

InnuScience

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Who are the
Equality &
Human Rights
Commission?
Why Are They
regulating the
Cleaning
Industry?





Cleaning Industry Background

Key facts:

- The UK market for contract cleaning is estimated to be **£5.6 billion** pa
- **448,400** people working in the industry
- Migrant workers make up **37%** of cleaning workforce.
- **1%** of companies employ approx **half** all cleaning employees.
- 70% of workforce below NVQ Level 2 qual.

500,000 people!





Cleaning Industry Background

Key facts:

Workforce statistics



18% of the workforce report having a disability.

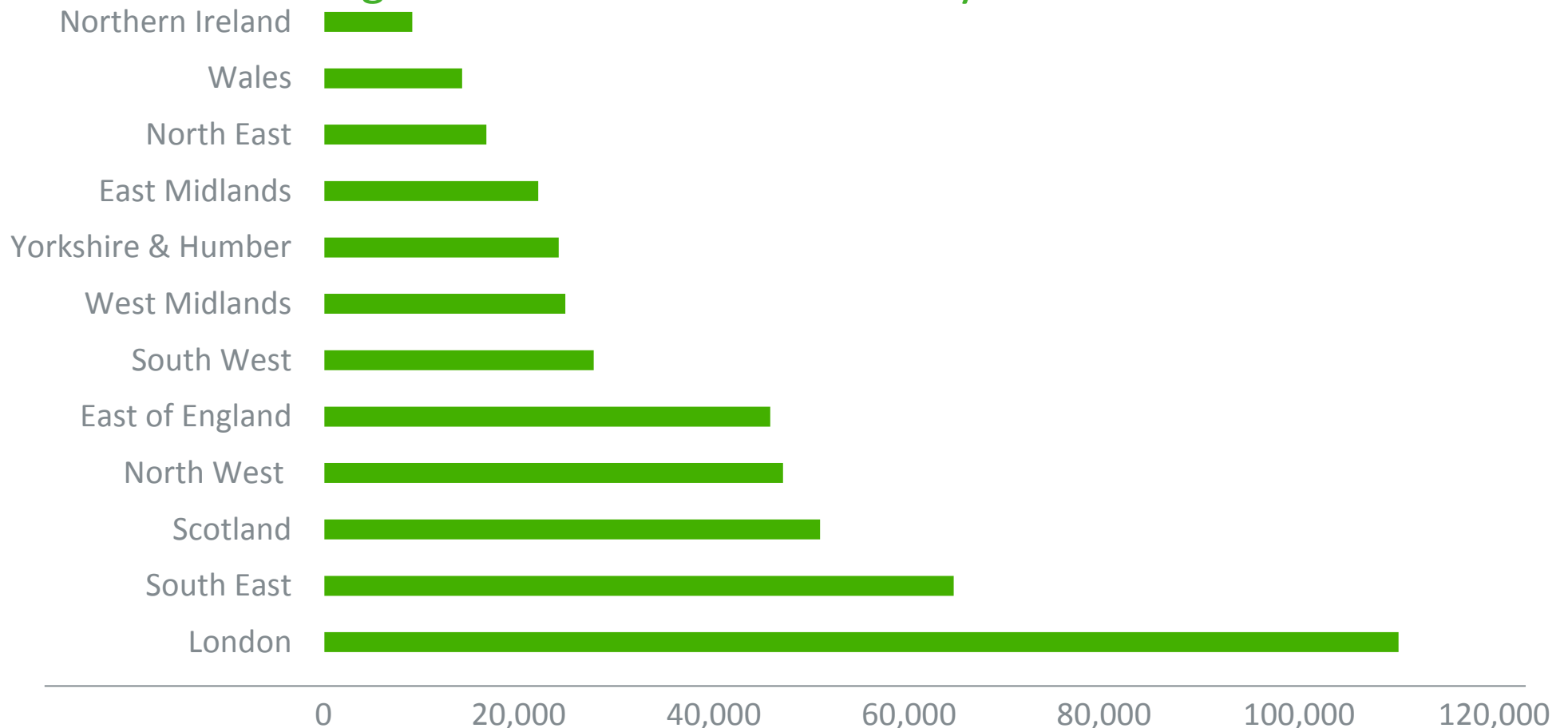
43% of workforce over 45



Cleaning Industry Background

Key facts:

National and regional data: Workforce widely distributed





EHRC Background

Mandate

In 2006 Parliament gave the Commission the mandate to challenge discrimination, and to protect and promote human rights.

Vision

Identify and tackle areas where there is still unfair discrimination or where human rights are not being respected.

Mission

A catalyst for change and improvement on equality and human rights.

A Strategic Priority for 2015/2016

Improving compliance with equality and human rights laws in employment practices in the cleaning sector.



EHRC & The Cleaning Industry

Why Cleaning?

One of the largest employers of minimum wage workers

Review

Conducted in 2013

Result

The Invisible Workforce Report in 2014

A Strategic Priority for 2015/2016

Industry taskforce set up in 2014

Improving compliance with equality and human rights laws in employment practices in the cleaning sector, with regulations expected early 2015





EHRC & The Cleaning Industry

Taskforce members include:





EHRC Expected Regulations to Cover

Dignity and respect

A lack of these values was found to be evident

Workers reported taking great pride in their work

Not afforded the same dignity and respect shown to others

Treated as 'lowest of the low' by supervisors, the client and the public.

Some clients prevented workers from using facilities, such as canteens, available to other employees.



EHRC Expected Regulations to Cover

Equality and non-discrimination at work

Little evidence of systemic unlawful discrimination

Migrant workers reported discriminatory treatment

Word of mouth recruitment is a commonly reported route into the sector, and this may leave employers at risk of indirect discrimination claims because employment opportunities are not open to all.

Recruitment practices have led to the informal segregation of the workforce by different nationalities



EHRC Expected Regulations to Cover

Pay

Contract value determines what cleaning firms are able to pay workers, and low pay is prevalent across the sector, up to clients to bring contracts up to Living Wage levels

A significant number of workers experienced problems with the under-payment or non-payment of wages

Some workers also did not receive the holiday or sick pay they were entitled to



EHRC Expected Regulations to Cover

Access to redress

Most of the cleaning firms have grievance policies and procedures
Workers are often not aware of these procedures

Working hours, breaks and leave

In some cases workers were told by their employer they were not entitled to holiday or sick leave

Many workers complained about unrealistic workloads.

Privacy

Changing facilities not provided



EHRC Expected Regulations to Cover

Most of these points can be covered by new policies and procedures but will have very little impact on operating procedure but what will?



EHRC Expected Regulations to Cover

A safe work environment

Is providing workers with products that are deemed hazardous to their health providing a safe environment?

- Workers exposed to chemical cleaning products will have these chemicals in their blood stream within 6 seconds
- 2013 Imperial College Study found cleaning operatives 3x more likelihood to suffer from respiratory diseases

It's very likely the regulations will propose the banning of hazardous chemicals in favour of non chemical alternatives



EHRC Expected Regulations to Cover

A safe work environment

Safer alternatives to chemicals

- Microfibre and water
 - Desks, glass, low traffic surfaces
- Ionised water
 - Desks, glass, floors
- Diamond floor
 - Alternative to floor strippers and polishes
- Biological Cleaning Products
 - Cleaning of all surfaces



Our Experience

A safe work environment

Biotechnology has come of age

- Biological products used on tens of thousands of UK sites, as an alternative to chemicals
- The most prestigious higher education institutions, public sector, retail and transport sites all use these products already
- No longer necessary to put cleaning operatives at risk, to provide a cleaner environment, within a budget
- Available on most University buying platforms through the UK's largest distributor, Bunzl Cleaning & Hygiene Supplies



Questions

Myself and my colleague Adam will be available on the EAUC stand for any questions or on the contact details below

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