

Principal Researcher: Katharina Schmid – ESADE (Universitat Ram3n Llull)

Title: Preventing discrimination, social exclusion and extreme attitudes in Spain: The role of collective identities and social contact.

Main purpose of the project:

This project tackles a key societal challenge facing Spain: how to prevent discrimination, extreme attitudes and social exclusion of immigrants and other minority/disadvantaged groups in society. It examines the interplay between exclusion as a risk factor and intergroup contact as a preventive strategy of such negative attitudes.

Design/methodology/approach:

The project triangulates three quantitative data collection methods: 1) a general population survey to examine drivers and correlates of extreme attitudes in society, 2) an implicit association test to examine subconscious biases, and 3) a series of experiments to identify strategies for preventing discrimination of immigrants and other disadvantaged groups.

Potential results:

The project expects to show the effectiveness of positive intergroup contact in preventing discrimination and extreme attitudes and that it does so via reducing collective identity confrontation. However, it expects that contact will only be effective when it is predominately positive, and when it unequivocally disconfirms prior negative stereotypes.

Social relevance of the research:

A key policy issue concerns building egalitarian societies, yet recent surges in extreme attitudes risk derailing progressive societal changes that tackle inequality. By offering novel data on risk and preventive factors of discrimination and extreme attitudes the project will yield important insights on how to foster a more inclusive society.

Originality/value of the project:

This project will collect primary data using a unique, innovative multi-method approach to study risk and preventive factors of discrimination, social exclusion and extreme attitudes. By examining previously unexplored conditional factors, this project will offer new insights into the drivers of explicit and implicit attitudes towards minority and disadvantaged groups.