



THE COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH DATABASE

is a searchable database of 54 community and social implications reports covering Ontario Census Divisions, as well as Ontario and Canada as a whole. Each report brings together key 2021 Census indicators and insights from community-based research to explain what these trends may mean for human services, community planning, and local decision-making.

Users can search for a specific city or region to access a profile that summarizes population trends, social needs and community strengths. This data can then be used to develop appropriate responses to community issues.

Framework

The reports use a social implications framework that integrates Census indicators with findings from community-based research to connect data to human service needs. Each profile begins with broad population trends organized around four themes: growth, diversity, vulnerability, and resilience/civic capacity.

Issues and interventions are then organised across three levels:

- Micro level: Individuals and households
- Mezzo level: Agencies, schools, neighbourhoods, and service networks
- Macro level: Policy, funding systems, and long-term planning

Why does it matter?

Generative AI tools are increasingly being used in scientific and academic research. AI can analyze enormous amounts of information and help researchers work faster and identify patterns that may be difficult to see manually.

The problem is, because AI data is sourced from multiple (sometimes millions of) different sources, data can be wrong, incomplete, or biased. Without checking original sources, and comparing that information with a trusted and reputable third party, AI in research can present conclusions that are not fully supported by the evidence.

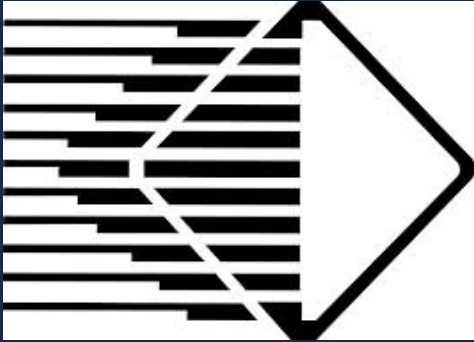
Our Portraits of Peel AI-Driven Community-Based research is verified using the primary source as well as Statistics Canada Census datasets, all by real humans.

People in Ontario are experiencing pressures related to population growth, housing affordability, poverty, aging, immigration, language access and unemployment. This database allows users to explore social conditions by location, supported by both Census data and original, verified reports, organized by artificial intelligence.



AI-Driven Data Community-Based Research Across Ontario Regions

Prepared by The Social
Planning Council of Peel



How was AI used to generate these reports?

AI was used as an analytical support tool to help transform 2021 Census data into accessible, community-focused insights. Rather than replacing human interpretation, AI was applied to assist in organizing large datasets, identifying key patterns, and translating statistical indicators into clear social and human service implications.

The process begins with structured 2021 Census variables. AI models help group and synthesize these indicators across geographic areas, highlighting trends such as growth pressures, vulnerability factors, and community strengths.

AI is also used to translate quantitative findings into plain-language summaries and linking them to potential service responses. All outputs are reviewed and structured within a human services lens to ensure that interpretations remain contextually grounded, relevant to community planning, and aligned with evidence-informed decision-making.

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How can decision-makers use it?

Decision-makers can use this database to support evidence-informed planning, funding decisions, advocacy, and service design. The reports draw on both statistical data and community-based research perspectives to help identify where needs are concentrated, which populations may face barriers, and what types of interventions may be most effective at the individual, organizational, and policy levels.

Municipalities, funders, agencies, researchers, and community partners can use the information to compare regions, plan outreach, strengthen partnerships, and prioritize programs in areas such as housing, income support, settlement services, childcare, seniors' services, employment, and community infrastructure.

What kind of Information is provided?

The database includes local indicators related to:

- Population changes
- Age, education, employment
- Immigration status, languages spoken
- Housing affordability, income, household structure
- Indigenous identity
- Racialized populations
- Civic capacity

These demographics are then translated into practical human service implications and potential interventions such as housing navigation, eviction prevention, settlement supports, culturally responsive programming, seniors' outreach, childcare supports, employment services, and broader policy or funding recommendations.