

Economic Citizenship and Governance in uncertain times

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Project Description:

It is in the context of the great unravelling of the global economy since the global financial crisis that the decision to leave the EU, following the Referendum of June 2016, can be used to exemplify the shock to the polity and economy of the UK; a process now referred to as Brexit. The consequences of this process have been compounded by global and local factors in the form of the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequences of the European Union Withdrawal Act (EUWAA) and the Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP) that effectively creates a border in the Irish Sea between Great Britain and the island of Ireland.

The legacy of austerity in the Eurozone and the United Kingdom (UK), following the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) reinforce these current challenges influences and have led to a period of apparent fracture and shock in the advanced economies, made visible by political debates and election successes of far-right representatives in, for example France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland. Managing these shocks and uncertainty compound the challenges facing government and legislators to act swiftly and within remits of the rule of law in order to ameliorate the impact upon citizens and sustain their welfare.

Applicant Specification:

The key question for this research investigation is how economic citizenship and governance can be reformed and restructured in order to produce outcomes that are legitimate, accountable and inclusive.

It is apparent that the socio-economic, political and governmental challenges in the UK and the rest of the EU are constitutionally grounded but spill over legal and jurisdictional boundaries, which makes research in this area particularly multi-disciplinary.

Depending on the chosen focus taken when analysing economic citizenship and governance a number of possible research topics present themselves, with the following offering a limited selection:

- *Resolving the tension between Administrative and Substantive Decentralisation:* Administrative decentralisation relates to a top-down hierarchical form of devolution in

which central government gives local and regional authorities limited control and resources over some areas of policy. Substantive decentralisation refers to a decentralisation of powers and resources to the most appropriate level of government/governance based upon the principle of subsidiarity.

The key question is whether multi-level governance is the appropriate institutional means to sustain and enhance economic citizenship as devolution ebbs and flows in the UK and the rest of Europe;

- *Is Brexit an Error Masquerading as an Opportunity?*
The Referendum result and subsequent debate highlight the symbiotic nature of culture, identity and citizenship that for many citizens have fractured. Detangling those links and re-adjusting the actual purpose of each of the entities could reinvent citizenship. What form of post-Brexit constitutional settlement, underpinning governance institutions, would rescue citizens from disengaged anomie?
- *Exclusivity v Inclusivity*
Citizenship is assumed to operate within specific political and legal boundaries only. Brexit highlights economic factors, arguably adding another means of exclusive citizenship through economic enabling or disabling. How can understandings and concepts of citizenship outgrow traditional settings and boundaries in order to adapt to global (economic) society?
- *Pandemic governance*
The governance challenges are likely to be more medium-term than that of Brexit, whose implications for the UK and the rest of the European Union (EU) are likely to be long lasting. Given the global scale of the pandemic, the interaction of the two may have profound implications with respect to law, governance and citizenship. In the UK, these include the possibility of further devolution; maintaining the stability of the Union; and, the changing relationship between state and society.

These topics are not exclusive and we are open to applications involving research proposals under the general theme of economic citizenship and governance. Potential students should have an interest and some expertise in studies and/or research of law and/or economics, specifically in relation to citizenship, governance and constitutional change. We are particularly interested in candidates that can offer a multi-disciplinary academic formation in the social sciences. The successful student will join a vibrant and growing community of academics and post-graduate students within the *Citizenship and Governance Strategic Research Area* in a University that is open to people, places ideas and methods.

About the Supervisors:

Dr Anne Wesemann's research focuses on the constitutional construct of the European Union and the interrelations with the Member States, as a result the UK's withdrawal from the EU is a particular interest. Within EU constitutional law, citizenship is a particular focus area of her research, also looking comparatively at concepts of citizenship in the Member States as well as sociological and political perspectives. Her research strongly draws constitutional rights theory and pluralism in its analysis.

Professor Leslie Budd's research focuses upon economic governance at different scales with respect to the political economy of Brexit, socio-economic analysis of space exploration the

digital social economy; eGovernance and socio-economic inclusion within the collaborative economy; public governance, policy and management; and, city leadership. As Visiting Professor of the Centre for Brexit Studies he has given a large public of public presentations and on the economic impact of Brexit and some of its constitutional challenges to the stability of the United Kingdom.

References:

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