



Britain at a crossroads: the politics of immigration, asylum and Europe
SEI workshop

Freeman Building F41, University of Sussex, 18 September 2015, 10.30-4.00

The Sussex European Institute, University of Sussex in Falmer invites you to a day workshop to discuss cutting edge research on the politics of asylum and immigration in Britain on the 18th September 2015.

The 2015 UK General Election and the campaign that preceded it broke many trends in British politics, but one of the most unprecedented developments was immigration being at the forefront of the debate. Whilst the British public have long been in favour of reducing immigration, the high level of public concern has been more recent, gravitating from a marginal concern of a small minority to a top three voting issue amongst the electorate. What is unique about current public concerns over immigration is that much of this migration is actually EU free movement. Whilst the recently elected Conservative government “talk tough” to placate these public concerns, at the same time there are a number of migration challenges over the course of the next term which must be resolved. These include how to cooperate and reconcile the EU Mediterranean and related Calais crises, and in turn establish a coherent asylum policy, satisfying employer demands for migrant labour within a restrictive policy framework, and following further devolution to Scotland, how to negotiate intergovernmental relations between Westminster and Holyrood on immigration policy. With freedom of movement and its associated welfare rights becoming increasingly politically contested, the most important challenge for the Conservative government will be the upcoming EU referendum, and the repercussions for both EU citizens’ right to claim benefits, and immigration policy more widely.

The aim of our day event is to provide a platform for some of the cutting edge research in the field of immigration politics in Britain. The workshop will run as follows:

10-10.30: Registration

10.30-10.45: Introductory remarks, Erica Consterdine

Session one: 10.45-12.30

Lucy Mayblin, University of Sheffield: *Complexity reduction and policy consensus: Asylum seekers, the right to work and the pull factor thesis in the UK context*

Gareth Mulvey, University of Glasgow: *Devolution and the lack of intergovernmental relations in Scottish refugee integration policy*

Lunch 12.30-1.30

Session two: 1.30-3.45

Erica Consterdine, University of Sussex: *Labour's legacy: feedback effects of Labour's immigration policy*

Alex Balch, University of Liverpool: *The eye of the storm: immigration and Europe in the UK media 2006-2013*

Rebecca Partos, University of Sussex: *Odd, silly policies'? The UK Conservative Party's immigration policy-making 1997-2015*

3.45-4: Closing remarks

The workshop is free and open to all, but please register by emailing D.Minto@sussex.ac.uk by the 16 September. Please also feel free to forward these details to your networks and contacts, and/or to display the attached poster.