

Survey reveals discrimination, instability in Vancouver housing market

June 19 2014, by Heather Amos



A survey of Metro Vancouver residents and their experiences with housing shows that one in six have experienced discrimination and many struggle with affordability, instability, and concerns about poor housing conditions.

Participants in the survey, which was conducted by researchers at the University of British Columbia, reported [discrimination](#) in trying to secure housing based on age, disability, [sexual orientation](#), language, and lack of credit history. One-fifth reported concerns around the health and safety conditions of their homes, indicating that mold, rot and other

[dangerous materials](#) are an issue.

"For people who are most at risk for becoming homeless, these results are a big concern," says Penny Gurstein, director of UBC's School of Community and Regional Planning, who led the survey. "Vulnerable people have difficulty finding housing and this compounds the other issues they are facing."

The survey aimed to capture the experiences of people grappling with [affordability](#) issues, such as low-income residents, senior citizens, immigrants and refugees. The survey was conducted by the Housing Justice Project and funded by the Wall Solutions Initiative, which focuses on issues of housing access and affordability. The [survey](#) was done to identify vulnerabilities in the housing system and will be used to generate proposals for policies to address these vulnerabilities.

"While these results are not surprising for the region, they point to the work that needs to be done to address housing affordability, stability and solutions for low-income residents," says Gurstein.

Other key findings:

- Seventy-three per cent of renters surveyed reported spending more than one-third of their income on housing, indicating they did not have disposable income to spend on other things
- Families struggle to find multi-bedroom rental units
- High numbers of renters expect to move elsewhere in the region in the coming years because of poor housing availability and costs
- Renters struggle with the decision of living in the city at a higher cost or moving outside of the city where they don't have good access to transit. They feel it is a tradeoff in lifestyle that they are being forced to make

More information: The complete survey is available online:
[housingjustice.ca/wp-content/u ... g-Survey-Results.pdf](https://housingjustice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Survey-Results.pdf)

Provided by University of British Columbia

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