A question of independence
What if Scotland leaves the UK?
Welcome to the Spring issue of Society Now, the ESRC's regular magazine which showcases the impact of the social science we fund.

This issue examines the latest findings of the Understanding Society survey which show that couples still don’t share the housework, even when they’re both wage-earners.

Experts offer their views on new approaches to treating addictions, the initiatives taking place in cities around the world to combat the effects of climate change, and, in the build-up to the 2012 contest, what is the political significance of Eurovision for former Soviet states?

IFS Director Paul Johnson looks at how the economy might develop over the coming years and the likelihood of more deep cuts in public spending. And devolution and constitutional expert Professor Charlie Jeffery answers a range of questions about the possible implications of a ‘yes’ vote in the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence.

I hope you find the magazine enjoyable and informative. Please do email us with your feedback or ideas for content.

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A KEY COMPONENT of democratic accountability is for citizens to understand who to blame. But little is known about how citizens attribute credit and blame in the complex multi-level structure of the European Union (EU). In the first project of its kind, researchers set out to understand when and why voters attribute responsibility to the national and EU levels of government for policy, and what that means for democracy.

“It’s important to understand how citizens assign credit and blame because citizens’ ability to assign responsibility to government is crucial to the functioning of democracy,” Professor Sara Hobolt explains. “In elections, citizens can vote politicians out if they are unhappy with their performance. But this only works if people know who is responsible for policy outcomes. This is clearly complicated with regard to the EU because it is hard for people to assign responsibility correctly.”

Can citizens make sense of the multi-level EU system? Based on a unique cross-national survey of citizens in 27 EU member states, researchers at the universities of Oxford, Exeter, Nottingham and the London School of Economics find that the answers to the question are mixed. On the one hand, to a large extent people rely on their general feelings about the EU when deciding whether the EU or the national government should be blamed (or credited) for policy outcomes.

On the other, the study also demonstrates that when citizens are more informed about politics, they are better able to ‘get it right’ when assigning credit and blame. Equally, when there is more debate about the EU – between political parties and in the media – citizens are better able to bring their attribution of blame into line with the actual divisions of responsibility.

Researchers argue that without doubt European integration makes it more difficult for people to hold politicians accountable for their actions. Voters tend to simply rely on their long-standing attitudes when making judgements.

Professor Hobolt says: “This can be problematic if it means that national politicians, for example, are absolved of blame because they can simply ‘pass the buck’ to the EU. More encouragingly, our work shows that citizens, when given the right tools and information, can make sensible judgements about complex government structures.” These findings have implications for the debate on institutional reform and democracy in the EU. For democracy to function in the EU, researchers highlight the need for greater transparency and debate on where decisions are taken combined with institutional mechanisms that allow citizens to hold the EU responsible for actions, such as a directly elected Commission president or a stronger link between European Parliament elections and EU policies.

Professor Hobolt concludes: “Worryingly, the current negotiations on the so-called Fiscal Compact point exactly in the opposite direction: the new treaty involves greater transfers of power to the EU, coupled with less transparency and less involvement of citizens and their parliaments in crucial decisions on fiscal policy.”
IN BRIEF

STUDENTS ABROAD
Residence abroad is a key experience for university students studying languages and most benefit from it greatly. But students’ language development during residence abroad is variable. A new study aims to explore the factors influencing this variability and findings will provide practical guidance for students and their teachers on how to improve advanced language learning during students’ year abroad.
ESRC grant number RES-062-23-2996

WORKING LIFE SURVEY
A new integrated survey of the skills and employment experiences of working life in Britain in 2012 will become a key and distinctive resource for research on contemporary working life. The Skills and Employment Survey (SES) will provide continuity with previous ESRC-funded surveys, set a benchmark for future research and allow international comparisons.
ESRC grant number RES-241-25-0001

IMPRISONMENT COSTS
Drawing on nearly 100 years of data on prisons, a new study asks what lessons can be learned for current debates about sentencing offenders and managing the prison population. Researchers will explore whether short sentences contributed to repeat offending, whether early release schemes accelerated or inhibited recidivism, and the financial costs of imprisonment to the country and the human costs to those imprisoned.
ESRC grant number RES-062-23-3102

Wage top-up schemes may devalue work

As the global economic crisis continues, global wage inequalities have become even starker. While the government is keen to reduce these inequalities through tax credit schemes, a new study suggests that such schemes may well be corrosive to those they are aiming to help.

Researchers investigated the perceptions of low-paid workers who had been receiving the UK government’s Working Tax Credit (WTC). “The WTC is the latest version of a means-tested state benefit or ‘credit’ that tops up the wages of low paid workers,” explains researcher Professor Hartley Dean.

WTC was introduced by the New Labour government in 2003, but will be replaced by the Coalition government’s new Universal Credit scheme, which will also be used to top-up low wages. “The assumption of policymakers – from all three main parties – is that using public funds to subsidise low wages is a way to ‘make work pay’ and give people an incentive to take low-paid work,” says Professor Dean. “In this study, we explored how 52 WTC recipients felt about having their wages topped up in this way.”

Findings reveal clear support for the WTC, but confusion as to the purposes of the scheme. “Although the WTC scheme was generally viewed positively and most of the people we talked to were grateful for the additional income, there were still some important undercurrents of resentment,” says Professor Dean.

“WTC does not of itself compensate for the injustices or adverse effects of precarious and inadequately paid work. Paradoxically, hardly any of the people who took part in this research explicitly recognised that schemes like WTC are in effect a subsidy to low-paying employers, but a lot of them felt devalued at work or locked into menial jobs.”

Wage top-up schemes may not always be conducive to sustaining a morally meaningful work ethic among those workers who are systematically confined to the low-paid periphery of a polarised labour market, the study concludes. Professor Dean adds: “It is worth remembering that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights holds that everyone has the right to work that is freely chosen and subject to just and favourable conditions. Whether wage top-up schemes serve to mitigate or perpetuate the violation of that right is a moot point.”

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Improving child nutrition in India

India is one of the fastest growing economies as well as the hotbed of child under-nutrition. To unravel this conundrum – sometimes termed the South Asian Enigma – researchers from the Universities of Warwick and Allahabad, India explored whether low levels of autonomy among women help explain the low levels of nutrition among children.

Using a new, robust measure of mothers’ autonomy, initial findings show that greater women’s autonomy causes a significant improvement in the long-term nutritional health of younger children below three years of age but not upon older children. Researchers’ analysis of the effectiveness of the Integrated Child Development Scheme – the largest maternal and childcare government programme in the world – suggests that it has massive potential to bring about a reduction in child under-nutrition in India. What is now required, say researchers, is a driver which pushes and inspires efficiency and outcome orientation among some of the larger, poorly performing states.

Civility still values civility

Civility can seem like an old-fashioned concept but a new report finds that, far from being a thing of the past, civility is something that people still care deeply about. Indeed, experiences of incivility cause hurt, stress and deeper social problems, and these experiences have a bigger impact on people’s sense of social health than crime statistics.

Long-term trends such as growing pressures on people’s time, increased mobility and greater use of technology could be making civility harder to sustain. To address this challenge, researchers suggest changes in national and local policy including a better balance between punitive measures and those which actively encourage civility. One effect of punitive measures, for example, has been to make people over-reliant on authorities such as the police to control behaviours which in the past may have been dealt with at a personal or community level.

The main role of interventions should be to make individuals aware of, and change their own behaviour – even in small ways. People are quick to see incivility in others, yet less aware of how their own behaviour can offend, researchers conclude.

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IN BRIEF

Church and Gender
The Church of England’s approach to gender has been taken as a key test in how contemporary faith institutions integrate gender equality ethics. Recently, this was lived out in the debate over whether women should become bishops. A new study will look at how gender and parenthood interact in the context of the Church, giving a fresh perspective on the contemporary clergy life.

ESRC grant number PTA-026-27-2911 - Post-doctoral Fellowship

Global Corruption
Surveys from more than 130 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America will be used to analyse the actual experience (as opposed to the perception) of corruption. Each survey asks questions about contacts with health, education, police and other municipal services, and whether any bribes were paid. The project partner is Transparency International’s Secretariat in Berlin.

ESRC grant number RES-062-23-3212

Aid Allocation
Donors choose to give development aid to poorer countries around the world. While other budgets are being cut, the UK government is sticking to the target of aid representing 0.7 per cent of British GDP. A new study will examine several major aid donors and consider issues including how donors decide who to give aid to and whether poverty is more important than trade links.

ESRC grant number PTA-026-27-2842 - Post-doctoral Fellowship
IN BRIEF

NEW TECHNOLOGIES
Networks are clearly important to developing new technologies. Researchers aim to fill an existing evidence gap by mapping how networks develop, align and, in some cases, misalign. This study will ask how the development of technology communities can be co-ordinated and managed effectively, and influenced by public policy.

ESRC grant number RES-360-25-0076 - Open Research Area in Europe (ORA) programme

ACHEIVING CHANGES
The changing ways in which Indonesian and Vietnamese individuals of divergent backgrounds and experience have understood the idea of ‘achievement’ over the course of their lives is the focus of a new two-year project. Researchers based in Hanoi and Indonesia’s borderland province of Kepri will focus on four groups: policymakers, teachers and pupils, export workers and religious professionals.

ESRC grant number RES-000-22-4632

MARITIME MIGRATION
To what extent did immigrants in pre-industrial Europe contribute to economic performance? Researchers will investigate how labour mobility and human capital (or skill) levels of workers influenced economic performance in the European maritime sector between 1650 and 1815. The project aims to contribute to current debate on the impact of skills and migration on the economy.

ESRC grant number RES-062-23-3339

Love at heart of civil partnerships

THE PRIMARY REASON for same-sex couples to enter into civil partnerships is to express to each other, their families and friends the loving nature of their relationship and their long-term commitment, says a new three-year study.

Based on interviews with 100 partners (50 couples), researchers from the University of Manchester conclude that, for the majority, legal ‘rights’ and protections are a secondary consideration.

The study shows that younger (up to age 35) couples in civil partnerships largely view and present themselves as ‘ordinary married’ couples and subscribe to broader cultural beliefs about good marriages based on love, enduring commitment, mutual care and support, sexual exclusivity, equality and respect, communication and stability.

A matter of convenience

AN INCREASE IN the provision of toilets designed to deter criminal behaviour could result in a shortage of publicly accessible toilets that meet the needs of older people and people with disabilities, warns a new study.

For example, guidelines for toilets designed to reduce crime suggest that turnstiles be installed to prevent anti-social behaviour through payment for facilities. Yet turnstiles are not recommended for inclusive design as they present a barrier to access for older people and people with mobility concerns, especially in facilities that are not attended and where alternative barrier-free entry cannot be given.

The Robust Accessible Toilets (RATs) project set out to produce a design guide which focused on user-acceptable, publicly accessible toilet design that provided access but also sought to discourage anti-social behaviour. Findings suggest that fully automated and self-cleaning facilities (‘superloos’) do not meet the needs of an ageing population as older users frequently fear using them. In contrast, researchers found successful examples of communities taking charge of public toilet provision and offering facilities that a wide range of users found accessible and welcoming.

The study suggests that although not a direct consequence of ageing, the need to use the lavatory more frequently, and reach the facilities faster, does increase with age. In view of the UK’s ageing population, it is essential that those making key decisions about toilet design and provision understand that publicly accessible toilets can be found and used when needed, and that people feel comfortable, safe and secure when using them.

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ESRC Grant Number RES-193-25-0006 - Connected Communities Cross-Council Programme
Dementia assumptions need to be challenged

PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA and their family caregivers will benefit from new research into the levels of awareness of those with mild to moderate dementia. Improving the understanding, care and support of those with early stage dementia is just one of the potential outcomes of this three-year study.

“Developing dementia and receiving the diagnosis is extremely challenging not only for the person with dementia but for family members as well,” says researcher Professor Linda Clare. “And it seems that the increasing numbers of people in this position may not always receive a great deal of help and support in coming to terms with the diagnosis and managing their situation.”

The study focused on the level of awareness of people with early stage dementia. ‘Awareness’ refers to the accuracy with which a person appraises his/her situation and current abilities. It has often been assumed that people with dementia are simply ‘not aware’ and that their frequent failure to acknowledge the difficulties they face is merely a symptom of the condition. But study findings show that is untrue.

Researchers studied 100 people with early stage dementia together with a spouse, partner or family member, at initial, 12-month and 20-month time points to see how people perceived the changes that were happening to them as well as the family members’ perspective, and how these two perspectives related to each other. “While we found huge variability in awareness, we also found that people were frequently much more aware than was assumed,” says Professor Clare.

Findings indicate that while changes in memory and thinking ability may certainly affect the ability to appraise one’s situation, other reasons may also affect the levels of awareness shown. For example, a person who is depressed or frightened of the consequences of dementia (will they put me in a home?) may be unwilling to admit their difficulties, particularly to a medical professional. “We mustn’t assume ‘no awareness’ even when a person appears not to acknowledge any changes,” says Professor Clare. “Instead, we need to help a person express how they are experiencing their situation.”

The research team has developed and piloted information and training materials based on their findings and conducted workshops for people with dementia and carers, and training sessions for practitioners in health and social care. “Where the perspectives of people with dementia and family members differ, this can lead to a lot of tension and stress within the family. It’s important to find ways to open up conversations and help family members and people with dementia develop more of a shared perspective on what’s happening,” concludes Professor Clare.

Trust in mental health

LOW LEVELS OF TRUST between mental health patients and professionals can lead to poor communication which generates negative outcomes for patients, including a further undermining of trust, says a new study. Researchers used qualitative methods to explore the influences on, and influences of, service-users’ trust in mental health services. The particular focus was on the effects of trust on service-users’ engagement with psychosis services.

Findings show that trust can play a significant role in facilitating service-users’ initial and ongoing engagement with services, the openness of their communication, and the level of cooperation with, and outcomes from, treatment/medication. Trust also enabled professionals to respond to users’ needs and facilitate positive outcomes. “Our findings have significant policy implications in that they show how current institutional and organisational policy with its accent on risk assessment tends to mitigate the development of trust relations between practitioners and their clients,” says researcher Professor Michael Calnan. “This indicates the need for a shift in emphasis in mental health service policy in England. Prioritising trust, rather than risk, would assist services in meeting patients’ needs as well as managing risk.”
The benefits of teaching grammar

TEACHING GRAMMAR to school children can have a significant positive impact on student writing performance, according to a new study.

Based on a project involving 32 teachers and more than 850 Year 8 pupils, researchers found that children who were taught with resources which paid explicit attention to grammar relevant to the writing being taught improved their writing scores by 20 per cent over the year. In contrast, a comparison group of children who did not receive the same focus on grammar improved their writing scores by just 11 per cent.

Researcher Professor Debra Myhill says: “The benefits or otherwise of teaching grammar has always been a contested topic. But whereas previous studies of the value of grammar teaching have focused principally on the impact of decontextualised grammar teaching, our aim was to systematically investigate whether teaching which makes connections between particular linguistic structures and particular writing tasks supports the development of pupils’ writing.”

The study provides evidence for the first time of the positive benefit of teaching grammar when the grammar is contextualised; in other words, linked meaningfully to the writing being taught. Researchers conclude that teachers should embed grammar in the teaching of writing.

Professor Myhill concludes: “Attention to grammar should be explicit, clearly explained and linked to meaning and effect, not simply the naming or identification of grammatical features. Interestingly, we found that explicit grammar teaching benefited able writers more than less able writers which suggests that attention to grammar may have provided the stretch these able writers needed.”

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Long-term support vital for young sex offenders

LONG-TERM PROFESSIONAL support is one of key factors influencing the later life outcomes for children and young people with sexually abusive behaviours, a new study suggests.

In a three-year project, researchers analysed the experiences and current life circumstances of adults who, as children, were subject to professional interventions because of their sexually abusive behaviours. Researchers analysed 700 cases and collected in-depth interview data from 69 individuals who had been referred for sexually abusive behaviours between ten and 20 years ago. They found that a small proportion only had reoffended sexually but that general reoffending was more common.

Researcher Professor Simon Hackett explains: “Based on measures focusing on health, wellbeing and coping we found that 26 per cent of participants reported positive life outcomes, while in 43 per cent of cases outcomes had been poor. In 31 per cent of cases outcomes were mixed.”

Researchers identified factors associated with poor and positive outcomes at individual, relational, social and environmental levels. The most significant positive influence on the life course of children at risk was the presence of long-term professional support as well as stable partner relationships, educational success and employment. In contrast, family instability, poor housing and drug use were factors associated with ongoing criminality, risk and poor life outcomes.

The quality of the relationship between the child and the professional involved appears to be key, Professor Hackett states. “This emphasises the vital importance of lasting ‘social anchors’ in the lives of children and adolescents at risk. We suggest that achieving carer and family constancy is an important part of professional interventions, as in general health promotion, though this is an area as yet under-developed in the sexual abuse field.”

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Video ID parades find favour

VIDEO IDENTIFICATION PARADES – which are less costly and more efficient than traditional line-ups – yield comparable levels of identifications to live parades, says new research.

An eight-month study of eyewitness identification decisions based on video technology finds a suspect identification rate of 40 per cent — virtually identical to the identification rate of live parades. “Video ID parades have advantages in that they can be organised quickly before a witness’s memory fades and are less stressful for the witness,” says researcher Professor Amina Memon. “This increased the chances that witnesses will come forward and, if the police can standardise procedures, courts will be able to rely more on eyewitness evidence.”

Lessons in citizenship

THE PROCESS BY which refugees to the UK can become British citizens requires review, according to a new research study of refugees living in Scotland. Based on in-depth interviews with 30 refugees in Scotland from 23 different countries of birth, researchers from the University of Strathclyde and Scottish Refugee Council conclude that the current policies may actually be operating against the Government’s desire to create integrated communities where everybody is able to participate fully.

Among a series of recommendations, researchers point out that if citizenship can ever act as a unifying bond, then it is essential that refugees receive clear and concise information about the process of becoming British citizens.

One set of barriers to citizenship raised during the project concerned the process itself and the lack of information available to refugees.

Researchers recommend that citizenship tests should take account of the precarious nature and educational backgrounds of applicants. If English language skills are to remain a requirement of citizenship, then refugees from non-English-speaking countries should receive intensive support in their language learning.

Findings also show that the costs of the application process are prohibitively high and require review. “It is important that the financial position of refugees is not the primary determinant of whether people are able to become British,” researcher Dr Emma Stewart points out.

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COPYRIGHT TODAY

Increasing illegal downloading by ordinary media consumers puts copyright at the centre of discussions concerning the creative industries. A new study will explore the complexities of copyright in the digital age by examining why and how users, policymakers, internet service providers and producers construct, distribute and maintain ideological justifications around copyright.

ESRC grant number RES-062-23-3027

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Recent controversies concerning new technologies have prompted inquiries to find new ways to engage the public. This Post-doctoral Fellowship will publicise an experimental nanotechnology engagement exercise which drew on sensory methods to encourage public debate and consider application of the methodology to related emerging technologies such as geo-engineering or synthetic life.

ESRC grant number PTA-026-27-2869
- Post-doctoral Fellowship

TRANSPORT GAINS

This project uses national data on actual transport improvements to understand the implications of transport investments on workers and firms (eg, productivity, employment and wages). Analysis will link detailed geographical data on road network infrastructure improvements to panel data on firms and workers in large-scale national surveys.

ESRC grant number ES/J007382/1
- An ESRC Venture
Chore wars

New research findings from the Understanding Society study show that although the gender gap in housework had been narrowing gradually, even when women are the main breadwinner, they still do more housework than their partner. By Sarah Womack

They call them the ‘chore wars’ and for good reason. With the huge influx of women in the workplace, the issue of whether domestic chores are shared has become a hot issue for many couples.

Does the woman complete a day at work and come home to do a ‘second job’ cleaning the house and looking after the children? Or does the man return from his job, roll up his sleeves and get stuck into the washing, ironing and childcare? Or do they share?

More likely, the rise in working couples means marital discord, uneasy compromises and the sense of exploitation.

Housework is still perceived as women’s work, and men are still often expected to be the breadwinners.

So why, when women are bringing home the bacon, do they still assume the dominant role when cooking it – and washing the plates afterwards?

Dr Kan says: “Gender ideology still poses a barrier to gender equality in the domestic division of labour.”

Women had not rid themselves of the idea that they were responsible for work around the house.

“It may be that men who already feel they fail to perform the traditional male role economically tend to be more sensitive about being seen as also playing the ‘female’ role at home. And women who are the main breadwinners feel that they should also be mainly responsible for housework.”

Her research about the domestic duties of men and women, using recent data from Understanding Society, found that men and women who don’t go out to work at all tend to do more housework than their working partner, but educational background also plays a part. The amount of housework changes, for example, depending on whether the woman has been educated to degree level. The more qualifications a woman has, the less likely she is to regularly get the Hoover out.

Other research undertaken by Dr Kan, Oriel Sullivan and Jonathan Gershuny, based on time-use data from the 1960s to the early 2000s, found that the gender gap in housework had been narrowing gradually.

Nevertheless, there was a view of whether household chores were ‘men’s’ or ‘women’s work’. ‘Routine housework’ such as cleaning, cooking and caring for family members was viewed as ‘feminine’ while ‘masculine’ roles included non-routine chores like DIY, car care and outside work.

As fears of an economic depression loom, the extent to which couples share responsibilities at home is increasingly pertinent, not least because work overload leads to stress, with its concomitant risks of marital breakdown, unemployment, debt and emotional depression. Social researchers and unions have increasing concerns about the level of stress in the workplace – for women, and for men.

The woman who wants to ‘have it all’ – the career, a husband and children – realises she is in fact ‘doing it all’ – the job, the housework, the
childcare. Around two out of three mothers of young children have jobs, encouraged by family-friendly and flexible working laws and the need for many families to have two incomes in order to pay mortgages and meet the bills.

Meanwhile men, who frequently still bear the main financial burden of supporting their families – or feel they should – suffer anxiety about retaining their job in a time of economic crisis.

With the office norm now 9am-6pm, and job demands intensifying, stress levels are a worry for both employees and employers. Stress and mental illness is responsible for more than half of all working days lost every year, and the economic impact is unequivocal: mental illness costs employers an estimated £26 billion a year.

In his research using data from Understanding Society, Dr Mark L Bryan, of the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex, found nearly half – 46 per cent – of workers had felt tense during the last few weeks, 27 per cent uneasy and 24 per cent worried at least some of the time. Women reported feeling more stressed than men. More hours were associated with greater anxiety at all levels of responsibility.

Full-time workers average around 37 hours per week, part-time workers around 15.5 hours per week and just under a fifth of people in employment work more than 45 hours a week, says the Office for National Statistics. By EU standards this is a high proportion of ‘long hours’ workers, though other developed countries such as Australia, Japan and the US have more than the UK.

The irony is that while marriage provides the obvious emotional shelter for those suffering from stress, many women turn to friends and family. Professor Heather Laurie, also of ISER, used data from Understanding Society which asked respondents to rate how supportive their spouse or partner was on a number of measures. The majority of people were positive – 88 per cent said their partner understood the way they felt, 94 per cent said they could rely on their partner, and 90 per cent said they could talk to their partner ‘a lot’ or ‘somewhat’ about their worries.

However, men were significantly more likely than women to say their partner criticised them a lot – just under one in three of men compared with one in five of women. Women were more likely to say their partners let them down or got on their nerves.

Men who had a spouse or partner relied heavily on them for positive social support while women tended to look more widely to other family members and friends.

It remains to be seen whether the ‘chore wars’ widen this trend.

Sarah Womack is former Social Affairs Correspondent of the Daily Telegraph

_Understanding Society_ is a world-leading study of the socio-economic circumstances and attitudes of 180,000 individuals in 40,000 British households.

It is funded by the ESRC and run by the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER).

_Understanding Society: Findings 2012_ is the second volume of findings from the survey and includes some of the first longitudinal research to make use of the very latest data, and a number of articles analysing the unique ethnic minority boost sample.

Web: [www.understandingsociety.org.uk](http://www.understandingsociety.org.uk)
A world of waste

What happens to our waste? Is it recycled, burned or transported to other countries? Everything Must Go – a public event marking the culmination of the ESRC-funded Waste of the World project – showed what happens to the things we throw away.

Staged on 20-22 January at the Bargehouse on London’s Southbank, Everything Must Go brought together social scientists, artists, designers and social entrepreneurs to create a visually stimulating environment to examine issues arising out of research into the global flow of waste.

The event was curated by Dr Lucy Norris of UCL and artist Clare Patey, and produced by arts organisation Holy Mountain. The main focus was on anthropological research into second-hand clothing markets and textile recycling – particularly relevant to all of us as consumers and an increasingly important issue for political and environmental agendas.

Visitors brought along an unwanted item of clothing to donate to the ‘charity shop’, on the ground floor of the Bargehouse. On the next two floors of the building, the event showed the global flows of old clothing that can’t be re-sold by a charity shop or that has been placed directly in a textile bank, and the role of commercial recyclers.

At several points the event showed research that highlighted the distribution of value along the clothing chain and its current concentration in the hands of sorting businesses and middlemen. The market for re-use in Africa was illustrated through an installation by Oxfam, who have established ‘Frip Ethique’ – a small-scale social enterprise in Senegal supporting local used-clothing sellers. This shows the potential for retaining the value of used clothing as a development tool throughout a distribution network, rather than simply selling it as a commodity to raise funds.

The exhibition continued with a room devoted to recycling technologies used in the UK, such as producing wipers from old cotton clothing and flocking from mixed fibres, and then moved on to show the shoddy recycling industry in India, the focus of Lucy Norris’ ethnographic research that highlights the poor labour conditions, low wages, and resulting low-quality products.

Throughout, research was illustrated by visual projects including Meghna Gupta’s debut film Unravel about the Indian recycling industry and photographs by Tim Mitchell – both projects partially funded by British Academy Small Research Grants with support from the ESRC-funded academic research. And fashion designer and social enterprise leader Lizzie Harrison of Remade in Leeds hosted workshops on upcycling old clothing and rug-making from scraps.

The Waste of the World event featured a programme of talks, ‘Talking Rubbish’, where academic researchers, designers, film-makers, business entrepreneurs and third-sector leaders discussed the issues raised by global waste management and the implications for the way in which we think about our old clothing, as well as wider issues around waste and recycling.

The exhibition finished with a display on ship-breaking in Chittagong and Bootle, a research strand in the project led by Nicky Gregson and Mike Crang, including a stunning time-release film by Tim Mitchell of the breaking up of a ship.

The research challenges the comfortable notion that our waste can be contained, cleaned and endlessly recycled, showing it as a filthy, powerful and potentially dangerous flow of materials through the world. Everything Must Go encouraged the public to consider their own relationship to materials, objects and waste and showed how social science research increases understanding of global issues.

For more information on the Waste of the World project and the Everything Must Go event see www.thewasteoftheworld.org
ESRC grant number RES 060-23-0007
ARCHWAY SCHOOL IN Gloucestershire is one of 30 schools and colleges taking up the new Anthropology A-level in the UK since its launch in September 2010. Developed by the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) in conjunction with the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA), the Anthropology A-level has been enthusiastically taken up by sociology and geography teachers who are passionate about teaching the subject.

The A-level provides a crucial turning point in raising the public profile of the discipline. Previously, anthropology was only taught within a minority of schools which offered an optional unit within the International Baccalaureate Diploma but the A-level has enabled anthropology to expand to state, public schools and sixth-form colleges, increasing participation and diversity of students.

The road from concept to delivery has been long. In 2003, the RAI prioritised developing anthropology within secondary education to enhance public understanding and formed an Education Committee that included academic anthropologists and teachers. They formulated the curriculum which would include biological and social anthropology and self-directed ethnographic research.

Over the following years the Education Committee campaigned for an Anthropology A-level, gathering support from all of the UK anthropology departments. In 2005, the ESRC co-directed an International Benchmarking Review of UK Social Anthropology’s international research standing. The Review highlighted the discipline’s strong contemporary impact in fields such as development, the public sector, NGOs and private sectors and was influential in helping UK departments realise the potential of the A-level to spread awareness of anthropology, ensuring recruitment and better employment opportunities.

Institutional support and commitment was crucial in helping advance the A-level but it became clear that to manage the subject’s implementation the RAI would need to employ an education officer to co-ordinate the Committee’s activities but would need support from statutory funding bodies to do so.

In 2005, the RAI received a grant from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) under its Aim Higher National Activity Rolling Programme. The HEFCE grant considered the development of the A-level – with its specification that highlighted cultural and linguistic diversity – as a way of attracting under-represented sections of UK school-age population to higher education. The funding covered the education officer position for one year which was extended for three more years by a grant from the ESRC under its Science in Society strategy. The strategy promoted understanding of and engagement with social science and helped shape the Institute’s Education and Public Engagement Programme by directing the education officer’s work across curriculum, information and activity. The education officer was central to co-ordinating a network of teachers and schools interested in taking up the subject and getting their feedback on the curriculum.

To secure acceptance of the new qualification, the RAI needed to convince the AQA of the A-level’s intellectual merit, its potential market value, and its ability to complement rather than compete with existing A-levels. Once AQA agreed, the task was to jointly revise the content in order to make sure the specification fit with the standard A-level format and negotiate accreditation by the national regulator.

Accreditation in 2010 demonstrated to social science communities the long-lasting impact that could be achieved with the collaborative effort of committed individuals and institutions. The success of the development and implementation of the A-level is now being analysed by social science researchers and anthropologists in Europe and the US to emulate within their respective secondary school education programmes.

The RAI is working to sustain the longevity of the course by organising events, teacher training and support, creating materials and platforms for communication as well as encouraging new graduates to consider teaching as a career option. Yet if the A-level is to really flourish and grow to numbers matching other social science courses, the subject will need the ongoing support of those institutions and communities which helped nurture the A-level at its beginning.

For further ESRC Impact Case Studies visit www.esrc.ac.uk/impacts-and-findings/features-casestudies/case-studies/index.aspx

**Advance of Anthropology**

From schools to public policy the growing popularity of the Anthropology A-Level is helping to create a new generation of Anthropologists. By Nafisa Fera

**Nafisa Fera** is RAI Education and Communications Officer

For more information about the A-level and the RAI’s Education Outreach Programme visit: www.discoveranthropology.org.uk

**ESRC IMPACTS**

**Society Now**

SPRING 2012
STUDIES FOCUSING ON the return of post-communist states to Europe have come to the fore in political science research since the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. The way in which many states of the former Eastern Bloc have engaged with European geopolitical power structures such as the European Union and Council of Europe are well-documented.

These studies have raised interesting questions about the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and their relationship to, and engagement with the European Union as well as the broader constructions of Europe, namely the geopolitical categories of East and West.

My ESRC-funded research examined issues of Europeanisation, national identity and nation branding in Estonia and Ukraine through the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC), looking specifically at the role the ESC plays in highlighting issues of identity politics. Although some studies have been made of the ESC there has been no detailed research on the relationship of a former Soviet republic with the contest.

First inaugurated in 1956, the Eurovision Song Contest is one of the largest television and media productions in the world although often dismissed as musically and culturally inferior. But it deserves attention because of its longevity and annual audience. And, as the research shows, different countries attribute different meanings to the ESC beyond the dominant (western) view.

Estonia was the first former Soviet republic to win the ESC in 2001 and Ukraine the third in 2005. In both cases hosting the contest was significant for domestic politics. It was also an opportunity to promote a positive international image, to move away from the Soviet past and, in the Ukrainian case, the shadow of Chernobyl.

In Estonia the event coincided with a decisive point in EU accession negotiations and in Ukraine it followed on from the Orange Revolution of 2004-5. Whilst comparisons between these two countries can be problematic,
both states have broadly faced similar challenges since independence. Both have had to renegotiate their geopolitical position in relation to East and West and both can be considered ‘plural society states’, home to ethnically diverse populations with differing understandings and interpretations of their recent history. It is therefore interesting to observe how these countries have represented these differences in the external image and the identity they project to a wider global audience.

The key research questions of my study examined constructions of national identity. What ‘official’ representations of national identity have the countries chosen to present through either hosting or participating in the ESC? Who ultimately took the decisions on how each contest was staged in Estonia and Ukraine? How contested have these representations been?

For Estonia there was a symbolic attachment to the Eurovision Song Contest as viewers in the north of the country were able to watch the programme via Finnish Television during Soviet times. This clandestine ritual was a form of resistance to Soviet rule and when Estonia won in May 2001 the then Prime Minister, Mart Laar, declared to a jubilant crowd: “Estonians crumbled the Soviet empire through singing and that is how we will enter Europe, not knocking on the door, but by singing.”

Initially there were doubts in the (western) European media about Estonia’s ability to host the event. Mart Laar himself became involved in the organisation and his government provided the necessary funding to Estonian Television in order to secure the event in Tallinn in 2002.

The rhetoric around the financing of the event shows that the Laar government saw value in hosting the competition, and particularly wanted to counter negative stereotypes of ‘backward’ Eastern European Estonia represented in the Western European media. This is precisely the image that Estonian politicians have been trying to dispel since independence. In fact, analysis of the media debates from the time show that Estonia chose to promote its ‘Nordic’ credentials through staging the ESC as a way to distance itself from the former Soviet Union.

The rhetoric concerning Dave Benton (one half of the winning duo for Estonia who is originally from Aruba) also highlighted issues of Estonian multiculturalism and how the sizeable Russian-speaking minority integrates with the rest of the country’s population.

The decision by the Estonian production team to screen an introductory clip called ‘Freedom’ directly before the Russian entry signalled a strong message about the country’s relationship with Russia. On the face of it, Russian speakers in Estonia are fully integrated; they speak Estonian and hold Estonian citizenship but the research shows that integration issues are more complicated in Estonia than the previous literature suggests. Many Russian speakers interviewed stated that somehow their difference is flagged, whether consciously or not and these respondents represent a form of hybridity.

“Countries attribute different meanings to the Eurovision song contest.”

In Ukraine the Eurovision Song Contest played a significant role in promoting and refining a positive international image of the country. Unlike Estonia, Ukraine’s return to Europe has been protracted and confused.

Ukrainian political leaders essentially walked a tightrope between emphasising EU integration whilst balancing the demands of the Russian government. Also, the legacy of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster has continued to have an impact on the international image of post-Soviet Ukraine.

The hosting of the 2005 ESC in Kyiv took on even greater significance following the political protests known internationally as the Orange Revolution which took place across the country at the end of 2004. As such the 2005 event was a highly politicised affair and effectively became a mouthpiece for the Orange Revolution government with the slogan ‘Awakening’.

A study of the 2005 ESC offers a potentially rich set of insights into the nature of the Orange Revolution and the accompanying debates on Ukrainian nation-building and Ukraine’s place in Europe more generally. President Yushchenko, who appeared on the stage at the show finale, became personally involved in the organisation of the event after widespread delays prompted an ultimatum from the European Broadcasting Union. Failure to stage the event successfully would have damaged the international standing of the country.

Azerbaijan is preparing to host the 2012 ESC in Baku. With this come serious questions concerning human rights, freedom of the press as well as on-going disputes with Armenia. As the contest continues to expand and be staged in new territories it offers further potential for future research.
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Healthy interventions

Dr Jeremy Segrott explains how social relationships shape young people’s health behaviours and what interventions could discourage them from alcohol abuse

Alcohol misuse is a major public health issue and a particular concern is the misuse of alcohol by children and young people, both in terms of the age at which they begin to drink, and the frequency or quantity of alcohol which they consume. Social scientists have an important role to play in critically examining the place of alcohol in society, explaining the complex social and environmental factors which shape young people’s use of alcohol, and informing the development of policies and interventions which respond to these issues.

A key policy focus is the prevention of alcohol misuse by young people, identifying ways to delay the start of frequent alcohol consumption, and reducing levels of binge drinking. While most agree that binge drinking among teenagers should be discouraged, the issue of when young people start drinking alcohol is more complex. When is it acceptable for children to first try alcohol? How and when should parents allow their children to drink regularly? And what are the best ways of providing information to young people about a substance which, although unhealthy or risky in certain circumstances, is a widely accepted part of adult life?

These questions highlight the importance of ensuring that interventions to prevent alcohol misuse by young people are well informed and have identifiable actions. Giving information to young people about the health issues around alcohol is important but prevention needs to take account of the wider social and environmental influences that shape health behaviours. McLeroy’s classic socio-ecological model has been widely used to understand the different levels of influence on health – including the intrapersonal, social relationships, and the wider physical environment – and how these different influences interact.

The ESRC-funded DECIPHer Centre – a UKCRC Centre of Excellence in Public Health – uses the socio-ecological model as a framework for the development and evaluation of prevention interventions. A major strand of this work looks at how social relationships (in families and schools, for instance) shape young people’s health behaviours.

A key example of this research is a randomised controlled trial of the Strengthening Families Programme 10-14, one of the first such evaluations of the programme outside the US. This programme aims to prevent substance misuse and antisocial behaviour by strengthening key protective factors found in the family, including parent-child communication, parenting styles, and helping young people develop life skills and positive goals. The programme addresses health behaviours such as alcohol, drug and tobacco use by recognising that they often share common risk and protective factors.

Another DECIPHer study is assessing the feasibility of a school-based prevention programme – Kids, Adults, Together (KAT) – which involves parents/carers in their children’s learning, and aims to promote pro-social communication in families. While KAT provides information to young people about the health effects of alcohol, the promotion of positive family communication and relationships are crucial to the way in which the programme is intended to influence later drinking behaviours.

Both these studies have resulted from strong partnerships between university-based researchers and policymakers and practitioners. Trials of such interventions to assess their long-term impact are often challenging, both in terms of the resources needed, and levels of familiarity with and acceptability of randomised controlled trials in the field of public health. Yet such trials are vital, and we need to be aware that even well-designed interventions do not always succeed, and others may have unintentional harmful effects.

The complexity and multifaceted task of evaluating complex public health interventions increasingly calls for interdisciplinary research teams with multiple methodological and conceptual skill sets. Social scientists play a critical role in such teams, offering theoretically informed understandings of how societal factors influence individuals’ health, how such factors can be shaped in positive ways, and the key influences on intervention delivery. As the psychologist Kurt Lewin famously remarked, “There is nothing more practical than a good theory.”

Interventions need to take account of wider social and environmental influences.

Dr Jeremy Segrott is Research Fellow in Public Health, DECIPHer. DECIPHer is part of a £20-million investment into public health research and is funded by the UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC) comprising the ESRC, The British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK, the Wellcome Trust, the Welsh Government and the Medical Research Council. Email decipher@cardiff.ac.uk Telephone 029 2087 9609 Web www.decipher.uk.net
We present an at-a-glance overview of the key issues in Britain today. In this issue our focus is on Transport. All statistics are from the Department for Transport unless stated otherwise.

Road accidents

Car user casualties have fallen by over a quarter since 2001 while pedal cyclist casualties have risen slightly.

“There are only two emotions in a plane: boredom and terror” Orson Welles

“The bicycle is the most civilised conveyance known to man” Iris Murdoch

Commuting method

In 2010, 85% of households in Great Britain lived within a six-minute walk of a bus stop while a further 11% lived within 13 minutes.

The percentage of passengers satisfied with most train and station factors at a national level was mostly unchanged compared to Autumn 2010. But satisfaction with six service areas improved and one declined (value for money). The improvements included overall satisfaction with the station, ticket-buying facilities and cleanliness of the inside of the train.

(Source: National Passenger Survey, Passenger Focus, Autumn 2011 wave)
Frequency of air travel in the UK
How often have you travelled by plane over the past 12 months? (single trip counts as one journey and return trip as two)

- Less than once a year: 49%
- More than twice a year: 12%
- Once or twice a year: 39%

Taxation on air travel
Percentage who believe taxes or other charges should be increased to encourage people to reduce their travel by plane

- Don’t know: 4%
- Strongly disagree: 28%
- Tend to agree: 11%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 23%
- Strongly agree: 8%

Cost of motoring
The overall cost of motoring (including purchase, petrol, oil, tax and insurance) has risen more slowly than the increase in the cost of living as measured by the all items Retail Prices Index (RPI). However when the purchase of vehicle is removed, motoring running costs have risen faster than the RPI

Supermarket average price per litre (pence) UK - Source: The AA

“\textit{The car has become... an article of dress without which we feel uncertain, unclad, and incomplete}” Marshall McLuhan

Travel time
Usual time taken to travel to work by region of workplace, in minutes, all methods of transport: October-December 2010

North East
North West
Yorkshire and The Humber
East Midlands
West Midlands
East of England
London
South East
South West
England
Wales
Scotland
Great Britain

0 10 20 30 40 50
Problem internet gambling is less visible because it can be part of everyday family life.
The climate challenge

Cities around the world are experimenting with initiatives to address climate change, explains Professor Harriet Bulkeley, ESRC Climate Change Fellow

Responding to climate change in the world’s cities is now recognised internationally as an ‘urgent agenda’ (World Bank 2010). Since the first voluntary commitments by cities to reduce their Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions over 20 years ago, several thousand have committed to action.

More recently, the challenges of adapting to the impacts of climate change at the urban level are also being recognised through urban planning. Over the past ten years, the research community has documented the challenges of governing climate change at the urban level, pointing to a persistent gap between rhetoric and reality. Dependent on strategies of self-governance and enabling or persuading others to act, municipalities have often lacked the powers and resources to take adequate action to address climate change.

At first it may appear that despite growing international recognition of the urban dimension of the climate change challenge, cities can do little to respond. But against this backdrop of the gap between the promise of the commitments, plans and policies of municipalities and the realities of increasing GHG emissions and urban vulnerabilities, the number of initiatives in cities to address climate change appears to be proliferating.

Whether this relates to wholesale eco-developments, community-based renewable energy schemes, new sustainable corporate buildings, infrastructure renewal projects or the like, urban landscapes are increasingly littered with attempts to forge a response to climate change.

Through a survey of documentary evidence from a sample of 100 cities globally, the Urban Transitions project found over 620 ‘climate change experiments’ that were specifically seeking to intervene in the built environment, energy, water, waste and transport systems of cities in order to address climate change. The sample represents diverse urban characteristics, with cities from across different world regions.

Analysis of the experiments across the sample shows that they started recently – 79 per cent since the Kyoto Protocol was ratified in 2005. Also, there is no significant variation across different regions of the likelihood of experimentation taking place, and common urban indicators such as GDP or population do not explain variation between cities.

Importantly, while most urban climate change experiments are led by municipal authorities (66 per cent), analysis shows that other actors are also critical to their development and deployment; 42 per cent of the sample of experiments had some form of private sector involvement, while 19 per cent included some level of involvement from community-based actors. Faced with limited formal capacity, it appears that ‘experimentation’ is a new way in which public and private actors are seeking to address climate change at the urban level.

For the most part, such experiments may provide the means through which new strategic efforts to secure critical infrastructure and ensure access to energy and other resources are being pursued at the urban level. Other experiments frame the climate change issue in very different ways, offering alternative visions of what it might mean to be a low-carbon or climate-resilient city.

The number of initiatives in cities to address climate change appears to be proliferating.

Analysis of experimentation in Bangalore, Berlin, Hong Kong, Monterrey and Philadelphia shows that it is a result of current economic constraints. For example, in the US, initiatives such as the Solar City programme and the ‘Coolest Block’ contest in Philadelphia have benefited from federal government economic stimulus funds. Experimentation also results from opportunities such as the Towards Zero Carbon housing development in Bangalore, aimed at the rising middle class population of the city.

In neither case does climate change experimentation pose a radical challenge to the liberal environmentalism or economic order on which it is based. Instead it puts such logics to work to create new forms of climate governance. Elsewhere, for example in the numerous examples of Transition Town initiatives or in the provision of low-carbon, low-cost energy and housing systems in cities in the Global South, climate change experimentation is a way to address issues of social and environmental justice.

As urban responses to climate change gather momentum, these experiments point to a new form of governance where boundaries between public and private are fluid, and where the potential for contestation and conflict is ever present.

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He chancellor, George Osborne, is facing exactly the situation he was hoping to avoid. When he set out his fiscal policies in 2010 he was aiming to sort out the budget deficit within the lifetime of the current parliament. But weaker than expected growth, and a severe downgrading by the independent Office for Budget Responsibility of their views about the potential future output of the economy, have left him needing to pencil in two more years of public spending cuts after a probable 2015 general election.

In our annual Green Budget we set out the scale of this planned fiscal tightening. Our latest estimates, based on official forecasts, suggest that the financial crisis and associated recession created a permanent hole in the public finances of 7.5 per cent of national income – that is £114 billion in today’s terms. This broadly reflects a large reduction in the amount that the economy is expected to be able to produce sustainably going forwards, with this expected to be a full 13 per cent lower in 2016-17 than the Treasury forecast in March 2008. The chancellor is aiming to slightly more than fill the hole that has opened up in the public finances through a combination of tax rises and spending cuts that are expected to total 8.1 per cent of national income, or £123 billion, by 2016-17.

These are huge numbers. We have not experienced a fiscal tightening on anything like this scale in the last 60 years. That's because we have not experienced either such a large loss of output or such a large deficit at any point over this period.

That a substantial tightening is required is not in doubt. Had this government and its predecessor announced no policy action then national debt would have spiralled out of control passing through 100, then 150 and 200 per cent of national income. Two key choices have been made. One is over the speed of the tightening. The other is over its composition.

In terms of speed Mr Osborne has set himself a ‘fiscal mandate’ which requires him to put in place policies to be able to expect to have sufficient receipts to cover non-investment spending, after adjusting for the estimated impact of temporary ups and downs of the economic cycle, by the end of the five-year forecast horizon. His current policy statements mean that he meets that mandate, but only because he has planned two years of unspecified but substantial spending cuts in 2015-16 and 2016-17.

As it has turned out he is aiming at a level of borrowing in 2016-17 almost identical to that implied by Alistair Darling’s last budget. But that is because the outlook for the economy has deteriorated in the intervening period. Had Mr Darling remained chancellor and not adjusted his tax and spending plans in response to the economic news – an entirely hypothetical situation since of course we cannot know for sure what he would have done – then he would have been on course for more borrowing than is currently planned.

The speed of the tightening carries risks. Higher taxes and lower spending has the direct impact of reducing economic activity in the short run. On the other hand it can increase certainty and credibility, thereby potentially reducing...
the risk that government borrowing rates rise sharply. There is clearly a trade-off here and Mr Osborne has made very clear where he stands on that trade-off: he puts a great deal of weight on the risks of losing credibility and facing higher borrowing costs. The opposition appear to put more weight on the risks to the economy of a speedy tightening.

There is another risk associated with the speed of the tightening though, and that is one associated with the other big choice made by the Chancellor – the choice to weight the tightening very much towards spending cuts as opposed to tax increases. About 80 per cent of the overall squeeze is planned to come through spending cuts. The justification for this is that much of the big increase in the deficit arose because when the economy shrank spending grew rapidly as a share of national income.

By 2016-17 public service spending is planned to be as high in real (inflation adjusted) terms as it was in 2004-05 and at the same level as a proportion of national income as it was in 2000-01. But that doesn’t change the fact that the planned real cut of 16.2 per cent in public service spending between April 2010 and March 2017 is nearly twice as big as the previous biggest seven-year fall (between 1975 and 1982) seen in the UK since the second world war. And seven consecutive years of cuts is wholly unprecedented.

The truth is we are in uncharted territory. Neither we nor the government can know what the political and social consequences of these cuts will be.

In terms of our analysis for the Green Budget, three further points stand out.

First, while most of the planned tax increases have barely begun, the cuts in non-investment public service spending have barely begun. The pain is mostly still to come.

Second, the pain will not be evenly shared across the public services. On the whole those areas of spending, particularly health, which did well in the preceding decade will be relatively protected. And some of those, such as defence and public order and safety which did less well will see significant cuts. So in some ways the current plans continue a long-term reshaping of the state with growing focus on health and welfare.

Third, longer term demographic pressures mean that more hard choices remain just around the corner. The pressure on health and pension spending will increase inexorably over the coming decades and a further set of fiscal choices on a similar scale to those we are currently experiencing will need to be made, albeit over a longer timescale.

One thing is clear. The speed with which the cuts were announced, their currently unknown effects, the need to specify what plans are after 2015 and the long-term pressures, all point to the need for a serious review of spending decisions by the Autumn of 2013. This review should look at what is known of the composition and consequences of the cuts. It should take account of long-term pressures. And it should fill in at least some of the details for 2015-16 and 2016-17.
Research on the erotic dancing industry has given dancers more information on workplace safety and their rights, improved working conditions and influenced the licensing policies of local authorities. By Dr Teela Sanders, Dr Kate Hardy and Rosie Campbell

Our research found that the majority of dancers had made a decision to dance as a flexible, relatively high-earning (although unpredictable), cash-in-hand form of work. Dancers generally reported high levels of job satisfaction and described both advantages and disadvantages of their work. Most women did not report any violence and felt safe in their workplace due to security, but they did report persistent unwanted touching and harassment from customers (nearly half reported frequent verbal harassment and unwanted touching from customers).

There was no evidence of organised prostitution or trafficking/forced involvement, although some migrant workers were paying more than the normal rate for accommodation and organisation of their work.

The key issues for dancers did not include gender exploitation or experiencing their work as a form of sexual violence, which is the primary argument of some feminist lobby groups against

Licence to dance
lap dancing. Dancers expressed practical concerns about facilities, relations with management and financial arrangements in the workplace. Most dancers were concerned about the high house fees, commissions and fines they were paying; especially on occasions when they were taking relatively little money home. Seventy per cent of respondents said they had left a shift without earning any money.

The research took place at a pivotal time in which all Local Authorities were re-writing their policy on licensing lap dancing as a result of changes introduced under the Policing and Crime Act, 2010. A new classification of Sexual Entertainment Venue (SEV) has been introduced, aligning the licensing process of lap-dancing clubs with sex shops and cinemas.

Further changes essentially give Local Authorities greater powers to control the number of clubs, by using quotas or introducing ‘nil policies’ which aim to remove existing clubs or prohibit new licences. New powers also mean that Licensing Committees have the ability to impose certain conditions on licences to dictate how they operate.

There was a strong feeling expressed by dancers that the legal changes introduced under SEV licensing would not make the industry safer or that their welfare and working conditions would be taken seriously by the new legislation. Instead they felt that assumptions were being made about exploitation, particularly gender exploitation, and that legislation favoured community’s views over dancers’.

Investigation of this latter point led to ESRC Follow-on-Funding awarded in November 2011. Towards the end of the initial project we had to some degree been able to share findings with licensing practitioners about the socio-economic profile of dancers, their experiences and views. Some authorities began to consider how they could address some of the issues related to dancer welfare, safety and working conditions but there was clearly a need for more dissemination of the findings to licensing practitioners and committees who are developing SEV policies often with little information about the sector and particularly dancers’ experiences.

The follow-on project also found that dancers needed more information, and this led to the development of a website and smartphone application that contains safety advice at work (in association with the Suzy Lamplugh Trust), and self employment rights and tax-awareness information (written in partnership with HMRC). These materials will form the basis of workshops with dancers and managers to try to increase knowledge, rights and good practice.

The other substantial aim of the project is to work specifically with Local Authorities to share the findings with licensing and enforcement officers, and to demonstrate how new conditions that prioritise dancers’ welfare at work can be written into policies.

At the start of the project we identified a small number of Local Authorities to whom researchers had presented the findings who were beginning to include conditions related to dancers’ welfare, safety and working conditions into policies and licences. For example, Leeds City Council now requires licence holders to provide a welfare pack to new dancers in the changing rooms.

This pack must include: a copy of the Sex Establishment License, including the conditions applied by the Licensing Committee; details of any other conditions applied by management of the premises; details of how to report crime to the relevant authority; details of insurance (public liability/personal); details of unions, trade organisations or other bodies that represent the interests of dancers/entertainers; a copy of the code of practice for entertainers; a copy of the code of conduct for customers; fining policy and pricing policy.

Blackpool Council has also taken the research findings seriously. In response to the issue of high competition and limited custom, their new SEV policy now includes a maximum number of dancers employed on any one night, which is calculated as no more than ten per cent of the total club occupancy.

The council has also responded to concerns about the fairness of codes of conduct/house rules by requiring that a club’s codes of conduct should include a system to ensure that performers who are sick or have a domestic emergency ‘are not made subject to unfair punitive financial penalties’. We are continuing to work with the Institute of Licensing to share our findings with as many licensing officials as possible. We hope the project will inform small changes in policy which could lead to a significant change in the treatment of dancers and sharing of good practice in the industry.
A question of independence

Devolution and constitutional expert Professor Charlie Jeffery explains some of the possible business, social, economic and political effects of an independent Scotland.

How likely is Scottish independence?

Charlie Jeffery: There are now more or less weekly opinion polls on the Scottish constitutional debate. They ask different questions in different ways. Very few have indicated that independence is a more popular option than the status quo. That said, we are not yet in a referendum campaign. When the campaign proper starts, the ‘Yes’ campaign will be fronted by a party, the SNP, with a formidable campaigning machine, a clear message and a leader of real presence. It is not clear how a ‘No’ campaign would be set up, how clear its message would be – as it would necessarily bring together different groupings with different views – or what leadership it would have.

What both opinion polls and more sophisticated time series on public attitudes on the constitutional question show, is that the most popular constitutional option in Scotland is neither the status quo nor independence, but some variant of fuller devolution – ‘devo-max’ or ‘devo-plus’. Whether or not fuller devolution will be on the ballot paper in the referendum is not yet clear – the Scottish Government is open to it, the UK Government opposed – but if it were, the bookies would have that as the shortest odds outcome.

Would Scotland be financially better or worse off if independent from the UK?

CJ: Like many questions about Scottish independence the answer is unknowable unless and until it happens. Supporters of independence claim that a Scotland with the fiscal policy levers of an independent state would be better able to respond to Scottish needs than UK-wide policies currently can. Opponents point to risks of not being part of a larger state with a greater capacity to pool risk. Perhaps the best guide are the annual estimates of all government spending and revenues in Scotland, produced by the Scottish Government and generally regarded as reliable, which suggest that if tax revenues from oil and gas in Scottish waters are included, then Scotland has generally ‘paid its way’ in the UK in the last few years.

What currency would Scotland use? Could it issue its own currency or adopt the euro for example?

CJ: The SNP Government’s policy is that an independent Scotland would use the pound sterling, and would look to a direct relationship with the Bank of England to co-ordinate Scotland’s fiscal policies with the needs of a Rest-UK/Scottish shared currency area. It is not yet clear what kind of relationship the Bank of England would foresee, or indeed what the UK Government thinks about such discussions and co-ordination within a single currency area that the rest of the UK would dominate. Scotland certainly could issue its own currency, but the SNP Government would prefer to find a way of maintaining the Bank of England’s monetary policy framework to help underpin the Scottish economy. The Euro remains in principle an alternative in the longer term, but given the Eurozone’s current problems is unlikely to be a real alternative for the foreseeable future.

Would an independent Scotland be able to sustain free university tuition fees without financial support from the UK?

CJ: If Scotland were independent, students from the rest of the UK would, under EU rules, have access to the same conditions as Scottish domiciled students, that is at the moment free university tuition. The SNP Government would ideally like – whether or not Scotland becomes independent – to explore ways of levying some kind of administrative charge on EU students, which would then apply also to the rest of UK students if Scotland were independent. Scotland would certainly be able to sustain free tuition because the number of ‘free’ (that is taxpayer-funded) places would be the same as now; the problem would be the high level of demand that might come from English students if fees there remain at current levels and the danger that Scottish students would be crowded out from Scottish universities by overwhelming English demand.

If economic and fiscal policy powers were to revert to Scotland would there be a radically different policy followed than currently in the UK. For example, would taxation be higher to fund better public services?

CJ: All the hints from the SNP have been about lower tax burdens, especially in corporate taxation. Scotland does have higher public spending per head than in England, but the annual revenue and spending estimates also suggest that Scotland raises more tax revenues per head than England, if North Sea revenues in Scottish waters are attributed to Scotland.

If Scotland became independent who would grant licences for oil/gas extraction? How would the investments that BP or Shell have made in oil extraction be affected?

CJ: If Scotland were independent, the Scottish Government would grant new licences. Existing licences would no doubt be a key issue in any post-referendum negotiation between Scottish and...
All the hints from the SNP have been about lower tax burdens
Rest-UK Governments about the distribution of assets and liabilities between the two states. What would be the main sources of state income? Is it viable to remain highly dependent on oil/gas revenue if climate change might mean increasing taxation on carbon emissions?

CJ: Again the answer is unknowable until and unless it happens, but clearly North Sea revenues would be a much bigger proportion of an independent Scotland’s revenues than they are currently in the UK. The challenges are perhaps less about carbon taxation than the often substantial fluctuations in world oil and gas prices which directly affect tax revenues. Hedging against such fluctuations would be a central priority. The most important longer term hedge would be future incomes from renewable energy sources, especially wind, wave and tidal power, where Scotland has massive potential.

How will Scotland fund major infrastructure projects such as high-speed rail?

CJ: Just as other states do: by using tax revenues and by borrowing on capital markets. On the latter – and no doubt with a view to potential future pronouncements of ratings agencies – the SNP’s finance minister John Swinney has been projecting an image of steadfast fiscal prudence.

Would the Scottish-based UK army regiments become Scottish and how would defence policy be split? What about the nuclear submarines? How much would changes cost?

CJ: There are plenty of hints that the SNP would like to maintain a defence union with the rest of the UK if it became independent, which would make any transition around Scottish-based UK forces easier to envisage. But there are big sticking points: the SNP’s commitment to withdraw Scotland from NATO, and its commitment to the removal of nuclear weapons from Scotland. It should be noted that recent research among SNP members by James Mitchell of Strathclyde University has shown that the SNP membership is increasingly sceptical on NATO withdrawal. And the removal of nuclear weapons would surely be central to any independence negotiations, and current positions could shift in those negotiations.

Would Scotland set up embassies, for instance in Ireland/Nordic countries? And would it become a separate member of and fully represented at the UN?

CJ: Yes, an independent Scotland would set up embassies, but might well look to negotiate an arrangement to share facilities with the Rest-UK. And yes, it would be a full member of the UN.

What would Scottish independence mean for Wales and NI? Would the UK become an English state in all but name?

CJ: Wales and Northern Ireland would become a smaller periphery to the UK’s core in England. They might well look to establish greater levels of autonomy to maintain balance with ‘Anglo-UK’. There are signs in recent research by the Universities of Edinburgh and Cardiff and the Institute for Public Policy research that the English are beginning to look for their own institutions of self-government. The UK could transform into a looser grouping of self-governing nations as a consequence of Scottish independence.

Who would be the head of state of an independent Scotland? Would it be the Queen as the SNP prefers or would the post of president or equivalent be created?

CJ: The SNP has been quite clear that Queen Elizabeth is also ‘The Queen of Scots’ and would be the head of state of an independent Scotland.

Would Scotland have its own Research Council?

CJ: The SNP has talked of sharing some services with the Rest-UK should Scotland become independent, with payments made to UK bodies for the supply of services to Scotland. The Research Councils would, from a Scottish perspective, be a strong candidate for service-sharing. Whether a Rest-UK Government would agree – in this or in other areas – would be another agenda item for post-referendum negotiations.

If independent would Scotland develop national squads for the Olympic games? And would it have its own Eurovision entry?

CJ: Yes – but would we see the kind of vote coordination between Scotland and Rest-UK that we see among the Nordic states, or the Balkans?

Would the UK-wide sports teams such as the Lions be broken up and what would that do for social cohesion across the countries?

CJ: The rugby union Lions is already a joint team of two independent states, the UK and Ireland. There is no reason in principle this couldn’t continue. And don’t forget the Ryder Cup, which generates continent-wide cohesion around one of Scotland’s national games.

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News briefs

DATA RELEASE OFFERS GREAT RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

Understanding Society is a world-leading study of the socio-economic circumstances and attitudes of 100,000 individuals in 40,000 British households. The first large wave of data from this survey is now available to researchers.

As the survey’s first ‘full wave’ of information has been deposited with the UK Data Archive, interviews from the world’s largest household panel survey are for the first time accessible for research analysis creating countless exciting research opportunities.

A team of researchers with early access to the data has already examined the material across a range of areas – from young people’s health and wellbeing, links between parents’ income and children’s achievements, and the role of social support networks in coping with stressful events, through to the division of housework and a range of specially-commissioned research using the survey’s ‘ethnicity boost sample’.

For more information see www.understandingsociety.org.uk/default.aspx

ENTER THE WORLD OF DATASETS

The ESRC’s research catalogue is getting bigger. In addition to the 100,000-plus research outputs currently featured in the catalogue, we are now publishing details of over 900 datasets generated by ESRC-funded grants. Over 200 datasets covering every major project funded by the ESRC, from the population, health and housing surveys to the British Crime survey, are available to download from the Economic and Social Data Service and UK Data Archive. For more information see www.esds.ac.uk

GREEN BUDGET

The financial crisis and recession have revealed ‘a £114-billion hole in the public finances’, state researchers at the Institute for Fiscal Studies at the launch of the Green Budget in February 2012, their annual analysis of the UK economy. The report also predicts that the Government will borrow less than predicted in 2011-12 (£2.9 billion), with departments underspending by more than £3 billion this year. For the full report see www ifs.org.uk/publications/6003

NEW TEAM TO NAVIGATE THE RETAIL SECTOR

Building relationships, raising the profile of social science research and identifying opportunities for collaboration will be the main focus of a new Retail Knowledge Navigator Team announced in January 2012. Given the broad range of stakeholders and research agendas, the ESRC has identified the need to supplement its existing resource with a team of expert knowledge brokers who will be able to forge stronger links between the social science community and the retail sector. This team will include Professor Kim Cassidy, Dr Sheilagh Resnick and Professor Paul Whysall, all from Nottingham Business School, part of Nottingham Trent University.

THE BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE CORPUS PROJECT

The Deafness, Cognition and Language (DCAL) research centre has announced that data from the British Sign Language Corpus Project (BSLCP) is now publicly available. The collection of video recordings shows 249 deaf men and women of different ages and backgrounds conversing in BSL with each other in pairs. They answer questions, tell stories, and show their signs for 102 key concepts. DCAL hopes the video data will lead directly to improved sign language teaching and improvements in training BSL teachers, sign language interpreters and teachers of deaf children. For more information see the data section of www.bslcorpusproject.org

AWARD-WINNING DRILLING IN VIRTUAL TEETH

An innovative multidisciplinary project that developed a 3D virtual dentist’s chair has scooped a prestigious award. The hapTEL project – whose name derives from haptics, the science of touch – picked up the BETT award for Innovation in ICT resources for education at a ceremony in London on 11 January 2012. BETT is the UK’s leading trade show for educational technology and described as ‘The Oscars of Educational Software’. The project had already won a Medical Futures award in June 2011. For more information see www.tlrp.org/tele hap tel

HISTORY MAKERS

A book by Jane Humphries, a professor of economic history and ESRC Professorial Fellow, shows the terrible price the labourers of the Industrial Revolution paid. A BBC 4 documentary based on her research, ‘The children who built Victorian Britain’, won Best History Production at the 2012 History Makers International festival in New York in January. The awards recognise the very best in history, current affairs, and non-fiction programming from around the world, across digital and TV platforms.

SOCIAL MOBILITY

The ESRC has produced a series of evidence briefings on social mobility that investigate how health, parenting, education, skills and poverty influence the opportunities for individuals. The briefings draw from a range of research produced by the centres and studies we fund, and analyse possible policy interventions that could give people the chance to break the cycle of social immobility.

For more information see www.esrc.ac.uk/news-and-events
People

PROFESSOR SIR ROGER JOWELL

Professor Sir Roger Jowell died on Christmas Day 2011. Professor Jowell, with his colleague, Gerald Hoinville, was the founder-director of the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), now Britain’s largest social research institute, which he ran from 1969 until 2001. He established a ‘Qualitative Research Unit’ at the Social and Community Planning Research (SCPR). In the early 1990s, the centre’s most publicised work was the comprehensive National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles, prompted by a need to develop policies to combat Aids.

Professor Jowell also made the news with his British General Election Study which explained why the Conservatives had romped to victory in 1992 despite predictions of a Labour win.

In 2001, with international colleagues, he set up the 34-nation European Social Survey (ESS) to study changing social values throughout Europe. In 2003 Professor Jowell moved with ESS to City University, where he became Research Professor and Founder Director of the Centre for Comparative Social Surveys. Professor Jowell was appointed CBE in 2001 and knighted in 2008.

PROFESSOR TONY COXON

Professor Tony Coxon died on 7 February. Professor Coxon was the first director of the ESRC Research Centre on Micro-social Change (MISOC), which was created in 1989 as the home of the British Household Panel Survey.

He also worked as a consultant for several ESRC-funded research projects and was part of the review team producing a comprehensive demographic review of the UK social sciences.

Professor Coxon was well known for his work in quantitative methods teaching. Particular areas of research included occupations and perceptions of occupations; sexualities and sociology of sexual behaviour and homosexuality; and research methods relating to cognitive sociology.

He was Honorary Professor at Cardiff University, and also Emeritus Professor of Sociological Research Methods, University of Wales (since 1988) and Professorial Research Fellow, University of Edinburgh (since 2002).

NEW YEAR HONOURS 2012

Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire
Professor Glynis Marie Breakwell, DL Vice-Chancellor, University of Bath; Chair of the ESRC Research Committee and Council member. For services to Higher Education.

Commanders of the Order of the British Empire
Professor Karin Barber, Professor of African Cultural Anthropology, University of Birmingham; ESRC grant holder. For services to African Studies.

Professor Eileen Munro, Professor of Social Policy, London School of Economics; ESRC seminar participant. For services to Children and Families.

Professor Judith Petts, Dean of the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, University of Southampton; ESRC grant holder. For services to Scientific Research.

Officers of the Order of the British Empire
Professor Dianne Berry, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Reading; former member of the ESRC Research and Evaluation Committee and ESRC grant holder. For services to Scientific Research.

Professor Ella Ritchie, Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Newcastle University; former member of the ESRC Training Board and ESRC grant holder. For services to Higher Education.

Professor Peter Jennings Buckley, Professor of International Business, University of Leeds; ESRC grant holder. For services to Higher Education, International Business and Research.

Professor Jean Golding, Emeritus Professor of Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology, University of Bristol; founder of the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC). For services to Medical Science.

Members of the Order of the British Empire
Professor Rhona Susan Johnston, Professor of Psychology, University of Hull; ESRC grant holder. For services to Education.

Professor Robert Walker, Professor of Social Policy, University of Oxford; ESRC grant holder. For services to Social Policy Research.

DR SABINA LEONELLI

The Global Young Academy is an organisation which selects 200 top early-career scientists around the globe to identify and voice science-related issues of relevance to policy and society. Dr Leonelli, Senior Lecturer at the ESRC Centre for Genomics in Society (Egenis), has been chosen as one of those 200. According to the Academy, members are selected ‘for the excellence of their science and their commitment to service. Members serve for a four-year term. The Global Young Academy aims to empower young scientists, providing a rallying point for them to come together to address topics of global importance.

DR HELEN SIMPSON

Dr Simpson from the Centre for Market and Public Organisation has been awarded a £70,000 Philip Leverhulme Prize. Prizes are awarded annually to ‘outstanding scholars who have made a substantial and recognised contribution to their particular field of study’. Dr Simpson has been awarded a prize for her research using new data on firms, which examines the reasons behind firms’ location decisions and the impact of these decisions on firm performance. The Leverhulme Trust was established in 1925 under the Will of the first Viscount Leverhulme. It is one of the largest all-subject providers of research funding in the UK.
Publications

Religion, Civil Society & Peace in Northern Ireland

Many commentators deny the churches a role in Northern Ireland’s peace process, focusing on the few well-known events of church involvement and the small number of high-profile religious peace builders. This ESRC-funded study seeks to correct misapprehensions about the role of the churches by pointing to their major achievements in both the social and political dimensions of the peace process.

Leadership and the reform of education

Western politicians consider that leadership is essential for the delivery of educational reform. This book, based on ESRC-funded research, examines how leaders, leading and leadership became the dominant theme in education. It presents an analysis of the relationship between the state, public policy and the types of knowledge that New Labour used to make policy and break professional cultures. It is essential reading for all those interested in public policy, education policy, and debates about governance.

Happiness

Richard Layard, from the ESRC-funded Centre for Economic Performance, shows that there is a paradox at the heart of our lives. Most people want more income yet as societies become richer, they do not become happier. This is not just anecdotally true, it is the story told by countless pieces of scientific research. We now have sophisticated ways of measuring how happy people are, and all the evidence shows that on average people have grown no happier in the last 50 years, even as average incomes have more than doubled.

Young people in post-conflict Northern Ireland

This multi-faceted study of young people’s lives and communities is a reminder that making a difference requires us to work across all parts of their lives, not just on those issues that most powerfully present themselves. The study is based on the Young Life and Times (YLT) annual postal survey of approximately 2,000 16-year-olds, which has been systematically collecting information since 1998. YLT is one of the key activities of ARK, an ESRC-funded joint initiative by the two Northern Irish universities. Reliable, robust and ongoing, it monitors changes in attitudes and behaviour over time.

EVENTS

23-24 APRIL

Genomics in Society: facts, fictions and cultures

A conference organised by the ESRC Centre for Genomics in Society (Egenis) will present the scope of research excellence in the social sciences of current bioscience innovation and celebrate a decade of academic achievement. There are great expectations that the life sciences, including genomics, are ideally positioned to deliver solutions to global challenges relating to health, food and energy. Simultaneously, policymakers and the public are concerned about social changes and the protection of ethical goods on the one hand, and cultural and institutional obstacles to the delivery of the benefits from the life sciences on the other. For more information see www.genomicsnetwork.ac.uk/egenis/conference2012

2-5 MAY

European Research on Emotion Conference

The Emotion Regulation of Others and Self team will hold a symposium at the conference titled ‘The effortful and exhausting nature of emotion regulation’. This conference is suitable for scholars in all disciplines carrying out research and empirically relevant theory on the topic of emotion. The event will include four parallel talk sessions, several poster sessions, social events, and four outstanding keynote talks. For more information see www.erosresearch.org/index.php/events/Consortium_of_European_Research_on_Emotion_CERE_Conference

17-18 MAY

Music, Methods and the Social: A Research Workshop

Trying to understand music as a social form raises the issue of methods. This is partly because of the ubiquity of music. Yet it is clear that to understand why music matters to people so profoundly we need a grasp both of the social, and the ways that music works as organised sound. The aim of a workshop organised by the Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change is to gather, think and talk together about particular ways of finding out and articulating the complex relationships between music and the social. For more information see www.cresc.ac.uk/events/music-methods-and-the-social-a-research-workshop

SPRING 2012 SOCIETY NOW 31
The ESRC magazine *Society Now* aims to raise awareness of our research and its impact. It addresses a wide range of readers, from the MP to the businessperson, the voluntary worker to the teacher, the public through to the social scientist, and is published three times a year (spring, summer and autumn).

*Society Now* offers a readable, intelligent, concise overview of current issues concerning society.

To subscribe to the magazine, please send an email including your full name and address to: societynow@esrc.ac.uk