

Presentation to legal seminar 29th November 2013

Migrants, housing and discrimination

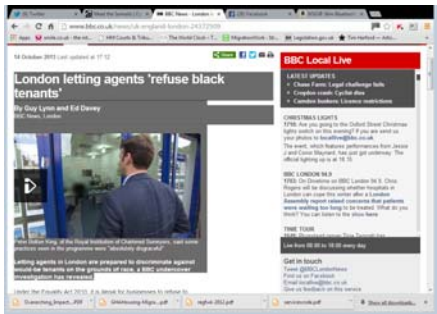
Why?

- How does discrimination against migrants happen?
- Supply, allocation, occupation
- How do we detect discrimination?
- What can we do about it: do the legal instruments work and what makes them work better?

What do migrants say?

- Louise’s story:
- Sajida’s story
- Ras Jamal’s story
- And John’s story
- And 14th October 2013

Discrimination October 2013



And now



Immigration Bill 2013

- Landlords to check immigration status of all new applicants and any other occupants
- Includes lodgers and any other arrangements involving payment
- Must refuse those "not entitled"
- £3,000 fine per occupant
- Some social housing excluded (+care homes, some hostels, hospitals etc)

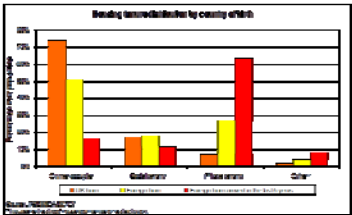
Immigration checks

- Already in place for local authority housing
- Excluded vulnerable migrants and those with children may access social services: much lower quality
- But even then.....
- Man with severe mental health problems release from secure hospital, eligible and refused

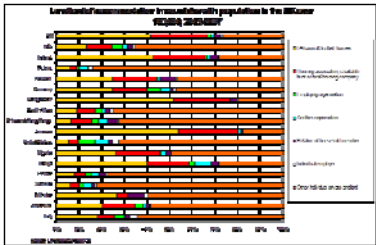
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/research/h19_the-equality-implications-of-being-a-migrant-in-britain.pdf



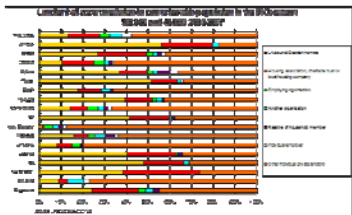
Housing tenure and country of birth, UK, 2006/7



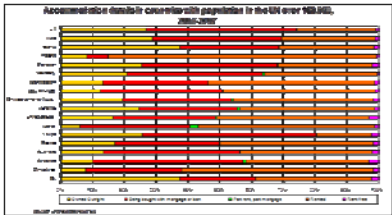
Rented accommodation landlords and nationalities (over 100,000), UK, 2005/7



Rented accommodation landlords and nationalities (40–100,000), UK, 2005/7



Tenure by nationality over 100,000, UK, 2005/7



Tenure by nationality 40–100,000, UK, 2005/7



Proportion of population living in social housing in Britain, by country of birth 2005/6

Rank (in ascending order)	Country of birth	Percentage living in social authority or housing association housing
1*	Australia	5
2*	France	5
3*	USA	5
4*	Poland	8
4*	India	8
4*	South Africa	8
4*	Canada	8
8	China	9
9	Italy	10
10	Kenya	12
11	Sri Lanka	14
12*	Pakistan	15
12*	Philippines	15
14	Cyprus	16
15	UK	17
16	Zimbabwe	20
17*	Republic of Ireland	21
17*	Algeria	21
19	Nigeria	29
20	Iran	33
21	Jamaica	35
22	Ghana	39
23	Portugal	40
24	Bangladesh	41
25	Turkey	48
26	Somalia	60

Statutory homelessness, by ethnicity, England

Period		Total	Minority Ethnic	% of total
2006	Q2	93,910	41,160	44
	Q3	93,090	40,750	44
	Q4	89,510	39,160	44
2007	Q1	87,120	38,610	44
	Q2	84,900	38,770	46
	Q3	82,750	38,710	47

Housing pathways

- David Robinson Sheffield
- The housing situations and experiences of new immigrants represent a composite of the familiar experiences of various disadvantaged groups within the housing system.
- The opportunities for new immigrants to effect a positive change in their housing situation are distinct and different from those of other disadvantaged groups.

Somali community in London

- Research for Karin Housing Association: 158 families
- 85% of Londoners find their current housing satisfactory, only 12% of Somalis surveyed did
- 2/3 overcrowded (cf 13% of all households in most overcrowded borough in UK)
 - Large families and no provision (supply)
 - No access to advice and support (but majority of those who went to solicitors got problems resolved!)
 - Supporting relatives
 - Family reunions

Somali community in London

- 45% suffer from disrepair, 1/3 major disrepair
- 38% reported damp
- 16% disabled
- Depression and family tensions
- 17% in employment
 - Ill health
 - Lack of skills and education
 - Housing problems
- Average personal income £130 per week
- Children's education affected
- Intergenerational problems

Somalis:

<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/multimedia/meet-the-somalis#all>



Housing costs and benefits

- Bedroom tax: major policy issue ("underoccupation")
- But benefit cap not: forcing large families out of high rent areas
- Somalis particularly targeted
- Supply issue here is affordable housing
- Not "affordable housing": now 80% of market rents

New migrants and transience

- 2004: arrival of large numbers of new migrants from accession countries
- Very few access social housing
- Many concentrated in worst part of private rental market
- Majority young mobile workforce need easy access cheap accommodation

Supply, allocation, occupation

- Supply is about size, affordability, terms of occupation
- Specific buying market in London and south-east
- Some figures suggest that half of new builds last year bought from abroad
- Overheated housing market becoming inaccessible to all except super rich

Supply

- Supply thus a function of decisions and policies about wider housing market
- Within social housing: failure to provide larger accommodation massive –ve impact on some communities
- Now exacerbated by benefits policies
- Which make it impossible for people excluded from social housing to be housed in private rented in more expensive areas

Supply, allocation, occupation

- Allocation: regulated hitherto in public sector, but equalities legislation “bites” there (mostly! Depends on access to advocacy and information)
- Government now recommends extending “residence qualification”: will impact
- General “climate of opinion” on migrants may be affecting public sector workers
- Allocation in private rented sector likely to get much worse after Immigration Bill

Supply, allocation, occupation

- "beds in sheds" or bars: 6 people sleeping in a disused bar with doors nailed shut



Supply, allocation, occupation

- Disrepair and harassment/illegal eviction
- Disrepair clearly prevalent and dangerous
- Press associates "beds in sheds" with undocumented migrants
- But the disused bar housed 27 people all Spanish citizens working in UK, some with children

Supply, allocation, occupation

- Harassment reported by many migrants
- "retaliatory eviction" often response to disrepair: quite legal
- Little evidence available because of poor security
- Harassment in public sector by other tenants/members of the public
- Processes available but often not reported or noted as racist incidents

Detecting discrimination

- Problems of identifying discrimination against migrants (as race discrimination)
- Problems of proof in private sector
- Identified as significant issue affecting migrant youth
- Problems of proof in social sector
- Key: **naming and identifying it**
- Key: **access to advocacy and information**

Dealing with discrimination

- UK has had effective laws against race discrimination since 1976
- Discrimination in housing may be increasing
- Legislation little used
- Low awareness of what discrimination is
- Reducing access to skilled advice and advocacy

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