



Justice and equality

Fairness, inclusivity, equality and welfare are policy fields where our research sets the political agenda. Justice and equality define the University of York's values and our approach to meeting the grand social challenges of our time at national and international level. They are also essential preconditions for the freedom of thought and expression that allows excellent research to flourish in all disciplines. Research within the theme spans the development and critique of theories of equality and social justice to influencing change in laws, regulation, policy, practice and public debate. Inequalities and injustices in education, employment, health, housing, the legal and justice systems, and the environment are just a few of our research strengths. We are concerned with both horizontal inequalities, such as those related to gender, ethnicity, migration, age or disability, and the vertical inequalities of wealth and income, as well as the intersections between them.

Our research excellence

The UK Research Excellence Framework 2014 confirmed the international excellence of our research. For example, the Department of Sociology was ranked first in the UK for research quality and research impact.

York's research in social policy has been awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education. We lead a multi-million-pound Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) project looking at the effects of welfare sanctions and support on people's lives.

Our Department of Politics has attracted funding from the Leverhulme Trust, including a Research Leadership award on rethinking civil society, a Research Fellowship on justice, justification and monetary policy, and an Early Career Fellowship on political economy.



[The Protective Fellowship Scheme in our Centre for Applied Human Rights] offers a visionary approach to protecting and supporting individuals who risk their lives for the protection of human rights... their unique contribution... puts the University at the cutting-edge of global policy-making on human rights."

James Savage, Human Rights Defenders Programme Director, Amnesty International UK



Case study

Workplace diversity

In recent years, the British workplace has become more diverse. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are an important part of this diversity. Led by Dr Anna Einarsdottir, our research into LGBT+ employee networks within the National Health Service (NHS) crosses interdisciplinary boundaries (Management, Economics, Social Policy) and involves extensive collaboration with non-academic partners including NHS Employers, Stonewall, the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion, and a theatre production team. These partnerships have been developing since 2011 and are designing and delivering research of public value in collaboration with relevant stakeholders. The research is deepening our understanding of how LGBT+ employee networks function. It explores how networks can be mobilised as drivers for inclusive work environments, and how they advance equal opportunities, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination

Einarsdottir, A., Mumford, K. and Birks, Y., LGBT employee networks within the NHS. ESRC project ref: ES/N019334/1.



Case study **The reality of EU welfare rights**

Dr Charlotte O'Brien combines her role as an academic in York Law School with practice in Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB). The recipient of a prestigious ESRC Future Research Leaders award, Dr O'Brien set up a specialist advice and advocacy service on the complex subject of EU welfare law as part of her ground-breaking EU human rights project. Taking on cases and consulting around the country, discovering first-hand how EU welfare rights work in practice, the research

is questioning the meaning and reality of laws related to free movement, discrimination, UK welfare and social justice. As well as producing a toolkit for CAB advisers, Dr O'Brien has been appointed to a European Commission network and has submitted evidence to the UK Social Security Advisory Committee.

O'Brien C. R. (2016). "Hand-to-mouth" citizenship: decision time for the UK Supreme Court on the substance of Zambrano rights, EU citizenship and equal treatment. *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, 38(2), 228-245

Partnerships and impact

Researchers at York work in partnerships at international, national and local levels to foster justice and equality.

- Our International Development Network works with partners from NGOs, governments, industry, funding bodies, universities and research institutions globally and can build multi-stakeholder networks to secure funding from sources such as the Global Challenges Research Fund.
- York experts advised UNICEF on their series of reports on child wellbeing and conducted research in their Peace-building, Advocacy and Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts programme.
- York research informed amendments to the UK Policing and Crime Bill 2016, which grants posthumous pardons to predominantly gay and bisexual men convicted of consensual sex with other men.
- The C and J B Morrell Trust supports our research on toleration.
- York health economists provide healthcare equity indicators so the National Health Service can monitor how services affect health inequalities.
- With the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust and City of York Council, our researchers studied low-paid workers and the implementation of the Living Wage by local employers.

We welcome new partnerships and collaborations and look forward to hearing from you.

Following a briefing on inequality by an International Monetary Fund (IMF) official which referred to evidence from the best-selling book *The Spirit Level*, written by University of York academics Professor Kate Pickett and Professor Richard Wilkinson:



Now all of us have a better understanding that a more equal distribution of income allows for more economic stability, more sustained economic growth, and healthier societies with stronger bonds of cohesion and trust."

Christine Lagarde, Managing Director, IMF, World Economic Forum, Davos, 2013.

For more information on the University of York's interdisciplinary research themes see www.york.ac.uk/research

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