

The Contemporary Rural Working Classes in England and Wales
ESRC DTP Studentship in collaboration with ADR UK

University of Leicester and ADR UK

The Midlands Graduate School is an accredited Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). One of 14 such partnerships in the UK, the Midlands Graduate School is a collaboration between the University of Warwick, Aston University, University of Birmingham, University of Leicester, Loughborough University and the University of Nottingham.

We are now inviting applications for an ESRC Doctoral Studentship in association with [ADR UK](#) to commence in October 2023.

The student will work under the supervision of Professor Martin Phillips (School of Geography, Geology and Environment) and Dr Patrick White (School of Media, Communications and Sociology) at the University of Leicester to undertake quantitative research examining the working conditions and social composition of working-class employees living and/or working in rural areas of England and Wales. There have been few studies of the contemporary rural working class in the UK, despite this social group figuring prominently in highly influential studies in and of the past (e.g. Newby 1977; Thompson, 1963). The predominant focus of contemporary research on the UK countryside has been on it being a "middle class territory" (Newby 1979: 497), with processes such as counterurbanisation, rural gentrification and agricultural mechanisation and centralisation, all being seen to undermine working class residence and employment in the countryside. Such accounts, however, neglect evidence of low-income migration to certain rural areas; the continuing persistence of low-income populations, even in areas of rural gentrification and middle-class employment growth; and studies highlighting the restructuring of working-class occupations, working conditions, and networks of social solidarity. Research has also pointed to the presence of social mobility within the work-class population, both upwards and downwards, an issue also stressed in more studies of rural employment precarity. Recent analysis of political attitudes and voting behaviours associated with Brexit have also variously stressed the significance of a rural working class and new lines of social solidarity. The student will use the Enhanced Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (EASHE) dataset produced by the Wage and Employment Dynamics Project for the ADR, as well as data related to agricultural employment and social class, gender, ethnicity, educational qualifications and age, to develop a quantitative analysis of the rural working-class employees and residents and their changing employment conditions and relations.

Application Process

To be considered for this PhD, please complete the ADR UK Studentship application form [available online here](#). Please upload an anonymised CV and cover letter as part of the online application process. Shortlisted applicants will also be required to provide transcripts and two references.

Application deadline: 2nd March 2023

Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP

Our ESRC studentships cover fees at the home rate, a maintenance stipend, and extensive support for research training, as well as research activity support grants. Support is available to both home and international applicants. For further details, visit: www.mgsdtp.ac.uk/studentships/eligibility/.

Informal enquiries about the research or ADR UK prior to application can be directed to be directed to Professor Martin Phillips (martin.phillips@le.ac.uk). For advice on the application process, contact to PGRGeog@le.ac.uk.