

W/SERD CIVIL SOCIETY



Researching Civil Society for Civil Society







Overview

WISERD Civil Society is an ESRC research centre, undertaking a five year, multi-disciplinary programme of policy relevant research addressing Civil Society in Wales, the UK and Internationally. The centre's research will produce new evidence on the changing nature of civil society at local, regional, national and international levels. In addition, the programme will describe and explain the impact of social change on local forms of civil society and civil society organisations; and examine what this means for social cohesion and well-being.

The Centre includes a suite of twenty three research projects, addressing four key thematic areas:

- Locality, Community and Civil Society
- Individuals, Institutions and Governance
- Economic Austerity, Social Enterprise and Inequality
- Generation, Life Course and Social Participation

Projects explore a series of policy and practice relevant themes which impact upon civil society at local, regional and national levels. These include: education, volunteering, well-being, ageing, governance and diversity.

WISERD Civil Society includes co-investigators from twelve UK universities as well as international collaborators in Europe, North America and Australia. The Centre also works in close partnership with colleagues from the public, private, policy and third sectors.



Theme 1: Locality, Community and Civil Society

Theme Leads: Mike Woods (Aberystwyth University) &
Howard David (Bangor University)

Theme One explores the reconfiguration and re-articulation of local civil society in the context of contemporary social and economic change.

Work-package 1.1: Researching Civic Participation in Wales, in Place, and Over Time

October 2014 – September 2017

Howard Davis & Robin Mann (Bangor University)

This project examines experiences of participation at the local level and what they tell us about the changing patterns of mobilisation in particular places in Wales. The project will also analyse trust in social organisations, and how social identities and inequalities shape local civic relations.

Work-package 1.2: Redefining Local Civil Society in an Age of Global Inter-Connectivity

October 2016 – September 2018

Mike Woods (Aberystwyth University) &
Jon Anderson (Cardiff University)

This project explores how imaginaries and practices of local civil society have been stretched and reconfigured by global interconnectivities, including both the reorientation of local civil society activities around global issues and concerns, and participation in local civil society by individuals outside the locality.



Work-package 1.3: Migrants, Minorities and Engagement in Local Civil Society

October 2015 – September 2017

Rhys Dafydd Jones (Aberystwyth University),
Stephen Drinkwater (University of Roehampton) &
Andrew Thompson (University of South Wales)

This project combines quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to examine the participation of European migrants from A8 countries in local civil society.

Work-package 1.4: Spaces of New Localism: Stakeholder Engagement and Economic Development in Wales and England

March 2015 – February 2018

Martin Jones, David Beel (University of Sheffield) &
Ian Rees Jones (Cardiff University)

This project is undertaking a comparative study of stakeholder and civil society involvement in the City-Region Building agenda. The project will specifically look at the City-Region Builders involved in Local Enterprise Partnerships, City Deals, Enterprise Zones, and City-Region governance and development in general.



Theme 2: Individuals, Institutions and Governance

Theme Lead: Paul Chaney (Cardiff University)

Theme Two projects use multi-level governance; neo-institutional theory and sub-national public policy-making to examine devolution and the changing relationships between individuals and institutions in civil society and the state.

Work-package 2.1: Higher Education and Civil Society

April 2015 – March 2017

Gareth Rees, Chris Taylor & Ceryn Evans (Cardiff University)

This project explores the relationships between participation in higher education and engagement in civil society and looks at whether university graduates play a distinctive role in the institutions of civil society. The research also examines the extent to which the institutional shift from an elite to a mass system of higher education has affected the roles that graduates play in civil society.

Work-package 2.2: Territoriality and Third Sector Engagement in Policy-Making and Welfare Provision

July 2016 – June 2018

Paul Chaney & Daniel Wincott (Cardiff University)

This project investigates how territorial administration of the third sector in Wales has changed over the post-war period in response to shifting patterns and processes of governance, analysing the ways in which this has affected the way third sector organisations' shape and deliver welfare.



Work-package 2.3: Education, Language and Identity

April 2016 – March 2019

Rhys Jones & Elin Royles (Aberystwyth University),
Lindsay Paterson & Fiona O'Hanlon (University of Edinburgh)

This project investigates types of civic participation and conceptions of language and identity promoted within the statutory education system, and within civil society organisations working with young people, in both Wales and Scotland.

Work-package 2.4: Building Trust? Institutions and Interactions of Multi-Level Governance in the UK, Germany and France

October 2016 – September 2019

Alistair Cole & Ian Stafford (Cardiff University)

This project utilises a mixed-methods approach to explore the role of trust and transparency within the context of multi-level governance in Europe, looking at the extent to which a pan-European convergence in norms of trust has emerged and its relationship to transparency. The project will examine the interplay of trust and transparency within and between three EU states: the UK, France and Germany.



Theme 3: Economic Austerity, Social Enterprise and Inequality

Theme Lead: David Blackaby (Swansea University)

Theme Three explores the inter-relationship between aspects of civil society and the economy in a time of austerity by examining how economic trends are related to key aspects of civil society including; levels of social enterprise, trade union membership and participation in associational life, access to community services, social cohesion and well-being at local scales.

Work-package 3.1: Social Enterprise in Wales, The UK and Europe

October 2014 – September 2016

Catherine Robinson (University of Kent) &
Philip Murphy (Swansea University)

This project utilises a range of econometric approaches to analyse entrepreneurial activity, the growth in social enterprise and the changing role of the third sector. Research focuses on the early stages of entrepreneurial activity and also on the survival and performance of small businesses in Wales (and beyond) as a means to contribute to economic growth and more widely, wellbeing.

Work-package 3.2: Implications of Spatial and Temporal Variation in Service Provision for Inequalities in Social Outcomes

April 2016 – March 2018

Gary Higgs, Mitch Langford (University of South Wales) &
Scott Orford (Cardiff University)

This project analyses existing secondary sources of quantitative data in order to investigate levels of social capital within communities in relation to changing levels of provision of key public services.



Work-package 3.3: Trade Union Membership, Associational Life and Wellbeing

April 2015 – March 2018

Rhys Davies, Steve Davies (Cardiff University) &
Alex Bryson (National Institute of Economic & Social Research)

This project utilises a mixed-methods approach to investigate the reasons behind trends and geographical variations in trade union membership. The project also explores how trade unions contribute to other aspects of social capital.

Work-package 3.4: Equality, Diversity and Third Sector Welfare Provision

April 2016 – March 2018

Nick Johns (Cardiff University),
Stephen Drinkwater (University of Roehampton) &
Alison Green (Glyndwr University)

This project employs a mixed methods approach to investigate the impact of faith-based welfare provision on social cohesion.

Work-package 3.5: Wellbeing, Deprivation and Social Cohesion

October 2015 – September 2017

David Blackaby, Philip Murphy (Swansea University) &
Melanie Jones (University of Sheffield)

This project utilises a range of econometric techniques to investigate the nature of the relationship between individual subjective wellbeing, individual and household characteristics, work/life circumstances, and a range of indicators related to the measurement of social cohesion and civil society.



Theme 4: Generation, Life Course and Social Participation

Theme Lead: Sally Power (Cardiff University)

Theme Four addresses the intergenerational transmission of values, beliefs and different forms of social, cultural and economic capital and how these relate to civil society; investigating variations in social participation and perceptions within and between generations.

Work-package 4.1: Generativity, Social Participation and Later Life

February 2015 – January 2017

Martin Hyde (University of Manchester),
Martijn Hogerbrug & Ian Rees Jones (Cardiff University)

This project is undertaking a programme of quantitative data analysis, using the prism of ageing, to address the effects of, and responses to, globalization for civil society and social participation at national and local levels.

Work-package 4.2: The Transmission of Intergenerational Capital in Wales: Language, Religion and Community

January 2016 – September 2017

Chris Taylor, Sally Power & Kate Moles (Cardiff University)

This project will utilise a mixed methods approach to explore the distribution and determinants of the intergenerational transmission of language, religion and community cohesion in Wales.



Work-package 4.3: Ageing, Serious Leisure and the Contribution of the Grey Economy

April 2016 – March 2018

Jesse Heley, Laura Jones (Aberystwyth University) &
Paul Milbourne (Cardiff University)

This project utilises a mixed methods approach to explore the benefits of 'serious leisure' in retirement for the individual and for the wider communities of which they are a part.

Work-package 4.4: Social and Cultural Capital in later life

January 2017 – December 2018

Martina Feilzer (Bangor University) &
Ian Rees Jones (Cardiff University)

This project explores the impact of ageing and intergenerational relations on participation in civil society through the lens of the place that crime occupies in the life course.


Work-package 4.5: The Involvement of Grandparents in the Early Years: A Geographical Comparison

January 2016 – December 2016

Chris Taylor (Cardiff University)

This project will undertake detailed analysis of the potential impact grandparents can have on their grandchildren's cognitive, social and emotional development.



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WISERD is a collaborative venture between the universities of
Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, South Wales and Swansea.