

## Talk 1. *Negotiating university education in a hostile environment*

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The Magna Charta Universitatum, signed by more than 800 universities, states that in order to 'fulfil its vocation [a university] transcends geographical and political frontiers' and that it must 'ensure that its' students freedoms are safeguarded'. Evidence suggests, that Brexit, as well as the rise of populist political discourse across Europe and the US, is part of a wider cultural backlash against policies of tolerance and diversity introduced in Western societies since the 1970s (Inglehart and Norris, 2016). Brexit follows from earlier exclusionary political developments, such as Theresa May's call for hostile environment and several immigration acts in the UK, which amount to what Yuval-Davis et al. (2017) call everyday bordering, whereby the state has shifted the responsibility of border control from the border agencies to public and private actors, such as universities. In the UK universities have also become private enterprises who need to raise profits through student fees. A university may thus be simultaneously acting as a humanitarian institution, a neoliberal space aiming to maximise profits and as a border guard acting on behalf of the state to monitor and control those without full citizenship rights. In this changing policy environment, institutions are challenging the cultural backlash and trying to make university education available to students regardless of their background, through programmes such as OLive. These programmes are invaluable for the students who succeed against the odds and against the numerous barriers put before them. For the institutions, and the individual actors within them, the goal of supporting these extraordinary students must be accompanied by the wider political goal of challenging the hostile environment in and out of the classrooms, so that not only the extraordinary, but also the ordinary students get the chance to succeed. This paper outlines some of these barriers in the UK context, and suggest some strategies to negotiate these, while also challenging the bordering regimes and hostile environment on a wider scale.

### References

- Inglehart, R. and Norris, P. (2016) Trump, Brexit, and the rise of populism: Economic have-nots and cultural backlash, Harvard Kennedy School, Faculty Research Working Paper Series  
Magna Charta Universitatum <http://www.magna-charta.org/resources/files/the-magna-charta/english>
- Yuval-Davis, N., Wemyss, G. and Cassidy, K. (2017) 'Everyday Bordering, belonging and the reorientation of British immigration', Sociology, First Published May 22, 2017

Talk 2. ***Passive revolutions and the sociology of biopolitical panic***

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How should we understand and then interpret anti-immigration hegemony within a fight for improving east European standing within Europe? How can we link these discursive and political events to demographic structures and changes following the ideas of Antonio Gramsci? First, I shall provide a historical structural analysis of demographic processes, then review policies and institutionalized norms, and finally link structures, processes, and popular political discourses in order to complete a complex and dynamic analysis of Hungarian biopolitical panic and the mass mobilization in Hungary.

Roundtable. ***The Right to Education: Issues and challenges faced by marginalised groups in Europe***

If some groups have difficulty in accessing higher education in Europe, what does that tell us about the nature of universities or higher education systems in Europe? What does it tell us also about the nature of community and society in Europe? The aim of this roundtable is to highlight issues that impact negatively on access to higher education of people identified as Roma or refugee. We consider this situation in light of two questions in particular (1) Who is more likely to enact the right to education than others and why? and (2) Do universities have a duty to address this issue?