

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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## **City of Toronto Backgrounder on the 2021 Census: Citizenship, Immigration, Ethnic Origin, Visible Minority Groups (Race), Mobility, Migration, Religion** by City of Toronto, November 2022.

The 2021 Census Day was May 11, 2021. On October 26, 2022, Statistics Canada released its sixth set of data from this Census, on citizenship, immigration, ethnic origins, racial identity, mobility, migration and religion. This backgrounder compiles a précis from this release for the city of Toronto and the GTHA region.

- In 2021, 47.1 per cent of Toronto residents were born in Canada. According to the Census, there were 1,286,140 immigrants in Toronto, or 46.6 percent of the population
- Of the 1,286,140 immigrants in Toronto, 55.7 percent were born in Asia, up from 53.5 percent in 2016
- In Toronto, 55.7% or 1,537,285 people identified as belonging to a racialized group (aka visible minority group). This figure is up from 51.5 percent in 2016
- In 2021, the top ten ethnicities/cultural origins reported by Torontonians were Chinese (297,725), English (244,995), Irish (226,865), Scottish (211,175), Indian (India) (182,115), Italian (167,460), Canadian (165,640), Filipino (161,495), German (107,475), and French n.o.s. (85,715)
- 9.6 percent of those living in Toronto identified as Muslim, 6.2 percent identified as Hindu, 3.6 percent as Jewish, 2.3 percent as Buddhist, and 0.8 percent as Sikh

Link to the backgrounder: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/8f69-2021-Census-Backgrounder-Immigration-Ethnoracial-Mobility-Migration-Religion-FINAL.pdf>

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## **Disaggregated Trends in Poverty From the 2021 Census of Population** by Statistics Canada, November 2022.

This Census in Brief article focuses on the experiences of poverty in Canada in 2020, based on data from the 2021 Census of Population. Trends by family type, gender, age, detailed geography, Indigenous identity, racialized group and immigrant status are presented. When possible, comparisons are made with data from the 2016 Census.

- Based on data from the 2021 Census of Population, the poverty rate in Canada was 8.1% in 2020, down from 14.5% in 2015
- Declines in poverty were driven by higher government transfers in 2020, including the enhanced Canada Child Benefit (CCB) and temporary pandemic relief benefits
- Among racialized groups, 10.8% of South Asian, 15.3% of Chinese and 12.4% of Black Canadians lived in poverty in 2020
- The poverty rate of immigrants declined by more than half from 2015 to 2020, falling from 18.8% to 9.1%

Link to the article:

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/98-200-x/2021009/98-200-x2021009-eng.pdf>

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## **Hunger Count 2022** by Food Banks Canada, September 2022.

Our research shows that for food banks, the current situation differs from that of previous years. While record numbers of people are using food bank services, unemployment rates are simultaneously at historic lows, which is a drastic departure from previous patterns. Food banks are now in uncharted territory, and with food bank usage increasing at rates not observed since the aftermath of the 2008 recession, as well as a possible recession looming on the horizon, we must batten down the hatches and look after our most vulnerable neighbours.

- In March 2022, there were nearly 1.5 million visits to food banks in Canada, the highest March usage on record even though unemployment rates were at their lowest on record in the same month
- This year's food bank usage represents a 15 per cent increase compared to March 2021, and a 35 per cent increase compared to March 2019
- According to the survey respondents, the top three reasons people accessed a food bank this year were food costs, low provincial social assistance rates, and housing costs.
- The percentage of seniors accessing food banks has increased from 6.8 per cent in 2019 to 8.9 per cent in 2022
- The percentage of Indigenous people accessing a food bank rose from 8 per cent in 2021 to 15.3 per cent in 2022

Link to the report: [https://hungercount.foodbankscanada.ca/assets/docs/FoodBanks\\_HungerCount\\_EN\\_2022.pdf](https://hungercount.foodbankscanada.ca/assets/docs/FoodBanks_HungerCount_EN_2022.pdf)

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## **A Decade of Deep Poverty 2010-2021** by Daily Bread Food Bank, September 2022.

Each year the sample data from Who's Hungry provides a snapshot into hunger in the city of Toronto. In searching for associations, the reliability of the sample is increased with the combined data sets. A retrospective analysis also provides a time-series analysis over the past decade, tracking against shifts in the local and national political economy. (The recent analysis of food bank visits by Kneebone (2022) provides an concrete example of the power of a longer timeline.).

- Deep poverty is officially defined by the Government of Canada as 75% of the official poverty line
- Almost every food bank client, through the years lives below the poverty line. In 2021, that number dropped to 97% when food banks faced an influx of people who suddenly found themselves without employment income and/or who were reliant on CoVID payments
- The median monthly income of food bank clients has been 50% below the official poverty line (until 2021 when the median incomes rose to \$1,070/month)
- 70% of food bank clients below the deep poverty line are on social assistance (Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program)
- Combining the past 12 years of data, 97% food bank clients on social assistance and using a food bank were living well below both the poverty line and the deep poverty line
- In 2020, deep poverty in Toronto equated to any single individual who had an annual salary below \$18,540 (\$1,545/month) and a family of four has an income below \$437,295 (\$3,108/month)

Link to the report: [https://www.dailybread.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/DB-ResearchBulletin\\_Report-2022.pdf](https://www.dailybread.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/DB-ResearchBulletin_Report-2022.pdf)

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**Storm Without End: The Economic and Fiscal Impact of COVID-19 on Canada and the Provinces** by Livio Di Matteo, Fraser Institute, September 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic created enormous economic and fiscal disruption in both Canada and around the world. As revenues dropped and pandemic-related spending soared, governments incurred large deficits. According to the IMF, Canada saw a negative fiscal balance of 10.9% in 2020 with a forecast 7.5% in 2021 and 2.2% in 2022. However, the pandemic affected the public finances of the federal and provincial governments differently.

- Federal government spending rose 73% to \$644.2 billion in 2020/21 before declining 21% to an estimated \$508 billion in 2021/22
- Between 2019/20 and 2020/21, the federal deficit-to-GDP ratio went from -1.8% to -13.2% while the collective deficit-to-GDP ratio of the provinces went from -0.8% to -1.9%
- Federally, over half the deficit incurred during the pandemic was related to COVID-19—either health transfers or income support to people and business—while the remainder was spending independent of the pandemic that represents a permanent long-term ramping up of federal expenditure

Chapter 1: <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/storm-without-end-economic-impact-of-covid-19-on-canada-and-provinces.pdf>

Chapter 2: <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/storm-without-end-fiscal-impact-of-covid-19-on-canada-and-the-provinces.pdf>

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**Sharing Practical Information About Indoor Air Quality With Community Spaces** by MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions, August 2022.

Improvements to indoor air quality can help limit transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases. We're working with researchers with expertise in engineering, indoor air quality, epidemiology, public health and knowledge translation to help share practical information about improving indoor air quality with community spaces in Toronto and beyond.

- Your HVAC system [should be] changing over the air in each room at least six times per hour
- If the HVAC system uses a filter (or filters, some HVAC systems use more than one), find out the Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value or "MERV" of the filter. Ideally, filters should be MERV-13 or higher, as these filters can remove the small particles that contain viruses out of the air
- Focus on quality of the filter, and the "clean air delivery rate" (CADR), which will help you decide what size portable air filter to use in a specific room. Higher CADR means better removal performance

Link to the resources: <https://maphealth.ca/ventilation/>

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/>