To introduce the panel, this paper presents the findings of a cross-national, cross-sectional study that will be conducted with young people aged 23 - 29 in England, Scotland and Wales in 2014. This survey was specially commissioned for the ESRC-funded project The Crisis for Contemporary Youth: Young People, Opportunities and Civic Values. It presents a valuable opportunity to provide up-to-date information about two developments that are of central interest to this project and to this panel, namely:

a) Comparing youth opportunities in the UK for engaging in employment, education, housing, and civic engagement (including political activities and volunteering)

b) Comparing civic values across the UK regions (that is, between England, Scotland and Wales)

This overview will also provide a contextual framework for the subsequent papers, which explore some of these themes in greater depth using qualitative data.

The second section of the paper will then examine youth identities and feelings of belonging in the context of devolution and the Scottish referendum on independence. Drawing on theories about internal colonialism (Hechter, 1975), the salience of in/out-group conceptions (Taifel, 1979) and the hybrid, dynamic and non-rivalling nature of identities, the paper will explore whether regional identities (Scottish, Welsh, English) and national identity (British) are mutually exclusive or complementary and whether there are differences between groups in this respect. Identities will further be related to civic values, political preferences, perceptions of fairness and basic demographic data to assess which groups of respondents are most likely to have strong regional identities and express a preference for Scottish independence. Particular emphasis will be given to young people of immigrant background and their feelings of Scottish-, English- and Britishness. A variety of statistical techniques will be used for these purposes, ranging from correlations to latent class analysis.