

Do private tenants want longer-term leases?

DO PRIVATE TENANTS WANT FLEXIBILITY AND CHOICE, OR DO THEY WANT SECURITY AND LONG-TERM STABILITY? THE PRIVATE TENANTS SURVEYED IN THIS PROJECT WOULD GIVE HIGHER PRIORITY TO GREATER FLEXIBILITY AND CHOICE THAN TO A LONGER-TERM LEASE.

KEY POINTS

- Nearly two thirds (63%) of private tenants surveyed would prefer a short term lease/tenancy that could be extended if required, rather than a long term lease/tenancy agreement that would commit the tenant and the landlord for a long term (more than 12 months).
- Only half of the respondents had a fixed term lease. Only one per cent of these were longer than one year. Less than one third had negotiated the conditions of their lease.
- Most of the private tenants surveyed felt they had a high degree of control over their housing circumstances: some 85% of respondents felt that they could stay in their current dwelling for as long as they chose.
- The security and stability of a longer lease was important to somewhat higher proportions of households comprising older people, those on the lowest incomes, those receiving income support assistance, single parent households and those with school aged children.

CAVEATS

The survey comprised 10,000 households in Brisbane and Ipswich in late 2001. Testing the findings in a variety of locations and at various points in rental housing market cycle may yield different results. Research focussing on income support recipients in the private rental market and public housing tenants would further the investigations and identify the importance and meaning of security of tenure for more vulnerable groups of particular policy interest.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

These survey findings suggest that there would not be widespread interest amongst private tenants for landlord-tenant legislation providing for longer-term leases.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information about this project, the following documents are available:

Positioning Paper www.ahuri.edu.au

Final Report www.ahuri.edu.au

Or contact AHURI National Office on +61 3 9613 5400

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The research, undertaken at AHURI's Queensland Research Centre, examined the views of 1,000 private tenants in inner city Brisbane and in Ipswich about their interest in longer-term leases.



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