

Research reveals deep divide in who gets best access to most desirable housing in England and Wales

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New research from University of Manchester sociologists has revealed a deep divide in who gets the best access to the most desirable housing in England and Wales.

By analysing Census data from 1991 to 2011, Drs Nissa Finney and Bethan Harries say the nation's severe rise in insecure housing is hitting [ethnic minority](#) groups hardest.

The trend, argue the researchers based at the University's Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE) , shows minorities are much more likely to live in insecure, substandard private rented accommodation.

The findings rebut arguments, prevalent in sections of the media and politics, that ethnic minorities have easier access to more stable and desirable rental properties.

The divide, find the team, is also geographical: Black Caribbean people living outside London are more likely to live in privately rented accommodation than the White British – as are 'White Other' groups such as Romani and East Europeans in the countryside.

And young people from ethnic [minority groups](#) are hit even harder, find the researchers, because they are less able to enjoy the security of home ownership, creating a 'generation rent'.

Dr Finney said: "Private renting can offer flexibility which is desirable for some people in some circumstances.

"But rent prices are instable and unpredictable, which hits some tenants hard, especially families with young children.

"And where housing supply does not meet demand, there is often concern over the cost and condition of properties on offer."

She added: "It's clear that all [ethnic groups](#), as well as the White group, want to own their own home.

"But it seems your [ethnic background](#) and where you live has an influence on whether those dreams are realised."

The increase in private renting between 1991 and 2011, they find, was proportionately greatest for the Indian, Pakistani and Black Caribbean populations, for who the percentage in private renting more than doubled.

It was least for the Black African and Chinese ethnic groups.

The drop in home ownership between 1991-2011 was proportionately greatest for the Pakistani (-18%), Chinese (-17%) and Indian (-16%) groups and least for the White and Bangladeshi groups (-3% each).

A snapshot of 2011 also showed that private renting was highest for the Other White (51%) and Arab (49%) ethnic groups and lowest for the Black Caribbean (15%) and White British (15%) ethnic groups.

Dr Harries said: "In addition to the overall inequalities endured by ethnic minority groups, young adults are more likely to rent privately than the population as a whole.

"Yet again, it's ethnic minority groups who are hit the hardest: for 25-34 year olds, the proportion in private renting ranges from 31% for Black Caribbean and Bangladeshi ethnic groups to 74% for the Other White group, creating a 'generation rent'.

"Indian, White British and Pakistani groups on the other hand , have the highest levels of home ownership at 69%, 68%, 63% respectively."

The CoDE briefing paper is titled 'How has the rise in private renting disproportionately affected some ethnic groups? Ethnic differences in housing tenure 1991-2001-2011.'

More information: www.ethnicity.ac.uk/

Provided by University of Manchester

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