

## The Humanities and Social Sciences Tackling the UK's International Challenges 2019

### List of Award-Holders

**Reference:** IC4/100133

**PI:** Dr Joanna Szostek, University of Glasgow

**Value:** £48,688.20

**Title:** Peripheral Audiences and State Security: a Study of Risks and Benefits Associated with Media Use Among Border Populations in Ukraine

**Abstract:** States rely on domestic mass media to cultivate sentiments of national belonging among citizens. If minorities engage less with domestic media than with foreign or transnational alternatives, this can prompt concern about societal cohesion and unwarranted foreign influence. Such concern is evident in Ukraine, where Russian influence on minorities is regarded as a particularly significant security threat. This project will investigate media use among audiences in Ukrainian border regions which are strategically important, yet not often studied: Zakarpattia in the west, Odesa region in the south and Sumy region in the east. Through structured, focused comparison, the project aims to explain (1) why levels of engagement with local, national and foreign/transnational media vary within and across 'peripheral' regions; and (2) how media use among 'peripheral' audiences can undermine and/or benefit state security, broadly defined.

**Reference:** IC4/100121

**PI:** Dr Paul Richardson, University of Birmingham

**Value:** £49,847.50

**Title:** Rescaling the Border: Nationalism and Civilisationalism in Central and Eastern Europe

**Abstract:** Europe is a mosaic of cultures, histories, languages and identities. However, in recent years, homogenising, singular, civilisationist narratives, which inscribe people and places with essentialised qualities reaching beyond national borders, have increasingly been mobilised by populist politicians. This project will explore the changing role of borders in civilisationist tropes, and the ways in which familiar boundaries and territories are undergoing discursive and material shifts related to demarcating wider meta-regions and broader cultural-religious divides, often in opposition to liberal democratic ideas and ideals. The research will expand on existing understandings of civilisationism by foregrounding tensions between variegated, plural and heterogeneous borderscapes and their representation as binary choices between competing civilisationist realms. Through interviews and focus groups with local actors in Kharkiv (Ukraine), Adjara (Georgia) and the Székelyföld (Romania), the project will trace a rescaling and reimagining of borders along civilisationist lines, and a multiscalar struggle for identity and belonging in Europe's borderlands.

**Reference:** IC4/100184

**PI:** Professor David Herd, University of Kent

**Value:** £49,026

**Title:** Hostile Environments: Policies, Stories, Responses

**Abstract:** The purpose of this project is to investigate the structures and effects of different hostile environments faced by people who have been displaced and are seeking asylum. Focusing on the UK, Italy, Canada and the USA, the research will explore three key questions: How is the environment rendered hostile? What is the effect of that hostility on individuals? What work is being done by civil society to counter or ameliorate the hostility and its effects? In addressing these questions, the project will consider the importance of individual stories in understandings of hostile environments: how such stories are systematically occluded and how the sharing of stories enables change. By drawing out

similarities and differences across jurisdictions, this research will determine the degree to which hostile environments constitute a continuous international space. Through its comparative approach, it will arrive at urgently needed proposals for changes in national and international asylum practice.

**Reference:** IC4/100235

**PI:** Dr Rachel Rich, Leeds Beckett University

**Value:** £44,733

**Title:** European Cuisine and British Identity in the Age of Nationalism, 1760-1837

**Abstract:** Today's recurrent nationalism makes it more important than ever to understand processes of cultural exchange and transnational identities. This project explores the contradiction between an apparent ambivalence towards Europe and a fervour for continental flavour through a consideration of British diets and the adoption of European fare during the first age of nationalism (1760-1837). Drawing on royal menus of two ethnically German kings (George III & IV), alongside middle-class recipe books from the Regency period, this project centres food within debates about Britishness and European identity. In the process, it challenges a historiography that focuses on Britain's wars with France and disdain for Catholicism as the root of British identity, and instead demonstrates the centrality of food in the invention of national identities on both sides of the Channel. This project is a response to current debates, showing that cultural practices surrounding food have long rooted Britain firmly within Europe.

**Reference:** IC4/100285

**PI:** Professor Michael Collyer, University of Sussex

**Value:** £49,978

**Title:** Borders, Global Governance and the Refugee, 1947-51

**Abstract:** Global governance is currently facing an unprecedented crisis. In an era of rising populism, tensions between the nation-state and internationalism are heightened as never before, chiefly over refugees' cross-border movement. In response, the UK and the UN are both seeking to reform existing refugee policy. By unpacking the international refugee regime's historical origins, this project will reframe the contemporary discourse to directly inform policy-making. It will examine how today's refugee regime was the product of a particular historical moment after the Second World War, which established a system of global governance for managing forced migration, and set the stage for internationalist tensions with the nation-state. The UK was central to this process, as two of the era's biggest refugee crises occurred following its decolonisation of India in 1947 and Palestine in 1948. This interdisciplinary research will thus comparatively analyse the past in order to enhance understandings in the present.

**Reference:** IC4/100117

**PI:** Dr Churnjeet Mahn, University of Strathclyde

**Value:** £37,559

**Title:** Cross-Border Queers: the Story of South Asian Migrants in the UK

**Abstract:** This project will address the missing history of queer South Asian migration to the UK. The 1960s marked the beginning of an organised LGBTQ civil rights movement in the UK, as well as larger waves of migration to the UK, with those of South Asian descent arriving from India, Pakistan, Kenya and Uganda. However, there is little research on queer South Asians who arrived in the UK and how their experiences of racism, homophobia and their transnational connections in South Asia, shaped their (inter)national experience of being queer.

**Reference:** IC4/100160

**PI:** Professor Mary Bosworth, University of Oxford

**Value:** £49,043

**Title:** Privatising Border Control and Sovereign Power

**Abstract:** Border control is one of the central issues of our time. For many years, the UK government has tried to harden the border, making it difficult for those without permission to enter, and easier to expel those who are no longer considered welcome. In this work, the state has relied extensively on the private sector to build and operate immigration detention centres, and to facilitate deportation and administrative removal. This project will subject such practices to scrutiny, through the first academic study of the 'escort staff' who transport and remove detainees. Although the border, legally and symbolically, is usually considered to be an articulation of state power and national identity, in practice, border control depends on the private sector. In focusing on this paradox, this project will consider the implications of the involvement of the private sector for our understanding of sovereign power and citizenship.

**Reference:** IC4/100182

**PI:** Professor Enda McCaffrey, Nottingham Trent University

**Value:** £21,852.18

**Title:** The Irish Border Challenge: from Backstop to Border Poll

**Abstract:** The Irish border presents a formidable international challenge to securing UK parliamentary support for the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union. Brexit has intensified the challenge for a border poll on both sides of the Irish border. The challenge is twofold. Firstly, why and at what point does the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland make the judgement to declare a border poll? Secondly, by agreeing to a border poll in the Good Friday Agreement (1998), the UK government acknowledges that the 'Irish border' is a dynamic, temporal phenomenon subject to the forces of political and demographic change. What steps therefore is the UK government taking to prepare for a border poll? This project explores levels of preparedness for these challenges at government and policy levels, and at social, cultural and human levels, with a particular focus on daily life and citizenship.

**Reference:** IC4/100159

**PI:** Dr Laura Taylor, Queen's University Belfast

**Value:** £49,993

**Title:** Generation Peace: Children, Conflict and Competing Identities in Europe

**Abstract:** Europe has always faced the challenge of identity. In the European Union's (EU) formation, new mechanisms provided shared symbols and meaning for citizens, in large part, to promote peace in the region. Becoming part of the EU, and gaining access to those shared symbols, motivates many governments. This research investigates when and how children from conflict-affected societies learn about this shared European identity. The project will explore how perceived intergroup conflict relates to the saliency of a European identity, compared to national and ethnic identities, and the implications of these identities, among majority/minority children in divided societies (Croatia, Kosovo, Northern Ireland, and Republic of North Macedonia). These cases represent a range of relations with the EU, from leaving to wanting to join. Understanding how a generation born into peace understands past conflicts, and turns to a European identity (or not), has implications for the future of the European project.

**Reference:** IC4/100169

**PI:** Dr Mark Griffiths, Newcastle University

**Value:** £44,904

**Title:** The Effects of Israel's Visa Restrictions in Palestine on Family, Social and Political Life

**Abstract:** Israel controls all border entry points into the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) and thus determines the legal status of the international citizens (including hundreds of UK/EU nationals) who live and work in Palestine. Many of them work in sectors for which the current Israeli government is restricting visitor and residency visas, including: NGOs, human rights organisations, academia, journalism and development agencies. Preliminary

research has indicated that this recent tightening of visa restrictions has increased the threat of deportation and anxieties around denied (re)entry and that this affects people's roles both at home and at work. The personal and political lives of Palestinians connected to those roles are also affected by the prospect of losing family, collaborators and colleagues. The objective of this research is thus to examine the effects of visa precarity in Palestine on family, social and political life.

**Reference:** IC4/100173

**PI:** Dr Alexandra Hall, University of York

**Value:** £47,987.75

**Title:** Sea Ports and Security: the Politics of the Minor Border

**Abstract:** At the UK's sea borders, pressing global security challenges - trafficking, migration, smuggling, even terrorism - become manifested as everyday concerns. As major points of contact with 'the international', UK ports, marinas and coastlines have always been places of circulation and flow, but also places of risk and vulnerability. At this critical national juncture, there is a pressing need to understand the contemporary manifestation of these tensions: resolving them is vital to the UK's future internal relations, European identity and international standing. While international marine security and global logistics have been the focus of burgeoning interdisciplinary debate - and while Europe's southern sea borders have been heavily scrutinised - very little is known about how circulation and security are reconciled within 'minor' northern European sea borders. This project will address this gap by investigating the UK sea port as a problem of security and a contested matter of identity.

**Reference:** IC4/100198

**PI:** Dr Alan Renwick, University College London

**Value:** £49,875.84

**Title:** Deciding on Borders: Preparing for a Northern Ireland Border Poll

**Abstract:** There is a high chance that a referendum on the status of Northern Ireland - a so-called 'border poll' - will take place at some point in the coming years. Indeed, the Good Friday Agreement requires such a vote in some circumstances. But nowhere has the process involved been worked out - despite the fact that how any such referendum is conducted and how it fits into broader decision-making processes could be enormously consequential. This project will bring together leading political scientists and legal scholars based in Belfast, Dublin and London to examine these issues in detail, drawing on existing expertise, close engagement with policy-makers and relevant international research.

**Reference:** IC4/100216

**PI:** Dr Danica Summerlin, University of Sheffield

**Value:** £44,570

**Title:** Jurisdiction, Legal Community, and Political Discourse in Medieval Europe, 1050-1250

**Abstract:** The central Middle Ages (1050-1250) has been traditionally understood as a transformative period for European legal history, with the 're-discovery' of Roman law providing rulers with new intellectual tools to define their power and authority. This has led to two narratives: the growth of papal and imperial claims to pan-European legal supremacy and the evolution of distinct bodies of national law which developed in conflict with one another. However, recent research is demonstrating that, instead of a Europe of competing jurisdictional blocks delineated through clear boundaries, these legal traditions were intellectually and socially interdependent, used by actors differently according to their immediate needs. Through the lens of 'multi-legalism', adopted from legal studies and international relations, this research project reconsiders the history of medieval law 1050-1250 and aims to contribute to a public discourse which invokes the medieval legal past in contemporary discussions on the relationship between national and transnational jurisdictions.

**Reference:** IC4/100223

**PI:** Professor Paul Nugent, University of Edinburgh

**Value:** £49,815.80

**Title:** Border Festivals, Partitioned Communities and Practical Governance in West Africa

**Abstract:** Across Africa, official pledges to mitigate the inconvenience associated with international borders hardly squares with the daily realities that populations confront. Despite the innumerable obstacles, border regions represent important sites of regional connectivity, as is apparent from flows between markets. This project focuses on border festivals that similarly connect divided populations as well as linking borders to other centres. It deploys two sets of festivals on the Ghana/Togo and Cameroun/Chad borders to investigate the manner in which they articulate with other cycles (including rotating markets), embody a process of reflection on historical and cultural linkages, and afford an opportunity for participants to engage with state functionaries. As moments of exception, festivals create a stage on which borderlanders can make their voices heard in ways that are not normally possible.

**Reference:** IC4/100280

**PI:** Dr Olga Onuch, University of Manchester

**Value:** £49,252.50

**Title:** Identity and Borders in Flux: the Case of Ukraine

**Abstract:** Recent elections have heightened fears that populist discourse is driving ethnonationalism across Europe. One recent European election (in Ukraine) has bucked this trend. Although incumbent Poroshenko followed an ethnonationalist playbook (emphasising ethnic, linguistic and patriotic tropes), he lost dramatically to a Russian-speaking comedian (Zelensky) who de-emphasised identity. This project revisits the question of whether ethnonational identity is essentially immutable once formed (Horowitz 1985) or whether it remains highly situational and politically plastic even in countries polarised along identity lines (Brubaker 2004; Hale 2004). The project proposes innovative methods to better untangle the complex relationship between identities, actors interested in shaping them, and political outcomes.