

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: University of East London (UEL)		
Unit of Assessment: 21 Sociology		
Title of case study: "Go Home"; Shaping the practice, policy and understanding of hostile environment immigration measure		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2008 – 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gargi Bhattacharyya 2. Giorgio Doná 3. Gerogie Wemyss 4. Nira Yuval-Davis 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor in Sociology 2. Profess of Forced Migration and Refugee Studies 3. Senior Lecturer 4. Emeritus Professor 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2013 – 2020 2. 2000 – present 3. 2013 – present 4. 2003 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2013 – 2020 (ongoing)		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

The Center for Migration, Refugees and Belonging's (CMRB) work produced pioneering evidence of the widespread effects of hostile environment measures. This evidence:

1. influenced government's policy and practice on country-of-origin evidence, health-related immigration and return operations;
2. shaped anti-hostility organisations' health, education, accommodation, and immigration enforcement campaigns;
3. raised national and international evidence-based understanding;
4. upskilled irregular migrants to become cultural producers.

Direct and indirect beneficiaries of the research range from forced migrants to racialised communities, and from anti-hostility campaigning groups to governmental bodies such as the Home Office and the UN.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

Since 2010, UK legislation has substantially restricted access to benefits and services for non-citizens. These multi-faceted immigration measures, subsumed under the term 'hostile environment', were originally targeted at 800,000 - 1,200,000 unauthorized migrants. However, as early as 2013, CMRB researchers exposed the unforeseen consequences of the policies to society, in particular to racialised people.

CMRB's research was conducted across 16 locations in the UK, France, Italy, Rwanda, and Uganda with 3,331 research participants. The methods comprised of ethnographic observations lasting between 3 and 36 months, 34 focus-groups with 374 participants, 16 arts workshops with 72 migrants, 2624 survey respondents, and 261 interviews. This research builds on CMRB's distinctive expertise in intersectional and situated positionality.

Wemyss and Yuval-Davis's EU-funded project Borders, Intersectionality and the Everyday (**G1**) was among the first to identify the effects of the hostile environment beyond its intended targets - those migrants who have no legal right to reside in the UK. This transformed the nature of civic participation across society despite the public stance of the Government.

In 2014, Wemyss, Yuval-Davis and their research partner coined the terms 'everyday bordering' and 'everyday border guards' as a lens to clarify the wider societal effects of borders and bordering processes, as they increasingly encroach on people's lives (**R1, R2**). For example, health workers and welfare administrators are required to check the immigration status of all service users and racialised minorities with regular immigration status are denied access to services. Meanwhile, private citizens who are landlords or employers are turned into 'border guards' required to check immigration status.

Bhattacharyya's ESRC project, Go Home: mapping immigration controversy, uncovered the racist impact of hostile environment policies, particularly the creation of an increased sense of precarity among racialised minorities independently of their immigration status (**R3, G2**). The collaborative street survey gathered the first systematic evidence that Operation Vaken, the Home Office scheme to encourage illegal residents to leave voluntarily, was having adverse effects on racialised minorities with legal settled status. Bhattacharyya's AHRC Performing Memory upskilled migrant-led groups in England and Italy to challenge hostile environment policies through cultural production (**R4, G3**).

CMRB projects address the international ramifications of the UK Government's hostile environment policies. Wemyss and Yuval-Davis found that Britain's 'everyday bordering' practices negatively affect by migrants and locals living near the UK border in Calais, France. Doná's long-term research on global refugee movements (**R5, G4**) and in conflict countries such as Guatemala, Mexico, Uganda, and Rwanda (**R6**), demonstrates how the hostile environment policy is shaped by the conditions in countries of origin and intentional pressures and collaborations.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- R1.** Yuval-Davis, N., Wemyss, G, and Cassidy, K. 2018. Everyday bordering, belonging, and the **reorientation** of British immigration legislation. *Sociology*, 52 (2), 228–244. *Winner 2019, Sage Sociology prize for Innovation and Excellence.* <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038517702599>
- R2.** Yuval-Davis, N., Wemyss, G. and Cassidy, K. 2019. *Bordering*, Polity Press.
- R3.** Jones, H., Gunaratnam, Y. and Bhattacharyya, G. et al. 2017, *Go Home? The politics of immigration controversies*. Manchester University Press.
- R4.** Forkert, K., Bhattacharyya, G., Oliveri, F. and Graham, J. 2019. *Media and the making of migrants*. Manchester University Press.
- R5.** Doná, G. and Young, M. 2016, Refugees and forced migrants, in D. L. Sam and J. W. Berry (eds.) *Cambridge handbook of acculturation Psychology*. Cambridge University Press, 153-172. [Second edition, 2018]. *Winner 2017, B. Gudykunst Outstanding Book Award, International Academy for Intercultural Research.*
- R6.** Doná, G. 2019. *The marginalised in genocide narratives*. Routledge.
- G1.** Nira Yuval-Davis, Georgie Wemyss, *Bordering, political landscapes and social arenas: potentials and challenges of evolving border concepts in a post-cold war world* - UEL led WP9 'Borders, intersectionality and the everyday, EU 7 th framework, 2012-2016, EUR233,600 (UEL share GBP211,641).
- G2.** Gargi Bhattacharyya, 'Go Home': mapping immigration controversy, ESRC, 2013-2015, GBP159,000.
- G3.** Gargi Bhattacharyya, *Performing memory and memorialising conflict at a distance: innovative approaches to understanding the views of displaced people and receiving communities*, AHRC, 2016-2017, GBP83,000.

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G4. Giorgia Doná, Bystanders to the Rwandan genocide: revisiting genocide narratives and reconciliation initiatives, Leverhulme Trust, 2008-2010, GBP31,078.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Since 2013, CMRB findings have been used to substantially reshape key elements of policy and practice, limiting the effects of different components of hostile environment policies.

1. Improving policy and practice about country-of-origin evidence for the Government

Doná was invited to join the influential Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) (**S1**), whose recommendations are laid before Parliament. One of only ten invited experts, Doná has advised the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) on the content and quality of Home Office country-of-origin evidence, which immigration officers rely upon when making case decisions. The evidence Doná provided significantly improved the quality of country-of-origin evidence produced by the Home Office for 17 additional countries over five years. Home Office policy and practice implemented 13 of 14 key recommendations of the ICIBI 2017 report. By clarifying eligibility for immigration status, Doná played a direct role in regulating the implementation of hostile environment practices at the Home Office. (**S2**)

2. Raising awareness of the effects of bordering and shaping campaigning evidence for organisations, politicians, and migrants

The novel concept of ‘everyday bordering’ reached audiences nationally and internationally through the online film *Everyday Borders* (**S3a**) and 36 public debates. Feedback showed that 93% of audiences achieved a greater understanding and 89% were motivated to take action “as a result of attending the event” (**S3b**).

In 2016, the team were invited to the Houses of Parliament to organise a discussion, *Immigration Bills and Everyday Bordering*, based on the national and political relevance of the research. Stuart C MacDonald, MP, testifies that “Everyday Bordering is a helpful term ... the film shows how it affects all, which Parliament didn’t appreciate ... we need to push back. All feel its effects” (**S3c**). MPs present subsequently signed the ‘MPs not border-guards pledge’ in 2018 (**S3d, S3e**).

CMRB’s concepts shaped understanding and campaigning evidence by migrant health campaign groups in submissions to the Health Select Committee on Data Sharing and the Department of Health and Social Care on charging overseas visitors. ‘Docs Not Cops’ representative, Jess Potter, asserted:

“My campaign work with Medact, Docs Not Cops, Migrants Organise and others and my writing of expert witness statements and policy responses have been strongly influenced by my understanding of the concept of everyday bordering” (**S4a**).

Campaign work by Docs Not Cops and other organisations (**S4b, S4c, S4d**) use CMRB’s evidence to argue against these policies, resulting in the termination of the NHS Data sharing agreement with the Home Office in 2018 and the suspension in 2020 of the Immigration Health Surcharge.

Research findings informed campaigns among formal partners such as Southall Black Sisters on immigration raids (**S5a**) and others, including English for Action (**S5b**) in collaboration with Against Borders for Children and Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) campaign against hostile environment ‘Right to Rent’ policy (**S5c**).

Bhattacharyya’s ‘collaborative memory project’ trained 72 migrants with irregular status to become cultural producers, enabling migrant-led organisations such as Global Sistaz United to

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campaign against the hostile environment beyond the scope of the project, at venues including New Arts Exchange, Nottingham in 2018 (S6a, S6b) and Kack Work Museum in Stockport in 2020 (S6c).

3. Underpinning evidence of the racist effects of hostile environment policies for activists and the UN

In 2013, Action against Racism and Xenophobia (AARX) was formed with Bhattacharyya to collaboratively gather the first evidence of the negative effects of the 'Go Home' vans and Operation Vaken on multi-ethnic neighbourhoods (S7a). AARX's ground-breaking findings underpinned the successful public challenge by Refugee and Migrants Forum of Essex and London (RAMFEL) (S7b). The public debate (S7c) sparked by the controversy contributed to the cessation of Operation Vaken and the Home Office review of the impacts of future campaigns on racialised communities and migrants with settled status. (S8)



Figure 1 'Go home' Van

The pivotal findings resulted in external funding (G2, R3) to collate systematic evidence in Scotland and Wales. The nationwide evidence, publicly demonstrated in two films and open access resources (S9), was internationally significant. The UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism in the UK cited the findings in the End of Mission Statement, which was presented to the UN General Assembly as evidence of the racist effects of the hostile environment policies. The report stated that as 'many members of the wider public have difficulty understanding the distinctions between legal and irregular immigrants' and "many people reported harassment for being 'illegal immigrants' when they held settled status or were British citizens." (S10).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

S1. IAGCI: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-independent-advisory-group-on-country-information-iagci>

S2. Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration. 2018. *An Inspection of the Home Office's production and use of Country of Origin information: April-August 2017*. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677556/An_inspection_of_the_production_and_use_of_Country_of_Origin_Information.pdf

S3a. Everyday Borders. <https://vimeo.com/126315982>

S3b. Everyday Borders film/public debates quantitative and qualitative feedback.

S3c. Email from Stuart C McDonald MP. Link to MPs not Border guards:

S3d. 'I am an MP not a border guard' tweet from Rushanara Ali MP 15/10/2018. <https://twitter.com/rushanaraali/status/1051884384905822209?lang=en>

S3e. <https://www.globaljustice.org.uk/our-campaigns/migration/mps-not-border-guards-pledge-signatories/>

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S4a. Testimonial letter from Dr Jess Potter, Consultant in Respiratory Medicine, founding member Docs Not Cops. <http://www.docsnocops.co.uk/>

S4b. Potter, J. 2018. Patients not passports – no borders in the NHS! *Justice, Power and Resistance* 2(2), 417-429 references our work and uses ‘everyday border guards’ <https://egpress.org/Docs-Not-Cops>

S4c. This campaign is covered in Gal-Dem everyday borders page ‘New policy transforms NHS workers into borderguards’ <https://gal-dem.com/tag/everyday-borders/>

S4d. <https://www.migrantsorganise.org/?p=26424>

S5a. SBS meeting in conjunction with AARX: <https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/news/go-home-campaign-public-meeting/>

S5b. Testimonial letter from English for Action.

S5c. Feedback comments from JCWI following viewing of ‘Everyday Borders’ (**S3a**) in December 2019. ‘really useful resource we are in the process of expanding our networks and this would be a great tool’. JCWI states ‘The Government hasn’t considered the concerns of landlords who don’t want to be borderguards’ <https://www.jcwi.org.uk/right-to-rent> and ‘Right to Rent turns landlords into untrained border guards’ <https://www.jcwi.org.uk/news/court-of-appeal-agrees-that-the-right-to-rent-scheme-causes-racial-discrimination>.

S6a. Blog showing regular participation by Global Sistaz United in annual festival by Nottingham Contemporary, bringing together food and performance, <https://thenottinghamfoodblog.com/2018/05/12/melting-pot-food-and-culture-festival-2018-the-global-sistaz-united/>

S6b. Exhibition notice evidencing participation of Global Sistaz United in further arts project on the topic of national identity, continuing work initiated through ‘Performing Memory’ on the topic *What does it mean to be British?* at Playworks, Nottingham, 14 September - 12 October 2018.

<https://www.bosedalawoye.com/copy-of-2016-2017>

S6c. Exhibition notes demonstrating further collaboration in arts projects beyond Nottingham by Global Sistaz United. <https://apocketfuloftreasure.wordpress.com/a-museum-of-journeys-in-a-chest-of-drawers/>

S7a. AARX press release on pilot study findings. [AARX Press Release: Survey shows government ‘Go Home’ message is ‘unacceptable’](https://www.actionagainstracismandxenophobia.wordpress.com/2018/07/22/aarx-press-release-survey-shows-government-go-home-message-is-unacceptable/) « Action Against Racism and Xenophobia (wordpress.com)

S7b. BBC report on ending of Operation Vaken. [‘Go home’ vans legal threat shelved](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-45888888)

S7c. Migrants Rights Network blog by interim director

Rita Chadha: <https://migrantsrights.org.uk/blog/2018/07/22/go-home-vans-five-years-on/> referencing the <https://mappingimmigrationcontroversy.com> as beneficial to reframing discussions.

S8. Home Office. 2013. Operation Vaken: evaluation report, October 2013.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254411/Operation_Vaken_Evaluation_Report.pdf

S9. Go Home: mapping immigration controversies website (**G2, R3**) hosts a variety of resources: <https://mappingimmigrationcontroversy.com>. Final research findings here: <https://mappingimmigrationcontroversy.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/end-of-project-findings-leaflet-final.pdf>

S10. Report of UN Special Rapporteur, point 35. [OHCHR | End of Mission Statement of the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance at the Conclusion of Her Mission to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Racism/End_of_Mission_Statement_of_the_Special_Rapporteur_on_Contemporary_Forms_of_Racism,_Racial_Discrimination,_Xenophobia_and_Related_Intolerance_at_the_Conclusion_of_Her_Mission_to_the_United_Kingdom_of_Great_Britain_and_Northern_Ireland.pdf)