Racialized Communities

Recent immigrants (many of whom are from racialized communities) have been experiencing declining earnings and employment outcomes, despite educational credentials that have been higher on average than those of native-born Canadians. This suggests that the real problem is not their skill level, but the extent to which these skills are not accepted and effectively utilized in the Canadian workplace.

Frequently referred to as 'visible minorities' the term ‘racialized communities’ encompasses all people that are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. Aboriginal peoples in Canada are sometimes excluded from this definition, but should not be. Increasing the term racialized communities is replacing visible minorities because in many municipalities that population of people who are non-white make up the majority, not minority of the overall population.

Systemic and institutionalized racism often contributes to homelessness amongst these communities. Disproportionate rates of incarceration, higher drop out rates for education, barriers to employment, and denial and discrimination in seeking government assistance all lead to people becoming homeless from racialized communities.

The rate of full-time employment for racialized Canadians is lower than the Canadian average and income levels are also lower. Furthermore, the demands for labour market flexibility have disproportionately exposed racialized communities to contract, temporary, part-time, and shift work with poor job security, low wages and benefits.

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It is important that shelters are prepared to adapt to the diversity of needs of racialized communities including food/nutrition (varied diet, prohibitions of types of food or methods of preparation), options for religious accommodation and creating safe spaces and cultural awareness/acceptance.