

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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## **Family Matters: Parental Leave in Canada** by Statistics Canada, February 2021.

In Canada, several types of leave after the birth or adoption of a child are available to parents. The number of parents taking up maternity, paternity or parental leave might change in the months and years to come, as the COVID-19 pandemic may lead to changes in family formation plans.

- Over 2.3 million Canadian parents took a leave of absence from work for the birth or adoption of a child
- From 2012 to 2017, 88% of mothers took maternity leave, parental leave or a combination of the two, compared with 46% of fathers.
- However, over the last decade, more fathers have begun to take paternity or parental leave. For example, from 2001 and 2006, 34% of fathers had taken such a leave

Link to the report:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/210210/dq210210a-eng.pdf?st=9v9PWlaS>

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## **Health Care for Homeless People** by Michael Liu, Stephen W. Hwang, Nature Reviews Disease Primers, January 2021.

A growing and diversifying homeless population faces tremendous social burdens and structural barriers to health care that contribute to high morbidity and mortality. Health care for homeless people must address intersecting health and social challenges through a combination of health-related and social interventions.

- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates that 1.9 million people are currently experiencing homelessness in 35 OECD countries
- In Toronto, mortality of homeless men aged 18–64 years was 2–8 times higher than that of non-homeless men; however, it is ~50% lower than that in some US cities, which may be attributed to universal health insurance and lower homicide rates in Canada, indicative of the strong influence of social institutions on the health of homeless people
- Health care and community service providers must collaborate to meet the unique needs of the homeless population. Providers should foster trust and sustained relationships with homeless people.

Link to the full paper:

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41572-020-00241-2.pdf>

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**Measuring Proximity to Services and Amenities: An Experimental Set of Indicators for Neighbourhoods and Localities** by Alessandro Alasia, Nick Newstead, Joseph Kuchar and Marian Radulescu, Statistics Canada, February 2021.

This paper presents the methodology used to generate the first nationwide database of proximity measures and the results obtained with a first set of ten measures. The computational methods are presented as a generalizable model due to the fact that it is now possible to apply similar methods to a multitude of other services or amenities, in a variety of alternative specifications.

- Approximately 20% of Canadians are living in “amenity dense” neighbourhoods. Amenity dense neighbourhoods meet the following criteria: access to at least one grocery store, pharmacy, and public transit stop within 1 km walking distance, a child care facility, primary school, and library within 1.5 km walking distance, a health facility within 3 km driving distance, and employment within 10 km driving distance
- Nearly half of Canadians live in a neighbourhood or locality within 1 km walking distance from a grocery store. In larger metropolitan areas, 55% of population live in proximity to a grocery store; this percentage drops to 30% for those living in smaller metro areas and to 16% for the population living in rural areas
- Roughly 70% of Canadians live in neighbourhoods or localities that are within 1.5 km walking distance from primary education services – a similar figure also applies for child care services.

Link to the full report:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/18-001-x/18-001-x2020001-eng.pdf?st=CRzKK6T>

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**Healthy Housing Quality - A Way Forward for Rental Apartments in Toronto** by Wellesley Institute, December 2020.

The Healthy Housing Quality Solutions Lab (“the Lab”) was a collaborative initiative, initiated by Wellesley Institute, with support from SHS Consulting, and funded by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This Lab aimed to provide a suite of options to respond to the issues of disrepair and housing quality in Toronto’s private rental apartment sector.

- The Lab team and participants examined and discussed the roles, interests, and influence of three key stakeholder groups: tenants (demand-side), landlords (supply-side), and City of Toronto staff (the public interest)
- Average rents have increased by 12 percent in Toronto over the last decade (2008-2018) in real (inflation-adjusted) terms, but this increase may not be enough to cover repair and retrofit costs. Meanwhile, incomes of moderate-to-low-income tenants living in this housing stock sector have steadily declined
- Repair and retrofit funding announced in the National Housing Co-Investment Fund (NHCF) equates to nationwide annual averages of about \$350 million in loans and \$230 million in grants

Link to the paper:

<https://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/5-Culminating-Report.pdf>

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**Reforming Employment Insurance for the 21st Century** by Steven Globerman and Jake Fuss, Fraser Institute, March 2021.

This study seeks to advance the debate surrounding a modernization of Canada's EI system by identifying and evaluating steps that might be taken to achieve that objective. Any such analysis clearly requires a discussion of the major issues that underlie calls for reforming the EI system.

- The anticipated EI funding challenges amplify calls for implementing design changes to the existing EI system. Specifically, they intensify the need for policies that make the EI system both more efficient and more equitable
- The implementation of Unemployment Insurance Savings Accounts (UISAs) would be a substantial redesign of the EI program and could address the moral hazard problem confronting the program
- Although the biggest expense remains regular EI benefits (\$10.7 billion or 64 percent of total payouts), special benefits comprise a large share of total expenditures. Indeed, more than one-third (34.7 percent) of all EI payments consist of special benefits claims, with an annual cost of approximately \$5.8 billion

Link to the paper:

<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/reforming-employment-insurance-for-the-21st-century.pdf>

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**Inclusive Innovation Monitor** by Daniel Munro and Joshua Zachariah, Brookfield Institute, February 2021.

The Innovation Policy Lab at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy and the Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship have partnered to produce an Inclusive Innovation Monitor (IIM) to track and understand Canada's performance in inclusive innovation.

- The Inclusive Innovation Monitor tracks the performance of more than 30 indicators of innovation, equity, and inclusion to highlight the relationships among these variables and to help inform policies aimed at building a more resilient, innovative, and inclusive economy in Canada
- A pre-COVID baseline of inclusive innovation metrics reveals that Canada lags international peers on many innovation opportunities, activities, and outcomes, while the ability to participate in and benefit from innovation are not equitably distributed across regions, income groups, racialized groups, gender, and disability

Links to paper:

[https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5fa04fa06f78952d8b8408ee/602597eb920e903f8f2c05f6\\_Inclusive\\_Innovation\\_Monitor-Report.pdf](https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5fa04fa06f78952d8b8408ee/602597eb920e903f8f2c05f6_Inclusive_Innovation_Monitor-Report.pdf)

Previous issues of the SPAR Monitor can be viewed online at: <https://bit.ly/3h42Zob>

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

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