopt an empirical strategy focusing on outcomes for the immigrants. Using panel data from ‘Understanding Society’, I investigate interest in politics among those who were non-citizens at Wave 1, comparing those who became citizens by Wave 6 to those who remained non-citizens.

The analysis indicates that those who became citizens subsequently reported lower interest in politics (controlling for other determinants), relative to those who remained non-citizens. This unexpected finding reinforces the concerns of critics of the ‘citizenship test’ regime: the policy appears to do more to alienate new citizens than it does to facilitate their integration in the political sphere.

Dr Hector Solaz

Senior Research Officer, Department of Government, University of Essex

“The Dynamics of Remittances and Political Participation in Central Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia”

Remittances are a crucial source of foreign capital for many developing world countries and increasingly, we have evidence that they can exert considerable political effects on national public policy and individual-level political behavior. One particularly active avenue of investigation has been the relationship between remittances and non-electoral participation. This work however, has, to date, produced conflicting interpretations of the role of remittances: the receipt of remittances has been associated with both increased non-electoral participation, and reduced non-electoral (and electoral) political participation. We provide an argument in this paper that attempts to marry these competing positions. Once we abandon the assumption that remittances are a stable and constant inflow, and consider fluctuations in the volume and the value of financial remittances received from abroad, then the receipt of remittances can both increase, and decrease non-electoral participation.

With a mechanism rooted in political opportunity and risk, and relying on a unique four-wave panel study of Kyrgyz citizens between 2010-2013 and a cross-sectional sample of 28 countries in Central Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, we show that all else equal, remittances encourage recipients to engage in more non-electoral and civic activities, but when people experience a decline in remittances, they become less likely to engage in such activities.

SESSION 2: Is there an “Immigrant Achievement Paradox”? [Immigrants and their children in work and school]

Hector Cebolla-Boado

Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, UNED, Madrid
&

Professor Yasemin Soysal

Department of Sociology, University of Essex

“Educational Optimism in China: Migrant Selectivity or Migration Experience?”

This paper addresses the so called “paradox of immigrant optimism,” which accounts for the higher educational expectations of immigrant-origin children, compared to non-immigrants in destination countries, conditional on social background and school attainment. We are interested in clarifying whether the mechanisms behind this optimism are related to migrant selectivity or family migration experience. To do this we use data from the China Education Panel Study, a representative survey of junior high school students in China. We use a two-pronged analytical strategy. Firstly, we look at whether having experienced family migration (within China) is associated with higher educational expectations. Secondly, we take a step back and explore whether adolescents who wish to migrate themselves when they grow up report higher educational expectations. Our findings confirm that adolescents who wish to migrate themselves when adults are already more optimistic even before any intentions of moving come to fruition. This we take as an indirect proof of selectivity. In contrast, we find no effect of family migration on expectations.

Prof. Dr. Sarah Carol (Cologne)

Professor, Institute of Sociology and Social Psychology, University of Cologne

“Religiosity as a Bridge or Barrier to Educational Achievement”

Immigrant children in Europe remain in a position of educational disadvantage. Most studies underscore the role of the parents’ education level and their socio-economic status in the educational achievement of their children. This paper adds to the literature by exploring other factors that reduce or contribute to educational inequality among immigrant children. Using research from the United States as a reference point, we specifically examine religiosity as a device for social mobility. Religiosity may be conducive to educational attainment in two ways: (1) religious organizations may provide guidance, support and beneficial social norms that foster the formation of social capital and sanction deviant behaviour; (2) religious participation may induce an internal locus of control that encourages students to focus on learning and resist counterproductive peer influence. Other scholars argue that ethno-religious in-group ties can be a mobility trap when human capital and socio-economic status in an immigrant community is low. Using the German National Educational Panel Study (NEPS), we take a cross-sectional perspective to test these arguments for Christian and Muslim students of immigrant origin living in Germany. Our analyses reveal that religiosity is primarily relevant for Muslims’ mathematical test performance. We find that students and parents’ religiosity are not necessarily a barrier to good mathematical test performance. Christians and Muslims’ frequency of praying is positively linked to academic performance. Self-rated religiosity, however, is correlated with worse performance. Finally, we find that religious community engagement is related to better academic performance only when the share of co-ethnics in a residential area is low.

Dr Malcolm Brynin

Reader, Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex

&

Dr Wouter Zwysen

Senior Research Officer, Department of Sociology, University of Essex

(with Dr Simonetta Longhi, Associate Professor, University of Reading)

“Employment and Earning Gaps in the Early Career of Ethnic Minority British Graduates: the Importance of University Choice, Parental Background and Area Characteristics”

We compare employment and earnings of British graduates belonging to ethnic minorities to those of white British six months and three and a half years after graduation. Six months after graduation all ethnic minority graduates are less likely than whites to be employed but those who have a job earn similarly or more than whites. University choice, parental background and area characteristics account for a large part of the ethnic differences in earnings but do not explain ethnic differences in employment. Using longitudinal methods we show that ethnic minority graduates do not catch up to their white British peers and in some respects, especially for women, actually fall further behind. This paper provides extensive evidence of ethnic gaps among highly qualified young British graduates.

SESSION 3: How can we understand the refugee experience? [Rights, welfare, and outcomes of involuntary immigrants]

Dr Maja Korac (UEL)

Reader, School of Social Sciences, University of East London

“Displaced Experiences: Centrality of agency in researching and understanding forced migration and exile”

This presentation is embedded in the argument that agency is central to forcible displacement. Forced migrants as people who have agency, search actively for options to their predicament. In doing so, many opt for dangerous opportunities, the decisions that are hard, if not impossible, to understand without ‘reading the world through their eyes’. In other words, to understand socio-political processes and boundaries that intersect with the processes of displacement and exile it is central to reveal the subjective world of the actor’s/refugee experience. As bell hooks argues, theorizing about personal experience not only posits the personal as critical to understanding socio-political social boundaries; but makes it possible to consider how the personal provides room to create alternative narratives. Within this conceptual framework, I shall focus on the complexities of inclusion and exclusion that accompany the trajectories of refugees. Specifically, the relationship between the im/migrants right to establish home in the receiving society and the series of their practices of ‘nesting’, ‘home-making’ and becoming ‘of place’.

Dr Anna Getmansky (with Tolga Sinmazdemir, and Thomas Zeitzoff)

Lecturer, Department of Government, University of Essex

“The Allure of Distant War Drums: Refugees, Geography, and Foreign Policy Preferences in Turkey”

Countries often try to stem migration by intervening in conflicts that cause refugees to flow across their borders. We study what shapes public support for such intervention using a survey experiment in Turkey against the backdrop of the Syrian refugee crisis. We survey over 1,200 respondents with varied exposure to refugees, and randomize information about the consequences of hosting refugees to examine how it affects Turkish public support for intervention in Syria. Emphasizing the negative externalities of hosting refugees (i.e., their connection with militants) increases support for intervention among respondents who reside far from the Turkish-Syrian border. Closer to the border, this information reduces support for intervention in Syria. These findings highlight that potential vulnerability to the costs of intervention (proximity to the border) shapes public support for intervening. Turkish public opinion towards intervention is also correlated with partisan identity and respondents' daily exposure to refugees.

Professor Renos Papadopoulos

Professor, Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies, University of Essex

“Beyond trauma: psychosocial care for the involuntary dislocated persons”

In this very brief presentation I will attempt to emphasise the importance of epistemological vigilance in working in this field because, unwittingly, epistemological imprecision enables the importation of a host of unexamined premises. Such slackening of epistemological vigilance is the result of emotional and other pressures that are endemic in this work. Accordingly, images of trauma tend to overwhelm the workers' conceptualisation of all related phenomena, leading to privileging pathological dimensions that ignore the totality of persons. Therefore, it is essential to have a working framework that facilitates the consideration of the entire range of the affected persons' responses to adversity. Such a framework needs to include not only distress and suffering but also resilient functions as well as positive responses that are activated by the very exposure to adversity (i.e. 'adversity-activated development').

SESSION 4: What are the challenges and opportunities of immigration for social cohesion?

Professor David Voas

Professor of Social Science and Head of Social Science Department, Institute of Education, UCL

“An agent-based model of integration”

Some Western societies – the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – have been largely populated over the past couple of centuries by immigrants and their descendants. Others – notably in Europe – have historically been lands of emigration, but the direction of flow has reversed in recent decades. Understanding how new people integrate into highly developed societies is one of the most pressing challenges faced by researchers and policymakers. The consequences of failure, measured by inequality, division and conflict, are severe.

We have created an agent-based model that encompasses three distinct types of integration:

1) structural integration, characterized by equality of opportunity in education, employment, housing, civil rights and civic participation.

- 2) social integration, defined as interaction between members of different groups in ways that range from the superficial (brief impersonal encounters, for example in commercial transactions) to the deeply personal (close friendships and intimate relationships).
- 3) cultural integration, which involves shared norms, values, worldviews and cultural capital.

The model offers a remarkably fine-grained view of the individual life course, from family upbringing through education to employment, and shifts in attitudes and even religiosity produced by online as well as ‘real life’ contacts of several different kinds. With hundreds of thousands of agents interacting every week in simulated time, there is an opportunity to study integration with a breadth that surpasses that of any conventional investigation. One question is whether this complexity will overwhelm our ability to generalize.

Dr James Laurence

Research Associate, Cathie Marsh Institute for Social Research, University of Manchester

Pathways to Integration? A Quasi-Experimental Test of the Impact of a Nationwide Youth Citizenship Program on Inter-Group Attitudes and Cohesion amongst Majority/Minority UK Youth

The issue of increasing ethnic diversity in societies is becoming a key crucible of our time. Across public/political debates, concern grows that diversity may pose a threat to social solidarity, fomenting inter-group conflict (Ossewaarde 2014; Gallup, 2015). This is coupled with fears that immigration may be driving a polarisation in attitudes towards out-groups; findings from the recent European Social Survey suggest ‘Europeans [are] becoming more divided over immigration’ while geopolitical events, such as the UK vote to leave the EU, suggest deep-seated divisions in societal perceptions of immigration (Heath and Richards, 2016; Pew, 2016).

Sociology has drawn heavily on the concept of inter-group contact for building positive relations (Allport, 1954). This emphasis is mirrored in policy recommendations, such as governmental reviews stressing the importance of mixing to facilitate integration (Casey, 2017). However, obstacles exist which inhibit the efficacy of contact for improving inter-group relations. Firstly, not everyone has opportunities to experience contact e.g., in segregated schools/neighbourhoods (Laurence, 2015). Secondly, even within diverse environments, with opportunities for mixing, contact may not occur e.g., when processes of self-segregation operate (Clack et al., 2004). Thirdly, contact that does occur may not meet the necessary conditions for attitude-improvement and, when negatively-valenced, further harm out-group relations (Pettigrew, 2010). Fourthly, research suggests out-group attitudes largely form during formative-years, and remain predominantly stable and inert-to-experience through adulthood (Ford, 2008); contact amongst adults may thus be less effective than hoped. Such obstacles limit the potential of inter-group contact for building positive societal relations (Dixon et al., 2005). One possible solution to these obstacles is youth citizenship-building programs.

The aim of this paper is to test the efficacy of youth-civic programs for improving inter-group attitudes and building wider cohesion. To do so, it studies a nationally-implemented, UK government-sponsored youth citizenship scheme. The initiative combines team-building and service-learning/community-service elements, bringing young people together from different backgrounds for a six-week period. In theory, such a scheme may be a key means of building inter-group relations via inter-group contact, overcoming the aforementioned obstacles: (1) it provides opportunities for mixing amongst individuals who do not have regular opportunities; (2) this will occur in environments uncondusive to self-segregation, and (3) in environments conducive to positive contact (encouraging

co-operative, common-goal, equal status, authority-sanctioned mixing); and (4) it fosters contact during an ‘optimum attitude formation period’ for adolescents.

The key questions of this study are:

- Does participation lead to an improvement in inter-group attitudes? How far is any impact of participation on attitudes accounted for via processes of (positive/negative) inter-group contact?
- Is participation particularly beneficial for those who come on to the scheme with more negative attitudes to begin with? Or, do negative attitudes act as a barrier to the efficacy of the scheme? Similarly, is participation particularly beneficial for those with few experiences of positive inter-group contact before they come on the scheme?
- Does the efficacy of participation depend upon the types of communities from which adolescents come from? In particular, is the effect of participation greater amongst individuals living in more homogeneous areas, or from more disadvantaged areas? And, again, how far do differential rates of contact account for any ‘treatment-effect’ heterogeneity?

To test the impact of this youth scheme we take a quasi-experimental approach, employing a pre-test/post-test research design to analyse how far participation affects inter-group attitudes. A unique set of purpose-delivered surveys were conducted amongst two groups: a sample of scheme participants (the ‘treated’) and an ‘intention to treat’ control group (who expressed an interest in participating on the scheme but ultimately did not participate). Participants were surveyed prior to, and three months after, their involvement in the scheme, with the control group sampled over an identical time period. These surveys contained measures of inter-group attitudes (e.g. feeling thermometers), contact measures (positive and negative contact) and socio-demographic indicators, alongside a range of indicators of health, well-being, and social capital. Respondents were also linked to the communities they live in providing measures of community ethnic, social and economic composition (2011 UK Census). The analysis took a difference-in-difference approach, aiming to robustly testing the causal effects of participation relative to the control-groups.

The results demonstrate that participation in this national youth-citizenship scheme leads to a significant improvement in inter-group attitudes. Participation also leads to an increase in rates of positive inter-group contact, while it does not lead to an increase in rates of negative inter-group contact (in spite of greater opportunities for this). Mediation analysis shows that around 50% of this improvement in inter-ethnic attitudes can be accounted for by increasing rates of positive contact. The analysis of heterogeneity in the impact of participation demonstrates significantly stronger effects amongst adolescents who had worse inter-group attitudes and lower positive inter-group contact before participation. We also observe that adolescents from more homogeneous or disadvantaged communities experienced stronger positive effects of participation. This is partially accounted for by larger increases in rates of positive contact amongst this group.

These results have important substantive implications. Firstly, they provide robust causal evidence that such youth social mixing schemes can improve inter-group attitudes, as well as an understanding of why. Secondly, they provide evidence about how the efficacy of such schemes can be improved via increasing the diversity of the teams in which participants are placed. Thirdly, they also highlight how such schemes may be able to overcome obstacles to generating positive inter-group relations; in particular, where persistent segregation may limit contact and engender perceptions of threat. These results also have critical implications for the sociological study of contact and diversity. Prior research has largely been experimental (limiting generalisability) while real-world studies have largely applied cross-sectional data (hampered by issues of endogeneity). This quasi-experimental approach makes a

strong claim that more diverse environments can foster greater positive contact and such contact can generate positive out-group attitudes. Collectively, these findings provide strong sociological evidence for guidance in helping to manage inter-group tensions and reduce inter-ethnic inequalities, in both the short- and long-term.

Prof. Dr. Merlin Schaeffer

Professor, Institute of Sociology and Social Psychology, University of Cologne

“The Halo-Effect in Homogeneous Neighborhoods. Does the Ethnic Diversity of Bordering Neighborhoods increase Xenophobia?”

Are people who live in homogenous neighborhoods that border ethnically diverse neighborhoods (or are even encircled by them) more xenophobic? This socio-spatial constellation, which is known as the ‘halo effect’ hypothesis, synthesizes two prominent explanations of xenophobia: as the direct neighborhood offers little opportunities for positive intergroup contact, the neighboring ethnically diverse neighborhoods can instill feelings of competition and group threat, which eventually result in xenophobia. Beyond classic hypotheses about the contextual effects of population shares, this perspective emphasizes the importance of neighborhoods’ local embeddedness. Yet, our analyses based on geo-coded ALLBUS 2014 data neither provide support for the halo effect hypotheses among the general population nor among xenophobia-minded subpopulations. Nevertheless, our study makes a case for the importance of considering neighborhoods local embeddedness and demonstrates the methodological characteristics and challenges of such a spatial analysis of the geocoded ALLBUS data. We conclude by discussing plausible reasons why our results deviate from earlier American and European studies.

Dr Alita Nandi

Research Fellow, Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Essex

&

Dr Renee Luthra

Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Essex

“Ethnic and racial harassment, mental health and resilience factors: new evidence from England”

In this paper, using data from Understanding Society over the period 2009-2014, we find that, after controlling for socio-economic factors, ethnic minorities who report experiencing ethnic and racial harassment (ERH) report worse mental health than those who do not. While UK born ethnic minorities report poorer mental health as compared to their first generation counterparts, there was no statistically significant difference across generations in the association between ERH and mental health. Next we examined a vast array of potential resilience factors, that is, factors that could be protective against the mental health cost of ERH. Some of these such as proportion co-ethnic in residential neighbourhoods, ethnic identity, religiosity and co-ethnic friendship networks were measures of ethnic attachment, others were general resilience factors such as number of close friends and personality traits. We found that ethnic minorities living in areas with a higher proportion of co-ethnics, higher frequency of visiting places of worship (religiosity), stronger ethnic identity, more number of friends and higher levels of Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness reported better mental health. However, except for number of close friends, none of the other factors qualified as resilience factors.