

## THE GTA IS MORE DIVIDED THAN EVER

**New United Way report finds that a growing income gap hits young people, immigrants and racialized groups the hardest.**

**May 6, 2019** – It's a point of civic pride that the GTA is one of the most diverse regions in the world. But, a new report from United Way Greater Toronto reveals that deep divides are undermining the promise that "diversity is our strength." *Rebalancing the Opportunity Equation* looks at income trends over the past 35 years, as well as the income gap between young people, immigrants, racialized groups and the rest of the population in Peel, Toronto and York regions.

The findings paint a stark picture of who has access to opportunities to succeed, and who does not.

### KEY FINDINGS:

Young adults in the GTA are more disadvantaged today than ever before.

- Young adults have become poorer over time. In real terms, a young person (25-34 years old) in the GTA is earning less today than a young person in 1980.
- Among permanent full-time workers in the GTA, a young person earns on average 71 cents for every dollar a mid-aged person earns. That gap is an average of 13 cents greater than it was in 1980: the income gap is growing and young people are starting further behind.

In the GTA, it doesn't matter how long you've been in Canada -- the fact that you weren't born here means that you are earning less.

- Immigrants, regardless of their years of residency in Canada, have become poorer over time. On average, immigrants in the GTA today are making less than immigrants did in 1980.
- The income gap between employed immigrants and the Canadian-born population has grown. While in 1980 they had similar incomes, a longstanding immigrant (over 20 years in Canada) in the GTA today is making a similar – or lower -- income than a Canadian-born person was in 1980.

The racial divide in the GTA has reached a historic high.

- Racialized groups have become poorer over time. Incomes for racialized groups have not increased in 35 years.
- The income gap between racialized and white groups has increased over time. For every dollar a white person in the GTA earns, a racialized person takes home on average 69 cents.

The report outlines recommendations that all sectors can act on to ensure that everyone can participate in society, that more people can get ahead, and that everyday costs like childcare and housing are more affordable. Read *Rebalancing the Opportunity Equation* at [unitedwaygt.org/research-and-reports](https://unitedwaygt.org/research-and-reports).

**QUOTES:**

*"Rebalancing the Opportunity Equation* reveals that the promise of diversity and opportunity that we tell ourselves -- and sell to the world -- doesn't reflect today's GTA. Increasingly, it's the things you can't change that determine if you're going to fall into poverty. We can't present a 35-year-old story of opportunity and fairness and pretend it is the same today—it is not. We must make the findings of this report #UNIGNORABLE. The time is now to rebalance the opportunity equation, harness all the talent our region has to offer, and make the GTA work for everyone." - **Daniele Zanotti, President & CEO, United Way Greater Toronto**

"Rising income inequality leads to a deeply divided region where different groups of people do not have enough meaningful encounters with people unlike themselves. By strengthening the connections in our region, we will move towards an inclusive prosperity that makes our region a better place to live for everyone. Evidence-based research is the first step towards meaningful action—and this data is the most robust source we have to date." – **Michelynn Lafliche, Vice President, Strategy, Research and Policy**

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**About United Way:** As the largest non-government funder of community services in the GTA, United Way Greater Toronto reinforces a crucial community safety net. United Way's network of agencies and initiatives in neighbourhoods across Peel, Toronto and York Region works to ensure that everyone has access to the programs and services they need to thrive today. Mobilizing the network and other community support, United Way tackles #UNIGNORABLE issues linked to poverty. United Way's work is rooted in ground-breaking research, strategic leadership, local advocacy and cross-sectoral partnerships committed to building lasting solutions to the GTA's greatest challenges.

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