

# What are the grassroots effects of globalization?

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An investigation by the Human Geography Research Group at Glasgow University has highlighted the uneven effects of globalization on local communities in the UK.

Conventional approaches assume that increased global connections are a source of opportunity and empowerment. Through interviews and focus groups with people in three communities - north-east Lincolnshire, Greater Glasgow and west London/'Heathrow Village' - the [‘Globalization, labor markets and communities in contemporary Britain’](#) study examined experiences of, and responses to, globalisation in the aftermath of the recession.

The key findings of the study, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, were:

- Academics' and policy-makers' concepts of globalisation differed from how local people experienced and understood global processes such as migration and increasing use of contract labour. These processes sparked powerful reactions at local level because they impacted on people's everyday lives.
- Globalisation's impact on communities was uneven. Migration and labour market flexibility and deregulation were experienced differently. Some people in an area benefited from globalization while others were marginalized or excluded.

- Respondents experienced the globalisation of labour markets through outsourcing, subcontracting and labour migration, often with negative effects on working conditions, job security and pay.
- Workers and communities challenged these experiences through campaigning and collective action. However, workers in the two disputes investigated were unable to alter underlying global processes such as downward pressure on wages and conditions and the use of subcontracted labor.
- The authors conclude that conflicts among different groups in [communities](#) are far from inevitable. Evidence of 'progressive localism' suggests the need for outward-looking community strategies for negotiating global processes, to create positive links between places and social groups.

Dr. Andrew Cumbers, Co-author of the study said: “Engaging with the recent turn towards localism in public policy, the report calls for more progressive forms of localism, support for 'ordinary multiculturalisms' and the importance of a UK wide Living Wage in response to the negative impacts of globalization on poorer groups in society.”

**More information:** The full report - "Globalization, labor markets and communities in contemporary Britain" by Danny MacKinnon, Andrew Cumbers, David Featherstone, Kendra Strauss and Anthony Ince from the Human Geography Research Group at the University of Glasgow can be accessed here: [www.jrf.org.uk/publications/globalization-and-communities-in-contemporary-britain](http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/globalization-and-communities-in-contemporary-britain) .

Provided by University of Glasgow

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