Housing and Social Policy: Connections and Challenges

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Social Policy in Housing: Towards Integration

• Benefits of neighbourhood/urban integration

• Past: Planned and organic mixed-income communities in cities and suburbs

• Present: Threats from public-private urban regeneration

• Future: Challenge of future immigrant integration
Benefits of Integration

• Health
• Crime
• Education
• Employment
• Upward mobility
• Civic and social capital
• Fiscal
Redevelopment: from social to mixed-income housing
(From left to right: Orchard Park in Boston, Regent Park in Toronto, Hunter’s View in San Francisco)
25 Years of Population Growth & Decline in Canadian Cities

Visualizing by neighbourhood census tracts how the population has increased 🟣 or decreased 🔴 between 1996 and 2021.

The area of the circles are proportional to the growth or decline in population in each neighbourhood:

$$\text{POP21} - \text{POP96} = \begin{array}{c|c|c}
-10,000 & +10,000 \\
-1,000 & +1,000 
\end{array}$$
Mixing incomes in the suburbs: Driven by immigration
And increasingly low-income (2020)
Berkeley Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative: Legal Clinics and Foreign-Born Population in San Francisco
Current threats to integration: Public-private urban regeneration
Available for FREE download at www.mitpress.edu
Future: Integration via Immigrants
But do we have the space?
And will market-led housing development be affordable?
If the space is in the suburbs, where are the jobs and amenities?
Housing as Social Policy: Lessons Learned

• Providing housing – by supporting integration in high-opportunity neighbourhoods – helps us tackle some social policy issues.

• Policymaking and program delivery must cross silos (e.g., transportation, housing, and health)

• To link housing and social policy, need more creative cross-sectoral collaboration.