

Please join us for our LSE Sociology Research Seminar on Wednesday the 17<sup>th</sup> of January with Dr Michaela Benson. Michaela will be talking on: **Brexit and the politics of belonging among Britons resident in the EU27: recasting formations of migration, privilege and identity**

The seminar will be held in the Robert McKenzie Room in the St Clements' Building, S219, from 12.30 to 2pm.

**Abstract:**

In this paper, I consider how Brexit recasts belonging among the Britons who have made their homes and lives in the EU27. Drawing on my recent research with Britons living in the Lot and Toulouse, I focus on how the referendum and early negotiations about citizens' rights were experienced by my interlocutors. In particular, I draw attention to what is going on beyond the political and legal re-writing of rights and entitlements—a necessary part of the withdrawal process through which UK citizens will find the rights previously conferred by their European Union citizenship reconsidered, in some cases upheld, and in other cases removed—to highlight that Brexit is having a tangible impact on the lives of UK citizens who have migrated and settled in the EU27. I highlight in particular how Brexit has brought to the fore not only questions about rights and privileges, but were also experienced in various ways by my co-conversationists as challenges to previously taken-for-granted identities founded on their understandings of the relationship between Britain and Europe, resulting in an emerging politics of belonging. Through this focus, I offer initial insights into Brexit as a social process that is reshaping who people think they are, raising questions about belonging that call to the fore considerations of relationships to Britain and Britishness, Europe and Europeanness, as well as to the places that they live.

**Bio:**

Dr Michaela Benson is an ethnographer and sociologist at Goldsmiths. She is internationally renowned for her contributions to the sociology of migration, and her research on the class, home, identity and belonging. Michaela is currently a research leader for the project **BrExpats: freedom of movement, citizenship and Brexit in the lives of Britons resident in the European Union** funded by the UK in a Changing EU. Examining the implications of Brexit for Britons resident in other European Union member states, this builds on her work on Britons living rural France. She is the author of *The British in rural France* (2011, MUP), co-author of *The Middle Classes and the city* (Palgrave, 2015) and the forthcoming book *Lifestyle Migration and colonial traces in Malaysia and Panama* (Palgrave, 2018). She has also published in journals including the British Journal of Sociology, Mobilities, The Sociological Review, IJURR, and the Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies.