

Social Research Call

Title:

Re-shaping Attitudes about Refugees and Gender Minorities in Spain and Portugal



Acronym: REACH

Project leader: Bilge Yabanci

Host organisation: University of Deusto

Main purpose of the project: The project aims to develop human rights-based public narratives about refugees and gender minorities in Spain and Portugal. Our goal is to provide stakeholders with empirically tested narratives to initiate constructive dialogues with their target audiences and counter the growing influence of the far-right in shaping public attitudes.

Design/methodology/approach: The team will first conduct 'deliberative community dialogues' in several cities to formulate alternative narratives. We will then run large-scale online randomised survey experiments to test the effect of these narratives on a representative sample of citizens.

Potential results: The project will identify game-changing new public communication strategies, i.e. narratives, that can address misinformation and moderate extreme cognitive-attitudinal biases and induced threat perceptions about refugees and gender minorities.

Social relevance of the research: The team will launch a new open-source digital database of narratives, serving as a blueprint for stakeholders like the media, civil society organisations, advocacy groups, educators, businesses, politicians, and artists. This database will assist them in communicating, publishing, reporting, and teaching about refugees and gender minorities.

Originality/value of the project: To date, limited research exists on how citizens would engage with and respond to rights-based narratives about refugees, gender minorities, and other stigmatised groups. The team weaves citizen participation into data-driven research, offering a foundational research program for the future to counter the salience of the far right in shaping public opinion and to reduce socio-political polarisation.