

Commission for Racial Equality

Disadvantage & discrimination in Britain today — the facts

http://www.cre.gov.uk/duty/duty_facts.html

Poverty, deprivation, poor education, poor housing, high unemployment: these are the real barriers to community cohesion and good race relations in Britain today. In the poorest, most deprived, most neglected parts of Britain all races and all cultures suffer.

Public services have a crucial role to play in helping those communities. Good healthcare, education, housing and regeneration is the only way to ensure everyone gets the opportunity to climb out of the poverty trap — whatever their race or colour.

Ethnic minorities are often the most deprived in our society. They are proportionately more likely to live in the most deprived areas, in unpopular, overcrowded housing. They are more likely to be poor and unemployed, regardless of age, sex, qualifications and place of residence.

'Non-white' ethnic minorities make up 7.1% of the British population, of which Indians are the largest ethnic group (24%), followed by Pakistanis (17%) and Black Caribbeans (13%).

Are public services serving all of us fairly?

Our public services are there for everyone. Yet, ethnic minority communities have poor expectations of public services, and expect worse treatment than other groups.

The services most poorly rated for recognising the different needs of ethnic minorities include the police, immigration services, the courts and local councils, especially council housing. One in eight ethnic minority people reported discrimination at a job interview.

As members of the public, 35% of black people believe they will receive worse treatment than others from the police. About a third believe immigration services will treat them worse, and 28% identified prisons and courts as places where they could expect poorer treatment than others.

As employees, 38% of black people expect worse treatment than other colleagues in the police service, and 28% expect poorer treatment in the prison service. Amongst Asian employees, 28% expected worse treatment in the police, while a quarter expected worse treatment in the prison service.

Education

- Approximately 11.5% of school pupils in England are from ethnic minority groups. There are huge differences between levels of attainment in different groups.
- 2000 asylum-seeking children do not receive formal education.
- Gypsy traveller children have been identified in an OFSTED report as the most at risk in the education system.
- Bangladeshi, Pakistani and black pupils achieve less than other pupils at all stages of compulsory education. Black Caribbean children have equal, if not higher, ability than white children on entrance to school. But black Caribbean boys do least well at school.

- In 1999 only 30% of Pakistani pupils, 37% of black pupils, and 30% of Bangladeshi pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C, compared with 50% of white pupils and 62% of Indian pupils.
- African Caribbean pupils are over four to six times more likely to be excluded than white pupils, although they are no more likely to truant than others. Many of those excluded are of higher or average ability although the schools see them as underachieving.
- An African Caribbean graduate is more than twice as likely to be unemployed as a white person with A-levels. African men with degrees are seven times more likely to be unemployed than white male graduates.
- The retention and career development of ethnic minority teachers and education staff is a major concern across all education sectors.

Health

People from ethnic minority groups are more likely to suffer ill-health.

Infant mortality is 100% higher for the children of African Caribbean or Pakistani mothers than white mothers.

Pakistani and Bangladeshi people are five times more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes and 50% more likely to have coronary heart disease than white people.

African Caribbean women have 80% higher rates for diagnosed hypertension than whites.

Irish-born men are the only migrant group whose mortality is higher in Britain than in their country of origin.

2000 fully qualified asylum-seeking and refugee doctors are either prohibited from working or are forced into unskilled work.

Housing

70% of all people from ethnic minorities live in the 88 most deprived local authority districts, compared with 40% of the general population.

Almost half of all people from ethnic minority groups live in London, where they make up 28% of all residents.

Some ethnic minority groups are more likely to live in poor housing. 40% of Bangladeshi and Pakistani households live in overcrowded housing, reflecting a lack of larger housing and lower incomes. Rates for overcrowding for the Irish are twice those of the population as a whole.

A fifth of the housing occupied by asylum seekers is unfit for human habitation.

The legal system

Racial harassment incidents are widespread and under-reported — it is estimated that only 5% of incidents are reported to the police.

Ethnic minorities are over-represented throughout the criminal justice system from 'stop and search' to prison.

In 1998/9 black people were six times more likely to be stopped and searched than white people.

89% of young black prisoners were sentenced for over 12 months compared to 75% of young white and 77% of Asian prisoners.

People from ethnic minorities made up 18% of the male prison population and 24% of the female prison population, with black people alone accounting for 12% of the male and 18% of the female prison population.

Work

Ethnic minorities accounted for 7.2% of the working population in 2000. Ethnic minority and mixed origin groups will account for half the growth in the working age population over the next ten years.

Unemployment is considerably higher among ethnic minority communities. In 1998, 5.8 % of white people of working age were unemployed on average, but among people from ethnic minorities it was more than double that at 13%. It was 20% for Pakistani people and 23% for Bangladeshi people.

Sources

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