

# Social integration of UK migrants: The role of English language skills

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# Outline of talk

1. What our research is about?
2. Data sets used in the project
3. Key findings and publications
4. Accessing the data:
  - Pre-SafePod time
  - After SafePods became available

# What the research is about?

- Socioeconomic integration of immigrants is an important policy objective in developed countries.
- What are barriers for integration?
  - Language skills.
- **Research question**  
How do English language skills affect
  - Residential integration outcome; and
  - Education, health and fertility outcomes of UK immigrants?



# What outcomes do we study?

Analyse the causal effects of language skills on:

1. Residency in different types of enclave.
  - Ethnic enclave
  - Language enclave
  - Country-of-birth enclave
  - World-region-of-birth enclave (e.g., Europe, North Africa, etc.)
2. The extent of deprivation of the neighbourhood migrants live in;
  - Measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation
3. Fertility outcomes that have not been studied before.
  - Age at having first child
  - Number of biological children
  - Child health
4. Educational attainment and self-reported adult health.

# Data used in the project

## Datasets

- The Office for National Statistics Longitudinal Study
  - Base: individual-level dataset from the England & Wales 2011 Census
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- Live Births to Sample Mothers

# Key findings on residential outcomes

1. Better English skills lead migrants to live outside of a language enclave, but lead them to cluster in an ethnic enclave.
2. Evidence for poorer English skills leading to a more deprived neighbourhood.

## Publication

- “Where to live? English proficiency and residential location of UK migrants”, *Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organisation*, 2024, Vol. 221.

# Key findings on education, health and fertility outcomes

1. Strong evidence for better English skills to improve educational attainment.
2. Better English proficiency improves adult health.
  - No significant effect on child health.
3. Evidence for poorer English skills leading to a higher chance of becoming a teenage mother.

## Publications

- “Speak better, do better? Education and health of migrants in the UK”, *Labour Economics*, 2018, Vol. 52.
- “Speak well, do well - English language proficiency and health and social outcomes of UK immigrants”, *Health Economics Research Unit Policy Brief*, 2016, University of Aberdeen.

# How did the SafePod help my research?

- Pre-SafePod time:
  - Having to travel to London or Fareham, to access the data.
  - Can be a significant barrier to data access.
    - Inequalities in data access opportunities, depending on where you live.
- After SafePods became available:
  - Frankly, life changing!
  - The confidential data can be accessed from a remote area.
  - Availability of SafePods opens a door for accessing confidential data to those who have restricted mobility due to, for example:
    - Caring responsibility
    - Disability
    - Budget limitations
  - Mitigates inequalities in data access opportunities.



Thank you!  
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