

This bulletin is a quick inventory of recent social research information. Its purpose is to promptly disseminate the most current external and internal research relevant to social policy.

Preventing Evictions of Senior Tenants in the GTA: A Call to Action to Curtail an Emerging Crisis was produced through conversations, surveys and focus groups with seniors, dozens of agencies working or advocating on their behalf and with financial support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, March 2017.

This report finds that Toronto's seniors are at increasingly high risk of eviction and homelessness, because of a lack of easily accessible and age-specific supports. It details 21 preliminary recommendations for service providers, various levels of government, and the region as a whole.

- In 2015, Toronto accounted for 33% of all eviction applications from across Ontario (19,894 in total)
- In 2006, 53% of senior tenants in Toronto spent more than 30% of their income on housing
- Between 2011 and 2014 the percentage of seniors living in poverty in the GTA increased from 10.5 to 12.1%
- In 2011, one in five Torontonians over 55 years lived alone, while 44% of those 85 and older lived alone

For link to the report:

<http://www.equalityrights.org/cera/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Final-Report-CERA-Seniors-Eviction-Prevention-Initiative.pdf>

Greener Pastures: Resetting the Age of Eligibility for Social Security Based on Actuarial Science by Robert L. Brown and Shantel Aris, C.D. Howe Institute, April 2017.

Given low fertility rates, rising life expectancies and the aging of the baby boom, Canada's old age dependency ratio is rising. Other countries with aging populations are raising the Age of Eligibility (AOE) for social security benefits. This paper applies a methodology applied in the United Kingdom by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries State Pension Age Working Party to the Canadian demographic context.

- Without proper reform strategies, the growing demand for financial support in retirement will potentially strain social security programs
- Finland, Sweden, Norway, Poland and the United Kingdom with aging populations are raising the Age of Eligibility (AOE) for social security benefits
- The UK proposal is based on actuarial and demographic logic that would see a rise in the AOE to guarantee a constant proportion of one's adult life is spent in retirement.
- This report find that for Canadian demographics, that constant proportion is 34 percent.
- Shifting the AOE upwards is regressive since wealthier Canadians live longer. The report argues that this can be mitigated by changing the claw back formulae now used in the OAS and GIS.

For link to the report:

https://www.cdhowe.org/sites/default/files/attachments/research_papers/mixed/Commentary_47_5.pdf

Understanding Wealth Inequality in Canada by Christopher A. Sarlo, Fraser Institute, April 2017.

This publication addresses the popular perception that wealth inequality has increased and finds that much of the concern is misplaced. Many of those in the bottom wealth quintile are young and have not yet had an opportunity to accumulate any wealth.

- There has been a 17% decline in the Gini Coefficient (the most popular indicator of inequality) on Canadian net worth between 1970 and 2012
- The top 20% of households own about 67% of the total wealth and the bottom 20% of households own less than 1%
- Evidence from US studies about the relative importance of the life-cycle effect vary considerably—from the 30%-to-50% range to the 80% range—this paper finds that life-cycle effect accounts for between 80-87% of wealth inequality in Canada in 2012

For link to the report:

<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/understanding-wealth-inequality-in-canada.pdf>

Police Resources in Canada, 2016 by Jacob Greenland and Sarah Alam, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada, March 2017.

The changing nature of society, the economy, and technology has created new challenges for police services as they adapt their responsibilities in crime prevention, law enforcement, public assistance and maintenance of public order. The economics of policing and community safety have been at the forefront of these discussions with a focus on the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of policing practices, training, and education as societal and technological changes unfold.

Some of the highlights:

- There were 68,773 police officers in Canada on May 15, 2016. This represents a rate of police strength of 190 officers per 100,000 population and a decline of 1% from the previous year
- The 28,422 civilians employed by police services across Canada on May 15, 2016 represented 29% of all police personnel
- On May 15, 2016, women accounted for over 21% of all sworn officers. They represented 13% of senior officers in 2016—the highest proportion ever recorded—compared with 6% in 2006 and less than 1% in 1986
- The proportion of police officers aged 40 years and older has grown from 50% in 2012 to 55% in 2016

For link to the report:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2017001/article/14777-eng.pdf>

Assessing the Faith-Based Response to Homelessness in America: Findings from Eleven Cities by Byron Johnson and William H Wubbenhorst, Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion, April 2013.

As of 2015, one in six Americans lives in poverty. The report was undertaken to provide an initial, credible estimate of the impact, socially and economically, of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in eleven cities across the country in responding to homelessness. The primary findings for the report focus on measuring the impact on homelessness by means of the percentage of emergency shelter beds provided through FBO homeless ministries.

Some of the key findings:

- Almost 60% of Emergency Shelter Beds, what many consider the ‘safety net of all safety nets’ for the homeless, are provided through faith-based organizations
- FBO homeless ministries are at the forefront of program innovation and organizational transformation for improving positive outcomes for the homeless individuals and families served
- Housing First policies do not always effectively engage with Faith-Based Organizations, especially congregation-based efforts that do not seek federal funding

For link to the report:

<http://www.baylorisr.org/wp-content/uploads/ISR-Homeless-FINAL-01092017-web.pdf>

Previous issues of the SPAR Monitor can be viewed online at: <http://bit.ly/1ez7uDB>

Social Policy, Analysis and Research Information Resources:

Wellbeing Toronto: www.toronto.ca/wellbeing

Demographics & other resources: www.toronto.ca/demographics