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Leicester: A tale of two (Welcoming) cities

- *Thomas Lacroix (Sciences Po-CEPR)*
- *Marie Godin (University of Leicester)*

Panel

Title: Economies of (In)justice (2)

Abstract

Leicester, in the Midlands, is an industrial city known for the sheer diversity of its population. Municipality declared the city to be sanctuary, and actively collaborate with local associations to provide shelter, training and health services to newly arrived asylum seekers. But it is also a city hosting the fast fashion industry that came into light during the pandemic, while textile workshops hiring undocumented workers from India, Africa or Eastern Europe became virus spreaders. A mapping of the places organisations and populations involved in sanctuary practices and fast fashion economy shows the disconnect between both levels. It delineates two distinct realities that coexist within the same urban environment and shows how Leicester is a focal point for two migration systems that do not overlap. Mapping methodologies highlight the complexities and ambivalence of sanctuary cities where migrants can experiment radically different forms of reception and trajectories.