



CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS
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The Contentious Politics of Asylum in Britain and Europe
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Research Report

Background

Throughout this project asylum and immigration issues have been highly contentious and salient in public debates, appearing regularly on policy agendas in Britain and across Europe. Specifically, 9/11 and the subsequent ‘war on terrorism’ have importantly shaped public and policy debates in recent years, bringing a closer linkage between immigration and questions of security, and raising questions about the success of previous integration policies, especially with respect to Muslims. This new impetus adds to a policy field that was already highly contentious, not least because publics and politicians tend to perceive immigration issues as a further threat to national identity and sovereignty, already challenged by processes of globalisation and European integration.

Substantively, we investigated immigration and asylum issues by mapping the field of political contention through original longitudinal (1990-2004), and cross-national (UK, F, CH, D, NL – 1992-8) data. The cross-national study of public debates allowed us to examine potential patterns of convergence and divergence across Europe. In addition, the British study also went deeper into this contentious policy field, by examining the multi-organisational field of actor relationships between elite decision-makers, the media, political parties, civil society actors, and pro- and anti-asylum movements, through in-depth interviews with the principal actors and analyses of their campaigns. Focus groups with different sections of the general public (by age, gender, social status, ethnicity) were conducted to determine how public opinion matches or differs from, and is shaped by, the expressed ‘official’ positions.

Objectives

To advance theory and extend knowledge in the immigration and asylum politics field, by developing a more integrated conceptual approach that systematically relates two dimensions of the field that have previously remained distinct and isolated fields of research: policy-making on one side, and political contention, public campaigns and mobilisation over migrants, on the other.

By necessity considerable theoretical and methodological innovation was built into the project design. The study integrated two approaches which have typically been applied separately, especially in immigration studies: policy change; and public debates, media coverage and public campaigns and mobilisation. Previous research on the public dimension of immigration tended to either simplistically blame the media for racism, or introduce the media as an 'ex hoc' explanatory factor for political change. Especially important to our innovation has been the establishment of the political claims-making approach. This approach makes a systematic link between the political system and public debates, thus allowing public debates about immigration to be studied in a way that determines the role and ideological position of specific political actors as 'claims-makers' in a contested field. Importantly, media actors become the 'carriers' or medium of political discourse to a large extent, and are seen as proponents only when they actively take a public stance on immigration. This integration of the institutional and discursive dimensions of politics was achieved through the development of a 'political opportunity' perspective. The theoretical approach and analytic model is fully outlined in *Contested Citizenship* (Nominated Output 1), and is applicable both for national longitudinal and cross-national research.

To collect a new body of data that will facilitate longitudinal (1990-2002) and internationally comparative (UK, F, D, CH, NL) analyses of the ideological positions of actors and their relationships in the immigration and asylum issue field, allowing for a systematic empirically grounded national study that also places Britain in European context.

This objective was successfully achieved. In fact we extended the British data-set on political claims-making from 1990 to the present date, and will complete 2004, to produce an original data-set on claims-making that covers fifteen years, with approximately 5000 cases. The five-country cross-national data-set (1992-1998) was completed first and has been the key primary source for a monograph (Nominated Output 1), as well as scholarly articles (see Appendix 1 for publications), which place Britain in systematic comparison with other European countries.

To contribute to knowledge on the relationship between policy-making and public campaigning, by collecting original data on the nature of the policy domain on one side, and the nature, contents and dynamics of public campaigns by the media, political parties, and pro- and anti-asylum movements, on the other, and to advance knowledge on the organisational field of asylum politics.

This is the first project of its kind to use such an original data-set that is strictly cross-national and comparative. The implementation of this project required considerable conceptual and methodological innovation, both with respect to the subject matter (applying social

movements research approaches to the migration field) and retrieving original data from sources that are systematic but drawn cross-nationally (development of approaches and methods for cross-national analysis). However, it is the sheer scale, collaborative effort, and cross-national pooling of knowledge and resources that have brought to this research programme a distinctiveness, originality, and interpretative power relative to competitors in the field. We also advanced in-depth knowledge on Britain by conducting 68 semi-structured interviews with policymakers, political party representatives, pro-asylum NGOs, and journalists at both national and EU levels (8 more interviews than initially proposed). This facilitated a more complete understanding of the multi-organisational field, providing systematic information on actors' political strategies and campaigns. Introducing this network analysis allowed us to be more systematic in our organisation analysis than originally envisaged.

To advance focus group techniques for gauging public opinion formation on sensitive political issues, by introducing an experimental approach whereby different peer groups (by age cohort, gender, ethnic background) are confronted by the 'moral dilemmas' of real asylum cases, and to examine to what extent their opinions are fixed or open to change.

We developed and applied our innovative experimental method in 14 focus groups. Our approach proved successful for gauging the normative limits of groups' acceptance or rejection of asylum cases, as well as the extent to which such opinions were derived from official sources and public positions. The focus group design permits retrieval of information on peer group positions that can be related to our own data on claims-making as well as to representative public opinion data.

To provide a body of knowledge based on rigorous cross-national data, that will allow firm empirically grounded statements to be made concerning 'Europeanisation': a) the levels of convergence and divergence in the UK, France, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands; b) the role that transnational political institutions and actors play as sources and targets of demands.

Much effort was expended on completing the five-country study, which is based on rigorous cross-national claims-making data. The important questions of postnational, transnational, and Europeanisation trends, are addressed in the forthcoming book (Nominated Output 1). Questions regarding cross-national convergence or divergence were the central focus for the entire comparative project. For Britain, a European dimension was included in each workpackage to track potential emergent trends.

Workpackage 1. Mapping Claims-Making Over Asylum and Immigration in Britain and Europe

Method – Political Claims-Making

Political claims-making acts range from demonstrations and protest actions to speech acts and conventional forms of public statements and political decisions. A political claim is the unit of analysis, and we code several variables (e.g. event, main actor, addressee of claim, issue, type of action, language used in making claim, constituency supported by claim; see Annex 1 for codebook). These can be aggregated at different levels, combine quantitative

and qualitative information, and maintain considerable flexibility for analysis. The data was coded directly into an SPSS database.

All articles referring to immigration and asylum were selected from the online database Lexis-Nexis for the primary newspaper source from 1990-2004. For one year, 2001, all articles from three broadsheet papers (Times, Guardian, Independent), two tabloids (Sun, Mirror) and two mid-market newspapers (Mail, Express) were collected in hard copy. This was to control for biases in our selected primary source, The Guardian. Tests supported the reliability of this data retrieval strategy. We therefore decided to retrieve data for a longer period than originally envisaged using our primary source, the Guardian, and in contrast to the original proposal, code the Times only for 2001. We now have a fifteen-year continuous sample (approximately 5000 cases) running from 1990 to the present.

Results

See Appendix 1 for publications of detailed findings, which we cannot comprehensively cover here. We briefly highlight cross-national ones, before giving more illustrative detail on the overall structure of the public debate in Britain.

Cross-national:

The book 'Contested Citizenship' addresses important questions relating to the relationship between national institutions set up for dealing with migrants and minorities, and the ways that actors – migrants, xenophobes, and anti-racists - have been able to make themselves heard by publicly mobilising demands over such issues. It is the first project of its kind to produce original empirical evidence that is strictly cross-nationally comparative, covering Britain, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, by combining insights from social movements and migration approaches to citizenship. Substantive research has been conducted on the major questions in immigration politics: citizenship, postnationalism, transnational communities, multiculturalism and Islam, the extreme right, and anti-racism. Findings address core questions facing European societies regarding integration and cohesion, globalisation and pluralisation.

Britain:

Table 1 presents the overall structure of British public debates on immigration and asylum. The first column (in bold) shows the share of different aggregated actors in claims-making on immigration and asylum. The second column shows the average valence position of these actors relative to each other, on a scale of -1 anti-migrant/immigration, to +1 pro-migrant/immigration. We also show shares of actors and their positions in different sub-issue fields, though without discussing them here.

Table 1: Distribution of Claims-making by Actor Type in British Immigration and Asylum Politics												
	Immigration & Asylum All Issues		Institutional Framework		Borders and Entry		Migrants' Rights within Country		Migrants' Access to Welfare and Labour market		Expulsions and Deportations	
	%	Val.	%	Val.	%	Val.	%	Val.	%	Val.	%	Val.
Nation State Actors	57.9	-0.07	62.7	-0.09	64.6	-0.22	53.1	-0.01	68.5	-0.21	57.6	-0.04
Supra- and Extra-Nation State Actors	5.1	+0.38	5.1	+0.40	8.7	+0.30	5.1	+0.33	2.4	0.00	3.4	+0.5
Civil Society Actors	8.0	+0.30	6.4	+0.37	7.9	+0.17	6.1	-0.06	4.7	+0.50	9.3	+0.64
British Ethnic Minorities	3.1	+0.75	1.0	+1.00	1.7	+0.75	4.1	+0.92	2.4	+0.33	4.2	+0.80
General Pro-migrant NGOs	4.7	+0.90	4.1	+0.67	2.6	+1.00	5.8	+1.00	3.9	+1.0	6.8	+0.88
Specific Pro-Migrant NGOs	16.7	+0.97	17.6	+0.96	13.5	+1.00	19.7	+0.97	17.3	+0.95	7.6	+1.00
Migrants, Refugees and Asylum-seekers	4.5	+0.90	3.1	+1.00	0.9	+0.5	6.1	+0.94	0.8	+1.0	11.0	+0.92
All Demands	100.0	+0.27	100.0	+0.23	100.0	+0.07	100.0	+0.35	100.0	+0.10	100.0	+0.32
N and (% of all Demands)	1291	(100)	295	(22.9)	229	(17.7)	294	(22.8)	127	(9.8)	118	(9.1)

A first finding is that the public debate is strongly dominated by the national state and executive actors, who account for six tenths of claims-making (57.9 %) holding a position that is strongly defined against the interests of migrants (-0.07 valence compared to overall +0.27). This demonstrates that British government actors strongly shape the public debate and do so in a way that promotes an anti-migrant/anti-immigration position. This finding contradicts Freeman's 'client politics' thesis¹, which sees immigration politics as tightly controlled by political elites and interest groups away from public debates. Another finding that goes against 'client politics' is that we find very few interventions by 'other civil society actors', such as trade unions (1.1%), churches (1.6%) and employers' associations (1.8%).

¹ Gary Freeman, 'Modes of Immigration Politics in Liberal Democratic States'. *International Migration Review* vol.29, no.122, Winter 1995, pp.881-902.

A second finding seems to contradict those authors who see anti-migrant organised publics expressing xenophobic sentiments as the driving force behind political elites taking restrictive stances on immigration. Counter to the 'racist public' thesis, our findings show that to the extent that they get involved, civil society actors do so with a pro-migrant stance. The main challenge to the British state's anti-migrant stance comes from specific pro-migrant NGOs (16.7%; +0.97) and human rights and welfare NGOs (4.7%; +0.90). Taken together, these NGOs account for six tenths of all civil society demands (57.9%) and have a highly pro-migrant position.

We also find very little mobilisation in civil society by the extreme right and anti-migrant groups (0.3%). Thus it appears that nation state actors definitively shape the public discourse on immigration and asylum, and that actors in civil society, to the extent that they mobilise at all, mobilise against this expressed position, spurred on primarily by a group of pro-migrant NGOs.

Overall our findings show that British governments dominate and shape the public discourse on asylum. This supports the view that the nature of the asylum debate – at present restrictive and stigmatising - to a large extent comes politically from the top down, rather than in response to mobilised public pressure. Government policy positions appear to set the normative limits of public debates, as well as providing the material and symbolic resources which shape the extent to which civil society actors enter the field to take a political stance. If this interpretation is correct, then a government with a massive electoral majority, which decided to take a more pro-migrant position on asylum politics, and emphasised Britain's obligations to asylum-seekers, would not automatically lose public support to the sponsors of anti-asylum sentiments. This argument is not just a moral plea, but based on an understanding of the workings of organisations within civil society. The public policy stance taken by a government offers material resources of grants, for example, for supplying welfare services, and symbolic resources of legitimacy, that would stimulate pro-asylum civil society organisations, and bring other organisations, such as churches and trade unions, into active and more compliant positions. Receiving legitimacy and support from government, organised pro-asylum actors would be able to occupy the political space, thus creating a buffer zone against any potential xenophobic political entrepreneurs. To achieve such a situation, the government could remain publicly quieter on asylum, and try to manage the objective problems away from the public domain. At present, such an eventuality is unlikely, given the restrictive stance of the government and the climate of security considerations.

Workpackage 2. Public Campaigning and the Policy Domain in Britain

Here we sought a better understanding of the multi-organisational field through which immigration and asylum politics is constructed. We focused particularly on the role played by ‘intermediary’ actors linking the policy and the public domains. We examined *movement campaigns*, by looking at the internal networks and alliances between movement actors, and those between movements and other actors, as well as investigating the channels of political access movement actors use to exert political influence, both indirectly through public constituency-building, and directly through lobbying. We also addressed the important question of the extent to which asylum is located within national politics or is ‘Europeanised’ or ‘localised’. Lastly, we addressed the political role of *media campaigns*. For this we undertook a detailed content analysis of all editorials on immigration and asylum in the major national newspapers for one year (2001) and conducted semi-structured interviews with journalists.

Method

A) Actor Interviews: the Multi-Organisational Field

68 semi-structured interviews were conducted with policymakers (8), party politicians (7), journalists (11) and civil society organisations (36). 16 of these interviews were conducted with EU-level actors, and the remaining 52 with national, regional or local-level actors in the UK. Two separate interview schedules were developed – one for policymakers, political parties and civil society organisations (Annex 3), and one for the in-depth interviews with pro-asylum activists (Annex 4). For civil society actors, 26 interviews were carried out with the most important organisations using the same schedule as for government and political party actors. This innovation allowed us to apply network analysis techniques to our study, and thereby undertake a more systematic analysis than originally envisaged. A further 10 interviews were undertaken with movement actors using an interview schedule that allowed greater qualitative depth. These interviews helped us to reach a deeper understanding of pro-asylum campaigns. Interviews lasted approximately an hour. They were recorded, transcribed, coded into Access and transformed into SPSS for analysis.

Regarding political campaigns, initial investigations showed that in the proposal we had overstated the role of political parties, and not really addressed those of other actors such as lawyers, who in fact proved to be relevant. Instead of studying party programmes and documentation, as initially proposed, we decided to analyse the structure of political campaigning within civil society more systematically, and invested our time and resources in developing the network analysis approach. This innovation gave us more explanatory potential regarding political campaigns in general by allowing us to undertake analyses of patterns of influence, alliance and disagreement between active organisations.

B) Newspaper Campaigns

To study the political role of the media, we carried out a content analysis of journalists’ arguments put forward in newspaper editorials and commentaries. We decided to drop the limited analysis of broadcast media from the initial proposal, and instead focus in greater depth on the print media. This was because interviewed actors regularly cited specific sections of the print media as influential political actors in the field, much more so than

broadcast media. The in-depth analysis of the political role of the print media that we have undertaken would not have been possible if we had undertaken a content analysis of broadcast media, which is resource intensive, and we considered it unlikely that it would have brought more information on media campaigns which appear to be located in the more partisan press.

We collected 309 relevant newspaper editorials from 7 national newspapers for 2001 (Guardian, Independent, Sun, Mirror, Daily Mail, Daily Express, Times). The codebook for the thematic contents of editorials is designed in a way that makes the data systematically comparable with the political claims-making data (WP1) (see Annex 2 for codebook). This allows for direct comparisons of how newspapers cover and comment upon events. The data was coded into an SPSS database. To give our findings more grounding, we undertook semi-structured interviews lasting 45 minutes with journalists at each newspaper, which were recorded, transcribed and coded into SPSS (see Annex 5 for interview schedule).

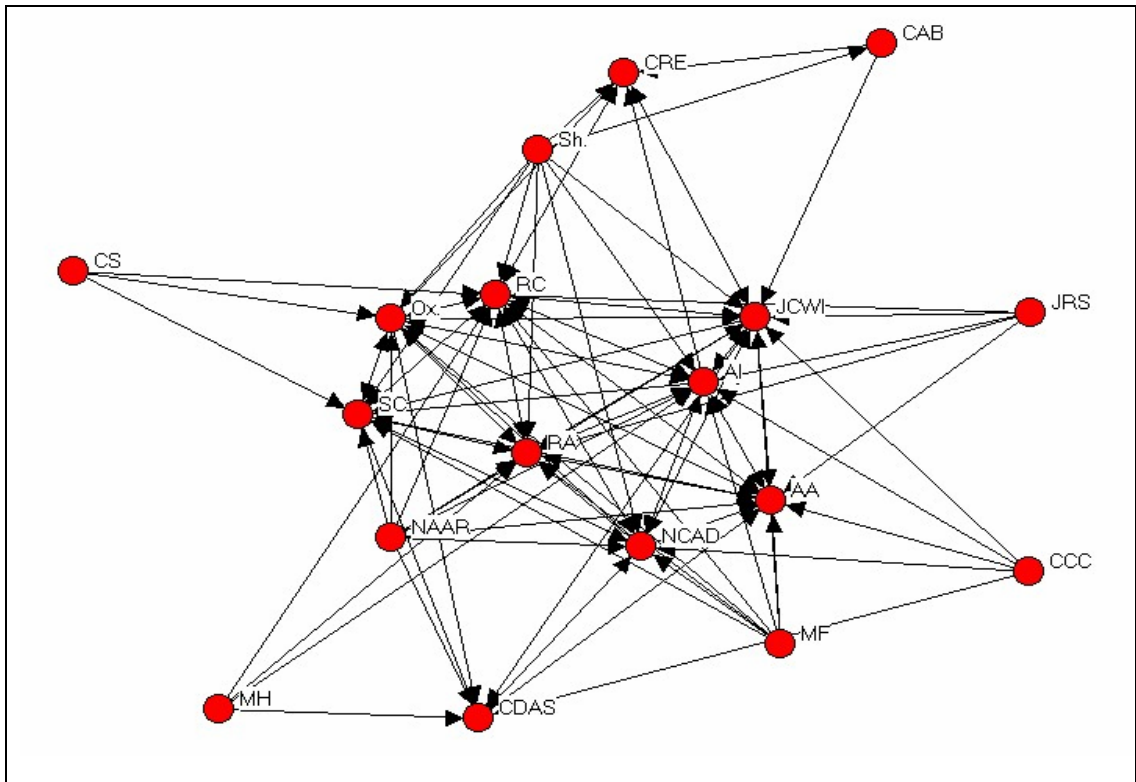
Results

A) Political Actors and the Multi-organisational Field on Asylum and Immigration

The interviews provided us with an extremely rich dataset, which complements our claims-making data, and from which we are able to make grounded statements regarding: the repertoires of action used by organisations at national and European levels; media and collective actors' political positions and strategies; patterns of influence, alliance, disagreement and transnational cooperation between actors; the specific actions undertaken by actors in campaigns, and their perceived effectiveness; actors' perceptions of the influence of public opinion on policies; and their evaluations of the extent, type and future potential for Europeanisation.

We have space to provide a few illustrative results here, and report main findings with regard to the structure of the multi-organisational field. Network analysis allowed us to investigate patterns of influence and targeting, alliance and disagreement by organisations. As in the claims-making analysis, institutional actors, namely the Home Office and NASS, emerged as crucial targets of other actors' attempts to exert influence, as to a lesser extent did the main political parties. In general, pro-asylum organisations were not important targets of influence, but exceptions to this were government quango the Commission for Racial Equality and the Refugee Council, which many other actors had attempted to influence in recent years. Examining alliance patterns (see Fig.2 below), we found that pro-asylum actors have built extensive linkages and a web of cooperative exchange with each other. The majority of pro-asylum organisations had successfully forged cooperative ties with more than half of the other pro-asylum actors in the network, with some organisations standing out as remarkably central (Refugee Council, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, Amnesty International, Oxfam, and the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns). In addition we found that extensive ties had also been forged between pro-asylum actors and a range of allies in wider civil society, such as trade unions, churches, political parties, professional organisations and other NGOs.

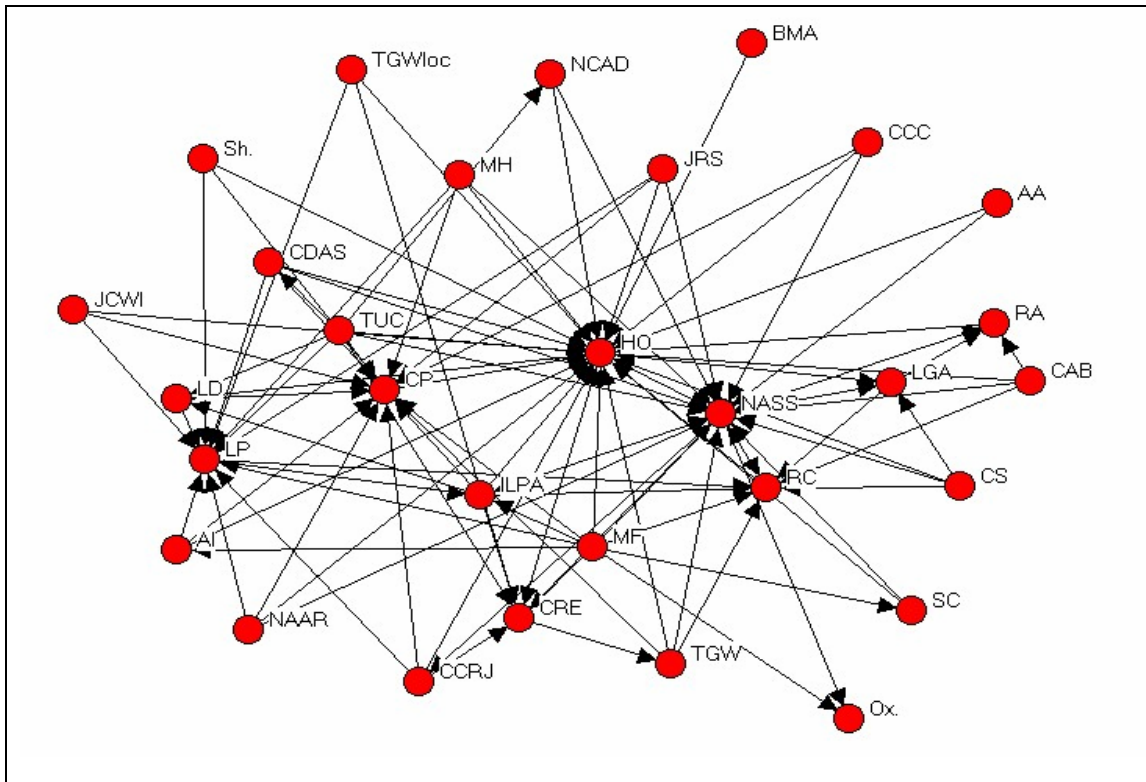
Fig. 2: Networks of Cooperation among Pro-Asylum Organisations²



These findings fit with those from our claims-making analysis which depict the pro-asylum movement as a tightly bound group of organisations existing in a field with relatively few allies, and an oppositional environment dominated by the stance of powerful government actors. It is indicative of a genuine pro-asylum social movement sector. An important finding, however, was that this strongly interlinked pro-asylum sector remained relatively weak in power and influence. Indeed the strong bonding within the pro-asylum lobby appears to be produced by existing within a hostile political environment that is shaped by government and largely unresponsive to the movement’s demands and campaigns. As we see when looking at the patterns of disagreement between actors in the multi-organisational field (see Fig.3 below), the pro-asylum lobby acts in accord as a group disagreeing with the Home Office, NASS, and the two main parties, as well as to a lesser extent the Refugee Council and the CRE. This underlines once more the existence of a state versus pro-asylum lobby cleavage as the definitive feature of the contentious politics of asylum.

² List of abbreviations for Fig.2 and Fig.3: AA=Asylum Aid, AI=Amnesty International, BMA=British Medical Association, CAB=National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, CCC=Campaign to Close Campsfield, CCRJ=Churches’ Commission for Racial Justice, CDAS=Committee to Defend Asylum Seekers, CP=Conservative Party, CRE=Commission for Racial Equality, CS=Children’s Society, HO=Home Office, ILPA=Immigration Law Practitioners’ Association, JCWI=Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, JRS=Jesuit Refugee Service, LD=Liberal Democrats, LGA=Local Government Association, LP=Labour Party, MF=Medical Foundation, MH=Migrant Helpline, NAAR=National Assembly Against Racism, NASS=National Asylum Support Service, NCAD=National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns, Ox=Oxfam, RA=Refugee Action, RC=Refugee Council, SC=Save The Children, Sh=Shelter, TGW=Transport and General Workers Union, TGWIoc=Transport and General Workers Union, Yorkshire branch, TUC=Trades Union Congress.

Fig. 3: Patterns of Disagreement in the Multi-Organisational Field



In contrast to the extensive ties of alliance and influence of pro-asylum groups at the national level, we found much weaker networks of cooperation and influence active at political levels beyond the nation-state. At the European level organisations also used different strategic action repertoires. In particular, the use of ‘outsider’ strategies directed at the mass media, informing and mobilising the public were relatively common nationally, but almost absent in campaigns at the European level. A majority of actors felt that the European Union was less or much less important than national politics, though there was also a broadly shared consensus that European immigration policies were becoming increasingly more important, with several interviewees citing the European harmonisation of asylum policies and the greater jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice as ‘drivers’ of such processes. Pro-asylum NGOs tended to view the European agenda as fundamentally restrictive, driven by governments’ desires to curb asylum seeking and illegal immigration.

B) The Press as a Political Actor on Asylum and Immigration

From the interviews with journalists and the analysis of editorials, we gathered wide-ranging data on how the British print media deals with the questions of asylum and immigration.

Journalists from the majority of British newspapers in the sample did not view their newspaper as running direct campaigns on immigration and asylum issues. One exception was the Sun, which has run campaigns directly targeting the Home Secretary.

Journalists generally assumed their readership was either very or moderately interested in immigration issues, and a slight majority also believed that people in Britain had come to view the issues within an anti-asylum, anti-immigration frame of reference over the past decade. Importantly, they tended not to see newspaper coverage as having much responsibility for or contributing to this situation, some articulating the view that coverage reflected public or societal concerns, rather than creating them. Differences were apparent between newspapers regarding journalists' assumptions of their readerships' opinions. While journalists from the Mail and the Express judged their readership to be less in favour of new immigration than general public, those from regional newspapers, broadsheets and the Mirror tabloid considered their readership to be more in favour than the general public. The majority of journalists interviewed felt the press had an important role to play in factually informing and educating the public on such issues.

Newspapers with the most editorials dedicated to immigration and asylum issues were the Express (73 editorials in 2001), the Independent (64) and the Guardian (58), with the tabloid newspapers having far fewer (Sun 24, Mirror 27). Our contents analysis of editorial arguments showed marked differences in the positions that different newspapers adopted towards migrants and minorities. The broadsheet newspapers the Times, the Guardian and the Independent, as well as the Mirror tabloid (the latter of which has a particularly strong editorial focus on anti-racism), took the most favourable stances towards migrants (mean evaluation on a scale from -1 anti-migrant/immigration to +1 pro-migrant/immigration: Times +0.49, Guardian +0.48, Mirror +0.46, Independent +0.36). Other newspapers, especially the Sun and the Daily Mail took up more anti-migrant/anti-immigration stances (Sun -0.29, Mail -0.21). The Express (-0.07) came in between these poles.

We found significant differences between the attitudes of different newspapers towards the British government. The tabloid Sun was the most favourable of any newspaper towards the government's stance on immigration and asylum (mean evaluation +0.11), with the Mirror and the Times being only mildly more critical of the government's position (Mirror -0.13, Times -0.18). Most critical of the government's actions were the broadsheets the Independent (-0.61) and the Guardian (-0.49), and mid-market newspapers the Mail (-0.55) and the Express (-0.47).

3) British Public Opinion-Formation on Asylum Politics

Method

To analyse public perceptions of asylum and immigration, we used an original experimental method for peer group discussions that was inspired largely by the classical tradition for the focussed interview, or ‘focus groups’. We conducted 14 focus groups that were professionally recruited, to ensure that participants did not know each other previously, thereby avoiding pre-existing interpersonal dynamics:

British ‘White’ Majority: 12 groups – 6 male, 6 female; rotated by age cohort 16-24, 24-45, 45-65; rotated by social grade ABC1, C2DE;
British ‘Minorities’: 2 groups – 1 male, 1 female; 1 Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi), 1 Afro-Caribbean; age cohort 24-45; rotated by location Leeds, London.
Total groups N=14; Total participants N=126³.

This sample was a modification of the original proposal. First we dropped the focus groups with pro-asylum activists, since we felt that our in-depth interviews had provided sufficient information on their activities and attitudes. Second we shifted the emphasis of the groups more onto the majority white population of British nationality, carrying out two groups with minorities as a control. This change allowed us to focus more on the potential source of anti-migrant/immigration sentiments, as well as allowing us to be able to introduce social grade, in addition to gender and age, as a variable. Existing survey research had shown that social grade was potentially an important factor.

After a lead-in discussion on newsprint coverage of asylum, groups were shown video clips of actual asylum cases, and a televised panel discussion where the following actors gave their views: pro-asylum activists, anti-asylum activists, third sector charity and welfare organisations, and official asylum adjudicators. Following each clip, groups were asked which official status they would grant in that particular case (full refugee status, temporary humanitarian protection, or refusal). This enabled the moderator to examine and probe their processes of discussion and negotiation, in order to determine how they constructed asylum as a public problem, the values and knowledge-base on which such stances were founded, the extent to which expressed decisions were derived from interaction with official stances or local understandings, and the extent to which such stances were open to change.

Results

Much literature on political socialisation has emphasised the importance of peer group interaction as the environment for the internalisation of political norms. Given that official mediated political discourse is filtered through an interpretative screen that is shaped by personal and cultural experiences, it is important to look at the private discourses through which people understand immigration and asylum. We investigated how different sections of the public construct their understandings of asylum politics, in particular examining the normative range and limits of, and values behind, their expressed group positions on specific real cases. A secondary objective was to gauge how they formed their positions on

³ Journalists, market researchers and asylum activists were excluded from the recruitment.

asylum through interaction with officially expressed stances of politicians and other public actors in the media, or by drawing on personal experiences.

Public opinion surveys regularly tell us that Britons are against asylum. However, public opinion is significant not only quantitatively, in an aggregate sense, but also qualitatively in the range of opinions that are available for interpreting specific problems. Overall, in our groups asylum-seekers were depicted as ‘outsiders’ to the British community, who saw ‘England’ as an easy country to come to, and became a burden on limited social resources. In some cases, highly stigmatising language was used. However, the key finding from our research was that the normative range of limits through which the public feel able to talk about asylum with their peers is to an important extent derived from the legitimacy given by official policy stances and the publicly expressed positions on asylum by governments and politicians. Actual factual knowledge on asylum and immigration was relatively low, and anti-asylum positions were in some cases relatively open to change when alternative policy positions were specified. According to our interpretation, it is the publicly expressed stance of governments which shapes the extent to which ordinary people feel able to openly express anti-asylum sentiments. The range of opinions and values on asylum expressed by our groups, as well as the language used, appears to be learnt from the top down, though local experiences also had a limited impact.

Activities

A key structural plank was the formation of the cross-national collaborative framework which facilitated the five-country comparative dimension. We established links with the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin, and the Universities of Geneva, Lausanne, and Amsterdam. Six-monthly meetings facilitated this collaboration and discussion of publications.

To ensure future international network activities, collaboration, and dissemination the principal applicant helped initiate and is now on the steering committee of a successful bid to the European Science Foundation for a Network on Identity and Socio-Political Participation (ISSP). This group takes the politics of immigration and ethnic relations as its key focus and holds annual postgraduate seminars, at which this research is presented to demonstrate methods and as a ‘cutting edge’ example of international research.

One co-applicant successfully achieved funding from UACES to host a series of international seminars. This enabled us to disseminate our findings, as well as interact with leading researchers from other approaches in this field.

We have put forward our substantive findings, methods and approach by attending many invited academic and expert international conferences (see Appendix 2 for full list).

We held our own international conference workshop where 17 academics from across Europe and other UK universities presented papers on 'Asylum Today in Britain and Europe - an institutional, public and lived issue'. An audience of more than 60 academics, postgraduate students and invited practitioners, discussed the findings of this project compared to those of other competing approaches (see Appendix 3 for full list of speakers).

Outputs

We published scholarly articles and monographs throughout this project, as promised in the proposal (see Appendix 1 for full details of publications). Much effort has been expended in research at the comparative and European level. This was a strategic decision because the European data was available at an earlier stage. Now the British detailed data is complete we have planned a programme of publication. To begin, Statham and Geddes will contribute two articles to a leading volume and an edition of *Western European Politics*. In addition the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* has already expressed an interest in publishing a special edition from our international conference.

The data-sets outlined in the report constitute a further output. Moreover, negotiations are underway with partners to make the comparative data-set available as a resource to the academic community, after the comparative book is published next year (Nominated Output 1).

Impacts

The team has made considerable efforts throughout the project to disseminate findings from the research to practitioners as well as the academic community (see Appendix 4 for full list). Media activities have included appearing on BBC national radio and the World Service, supplying information and knowledge to BBC journalists (especially on European aspects), and substantial coverage of our comparative research in the press in Denmark and the Netherlands. Expert advice has been submitted nationally to the TUC and CRE, and internationally to the European Commission and two US policy institutes keen to understand the impact of 9/11 on Europe. To ensure dissemination we included a question to all our interviewees asking them if they wished to receive further information and reports on the project, and will send them a copy of the final report.

Future Research Priorities

The cross-national comparative research agenda is still in its infancy. Our own experiences indicate that knowledge and understanding of the national case can be greatly advanced by systematic, empirically based comparison with other countries. Extending the organisational analysis of the British case to other countries would significantly advance understanding of this topic, but requires considerable resources and financial support for a collaborative international framework.

Appendix 1

Publications:

Paul Statham. Forthcoming in 2005. 'Contested Citizenship: The Contentious Politics of Immigration and Ethnic Relations in Germany, Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.' (with R. Koopmans, M. Giugni and F. Passy). 130,000 words. Manuscript submitted and accepted (to be published 2005 by Minnesota University Press) (see Nominated Output 1).

Paul Statham and Ruud Koopmans. Forthcoming in 2005. 'Multiculturalisme et Conflits Culturels: le défi posé par les revendications des groupes musulmans en Grande-Bretagne et aux Pays-Bas' (with R. Koopmans) Chapter 7 in Lionel Arnaud ed., *Les minorités ethniques et l'Union européenne. Politiques, mobilisations, identités*. 33 pages. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, collection "Res Publica".

Paul Statham, Ruud Koopmans, Marco Giugni and Florence Passy. 'Resilient or Adaptable Islam? Multiculturalism, Religion and Migrants' Claims-making for Group Demands in Britain, the Netherlands and France'. Through to final stage of review process for *Ethnicities* Journal.

Paul Statham and Ruud Koopmans. 2004. 'Problems of Cohesion?: Multiculturalism and Islam in Britain and the Netherlands'. In C Husband and A. Garrido (eds.) *Comparative European Research in Migration, Diversity and Identities*. Spain: University of Duesto Press/Humanitarian Net.

Andrew Geddes. Forthcoming in 2004. 'UK migration policy: between the past that cannot be forgotten and the future that cannot be avoided', in A. Kondo (ed.), *Migration and Globalisation*, Stockholm: CEIFO.

Manlio Cinalli. 2004. 'Pro-Beneficiary Actors between Public and Policy-Domains: A Comparative Analysis of Asylum and Unemployment in the UK'. EurPolCom Working Paper 8/04, available at <http://ics.leeds.ac.uk/eurpolcom>.

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Paul Statham. 2003. 'Understanding the Anti-Asylum Rhetoric: Restrictive Politics or Racist Publics?' *Political Quarterly* vol.74, Special Edition no.1, pp.163-177 (see Nominated Output 2).

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Paul Statham. 2003. 'New Conflicts about Integration and Cultural Diversity in Britain: The Muslim Challenge to Race Relations'. In René Cuperus, Karl A. Duffek, Johannes Kandel (eds.) *The Challenge of Diversity: European Social Democracy Facing Migration, Integration, and Multiculturalism*. Innsbruck, Wien, München: StudienVerlag, pp.126-149.

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Paul Statham. 2001. 'Europe's Contentious Politics of Immigration and Asylum' *Western Europe 2002*. London: Taylor and Francis, Europa Publications.

Paul Statham. 2001. 'Political Opportunities for Altruism? The role of state policies in influencing British anti-racist and pro-migrant movements.' Marco Giugni and Florence Passy (eds.) *Political Altruism? Solidarity Movements in International Perspective*, pp.133-158. New York/Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Press.

Appendix 2

Academic presentations and conferences:

We have participated, during the course of the project, in several expert international conferences. Papers and presentations/lectures were given at the following:

November 2004. 'Europe's International Migration Relations Old and New', presented at Centre of International Studies, University of Cambridge.

October 2004. 'EU Immigration and asylum policy', presented to conference 'Migration in EU Turkish Relations', Bogazici University, Istanbul.

September 2004. 'Europe's International Migration Relations Old and New', UACES Research Conference, University of Birmingham.

July 2004. 'Europe's International Migration Relations Old and New', Workshop on the Borders of Europe, Europe in the World Centre, University of Liverpool.

June 2004. 'Introductory remarks on the need for new labour migration', at seminar on Immigration and the Labour Market, organised by the Institute for German Studies (Univ. Of Birmingham), Institute for Public Policy Research, Anglo-German Foundation for Industrial Society, Centre for Migration, Politics and Society (Univ. of Oxford), British Embassy, Berlin.

May 2004. 'Migration and the Welfare State in Europe, presented to the European Social and Cultural Studies Unit, University of Sheffield.

May 2004. 'Immigration and asylum during the Italian presidency', presented to UACES conference on the Italian presidency of the EU, LSE.

April 2004. 'Migrants and minorities and the European Parliament elections' presented to seminar on European Parliament elections.

April 2004. 'Europe's fourth wave of migration?' Paper presented to the UACES study group on EU Migration Law and Policy.

April 2004. 'Migration and citizenship in the EU', paper presented at conference 'Cosmopolitanism and Europe' Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, University of London.

April 2004. Two papers presented at Workshop on 'The Contentious Politics of Unemployment and Immigration', European University Institute, Florence.

April 2004. 'Horizontal Networks vs. Vertical Networks within Multi-Organisational Alliances: A Comparative Study of the Unemployment and Asylum Issue-Fields in Britain'. ECPR Joint Sessions, Uppsala, Sweden.

March 2004. 'Immigration in Europe', invited talk at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Florence.

November 2003. 'Towards the Creation of a Common Immigration and Asylum Policy: a review'. Presented at 'The 2003 Greek EU Council Presidency: between disintegration and consensus-building', Hellenic Observatory, London School of Economics.

September 2003. Two papers presented at ECPR General Conference, Symposium on 'The Europeanization of Immigration Policy', Germany.

May 2003. Special invited lecture to Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge MA.

May 2003. 'Labour migration in the EU', paper presented to the workshop on Immigration in Western Europe and the Challenges of Enlargement, Centre for International Studies, University of Cambridge.

April 2003. University Association for Contemporary European Studies, Study Group on the Evolving European Migration Law and Policy: Second Meeting, University of Manchester.

April 2003. 'Still Beyond Fortress Europe? Patterns and Pathways in EU Migration Policy'. Paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the Political Studies Association, University of Leicester.

March 2003. 'National minorities and EU citizenship', round table presentation with Professor D. Miller (Nuffield College, Oxford) on immigrant minorities and European citizenship, St Antony's College, Oxford University.

February 2003. 'The New European Migration Policy?' paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Portland, Oregon.

February 2003. 'Labour migration in the EU: Trends, Patterns, Lacunae and their Implications'. Paper presented at a meeting of the study group 'The Human face of Global Mobility: Exploring International Skilled and Professional Migration in Europe and Asia/Pacific', Department of Sociology, University of California.

September 2002. 1st Pan-European Conference on European Union Politics, ECPR Standing Group on the EU, University of Bordeaux.

September 2002. Lecture to European Doctoral Programme in Migration Diversity and Identities, Ethnicity and Social Policy Research Unit, University of Bradford, UK.

May 2002. Workshop on the Communitarianism of Migration, School of Politics and Communication Studies, University of Liverpool.

May 2002. Panel Member of Forum Scholars for European Social Democracy on 'Migration, Multiculturalism and Civil Society', Berlin.

March 2002. 'A Europeanisation of British NGOs in the Asylum Field?' International Studies Association Conference, USA.

January 2002. Lecture on 'British Race Relations Politics' at the Centre Americain de Sciences Po, Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, Paris.

Appendix 3

Project conference:

As proposed, a one-day international conference was held with academics in 2004. 17 academics from Europe and other UK universities presented papers on the topic of 'Asylum Today in Britain and Europe - an institutional, public and lived issue'. The audience of over 60 academics and postgraduate students discussed the findings of the project alongside the other research presented, much of which was cross national and comparative in perspective. Selected papers from the conference will be submitted to the Journal of Ethnic Migration Studies, who have expressed an interest in publishing a special issue based on the conference.

Conference Programme:



CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS

<http://ics.leeds.ac.uk/eurpolcom>

Asylum Today in Britain and Europe an institutional, public and lived issue

University House,
University of Leeds

**A One Day Conference at the University of Leeds
held by the Centre for European Political Communications (EurPolCom) and the
Jean Monnet European Centre for Excellence**

Supported by the Economic and Social Research Council

9.30-45 Introduction and welcome

Paul Statham, Director, EurPolCom, University of Leeds.

Session 1: Institutions and Rights: European Perspectives – Chair: Paul Statham 9.45-11.15

Christina Boswell, Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWA) – Explaining Protection: Asylum Policy and the Liberal Constraint.

Colin Harvey, University of Leeds - Human Rights and Asylum.

Sarah Craig, University of Stirling - Getting to Refugee status: how asylum procedures block vulnerable applicants.

Georg Menz, Goldsmiths College, University of London – Negotiating European Migration Policy on Two Levels.

Session 2 Institutions and Rights: EU level – Chair: Andrew Geddes, University of Sheffield.

11.30-1.00

Eiko Thielmann, London School of Economics - Managing Asylum in Europe: Redistributive Politics Beyond the State?

Ann Singleton, University of Bristol – Reflections on recent developments in EU immigration and asylum policies.

Sarah Leonard, University of Wales, Aberystwyth - What happened to refugee protection in the European Union? The debates on the creation of 'refugee camps.

Matilde McCreight, University of Birmingham - Defining and Combating Smuggling of migrants, trafficking in human beings and illegal immigration at EC/EU level.

Session 3 Public, Media and Politics – Chair: David Morrison, Institute of Communications Studies, University of Leeds.

2.00-3.10

Paul Statham, EurPolCom, University of Leeds – The Contentious Politics of Asylum: a research project on public claims-making, organisational networks, media, and public perceptions.

Roger Grimshaw, Centre for Crime and Justice Studies (CCJS), Kings College, London – 'Media Image: Community Impact': Are there links between media representations of asylum seekers and refugees, community tensions, and local harassment? Findings of a pilot study in London.

Fabienne Scandella, Free University, Brussels - Asylum policy in Belgium or How to manage the NIMBY discourse.

Session 4 – Communities and Integration – Chair: Andrew Geddes.

3.20-4.30

Jean Tillie, Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES), University of Amsterdam - The role of ethnic civic communities in immigration and integration processes.

Lynette Kelly, Institute of Health, School of health and Social Studies, Warwick University - Constructing communities: British social policy and the management of refugee populations.

Peter Dwyer, University of Leeds – Governance and the welfare of forced migrants.

**Session 5 – Managing and Dealing with Asylum –Chair: Paul Statham
4.40-5.50**

Vicki Squire, University of Essex - From Reception to Interception? The asylum “problem” and an extending UK agenda of management.

Jill Rutter, London Metropolitan University, Understanding Young People's Views on Asylum and Migration.

Christian Kaunert, University of Wales, Aberystwyth - Single Market In Asylum And Migration? -New Norms In EU Justice And Home Affairs.

End

Appendix 4

Impacts

December 2004. Andrew Geddes. Invited speaker, 'Tampere II: New challenges and perspectives for the EU policy on immigration', Fundacio CIDOB, Barcelona.

November 2004. Andrew Geddes. Invited speaker, 'Migration and Labour Market', Plenary contribution at TUC Migrant Workers Conference, Trades Union Congress, London.

July 2004. Andrew Geddes. Invited speaker, 'Crisis what crisis? Immigration and asylum in Britain and Europe', presented to conference for teachers of politics, University of Westminster.

June 2004. Paul Statham. Participant in the launch of the 'Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees' (ICAR), London.

June 2004. Andrew Geddes. Invited speaker, 'Using indicators to measure the labour market inclusion of migrants', Commission for Racial Equality.

June 2004. Andrew Geddes. Invited speaker, Home Office organised seminar for EU National Contact Points on Immigrant Integration, London.

April 2004. Andrew Geddes. Keynote speaker to European Commission EQUAL programme conference on 'Asylum Seekers in the EU: The Challenges of Integration', Croke Park, Dublin.

Research results will be disseminated to all interview partners.

Journalists have regularly contacted the Principal Investigator to comment on immigration and asylum issues on BBC radio, in the national press and press in other European countries.