



Inner Temple Library



Race Relations Act 1965

1965 CHAPTER 73

An Act to prohibit discrimination on racial grounds in places of public resort; to prevent the enforcement or imposition on racial grounds of restrictions on the transfer of tenancies; to penalise incitement to racial hatred; and to amend section 5 of the Public Order Act 1936.
[8th November 1965]

Race Relations Act 1965: 50 Years On

October 2015. Based on a display in the Inner Temple Library

Race Relations Act 1965



2015 is the 50th anniversary of the Race Relations Act 1965, which was the first legislation to outlaw racial discrimination in public places in the UK.

The Act outlawed discrimination “on the grounds of colour, race, or ethnic or national origins” in public places, but did not

make racial discrimination as such a criminal offence. The Race Relations Board was set up to consider any complaint of discrimination. It could refer persistent discrimination to the Attorney General (or to the Lord Advocate in Scotland) who could then apply for a court injunction.

It was superseded by further Race Relations Acts in 1968, 1976 and an Amendment Act in 2000, before the Equality Act 2010 superseded and consolidated these and other discrimination legislation.

The Act received criticism at the time for being too weak, but is of historical importance as the legislation that instigated the drive towards greater equality in the UK.

Selected Books

in the Inner Temple Library

Blackstone's guide to the Equality Act 2010. 2nd ed. 2012

Burney & Rose. Racist offences: how is the law working? 2002

Butterworth. Immigration of coloured races into British colonies. 1898

Carey. Colonial students: a study of the social adaptation of colonial students in London. 1956

Coussey. Tackling racial equality: international comparisons. 2002

Discrimination law handbook. 2nd ed. 2006

Hill. Blackstone's guide to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. 2001

Hill & Kenyon. Promoting equality and diversity: a practitioner's guide. 2008

Justice Reports. The Union divided: race discrimination and third country nationals in the European Union. 1997

Kennedy. The illusion of inclusion: law and race in Britain. 1998

Monaghan on equality law. 2nd ed. 2013

Monaghan, du Pleiss & Malhi. Race, religion and ethnicity discrimination: using international human rights law. 2003

Poulter. English law and ethnic minority customs. 1986

Prashar. Positive action: ambiguities and ambivalence. 1991

Rubenstein. Discrimination: the new law: a guide to the new regulations on race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and disability. 2004

Tuck & Southgate. Ethnic minorities, crime and policing: a survey of the experiences of West Indians and whites. 1981

Walker & Redman. Racial discrimination: a simple guide to the provisions of the Race Relations Act 1976. 1977



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BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

Discrimination

1.—(1) It shall be unlawful for any person, being the proprietor or manager of or employed for the purposes of any place of public resort to which this section applies, to practise discrimination on the ground of colour, race, or ethnic or national origins against persons seeking access to or facilities or services at that place.

(2) This section applies to the following places of public resort, that is to say—

- (a) any hotel, and any restaurant, café, public house or other place where food or drink is supplied for consumption by the public therein;
- (b) any theatre, cinema, dance hall, sports ground, swimming pool or other place of public entertainment or recreation;
- (c) any premises, vehicle, vessel or aircraft used for the purposes of a regular service of public transport;

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(d) any place of public resort maintained by a local authority or other public authority.

(3) For the purposes of this section a person discriminates against another person if he refuses or neglects to afford him access to the place in question, or any facilities or services available there, in the like manner and on the like terms in and on which such access, facilities or services are available to other members of the public resorting thereto.

(4) Except as provided by sections 3 and 4 of this Act, no proceedings, whether civil or criminal, shall lie against any person in respect of an act or omission which is unlawful by virtue only of this section.

1956 c. 62.

(5) In this section "hotel" means an hotel within the meaning of the Hotel Proprietors Act 1956 (that is to say an establishment held out by the proprietor as offering food, drink and, if so required, sleeping accommodation, without special contract, to any traveller presenting himself who appears able and willing to pay a reasonable sum for the services and facilities provided and who is in a fit state to be received) and any establishment which would be an hotel within the meaning of that Act apart from any discrimination on grounds mentioned in this section.

The Race Relations Board and conciliation committees.

2.—(1) For the purposes of securing compliance with the provisions of section 1 of this Act and the resolution of difficulties arising out of those provisions, there shall be constituted a board to be known as the Race Relations Board, consisting of a chairman and two other members appointed by the Secretary of State.

(2) The Board shall constitute committees, to be known as local conciliation committees, for such areas as the Board consider necessary for the purposes of this section; and it shall be the duty of every such committee—

- (a) to receive and consider any complaint of discrimination in contravention of section 1 of this Act which may be made to them (or made to the Board and referred by the Board to them), being a complaint made by or with the authority in writing of the person against whom the discrimination is alleged to have been practised;
- (b) to make such inquiries as they think necessary with respect to the facts alleged in any such complaint; and
- (c) where appropriate, to use their best endeavours by communication with the parties concerned or otherwise to secure a settlement of any difference between them and a satisfactory assurance against further discrimination contrary to the said section 1 by the party against whom the complaint is made.

