

# Multiculturalism 'not to blame' for failed sense of community

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A research team led by Dr. Laia Bécaries from The University of Manchester reveals that neighbourhoods with higher ethnic diversity are associated with higher rates of social cohesion, respect for ethnic differences, and neighbours of different backgrounds getting on well together.

The research, mainly funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, found that deprivation, not multiculturalism, was the root cause of fragmented communities.

The paper -published next month in *Urban Studies* - challenges critics of British multiculturalism – including most recently Prime Minister David Cameron.

The results were calculated from an analysis of almost 25,000 respondents from the 2005 and 2007 Citizenship Surveys.

The paper also shows that as area deprivation gets worse, so do reports of social cohesion, respect for ethnic differences, and people getting on well together.

And in further recent research, Dr. Bécaries shows that the mental health of people with an ethnic minority background improves in diverse areas when adjusted for deprivation.

“Politicians seem to link racial tensions to the perception that ethnic

minority people and newly arrived migrants are not integrated into their host culture,” Dr. Bécares said.

“But our findings show it is not neighborhood ethnic profile but neighbourhood deprivation which erodes [social cohesion](#) in England.”

The results were found for Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black African and White British people.

She added: “Our study complements other research which shows that multiculturalism hasn’t failed: segregation in the UK is not increasing, and Muslim people are as likely to report they feel British as people from other minority religions.”

Provided by University of Manchester

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