Migration, migrants and inequality
Rutter Jill and Latorre Maria
in Towards a more equal society?: Poverty, inequality and policy since 1997
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Item type: chapter

This chapter discusses challenges for poverty and inequality arising from higher levels of immigration. It examines both how migrant communities are faring in terms of labour-market experiences and educational outcomes, and possible effects of immigration on the employment prospects and wages of non-migrants. The chapter also looks at who has migrated to the UK in the period 1997–2007 and analyses the changing socioeconomic profiles of migrant communities. It then examines the impact of migration on broader progress towards greater equality in the UK.

Poverty Street
Ruth Lupton
Published in print: 2003 Published Online: March 2012
Item type: book

This book addresses one of the UK's major social-policy concerns: the gap between the poorest neighbourhoods and the rest of the country. It is an account of neighbourhood decline, a portrait of conditions in the most disadvantaged areas, and an up-to-date analysis of the impact of the government's neighbourhood-renewal policies. The book explores twelve of the most disadvantaged areas in England and Wales, from Newcastle in the north to Thanet in the south, providing the reader with a journey around the country's poverty map; combines evidence from neighbourhood statistics, photographs, and the accounts of local people; with analysis of broader social and economic trends; assesses the effect of government policies since 1997; and considers future prospects for reducing inequalities.
This book argues that past failure to address fundamental inequalities in the ability of low-income households to access adequate transport has undermined effective delivery of welfare policies in the US and UK. It describes the new policies and initiatives being developed to address this oversight, and outlines the case for including transport as an area of social-policy inquiry. Key factors are identified and case-study examples of practical initiatives from both sides of the Atlantic are used to draw lessons for future policy and practice. The comparison between US and UK policy and practice adds a new dimension to those familiar with the subject.

The art of learning: empowerment through performing arts

Steven Miles

This chapter takes a closer look at learning processes and empowering experiences in the more informal setting of projects for young people located in the arena of the performing arts. Based on the intercultural evaluation of three case studies (from Portugal, Germany, and the UK), it shows that participation in the performing arts is a highly successful means to aid the development of young people's self-confidence and social skills. However, the biographical effects of such experiences depend on how informal learning and education are recognised by respective national transition systems. They demand from policy makers an investment in programmes for which the outcomes are less predictable and measurable than those of formal education and training are normally assumed to be.
Towards a ‘social welfare’ approach to transport
Karen Lucas

in Running on empty: Transport, social exclusion and environmental justice.

Published in print: 2004 Published Online: March 2012
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This chapter draws comparative lessons between the UK and the US, identifying how the social- and transport-policy agenda on both sides of the Atlantic can better embrace the issue of social equity in the future. The statistical evidence shows that people living on the lowest incomes, in both the UK and the US, spend a far greater proportion of their income to travel less often and over shorter distances than the average population. This ‘travel poverty’ significantly reduces their life chances because of a reduced opportunity to access a decent education, gainful employment, healthcare services, and other amenities. Now, new policy and legislative frameworks are being developed in both countries in an attempt to address this previous oversight. US policy and practice is more advanced in this respect and the UK policy makers and practitioners have much to learn from the experiences of their US counterparts.

Poverty and social exclusion: theory and policy
David M. Smith

in On the margins of inclusion: Changing labour markets and social exclusion in London

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Item type: chapter

This chapter shows how the current ‘social exclusion’ concept has been deployed in the UK and the historical, institutional, and political contexts that have influenced the debates surrounding the causes of poverty and social exclusion. It notes that the ‘social exclusion’ concept originated in EU poverty programmes during the 1980s while in Britain and the US the same concerns were addressed in terms of the emergence of an urban ‘underclass’ (Silver 1994). It further notes that the concepts are not unrelated and both are concerned with the relative roles of agency and structural and/or institutional causes and both emerged together with debates surrounding the ‘new poverty’ associated with global economic changes.
Soon after it was elected in 1997, Tony Blair's 'New Labour' government became embroiled in a row about the implementation of cuts in benefits for lone parents that had been set in train by the outgoing administration. In the late spring of 2008, another huge row broke out over the treatment of those with low incomes. Huge damage had been done to the government's and especially the new Prime Minister, Gordon Brown's, reputation for being on the side of the poor. These two events bracket the period covered in the book - one of sustained economic growth and low unemployment, which at the time of writing appears to have come to an end. This book brings together evidence on each of these domains with the aim of providing a balanced assessment of more than a decade of New Labour government.

Housing policy and disabled people: from past to present
Laura Hemingway

This chapter reviews developments in housing policy, regulation and official advice as it relates to disabled people, with the aim of highlighting the extent of progress towards better practices. The chapter is broken down into different periods, starting from the 1900s through to the present day, spanning workhouses, institutionalisation, community care and special needs provision. It goes further than previous historical overviews by offering some prediction of future patterns resulting from the change of government in the UK in 2010, and an overview of international good practice. The introduction of social model ideas has led to some positive progress, and UK examples are used to emphasise innovations and improvements. The principal argument is that housing policy and practice has been largely influenced by an individual approach to disability that regards impairment as a disadvantage and 'personal tragedy' for the individual.
Examining the empirical evidence of transport inequality in the US and UK
Kelly Clifton and Karen Lucas
in Running on empty: Transport, social exclusion and environmental justice.

On the basis that most social policy is concerned with addressing the unequal effects of the market distribution of goods and services in the interest of the welfare of citizens, this chapter presents the empirical evidence of transport inequality in the UK and US. It draws out the similarities and differences in transport access and travel behaviour between the average population and different social groups within each country. Where the data allows, the discussion makes direct comparisons between the UK and the US circumstances. It considers the implications of these inequities in relation to wider quality-of-life issues – such as access to work, education, healthcare, and other basic amenities – identifies how widely these issues have been examined within the existing body of research, and highlights gaps in this knowledge base.

Transport and social exclusion
Karen Lucas
in Running on empty: Transport, social exclusion and environmental justice.

Part Two of this book is dedicated to the UK policy approach, with a particular focus on policy development and practice in England. This chapter introduces the social-exclusion policy agenda. It offers a definition of social exclusion as it is presented by the policy literature, and presents the key components of the UK government's emerging strategy for addressing the problem of poor transport in England through accessibility planning.
Ensuring access and participation in the Liverpool city region
Murray Grant

in Running on empty: Transport, social exclusion and environmental justice.

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This is the first of four UK-case-study chapters in this book that illustrate the way in which local-policy practitioners are implementing policies and initiatives to improve accessibility for people experiencing ‘transport poverty’ in their administrative areas. It focuses on the work undertaken by Merseytravel, the Public Transport Executive (PTE) for Liverpool and Merseyside, in linking major areas of regeneration with areas of high unemployment.

A road less travelled: case studies from community transport
Martin Jones

in Running on empty: Transport, social exclusion and environmental justice.

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This final UK case study describes the wide variety of community- and voluntary-run and owned transport services that are provided in the UK under the broad umbrella of community transport. Community transport is important in two ways. It is important because it shows that things can be done differently and better by the devolved voluntary sector. Community transport has pioneered the development of accessible transport for disabled people in the UK. It created the concept of demand-responsive transport. Second, community transport has made a huge difference to the lives of vast numbers of people who were previously prevented from playing a full part in society. The discussion cites a number of examples of community- and voluntary-based transport services that have been specifically introduced to fill a gap in mainstream transport services in deprived communities.
Conclusions from the UK experience

Karen Lucas

in Running on empty: Transport, social exclusion and environmental justice.

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Item type: chapter

This chapter summarises the main points raised in the UK chapters and identifies the overall strengths and weaknesses of the social exclusion and accessibility planning approach. The UK case studies (Chapters Four to Seven) demonstrate that there is already a lot of good practice happening ‘on the ground’ and, for transport authorities such as Merseytravel, which has been championing a social-equity agenda in transport for more than ten years, the SEU policies will simply help to reinforce the good work that is already going on. There is also an important role for the community-transport sector aimed at improving transport for socially excluded groups and communities. However, there are still some significant barriers and risks, such as short termism and over-simplification of the problem; under-resourcing and competing funding priorities; legislative and institutional barriers; and reconciling social concerns about transport.

Social justice for children: investigating and eradicating child poverty

Ruth Lister

in Fighting poverty, inequality and injustice: A manifesto inspired by Peter Townsend

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Item type: chapter

This chapter stresses that Peter did not separate child poverty out from the wider issues of poverty and privilege as a discrete problem, which could be solved without addressing the underlying structures of inequality that maintain social injustice. It observes that this lifelong belief is frequently demonstrated, for example, notably in Poverty in the UK, in which Peter attributed the experience of poverty by women and children to structural disadvantage, not to ‘personal characteristics’, up until his final work on international poverty which uses the language of human rights to shift the debate from the personal failures of the poor to failures at the macro level of national governments and international
organisations. It sets out the major challenges which need to be addressed in the continuing fight to end child poverty.

Social policy and disabled people: a recent history
Luke Clements and Janet Read


This chapter provides a summary of the main policy and legislative developments that have affected disabled people in the United Kingdom (UK) fifty years after the Second World War. This period is considered to be coterminous with that following the ratification of the European Convention on Human Rights – or simply the Convention – by the UK.

Participation in supported employment
Sheila Riddell, Stephen Baron, and Alastair Wilson

in The Learning Society and people with learning difficulties

This chapter explores the operation of a quite different form of supported employment that has developed from grassroots movements and lacks statutory or central-government financial support. It notes that this version of supported employment, Job Coach Supported Employment, reflects the principle that all citizens have the right to work, since this is the key aspect of social inclusion in Western societies. The chapter outlines some central principles of Job Coach Supported Employment and then discusses some recent findings on its position in the UK. It uses case-study material to explore experiences of Job Coach Supported Employment by people with learning difficulties.
Inequality and the devolved administrations: Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
Burchardt Tania and Holder Holly

This chapter explores the consequences of devolution for inequality. It discusses whether and why devolution might have been expected to have had an impact on inequality within and between the four UK nations, and then looks at the evidence, focusing on income and educational inequalities. The first section briefly reviews the degree of devolution that Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland have each enjoyed since 1997. The second section describes the policies pursued in practice in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland since devolution and explores the extent to which they represent a divergence from the past and/or a divergence from policy as it has evolved in England and the UK. The third section reports changes over the period 1998–99 to the present. The final section offers an assessment of whether devolution has so far produced more effective strategies for reducing inequality and poverty than would have occurred in its absence.

Poverty, inequality and child well-being in international context: still bottom of the pack?
Kitty Stewart

This chapter takes a wider cross-national perspective, asking whether a decade of Labour government has improved the UK's international standing on indicators of poverty, inequality, and child well being. Despite various efforts, in 2007, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) published a report that placed the UK bottom of a child well being league. The first half of the chapter is dedicated to the material well-being domain. The second half examines relative progress in education, risks and behaviours, peer relationships, and subjective well being. At times, discussion is restricted to European Union (EU) member states because of the data available, but, where possible, information for other OECD countries is included.
Conclusions: climbing every mountain or retreating from the foothills?
Hills John, Sefton Tom, and Stewart Kitty

in Towards a more equal society?: Poverty, inequality and policy since 1997
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This chapter pulls together the threads of the book with the aim of reaching an overall assessment of the government's record since it came to power in 1997. It examines whether the evidence of the previous chapters adds up to a picture of substantial change, a serious assault on inherited levels of poverty, inequality, and social exclusion. The chapter examines how much of a difference New Labour, after more than a decade in government, can be said to have made and whether Britain is a 'more equal society' than it was in 1997. In several key respects, the UK was a somewhat more equal society after 10 years of New Labour government.

Changing minds: opening up employment options for people with mental health problems
Alan Roulstone and Colin Barnes

in Working futures?: Disabled people, policy and social inclusion
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Item type: chapter

This chapter examines the historical context, contrasting it with the research evidence regarding the work aspirations of people with enduring mental-health problems and their potential to become valued employees. It argues that what is required to enable people to fulfil their potential is a shift from a clinical model of recovery, from mental ill health towards a model more akin to a social model of disability. The chapter presents the results of a study exploring approaches to employment support for this group to back up that argument. It looks at the progress being made in developing appropriate supported employment in the UK and at the challenges ahead.