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**Participant information letter**

You are being invited to participate in the Ethnic Diversity in Local Government project. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

**Who will conduct the research?**

It is a research programme funded by the Economic and Social Research Council to conduct a study of ethnic minority representation at the local level (as part of the Centre for Dynamics of Ethnicity, grant number ES/R009341/1). Professor Sobolewska, in Politics Department, University of Manchester, is the Research Lead on this part of the project and Ms Neema Begum, in Politics Department, University of Manchester, is the main Research Officer on this project.

**What is the purpose of the research?**

The local level, so important to our democracy, is too often ignored, and political representation is predominantly studied at the national level. The particular importance of local level to ethnic representation cannot be overstated as it is often the first step in politics and political careers for many minority politicians, and a first line of contact for minority individuals and communities in need of help. This new project seeks to fill this research gap and to put local representation at the heart of studying how ethnic minorities are politically represented in Britain.

**Why have I been chosen?**

You have been invited to participate in this research because of your knowledge of, experience and involvement in local government.

**What would I be asked to do if I took part?**

We would ask you to participate in an audio-recorded interview, less than an hour in length, about your experiences and knowledge of the local government and /or local political context.

**What will happen to my personal information?**

We will record your name and the location of this interview, but will delete this information once the anonymised transcript of your interview is completed. Only Maria Sobolewska and Neema Begum will have access to this information.

For more information about the way we process your personal information and comply with data protection law please see our [Privacy Notice for Research Participants](http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=37095). The University of Manchester, as Data Controller for this project, takes responsibility for the protection of the personal information that this study is collecting about you. In order to comply with the legal obligations to protect your personal data the University has safeguards in place such as policies and procedures. All researchers are appropriately trained and your data will be looked after in the following way: all the recorded interviews will be transcribed and anonymised, upon which all of your identifying information will be removed.

The anonymised interviews will be stored on a secure Manchester University Research Data Storage Service for the period of five years, and in the UK Data Archive where in its anonymised form will be accessible by other researches for scholarly purposes.

We will collect and record your political, professional experience and involvement with the local government and local politics. We will also record your ethnic background since it is of primary interest to the study on ethnic diversity. All of this information will be recorded in a way that prevents personal identification and thus will be kept anonymously.

You have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information. For example you can request a copy of the information we hold about you, including audio recordings. This is known as a Subject Access Request. If you would like to know more about your different rights, please consult our [privacy notice for research](http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=37095) and if you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email [dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk) or write to The Information Governance Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL. at the University and we will guide you through the process of exercising your rights.

You also have a right to complain to the [Information Commissioner’s Office](https://ico.org.uk/concerns), Tel 0303 123 1113

**Will my participation in the study be confidential?**

Your participation in the study will be kept confidential to the study team.

Ms Begum will transcribe the interviews, possibly with the help of a trusted transcription company. The transcription company will sign a Confidentiality Agreement and will not be given access to any personal or other identifying information.

We will use University of Manchester encrypted device to record your interview and store it securely on Manchester University Research Data Storage Service and research team members’ University of Manchester password protected desktops until transcription and anonymisation is completed.

Anonymisation will include creating an ID which will link your professional, ethnic and political, non-identifying information with your interview, so we can delete all of your identifying and personal information such as your name, specific role/job title and specific geographical location.

**What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself. You can request that we delete your interview and not transcribe it, if we have not done this already. However, it will not be possible to remove your data from the project once it has been anonymised and forms part of the dataset as we will not be able to identify your specific data. This does not affect your data protection rights.

If you do decide to take part, it is necessary that we record your interview, for data quality purposes.

**Will my data be used for future research?**

When you agree to take part in a research study, the anonymised information and data will be stored at the UK Data Archive and may be provided to researchers running other research studies. The future research should not be incompatible with this research project and will concern ethnic diversity in local government or local government and local politics more broadly. These organisations may be universities in this country or abroad. Your information will only be used by organisations and researchers to conduct research in accordance with the UK Data Archive terms and conditions.

This information will not identify you and will not be combined with other information in a way that could identify you.

**Will I be paid for participating in the research?**

No, we do not provide financial incentives, or reimburse out of pocket expenses to the participants of this study.

**What is the duration of the research?**

We only ask for up to an hour of your time and will not contact you again unless you specifically arrange for us to do so.

**Where will the research be conducted?**

[Provide details of the location and venue specific to interviewee]

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

This research will be published in a form of a broader access report or blog, at least one journal article and most likely a book with an academic press.

**Who has reviewed the research project?**

[This project has been reviewed by University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee and granted ethical approval date/number]

**What if I want to make a complaint?**

**Minor complaints**

If you have a minor complaint then you need to contact the Lead Researcher in the first instance.

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**Formal Complaints**

**If you wish to make a formal complaint or if you are not satisfied with the response you have gained from the researchers in the first instance then please contact**

TheResearch Governance and Integrity Manager, Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, by emailing: [research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk)  or by telephoning 0161 275 2674.

**What Do I Do Now?**

If you have any queries about the study or if you are interested in taking part then please contact the Lead Researcher

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Thank you for your time considering participating in this research project.

Kind regards,



Maria Sobolewska