

Burak Sonmez

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Academic appointments

University College London, UCL Social Research Institute
Associate Professor in Quantitative Social Science, 2025 - Present.

University College London, UCL Social Research Institute
Lecturer in Quantitative Social Science, 2021 - 2025.

London School of Economics and Political Science, Department of Sociology
LSE Fellow in Quantitative Social Research Methods, 2020- 2021.

University of Essex, Department of Sociology
Fixed-term Lecturer, 2019-2020.

Visiting positions

WZB Berlin Social Science Center, Global Sociology
Visiting Scholar, 2026

Education

Ph.D. Sociology, University of Essex, 2019.

Committee: Prof. Yasemin Soysal (Supervisor), Prof. Paul Clarke (Chair)

Thesis: Rethinking Charitable Actions: Identifying the New Characteristics of Social Solidarity

M.A. Longitudinal Social Research, ISER , University of Essex, 2014.

Thesis: A Longitudinal Assessment of the Relationship between Welfare and Globalization: How Do People Perceive?

B.A. Economics, Bilkent University, 2012.

Fields of Interest

Social Norms; Trust; Collective Actions; Punishment; Beliefs; Inequality; Experimental Methods; and Computational Social Science.

Publications

Journal articles

"Investigating the Analytical Robustness of the Social and Behavioural Sciences". with Balazs Aczel and many others. (*Forthcoming in Nature*). [Preregistration](#).

Lo Iacono, S., Sonmez, B. & Fairbrother, M. "Collective and Individual Solutions to Social Dilemmas: The Effects of Trusting Contexts." (2024) (*Nature Scientific Reports*). [DOI](#)

Ari., B & Sonmez, B. "Human Rights Violations and Public Support for Sanctions: Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment." (2024). *Journal of Peace Research*. [DOI](#). (*Equal co-authorship*).

Sonmez, B., Makarov, K. & Allum, N. (2023). "Public perception of scientists: Experimental evidence on the role of sociodemographic, partisan, and professional characteristics.". *PLOS ONE*. [DOI](#) (*Equal co-authorship*).

Ermisch, J., Gambetta, D., Lo Iacono, S., & Sonmez, B. (2023). "Trust and Strength of Family Ties: New Experimental Evidence". *Social Psychology Quarterly*. [DOI](#)

Sonmez, B., & Iacono, S. L. (2022). "Other-Regarding Behaviors and Attitudes toward Asylum Seekers". *Socius*. [DOI](#)

Lo Iacono, S., & Sonmez, B. (2021). "The Effect of Trusting and Trustworthy Environments on the Provision of Public Goods". *European Sociological Review*. [DOI](#)

Book chapters

"Double-edged Sword of Cooperation: The Vulnerability of Trusting and Trustworthy Behaviour" In: Barradas de Freitas, Raquel & Lo Iacono, Sergio (eds.) (2021). *Trust Matters: Cross-Disciplinary Essays*, Hart Publishing.

Work in progress

"Education and National Identity: Evidence from the Fundamental British Values Policy" with Ozan Aksoy. (*under review*). [Pre-print](#).

"Close to the Edge: When Do People Condone Violence to Stop Undocumented Border Crossings?" with Victoria Donnalaja and Sergio Lo Iacono. (*under review*). [Preregistration](#).

"Limits of the Humanitarian: Liminal Legality and Socio-Exclusion of Asylum Seekers and Refugees". (*under review*). [Preregistration](#).

"AI in Courts: Understanding Public Acceptance and Legitimacy across Different Procedural Pathways." with Talia Shwartz, Orna Rabinovich-Einy, and Avital Mentovich. (*under review*). [Preregistration](#).

"Beyond the Paycheck: Small Class Sizes, Wellbeing Perks, and Work-Life Balance Can Attract Teachers." with Rebecca Allen, Iain Ford, John Jerrim, Loic Menzies, and Sam Sims. (*Under review*). [Preregistration](#).

"Redistribution Preferences: The Role of Merit and Structural Inequality". (*Manuscript in progress*). [Preregistration](#).

"Understanding Individuals' Propensity towards Sustainability." with Martina Testori and Sergio Lo Iacono. (*Manuscript in progress*). [Preregistration](#).

“Public Support for Sanctions: The Interplay of Costs and Punishment.” with Baris Ari. (*Manuscript in progress*). [Preregistration](#).

Reports

Integrated cross-national dataset on migration policies and recognition of foreign educational credentials. Growth, Equal Opportunities, Migration and Markets (GEMM) with Soysal, Y., Alizade, J. & Koopmans, R. 2018. [online] [Access the report](#).

Book reviews

Book Review: Competing Responsibilities: The Ethics and Politics of Contemporary Life. 2018. *Cultural Sociology*, 12(2), 276–277. [Access the review](#).

Selected Grants & Honours

Nuffield Foundation Funding the Project "Evaluating Fundamental British Values Initiative", 2024-2027 (£224,529), Co-Investigator. [Access the project](#).

Education Endowment Foundation Funding for the Project "Evaluating Teaching Recruitment Strategies", 2024-2025 (£127,385), Co-Principle Investigator. [Access the project](#).

British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grants for the Project "Humanitarian Communication: Gated Information and Sentiments towards Asylum Seekers and Refugees", 2020-2022 (£7300), Principal Investigator.

Essex Social Sciences Doctoral Scholarship, University of Essex, 2015-2018 (Full Scholarship) (£48000).

University of Essex, EssexLab Seedcorn Grant for Experiments, 2018-2019 (£2000), Principal Investigator.

University of Essex Doctoral Scholarship Training Bursary and Research Grant, 2015-2018 (£4250).

ESRC Collaborative & Multidisciplinary Funding for the project “Let’s Talk” with R. Baltaru, S. Lo Iacono, R. Weir and F. Zilio, University of Essex, 2017 (£8000).

University of Essex, EssexLab Seedcorn Grant for Experiments, 2016-2017 (£2000), Principal Investigator.

Academic Excellence International Masters Scholarship, University of Essex, 2013-2014.

Bilkent University, Dean’s Honour List, 2008-2009, 2010-2011, 2011-2012.

Invited Seminars & Conferences

Invited talk at the WZB Berlin Social Science Centre, Experimental Methods Seminar Series, March 2026.

Invited talk at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, RECSM Seminar Series, Feb 2026.

Invited talk at the NYU Abu Dhabi, the 1st Inequality Conference, February 2026.

Invited talk at the WZB Berlin Social Science Centre, Global Sociology Seminar Series, January 2026.

Invited talk at the Education Endowment Foundation, EEF Evaluator Conference, September 2025.

Invited talk at the United Nations University Merit, Migration Seminar Series, June 2025.

Invited talk at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, RECSM Seminar Series, May 2025.

Invited talk at the LSE, EduHub Seminar Series, May 2025.

The 17th Annual Conference of the International Network of Analytical Sociology, Columbia University, June 2025.

The 2nd Sociological Science Conference, Cornell University, June 2025.

Invited talk at University of Leeds, Centre for Democratic Politics (Research Seminar), March 2024.

Invited talk at London Inequality Workshop, King's College London (Research Seminar), February 2024.

Invited talk at Bilkent University, The Department of Political Science (Research Seminar), January 2024.

Invited talk at Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (Research Seminar), May 2023.

European Consortium for Sociological Research (ECSR) Annual Conference, Online, October 2021.

British Sociological Association (BSA) Annual Conference, Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK, April 2018.

The 112th American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Conference, the Section on Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity, Montreal, Canada, August 2017.

The 39th Annual Scientific Meeting of the International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP), Warsaw, Poland, July 2016.

Joint Empirical Social Science (JESS) Seminars, Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER), Colchester, UK, February 2016.

Current Teaching

University College London (2023-Present)

Computational Social Science (undergraduate), [Module Website](#)

Pompeu Fabra University (2020-Present)

Quantitative Methods in Social Research (postgraduate), [Module Website](#)

Previous Teaching

University College London (2021-2024)

Experiments in Social Sciences: Online Experiments (NCRM course)
Game Theory for Social Sciences (undergraduate)
Social Network Analysis (undergraduate)
Advanced Quantitative Methods (postgraduate)
Data Analysis in the Real World (postgraduate)
Intro to Regression Analysis (postgraduate)
Statistics Bootcamp (postgraduate)

London School of Economics and Political Science (2018-2021)

Researching London: Advanced Social Research Methods (undergraduate)
Quantitative Social Research Methods (postgraduate)
Data in Society (undergraduate)
Introduction to Quantitative Analysis (postgraduate)
Introduction to Quantitative Analysis for Media & Communications (postgraduate)

University of Essex (2016-2020)

Models and Measurement in Quantitative Sociology (undergraduate)
Longitudinal Data Analysis, Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis (postgraduate)
Ethics and Public Policy (undergraduate)
Online Data Collection through Crowdsourcing Marketplaces (short course)
Researching Social Life I (undergraduate)
Researching Social Life II (undergraduate)

Supervision

2025 - Present: UCL Social Research Institute, Doctoral Supervisor (2nd), Zhengze Zhang.
2025 - Present: UCL Social Research Institute, Doctoral Supervisor (2nd), Juan Carlos Valverde.
2023 – 2026: Dispute Resolution Automation Lab at University of Haifa: Postdoctoral supervisor (2nd), Dr Talia Schwartz Maor.
2024 – 2025: BSc Social Sciences with Data Science, UCL: Dissertation supervisor (1st) for 5 students.
2023 – 2024: BSc Social Sciences with Data Science, UCL: Dissertation supervisor (1st) for 5 students.
2022 – 2023: BSc Social Sciences with Data Science, UCL: Dissertation supervisor (1st) for 5 students.

2021 – 2022: BSc Social Sciences with Data Science, UCL: Dissertation supervisor (1st) for 5 students.

2020 – 2021: BSc Sociology, LSE: Dissertation supervisor (1st) for 5 students.

MSc Sociology, LSE: Dissertation supervisor (1st) for 10 students.

Consultancy

UNIDO and the UN Global Compact

Survey Researcher (Freelancer), Oct, 2014.

Series of Dialogues on Means of Implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Engaging with the Private Sector in the Post-2015 Agenda, National Consultations in Turkey.

Library of Stuff (NGO)

Lead Data Scientist, Feb, 2015 - June, 2015.

Research Project on “The Database of Carbon Footprints of Everyday Objects in Turkey”, funded by the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology.

Matterhorn Platform

Survey Design Consultancy for Online Dispute Resolution Services in Michigan Courts, Jul 2019 - Nov 2019.

SAGE Publishing

Survey Design and Data Analytics Consultancy for SAGE Internal Communications Survey, Oct 2019 - Jan 2020.

European Research Council Funded Project

Experimental Design and Data Analytics Consultancy for ERC-funded Project on Dispute Resolution Automation, Oct 2022 - Present.

Service

Programme Director of BSc Social Sciences with Data Science at UCL, Sep 2022 - Sep 2024.

Deputy Programme Director of BSc Social Sciences with Data Science at UCL, Sep 2024 - Present.

Affiliations & Other Qualifications

Fellowship of Higher Education Academy in the UK.

Associate Fellowship of Higher Education Academy in the UK. Recognition Reference Number: PR130001.

Member, American Sociological Association.

Language Competency

English and Turkish

Technical Skills

R, Stata, Python, JavaScript, Qualtrics, L^AT_EX

Last updated: March 19, 2026

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST