Vulnerability, policing and administrative fairness

Exploring the increasingly complex nexus between law, vulnerability and policing – particularly the positive obligations arising from law for safeguarding vulnerable people.

Key details

Lead institution	University of York
Principal researcher(s)	Prof Joe Tomlinson, Dr Jed Meers and Angela Paul angela.paul@york.ac.uk
Police region	North East
Collaboration and partnership	• Dr Richard Martin (London School of Economics (LSE)) • Dr Elizabeth Cook (City, University of London) • Dr Ruth Weir (City, University of London) • Professor Simon Halliday (University of Strathclyde)
Level of research	Professional/work based
Project start date	September 2023
Date due for completion	July 2024

Research context

Four questions are at the centre of the research.

1. How, if at all, does 'legal vulnerability' derived from human rights law find everyday form in the orientations, communications and prioritisations within the police, and how are positive obligations understood and enacted in practice by officers?
2. How, in the policies and actions of the police and other state agencies, is 'legal vulnerability' derived from human rights law related to other legal conceptions of vulnerability found in, for

example, housing or social work law?

3. How are various forms of state power, once legally channelled towards these groups by legal obligations, perceived procedurally and substantively by the 'legally vulnerable?'
4. In what ways do legal duties towards the vulnerable – both in substance and through processes of implementation – help to safeguard and alleviate vulnerability?

Research methodology

The project is designed to create the foundation for a major mixed-methods, interdisciplinary empirical project that will generate data and produce evidence-led reform initiatives where appropriate.

The project methodology consists of a literature-based legal and theoretical approach which will be combined with empirical findings from research with the police.

Tags

- Vulnerable people