

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.

Forty is Too Young to Die: A call for action from Toronto's Early Onset Illness and Mortality Working Group, a coalition of Toronto agencies, academics and housing providers, December 08, 2011.

This report confirms that individuals with mental health and addiction issues are at a much greater risk of exposure to infectious diseases, early onset of chronic diseases and death. Those with serious mental illness and concurrent disorders are more likely to suffer from multiple medical conditions. It also showcases the direct link between mental health and poor determinants of health such as poverty and homelessness which act as hurdles to physical health and contribute to the early onset of chronic or ongoing physical conditions.

Some of the findings:

- People with mental illness die young. In the US, people with serious mental illness die, on average, 25 years earlier than the general population
- People who are poor die young. Poverty is now thought to be among the greatest determinants of (ill) health
- People who are homeless die young. Homeless men in Toronto aged 45 – 64 years are 40% to 50% more likely to die of heart disease than men in the general population

For link to the study:

<http://recoverynetworktoronto.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/40-is-too-young-to-die-2011.pdf>

Brain Health + Brain Skills = Brain Capital, Wilson + Wilkerson 2011, Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health 2011 Report, December 08, 2011.

A striking rise in mental illness in the global economy means it is crucial for business executives and health experts to learn what they can do together to confront the medical and non-medical causes of mental illness in the workplace. The report sets out a universal agenda for broad international action and calls for the establishment of a \$10 billion workplace-based, multi-year research, education and retention campaign in three countries.

Some of the trends include:

- Infectious disease is giving way to chronic non-infectious disorders as the world's principal public health concern
- Life expectancy is giving way to disability as the principal component of the global burden of disease with depression and anxiety as major contributors to disability
- Depression not only has disabling but lethal consequences through suicide, cardiovascular disease and 'excess deaths' among those living with diabetes

- Depression wields a powerful influence on the course and outcome of co-occurring chronic conditions, all of which are susceptible to workplace stress
- Workplace depression now afflicts 18-25% of employees and the annual prevalence of all mental disorders has risen to 25% in the US and a reported 30% in Europe, according to US Centre for Disease Control, EEC and Roundtable data
- The spread of depression and anxiety disorders exacts an economic toll of \$1 trillion a year in the European Community and North American Free Trade Area combined based on 4% of GDP.

For link to the full report:

http://www.mentalhealthroundtable.ca/report/MHR_FinalReport.pdf

Regional Economic Shocks and Migration by André Bernard, Perspectives on Labour and Income, Statistics Canada, November 23, 2011.

When the employment and wage prospects of one region weaken in relation to others, residents—particularly those active in the labour force—look to migrate elsewhere to improve their economic situation. Theoretically, the decision to migrate or remain in one’s region is linked in part to the probability of finding a job and the expected level of income in the regions considered.

- Residents of census agglomerations (CAs) or census metropolitan areas (CMAs) with less than 500,000 residents were much more likely to migrate than residents of large metropolitan centres
- From 2000 to 2008, people living in a region where the unemployment rate went up by one percentage point in relation to the national average between two years had virtually the same probability of migration as people in regions where the unemployment rate had remained close to the national average in the same two years
- Similarly, individuals living in a region where hourly earnings had declined by \$1 per hour in relation to the national average between two years were only slightly more likely to migrate than those living in a region where regional average hourly earnings remained the same as in the rest of the country during the same period
- People who experienced a deterioration of their personal economic situation in relation to others were much more likely to migrate than persons whose economic situation had remained unchanged
- Unlike other Canadians, recent immigrants living in a region where unemployment had increased by one percentage point in relation to the national average between two given years were 10% more likely to migrate than immigrants living in a region where the unemployment rate had remained the same over the same two years.

For link to the article:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/2011004/article/11593-eng.pdf>

The Impact of Considering Birthplace in Analyses of Immigrant Health by Michelle Rotermann, Health Reports, Statistics Canada, November 2011.

According to the 2006 Census, nearly 20% of Canada's population were foreign-born. Moreover, in the last 35 years, the predominant source countries of immigrants to Canada have shifted from Europe to Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Because of immigrants' increasingly diverse origins, it is important to study them as a non-homogenous group. A challenge facing health researchers is that small sample surveys can limit the analysis of immigrant subpopulations.

- Despite the heterogeneity of Canada's immigrant population, small sample sizes often prevent health researchers from studying specific subgroups
- This analysis compares the age-standardized prevalence of fair/poor self-perceived health, diabetes and arthritis among immigrants and the Canadian-born population at three progressively more precise breakdowns of immigrants by birthplace
- Overall, immigrants were more likely than the Canadian-born to report poor health and diabetes, but less likely to report arthritis

For link to the study:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2011004/article/11589-eng.pdf>

The Real Outsiders: Politically Disengaged Views on Politics and Democracy, by Heather Bastedo, Wayne Chu, Jane Hilderman and Andre Turcotte, Samara, December 2011.

This study looks into the reasons for the evidence showing that Canadians are not interested in politics, as manifested for instance in low voter turnout. It specifically attempts to answer the question as to why Canadians are disengaged in politics.

Findings:

- First, whether they were engaged or disengaged, participants in the study universally condemned politics. Their dislike of politics seemed closely related to their perception of a gap between what politics is and what democracy should be. On the one hand, democracy is seen as a worthy ideal for society. On the other hand, for the participants, politics is a source of frustration and disappointment. These were attitudes gained through concrete experiences of interacting with political institutions
- Second, the key difference between the disengaged and the engaged is their relationship to politics. The disengaged or outsiders considered the political system as irrelevant to their needs, The engaged or insiders believed the political system works for them
- The third and final finding of this report proposes that disengaged people become outsiders through their daily experience and interactions with the political system. This finding is a far cry from conventional wisdom that holds that the disengaged simply do not care or that they lack knowledge. The disengaged have learned from personal experience that engagement is futile.

For link to the report:

http://www.samaracanada.com/docs/default-document-library/sam_therealoutsiders.pdf

How Have the Risk of Layoff and Earnings Losses of Laid-off Workers Evolved since the Late 1970s in Canada? By René Morissette, Theresa Qiu, and Ping Ching Winnie Chan, Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series, Statistics Canada, December 2011.

This study analyses permanent layoff rates and short-term earnings losses following displacement for the period from 1978 to 2007, the year preceding the most recent economic slowdown. Short-term earnings losses are defined as the percentage change in total earnings observed from the year preceding displacement to the year following displacement. Data came from the Longitudinal Worker File.

Key findings:

- Canadian workers aged 25 to 54 were less likely to lose their job during the mid-2000s than they were in the late 1970s.
- Those who were laid off from a job in industries other than manufacturing experienced smaller short-term earnings losses from 2005 to 2007 than their counterparts did in the late 1970s
- Men aged 25 to 54 who were laid off in manufacturing from 2005 to 2007 experienced larger short-term earnings losses than their counterparts did in the late 1970s
- Between 1978 and 1980, 8.3% of jobs held by workers aged 25 to 54 ended with a permanent layoff, compared with 6.1% between 2005 and 2007. A permanent layoff occurs when the employee does not return to his or her employer in the year of the layoff or the following year
- Falling layoff rates were observed in manufacturing and outside manufacturing. For instance, permanent layoff rates in manufacturing averaged 6.6% during the late 1970s and 5.4% during the mid-2000s
- In industries other than manufacturing, laid-off workers experienced smaller short-term earnings losses from 2005 to 2007 than in the late 1970s
- In the late 1970s, men who were laid off from industries other than manufacturing received 12% lower earnings one year after being displaced compared with the year preceding displacement. From 2005 to 2007, men who were laid off had lost 4% of their pre-displacement earnings a year later. For women, earnings fell 29% in the year after displacement in the late 1970s. For those laid off between 2005 and 2007, however, earnings had declined 11% a year later.

For link to report:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2011339-eng.pdf>

National Health Expenditure Trends, 1975 to 2011, by Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), November 03, 2011.

Between 2009 and 2010, growth in the supply of physicians was more than double that of the Canadian population. Between 2009 and 2010, growth in the supply of physicians was more than double that of the Canadian population. This report also shows a significant increase in the number of medical graduates, both from Canadian universities and abroad.

Highlights:

- Total health expenditure in Canada, in current dollars was \$182.1 billion in 2009, and is forecast to have reached \$192.9 billion in 2010 and \$200.5 billion in 2011
- In current dollars, total health expenditure per capita in Canada was \$5,401 in 2009. Forecasts for 2010 and 2011 are expected to be \$5,654 and \$5,811, amounting to respective growth rates of 4.7% and 2.8%. When adjusted for inflation and for population changes, real rates of increase are expected to be 2.0% in 2010 and 0.6% in 2011
- Total health expenditure in Canada was 11.9% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2009. It is forecast to be 11.9% in 2010 and 11.6% in 2011
- The underlying drivers of health care expenditure are examined in CIHI's report Health Care Cost Drivers: The Facts.

For link to the full report:

http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/products/nhex_trends_report_2011_en.pdf

Education Indicators in Canada: An International Perspective 2011, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics Division, Statistics Canada, September 2011.

This report is the third in a series that reports on certain aspects of the educational systems in Canada's provinces and territories in an international context. A series of indicators that have been developed to align with the definitions and methodologies used by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are presented.

Some of the highlights:

- In 2009, 92% of Canadian adults aged 25 to 34 had attained at least upper secondary education, compared with 80% for those aged 55 to 64, reflecting change in attainment patterns over time
- There were relatively small differences between provinces in the proportion of adults aged 25 to 34 with at least a secondary school diploma; figures ranged from 89% in Manitoba to 94% in British Columbia
- Upper secondary graduation rates for females were higher than those for males in all provinces and territories, as well as in the vast majority of OECD countries for which comparable data were available. In Canada, the rate for females was 83%; the rate for males, 75%
- In Canada in 2008, successful completion in public schools was 70%, slightly higher than the average of 68% for the OECD countries that were able to provide the appropriate data
- Canada's average graduation rate for tertiary-type A (first-time graduates, bachelor's degree) was 36.9% (2008), 2 percentage points lower than the most recent average of 38.6% registered by the OECD
- Variations in employment rates between 1997 and 2009 suggest that some educational attainment groups may be more sensitive to labour market conditions than others.

For link to the report:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-604-x/81-604-x2011001-eng.pdf>

Human Rights Accountability in National Security Practices: A Special Report to Parliament by Canadian Human Rights Commission, November 28, 2011.

The Government of Canada's national security organizations operate in a challenging environment. They must protect Canada from complex domestic and foreign threats that evolve constantly. The effectiveness of these organizations depends in part on their capacity to earn and maintain the trust of the general public. Respect for human rights is not just a legal obligation; it is critical to earning that trust.

Highlights:

- Ten years after the 9/11 attacks, the question of how best to ensure collective safety while respecting the rights of individuals remains on the minds of many Canadians, especially those who travel frequently by air
- News reports regularly tell stories of air travelers who say they experienced discrimination during a security screening on account of their race, ethnicity, religion, or disability
- Over the past decade, the Canadian Human Rights Commission has conducted extensive research on national security and human rights in the Canadian context
- The Commission has learned that many organizations have policies designed to prevent discrimination, but few can demonstrate whether or not their policies are actually effective in practice
- This report recommends that Parliament amend existing legislation or create new legislation that requires national security organizations to track their human rights related performance and account publicly for that performance.

For link to the report:

<http://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/pdf/chrc-specialreport-28112011.pdf>

Community Transformation from an Economic Costing Perspective: The link between area of residence and places of employment in a disadvantaged community Dr. Linda DeRiviere and Jeffrey Brojges, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, December 2011.

The location of an individual's residence may determine his/her potential and possibilities in the labour market. In this study, the authors investigated the correlation between area of residence and employment opportunities in a disadvantaged community, specifically the Lord Selkirk Park (LSP) neighborhood of Winnipeg, in the Province of Manitoba.

Some key findings:

- Willing job-takers may be poorly connected to employment opportunities. However, access to social services has positively affected the residents' employment outcomes and generated significant economic value
- Other positive externalities of service provision in community agencies are not easily measured
- State-led demand side strategies aimed at employment generation may contribute to a higher level of economically active residents, as well as citizen participation in the local community

- There is substantial potential for increased economic value of targeting employment opportunities to willing job-seeking residents in the LSP neighborhood.

For link to the study:

<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Manitoba%20Office/2011/12/Final.pdf>

State of the Inner City Report 2011, Neoliberalism: What a difference a theory makes by Lindsey Li, Sarah Cooper, Shauna MacKinnon, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Manitoba Office, December 14, 2011.

This 2011 State of the Inner City Report, a product of work with community partners, is divided into three distinct studies: it examines (1) social assistance policy; (2) housing policy; and Aboriginal education policy. The making of this report involved the participation of inner-city residents.

1. Manitoba's Employment and Income Assistance Program: Exploring the Policy Impacts on Winnipeg's Inner City by Lindsey Li

This study seeks to understand what Manitoba's social assistance program, renamed Employment Income Assistance (EIA) in the 1990s, offers recipients and whether or not it affords a viable means to help them exit poverty and social exclusion. It reflects on how the shift from welfare-state social policies to neoliberal social policies has affected the EIA system and the treatment and programming its recipients receive.

Policy Recommendations:

- Increase EIA benefits
- Implement Liveable income support rates
- Allow EIA recipients to claim child maintenance payments
- Increase support for those who wish to transition from EIA to work
- Create a standard procedure/protocol for EIA staff.

2. Housing for People, Not Markets: Neoliberalism and housing in Winnipeg's inner city, by Sarah Cooper, with information from interviews conducted by Lindsey Li

This paper examines what neoliberalism means for housing, particularly for lower-income households. It begins with a discussion of why housing is important, and looks at Canada's housing system and the context of housing in Winnipeg's inner city. It then considers, through the policies that affect people's access to housing, how neoliberalism has affected those who live in the inner city. Finally, it offers some recommendations to improve the situation.

Policy Recommendations:

- Reverse the neoliberal trend that sees housing exclusively as an individual investment opportunity

- Understand and treat housing as a form of infrastructure
- Embed the broader benefits of good housing in broader policy
- Increase the amount of rental housing in Winnipeg, particularly affordable housing
- Increase the amount of social housing in Winnipeg
- Ensure that the minimum wage and EIA rental allowances are sufficient to enable households to afford good housing.

3. Policy and the Unique Needs of Aboriginal Second-Chance Learners, by Shauna MacKinnon

Policy Recommendations:

- Finding, funding, funding
- Supporting the Transition into Employment
- Decolonizing Pedagogy
- Integrating training and employment

For link to the report:

<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Manitoba%20Office/2011/12/SIC%202011%20Full%20Report.pdf>

Tapping our Potential: Diaspora Communities and Canadian Foreign Policy, a Joint Initiative of the Mosaic Institute and the Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation, December 19, 2011.

Canada has what is arguably the most international citizenry on the planet. This report considers how Canada's role in the world, particularly the foreign policy priorities, policies, and program commitments, can be informed, shaped, and strengthened through the facilitation of a broader inclusion of transnational Canadians whose expertise and advice is rooted in a deep knowledge of the political, economic and social realities of international peace building and development needs.

Some of the recommendations:

- The federal government articulate a comprehensive set of principles, goals and policies for diaspora engagement
- Government departments work together to gather and analyze information about the composition, interests and foreign-policy capacities of Canada's diaspora groups
- Diaspora groups be funded to help them develop the organizational capacities needed to participate effectively in policy-making
- Perceive members of Canada's diaspora communities as valuable assets for this nation's policy-making
- All Canadians – should be encouraged to reach their full potential in helping to define our collective relationship to the rest of the world.

For link to the report:

<http://www.mosaicinstitute.ca/pdf/TAPPING%20OUR%20POTENTIAL.pdf>

Social Policy, Analysis and Research Information Resources:

Wellbeing Toronto: www.toronto.ca/wellbeing

Neighbourhood Profiles: <http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/neighbourhoods.htm>