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BULL POINTS ON REPORT, MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS IN BRITAIN BY RUTH LUPTON & ANNE POWER

Summary

- a The report uses data from the 1991 and 2001 Census to describe the distribution of Britain's main minority ethnic groups, and how it has changed, both across the country as a whole and in the four largest conurbations.
- b The UK has "a rapidly increasing diversity of ethnic groups and cultures." The UK population grew by 4% during the 1990s - 73% of this growth was due to Black and Minority Ethnic group (BME), which grew by about 1.6 million, compared to growth of 600,000 in the white population. The fastest growing group was "black African", which more than doubled over the decade. Other fast growing groups were Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Chinese.
- c BME populations grew in virtually every local authority area, including those with very few minorities at the start of the decade as well as those where communities were already well established. This is consistent with the pattern of dispersal in the 1980s.
- d As a percentage of their starting point, these increases were greatest in areas with small BME populations in 1991. The greatest numerical increases, however, were in areas where there were already significant BME populations; mainly inner urban areas. This is consistent with a pattern of natural population growth and continuing immigration to join established family members.
- e This population growth took place in the context of continuing counter-urbanisation and regional economic decline. While BME populations in inner urban areas continued to grow, white populations in many of these areas declined. Consequently, BME groups made up a greater share of the population of some urban areas in 2001 than in 1992.

Main Paper

- 1 Difficulties in comparing data between 1991 and 2001 include different categories of ethnicity being used (e.g. the introduction of a 'mixed race' category in 2001) and likely undercounting of BME people in 1991.
- 2 As at 2001, the major BME groups were Indians (1,052,000), Pakistanis (747,000), black Caribbeans (566,000), black Africans (485,000), Bangladeshis (283,000), and Chinese (243,000). 647,000 people identified themselves as 'mixed race'. 'Other Asian', 'Other black' and 'Other' groups make up the remainder of the BME total.
- 3 BME groups are very unevenly distributed, being skewed heavily towards the inner areas of London and other urban conurbations.
- 4 The Indian population was concentrated in London, and in the cities of the Midlands, and in Lancs and W Yorks.
- 5 The Pakistani population was strongly represented in Manchester, Lancs and W Yorks and also in Birmingham and Midlands cities, with a smaller proportion of the population in London than was the case with Indians.
- 6 The Bangladeshi population was concentrated in London and, to a lesser extent, Birmingham.
- 7 The black Caribbean population had a similar pattern to the Bangladeshi population but with London even more dominant.
- 8 Black Africans were very heavily concentrated in London.
- 9 Chinese were more widely dispersed than other groups.
- 10 All BME groups except the Chinese had at least 25% of their population in just 5 local authorities and over 50% in the 20 local authorities where the group was most numerous.
- 11 Bangladeshis were the most concentrated, with 46% in just 5 local authorities; 23% in Tower Hamlets alone.
- 12 Concentration of BME people meant that in 2001 81% of local authorities had BME populations at or below the national average.
- 13 Only 37 districts (9%) had more than 15% of their population from ethnic minorities.
- 14 26 of these 37 districts were London Boroughs. London was home to 61% of Black Caribbeans, 78% of black Africans, 54% of Bangladeshis and 42% of Indians.
- 15 Havering was the only one of London's 33 boroughs that had a BME population below the national average.
- 16 Newham and Brent had majority minority populations (61% and 55% respectively).
- 17 In London, with the exception of Tower Hamlets, it was unusual to find very high concentrations of any one minority group at district level.

- 18 Outside London, local authorities with more than 15% BME population were: Slough (36%), Leicester (36%), Birmingham (30%), Luton (28%), Wolverhampton (22%), Blackburn-with-Darwen (22%), Bradford (22%), Sandwell (20%), Manchester (19%), Coventry (16%) and Oadby & Wigston (16%). These are all urban areas.
- 19 All the BME groups except 'black other' grew much more than the white population from 1991-2001.
- 20 The most significant growth in any specific group was in the 270,000 extra black Africans which, by 2001, was approaching the size of the black Caribbean group, having been less than half its size in 1991.
- 21 The Bangladeshi population grew by 120,000 (74%); the Pakistani by 270,000 (57%); the Indian by 210,000 (25%).
- 22 Excluding the mixed race group, there were an additional 935,000 people in BME groups, in 2001.
- 23 When mixed race people are included, there are an extra 1.6 million BME people since 1991 - an increase of 53.4%.
- 24 By comparison, the white population grew by 600,000, or 1.2%.
- 25 The overall proportion of minority ethnic groups increased from 5.5% in 1991 to 8.1% in 2001.
- 26 Every local authority area in Britain except Suffolk Coastal had an increase in the number of BME residents in the decade to 2001.
- 27 Often, large percentage increases in BME population meant little; e.g. in the Scilly Isles there was a 500% increase, from one person to six.
- 28 More significant are the increases in areas where there was already a high BME concentration, e.g.: Newham and Tower Hamlets (both 67%); Southwark 70%; Redbridge 80%; Croydon 79%; Camden 75%; Slough 53%; Birmingham 40% and Bradford 42%.
- 29 Percentage increases in BME population were generally larger in districts that had bigger minority populations in 1991, e.g. Newham, which increased from 42% to 61%.
- 30 The overall effect of this pattern was that fewer local authority areas had very small proportions of minorities in 2001 and more had large minority populations. 87% of authorities in 1991 had 7% or fewer, falling to 81% in 2001. In 1991, 7% of districts had more than 15% BME, rising to 9% in 2001.
- 31 As the proportion of BME people increased in areas of established settlement, so did the proportion of individuals from BME groups who lived in areas where minority groups were relatively highly concentrated. In 1991, 55% of BME people lived in districts with at least 15% BME; 61% did so in 2001. The proportion living in districts with a quarter or so BME population rose from 25% to 44%.

- 32 The increases in BME populations in districts which had had very small minority populations in 1991 were not large enough to significantly alter the overall pattern of distribution. And the increases in areas of existing settlement only reinforced the existing distribution.
- 33 There were significant localized changes e.g. the increases in BME populations in outer London districts like Harrow, Croydon and Redbridge, but broadly speaking, BME groups remained concentrated in the areas where they were in 1991.
- 34 Overall, BME groups became slightly more concentrated in a small number of districts with large BME populations. Most groups retained their 1991 distribution. The Indian group became slightly less concentrated; the Bangladeshi group more so in some areas.
- 35 The data here are consistent with a pattern of natural growth of existing minority communities, increasing the proportion of minorities in areas where they are already concentrated. They are also consistent with a pattern of gradual dispersal away from areas of first settlement, leading to increases in minority population in areas that previously had only small proportions of minorities.
- 36 Britain 's largest urban areas were also the areas of largest BME settlement.
- 37 In London, the BME population in 2001 made up just under one-third of the overall population, compared with one-fifth in Birmingham and one-tenth in W Yorks and Greater Manchester.
- 38 London had a diverse population, with Indians the largest minority group (6%) but Black Caribbeans and black Africans also each making up 5%, as well as smaller Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese populations. The W Midlands was also diverse, but without a significant black African population, whilst W Yorks and Manchester had one major minority group (Pakistani) and much smaller representation of other groups.
- 39 Between 1991-2001, the BME population increased in every district across all four conurbations, except in the LB of Wandsworth.
- 40 The greatest increases, in numerical terms, were in districts with high ethnic minority populations to start with. The districts with the lowest concentrations of minorities (less than 10%) gained on average about 5,500 BME people to 2001, compared with 18,000 in the districts with 10-24% BME population in 1991 and about 26,500 in the districts with the highest original concentrations (over 25%).

- 41 White population declined across the four conurbations. Only in six LBs did the white population grow to 2001. This loss in the rest of London is despite the growth of the population as a whole by 4%. W Yorks had population growth of 0.2% but white decline by 2.5%. Manchester and the W Midlands had declining populations, but the decline was steeper among the white population.
- 42 Across the four conurbations, white population losses were greatest in the districts with the highest ethnic minority populations in 1991.
- 43 Thus the contrast in ethnic composition between districts grew between 1991-2001.
- 44 On the other hand, the growth of minority populations in most districts meant that more white people were living in areas of ethnic diversity in 2001 than in 1991.
- 45 "Thus while white people were becoming less isolated from people of a minority ethnic background, and there was an increasing number of people from ethnic minorities in formerly all-white areas, people from ethnic minorities were also becoming more likely to live in areas with much higher proportions of minorities than the national average. These trends are consistent with trends of dispersal and of continued growth in areas of existing minority settlement."
- 46 The trends observed at district level were also evident at ward level.
- 47 W Yorks and the W Midlands both had a small number of "majority minority" wards.
- 48 From 1991-2001, across the three conurbations for which ward level comparisons were possible (i.e. not London) BME populations increased in 95% of the wards and the white population decreased in 78%, the latter tending to rise only in inner city wards close to universities or in more affluent suburbs or areas of new building on the edge of conurbations.
- 49 The white population decreased most in those wards which were already "minority majority" in 1991.
- 50 The wards of W Yorks bucked the trend, however, showing very little change in distribution over the decade except for in Bradford, where there were very high rates of white population decline (over one third) in wards that had high BME populations in 1991.

Conclusions

- 51 Despite the considerable increase in the BME population 1991-2001, it is still proportionally small compared to the USA and several other European countries have a similar proportion to the UK.
- 52 Particular minority groups are concentrated in particular areas and the overall concentration of minorities is in a limited number of mainly older urban areas. The 37 local authorities (9% of districts in the UK) with the highest concentration of minorities (over 15%) house 61% of the total BME population.
- 53 The authors' other work supports the notion that the "dual pattern of settlement" described in the report "would have mixed effects".
"Growing concentrations of minority groups in specific disadvantaged areas can cause strains both on service provision and community relations, and particularly the risk of greater separation along ethnic lines, thereby reducing social contact and the potential for social cohesion".
- 54 There needs to be a more detailed understanding of the process of change.
- 55 The report's findings are consistent with patterns of natural growth and continued immigration into existing minority communities, increasing the proportion of minorities in areas where they were already concentrated, and a pattern of gradual dispersal away from areas of first settlement.
- 56 Analysing the extent to which the changes described are "white flight" would require careful exploration of migration and birth and deaths data as well as data from local surveys of preferences.
- 57 There also needs to be more understanding of how the processes involved in globalisation are bound up with urban demographic change, viz: economic and technological development, anti-urban planning, transportation and housing policy. "Outward movement of existing populations leaves residual social and economic problems...as well as vacuums of space and housing that can be readily filled by newcomers who have difficulty accessing more favoured locations and higher cost housing".
- 58 It is hoped that this report will reinforce arguments for an urban policy that favours avoiding the risks of segregation and inner city collapse that have characterised patterns of high minority concentration in the USA.
- 59 In the UK and elsewhere in Europe, the stronger welfare systems, different history of inter-ethnic contact, and greater pressure on rural land makes the potential solutions different from those in the US.