Panka Bencsik

Education

2014–Present **PhD candidate**, *Department of Economics, University of Sussex*, United Kingdom
Areas of specialization: Economics of Well-Being, Economics of Crime, Health Economics, Big Data
Supervisors: George MacKerron, Richard Dickens

2012–2013 **Kellner Scholar**, *Bard College*, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

2012 **MSc in Survey Statistics**, *Eotvos Lorand University*, Budapest, Hungary

2010 **BA in Sociology**, *Peter Pazmany University*, Budapest, Hungary

Research Appointments

2016–2017 **Fulbright Scholar**, *Brookings Institution*, Washington, DC
Supervisor: Carol Graham

2014 **Pre-doctoral Research Scholar**, *University of Bielefeld*, Germany

2012 **Research Intern**, *Social Science Research Council*, New York

2010 **Research Assistant**, *Institute of Behavioral Sciences*, Semmelweis University, Hungary

Research

Bencsik, P. (2018): The non-financial costs of violent public disturbances: Emotional responses to the 2011 riots in England. Journal of Housing Economics. *forthcoming*

Bencsik, P., Chunluun, T.: Are the self-employed happy entrepreneurs? *revide and resubmit: Small Busienss Economics*

Bencsik, P.: Nowcasting the mental health effects of crime. *project-in-progress*

Pinto, S., Bencsik, P., Chunluun, T., Graham, C.: The 2016 election, divided politics, and happiness in the U.S. *project-in-progress*

Bencsik, P., Powdthavee, N., MacKerron, G.: Short run and later life well-being effects of the arrival of the first child. *project-in-progress*

University of Sussex – Department of Economics
Brighton, BN1 9RH, UK
✉ *p.bencsik@sussex.ac.uk*

Teaching

2014–Present **Graduate Teaching Assistant**, *Department of Economics, University of Sussex*
Econometrics (400 level), Statistics for Economics and Finance (200 level), Introduction to Econometrics (300 level), Introduction to Mathematics for Finance and Economics (100 level), Introduction to Statistics (100 level)

2011–2012 **Graduate Teaching Assistant**, *Eotvos Lorand University*
Statistical Programming (Graduate Level), Statistics (100 level)

Selected Presentations

2017 Barnard College — CORE Economics workshop (panelist)
Brookings Institution — The Economics of Happiness Annual Workshop

2016 LUMSA University, Rome — HEIRS Conference on Wellbeing Indicators

2015 University of Sussex — PhD Research in Progress Seminar
University of Leicester — Well-being Symposium

Grants

2018 Western Economics Association International - Graduate Student Workshop
16 PhD Candidates annually, was first candidate ever selected from outside of North America

2017 Fulbright Scholarship (research grant, all costs covered)

2017 Rosztoczy Foundation Scholarship (research grant, all costs covered)

2014 German Federal Ministry of Education and Research Pre-doctoral Research Scholarship
(research grant, all costs covered)

2013 Kellner Foundation Scholarship (study grant, tuition and all costs covered)

2009 Sirius Scholarship (study grant, tuition and costs covered)

Referee

Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, Applied Research in Quality of Life

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Invitation-Only Manuscript Workshops

Barnard College, CORE Economics textbook workshop ('a textbook with "a grand idea" to overhaul economics teaching,' says The Economist)
George Mason University, Erik Angner: Philosophy and the Science of Happiness

Service

Founder and Co-chair, Educate and Teach (EAT): A Lunchtime Discussion Series for Early Carrier Academics on Teaching Matters

Member, Royal Economic Society

Admissions Committee, Student Representative, Eotvos Lorand University

Honors & Awards

CORE-Teagle Fellow (Teagle Foundation)

Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK Professional Standards Framework)

Media

Are the self-employed happy entrepreneurs?: Ozy

Languages

English (fluent)
Hungarian (fluent)
German (intermediate)
Danish (intermediate)
Spanish (beginner)

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Measurement and Tracking of Subjective Well-Being for Aging Research - Cover Letter

Panka Bencsik

May 21, 2018

As a final year PhD Candidate, each of my three thesis essays, along with projects with co-authors outside of my thesis work is centered on well-being. My research predominantly focuses on analyzing affective measures of well-being, such as happiness and stress, in order to have a more complete understanding of the interplay between various non-financial costs and benefits. I do this by considering well-being in terms of one-off events and also as adaptation, and over the life course, currently writing up research with my co-authors on the effects of the birth of the first child on various domains of satisfaction right around the child's arrival, and then once the parents retire decades later. This latter strand of research is what I am looking to pursue in my future academic carrier, deepening our understanding of long-run well-being effects of policies and 'natural experiments.' The vast majority of my research is done using ESM data, where I observe individuals daily using a smartphone application, Mappiness, and exploit the data's Big Data characteristics for causal estimations.

Attending the meeting would allow me to interact with fellow academics who consider well-being a crucial part in understanding citizen's utility formation. In particular, currently in the United States it seems imperative for there to be a greater focus on what provides people with a stable later life, with America experiencing simultaneously an aging population (at least in rural areas) and exceptionally high premature mortality among middle aged white men. I have spent the previous academic year (2016-2017) at the Brookings Institution as a Fulbright Scholar writing part of my thesis with Carol Graham as my supervisor. She, I, and co-authors had many discussions on how ill-being influences major aspects of life and choice, from political outcomes to mortality. It was fascinating to see then Anne Case come and present her and Angus Deaton's groundbreaking work on this topic during the Brookings Papers on Economic Activity (BPEA). It would be a delight to see where Carol's research has taken her in the past academic year, and I am aware she'd be pleased to have me there. We also are currently writing up a co-authored paper on ill-being, health problems, and how these played a role in the outcome of the 2016 elections - I would love to get to chat about this, too, with fellow attendees.

I have also already started to have a research output. My work on the well-being and stress effects of the 2011 English riots (also focusing on whether adaptation to the disruption was possible, and what personal characteristics helped or hindered it) is forthcoming in the Journal of Housing Economics, while mine and a co-author's work on self-employment and well-being is at the revise and resubmit stage at Small Business Economics.

The meeting seems to have an exceptionally fitting line-up to my interests, I feel I'd greatly benefit from attending. Consumption's changing nature is something that will likely show parallels with the changing nature of the impact of having children; just as certain goods might bring more of less well-being over time, and their impact should be interpreted taking the full course into account, while the birth of the first child has strong negative effects initially (for the first four years, in almost all domains of life), it is only once looking at the the benefits of children for the retirees that we can form a full picture of the impact. The question whether happiness can be a policy goal is something I look at in each of my papers, such as the English riots, and currently also in a research in progress on neighborhood crime's stress effect on residents. In my opinion, to the question whether it can be a policy goal the answer is a resounding yes. Not that it should ever be the single policy goal, but I believe adding well-being to the set of goals we evaluate policy plans against would enrich our understanding of their impact. In terms of looking at eudaimonic well-being, it will be a delight to chat with a fellow researcher also working on the less explored sides of well-being, as I do in papers on affective well-being. The talks on adaptation, and on midlife nadir, again will be fascinating to hear more about for the same reasons.

Considering aging and those in ill-being or in good physical health but in older age is a much needed addition to the discourse on well-being today. With life expectancy steadily increasing in much of the world, it is crucial to identify ways to both make old age emotionally rewarding, and ones in which elderly ill-being can be detected before the standard measure of serious physical health issues arise. According to most recent national statistics in the United Kingdom, for a full third of those above 65 their closest friend or companion is their TV set. Clearly, the problem thus is already present. I believe this meeting will help us, happiness economists, bring together the already existing knowledge on old age and well-being so we can prepare to better address the current problems together. It'd be a real pleasure to take part in these discussions.

1 Completed graduate courses

Note: Please note that in England PhD programs usually don't carry courses, but have to be entered into after a masters degree. Following the recommendation of Chelsea Watson, I provide below the content of my masters program, which are all graduate level courses.

- Linear algebra I, II
- Economics I, II
- Mathematical fundamentals
- Mathematical statistics
- Data analysis I, II
- Multivariate probability and mathematical statistics
- Sampling
- Statistical programming I, II, III
- Analysis of categorical variables
- Social processes I, II
- Market research and public opinion
- Qualitative research I, II
- Data mining
- Presentation, grant writing, and research management I, II

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Joan Stillwell
NBER Meeting on the Measurement and Tracking of
Subjective Well-Being for Aging Research 2018
National Bureau of Economic Research

21 May 2018

Dear selection panel,

Panka Bencsik — Letter of Recommendation

I am Panka's PhD advisor at Sussex, alongside Prof Richard Dickens, and I write to support her application to attend your meeting this July.

Panka's work encompasses the measurement and tracking of subjective wellbeing using both traditional survey data and real-time (ESM) approaches. Using ESM, she has a forthcoming paper on the subjective wellbeing impact of riots on the general population (using a diff-in-diff design to establish causality, forthcoming in the *Journal of Housing Economics*), and with survey data she has a revise-and-resubmit on the subjective wellbeing of entrepreneurs.

We are currently working together (and with Prof Nick Powdthavee) on a paper analysing the subjective wellbeing effects of having children, using both hedonic and life satisfaction measures and taking a life course approach.

Panka is both smart and diligent. Her background is broader than is typical of an economics PhD candidate, which I consider to give her a broader and more creative outlook, still framed by her commitment to methodological rigour and a career in economics. She also has substantial experience of the US academic system, including her work last year with Carol Graham at the Brookings Institution on a Fulbright Scholarship.

Please feel free to contact me for any further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely,



Dr George MacKerron

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
School of Business, Management and Economics
University of Sussex | Jubilee Building | Brighton BN1 9SL | United Kingdom
george.mackerron@sussex.ac.uk | +44 1273 87 27 26
www.sussex.ac.uk/economics

Note: In email to Joan Stillwell from Ms. Bencsik, she includes the following information:

I also wanted to note that Carol Graham, who is one of the presenters would had been the one to write my recommendation for the workshop, but due to a (luckily joyous) family matter, she didn't have the chance.
I do note this in my cover letter - if in less detail - and was hoping this could be kept in mind during the selection process.
She is also happy to be reached out to if in doubt.