

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.

The Human Freedom Index, 2017: A Global Measurement of Personal, Civil and Economic Freedom by Ian Vásquez and Tanja Porčnik, Cato Institute, the Fraser Institute, and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, 2017.

Freedom seems to be under attack in major nations around the world. The Human Freedom Index (HFI) is the most comprehensive freedom index so far created for a globally meaningful set of countries. The HFI covers 159 countries for 2015, the most recent year for which sufficient data are available. The index ranks countries beginning in 2008, the earliest year for which a robust enough index could be produced.

- On a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 represents more freedom, the average human freedom rating for 159 countries in 2015 was 6.93
- Among countries included in this report, the level of freedom decreased slightly (-0.05) compared with 2014, with 61 countries increasing their ratings and 97 decreasing
- Since 2008, the level of global freedom has also decreased slightly (-0.12), with about half of the countries in the index increasing their ratings and half decreasing

For link to the report:

<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/human-freedom-index-2017-web.pdf>

How Temporary Were Canada's Temporary Foreign Workers? By Elena Prokopenko and Feng Hou, Statistics Canada, January 2018.

Temporary foreign workers (TFWs) have been playing a growing role in Canada's labour force and immigration system. The length and type of stay of TFWs in Canada have strong implications for the country's immigration and labour policies. This study assesses the distribution of temporary workers among possible post-arrival residential trajectories to determine which TFWs are more likely to return to their source country and which are more likely to stay in Canada.

- Of the 264,000 temporary foreign workers first admitted to Canada from 1995 to 1999, 13% (or 35,000) were still in Canada five years after their initial arrival
- 11% of temporary foreign workers first admitted to Canada from 1995 to 1999 and 18% of those first admitted from 2000 to 2004 were still in Canada 10 years after their initial arrival in Canada
- Almost 90% of temporary foreign workers who were still in Canada after 10 years had obtained permanent resident status, having made the transition from temporary foreign worker to landed immigrant

For link to the paper:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2018402-eng.pdf>

Headed for the Poorhouse: How to Ensure Seniors Don't Run Out of Cash before They Run Out of Time
by Bonnie-Jeanne Macdonald, C. D. Howe Institute, January 2018.

With Canadians living longer, running out of savings in old age is a real possibility for seniors. For years, policymakers, employers, consulting professionals, financial advisors and academics have focused on accumulating retirement wealth. But with Canadian baby boomers now entering retirement – with longer life expectancies and a greater dependency on private savings to sustain them – we can no longer delay helping Canadians in the drawdown phase.

- [We] propose a government-led solution: Canada's Living Income For the Elderly (LIFE) [...to] enable retiring Canadians to pool their financial savings to better protect those who live to age 85 and beyond
- Research highlights that seniors are strongly averted to voluntary annuitization, as they want to keep control over their savings
- Longevity insurance can provide a secure income stream at older ages without many of the criticisms associated with traditional annuities

For link to the report:

https://www.cdhowe.org/sites/default/files/attachments/research_papers/mixed/C.D.%20Howe%20Commenary%20500.pdf

Reward Work, Not Wealth: Oxfam Briefing Paper by Max Lawson, Oxfam International, January 2018.

Last year saw the biggest increase in billionaires in history, one more every two days. This huge increase could have ended global extreme poverty seven times over. Dangerous, poorly paid work for the many is supporting extreme wealth for the few. Women are in the worst work, and almost all the super-rich are men. Governments must create a more equal society by prioritizing ordinary workers and small-scale food producers instead of the rich and powerful.

- 82% of all wealth created in the last year went to the top 1%, while the bottom 50% saw no increase at all
- All over the world, our economy of the 1% is built on the backs of low paid workers, often women, who are paid poverty wages and denied basic rights
- In the period between 2006 and 2015, ordinary workers saw their incomes rise by an average of just 2% a year, while billionaire wealth rose by nearly 13% a year – almost six times faster
- The three richest people in the US own the same wealth as the bottom half of the US population (roughly 160 million people)

For link to the report:

https://www.oxfam.ca/sites/default/files/report_reward_work_not_wealth_en.pdf

Strength-in-Numbers Series by CCSD's Community Data Program, 2018.

These are series of infographics, fact sheets and reports highlighting community trends across Canada drawing on the CCSD's Community Data Program – a unique repository of local data in Canada. It is designed to identify and illuminate significant socioeconomic trends impacting Canadian communities today, providing a source of critical evidence for sound decision-making and program evaluation.

- 1 in 6 (or 17.4%) of children aged 0-17 live in poverty
- 1 in 15 (or 6.6%) seniors aged 65+ live in poverty
- Cities with the highest child 0-17 poverty rate included Windsor, Winnipeg and Saint John

For link to the Series:

<http://communitydata.ca/strengthinnumbers>

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/>