# SPAR Monitor

### The Social Policy Analysis & Research Bi-Weekly Bulletin

Monitoring Toronto's
Social Change Since 2009

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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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**Moving Forward on Well-being (Quality of Life) Measures in Canada** by by Claudia Sanmartin et al., Statistics Canada, July 2021.

The overall objective of this paper is to provide an overview of selected approaches to measuring and reporting well-being in Canada and internationally, and to identify opportunities to move forward with new and enhanced measures to address current social, economic and environmental issues facing Canada that may impact the well-being of its population.

➢ This report highlights 6 trends and proposes a range of data development and measurement activities to advance well-being measurement in the following key areas: digitization, affordability & economic uncertainty, the quality of jobs, social cohesion, neighbourhoods, the built environment & climate change

➢ Statistics Canada is using pooled CCHS files data and a suite of neighbourhood-level variables from different sources to document the correlation between neighbourhood characteristics at the dissemination area (DA) level (e.g., proximity to transit and amenities, crime, household income, population density) and life satisfaction, net of individual characteristics

➢ Further integration can be achieved at the microdata level by advancing initiatives such as the expansion of the System of National Accounts framework to encompass elements of wellbeing and sustainability starting with the development of specialized 'satellite accounts.'

Link to the report: https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2021006-eng.pdf

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**The Missing Middle** by Tai Huynh, The Local, July 13 2021.

When the mass vaccination campaign began in early spring, wealthy neighbourhoods raced ahead in getting their first doses. The same pattern was repeated at the start of the second dose rollout in late spring. In both instances, countermeasures were implemented whereby additional vaccines and resources were pumped into "hot spots"—largely low-income, high-infection areas—to keep any disparity to a minimum. Low-income neighbourhoods had help, while affluent ones didn't need any. Middle-class areas, on the other hand, just sputtered along beneath the radar. These neighbourhoods are now home to more than half a million under-vaccinated individuals..

➢ At this point in the vaccine rollout, when there is a need to zero in on pockets of the city where there's still a large, under-vaccinated population, looking at the percentage of residents vaccinated may no longer be the most useful metric

➢ Of these 1.3 million under-vaccinated individuals, roughly 20 percent live in high-income, 40 percent live in middle-income, and 40 percent live in low-income areas

➢ Due to Thorncliffe Park's relatively small population and the fact that a large proportion of the community is made up of children below 12 years of age who are ineligible, less than 10,000 residents are under-vaccinated for first and second doses. At Yonge and Sheppard (M2N), that number is four times greater

Link to the full article: https://thelocal.to/the-missing-middle/

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Prepared by Social Policy Analysis & Research (spar@toronto.ca). The views expressed in these studies are those of the author(s) and opinions on the content of these studies should be communicated directly to the author(s) themselves. This list is in no way exhaustive of all social research relevant to Toronto. The City of Toronto is not responsible for the content of hyperlinks.

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**COVID-19 Deaths Among Immigrants: Evidence From the Early Months of the Pandemic** by Edward Ng, Statistics Canada, June 9 2021.

Neighbourhoods in Canada with higher proportions of residents belonging to groups designated as visible minorities have experienced greater COVID-19-related mortality rates—about two times higher than neighbourhoods with low proportions of visible minority residents. Despite this, a data gap remains in terms of whether immigrants bear a higher burden of COVID-19 deaths compared with their non-immigrant counterparts.

➤ [A]n Ontario study pointed to higher COVID-19 infection rates for immigrants and refugees who landed in Ontario between 1985 and 2018. COVID-19 testing rates were lower but positivity rates were higher for immigrants and especially for refugees, compared with Canadian-born and long-term residents

➤ The linked database yields COVID-19 crude mortality rates of 26 and 22 per 100,000 population for immigrants and non-immigrants, respectively

➤ Among immigrants who died from COVID-19, the majority of these linked deaths (about 60%) were among those who landed before 1980 (see Chart 1) and were older. About 9% of immigrant deaths were among those who landed between 2000 and 2018

➤ [C]lose to half of the total immigrant deaths were of immigrants from traditional source countries, including the United States and European countries, and 12% were of immigrants from Asia (South and East Asia combined)

Link to the article:
https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/45-28-0001/2021001/article/00017-eng.pdf?st=RS1RGM9z

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**Business Districts: A New Model for Understanding Our Economy and Guiding Recovery** by Toronto Region Board of Trade, June 2021.

The Economic Blueprint Institute (EBI) – the Board's data and research arm – has introduced a Business District framework to better understand the complexity and diversity of the regional economy, the uneven impact of COVID-19, and strategies to support recovery. For each Business District, EBI has produced reports highlighting considerations for reopening and outlining strategies to help the region transition from crisis towards opportunities for recovery. Click below to learn more about each Business District and read the reports.

➤ The pandemic has had a deep impact on the Metropolitan Centre. The majority of workers in the MC shifted to remote or hybrid work. Visitor and tourist traffic declined sharply, resulting in $8.35 billion in lost economic activity tied to visitor spending for the City of Toronto in 2020

➤ Prior to the pandemic, the GPDD was challenged by congestion on the region's roads, highways and rail corridors, at an estimated cost of $6 billion annually

➤ As the pandemic upended our economy, it also drove a surge in e-commerce activity. Businesses in the SMUD were key beneficiaries of this trend as year-over-year growth in e-commerce retail spending averaged 34% between April and December of 2020

Link to the report:
https://supportbusiness.bot.com/ready-toronto/business-districts/

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**Data Literacy Training Videos and Course Materials** by Statistics Canada, April 2021.

Statistics Canada is offering a series of free online data literacy courses. The data literacy learning catalogue is organized by the step on the data journey and can be sorted by title, data competency, level, and type, and includes courses on:

➤ Data Accuracy and Validation: Methods to Ensure the Quality of Data
➤ Statistics 101: Exploring Measures of Dispersion
➤ Framework for Responsible Machine Learning Processes at Statistics Canada
➤ QGIS (geospatial mapping of data) Training Videos
➤ Data Visualization: An Introduction

Link to the resources: https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/wtc/data-literacy/catalogue

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**Where Eviction Applications Are Filed: Ward Distribution of Eviction Applications in Toronto** by Scott Leon, Wellesley Institute , March 2021.

To adequately address evictions, it's important to first understand where eviction applications are taking place. This brief examines where eviction applications were filed prior to the pandemic. This information could be helpful for targeting eviction prevention services and building political support for expanding them. This brief compares formal Landlord and Tenant Board eviction filings across the City of Toronto's 25 wards. Wards are political geographies, where constituents elect one Councillor to represent their interests on City Council.

➤ Prior to COVID-19, eviction filing rates were highest in a number of inner-suburban Toronto wards
➤ The study examined census tracts and found that areas with higher renter poverty had 2.5 times higher eviction filing rates on average
➤ The wards where the highest number of Black Torontians live also had the highest numbers and rates of eviction applications (Wards 1, 5, and 7)
➤ The top five wards by eviction filing rate are: Humber River-Black Creek (7), York South-Weston (5), Etobicoke North (1), Scarborough-Guildwood (24), Scarborough Southwest (20)

Link to the briefing: https://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Brief-1-Ward-Distribution-of-Evictions-FINAL.pdf

**Previous issues of the SPAR Monitor can be viewed online at:** https://bit.ly/3h42Zob
**Wellbeing Toronto:** www.toronto.ca/wellbeing
**City of Toronto Data, Research & Maps:** https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/

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