

Social sciences

Research from the College of Social Sciences at the University of Birmingham has regional, national and global importance, setting the agenda for government, business and civil society.

A recent economic report produced by the College's **Centre for Urban and Regional Studies** (<http://www.curs.bham.ac.uk>) calculated that University of Birmingham activities make a startling contribution of £662 million to the city of Birmingham and £779 million to the entire West Midlands region.



With an active research culture, including some 20 research centres and participation in a range of externally funded research projects, the College contributes research around six key themes:

- Global communities and knowledge societies
- Governance: making collective choices
- Children and families: well-being of new generations
- Security: living lives free from fear
- Development and sustainability: improving people's lives in transitional and developing countries
- Europe: European society, economy and governance

The College is committed to spanning the divide between academia and practice, and to applying its research through teaching, publications, consultancy and policy advice.

Training

The University offers a range of courses on Social Policy including undergraduate, postgraduate taught and research programmes, as well as continuing professional and management development opportunities in the area of Social Policy.



Case studies

Dialogue: A new approach to tackling domestic terrorism

[Open all sections](#)

Most counter-terrorism strategies involve the use of intelligence derived from 'hard' policing methods like the use of informants and surveillance.

Dr Basia Spalet and Dr Salwa Ed-Awa from the College of Social Sciences have found that community policing methods - based on dialogue, support and trust - are significantly changing this traditional approach.

This research, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and recently presented at a House of Commons seminar, has highlighted the importance of understanding religious knowledge when designing counter terrorism policy. Following major reports and continuing dialogue with national government and local police forces, this research will have direct implications on policy and practice at home and abroad.

NHS West Midlands

The Health Services Management Centre at the University of Birmingham designed and delivered a commissioning development programme for senior managers and clinicians from the 12 Birmingham and Black Country Primary Care Trusts.

The objectives for the programme were co-produced with participants during plenary days. Subsequent programme delivery included skills workshops with input from national and international subject experts; facilitation of group-based case study work on local commissioning challenges; setting and reviewing individual development objectives; and production of web-based 'hot-topic' guides.

A second phase of the programme was commissioned by the new Strategic Health Authority (NHS West Midlands) and was re-commissioned in 2008.

Warlords threaten state building in Africa

The enduring presence of warlords in Africa, and the influence of their international supporters threaten the process of state-building in the region, according to research from the College of Social Sciences at the University of Birmingham.

Dr Danielle Beswick, from the College's International Development Department, analysed data on warlords in Congo, focusing in particular on the eastern Kivu provinces which borders Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi.

Her findings reveal that foreign agencies have been spending huge amounts of money on reconstructing the Congolese state, but they are yet to develop strategies which can incorporate or effectively challenge warlords and their supporters. She suggests that international agencies should adopt a strategy that emphasises regional and local governance rather than reinforcing a central government which, historically, has seemed unable to provide basic security, much less development, in border regions.