

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.

Room to Grow: Comparing Urban Density in Canada and Abroad by Josef Filipowicz, Fraser Institute, January 2018.

Though it covers a vast geographical area, Canada is one of the world's most urban countries: more than 80 percent of Canadians live in cities and towns (Statistics Canada, 2011). As Canada's most successful metropolitan areas continue to grow, they face pressures to grow outward—through the construction of new communities at the urban fringe—and upward—by accommodating more residents in existing urban areas, leading to higher populations densities.

- Of the 30 cities analyzed, Canada's largest have low population densities relative to international counterparts
- The coastal cities of San Francisco and Barcelona manage to balance high incomes with higher densities than Vancouver, at 1.31 and 2.89 times Vancouver's population density, respectively
- The financial hubs of Chicago, New York, and London are 1.03, 2.45, and 2.48 times as dense as Canada's financial and media centre, Toronto

For link to the Bulletin:

<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/room-to-grow-comparing-urban-density-in-canada-and-abroad.pdf>

The 2017 Kids Count Data Book by Patrick T. McCarthy, Annie E. Casey Foundation, October 2017.

Current trends [among US states] highlight notable progress but also areas of concern. Parental employment and wages are up, and a record number of children have health insurance. But child poverty rates remain high and more families live in neighborhoods with a high concentration of poverty. Despite modest gains in academic performance, far too many children are below grade level in reading and math. Even where we see improvements, deep racial and ethnic disparities remain.

- Child and youth poverty cost the country an estimated \$500 billion a year in reduced economic output and increased health and criminal justice expenditures
- In 2015, the child poverty rate stood at 21 percent – 3 percentage points higher than at the start of the recession
- Among white children, 12 percent lived in poor families, compared with 36 percent of African-American and 31 percent of Latino children

For link to the report:

<http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-2017kidscountdatabook.pdf>

The Changing Wealth of Nations 2018: Building a Sustainable Future by Glenn-Marie Lange, Quentin Wodon, and Kevin Carey, World Bank Group, 2018.

National income and well-being are underpinned by a country's assets or wealth—measured comprehensively to include produced capital, natural capital, human capital, and net foreign assets. This book covers a wide range of topics related to produced, natural, and human capital, as well as total wealth as an indicator of sustainability.

- Global wealth grew significantly between 1995 and 2014. Middle-income countries are catching up in large part because of rapid growth in Asia, but inequality in overall wealth persists
- Several low-income countries experienced a decline in per capita wealth because population growth outpaced investment, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Human capital wealth on a per capita basis is typically increasing in low- and middle-income countries
- Women account for less than 40 percent of human capital wealth because of lower earnings, lower labor force participation, and fewer average hours of work

For link to the report:

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/29001/9781464810466.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

Reality Bites: How Canada's Healthcare System Compares to its International Peers by Colin Busby, Ramya Muthukumaran and Aaron Jacobs, C.D. Howe Institute, January 2018.

Its latest ranking, based on the fund's rolling surveys of patients, doctors and the public, highlights ongoing gaps between the US healthcare system and those in the rest of the highly industrialized world. At the same time, the results also demonstrate that Canada fares poorly compared to its peer countries, an ongoing reminder of the need to look beyond the common comparison with US healthcare.

- In international performance surveys, Canada's healthcare system fares poorly compared to peer countries
- Provinces can learn lessons from each other and the federal government should support these comparison efforts to promote more innovation within Canada
- Progress can and should be made with improved coverage, such as for drugs and dental care, plus shorter wait times

For link to the report:

https://www.cdhowe.org/sites/default/files/attachments/research_papers/mixed/Final%20for%20release%20e-brief_271_Online.pdf

The Effect of Labour Demand on Regional Demographics by René Morissette, Social Analysis and Modelling Division, Statistics Canada, January 2018.

This article assesses the degree to which changes in labour demand affect the working-age population and the regional demographic dependency ratio, based on a range of administrative data and Statistics Canada's population estimates. The results suggest that over periods of seven years, a 5.0% decline in regional labour demand reduces the regional population aged 15 to 64 by 4.5% to 6.0%.

- Over two seven-year periods—from 2001 to 2008 and from 2008 to 2015—a 5.0% decline in regional labour demand reduced the regional working age population by 4.5% to 6.0%, on average
- Regional populations of younger individuals aged 15 to 34 responded to changes in labour demand to a greater degree than did regional populations of workers aged 35 to 64
- A 5.0% decline in labour demand was also found to raise the demographic dependency ratio—the number of individuals under 15 or over 64, divided by the population aged 15 to 64—by 1.1 to 1.5 percentage points, on average

For link to the study:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-626-x/11-626-x2018079-eng.pdf>

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

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