

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION IN THE VILLERAY-SAINT-MICHEL-PARC-EXTENSION BOROUGH AND PLANS FOR ACTION

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Established in 1977, l'Association des locataires de Villeray (ALV) is an organisation devoted to the protection of tenant rights in the Villeray neighbourhood as well as the promotion of housing rights.

The Comité d'action de Parc-Extension (CAPE) has worked toward improving housing conditions among the most vulnerable residents of the Parc-Extension neighbourhood since 1986.

A branch of the Centre éducatif communautaire René-Goupil, the Bureau Info Logement de Saint-Michel (BIL) provides information regarding the rights and responsibilities of tenants. The BIL orients, advises, and accompanies tenants throughout the multiple steps associated with housing.



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HIGHLIGHT SUMMARY

Newcomers and immigrants are particularly vulnerable in the housing market and are confronted with many barriers in both the social sectors and the private sectors of large Canadian cities. The discriminatory practices of landlords are among the specific barriers that newcomers face not only upon arrival in Canada, but also in the course of their integration in the years following.

In Montreal, the housing crisis continues to amplify growing discrimination. Despite this issue's increased exposure in the media as well as its coverage in the Commission de consultation publique's report on racism and systemic discrimination, this phenomenon remains inconspicuous and difficult to prove despite an increasing number of complaints.

One of the City of Montreal's most populated and diverse boroughs, Villeray—Saint-Michel—Parc-Extension is home to tenants facing various housing discrimination issues. In the survey conducted for this report, residents of the borough mention experiencing multiple instances racial, ethnic, and/or religious discrimination, as well as discrimination on the basis of their familial status, during their search for housing. These instances of discrimination have a significant impact on the integration and the mental wellbeing of immigrants and newcomers.

For most of the landlords we encountered in the borough, questions of skin colour or religion are greatly outweighed by the importance of securing a well-paying tenant. However, the common requirement of proof of income may indirectly discriminate against immigrants and newcomers. Moreover, some landlords report having difficulties with immigrant tenants. The challenges landlords confront are often related to the various prejudices imposed on migrants.

This report considers several tools for tenants, community groups as well as landlords to improve cohesion within the borough.



TABLE OF CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THE VILLERAY-SAINT-MICHEL-PARC-EXTENSION BOROUGH	2
3. THE CHALLENGES FACED BY IMMIGRANTS IN THE RENTAL MARKET	3
3.1 The Many Barriers Confronted by Immigrants	3
3.2 Housing Discrimination	4
3.3 The Situation in Montreal	5
4. THE MAIN CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED IN THE VSMPE BOROUGH	6
4.1 Note on Methodology	6
4.2 The Challenges Experienced by Tenants	6
4.3 The Challenges Experienced by Landlords	10
5. FINDINGS AND POINTS FOR REFLECTION	13
6. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	14
6.1. Recommendations to Better Equip Tenants	14
6.2. Recommendations for Landlords	14
7. HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT?	14
8. BIBLIOGRAPHY	15



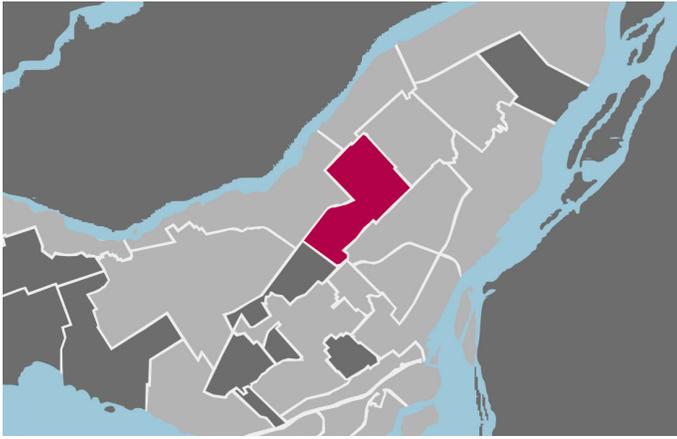
1. INTRODUCTION

Discriminatory actions and attitudes based on ethnic origin, race and/or religion at evidence during the search for housing, occupancy of a residence, and after termination of occupancy (via referrals), can be enacted and/or exhibited by landlords, concierges, and even neighbours. These phenomena have the regrettable effect of considerably inhibiting the ability of immigrant households, racialized households, and/or households comprising those newly arrived in Canada, to find housing of a suitable size and quality, and at a reasonable price.

Highlighting the cultural diversity present in the Villeray—Saint-Michel—Parc-Extension borough not only reinforces that very diversity and the promotion of cohesive exchanges between tenants and landlords, it equally reinforces the tools necessary to foster a more harmonious coexistence among all residents of the borough.

This report aims to illustrate the stakes and dynamics of discrimination in order to develop a better understanding of the issues that both tenants and landlords encounter in their respective rental experiences.

Through testimony, this overview seeks a more complete understanding of the various perspectives from which the discourse on discrimination is constructed. It also aims to identify recommendations and actions that would foster and promote a more inclusive society in which newcomers can fully participate in their communities, thereby flourishing and developing meaningful relationships.



2. THE VILLERAY-SAINT-MICHEL-PARC-EXTENSION BOROUGH

Montreal has always been a refuge for newcomers. Between 2006 and 2015, 80% of immigrant households that landed in Quebec settled there¹. The Villeray—Saint-Michel—Parc-Extension borough is located in the north-central part of the City of Montreal and covers an area of 16.5 km². There is a range of culturally and linguistically diverse residents within the borough; seven out of ten people have a direct link to immigration, either originating abroad themselves or having at least one parent born outside Canada.

The borough is the City of Montreal's second most populated. In 2016, it comprised 143,853 residents, or 8.4% of the population — 15% of which had not yet received Canadian citizenship. Furthermore, 47% of the borough's population, or 66,600 residents, identified as a visible minority. The majority of the borough's immigrant population originates from five countries: Haiti, Algeria, Vietnam, Italy, and Morocco. As for those who migrated to Canada in the five years between 2011 and 2016, the most represented countries of origin are respectively Algeria, Haiti, Morocco, and France.

Among those living in the borough, 60,200 have been identified as immigrants, representing over two in five residents. Their presence is most significant in Parc-Extension and in Saint-

Michel, where immigrants make up 61% of the population, while in Villeray immigrants make up only 30% of the population². Among the borough's immigrant population, nearly 11,890 individuals have recently arrived in Canada, representing close to 20% of the population — a proportion which is increasing, making the borough a major refuge for immigrants within the City of Montreal. Finally, nearly 61,540 people had changed their residence in the five years preceding the census, representing approximately 46% of the population.

While some languages — English, Spanish, or Arabic, for example — are commonly spoken at home, French remains the most frequently spoken language among residents of the borough. Bilingualism remains a significant component, insofar as one in two people is equally capable of conversing in French and English. It is nevertheless imperative to note that more than 5% of the population canvassed speaks neither of Canada's two official languages.

Composed of three formerly working-class neighbourhoods, the Villeray—Saint-Michel—Parc-Extension borough is mostly made up of tenants, who represent 74% of the population. Despite the accelerated gentrification caused by residential and institutional real estate projects, over 33,000 residents, representing 23% of the population, are in low-income situations. Furthermore, more than 32% of households commit 30% or more of their income to paying rent. In addition, nearly 9% of the borough's housing units require major repairs, compared to the 8.5% associated with the City of Montreal. While the neighbourhood is home to many families with children, more than 12% of dwellings are undersized according to the National Occupancy Standard developed by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The difficulty of accessing subsidized housing, the low number of social housing units in the rental housing stock, as well as discriminatory practices among landlords in the borough all contribute to forcing the most vulnerable immigrants to settle for substandard housing.

¹ The numbers provided in this section are cited from the last Canadian census dated 2016, and from Montreal en Statistiques, 2018.

² Centraide de Grand Montreal. 2017. Analyse territoriale 2015-2016 Villeray, Saint-Michel et Parc-Extension.

3. THE CHALLENGES FACED BY IMMIGRANTS IN THE RENTAL MARKET SUR LE MARCHÉ DU LOGEMENT

3.1 The Many Barriers Confronted by Immigrants

Since the beginning of the 2000s, researchers report that the socio-economic integration of immigrants is becoming increasingly difficult in Canada's largest cities³.

The same is true when we consider the state of housing. Indeed, immigrants and newcomers are finding it increasingly difficult to access accommodations. While the housing conditions of immigrant households tend to improve over time, this process is neither linear nor uniform across socioeconomic factors; overall, immigrant households tend to experience poorer housing conditions than those born in Canada, sometimes long after they arrive⁴. Among immigrants, those who have recently arrived in Canada and refugees are of the most vulnerable individuals when it comes to housing — next to other notable categories such as Indigenous and young people.

To explain this situation, several studies have emphasized the unique barriers to housing that burden newcomers⁵. Research has shown that, beyond the potential weakness of their revenue, recent immigrants are confronted with numerous specific disadvantages that render them vulnerable in the rental market in ways that people born in Canada are not. Indeed, while finding accommodations in complex and in-demand housing markets is a difficult challenge for any household, the language barrier, lack of knowledge of local housing markets and tenants' rights, a lack of credit history and/or of a guarantor, and various forms of discrimination add to the unpredictability of many immigrants' search for housing.

³ See Ledent, Chicha et Arcand. 2017; Teixeira, et Li dir. 2015.

⁴ See Haan. 2005; Leloup et Nong. 2006; Murdie et Logan. 2011.

⁵ See Teixeira. 2008; Francis. 2011.





3.2 Housing Discrimination

Housing discrimination is one of the main barriers that immigrant households face in the rental market. This kind of discrimination practiced by landlords, brokers, lenders, and institutions has been documented in numerous studies in different urban contexts across North America⁶.

Housing discrimination refers to:

" any behaviour, practice or policy in the public or private sectors that directly, indirectly, or systematically causes harm through inhibited access to or use and enjoyment of housing by members of historically disadvantaged social groups"⁷.

Discrimination can therefore take different forms: from simply refusing to grant a household or individual tenancy, to the implementation of a selection criteria, to targeted advertising. The grounds of discrimination are varied and include not only race, but ethnic origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, sexual orientation, family status, age, religious and political beliefs, social status, and disability. While such housing discrimination is prohibited under Canadian Law, very few lawsuits are filed.

Discriminatory practices can occur throughout the course of the rental process. Most of the time they occur during the search for housing, in direct contact with landlords, at the time of showing or during a phone call⁸. Discriminatory practices by landlords during the search for housing can, moreover, take a more indirect form, through offers exclusive to a certain kind of

clientele on online real estate platforms⁹, by way of requests for information on rental application forms, and personal information (name of employer, social insurance number, name of financial institution, etc.), or still by charging tenants in order to consult their credit history. In a report on the needs of racialized women in Villeray¹⁰, several individuals testify to having suffered racist, psychological, and/or sexual harassment from neighbours or landlords at their place of residence.

Immigrants and newcomers are particularly vulnerable to housing discrimination. Positioned at the intersection of numerous markers of identity, they are simultaneously subject to various forms of influence that partly explain their unique trajectory within the housing market¹¹. While some factors are unalterable barriers, such as race and ethnicity, religion or gender, other factors may change as an individual's revenue and employment status, migratory status, official language proficiency, or social capital evolve over time¹². Research shows, furthermore, that refugees, asylum seekers, and undocumented immigrants are most often exposed to the most difficult housing situations in large Canadian cities — especially when they are racialized¹³.

Experiences of discrimination also depend on the geographic context and time period studied. In an article on the differences in how discrimination is perceived in Vancouver, Montreal, and Toronto¹⁴, it was shown that immigrants consider certain spaces to be more inclusive than others. Consequently, renting experiences will vary for immigrant households depending on the city and neighbourhood in which they reside.

⁶ See notably Novac et al., 2002.

⁷ As defined by Novac et al., 2002, p. 1.

⁸ See Dion, 2001.

⁹ See Hogan and Berry, 2011.

¹⁰ Cousineau, Amélie. 2018. Les besoins des femmes racisées dans le quartier Villeray.

¹¹ See notably Dion, 2001; Reiser, 2018.

¹² See notably the works of MirafTAB, 2000; Teixeira, 2008; Francis, 2009; Mensah and Williams, 2013; Ray and Rose, 2011; Murdie, 2008; Rose and Charette, 2014; D'Addario et al., 2007.

¹³ See Francis, 2011; Carter and Vitiello, 2012.



" When there is scarcity in the rental market, discrimination increases because landlords have a choice. This is illegal and [...] extremely concerning "
- Véronique Laflamme, spokesperson for Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain (FRAPRU)¹⁵

3.3 The Situation in Montreal

The number of complaints received for housing discrimination is rising according to Montreal's Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la Jeunesse (CDPDJ). As per the Commission's annual report, the number of complaints had increased by 35% when comparing the period of 2006-2011 with that of 2011-2016¹⁶.

Most of the open complaint files concern experiences of discrimination related to ethnic origin and to skin colour. This situation is likely reinforced by the shrinking rental market in Montreal and is likely even more acute in the context of COVID-19¹⁷. Indeed, low vacancy rates allow landlords to be more selective. In fact, during the housing crisis of the early 2000s, it was observed that reported instances of racial discrimination and ethnic discrimination decreased as vacancy rates increased¹⁸.

The Regroupement des comités logement et associations de locataires du Québec (RCLALQ)¹⁹ has been regularly identifying discriminatory rental advertisements posted on websites and social networks for the past few years. They describe numerous examples of discrimination related to ethnic origin, social status, marital status and age of children, gender, and age.

We are observing continuing discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and race

- Myrlande Pierre, vice-president of the CDPDJ²⁰

However, the low probability of sanctioning a landlord discourages many tenants from filing complaints. While housing discrimination is prohibited by law, very few lawsuits are filed; the Tribunal administratif du logement (formerly the Régie du logement) remains ineffective when it comes to these practices. Tenants must then file a complaint with the Commission des droits de la personne et de la jeunesse (CDPDJ), but a lengthy legal process, relatively weak sanctions (with some exceptions²¹), and the difficulty of proving discrimination are enough to discourage the victims. Ultimately, the process does not guarantee a roof over one's head as its outcome. Thus, housing discrimination remains an inconspicuous and elusive phenomenon in Montreal. In 2019-2020, complaints of housing discrimination made to the CDPDJ represent only 6% of open files, compared to the 49% of complaints to the labour sector (CDPDJ, 2020).

¹⁴ See Ray and Preston, 2009.

¹⁵ Poiré, Anne-Sophie. 2021. " On ne veut pas d'enfants dans des logements à louer ", Le Journal de Montreal. Translation of " Quand il y a une rareté de logements locatifs, la discrimination augmente parce que les propriétaires ont le choix. C'est illégal et [...] extrêmement inquiétant "

¹⁶ CDPDJ, 2020. Rapport d'activités et de gestion 2019-2020.

¹⁷ Vézina, Henri Ouellette. 2020. " Accès au logement: la discrimination "s'accroît" à Montreal ", Journal Métro.

¹⁸ Hachey, Isabelle. 2009. " Discrimination envers les locataires: le nombre de plaintes en forte baisse ", La Presse.

¹⁹ RCLALQ. 2019-2020-2021. Rapports sur *Discrimination et logement*.

²⁰ Goudreault, Zacharie. 2019. " Hausse des cas de discrimination dans l'accès à un logement ", Journal Métro. Translation of " Ce qu'on constate, c'est qu'il y a une persistance de la discrimination fondée sur l'origine ethnique et la race "

²¹ Lévesque, Lia. 2018. " Discrimination: 12 000\$ à payer pour avoir refusé de louer un logement ", La Presse.

4. THE MAIN CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED IN THE VSMPE BOROUGH

4.1 Note on Methodology

Because of the COVID-19 public health crisis, the methodology used to produce this overview had to be appropriately modified. It is based primarily on eleven interviews with tenants living in the borough and six interviews with VSMPE landlords. The report, therefore, has certain limitations and cannot claim to reflect the experiences of all tenants and landlords. Moreover, it is important to mention that, contrary to what was initially expected, this report did not limit the collection of data to people that had arrived in Canada less than five years ago, so as to ensure as many testimonies possible were recorded. This document represents, therefore, an initial overview, on which further research might build.

Most cases of housing discrimination surveyed in this study are:

- Racial, ethnic and/or religious discrimination, sometimes concurrently;
- Discrimination of families with children, which often masks racial and ethnic discrimination.

The instances of discrimination reported by tenants are both of a direct and indirect nature. Direct discrimination is the most blatant form of discrimination. It involves overtly treating individuals differently on discriminatory grounds. For example, blatantly discriminating against immigrants or racialized individuals in online rental advertisements. Indirect discrimination is less conspicuous and more difficult to condemn. It stems from the application of an ostensibly neutral norm that, while not necessarily intended to be discriminatory, nevertheless has a discriminatory effect on individuals. This is the case with certain requirements, such as the need for a guarantor or a credit history, which some landlords demand of their potential tenants — putting newcomers at a particular disadvantage. Finally, some immigrant tenants describe situations of what can be described as “reverse discrimination,” wherein landlords deliberately choose to accept more vulnerable newcomers as tenants.

4.2 The Challenges Experienced by Tenants

We have collected several testimonies from tenants who, while looking for housing, were given rejections, whether implicit or explicit, because of their racial and ethnic origins or their religious beliefs. Below are several instances in which skin colour and/or religious dress and symbols, while invisible over the phone ultimately deterred landlords when it came time to show the property in person.

“ The building I was living in had a fire. I had to find another place to live while it was being worked on. I was given many meetings over the phone, but when I was shown the unit in person, I was told it had already been rented. Between you and me, who exactly makes an appointment to show a rented unit? I know it’s because of my veil. I’m a proud woman, I tell myself that it’s the owner’s right, that they own the property. So I turn away with tears in my eyes. I won’t beg to rent. I’m not asking for charity; I’ll pay.”²²

- Amina, woman of Algerian origin, residing in Quebec since 2011

“ I have very bad memories of the last time I moved in Montreal. It was in 2012 and ever since, as much as I would like to, I refuse to go through it all over again. I began looking in February and had already informed my landlord at the time that I was leaving on June 30th... I’m French, so with an accent from France. I never have any trouble getting an interview, but as soon as I arrive, I feel uneasy. An Asian landlord once asked me if I was actually French. To make a long story short, I visited many, many apartments! I found the one I’m currently living in on June 29th. My baker took pity on me and asked the owner, hoping the religious aspect at least wouldn’t be visible... I had so many rejections, I couldn’t believe it. For those like me who believe, we say to ourselves, thankfully God is good. ”²⁴

- Sanou, woman of French origin, residing in Quebec since 2013

²² Translation of : “ L’immeuble où j’habitais est passé au feu. J’ai dû me chercher un autre logement durant la période des travaux. On m’a donné pas mal de rendez-vous par téléphone, mais une fois arrivée sur les lieux, on me dit que c’est loué. Entre vous et moi, est-ce qu’on donne rendez-vous pour un logement loué? Je sais que c’est le voile. Je suis orgueilleuse, je me dis que c’est son droit au propriétaire, que c’est sa propriété. Alors, je fais demi-tour, les larmes dans les yeux. Je ne peux pas supplier pour louer. Je ne demande pas de charité, je vais payer. ”



Characteristics of the Tenants Interviewed

	Given Name ²³	Country of Origin	No. of years in Quebec	Neighbourhood of residence	Grounds of Discrimination	Discrimination During the Search for Housing	Discrimination During Occupancy
1	Isgou	Somalia	20 years	Villeray	Racial Ethnic	YES	NO
2	Amina	Algeria	10 years	Villeray	Racial Ethnic Religious	YES	NO
3	Yolanda	Haïti	9 years	Villeray	Racial	YES	YES
4	Mustapha	Tunisia	25 years	Saint-Michel	Religious	YES	NO
5	Ibrahim	Marocco	13 years	Villeray	Raciale Ethnic Religious	YES	YES
6	Sanou	France	8 years	Villeray	Racial Religious	NO	YES
7	Majida	Marocco	14 years	Villeray	Racial Religious	NO	YES
8	Josette	Congo	2 years	Saint-Michel	Ethnic	NO	YES
9	Mehdi	Algeria	5 years	Saint-Michel	Racial Ethnic Religious	NO	YES
10	Amir	Pakistan	7 years	Parc-Extension	Ethnic	YES	NO
11	Rosario	Nicaragua	25 years	Saint-Michel	Ethnic	YES	YES

²³The names those interviewed, both tenants and landlords, have been changed to ensure their anonymity.

" One woman, looking right at me, told me flat out that if I was a practicing Muslim, she didn't want anything to do with me. She told me that she didn't want to be bothered during Ramadan. I thought to myself: being Muslim doesn't mean making noise! [...]"

Another woman once said to me : 'Here it's clean, I choose my tenants.' Then, she says that there are no blacks here. I think she was telling me that she only accepted white people. So, when she saw my name on the form, she must

have become uneasy. I'm Arabic, but I have light skin. She must have thought I was white too. Then she never called me back. "

- Mustapha, man of Tunisian origin, residing in Quebec since 1995

²⁴ Translation of: " Je garde un très mauvais souvenir de mon dernier déménagement à Montreal. C'était en 2012 et depuis, malgré que je le voudrais, je ne me lance plus. J'avais commencé mes recherches dès février et j'avais déjà informé mon propriétaire que je quittais mon logement de l'époque au 30 juin... Je suis française, donc avec un accent de France, je n'ai jamais eu de difficulté à avoir d'entrevue, mais une fois sur place, je sentais le malaise. Un propriétaire asiatique m'a même demandé si j'étais vraiment française. Bref, j'en ai visité des appartements! J'ai trouvé mon logement actuel le 29 juin, c'est mon boulanger qui a eu pitié de moi et qui a demandé au propriétaire. Étant noire et voilée, j'ai laissé mon mari aller voir le propriétaire, espérant que l'aspect religieux ne soit pas visible au moins... Tellement eu de refus, que je n'y croyais plus. Pour les croyants comme moi, on se dit heureusement qu'il y a un bon Dieu. "

²⁵ Translation of: " En me regardant, une dame m'a dit carrément que si j'étais un musulman qui pratique, elle ne voulait pas de moi. Elle m'a dit qu'elle ne voulait pas être dérangée pendant le ramadan. Moi j'ai pensé, être musulman ne veut pas dire faire du bruit! [...] Une autre dame m'a dit : "Ici, c'est propre, moi je choisis mes locataires". Puis, elle me dit qu'il n'y a aucun noir ici. D'après moi, elle voulait me dire qu'elle ne prenait que des personnes blanches. Alors, quand elle a vu mon prénom sur le formulaire, il y a eu une sorte de malaise. Je suis arabe, mais j'ai la peau claire. Elle avait dû penser que j'étais blanc moi aussi. Puis, elle ne m'a jamais appelé. "

In some cases, it is the potential tenant's accent during a telephone exchange that reveals an immigrant status which deters the landlord.

" My husband and I were driving around, looking for apartments. I called a number from a sign three times and was told that the apartment was already rented. Two weeks later, we drove past the building and the same sign was there. I am Latina and when I speak, even if you can understand me, you can hear my accent. I don't think you leave a For Rent sign up when the apartment is already taken. "

- Rosario, woman of Nicaraguan origin, residing in Quebec since 1995

Other factors, like whether children are or are not a part of a household, compound with factors of ethnic origin and religious affiliation. Unfortunately, discrimination on the basis of familial status is common and constitutes the majority of the testimonies shared with social workers employed in the borough's housing committees. Discrimination against families with children is further reinforced by the state of the rental market, where large units are scarce within the borough's rental stock. Nevertheless, it can be noted that this type of discrimination often masks racial and/or ethnic discrimination — as is the case for Isigou and Amir, who testify in the following extracts.

" I once visited an apartment with my kids. When I arrived, they told me it was already taken. I had my doubts. When I returned home, I called to see if what they said was true. They said the unit was available, that I could come see it. I don't know whether it's because of the kids, because of colour. I realized they didn't want me. I let it slide. It was in the beginning; I was new here. It hurt me. I asked myself: 'But why, why didn't they give you a chance? "

- Isigou, woman of Malian origin, residing in Quebec since 2011

" I was looking for an apartment. I was living in a 3 and a half and I have 3 kids with some cockroaches and mice issues. We were newcomers and did not have enough resources. During my quest, I came across discrimination. A landlord asked me: "Are you a student?". I told I have a family, and he ended up. Another realtor, he told me that if I am family, the rent is 1200\$ instead of 1050\$ as written on the board. I asked: "What is the difference?", he answered: "There will be more use of the appartement". The same guy rented another 4 and a half. He asked how many people we were and he said: "It will be 500\$ per head", but it was written 1100\$ on the poster. He said: "This is not my appartement, I will talk with my friend" but he never called me back. "

- Amir, man of Pakistani origin, residing in Quebec since 2013

In one of the recorded testimonies what appears to be an example of racial stratification can be noted — that is, a devaluation of certain racialized groups in relation to others in the rental process. Indeed, a tenant of Latin-American origin shared her experience of initially being rejected because, she believes, of her family's ethnic origin, before finally being selected because the landlord wanted to avoid being compelled to rent to people of certain ethnic backgrounds.

" We decided to move because our apartment was too small. When we went to see the apartment, it wasn't the unit advertised: the floors weren't good, the painting wasn't done. The listing agent called to tell us that we weren't chosen. Two days later, the landlord called, she said: "Listen, I prefer to rent to you over black people." That was in the last week of June; even if I didn't like the comment, I had no choice. "²⁸

- Rosario, femme d'origine nicaraguayenne, arrivée au Québec en 1995

²⁶ Translation of: " Mon mari et moi, on cherchait des appartements en se promenant en voiture. À trois reprises, j'ai appelé à un numéro indiqué sur une pancarte et on m'a répondu que l'appartement était déjà loué. On est passé deux semaines plus tard devant l'immeuble et la pancarte était toujours là. Moi, je suis latina et quand je parle, même si on me comprend bien, on entend mon accent. Je pense qu'on ne laisse pas une pancarte à louer quand un logement est déjà loué. "

²⁷ Translation of: " J'ai visité un appartement avec mes enfants. Quand je suis venue, ils m'ont dit que c'est déjà pris. J'avais des doutes. Quand je suis rentrée à la maison, j'ai appelé pour voir si c'était vrai ce qu'ils disaient. Ils m'ont dit que le logement était disponible, que je pouvais venir visiter. Je ne sais pas si c'est à cause des enfants, de la couleur. J'ai compris qu'ils ne voulaient pas de moi. J'ai laissé tomber. C'était au début, j'étais nouvelle. J'avais mal, je me posais la question "Mais pourquoi, pourquoi il ne t'a pas donné la chance?". "

²⁸ Translation of: " On a décidé de déménager parce que l'appartement était trop petit. Quand on est allé visiter, ce n'était pas l'appartement sur les photos de l'annonce: les planchers n'étaient pas très bons, la peinture n'était pas faite. L'agent immobilier nous a téléphoné pour nous informer que nous n'étions pas sélectionnés. Deux jours plus tard, la propriétaire de l'immeuble nous a appelé et elle a dit: "Écoute, je préfère te louer à toi qu'à des noirs". C'était dans les dernières semaines du mois de juin, même si je n'avais pas aimé ce commentaire, je n'avais pas le choix. "

Furthermore, some landlords within the borough take advantage of the lack of knowledge newcomer and immigrant tenants have of their rights. For example, the testimonies gathered here demonstrate that certain landlords would prefer to rent their substandard units to an allophone immigrant rather than to a Quebecer or to an immigrant too well informed and literate. Newcomers are in some ways targets for landlords with malicious intent. This is notably the situation of Yolanda, a mother of four children, for whom the search for housing was not necessarily problematic when she arrived in Quebec: supported by her family, she went to live in their apartment. She did, however, have to deal with substandard conditions in her dwelling: taking advantage of her vulnerable situation and her ignorance of tenants' rights, her landlord chose to not act and make required repairs.

" When I arrived in Quebec, I went to live with my mother and my sister who supported me and my daughters. When my sons arrived from Haiti, the unit became too small. My mom and sister found another place in the building, and I kept the other. I come from Haiti; I didn't really know the law. But I can tell the apartment wasn't clean — I didn't know what mold was. They really don't fix anything. I was ashamed to go the authorities to talk about it. Bugs, roaches, mice. I continuously throw out furniture, clothes, mattresses, all kinds of my things. They tell me the drains are plugged because I eat rice. They tell me there's mold because I cook too much. They tell me there are mice because I buy bags of rice and peas. You think I'm the only one eating around here?"²⁹

- Yolanda, woman of Haitian origin, residing in Quebec since 2012

These experiences of discrimination have a profound impact on the integration and on the mental health of immigrants and of newcomers.

For example, Ibrahim asserts that, since arriving in Quebec, he has let go of many of the expectations he once held of integration, as much in the labour market as in housing. He describes his frustration in a society that purports massive immigration goals yet fails to recognize newcomers for their true value.

"Landlords seek out immigrants because they can dominate them. We often think that it's through words, but it's also their actions. I was in the bathroom, and I came out — the concierge was in my apartment. Is that normal? It's to show me that immigrants are inferior."³⁰

- Ibrahim, man of Moroccan origin, residing in Quebec since 2007

Majida, a tenant of Moroccan origin, has lived in the same dwelling since she arrived in Quebec. She moved into the apartment her husband found when he arrived in Quebec four years earlier. While she did not have to go through the difficulties of finding a place to live, she nevertheless recounts the difficulties she's had with the landlord's son since his father's death. He has, on two separate occasions, opened an application with the housing tribunal with the intent to evict her for wrongdoing.

"He took us to the tribunal twice for nothing. He didn't even show up. He yells at my husband in front of our kids, he threatens to kick us out if we don't accept the rent increase. He doesn't do any of the required repairs. He did some repairs on the balconies, he notified everyone, but not us. There was debris on all our things. I don't know who exactly he thinks he is. He took a cheque but didn't cash it. Then claimed that we didn't pay. I don't know what he wants, but between you and me, he wants us out because he's a racist. We didn't realize. It was his son-in-law who said so."³¹

- Majida, woman of Moroccan origin, residing in Quebec since 2006

Even if these experiences of discrimination are a daily reality for tenants, it is nevertheless difficult to leave a dwelling to find another — particularly given housing crisis currently plaguing Montreal. Majida is on the waiting list for affordable rental housing, as her household earnings are not enough to afford a unit with five rooms. With four children, including a child with autism, Yolanda admits that she is discouraged by her inability to find suitable housing. Not only does she live with the discomfort of substandard housing, but with the resulting shame and the pressure to keep her experiences to herself.

²⁹ Translation of: " Quand je suis arrivée au Québec, je suis allée habiter avec ma mère et ma sœur qui m'avaient parrainée moi et mes filles. Quand mes garçons sont arrivés d'Haïti, le logement était trop petit. Ma mère et ma sœur ont pris un autre logement dans l'immeuble et j'ai gardé celui-ci. Moi, je viens d'Haïti, je ne connaissais pas trop la loi. Mais, je vois que l'immeuble n'était pas propre, je ne connaissais pas ce qu'était la moisissure. Ils ne réparent vraiment pas. J'avais la honte d'aller au bureau pour en parler. Punaises, coquerelles, souris. Je n'arrête pas de jeter les meubles, les vêtements, les affaires, les matelas. Ils me disent que les tuyaux sont bloqués parce que je mange du riz. Ils me disent qu'il y a de la moisissure parce que je cuisine trop. Ils me disent qu'il y a des souris parce que j'achète des poches de riz et de pois. Vous pensez que je suis la seule à manger ici?

³⁰ Translation of: " Les propriétaires cherchent des immigrants, parce qu'ils peuvent les dominer. On pense souvent que c'est avec des mots, mais c'est aussi avec des gestes. J'étais dans la salle de bain, et je suis sorti. J'ai trouvé le concierge dans mon appartement. Est-ce que c'est normal? C'est pour me montrer que les immigrants sont inférieurs. "

³¹ Translation of: " Il nous a amenés à la Régie deux fois pour rien. Il n'est pas venu. Il crie sur mon mari devant les enfants, il nous menace qu'il va nous mettre dehors si on n'accepte pas l'augmentation. Il n'accepte pas de faire les réparations dans notre logement. Il a fait des réparations sur les balcons, il a avisé tout le monde, mais pas nous. Il y avait des déchets sur nos choses. Je ne sais pas pour qui il se prend. Il a pris un chèque, il ne l'a pas encaissé. Puis, il a dit qu'on n'a pas payé. Je ne sais pas ce qu'il veut, mais entre moi et vous, il veut vous mettre dehors parce qu'il est raciste. Nous, on ne comprenait pas. C'est son gendre qui nous a dit qu'il est raciste. "

"I'm a black woman and a single mother. Where would I go? I tell my kid that the cockroaches are called 'ants' so he won't tell his friends at school that we have cockroaches. I know what cockroaches are. Can you imagine?"³²

- Yolanda, woman of Haitian origin, residing in Quebec since 2012

The scarcity of appropriate housing available in the borough has a profound impact on the discriminatory practices of landlords. This is particularly true in gentrifying areas like West Villeray, Parc-Extension, and the South side of Saint-Michel. For Mustapha, who must leave his home on July 1st due to repossession, there is little hope of finding housing. He mentions having contacted over one-hundred-twenty landlords since January 2021 without success. For a 62-year-old immigrant man, this situation is particularly serious and worrying.

"My search for housing, it's a crisis for me. It's not normal to have no results. They notice that I have an accent. In conversation, the first thing they ask for is my name. I get it, we're human, I prefer a neighbour of a certain origin. And since the supply is less than demand, we segregate. For July 1st, I think i'm going to get rid of my furniture, throw it away or sell it, and go sleep in a McDonald's."³³

- Mustapha, man of Tunisian origin, residing in Quebec since 2007

4.3 The Challenges Experienced by Landlords

Most of the landlords encountered or interviewed during the questionnaire claim they do not consider skin colour or country of origin when they seek a new tenant for their rentals. Rather, they suggest that they are more attentive to certain

Mehdi, for his part, believes that his landlord refuses to intervene in a conflict between neighbours in the hopes that he will leave his unit, which could then be rented again at a higher price. In such a situation, even if the issue is between two tenants, it is the landlord's responsibility to ensure the tenants' peaceful use of their rented units and to intervene to put an end to any conflict.

"He [the tenant] says I bang on the ceiling of my apartment. And then, he bangs on the floor. He came down and knocked violently at my door. Me, I have no reason to bang on the ceiling. One time, he called me a "dirty mongrel". Sometimes he yells from his balcony. He has committed vandalism; he damaged my car. The police have come twenty-five or twenty-six times, me, I call the police. Sometimes, he complains about noise, but there's nobody home. The landlord doesn't want to act because we pay \$800 and the new tenants like this guy, they pay \$1,200. My wife is in a wheelchair. We're looking for somewhere else to live for now."³⁴

- Mehdi, man of Algerian origin, residing in Quebec since 2007

The discrimination experienced by tenants are manifold and are closely linked to their context and the transformations of the borough's housing market. What then of landlords' perceptions?

qualities that are reflective of a good application, a neighbourly attitude, and the capability to pay the rent. To those ends, they require proof of income and references, as evidenced in the following interview excerpts.



³² Translation of: " Je suis une femme monoparentale noire. Où je vais aller? Je dis à mon enfant que les coquerelles s'appellent des fourmis pour ne pas qu'il dise à ses amis à l'école qu'on a des coquerelles à la maison. Je sais ce que c'est des coquerelles. Vous vous rendez compte? "

³³ Translation of: " Ma recherche d'appartement, c'est une crise pour moi. Ce n'est pas normal que ça n'aboutisse pas. On remarque que j'ai un accent. Dans la conversation, on me demande la première chose, c'est quoi votre prénom. Je comprends très bien, nous sommes des êtres humains, je préfère un voisin d'une certaine origine. Et puisque l'offre est moins grande que la demande, on fait de la ségrégation. Moi, pour le 1er juillet, je regarde déjà comment me départir de mes meubles, les jeter ou les vendre et aller dormir au McDonald. "

³⁴ Translation of: " Il [le locataire] dit que je cogne sur le plafond de mon logement. Et là, il frappe sur son plancher. Il est venu frapper dans ma porte avec violence. Moi, je n'ai rien à faire de frapper sur mon plafond. Une fois, il m'a traité de chien sale. Parfois, il crie sur le balcon. Il a fait du vandalisme, il a brisé mon auto. La police est venue 25-26 fois, moi j'appelle la police. Des fois, il se plaint du bruit, mais il n'y a personne à la maison. Le propriétaire ne veut pas bouger parce que nous, on paye 800\$ et les nouveaux comme lui, ils payent 1200\$. Ma femme a un fauteuil roulant, on cherche un autre logement pour le moment. "

Characteristics of the Landlords Interviewed

	Given Name	Country of Origin	Neighbourhood	Landlord Since	Selection of Tenants Based on Specific Criteria Related to Race, Ethnicity, or Religion	Most Difficult Experiences with Immigrant Tenants	Requirements for a Credit History, A Guarantor
1	Solange	Canada	Saint-Michel	9 years	NO	YES	YES
2	Mathieu	Canada	Saint-Michel	6 years	NO	NO	YES
3	Julie	Canada	Villeray	2 years	NO	NO	YES
4	Marie	Canada	Saint-Michel	1 year	NO	NSP	YES
5	Hélène	Canada	Villeray	3 years	NO	YES	YES
6	Manon	Canada	Villeray	8 years	NO	NO	YES

“I look for those who will be proactive. Someone who will pay on time, someone tidy and who will let me know if something breaks. I don’t profile for skin colour, but I do pay attention to what time you arrive. The market’s hot, it’s a real battle, you don’t have the choice but to follow some criteria.”³⁵

- Solange, landlord in Saint-Michel

“The ethnic origin of my tenants is of little concern to me. As the owner-occupant of a duplex, I’m looking for someone who will pay and who will be respectful of their neighbours (me) and of their home.”³⁶

- Mathieu, landlord in Saint-Michel

“We’re looking for someone with good references from past landlords, we want to verify that the tenant has a job — an income that allows them to pay the rent. We’re looking for people who are human. We’re a family with three kids. Given the size of the unit, we were looking for a single person planning on staying long-term.”³⁷

- Marie, landlord in Saint-Michel

“I have a good relationship with my tenants. I almost never required references before. Now, I do it systematically, no matter your background — especially

since negative experiences are linked to immigrants just as much as non-immigrants. Respect is a universal value, no matter where you come from. One of the most important criteria remains how well neighbours coexist in the building. I want it to be a pleasant community, where everyone cares for each other and the building,”³⁸

- Manon, landlord in Villeray

Some landlords see their rentals as a potential way to accompany newcomers along their process of integration into Quebec society and to participate in their setting down roots in the neighbourhood.

“I can’t say that I hand him an opportunity, because I don’t offer cheap rent. But I am friendly with him. I allow myself a certain fraternity, it’s part of my values and habits. I gave him a list of places to visit and discover in the neighbourhood. Warm welcoming brings me value as a landlord.”³⁹

- Julie, landlord in Villeray.

“Personally, I would like to have more information on programs for newcomers: who’s helping them, who’s supporting them, are they registered for French lessons? I haven’t had the chance to rent to someone from another

³⁵ Translation of: " Je cherche quelqu'un qui va être proactif. Quelqu'un qui va payer à temps, que tu sois propre et que tu me le dises si quelque chose pète. Mon profilage n'est pas sur la couleur de la peau, mais l'heure à laquelle tu arrives. Le marché est chaud, c'est une lutte féroce, tu n'as pas le choix de te baser sur des critères. "

³⁶ Translation of: " L'origine ethnique de mes locataires m'importe peu. En tant que propriétaire occupant d'un duplex, je recherche une personne qui a la capacité de payer et qui est respectueuse de ses voisins (moi) et de son logement. "

Translation of: " On cherche quelqu'un avec de bonnes références de l'ancien propriétaire, on veut vérifier si la personne a un travail, un revenu qui permet de payer le logement. On cherche des gens humains. On est une famille avec 3 enfants. Étant donné la taille du logement, on cherchait une personne seule qui vise à être là à long terme. "

³⁷ Translation of: " On cherche quelqu'un avec de bonnes références de l'ancien propriétaire, on veut vérifier si la personne a un travail, un revenu qui permet de payer le logement. On cherche des gens humains. On est une famille avec 3 enfants. Étant donné la taille du logement, on cherchait une personne seule qui vise à être là à long terme. "

³⁸ Translation of: " J'ai de bonnes relations avec mes locataires. Je ne prenais presque jamais de références auparavant. Maintenant, je le fais de manière systématique, peu importe la provenance des personnes, d'autant que les expériences négatives sont autant liées à des personnes immigrantes que des personnes non-immigrantes. Le respect est une valeur universelle, peu importe d'où vient la personne. Un des critères les plus importants demeure la bonne cohabitation avec les personnes de l'immeuble puisque je désire que ce soit une agréable communauté où chacun fait attention à l'autre et à l'immeuble. "

³⁹ Translation of: " Je ne peux pas dire que je lui donne une chance, parce que je ne lui offre pas un loyer pas cher. Mais, j'ai fraternisé un peu avec lui. Je me permets une certaine fraternité qui s'inscrit dans mes valeurs et habitudes. Je lui ai remis une liste de lieux à connaître et à découvrir dans le quartier. Moi, ça me valorise en tant que propriétaire d'accueillir. "



culture, but I like the idea that as a property-owner I can help someone to be at ease in our neighbourhood — it's already multicultural, so it would be easy for people to network and be comfortable, to integrate into the community.”⁴⁰

- Marie, landlord in Saint-Michel

However, some landlords report that the challenges they have are more substantial when the tenants who reside in their buildings are immigrants and that, unfortunately, their negative rental experiences have sometimes taken place with foreign tenants. This is the case with Solange, a landlord in Saint-Michel, who shares several bad rental experiences with tenants in the following extracts:



“A Moroccan tenant of mine hadn't been here long. He wasn't heating his place, he kept his coat on in the house. The entire apartment was moldy, the bathroom was black. He dumped oil down the sink and called us to unclog it. I found it very difficult... did someone explain to him that Hydro is expensive and that it's necessary to heat the house, when he arrived in Canada? He would also dump all kinds of trash on the road during the week, but the pickup only happened on Wednesdays. The neighbours complained. I think it's all part of integrating — learning these things. But it's a thankless role for the landlord to play: you don't want to be condescending. I get that he didn't want to heat his place because it's expensive. It's tough. It wouldn't stop me from renting to another Moroccan, though I'd write it in the lease. But how many requirements like that would I have to add to the lease to make sure everything was covered?

[...]

Newcomers need to know their rights, but also their responsibilities. The lease is a contract with parameters that must be respected. An Algerian tenant of mine lived with his daughter. One day, she tells me that she was leaving in two weeks. I tell her: Well, no, you have a lease, you have certain obligations! She again tells me that she must leave, that she's going to leave. Her story was very vague. We came to an agreement: I asked for one month's rent and said I'd try to find someone as soon as possible. In the end, I learned that she had some troubles with immigration and that she had to go back to Algeria for her papers. Was she ashamed? Is that why she didn't tell me? I don't know. But I thought it was a real shame, it caused everyone a lot of stress. I sympathise with her situation anyways. Had I known, I wouldn't have even asked her to cover the month.”⁴¹

- Solange, landlord in Saint-Michel

⁴⁰ Translation of: " Moi, j'aimerais avoir plus d'informations sur les programmes pour les nouveaux arrivants: qui les aide, qui les finance, est-ce qu'ils ont des cours de français? Je n'ai pas eu la chance de choisir une personne d'une autre culture, mais j'aime l'idée que, comme propriétaire, je pourrais aider quelqu'un à être bien dans notre quartier. C'est déjà multiculturel, donc ce serait plus facile pour les gens de se développer un réseau et d'être bien, de s'intégrer à la communauté.

⁴¹ Translation of: " Mon locataire marocain n'était pas ici depuis longtemps. Il ne chauffait pas son logement l'hiver, il gardait son manteau dans la maison. Tout l'appartement était moisi, la salle de bain était noire. Il jetait de l'huile de cuisson dans le lavabo et il nous appelait pour le déboucher. J'ai trouvé ça vraiment dur... Est-ce qu'on lui avait expliqué que ça coûtait cher l'Hydro et qu'il fallait mettre du chauffage dans la maison quand il est arrivé au Canada? Il mettait aussi toutes sortes de vidanges au chemin la semaine, alors que les poubelles ne passaient que le mercredi. Les autres voisins se plaignaient. Je pense que ça fait partie de l'intégration de faire ces apprentissages. Mais c'est un rôle ingrat pour le propriétaire, car tu ne veux pas être condescendant. Je comprends que le monsieur ne voulait pas chauffer son logement parce que ça coûte cher. Je trouve ça dur. Ça ne m'empêcherait pas de louer à un autre Marocain, mais je l'écrirais dans le bail. Mais combien d'exigences comme ça je devrais ajouter sur le bail pour être sûre de tout prévoir? [...]

Les nouveaux arrivants ont besoin de connaître leurs droits, mais aussi leurs devoirs. Le bail est un contrat avec des paramètres à respecter. Ma locataire algérienne vivait avec sa fille. Un jour, elle me dit qu'il faut qu'elle s'en aille dans 2 semaines. Je lui réponds: Mais, non tu as un bail, tu as des obligations! Et elle me répète qu'il faut qu'elle s'en aille, qu'elle va s'en aller. Son histoire était très floue. On s'est entendu, je lui ai demandé un mois de loyer et je lui ai dit que j'allais essayer de trouver quelqu'un le plus vite possible. Finalement, j'ai appris que sa fille avait des enjeux d'immigration et qu'elle devait retourner en Algérie pour ses papiers. Est-ce que c'était une honte pour elle, et c'est pour ça qu'elle ne me l'a pas dit? Je ne sais pas. Mais j'avais trouvé ça plate, parce que tout le monde a eu un stress énorme. Je suis sensible à sa réalité quand même. Si j'avais su, je ne lui aurais même pas demandé un mois. "



For other landlords, the problem is not necessarily due to their tenants' lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, but rather due to weak references or a lack of a credit history. This is the case with Hélène.

"The problem is with often inexistent references. I want to ensure that my tenants can pay their rent. And if they're recent immigrants, there's not much to go by. Once I rented to a European immigrant whose wife was from Quebec and had a salary. The inquiry could be done for one of the two tenants."⁴²

-Hélène, landlord in Saint-Michel.

As a matter of fact, all the landlords interviewed explicitly mention that their rental units are real estate ventures from which they seek to make a profit. Thus, they want to ensure that their tenants are well paying.

"Renting is like a job interview. The tenant doesn't have to make a victim of themselves based on income or social status. Instead, they should value the rental process. Go based strictly on income, see what you're financially capable of, that's all. I want the tenant to assure me of their capacity to pay, to act in good faith, to be considerate, to acknowledge me as the property owner and respect the space's integrity, to appreciate the environment I'm offering."⁴³

-Julie, landlord in Villeray

"It's a shame that newcomers have such a hard time finding a place to live. We promise them the moon, but they can barely find housing. This isn't an NPO: When the mortgage is due, it's due. I don't have subsidies. I didn't buy these apartment buildings for charity, but for the money. And for my daughter, this might be the only way she'll be able to live in Montreal."⁴⁴

- Solange, landlord in Saint-Michel

⁴² Translation of: " Le défi est lié aux références parfois inexistantes. Je veux m'assurer que les locataires peuvent payer le loyer et si l'immigration est récente, cette enquête est très limitée. J'ai loué par le passé à un immigrant européen, mais dont le conjoint était québécois et avait un emploi salarié. L'enquête a donc pu être faite pour un des deux locataires. "

⁴³ Translation of: " Un logement, c'est comme une entrevue pour un emploi. Le locataire ne doit pas se victimiser selon son revenu ou son statut. Il faut plutôt valoriser le processus locatif. Y aller seulement avec les revenus, voir la capacité financière, c'est tout. Je veux que le locataire me donne confiance qu'il a la capacité de payer, qu'il est de bonne foi, qu'il est bienveillant, qu'il me reconnaît en tant que propriétaire, qu'il va respecter l'intégrité des lieux et qu'il va apprécier l'environnement que je lui offre. "

⁴⁴ Translation of: " C'est plate que les nouveaux arrivants aient autant de misère à se loger, on leur promet mer et monde, mais ils ont de la misère à se trouver un logement. On n'est pas un OBNL: quand l'hypothèque passe, elle passe. Moi je n'ai pas de subventions. Je n'ai pas acheté des blocs pour faire la charité, pour faire de l'argent. Et pour ma fille, ce sera peut-être sa seule possibilité de se loger à Montreal. "

5. FINDINGS AND POINTS FOR REFLECTION

Housing discrimination has several consequences for the tenants of the Villeray—Saint-Michel—Parc-Extension borough:

First, discrimination suffered by tenants complicates their search for housing. For newcomers, this has an undeniable impact on their experience of integration over the long-term.

Moreover, housing discrimination limits the residential mobility of households within the rental stock and contributes to the overpopulation of units within the borough. In fact, while many families want to move to larger, more appropriate accommodations, some refuse to leave their apartments for fear of suffering further discrimination from landlords.

When discriminatory practices occur within housing units the safety of the premises becomes compromised, and tenants no longer feel at home.

Finally, discrimination increases the financial vulnerability of tenants, as well as their exposure to unacceptable living conditions. After being refused multiple times, the neighbourhood's newcomers and immigrants are often compelled to accept accommodations in poor condition, those that nobody else wants.

While landlords suggest that they are primarily concerned with their tenants' ability to pay, their requirements for proof of income or of references present additional barriers, particularly for newcomers.

6. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Recommendations to Better Equip Tenants

1. Undertake **public education initiatives** aimed at newcomers on the grounds of discrimination accounted for in the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms by developing tools adapted to the target audience.

2. Undertake **political representation** to demand that a lease include not only references to the articles present in Quebec's Civil Code, but also the grounds of discrimination prohibited by the Charter.

3. **Allocate a budget to the CDPDJ** that is adequate for the entirety of its mandate, particularly regarding its duty to process individual complaints of discrimination and to conduct systemic investigations.

4. **Revise the CDPDJ's complaint procedure** in order to simplify and accelerate complaint processing.

5. **Introduce rental permits for landlords** who could be sanctioned following a conviction on grounds of discrimination as prohibited by the Charter.

6.2. Recommendations for Landlords

Although most of the landlords who participated suggested that they can resolve situations on their own, some mentioned the need for mediation by an external body or training to effectively receive immigrants.

1. Conduct **television and radio campaigns to deconstruct prejudices** and to **alert landlords** to the need to better welcome immigrant tenants.

2. **Increase knowledge about mediation between landlords and tenants** and **develop specialised resources** in the event that one of the concerned parties is an immigrant.

3. **Monitor online rental advertisements** to detect instances of discriminatory practices and contact the landlords to remind them of the provisions of the Charter.

4. **Distribute existing awareness-raising materials**, such as the housing rights memory-aid developed by the CDPDJ for the use of landlords of apartment buildings⁴⁵.

5. Produce and distribute **a list of what information can be requested from tenants** and **what information constitutes grounds of discrimination** under the Charter.

7. HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT?⁴⁶

Anyone believing to be the victim of discrimination or discriminatory harassment on any of the grounds listed in the Charter may file a complaint with the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ).

Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse

Telephone : 514 873-5146

ou 1 800 361-6477

Email : accueil@cdpdj.qc.ca

Discrimination During the Search for Housing

If you think you are the victim of housing discrimination, take note of the following information to help you prepare your file:

- Reason(s) for denial;
- Name of the person you spoke to, their title;
- Address of the unit;
- Telephone number;
- Date and time of the visit, the cost of rent;
- Number of heated or unheated rooms, the availability;
- All other relevant information.

Discriminatory Harassment During Occupancy

You have signed your lease and have moved into your home, but your landlord or neighbour is harassing you: inappropriate comments or behaviours, insults, hurtful words about your ethnic origin, religious beliefs, or culture. If this harassment violates your dignity and integrity under the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, you can file a complaint with the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ). Take note of the following information to help you prepare your file:

- Name of the harassing party;
- Date and time of the incident(s);
- Detailed description of the incident(s);
- All other relevant information.

⁴⁵ See the document in French here: https://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/storage/app/media/publications/aide-memoire_logement.pdf

⁴⁶ See the document in French here: <https://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/storage/app/media/publications/Depliant-Logement.pdf>

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