

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.

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**Improving our Knowledge of and Responses to Singles on Ontario Works in Toronto:** Lifting singles out of poverty through more effective employment supports, by Dean Herd, Yuna Kim and Christine Carrasco, Toronto Employment and Social Services, April 2018.

Over the past two decades, significant changes have taken place in the composition of social assistance caseloads in Canada, with unattached individuals (singles) replacing lone parents as the “new face of social assistance.” In Ontario, for example, between 2000 and 2011 lone parents declined by 20%, while singles increased by 65%. Reflecting these trends, there have also been significant increases to the singles caseload in Toronto.

- In Ontario the number of singles increased from 92,000 in 2000 (compared to 95,000 lone parents) to 151,000 in 2011 (compared to 76,000 lone parents)
- Lone parents declined by 20%, while singles increased by 65% with similar changes taking place across much of Canada
- Singles were also staying on assistance for longer periods of time, increasing from an average of 21 months in 1999 to 34 months by 2016

For link to the reports:

<https://ocwi-coie.ca/project/improving-our-knowledge-of-responses-to-singles-on-ontario-works-in-toronto/>

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**Getting Left Behind: Who Gained and Who Didn't in an Improving Labour Market,** by Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario (PEPSO) research group, a university-community joint initiative, June 2018.

In times of economic growth, it is fair to expect that wages and job quality will improve with positive benefits being experienced throughout society. But between 2011 and 2017—a period when Ontario's economy experienced significant gains—this research found that these expectations did not come true: the adage that a rising tide will lift all boats proved to be false in Ontario.

- Overall, the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) labour market did improve between 2011 and 2017
- Workers with a university degree generally did better than those without a degree
- White workers generally did better than racialized workers and men generally did better than women

For link to the report:

[https://pepso.ca/documents/pepso-glb-final-lores\\_2018-06-18\\_r4-for-website.pdf](https://pepso.ca/documents/pepso-glb-final-lores_2018-06-18_r4-for-website.pdf)

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**Increasing the Minimum Wage in British Columbia: A Flawed Anti-Poverty Policy** by Charles Lamman and Hugh MacIntyre, Fraser Institute, 2018.

This report finds that despite misperceptions, more than 80 per cent of B.C.'s minimum-wage earners don't actually live in low-income families. In fact, last year, the majority of minimum-wage earners in the province (55.7 per cent) were teenagers or young adults aged 15 to 24, almost all of whom (77.9 per cent) lived with their parents or other relatives.

- Raising the minimum wage is not an effective way to alleviate poverty primarily because the policy fails to provide help targeted to families living in poverty
- In 2015, the latest year of available data, 84.3% of workers earning minimum wage in British Columbia did not live in a low-income family
- In 2017, 55.7% of all minimum wage earners in BC were under the age of 25 and the vast majority of them (77.9%) lived with a parent or other relatives

For link to the report:

<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/increasing-the-minimum-wage-in-british-columbia.pdf>

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**Growing Impact: International Students in Toronto** by Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development in Toronto (ICE), June 2018.

International student tuitions are an increasingly important revenue source for Canada's post-secondary education system, enabling capital projects and expanded staffing, course offerings and study opportunities which benefit our domestic student population. The research explores challenges and issues experienced by international students while studying and making the transition to permanent residence. Suggestions are offered for improving the current system to increase the chances of success.

- There are almost half a million international students currently studying in Canadian universities and colleges, more than double the 2010 number
- About 1/4 of Canada's international students are studying in Toronto, and their presence adds to existing diversity on campuses and in communities
- The number of international undergraduate and Master's level students more than doubled in the City of Toronto's four universities between 2006 and 2015
- International students primarily come to Canada to receive a high-quality education, about 25% decide to make Canada their permanent home after graduating

For link to the report:

<https://www.icecommittee.org/reports/Final-Int.-Stud.-Report-June-15-2018-final.pdf>

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**Health Fact Sheet - Smoking, 2017**, Statistics Canada, June 2018.

Smoking is a risk factor for lung cancer, heart disease, stroke, chronic respiratory disease, and other conditions. According to the World Health Organization, smoking is an important and preventable cause of death. The Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) smoking rate covers cigarettes that are bought ready-made as well as cigarettes that are self-made, but does not include electronic cigarettes.

- In 2017, 16.2% of Canadians aged 12 and older (roughly 5 million people) smoked either daily or occasionally
- The proportion of Canadians aged 12 and older who smoked either daily or occasionally declined between 2015 and 2017 (17.7%, 16.2%)
- Among the sexes, the proportion who smoked daily or occasionally was higher among males (19.1%) than females (13.4%)
- Across all age groups, smoking was least common among youth aged 12 to 17 (3.5%)

For link to the paper:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/82-625-x/2018001/article/54974-eng.pdf?st=oUtBqDgx>

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Previous issues of the SPAR Monitor can be viewed online at: <http://bit.ly/2iltgRQ>

Social Policy, Analysis and Research Information Resources:

Wellbeing Toronto: [www.toronto.ca/wellbeing](http://www.toronto.ca/wellbeing)

City of Toronto Data, Research & Maps: <https://web.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/>