IRiS Newsletter

November 2013

This e-newsletter reflects back on some of the activities and projects staff in the Institute for Research into Superdiversity at the University of Birmingham has been involved in our first year of establishment. To find out more about our activities and keep up to date with our news, events and research findings visit our website http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/iris or follow us on Twitter @IRiS_Birmingham.

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NEWS ON IRIS RESEARCH PROJECTS

Translation and Translanguaging (AHRC)

A consortium led Professors Angela Creese and Adrian Blackledge (MOSAIC and IRIS), supported by several other IRIS academics, has been awarded a Large Grant as part of the AHRC Translating Cultures theme. The 4-year research project, Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities will develop new understandings of multilingual interaction in cities in the UK, and communicate these to policymakers and communities locally, nationally, and internationally. Researchers will focus on multilingual interactions between people in contexts of business, legal advice, community sport, and libraries and museums. Analysis will provide detailed evidence of how people communicate across languages and cultures.

Enterprise and Diversity (ERC)

Professor Kiran Trehan, IRIS Policy, Practice and Foresight workstream leader and Professor Monder Ram are Co-leading the Economics Research Councils (ERC’s) work on diversity and enterprise through the Enterprise and Diversity Alliance (EDA). The EDA is a flagship knowledge exchange initiative and will assist the ERC in its aim to develop productive relationships between banks and
minority entrepreneurs. The EDA’s work demonstrates the practical impact social science research can have on a wide range of communities of practice. It has attracted interest from national policy makers, the corporate sector, professional associations as well as locally embedded community groups. The EDA’s programme of work builds on the productive links with IRIS promoting engaged scholarship on superdiversity and enterprise and exploiting already strong linkages with our international partners on migration and entrepreneurship.

The role of social capital in refugee integration (Nuffield Foundation)

This project, undertaken in collaboration with the University of Cardiff, combines a re-analysis of the Survey of New Refugees, with a new e-survey examining and comparing the integration priorities of refugees and those who work with them. Interim findings show that refugees who are socially connected to family and friends are more likely to be employed and report good general health than those who have no networks or who are connected to associations or agencies such as Jobcentre Plus. Women are more likely to access social capital via families while men use friends and religious connections. For more information, look at the first report from the study http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/iris/2013/nuffield-refugees-integration-research-report.pdf. More findings released soon.

KING: Knowledge for Integration Governance (European Integration Fund)

IRiS are partnering with Universities, municipalities and think tanks in Italy, Belgium, Germany and Netherlands in a project let by the ISMU Foundation developing ideas to inform post-Stockholm EU Integration policy. Each partner will identify the state of knowledge in integration from a unique disciplinary perspective. IRiS will focus on local and experiential dimensions of integration looking specifically at migrants’ access to social welfare and use of social networks. IRiS will also identify good practice in local integration initiatives. Findings to be presented at Metropolis 2014, Milan.

Financial advice and retirement planning in an age of superdiversity (EREBUS)

The change in the age profile of migrants arriving in the UK is one of the key variables of superdiversity. The UK Census shows 0.61% of those arriving in the UK between 2001 and 2011 were over 45 years of age equating to 340,362 people many of whom will reach retirement age in the next 10-20 years. There is a gap in knowledge about these recently arrived elderly migrants, in particular around their asset accumulation strategies and retirement plans. Focusing on African migrants the study finds that knowledge about the financial services industry is extremely low. Financial advisers located in superdiverse areas had minimal experience of working with new migrants, no knowledge about their financial service needs and no idea how to reach out to them. For full findings and recommendations see http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/social-policy/departments/applied-social-studies/research/projects/2013/retirement-planning.aspx or contact project leader Dr Lisa Goodson l.j.goodson@bham.ac.uk.

Health and well-being in the era of superdiversity (British Academy/Leverhulme)

The emergence of superdiversity has created challenges of how we identify, understand and respond to the health needs of all members of society. We lack knowledge about the beliefs, experiences and behaviours of recently arrived migrants regarding health and illness and how these shape the ways they seek help. Working with a team of Community Researchers drawn from different communities in Birmingham, we will undertake oral history informed interviews to explore health beliefs and values, and how they are shaped through lived experiences from childhood through to migration and settlement. We anticipate that the findings will help us to better understand the health needs of people living in a superdiverse area. For further details contact Dr Sabi Redwood s.redwood@bham.ac.uk.
Social Anchoring in Superdiverse Transnational Social Spaces (FP7)

Dr Aleksandra Kazlowska has joined IRiS for two years as a Marie Curie Intra-European Fellow working with Professor Jenny Phillimore on the Social Anchoring in Superdiverse Transnational Social Spaces project. Kazlowska will examine the role of identity for immigrant adaptation and ways in which migrants establish footholds in their life developing a theoretical and methodological framework that enables identification of the source(s) of socio-psychological stability of individuals. Using the new concept of “social anchoring” Kazlowska will undertake research with Polish immigrants in the UK and Ukrainian immigrants in Poland. The theory of social anchoring will offer a new approach to migration studies and provides an opportunity to combine sociological and psychological perspectives as well as relate individuals to a contemporary, increasingly superdiverse and mobile society. Contact GrzmalA@adf.bham.ac.uk.

Causes and experiences of poverty among migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the UK: Reviews of evidence (Joseph Rowntree Foundation)

As part of a series of evidence and policy reviews commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on the multiple dimensions and manifestations of poverty in contemporary Britain, IRiS has been commissioned two reviews exploring, respectively, the link between poverty and refugees and asylum seekers in the United Kingdom (led by Dr Nando Sigona) recognising that asylum seekers and refugees sit at the cross-roads of intersecting policy agendas in the UK and often have a range of complex support needs which correspond to a range of pathways into poverty; and the links between immigration and poverty and the poverty experienced by UK economic migrants, carried out by Professor Jenny Phillimore in collaboration with colleagues at Keele University and Sheffield Hallam University.

ACTIVITIES

The Doctoral Researcher Diversity Network (DRDN)

DRDN was established with support from the Alumni Impact Fund to provide a platform for PhD students interested in diversity to network, learn and collaborate. Following initial networking events attended by over 50 DRs a wide range of activities have taken place including masterclasses on publishing, impact and social media, recordings of three minute theses and a network website hosted on the IRiS website. Two further events are planned before the end of 2013: Making a Difference in Diversity (19 November) and The Future of Diversity Research (4 December). Further details can be found on the DRDN website or from the DRDN lead academic Ricky Joseph r.joseph@bham.ac.uk

Visitors

IRiS has welcomed a number of visitors from overseas. These include the Mayor of Frankfurt and Vice Principal of Goethe University, Deborah Warr from the University of Melbourne, Wally Karnilowicz from the University of Victoria and Paolo Boccagni from the University of Trento. Visiting Fellows include Barbara Teifenbacher from the University of Vienna who is undertaking research about Roma communities and Gail Walters who is exploring how social care services can be redesigned in light of the emergence of superdiversity. Visiting fellows are joining us from Spain, Germany and Netherlands in the next few months and will be focusing on intercultural communication, refugee integration and social cohesion. More details will follow on our website
NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM IRiS STAFF

There is a comprehensive list of our publications on the website. Here are a few highlights from the past 12 months.

*Discourses on Religious Diversity: Explorations in an Urban Ecology* by Professor Martin Stringer (Ashgate). This book, which is based in Birmingham, explores the series of discourses around religion and religious diversity that are held by ordinary members of the city. Drawing on examples from UK, Europe and the US, Stringer offers some practical suggestions for ways in which discourses of religious diversity can be managed in the future. Further details here: [www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781472411754](http://www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781472411754)


*Ethnography, diversity and the urban space*, special issue of *Identities. Global Studies in Power and Culture* co-edited by Dr Nando Sigona (Volume 20, Issue 4). The issue brings together an introductory essay by Mette Berg and Sigona on the ‘death’ of multiculturalism and uses and abuses of ‘diversity’, seven ethnographic articles, and an epilogue that use ‘diversity’ to gauge and examine processes of everyday intercultural encounters and practices across European countries.

PAST EVENTS

**Superdiversity: the new reality**

IRiS held its official launch at the City Hall in Birmingham, in conjunction with Birmingham City Council. Birmingham City Council’s Cabinet Leader for Social Cohesion and Equalities, Councillor John Cotton introduced IRiS’s workstream leaders to a packed building. Following a keynote by IRiS’s Director which outlined the need for an institute researching superdiversity and used the example of Birmingham to explore the implications of superdiversity for urban areas IRiS workstream leaders briefly examined the key issues that they planned to focus on in their subject areas. Over 150 delegates joined workshop discussions and helped IRiS academics to explore a range of superdiversity related questions. PowerPoint slides from the event can be found here: [http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/superdiversity-institute/events/Event-reports/iris-launch.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/superdiversity-institute/events/Event-reports/iris-launch.aspx)

**The EU Accession Migration: Taking stock and looking forward**

The conference was hosted by the Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRIS) at the University of Birmingham in partnership with West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership, the Migrants Rights Network and the (Migrants in Rural Areas) MIRA Project. The conference provided an opportunity to reflect on what we have learnt in the nine years since Accession and to examine the impacts of Accession migration on the local economy, the public sector, local communities and community cohesion and consider the anticipated effects of Romania and Bulgaria gaining full access to UK’s labour market in January 2014. The post conference report by IRIS’s Dr Lisa Goodson is available here: [http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/iris/2013/eu-accession-migration-final-conference-report.pdf](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/iris/2013/eu-accession-migration-final-conference-report.pdf)
Sexual abuse of children: Representations of Class, Race, Faith and Gender

This event explored the racialised, private and public discourses around the sexual ‘street grooming’ cases highlighted in various cities such as Oxford and Rochdale and sexual abuse perpetrated by high profile figures including Jimmy Saville, and Stuart Hall. The workshop brought people together from a range academic, policy and practice backgrounds to discuss the implications of the debates for their work. Dr Ricky Joseph and Dr Surinder Guru are leading on special issue for a prominent academic journal.

IRiS and Harvard Graduate School of Education conference series on Immigration status, rights and belonging

Dr Nando Sigona gave a keynote address on undocumented children in the UK at the international symposium on ‘Illegality, youth, and belonging’ held at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge MA October 2013. The symposium explored the confusing and contradictory experiences of belonging and illegality that frame the everyday lives of undocumented immigrant youth. The Harvard symposium is the second in an event series on ‘Legal status, rights and belonging’ co-convened by Dr Sigona and Dr Roberto G. Gonzales (Harvard), in collaboration with colleagues at the University of Oxford.

Other events

Other events have included workshops and seminars on refugee integration, social networks and social mobility, social work and superdiversity, researching multilingualism, the census, conversation about religion and diversity and migrant maternity. Future events are planned exploring issues around the Roma, intercultural communication, social care and complexity, migration and citizenship, health and superdiversity, superdiversity, language and culture and refugee integration. Follow us on Twitter or join our mailing list (a.bolstridge@bham.ac.uk) to keep updated.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Call for Papers - Superdiversity: theory, method and practice in an era of change 23/24 June 2014

IRiS are organising the first international, interdisciplinary conference on superdiversity. The conference will feature invited lectures, academic panels, workshops and roundtables on topics at the forefront of the superdiversity research agenda. The aim of the conference is to map the state-of-the-art knowledge about superdiversity and to draw an agenda for future research in the field. We invite academics, including doctoral researchers from sociology, law, social policy, geography, psychology, economics, medicine, demography, anthropology, development studies and other disciplines, and policy makers and practitioners with an interest in superdiversity, to submit papers, workshop proposals or posters on any aspect related to superdiversity.

Speakers will include Professor Jan Blommaert, Babylon Centre for the Study of Superdiversity, University of Tilberg, The Netherlands; Professor Gill Valentine, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Sheffield, UK; Professor James Nazroo, CODE, University of Manchester, UK; Professor Steven Vertovec, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Germany. Link to call for papers is http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/iris/2013/CfP-IRiS-Sept-2013.pdf
The Future of Diversity Research: Roundtable

The roundtable will be held on December 4th and will draw on the expertise of leading thinkers to explore the future directions, challenges and opportunities in diversity research. The key questions the panellists will be addressing are: What paths might diversity research take in the next decade? How might these impact on different disciplines? What challenges and opportunities might lie ahead for diversity researchers? How can diversity research engage with different academic and policy agendas?

Migration, citizenship & diversity: Seminar Series

The seminar series will run fortnightly from 15th January 2014. Speakers include: Dr Phillip Cole (West England), Dr Sarah Neal (Surrey) and Dr Agnieszka Kubal (Oxford). The series is jointly convened by Dr Nando Sigona and Dr Katie Tonkiss and supported by IRiS, IAS and INLOGOV.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, MEDIA ACTIVITY AND IMPACT

IRiS continues to work closely with Birmingham City Council, the West Midlands’ Police, the West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership and Business in the Community as part of its commitment to civic engagement around superdiversity. IRiS academics have also been engaged as expert advisors around anti-Muslim hate and migrant integration with Communities and Local Government and the Home Office and given evidence at APPG enquiries. Two IRiS impact case studies will be submitted to the REF. IRiS academics have appeared in international and national newspapers, on radio and television discussing diversity related issues including race hate, integration, immigration control, the emergence of superdiversity and much more. For some recent articles on Islamophobia and the Lampedusa tragedy see [http://www.newstatesman.com/voices/2013/06/their-attackers-mosques-are-seen-places-difference](http://www.newstatesman.com/voices/2013/06/their-attackers-mosques-are-seen-places-difference) and [http://theconversation.com/italy-ignores-real-cause-of-lampedusa-refugee-tragedy-18928](http://theconversation.com/italy-ignores-real-cause-of-lampedusa-refugee-tragedy-18928). Follow us on Twitter or our news pages for updates.

IRiS Practitioner Research Programme

IRiS’s Practitioner Research Programme brings IRiS academics together with individuals working at the forefront of superdiversity to co-produce new knowledge about everyday superdiversity. Nineteen participants have been recruited from a range of organisations including local authorities, the Police, NHS, the Children’s Society and Refugee Action. All have been matched with academic mentors from IRiS. Training on qualitative research methods has been arranged to prepare the researchers for their fieldwork and will be accredited by the Open College Network. The PRP programme will bring new knowledge about a wide range of subjects including migrant maternity, use of services in superdiverse areas, planning for superdiversity and more. Contact PRP Lead Dr Lisa Goodson for further information [l.j.goodson@bham.ac.uk](mailto:l.j.goodson@bham.ac.uk)