

Ethnic Minority Women and Access to the Labour Market in Camden

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Foreword

Over the last three years, Camden Council has worked in close partnership with Sheffield Hallam University, and eleven other local authorities to assess the impact of *Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets* (GELLM).

Tackling worklessness, increasing employment rates among disadvantaged groups and tackling inequality are key priorities of Camden's Local Area Agreement. This valuable piece of research will enable us to focus our efforts to address gender-based disadvantage in the labour market.

A key challenge for us is to assist local people into local jobs. There is a strong labour market in Camden, with two jobs potentially available to every resident, however, we know that a significant number of people are excluded from the workforce, particularly women and lone parents, people from BME communities, including refugees, and people on incapacity benefits. It is timely therefore that this detailed analysis of women's employment situations is being published at a time when we have prioritised the need to tackle the barriers which prevent Camden residents from economic activity.

This research will help us to respond to the wider agenda around Welfare Reform and the Gender Duty requirements of the Equality Act 2006. The assessment of the challenges which men and women face in being able to participate in Camden's vibrant local economy will assist us as we focus on outcomes which make a real difference to helping local people access jobs and the benefits which come with work.

I look forward to working with local partners and employers to respond to the challenges outlined in the following pages.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Moira Gibb".

Moira Gibb

Chief Executive

London Borough of Camden

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Key findings

This study has explored the situation of ethnic minority women in Camden - particularly those resident in the wards of Swiss Cottage, Kilburn and West Hampstead - in relation to their access to the labour market.

The study has used a range of quantitative and qualitative methods, and has built on other research. This report presents its findings, noting that:

- A range of national policy initiatives have been developed to tackle the inequalities faced by ethnic minorities in relation to education, training and employment. These include *Aimhigher*; the work of the *Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force* and the *Ethnic Minority Outreach scheme*; and the *Fair Cities Programme*.
- Refugees are now among the most disadvantaged groups in the labour market, due to their sometimes limited fluency in English and issues in relation to their other skills and qualifications. They are also affected by their country of origin and their gender. Official rules restricting their access to employment, benefits and other services during the application process put them at further disadvantage.

At the regional (London) and local level, a number of strategies and initiatives focus on increasing the number of women, ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups, in education, training and employment. These tackle barriers relating to skills, access to affordable childcare and transport. There is limited information available on how effective these have been.

Our analysis of 2001 Census data reveals that:

- Camden is more ethnically diverse than London or England as a whole, with 49% of its women from groups other than White British. The largest ethnic groups are 'White Other' (17% of all local women), Bangladeshi and Black Africans (both about 6%).
- Of the three wards studied, Kilburn has the highest proportion of ethnic minority women. 15% are 'White Other', 10% Black African, 8% White Irish, and 4% Bangladeshi.
- Bangladeshi, followed by the Black Africans, are among the more recently established migrant groups in the borough, with a very young age profile and a high proportion of

households with dependent children. The Somalis are the largest refugee and asylum seeker community in Camden.

- Bangladeshi and Black African women are far less likely to be employed. 9% of Bangladeshi women and 25% of Black African women work full-time, compared with 40% of all women in Camden. They are more likely to be students and looking after home and family full-time, than their White counterparts.
- In West Hampstead, 32% of economically active Bangladeshi women were unemployed, compared with just 6% of all economically active women in Camden as a whole. Bangladeshi and Black African women were more likely to be working in sales, customer services and elementary occupations.
- In the three selected wards the high proportions of Bangladeshi and Black African women who were unemployed suggests they experience more significant barriers to employment (and possibly more discrimination) than other groups.

The ethnic composition of Camden is continuing to change, with increasing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in recent years, posing particular challenges for local agencies. Transport and childcare remain important issues affecting access to employment, especially for certain groups of women. Although some groups of ethnic minority women (e.g. Black Africans) are highly entrepreneurial and succeeding in business, the unemployment rates and levels of racial discrimination experienced by local Bangladeshi and Somali women are worrying and need action.

The study's arts-based workshops with a diverse group of first and second generation migrant women suggest local ethnic minority women's disadvantage is related to the following factors:

- migration history
- language, qualifications, skills and experience
- aspirations and confidence
- infrastructure of the local area
- limited range of job opportunities
- cultural/family expectations/circumstances
- discrimination and racism

The workshops could not explore the views of all ethnic minority women in the area (and should not be taken as a basis for generalisation). However they gave voice to many issues important to those involved, and identified a number of key issues.

Introduction

This report presents research undertaken as part of the *Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets* (GELLM) research programme (Appendix 1). Parallel local research studies on women in ethnic minority communities have also been conducted in four other local authorities (Leicester, Newcastle, Somerset and Southwark), and these are reported separately. A synthesis report of the findings from all five areas is also available (Stiell et al, 2006). The *Gender Profile of Camden's Labour Market* (Buckner et al 2004) provides the borough-wide statistical evidence and context for the study. This study is one of three local research studies relating to Camden; the other two are also available as separate reports (Grant et al, 2006a; 2006b). This particular study aimed to:

- Research the skills, achievements and aspirations of ethnic minority women in selected localities.
- Investigate mismatches between skills and employment opportunities.
- Identify the support needs of ethnic minority women which need to be met if they are to overcome barriers in accessing the labour market or progressing within it.
- Provide opportunities for activities that will be empowering and confidence-building for women from ethnic minority groups.
- Make recommendations about ways of supporting ethnic minority women in entering /progressing in the labour market.

The study included:

- Detailed analysis of 2001 Census data for ethnic minority women living in Swiss Cottage, Kilburn and West Hampstead, and comparisons with Camden and England as a whole.
- A review of existing local information and data on these issues.
- Qualitative evidence gathered during innovative arts-based workshops with a diverse group of first and second generation migrant women living locally.

The workshops were developed in close collaboration with local authority officers and a community artist.

The study explores differences in labour market patterns and experiences for ethnic minority women in the wards of Swiss Cottage, Kilburn and West Hampstead. These areas were chosen

by the local authority for the focus of this study because less was known about the diversity of issues facing ethnic minority women in these particular wards.

This report, which relates specifically to Camden, outlines the national and local policy background in this field as it affects statutory and voluntary sector organisations, and highlights the main findings from the research.

Ethnic minority women and the labour market: national and local policy developments

National policy

Across England there are complex variations in levels of labour market participation and achievement among men and women from ethnic minority groups. Although a high proportion of people from ethnic minority groups enter post-16 education and training, many face barriers to learning, gaining qualifications, and finding and progressing within employment (PIU 2002; Berthoud 2003; Barnes et al 2005; TUC, 2006). Muslim women - mainly those from Pakistan and Bangladesh - have the highest rates of economic inactivity and unemployment, and suffer the greatest employment penalty of any ethnic group (Twomey 2001; Lindley et al 2004; Berthoud and Blekesaune 2006). Whilst differences between first and subsequent generations of Muslim women have been identified (Dale et al 2002), the employment rates of female Muslim graduates still lag far behind those of their male counterparts, and of other female graduates (Steer 2005).

The labour market disadvantage of ethnic minority groups is a major policy concern for government, and has resulted in a number of national policy initiatives relating to education, skills, training, employment and social inclusion, including:

- The *Aimhigher* initiatives, which seek to increase the higher education participation rates of under-represented groups by raising the aspirations and motivation of young people.¹
- The *Learning and Skills Council's* equality and diversity strategy, which includes initiatives

¹ www.aimhigher.ac.uk

aimed at ethnic minority learners and staff (Ethnic Minority Student Achievement Grant; Adult Ethnic Minority Student Achievement Grant; Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities; Black Leadership Initiative) (LSC 2004, 2005).

- The *Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force*, set up to deliver the recommendations of the 2003 Strategy Unit report, *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market*.² The Task Force focuses on: *building employability*, to improve education and skills; *connecting people to work* in the most disadvantaged areas with limited support services; and *equal opportunities in the workplace*, to tackle employer discrimination. Its strategy highlights the importance of English language skills, noting that three-quarters of Bangladeshi women aged over 25 are unable to speak English fluently, and the need to better understand the demand for ESOL training (Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force, 2004:27).
- The Department for Work and Pensions' *Ethnic Minority Outreach* (EMO) schemes, which report to the *Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force* and operate through Jobcentre Plus. These work through private and voluntary sector organisations to attract job seekers into the mainstream labour market, offering outreach-based, employer focused, and positive action training provision. The EMO schemes have been successful in increasing ethnic minorities' awareness of employment and training opportunities, especially among Indian and Pakistani women, where the language and outreach skills of EMO staff were crucial in reaching these groups (Barnes et al 2005).
- The employer-led *Fair Cities Programme*, which highlights the barriers to employment often faced by ethnic minorities in urban areas, including: low levels of basic and workplace skills; their disproportionate concentration in localities with poor employment opportunities; and the relatively weak social networks available to help people from ethnic minority groups gain access to employment³.

Recent data suggests that refugees are now among the most disadvantaged groups in the

labour market (Bloch 2002). The causes of their flight, their first language literacy skills, and their English fluency, as well as their country of origin, education, age, class, household composition, culture and religious beliefs vary greatly, and are key determinants of their economic activity, with important variations by gender (Bloch 2004; Kirk 2004). The removal of asylum seekers' employment concessions in 2002 further reduced the employment prospects of those in exile.

Women from some countries are less likely than men to receive formal education and to be literate in their first language. Research with refugee women found that 16% were in paid work, and that those in employment were most likely to be fluent in English, to be under 35 years old, to have lived in the UK for five years or more, and to have gained a UK qualification. However, their working conditions, terms of employment and pay were generally poor, and the level of their work did not reflect their skills and experience (Bloch 2002).

Official policies and initiatives to tackle this issue include the Home Office's refugee integration strategy *Integration Matters*⁴, launched in 2005, and *Working to Rebuild Lives*⁵, the DWP's refugee employment strategy. Both emphasise refugees 'gaining skills to give something back to the community'. They highlight unemployment, racism and housing problems and the need for regional and local partnership action, which can provide both direct support and volunteering opportunities. However, these initiatives do not address gender directly, and *Working to Rebuild Lives* makes no reference to women or to gender.

These developments at national level have been developed in the context of over 30 years of equalities legislation, including the *Sex Discrimination Act 1975*, the *Race Relations Act 1975* (and its subsequent amendments), and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*. The recent enactment of the *Equality Act 2006* will in 2007 establish a *Commission for Equality and Human Rights* and a new duty requiring public bodies to promote gender equality. This will require service providers and public sector employers to design their employment and services to meet the needs of different groups of women and men, and to

² www.emetaskforce.gov.uk/summary.asp

³ www.nationalemploymentpanel.gov.uk

⁴ www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/laws_policy/refugee_integration/a_national_strategy.html

⁵ www.dwp.gov.uk/

take action to meet equality goals in consultation with their service users and employees.

The Women and Work Commission has recently reported on its investigations⁶, although some feel more emphasis could have been given to the situation of ethnic minority women⁷. The Equal Opportunities Commission is currently undertaking an investigation into the participation, pay and progression of ethnic minority women in the GB labour market, which may help raise the profile of these issues⁸.

Policy responses in London

The Greater London Authority (GLA) has a range of initiatives targeting ethnic minorities, women and other disadvantaged groups, underpinned by a *Race Equality Scheme* with priorities to improve transport links to many deprived areas with high ethnic minority populations. Its *Gender Equality Scheme* and *Working Group* aims to increase job opportunities for women in traditional male roles, including transport and construction. The GLA's *Faith Equality Scheme* includes plans to mainstream faith equality and engage more effectively with faith groups. The GLA also has a target for employing a quarter of its staff from BME backgrounds (met for all groups, but not yet for Asians), and has exceeded its 55% target for women staff⁹.

The London Development Agency's (LDA)¹⁰ *Economic Development Strategy* aims to tackle barriers to employment faced by women and disadvantaged groups in London through initiatives and campaigns including: *Diversity Works for London*; *the Initiative of Enterprising Women*; *Women in New Media*; and *Ready to Invest*.

The *City Fringe Partnership*¹¹ was established in 1996 through SRB4, and aims to 'Bridge the Gap' between economic opportunities offered by the City of London and the employment needs of the four border boroughs, including Camden.

Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Central has targets to raise participation in learning for under-

represented groups, through ESOL¹², basic skills, e-learning and other training; and to raise levels of achievement through other activities such as its *Equalities and Diversity Programme* for employers, and *Challenging Gender Stereotyping in Work-Based Learning* and in *Learning and Employment*.

Jobcentre Plus London, *Connexions London Central*, the *Corporation of London*, and the *Prince's Trust Outreach*, are among the other London-wide agencies offering support to ethnic minority women related to education, training and employment.

Camden's strategy and policy responses

The London Borough of Camden and its partner agencies address the needs of ethnic minority women in a number of ways, including through the:

- *Community Strategy* – increasing access to training and reducing unemployment among refugees and ethnic minority groups.
- *Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy* - including the *Micro-social Enterprise for Women Refugees* project, run by the Local Strategic Partnership. Camden focuses employment support on areas that have a high rate of worklessness.
- *Race Equality Scheme* - prioritising work on refugees, community cohesion, race and religion
- *Beacon Council* award for raising standards for Black, Bangladeshi and refugee pupils
- *Investing in Camden's Future - A plan for excellence* (2002) – the LSC's strategic objectives for inclusion, achievement and progression, with specific targets for ethnic minorities and entry level provision for refugees and asylum seekers.
- *Draft Training and Employment Strategy* – currently being developed by Camden's training and employment partnership, a sub-group of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

Targeted training and employment-related projects include:

- *RAISE: Refugees Access Into Sustainable Employment* project – employment routes, specialist Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), sustained job-matching; working with employers; and ESOL strategy.
- *Camden Training Network* – which co-ordinates and promotes job brokerage for refugees.
- *Camden ITeC* – which offers accessible, tailored learning programmes, work placements and support and ESOL.

⁶ www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/publications/

⁷ <http://www.blackbritain.co.uk/news/>

⁸ <http://www.eoc.org.uk>

⁹ <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/equalities/new-initiatives.jsp>

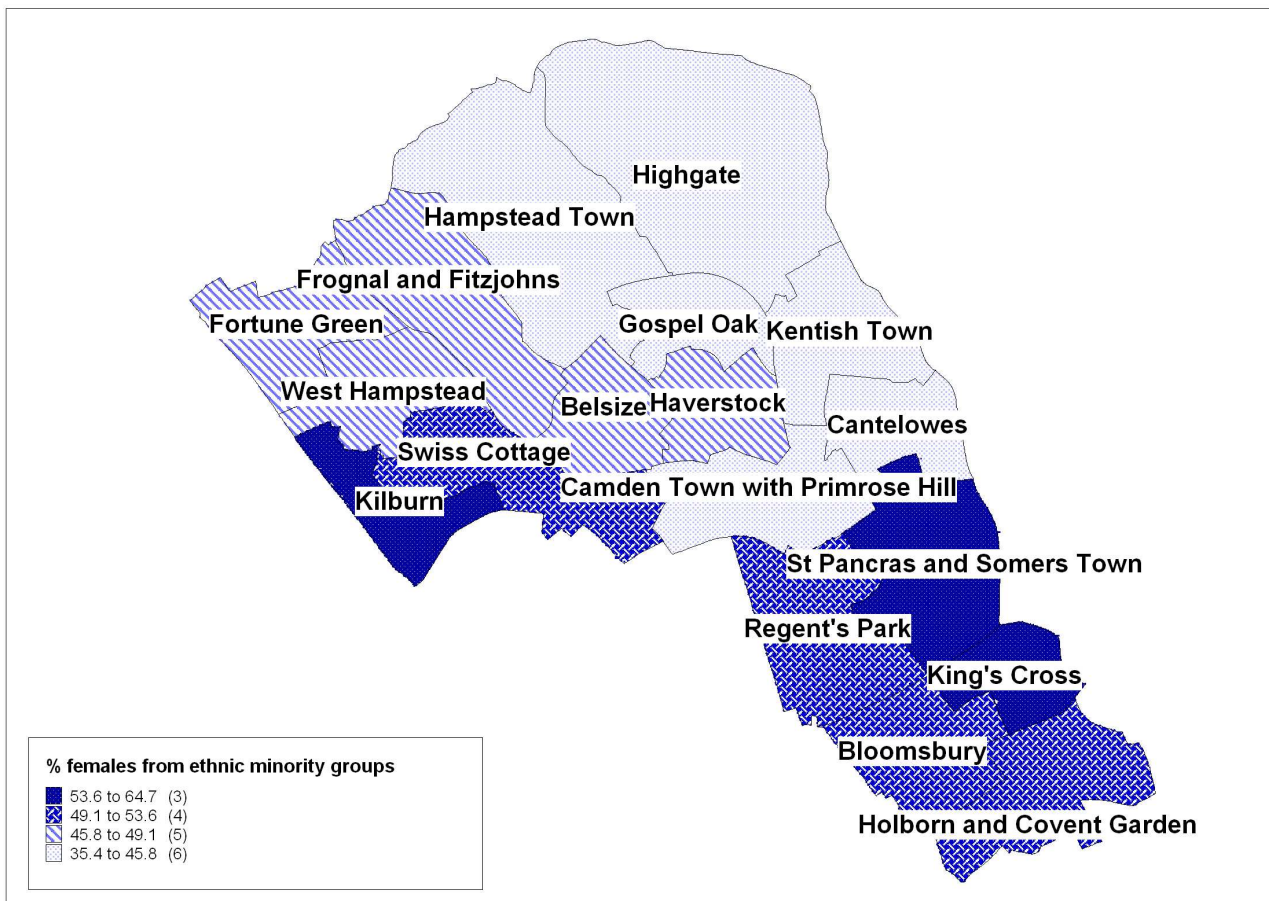
¹⁰ <http://www.lda.gov.uk/>

¹¹ <http://www.cityfringe.org.uk/>

¹² ESOL is English for Speakers of Other Languages.

- *Camden Jobtrain* – offering work-based training and ESOL targeted to individual needs.
- *Camden's Early Year's and Sure Start (EYSS) Childcare Support Fund (CCSF)* has enabled parents on low income to access education, training and employment with the help of a childcare subsidy package. Between April 2005 and March 2006 of the 182 CCSF applicants, 140 were from ethnic minority.
- The *EYSS team* also deliver an LSC ESF Programme '*First Steps*' for workless parents in Camden. It is designed to meet the needs of the ethnic minority community and includes literacy skills and ESOL courses with childcare training. 65% of current course participants are from ethnic minority communities, including the Kilburn and St Pancras and Somers Town wards.
- '*Women like us*' is a social enterprise supporting women with children back to work. It recruits women at the school gates, offering coaching/support to address confidence and encourage them to take using their skills and experience as well as working with employers. *Camden Neighbourhood Learning and Jobs Initiative* – providing IAG, employment support and outreach.
- *SKEIN – Skills Economic Inclusion Network* – providing information and capacity building for small community organisations across Camden (and London).

Figure 1 Distribution of ethnic minority women (non-White British) in Camden's wards (2001)



Source: 2001 Census Areas Statistics Theme Tables, Crown Copyright 2003, 2001 Census Output Areas, Crown Copyright 2003. This work is based on data provided through EDINA UKBORDERS with the support of the ESRC and JISC and uses boundary material which is Copyright of the Crown.

Ethnic minority women in Camden

In 2001, Camden's residents included just over 52,000 White British women and girls and some 50,000 women and girls from other ethnic groups. The latter included:

- almost 22,000 from the White Other/White Irish groups
- 10,000 women and girls of Bangladeshi (6,300), Indian (2,200), Pakistani (600) and other Asian (1,000) backgrounds
- almost 1,900 Chinese
- almost 4,000 of Mixed ethnic backgrounds
- nearly 9,000 Black women and girls (6,300 Black African, about 2,000 Black Caribbean and 500 Other Black)
- and 3,000 from other ethnic groups

Taken together, the three wards selected for this study (Kilburn, Swiss Cottage and West Hampstead) had almost 17,000 female residents, including women from all the ethnic groups mentioned above, in some cases in quite small numbers. Appendix 3 to this report contains further detail about women and the labour market for those ethnic groups where numbers are sufficiently large to justify statistical presentation. The Figures presented in Appendix 3 thus draw on data for female residents in the three wards as follows:

- *All women and girls* (16,897, given as a reference point)
- *White British* (8,140 women and girls)
- *White Other* (3,131 women and girls)
- *Black African* (1,220 women and girls)

In all other ethnic groups the total female population across the three wards was less than 1,000, and in some cases very small (e.g. West Hampstead had only 26 females of Pakistani origin in 2001) (Figure A1).

Ethnicity in Camden – Swiss Cottage, Kilburn and West Hampstead¹³

This section of the report provides additional statistical background for the Camden wards where the arts workshops participants were recruited.

Compared with London and England as a whole, Camden has a high proportion of ethnic minority women and men: 46% of Camden's men and

49% of its women are from groups other than White British (Buckner et al 2004). The highest concentrations of these groups are in the wards of St Pancras & Somers Town, Kings Cross, Regents Park and Kilburn (Figure 1).

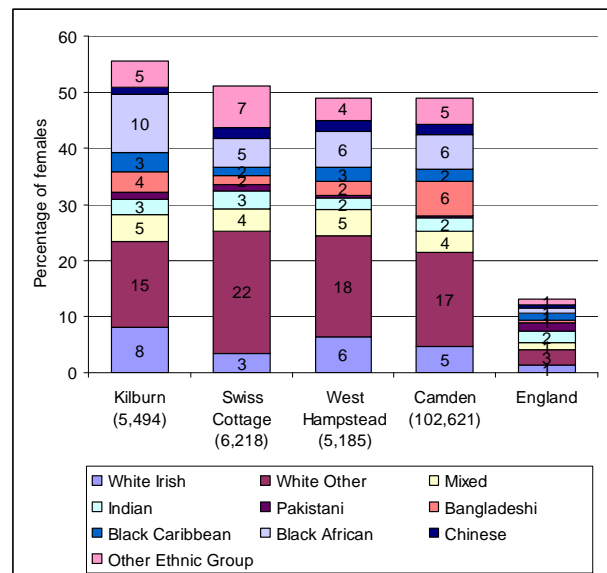
The largest ethnic minority group in the borough is 'White Other' (17% of women), followed by women of Bangladeshi origin and Black Africans (both about 6%).

Of the three wards selected for this study, **Kilburn** has the highest proportion of ethnic minority women (55%) (Figure 2). 15% are in the 'White Other' category, and come from Western or Eastern Europe. Kilburn also has a high proportion of Black Africans (10%); 30% of these women are Muslim, most of them thought to be Somalis. 8% of Kilburn's resident women are White Irish, and 4% are Bangladeshi.

Swiss Cottage has a higher percentage of 'White Other' groups (22%) than Kilburn. Many of these women were born in Western Europe and North America. In this ward Chinese and 'Other ethnic' groups account for 9% of the female population, and Black Africans for 5%.

In **West Hampstead** just under half women residents are from ethnic minority groups, with 'White Other' and 'White Irish' women making up almost a quarter of the female population. The next largest group are Black Africans who account for 6% of the female population in the ward.

Figure 2 Ethnic minority women in selected Camden wards



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003. Crown

¹³ More detailed data relating to this part of the report can be found in Appendix 3.

Most Bangladeshi households in Kilburn comprise married/cohabiting couples with dependent children (67%, compared with just 11% of all Camden households). However, nearly a quarter of Bangladeshi households in West Hampstead were lone parents with dependent children - twice the rate in Kilburn or in Camden as a whole.

Employment status

Bangladeshi and Black African women in Camden have lower rates of full time employment, compared with other groups. 25% of Black African and 9% of Bangladeshi women in Camden work full time, compared with 40% of all Camden women. In Swiss Cottage, Bangladeshi women are slightly more likely to work full-time (14%) than in the other wards (Figure 3).

Ethnic minority women in Camden are more likely to be students than White British women in the borough. This is especially true in West Hampstead, where 23% of Black African and 29% of Bangladeshi women are students, compared with only 6% of White British women.

Camden has very high rates of unemployment among its economically active Bangladeshi and Black African women.

- In West Hampstead, 32% of economically active Bangladeshi women were unemployed, compared with just 6% of all economically active women in Camden as a whole.
- Unemployment rates were very high for Black African women in Kilburn, where 13% were unemployed (compared to 4% of all women).
- Unemployment rates for economically active Black African women in Kilburn are even higher (23%, compared with 16% in Camden and 12% in England as a whole).

The much higher proportions of Bangladeshi and Black African women in these wards who were unemployed and actively seeking work in 2001 (Figure 4) suggests that they experience considerably greater barriers to employment (and possibly more discrimination) than other groups. As shown elsewhere (Buckner et al 2004), when in paid work, Bangladeshis and Black African women in Camden are less likely to be managers, senior officials and professionals, and are more likely to work in sales and customer services, personal services and elementary occupations.¹⁴

¹⁴ Elementary occupations include packers, kitchen and catering assistants, waitresses, cleaners and shelf fillers.

Local knowledge of the issues faced by ethnic minority women

To ensure that our study was also informed by up-to-date local knowledge, requests for information were sent to all key local statutory and voluntary sector organisations that provide services for ethnic minority women in Camden. An additional internet trawl was also conducted. This section of the report draws on these sources.

Ethnic minority women in London and Camden

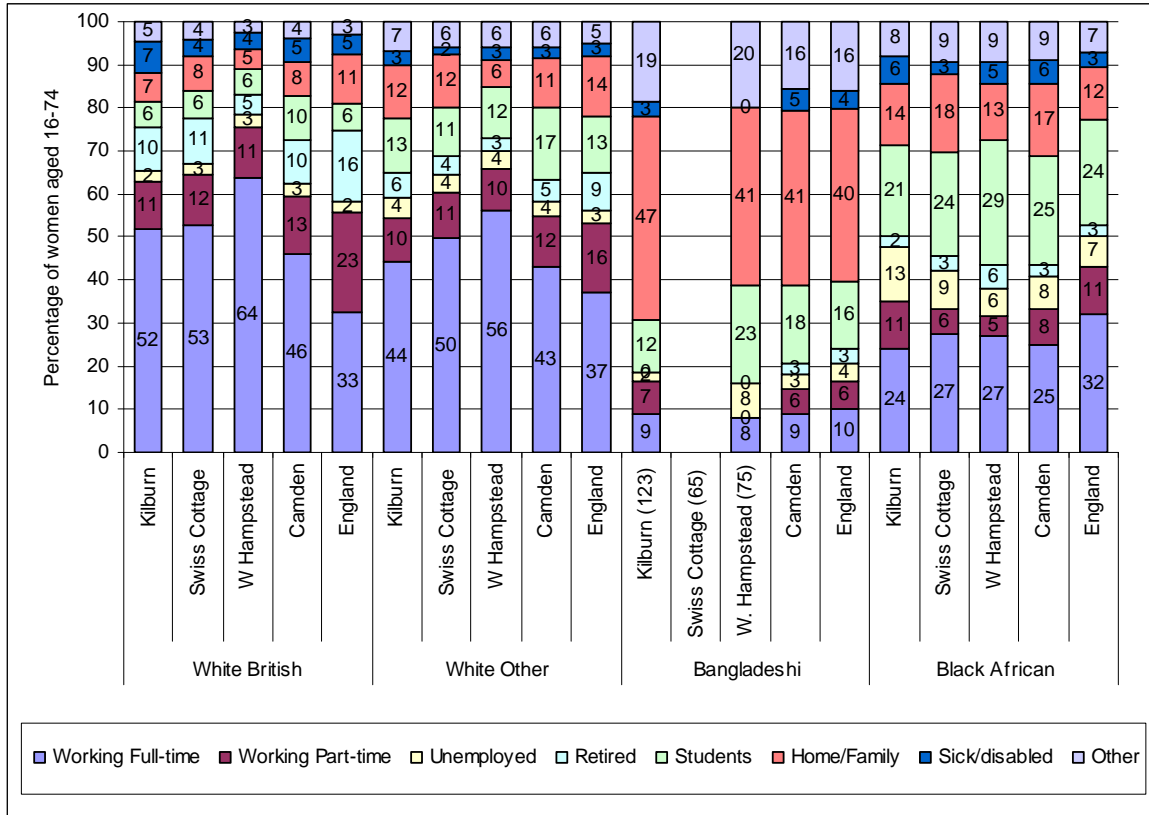
Ethnic minority women currently account for 27% of all working women in London (the wider labour market that Camden women can access). This figure is expected to rise steadily in the future. It is also estimated that 80% of the increase in London's workforce by 2011 will consist of ethnic minority workers (GLA 2006b:9), including many of those who live in Camden. The GLA is currently investigating the differential impact that this growth in jobs is likely to have for different ethnic groups of women across London.

Camden now has the third highest annual population growth rate in the UK, partly due to net immigration, which is forecast to continue rising (LBC 2006a). Jobs in the borough grew strongly between 1991 and 2002 (full-time jobs +16% and part-time jobs +104% [Buckner et al 2004:22]), and are also expected to grow by 12% overall between 2002 and 2016 (GLA June 2005).

In addition to the ethnic and gender 'penalty' suffered by ethnic minority women, having dependent children further reduces the likelihood of women working in London – to a greater degree than in the rest of the UK. The 2004 Annual Population Survey indicated that in London, only 54% of all women with dependent children were in employment, compared with 68% in the rest of the UK.

Access to affordable childcare remains a much more significant barrier for mothers in London, especially for lone parents, those on benefits or low incomes, and for those from ethnic minority groups (Bivand et al 2003; LBC 2006b). Although White and Black Caribbean families are more likely to use childcare than Asian or Black African groups, the differences in use between White and Black families depends on whether the parent works full or part-time, their income level, ease of travel and whether they live in a deprived area.

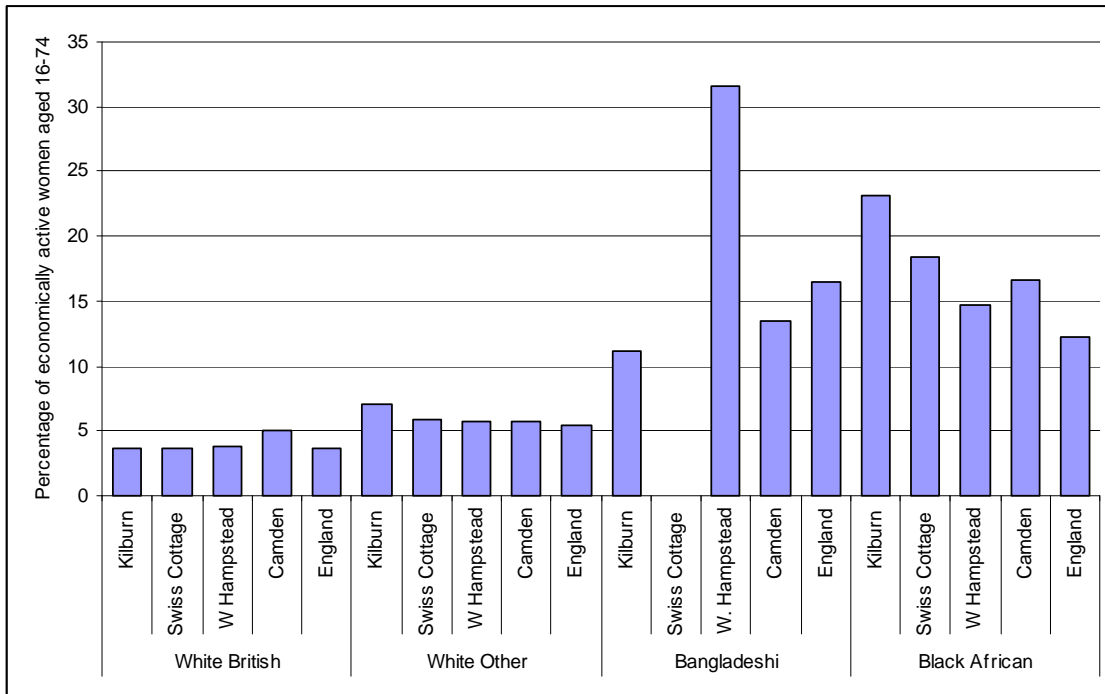
Figure 3 Economic activity status of women by ethnicity (selected groups)¹⁵



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003.

Note: Missing data are due to very low numbers of Bangladeshi women in Swiss Cottage

Figure 4 Unemployment among economically active women by ethnicity (selected groups)



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003.

Note: Missing data are due to very low numbers of Bangladeshi women in Swiss Cottage

¹⁵ Gender and ethnicity disaggregated data on economic activity rates are only available at ward level for the 16-74 age group.

(Bell et al 2005), suggesting a complex picture for Camden

As the *Gender Profile of Camden's Labour Market* showed, although the borough has more childcare places per 1,000 children than London or England as a whole, demand outstrips supply (Buckner et al 2004). The flexibility and type of provision available is also an issue, with low levels of sessional care and childminders. Some local authority-run or subsidised nurseries offer part time day care for early years children on a full time rate basis only. At a local level, day nursery provision is concentrated within certain areas, whilst other areas have no provision at all.

Women and men in Camden are more likely to live within 5 km of where they work than people in London or in England as a whole. They are also much less likely to commute out of the city to work; and more likely to rely on the Tube or to walk to work (Buckner et al 2004).

In 2002 Camden was the most polarised London borough in terms of wealth and deprivation (LBC 2002). The close juxtaposition of demand for services and supply of cheap labour has led to a large and hidden informal employment sector¹⁶, particularly for migrant women employed in low paid cleaning and care work (Cox and Watts 2002). Many of these women have very restricted employment options, due to their limited language or other skills and/or immigration status and entitlement to work, making them highly vulnerable to exploitation (Anderson 2000). In Camden, the largest group of informally-employed domestic workers were cleaners from Columbia, Poland, the Philippines, Russia, India and Ireland (Cox and Watt 2002). Many were legally able to work, but had difficulty finding employment to fit around their childcare responsibilities, or because of their language skills. Others had visa difficulties which meant they were not legally entitled to work.

A skills audit of 300 refugee women in London found that many had qualifications in professions where there are current skills shortages (teaching, nursing and medicine), but were unable to access jobs or training at their previous level (Dumper 2002).

¹⁶ The census does not allow identification or analysis of this form of economic activity - some 'black' or 'grey economy' workers may also be legally employed or claiming benefits. By their very nature, these forms of work are difficult to quantify.

According to a survey of London entrepreneurs, ethnic minority groups are significantly more entrepreneurial than white groups, perhaps due to the ethnic minorities' younger age profile and barriers to mainstream employment opportunities. Total entrepreneurial activity (TEA) rates among Indian and Pakistani respondents were twice as high as for White respondents, and in the Black African community almost three times higher. Black African women were significantly more entrepreneurial than women from other ethnic groups (London Business School 2006). The London Annual Business Survey (2003) highlighted a sharp increase in business start-ups by ethnic minority women. Black women had the highest level of business ownership (29%, compared with 21% of Whites and 15% of Asians) (LDA 2005).

Camden's ethnic minority women

Bangladeshis

The Bangladeshi community in Camden is the largest and most recent group of migrants from Asia. Their numbers more than doubled between the 1991 and 2001 censuses (Piggot 2004). They mainly originate from the rural Sylhet region of North East Bangladesh, with a traditional pattern of 'pioneer young men' arriving first to find work, followed by a wife and children (Allam 1998). A significant number of adults (men and women) arriving in Camden do so following their marriage to someone already living in the borough (Bisby et al 2003).

A 1996 survey of Camden's Bangladeshi community¹⁷ (conducted with 156 residents) found that:

- Sylheti, the language spoken by nearly all Bangladeshis, has no written form. Less than half the sample was literate in Bengali – the written language used in translations.
- 55% of women and 45% of men reported speaking English 'not very well' or 'not at all'.
- Women were more interested in attending adult education courses than men. Popular courses for women were childcare and ESOL. Women had more formal UK qualifications than men. 82% of men had none, compared to 44% of women.
- There were high levels of racial discrimination, harassment, educational under-achievement and alarmingly high levels of unemployment in the community.

Low income and unemployment amongst Bangladeshi families in Camden results in high

¹⁷ LBC (1996) 'Camden – Bangladeshi Residents Survey'

levels of stress and physical and mental health problems, much of which goes untreated because of difficulties in accessing appropriate care, which in turn acts as a barrier to progress (Bisby et al, 2003). Despite the image of strong family support, women are often isolated as single parents, often with many children, because their husbands have died or spend most of their time in Bangladesh (Bisby et al 2003: 38). This may explain the higher levels of lone parent Bangladeshi households in some wards reported above.

White Other

This group accounted for 16% of Camden's population in the 2001 Census. They are a diverse group, including high earning professionals from English-speaking countries in the new world, and established and more recent refugee communities from Kosovo, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Albania, and the Near and Middle East (LBC 2003, 2006). Some Eastern European groups have grown since accession to the EU in May 2004 (Gilpin et al 2006). There was very limited evidence available about these women's needs, except evidence that a high percentage of Roma refugee women from Eastern Europe have low levels of qualification (LBC 2003).

Chinese

This is a small, well-established and dispersed community in Camden (2% of the population in 2001), which is more socially polarised than most statistics suggest. Although the younger Chinese community in Camden has much higher levels of qualification and professional employment, a significant proportion of the older, first generation, migrants live in relative poverty. Analysis of this group in Camden using the 1991 Census revealed that economic activity rates for Chinese men were comparatively low, as were the levels of officially recorded male unemployment. Women's economic activity levels were also low (50%), suggesting significant levels of hidden unemployment among Chinese men and women. 'Discouraged workers' simply dropped out of the labour market, and many failed to register for benefits, further exacerbating their disadvantage. English-language skills were much lower for the Camden sample than previous research elsewhere had suggested (LBC 1998).

Black Africans

Over half of Camden's Black African women were born in South and Eastern Africa (ONS, Census 2001). Other large groups come from Central and Western Africa. Most of the information available for this group at local level relates to asylum seekers and refugees. The range of Black African community organisations serving Camden suggests that some support exists for refugees from most of the war-torn areas of sub-Saharan Africa. The Somali group is considered below. A quarter of women in this group were students (Figure 3).

Camden's refugees and asylum seekers

Camden has an estimated 20,000 to 25,000 refugees and asylum seekers. The number is thought to have fallen after changes in Home Office policy in 2000, which dispersed people to cities like Newcastle (Stiell and Tang 2006). In 2003 the London Borough of Camden's refugee scrutiny panel estimated there were 15,684 refugees of working age (LBC 2003). In March 2005, 310 asylum seekers in Camden were recorded as receiving subsistence-only support from NASS (National Assistance Support Service).

Other data show a steady increase in the number of refugee pupils in Camden schools over the last decade. In 2004/05, 21% of primary school pupils, and 15% of secondary school pupils of compulsory school age, were from asylum seeker or refugee families. The largest and fastest growing numbers of refugee children were from Somalia, Kosovo and the Congo. In Camden 55% of primary school children, and 39% of secondary school pupils, are learning English as an additional language, posing a number of challenges to local schools (LBC 2006b). The main countries of origin for refugees in Camden are Somalia, Kosovo, Congo, Eritrea, Albania, Sudan and Iran.

Somalis

Somalis are Camden's largest refugee population. The 2001 Census recorded 1,900 Camden residents born in Somalia, considered by some to be a significant underestimate (Khan and Jones 2004). Most came to Camden in 1990, and are concentrated in the borough's less affluent areas of Kentish Town, Kilburn, Camden Town and King's Cross/St Pancras. Many are awaiting their return to Somalia, and many have limited interest in integrating and participating in British society (Somali Community Centre 2003; LBC 2003).

A high proportion of Somali single parent families are widows (the result of war) or have husbands living abroad, either in refugee camps or working in the Gulf. A survey identified the need for specific services to better meet Somali women's needs, and the need for confidence building, community champions; crèches and family-based activities (LBC 2003).

Many Somali women in Camden have had no formal education (particularly those over 40), and have basic support needs (LBC 2003). They often have sole responsibility for children and domestic work, health problems, and little time to attend language classes. Men are more likely to be highly qualified, but most lack documentation/references, and experience high levels of unemployment, linked to high levels of ill-health and disability, discrimination, and poor language skills. Changes in gender roles and generational conflict within families since re-settlement have been widely reported. National and local studies suggest that women are often unsupported in the home and by local services (particularly health, housing, education, and social services, often due to inadequate bilingual support). Direct and indirect racism has also been reported, and poverty and family stress is widespread (LBC 2003; Somali Community Centre 2003; Harris 2004; Khan and Jones 2004).

Voluntary sector organisations in Camden

Camden has a large number of voluntary organisations supporting its ethnic minority population. A recent survey of 38 community organisations found that 30 worked mainly with BME communities, 18 were working with women and girls, and 23 with asylum seekers and refugees. The *Active and Sustainable Communities Project* found that a lack of access to affordable and appropriate premises, and limited capacity to manage and maintain premises, was limiting the impact and effectiveness of these organisations (ASC 2004). The Camden Race and Equality Scheme (2003) also highlighted the need for the council to consider its support of these groups in terms of accommodation.

The concerns and aspirations of ethnic minority women

To understand more about the complexity of ethnic minority women's circumstances and experiences, we provided positive, arts-based opportunities for women to reflect on: their skills and aspirations; their past achievements and experiences; the role of paid and unpaid work in their lives; the mismatch between their skills and employment opportunities; and the support they needed to overcome the barriers they still faced.

Three arts workshops were held over two weeks in January 2006, at a community centre in Kilburn. These workshops were developed with and facilitated by a community artist working with the research themes (Appendix 2).

Ten local women from different ethnic minority backgrounds attended the arts workshops. Their backgrounds included South Asian (Muslim, Hindu and Jain), African, Mixed Heritage, Chinese, Greek Cypriot and White Other. Their ages ranged from late-20s to mid-50s, all were from established first generation 'settled' migrant communities, and they had been resident in England for between 16 and 40 years. All had experience of paid employment in the London labour market, some experience of education/training in the UK, and a variety of qualifications, skills and abilities. Nearly all were fluent English speakers.

The women participants, community artist and participant observers (two project workers and local authority officers) who participated in the main discussions were mainly first and second generation ethnic minority women. Issues raised in the workshops and discussions are expressed below in the quotations presented.

These findings reflect the views of those involved, and are not representative of *all* ethnic minority women in the area. This section of the report identifies issues that are important to this group of women.

Barriers and sources of disadvantage

Migration history

Most of the women had arrived in the UK as children with their families, or as young women following their husband. Some were economic migrants; others were asylum seekers, escaping persecution or conflict. Many were from educated

middle class backgrounds, which had an impact on their assimilation. All had spent a large portion of their lives in England, or were born in the UK, and had witnessed social and economic changes with each generation - their parents' settlement and adjustment; their own experiences in education/training and employment; and the changes experienced by their own children, or other second and subsequent generations of their community.

The period and circumstances of their arrival, and where they settled, had an impact on their subsequent experiences. Differences were observed between Pakistani families arriving in the 1940s, now established for four generations, and those who settled in far greater numbers in the 1970s and have remained in tightly knit, impoverished communities; and asylum seekers' 'relaxed' arrival in the 1980s and 90s, compared with the system now.

Language, qualifications, skills and experience

Those who were born here or arrived as young children had mixed experiences of the British education system. Most had experienced discrimination and difficulties adjusting to school, despite their command of English. Their earlier cultural assimilation gave them advantages over their parents' generation and those who arrived as adults. Older migrants reported struggling to access or afford ESOL classes, losing confidence, and becoming isolated and depressed at home. These women tended to participate least in the labour market.

A UK education and good qualifications were insufficient to complete at higher levels of the current labour market. Sometimes 'appropriate experience' for a job was harder to gain than qualifications. Others had relevant work experience, but not the qualifications to evidence their abilities:

I want to progress my career now, but I need professional qualifications. Experience is not enough any more to be a strong candidate.

There was an awareness of the more subtle skills required in negotiating the 'codes and rules' of progressing through complex, modern workplace cultures:

You need to understand how networking works. How you actually apply for promotion. Some get promotion more easily than others. Some jobs are open to everybody, others are not.

There's a very clear game that people play... and to understand that you need to be in the system long enough, and be willing to play the game to get to the top - watching to understand what the rules are and how it works. If you play it straight you get nowhere.

At each stage of career progression, 'being different' meant there was more to learn and understand - additional hurdles that had to be overcome to move up.

Aspirations and confidence

Some of the Camden women were highly work-orientated, motivated and strategic in developing informed and planned career choices for themselves, despite set-backs which had dented their confidence.

Many had ambitions in early life - to be a nurse, artist, or work in fashion; but circumstances, lack of opportunities or other people held them back. In later life, some of these dreams were finally being pursued as they gained the confidence from other activities to move forward:

It was always my ambition to be a nurse - my first love (but my mother would not allow it). Now I'm in my late 40s, I still have to ask her permission. I don't regret not doing it earlier, as I've done so many other things, explored so many other options, I've travelled, I've worked in so many places - I might not have been able to do that if I went straight into nursing. My mum didn't mess up my life. I can go back to it. It's never too late.

Others had regrets about unrealised potential, but were content with their current part-time jobs because of their caring responsibilities - they were supporting their children to do their best now.

I wish I'd studied more, had more encouragement for my education. I wanted to be a nurse too. I'm too busy now, it's too difficult now - the housework, the children. I just don't have the energy.

Local area infrastructure

Camden was thought to be a good place to live, with lots of opportunities for working locally, and easy access across London. However, transport and childcare became more critical issues for working mothers, who found they now needed to drive:

Transport in London is all geared to coming into the centre and out again for work. Local

transport networks can be very bad in the suburbs. My mum used to look after my son and she lived 20 minutes drive away. Public transport would take me 2 hours to drop him off there.

Driving will help me drop off and pick up my son. I spend 4 hours each day travelling up and down from home to school to work and back again (on public transport). Driving will cut that down by half at least.

I didn't learn to drive until I was 35, for the same reason - childcare. I wouldn't have been able to pick up children and work. Nursery and childcare hours are really restricted, and driving made a huge difference.

Suitable job opportunities

Women in the group had experience of employment in Camden and across London. This included professional careers in large public sector organisations; voluntary organisations; self-employment; temporary or casual work; and low-paid 'dead-end' jobs. Some had managed to secure and change jobs to suit their circumstances, gaining promotions, re-training and up-skilling over time, depending on their motivations. Each type of employment offered different opportunities and constraints.

Some women with limited skills and qualifications had felt trapped in low paid 'dead-end' jobs. Others worked casually in low-skilled jobs as a stop-gap to subsidise other freelance or project-based work.

The voluntary sector offered an important source of job opportunities (despite being funding-reliant and insecure). Community-based organisations were often local, considered 'safe', and 'easier to slip into'. Recruitment was seen as less formal and rigid, and hours more easily negotiated to fit around other responsibilities. Women were able to gain skills and experience, and access opportunities that they felt would be denied to them in other sectors:

I've never worked for all-white English organisations. Working with people in your own community is easier to get in and get along.

They knew my potential... I don't think I would be able to do this (job) in a mainstream place because if I applied for a job there, I would need the experience and the paper qualification.

Opportunities for part-time or more flexible work varied, even between teams/departments in the same public sector organisation, depending on

the workplace/team culture. There was an awareness that the labour market was becoming more competitive, with fewer opportunities for young graduates, women returners or those lacking qualifications and experience. They could see opportunities opening up for women (in general) to progress to senior levels if you were willing 'to play the game' and forego having a family or work-life balance for the long-hours culture. This was perceived as more of a 'private sector culture' that was becoming more evident at senior levels in the public sector. One woman had decided this was not for her:

I've made a conscious decision over the last few years that I'm going to stay at this level. I don't want to sacrifice my children for a career. Women still have to make sacrifices, even with a good partner who helps a lot.

They welcomed the new avenues opening up for the younger generations of ethnic minority women in areas like media and the arts. Younger men and women had more options now than 20 years ago, when the emphasis had been on traditional professions like law, medicine and accountancy. This was seen as a progressive sign, providing high profile role models and exciting possibilities for future generations.

Cultural / family issues

Parental, family and cultural influences could be positive and negative – encouraging, directing or holding women back:

My father, then my husband, had very old views. My husband said I should give up my job, and I lost a lot of confidence.

My family thought it was very important for me to do sciences. It was 'very Gujarati' to become a doctor, so I went to university and did sciences. Had I done arts, I would have really blossomed, but you don't have a say.

I come from a culture and society where you accept what the general framework is, what people say. For a girl, it's not about going out and forging your individual style. For men it's different, they can forge a public life, they do other things. Women don't, in reality, it's quite different.

Their experiences had made some women more knowledgeable about options and careers for their own children. They were no longer dependent on the discriminatory advice of others:

The next generation of parents are better informed. It's different for me; I'm not like my parents. We are not reliant on other professionals for their advice.

Family and personal circumstances varied between individuals and over time. Women without dependent children tended to have more options in terms of job and residential mobility. Those with one or more children were forced to re-evaluate the benefits of working, versus the cost of childcare. Household circumstances; marital status; caring for family members; employment status of their partners; housing; health; debt; and benefits problems, also impacted on the women's ability to participate in the local labour market.

Discrimination and racism

A number of the women had experienced both direct and indirect racism at school, from other children and from teachers.

I came from Zanzibar; I didn't speak a word of English. Even when you learn you still have an accent, and there's no chance for you at all. It's hard to integrate with the other kids, they just laugh at you. I was very good at maths, but that made me more vulnerable – I became the scapegoat. Either way you are not a winner. If you're progressing you're not a winner, if you're down level, you're still not a winner.

Teachers had sometimes acted as 'gatekeepers' of information and discouraged ambition:

When I was at school in the 70s, if you were a girl from a BME community and wanted to go to university, the careers advisor would automatically say no, you can't apply. They wouldn't even give you an UCCA¹⁸ form - 'Go to teacher training or do secretarial'. That was very much forced upon you.

Some felt that these early negative experiences had continued to hamper their progress throughout their lives:

It was a tough battle that still affects you as you grow up. Later in your life you wonder, 'What is holding me back, what is stopping me?' Experiences of being put down and racially abused, they stay with you the rest of your life.

In the workplace, a number of women had experienced racism and sexism, often operating subtly and in tandem. On occasions they had felt excluded, undermined or overlooked. There were 'unspoken rules' or cultures and practices that excluded them (e.g. decisions made in the pub after work). These processes made it even harder for ethnic minority women to break through the 'glass ceiling'. Despite many challenges, one woman had campaigned to have racist policies

and practices overturned in her workplace, enabling more ethnic minority clients to use the service.

Some women now felt ageism had become an additional barrier and form of discrimination, denying them opportunities because of their age, despite their experienced and well-established careers.

While some groups seemed to progress despite these hurdles, there was concern that some Muslim groups are 'going backwards' and becoming more insular in response to rejection and marginalisation from mainstream society. Some felt that educational underachievement and economic disadvantage are linked to complex identity issues based on religious, political, ethnic and class differences:

They're no longer willing to compromise being British Asian, or Black British. 'I've tried and I've tried and I've been rejected again and again. So I'm going down the ethnic road properly'. It's happening more to groups that are doing less well educationally – illiterate communities working in manual work, in poorer areas. It's a class thing, it's not happening to the Muslim or other ethnic middle classes - they seem to have their own identity and know who they are now.

Support and motivation

These women had overcome barriers and some of the disadvantages of their situation, and been motivated to progress by various forms of support:

Parental support for education had encouraged some to achieve qualifications, enter paid work and develop varied careers in the public and voluntary sectors. Wanting better educational and employment opportunities for their own children had also spurred some women into working (e.g. to help pay for children's private school education).

Voluntary sector employment had provided easier entry into mainstream employment.

Social and professional networks (mostly informal) offered valuable sources of support, advice, information and social contacts. Community-based organisations were also important sources of mutual support. Some women had the skills and confidence to seek additional information and support, access services and lobby for change. For some, role

¹⁸ University application form.

models (in other less conventional careers) had provided encouragement, built confidence and offered belief in future progress.

Personal drive and motivation was strongly emphasised by some:

Capability and ambition get you further than anything else. Ambition gives you the skills you need to get to the next step. It could be social, it could be the next training level, but ambition is also 'sniffing out' what you need to do. If you can do the job and do it better than anyone else - I don't think anyone can hold you back.

The women found the arts workshops engaging and enlightening, giving them an opportunity to reflect on their lives and shared experiences. For some, it helped clarify their thinking about future careers and aspirations. The more introspective art 'process' enabled researchers to gain a deeper understanding of some of the issues, in a way that may not have been possible through interviews or discussions alone.

The evidence presented in this report from both the analysis of Census data and from national and our review of local intelligence, supported by the insights gained through these workshops with a small group of women, enable us to draw out the key issues, and make the recommendations for local agencies included below.

Key points and recommendations

This study of ethnic minority women in Camden has shown that these women's (dis)advantage arises from their:

- *Migration history*: their settlement and assimilation patterns, residency status, and whether they are first or subsequent generation residents.
- *Language, qualifications, skills and experience*: these affected women's confidence, employment aspirations and achievements, and their ability to access information and support services. Certain 'career skills' were subtle and more difficult to acquire.
- *Aspirations/confidence*: this depended on levels of qualification and skill. Some had their ambitions quashed early, while others realised their aims at a later stage in life, as circumstances changed and additional opportunities arose.
- *Local area*: There are still important weaknesses in the local support infrastructure, including childcare, public transport and other services.
- *Suitable job opportunities*: Available jobs were poorly designed for working parents, young graduates and those with limited skills/qualifications. Some had found routes into work through the voluntary sector and new careers.
- *Cultural/family circumstances*: These are highly variable within and between different ethnic groups; they can be barriers to employment, but can also offer ways of accessing some kinds of work and important sources of support.
- *Discrimination and racism*: Direct and indirect racism was a common experience both at school and in employment; some also mentioned experiences of sexism and ageism.

Locally, there are a number of examples of good practice in supporting ethnic minority women to move closer to the labour market. Nevertheless, major challenges remain for women in this growing and changing community. The London Borough of Camden and its partner agencies should continue to explore ways of developing closer partnerships with local agencies, and of

deepening understanding of the support and provision needed by its resident ethnic minority women. Our recommendations are set out below for different key stakeholder groups to consider:

Voluntary/community sector organisations and funders

- The importance of the work of local, community-focused organisations in meeting the needs of ethnic minority women was evident in this study. These centres successfully engage hard-to-reach groups, by building their trust, increasing their skills, confidence and employability, and bringing them closer to the labour market. They offer ‘value-added’ by encouraging women’s self-help and independence, as participants progress from ‘beneficiaries’ to volunteers. It will be important to identify ways of sustaining this work in the longer term.
- *Could increase opportunities for training and progression:* e.g. to accredit skills and experience gained in the voluntary sector, and to provide improved career structures and opportunities for gaining professional qualifications, while retaining opportunities for women lacking qualifications to enter the sector.
- *Extended ESOL/English-language support is needed:* Free access is needed in community-based centres providing opportunities to develop skills and confidence in a safe environment, alongside basic skills/IT training to enhance employability. This provision needs to be culturally appropriate and gender sensitive. Crèche facilities (preferably on-site) are important. Translation and interpretation services should be monitored and reviewed to ensure this provision meets the needs of its changing and diverse beneficiaries.
- *Increased provision of personal development and confidence-building courses and activities is needed:* Arts-based/creative activities can be highly positive and empowering, without over-reliance on verbal communication skills. Group activities further enhance mutual understanding and shared experiences.

Employers/employers’ organisations

- *Recognition of prior qualifications and skills gained abroad* needs to improve, building on existing schemes. Employer awareness

needs to be raised by challenging misconceptions and assumptions about particular groups, and recognising that prior experience and motivation to work can be an indication of potential.

- *Work placement and on-the-job training opportunities are needed:* tasters of alternative and non-traditional opportunities; and opportunities to gain experience and ‘a foot-in-the-door’.
- *Staff management, career progression and staff development support may need to be enhanced.* Managers need to be aware of workplace cultures that directly or indirectly exclude certain groups. Practices need to be sensitive to individual differences and need, and to recognise that lack of confidence can hamper performance and progression for some groups.
- *A much wider range of part-time jobs* is needed, to enable women to progress and achieve their potential, and to fit the availability of working mothers and with tax credit/benefit rules.
- *Vacancies* need to be advertised in a wider range of local community settings and press/media.

Jobcentre Plus, Connexions, careers-related services and training organisations

- *Improved access to careers advice is needed:* This should be tailored to women from different backgrounds, with varied experience and aspirations, and should offer advice and guidance on short, medium and longer-term goals. Non-stereotyped careers advice and information on alternative and non-traditional employment and training options, matched to local skills gaps, employers, and job opportunities is required – particularly in schools/colleges.
- *Access to pre-interview and job-preparation support and coaching* in schools, colleges and elsewhere, on: job-search skills, CV writing, applications, and interview skills. Support needs to recognise that ‘self-promotion’ in applications and interviews is a cultural barrier for some groups, and may require specific, targeted coaching.
- *Better local information, advice and guidance are needed:* This should relate to

employment, training, the education system, benefits, etc., and be offered in community languages or with community language support. Further outreach work by JobCentre Plus and by community organisations needs to be developed, to bring mainstream support, local jobs and information to local women.

- *Targeted supported is needed to tackle the barriers experienced by unemployed ethnic minority women* e.g. for Bangladeshi and Black African women seeking work through JobCentre Plus. Their much higher levels of unemployment in certain areas suggest that entrenched disadvantage and discrimination still persist.
- *Formal accreditation mechanisms that value and recognise practical competences and skills* need to be developed, rather than just formal academic qualifications.

Local authorities and other local service providers

- *Additional work to tackle racism and discrimination is needed.* This could include:
 - Awareness raising and information for the local population, through schools and colleges, local media and employers.
 - Anti-racist, diversity training for service providers and employers (e.g. transport; recruitment panels).
 - Heightened profile of the work, policies and actions taken by Street Wardens, the Police, Victim Support, legal services and other agencies in combating racism.
 - Initiatives to encourage reporting of incidents.
- *Better targeting and promotion of information and support services to ethnic minority women* through trusted community links (organisations, events, workers, volunteers), capitalising on informal communication mechanisms.
- *Improved access to childcare:* flexible, local, affordable and culturally sensitive provision, to support course attendance, training, volunteering activities and paid work.
- *Improve monitoring data and target services more effectively.* This needs to explore the situation of different groups of ethnic minority women - separate data on men/women and on ethnic groups does not achieve this). Guidance could be developed for

organisations on how they can meet the multi-layered/multiple needs of the local population.

- *Mainstream equalities/diversity policies:* Across all statutory, voluntary and private sector provision/services (this will be necessary from 2007 when the new public duty to promote gender equality is in place).¹⁹
- *Positively encourage and promote ethnic minority women's representation and participation in local decision making and governance bodies* (e.g. as local councillors, on Boards, and in other ways) to enable local change.

¹⁹ Under the *Equality Act 2006* all public sector bodies will have a new duty to promote gender equality from 2007.

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Appendix 1 Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets

The *Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets* project was funded, between September 2003 and August 2006, by a core European Social Fund grant to Professor Sue Yeandle and her research team at the *Centre for Social Inclusion*, Sheffield Hallam University. The award was made from within ESF Policy Field 5 Measure 2, 'Gender and Discrimination in Employment'. The grant was supplemented with additional funds and resources provided by a range of partner agencies, notably the Equal Opportunities Commission, the TUC, and 12 English local authorities.

The GELLM project output comprises:

- new statistical analysis of district-level labour market data, led by Dr Lisa Buckner, producing separate **Gender Profiles** of the local labour markets of each of the participating local authorities (Buckner, Tang and Yeandle 2004, 2005, 2006) - available from the local authorities concerned and at www.shu.ac.uk/research/csi
- 6 **Local Research Studies**, each involving between three and six of the project's local authority partners. Locality and Synthesis reports of these studies, published spring-summer 2006 are available at www.shu.ac.uk/research/csi. Details of other publications and presentations relating to the GELLM programme are also posted on this website.
 1. *Working below potential: women and part-time work*, led by Dr Linda Grant and part-funded by the EOC (first published by the EOC in 2005)
 2. *Connecting women with the labour market*, led by Dr Linda Grant
 3. *Ethnic minority women and access to the labour market*, led by Bernadette Stiell
 4. *Women's career development in the local authority sector in England* led by Dr Cinnamon Bennett
 5. *Addressing women's poverty: local labour market initiatives* led by Karen Escott
 6. *Local challenges in meeting demand for domiciliary care* led from autumn 2005 by Professor Sue Yeandle and prior to this by Anu Suokas

The GELLM Team

Led by Professor Sue Yeandle, the members of the GELLM research team at the *Centre for Social Inclusion* are: Dr Cinnamon Bennett, Dr Lisa Buckner, Ian Chesters (administrator), Karen Escott, Dr Linda Grant, Christopher Price, Lucy Shipton, Bernadette Stiell, Anu Suokas (until autumn 2005), and Dr Ning Tang. The team is grateful to Dr Pamela Fisher for her contribution to the project in 2004, and for the continuing advice and support of Dr Chris Gardiner.

The GELLM Partnership

The national partners supporting the GELLM project are the Equal Opportunities Commission and the TUC. The project's 12 local authority partners are: Birmingham Council, the London Borough of Camden, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Leicester Council, Camden Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Somerset County Council, the London Borough of Southwark, Thurrock Council, Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council and West Sussex County Council. The North East Coalition of Employers has also provided financial resources via Camden Council. The team is grateful for the support of these agencies, without which the project could not have been developed. The GELLM project engaged Professor Damian Grimshaw, Professor Ed Fieldhouse (both of Manchester University) and Professor Irene Hardill (Nottingham Trent University), as external academic advisers to the project team, and thanks them for their valuable advice and support.

Appendix 2 Research methods

This study used a mixed method research design, incorporating:

- Detailed analysis of the 2001 Census
- A review of local information and intelligence using documentary analysis
- Qualitative research with local ethnic minority women

Analysis of the 2001 Census

Data from the 2001 Census relating to women resident in the wards were analysed for particular ethnic minority groups. This included:

- Background information - population size, age-sex profile, country of birth, household composition
- Economic activity - full-time/part-time employment, unemployment, economic inactivity
- Occupation and industry data for women in employment.

Where possible, data are presented for women of working age (16-59), however some Census output was only available for women aged 16-74.

Review of local information and intelligence

Through Camden Council relevant information from local statutory and voluntary and community sector organisations that deal with, support or collect data on, ethnic minority women was obtained. These documents were supplemented with national policy and academic literature, and internet sources.

Qualitative methodology: art-based workshops

These innovative workshops enabled women participants to use a range of art forms to creatively represent images of their lives, whilst evidencing their aspirations, skills and capabilities. The women also identified barriers to employment / job progression which affected them, and their support needs. The workshops produced detailed qualitative data relating to the women's:

- views, preferences and values regarding child-care, caring, and employment;
- existing experience, skills, capacities and qualifications;
- personal choices, and how these are influenced by cultural/ family expectations;
- local barriers to employment such as transport, childcare, education & discrimination.

The art-based approach was a way of attracting the women to a research experience that was confidence-enhancing and interactive, but not wholly reliant on their verbal skills and confidence. It was also an alternative means of tapping into, and expressing, their life experiences and stories. The informal and interactive workshop ethos enabled trust and rapport to develop between attendees and encouraged everyone to join in – often 'doing' the art while also talking and sharing experiences, building up snippets of each others' stories over time. Participants were reassured that their confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained – their work, images or words would only be used with their informed consent.

Gantt charts and snakes and ladders

The artist created the ideas for the 'Gantt chart' and Snakes and Ladders board game, in response to the research themes. The Gantt chart, normally used as a project planning tool to show activities over time was thought to be an ideal way of visually representing the changing aspects of a woman's life over the years. The charts can show the relationship between conflicting demands – which in this case can relate to periods of conflict between work and family life, for example. The aspects charted horizontally across time (0-50 years, for example) included: education; caring responsibilities; paid employment; voluntary work; ambition; housework; events that changed my life; best times of my life; religious/cultural influence; 2nd/additional languages; and health.

Each participant completed their Gantt chart on square white card and an additional 'narrative board' (depicting memorable events in a sequence or journey through life) on black card. These 'decorated' white and black squares were arranged alternately in a chequers board effect. Brightly coloured snakes and ladders were painted and cut out of card and laid over the chequer board. As well as the introspective and

reflective individual pieces produced by each women, the group also produced a larger composite work (the board game) – where patterns and images could be compared and contrasted.

In the final sessions, a game of snakes and ladders was played using informal rules:

- Each participant threw the dice in turn and moved their counter the appropriate number of squares.
- The player (or person whose square was landed) could talk about some aspect of their chart/square, or could discuss a snake (barrier) or ladder (motivator/progress/something that helped them) shown on their board, or that they had experience in their past.
- Each throw of the dice brought up new issues that spontaneously led into a wider group discussion.
- The discussion was tape-recorded and later partially transcribed for thematic analysis.

The artist, researchers, local authority officers, and project workers also attended the workshops and actively participated in the art, board game and discussions. They also talked informally to the individual women about their art work and the issues that emerged for that.

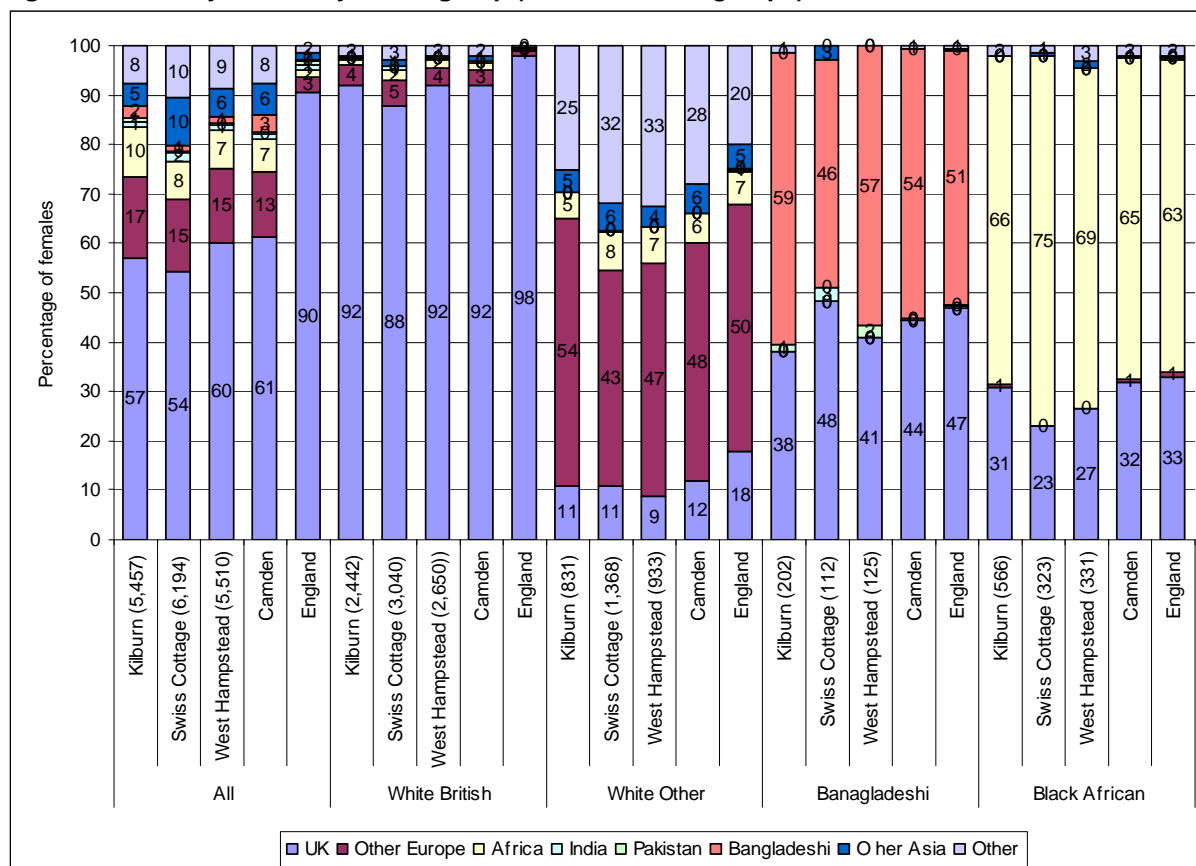
Appendix 3 Additional informational about ethnic minority women in the locality

Table A1 Ethnic Groups: females

	Kilburn	Swiss Cottage	West Hampstead	Camden	London	England
ALL PEOPLE	5,494	6,218	5,185	102,621	3,703,298	25,216,687
White British	2,447	3,045	2,648	52,378	2,193,564	21,918,492
White Irish	445	209	332	4,692	117,252	330,054
White Other	832	1,363	936	17,226	318,133	699,237
White and Black Caribbean	60	35	44	875	37,163	118,379
White and Black African	56	30	43	678	17,850	38,940
White and Asian	67	83	63	1,045	29,927	91,414
Other Mixed	94	105	89	1,463	32,065	78,236
Indian	146	189	109	2,255	221,181	517,342
Pakistani	67	63	26	583	69,199	348,496
Bangladeshi	203	109	125	6,318	77,141	136,422
Other Asian	70	82	53	1,075	61,291	107,672
Black Caribbean	189	98	133	2,066	191,482	301,365
Black African	568	317	335	6,378	200,237	246,835
Other Black	39	30	32	495	32,372	50,024
Chinese	71	118	99	1,891	42,544	114,768
Other Ethnic Group	140	342	118	3,203	61,897	119,011

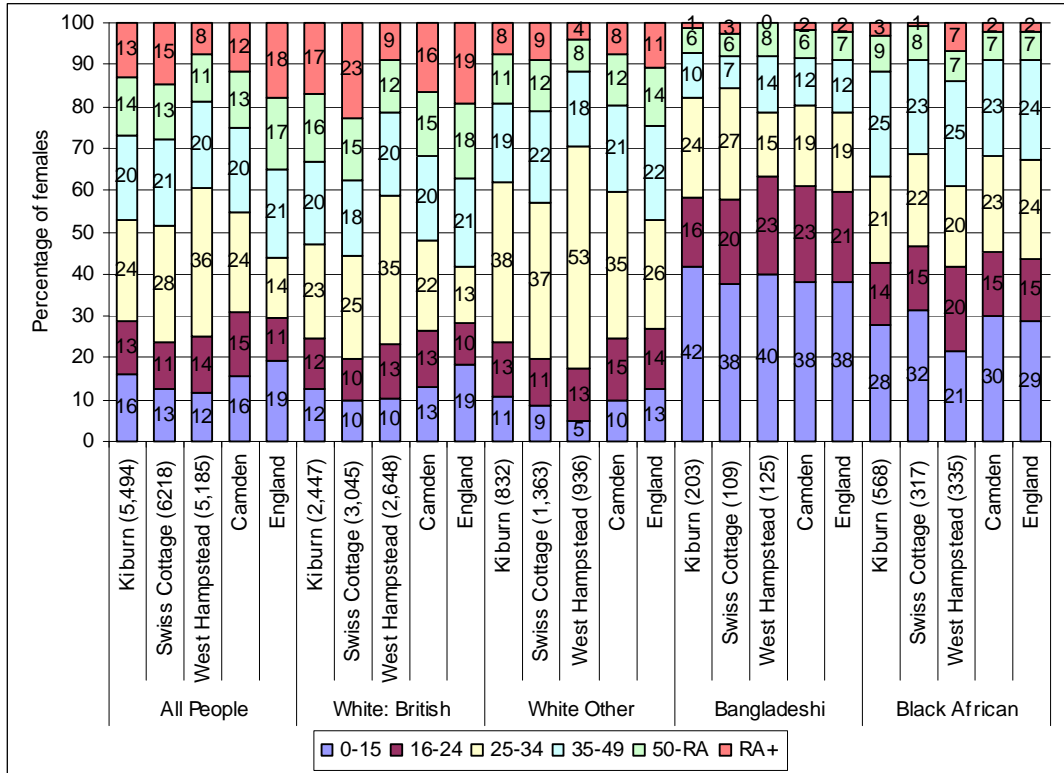
Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003.

Figure A2 Country of birth by ethnic group (selected ethnic groups)



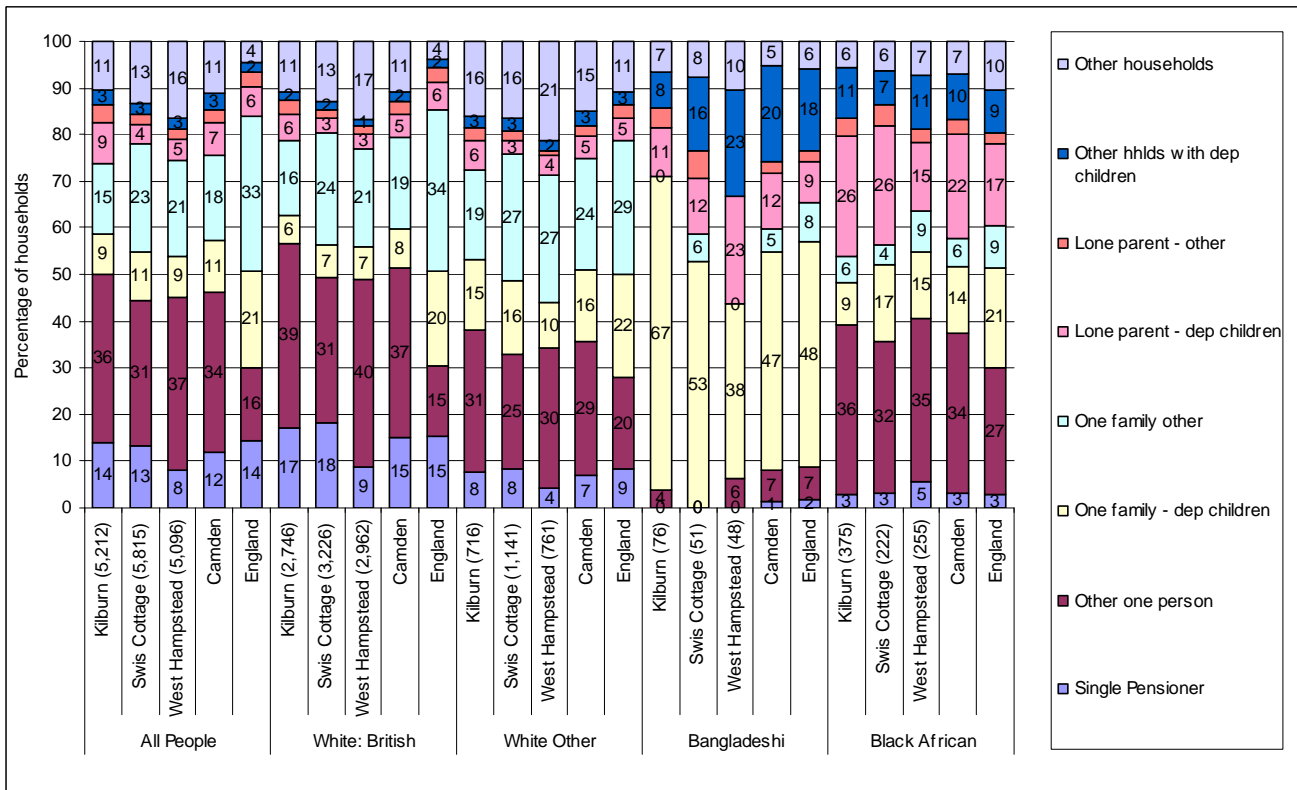
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Figure A3 Age profile for females (selected ethnic groups)



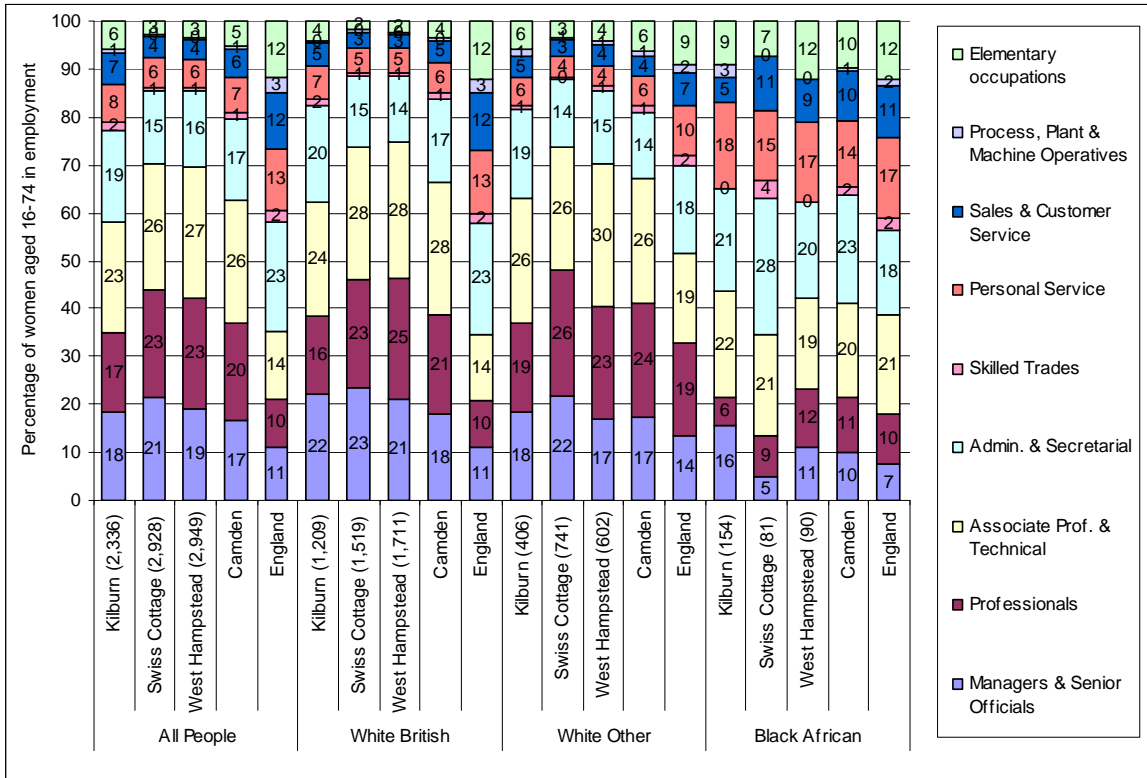
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Figure A4. Household composition by ethnic group of household representative person (selected ethnic groups)



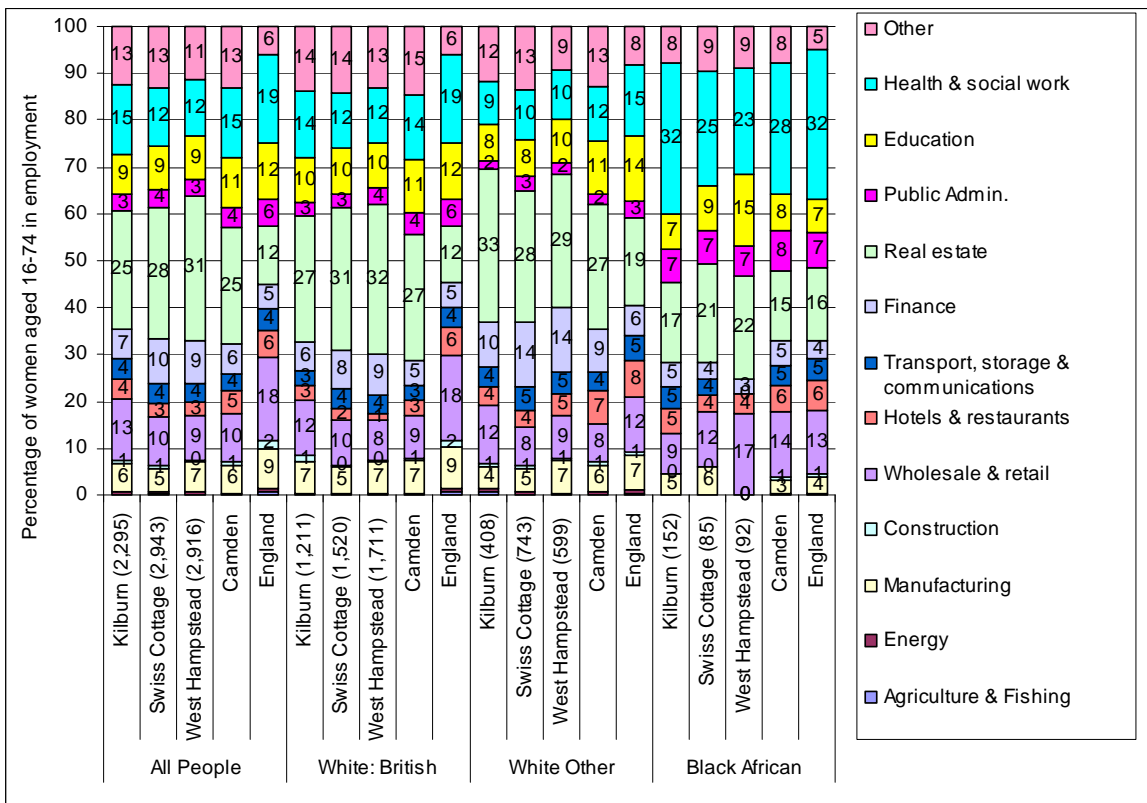
Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003.

Figure A5 Occupation by ethnicity for women from selected ethnic groups



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003.

Figure A6 Industry by ethnicity for women from selected ethnic groups



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003.