

About superdiversity



The social landscape of Britain and other countries of immigration have been transformed in the past two decades. The arrival of migrants from many different countries, combined with longer established minority populations, has resulted in an unprecedented variety of cultures, identities, faiths, languages, and immigration statuses.

These new patterns have emerged from greater speed, scale and spread of diversity than ever before. Furthermore superdiverse populations tend to change rapidly and are often fragmented rather than clustered in geographical locations. All these factors combine meaning that superdiversity presents unparalleled challenges and opportunities to policymakers and practitioners, as well as to businesses, communities and migrants.

Birmingham, as one of the UK's most diverse, and soon to be one of several so-called minority/majority cities, exemplifies the changes associated with the emergence of superdiversity. Superdiversity is also an issue high on the European Union's agenda, in relation to internal movement of labour as well as questions about Europe's borders and further enlargement. And there are global dimensions as a result of increased opportunities for legal and illegal migration, the attractiveness of Europe, the UK and Birmingham to refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants, especially from parts of the world undergoing civil war or facing environmental degradation.

Much of Europe and the developed world have already become superdiverse. Superdiversity is here to stay, and the challenges run on into the future – in many policy fields, including education, security, housing, employment, immigration status, culture and heritage. The political context is also changing, with national and ethnic identity becoming a more visible symbol for mobilisation, both on the right of the political spectrum and in immigrant communities. This opens up questions about whether the way in which politics and government has been conducted can adapt to these new dimensions.

The Institute for Research into Superdiversity seeks to answer some of the critical questions around superdiversity and to promote constructive discourse providing a space where academics, communities, policymakers, politicians and practitioners can work together to explore issues of profound importance to our cultures, societies and economies.

Further information

For more information about IRiS's activities and how you can get involved contact IRiS Manager Ann Bolstridge a.bolstridge@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:a.bolstridge@bham.ac.uk>) or Director [Professor Jenny Phillimore](http://staff/profiles/social-policy/phillimore-jenny.aspx) ([/staff/profiles/social-policy/phillimore-jenny.aspx](http://staff/profiles/social-policy/phillimore-jenny.aspx)).