

**立法會 CB(2)1453/16-17(05)號文件**  
**LC Paper No. CB(2)1453/16-17(05)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for providing this opportunity to bring to your attention the problems faced by the EM families in HK. I would like to speak on behalf of a few EM families who are Hong Kong residents for a long time, yet have faced troubles in gaining access to housing facilities in the city. One case mentions that they had to wait for two months and went to as many as "thirty-seven" agencies to search for private housing. The situation is not only bad in the populous areas of the city, but one family faced similar situation (i.e. waiting for six months) even in the new territories.

**Attitude from the Landlords:**

The following points were observed with regards to the estate agents and landlords' behaviour, that are a cause of concern for the EM, and certainly a breach of the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance.

- According to the 2016 Study of the Equal Opportunities Commission, some Chinese property owners did not want to lease their properties to EM fearing either lack in proper communication, delayed payments, or possible disturbance and inconvenience for neighbours.
- Some EM personal experience also indicates the concerns of landlords regarding inadequate maintenance of house, cooking style and the smell of curry.
- Few landlords even went as far as forbidding the tenants from using kitchen for cooking, which is surely quite inconvenient. Even in the case of landlord agreeing to rent his property to EM, extreme documentation was required, for example, information about the whole family background, income proof, employment record, number of permanent and not permanent members in the family etc. Moreover, after a successful agreement, landlords would even spot-check the premises, causing hassle for the residing tenants.

**Attitude of the Estate Agents:**

- In multiple cases, poorly maintained houses with low ventilation were shown to the EM tenants.
- *Some of them completely refused to entertain unless there was a Chinese guarantor with the prospective tenants. Despite the clear instruction of equal opportunities in rental services, Agents seem to be ignoring it.*
- It is also reported that property agency refused to help the EMs despite the fact that the Estate Agents Authority has issued Practice Circulars on Equal Opportunities and Race Discrimination Ordinance

**High Rents:**

Another issue that is cause of concern is high rents. Research conducted by the Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (2014) has shown that almost half of the EMs live in private flats, with half of them paying over \$5,000 per month for a flat less than 300 square feet. An average two-bedroom flat in Sham Shui Po area has \$12,000 monthly rent.

**PRH:**

The situation for PRH is similar, a family has been waiting for seven years, and despite their eligibility, not a single chance has been given to them up till now. Despite giving medical certificate for their wheelchair bound elderly, they haven't been offered any house with disabled facility in the estate.

In the end, I'd like to say that there may have been problem created by the EM families, but few black sheep do not represent the whole region. Whereas there can be measures taken to cater the reservations of the landlords; this type of stereotyping should be ended.

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