

*King's Christian Collegiate Model United Nations
City of Toronto*



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Dear King'sMUN 2024 delegates,

We are truly honoured, as this year's Co-Secretary Generals of King'sMUN, to welcome you to our 10th annual conference. The Secretariat has been working hard throughout this school year to deliver you an incredible, in-person conference with a variety of creative committees, experienced chairs, and an overall successful day of debate.

Model United Nations, a reenactment of the function of the United Nations, is designed for students to come together to debate, discuss, and develop creative resolutions to some of the world's most pressing issues that plague our world today. In most committees, students take on the positions of various countries, characters, or political figures to create solutions for both real and fictional issues and crises. We also offer unique committees that explore historical, future, and fictional issues.

In our personal experience with MUN we have developed many valuable skills that we will take with us throughout our lives, such as confidence in public speaking, leadership, and creative problem-solving. Furthermore, MUN promotes lifelong connections, as we are constantly meeting delegates who share similar passions to us in committee sessions. We truly believe that your participation in MUN will guide you throughout your high school journey and beyond.

At King'sMUN, we provide a variety of committees to ensure that we have something of interest for everyone. From very current pressing issues (ie. UNSC and the African Union) and issues in sports (ie. International Cricket Council and WSF) to fictional, yet real, controversies (ie. Barbieland) and issues set in the past (ie. The Manhattan Project). We strive to ensure that there is appeal for a variety of delegates. Whether you have no experience or have been to a multitude of conferences, there is a place at King'sMUN for you!

Once again, we are thrilled to welcome all delegates, new or returning, back to King'sMUN. We hope that you engage in fruitful debate and have an amazing time at King'sMUN 2024.

Sincerely,

Serena Kalsi and Georgia Apostolopoulos

Co-Secretary Generals

King'sMUN 2024

Background Information

Toronto, the capital of Ontario, is home to over 3 million people. The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) has a population of 6.3 million people and is comprised of the cities Mississauga and Brampton, as well as the boroughs of Toronto which includes Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, York, and East York (“Greater Toronto Area.” 2023)

Toronto’s City Council is made up of 26 members. This includes the mayor, elected by the people in the city, and 25 councillors, each representing a ward in the city. The 25-ward system was introduced in 2019, diverting the city from its previous 47 wards (“Ward Boundaries for Toronto” 2019). A review for a new ward system took place for several reasons as people were not content with the municipality of Toronto. These orders include ensuring all people in Toronto are fairly represented, maintaining a similar population of people throughout the wards, and preserving the historical and physical features of each ward. This ensures that each spokesperson is representing the needs of the majority, if not all, of the people. Figure 1 displays these ward divisions and their suspected population in 2026.

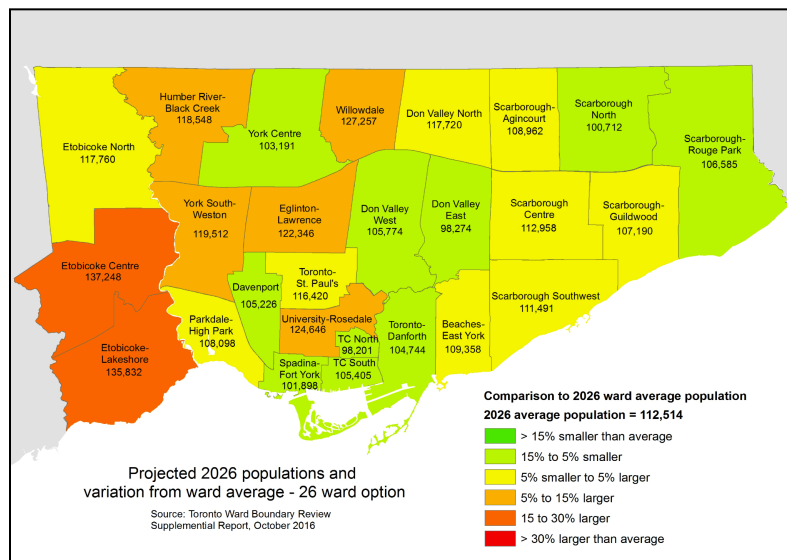


Figure 1: Ward divisions and population projections in Toronto.

Source: seanmarshall.ca

The Mayor of Toronto, Olivia Chow, was elected in June 2023 (Mayor Olivia Chow Takes Office” 2023). As someone with a high authority, she has many responsibilities to look after. These include; leading all council meetings, representing Toronto around the world, announcing any existing emergencies in the area, signing all bylaws, and more. Each councillor is responsible for looking after their ward. They focus on specific issues within neighbourhoods and ensure that all problems are being solved by looking at all points of views. The Members of Council are as follows:

Etobicoke North: Councillor Vincent Crisanti
Etobicoke Centre: Councillor Stephen Holyday
Etobicoke-Lakeshore: Councillor Amber Morley
Parkdale-High Park: Councillor Gord Perks
York South-Weston: Councillor Frances Nunziata
York Centre: Councillor James Pasternak
Humber River-Black Creek: Councillor Anthony Perruzza
Eglinton-Lawrence: Councillor Mike Colle
Davenport: Councillor Alejandra Bravo
Spadina-Fort York: Councillor Ausma Malik
University-Rosedale: Councillor Dianne Saxe
Toronto-St. Paul’s: Councillor Josh Matlow
Toronto Centre: Councillor Chris Moise
Toronto-Danforth: Councillor Paula Fletcher
Don Valley West: Councillor Jaye Robinson
Don Valley East: Councillor Jon Burnside
Don Valley North: Councillor Shelley Carroll
Willowdale: Councillor Lily Cheng
Beaches-East York: Councillor Brad Bradford
Scarborough Southwest: Councillor Parthi Kandavel
Scarborough Centre: Councillor Michael Thompson
Scarborough-Agincourt: Councillor Nick Mantas
Scarborough North: Councillor Jamaal Myers
Scarborough-Guildwood: Councillor Paul Ainslie
Scarborough-Rouge Park: Councillor Jennifer McKelvie

Additional delegates are found below and do not have a vote. They will be listed as an observer as they are still able to weigh in on the debate and draft resolutions.

Matthew House Toronto Representative

Indwell Representative

Ontario Real Estate Association

Refugee from Sudan

Evangeline Residence Advocate

Topic 1: Managing the Influx of Refugee Claimants

According to the International Convention on Refugees in 1951, a refugee is someone who *has a well-founded fear of persecution due to civil unrest, political opinion, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation* (“The 1951 Refugee Convention” 2016). This is decided by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) as they deal with people who are new to Canada. After that process, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) takes over and are involved in the resettlement program of refugees. Prior to obtaining refugee status, an individual is labelled as an asylum seeker. The Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) closely monitors and determines this. To be classified as such means that an individual is seeking safety in another country. A total of 47,605 asylum seekers were processed in Ontario from January to October 2023 (“Claiming Asylum in Canada.” 2021).

In Canada, possessing asylum-seeker status allows one to have a job in order to support themselves while in the country. However, one cannot remain an asylum seeker forever and must speak before a judge at the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, where they will decide if an individual will be granted refugee status or not. Asylum-seekers found at the border must go through an extensive screening process to be deemed safe to enter the country. First, they illegally cross the border and are taken to the nearest CBSA office. At this point, they must prove their identity and ensure that they are not a flight risk when they face the Canadian Refugee Board. The CBSA runs safety checks which include biometrics, travel history, criminal records, relationships, and more. If they do not pass these tests, they are issued a removal order to leave the country (“Claiming Asylum in Canada.” 2021).

Shelter Crisis:

Toronto has continued to struggle to locate proper housing for refugees. The government of Ontario, through the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB), has provided \$42 million to the city to support refugees, in September 2023 (“Long-Term Housing for Asylum Claimants” 2023). This money is allocated to homeless shelters as well as long-term housing. About 4,000 refugees will be removed from shelters and placed into more permanent houses. This will free up shelters for more refugees to be able to settle in. Yet, this is not enough as hundreds of refugees are still found on the streets in October 2023, a month after the COHB’s funds were given. The

shelters of Toronto deny access to around 300 refugees per day, as they do not have the space to support them (Balintec 2023). The mayor of Toronto is urging the federal government of Canada to take action in aiding these refugees in this crisis. Figure 2 displays the increase in refugee and asylum claimants found in the shelter system in 2019, which has quadrupled since 2016.

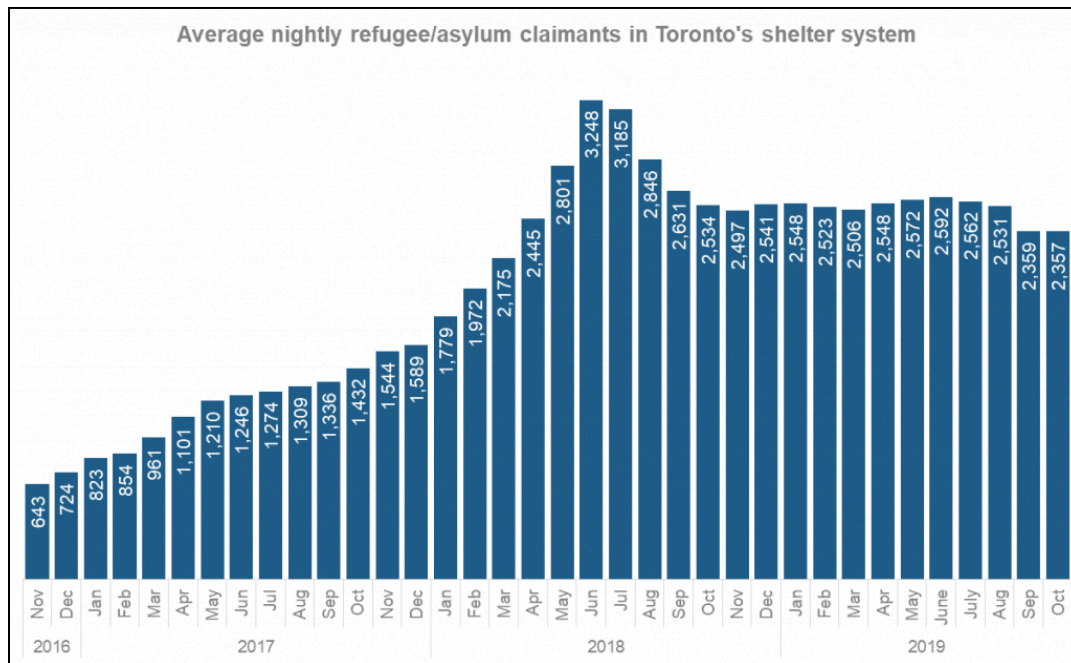


Figure 2: Refugee claimants and asylum seekers in Toronto's shelter system.

Source: toronto.ca

Human Smuggling Crisis:

As there are many opportunities for asylum seekers to enter Canada, some feel the need to enter with the help of human smugglers. A human smuggler is someone who assists individuals to cross a border illegally. Once they are brought across, they are free to go and have no remaining debts with the smuggler. These asylum seekers enter Canada with either no documents, because they are destroyed or hidden, or with false documents. This is done in an attempt to have a guaranteed grant to refugee status. For example, if an asylum seeker is given a false document from a country with a major conflict, it would be easier for them to get approved compared to being from a country with little conflict. In doing this, it is easier to fit into the definition of a conventional refugee. Although, committing identity fraud is illegal all across Canada. The members of the Canadian Refugee Board are trained to ask specific questions

regarding their reasoning for fleeing their country. If an asylum seeker is lying, they are prone to being banned from Canada.

Toronto is one of many cities where refugees are smuggled to as either a transit or destination area. In one scenario, a man was caught smuggling people from India to Toronto, and one step further to the United States. Over 1,000 people were smuggled through Toronto because of this (Barrera 2023). This individual charged asylum seekers ranging from \$5,000 to \$35,000 to get them across. Smugglers tend to take advantage of the desperation of these people by draining them of their money. In doing so, daily life will be much harder for asylum seekers. Once at their destination city, in this case, Toronto, they are found to be living on the streets since they do not have much money left to support themselves and their families.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

SDGs cover all pressing matters within the world, and they are developed by the United Nations. It is a global partnership where all nations come together to eradicate issues the world faces. The refugee crisis in Toronto has raised many concerns regarding these SDGs. One that is being affected is SDG 1: No Poverty. This goal expresses the need to end poverty, which is tough for the refugees in Toronto. As stated before, many of the refugees in Toronto do not have a place to live as free shelters have no more space. They are unable to afford other housing options, forcing them to be homeless. Additionally, individuals who have entered through smugglers have also lost all of their money to enter the country. This SDG has a strong correlation with many others. This is because if one is in poverty, they may struggle to provide food for themselves, SDG 2: Zero Hunger, or access to healthcare, such as dentists, which is not covered for them, SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being. Figures 3, 4, and 5 exhibit these SDGs as well as specific targets that relate to refugees.



Figure 3: SDG 1.3



Figure 4: SDG 2.1



Figure 5: SDG 3.8

Source: sdg.un.org

Overall, Toronto has faced many challenges in dealing with the needs of refugees and asylum seekers. It is highly recommended that issues such as refugee housing and human smuggling are acknowledged, to ensure the safety of all individuals involved. This topic is constantly being looked at, as refugees and asylum seekers continue to enter Toronto.

Questions to Consider:

1. How is the Canadian government unable to recognize the difference between real and fake documents? Should their budget be allocated towards fixing this issue?
2. How are refugees dealing with harsh winter temperatures if they are living on the streets?
3. What can the City of Toronto do to identify human smugglers using the city to transport to the United States?
4. How can asylum seekers be protected so they do not have to resort to paying smugglers thousands of dollars to flee their country?

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Topic 2: Affordable Housing and Homelessness

It is estimated that over 7,000 people are homeless in Toronto. The Street Needs Assessment (SNA) is administered by the City of Toronto to take note of the number of current homeless people. This assessment is examined through the Shelter, Support, and Housing Administration (SSHA). The SNA allows homeless people to voice their concerns to identify their own needs of what assistance they need in their struggle. In 2021, this assessment involved people living outdoors, city-operated shelters, and women's shelters (“Street Needs Assessment.” 2021). It was found that the majority of homeless people fit into one or more of these definitions; Indigenous people, racialized individuals, those previously in the foster-care system, those homeless as a youth, and those who identify as LGBTQ+.

Foster Care:

The foster care system in Toronto does not set up the children for success once they leave. Instead, they are left to fend for themselves once they age out of the program. They lack access to proper education, since they are always on the move, and therefore, cannot easily acquire employment. Foster children who aged out of the system experience a 20% lower employment rate than the average child (Kurzawski 2021). With that being said, it is hard to manage a stable home since there is no steady source of income. Many additional factors link foster children to homelessness as they may have a negative experience in their foster homes. This includes physical and/or sexual abuse, lack of healthy relationships, poor mental health, and being surrounded by substance abuse. Children may feel the need to leave their current home, forcing them to live on the streets if they have no other relationship they can get support from.

Indigenous Community:

The Toronto Indigenous Community Advisory Board (TICAB) stated that Indigenous people are beginning to be the majority representation of the homeless population. In April 2021, shelters reached a peak with over 1,000 Indigenous individuals seen outdoors or in city shelters (“Street Needs Assessment.” 2021). About 30% of homeless people in Toronto are Indigenous and the number increases to 44% when looking at the issue country-wide (Omar 2023). Figure 6 shows how Indigenous people face the most housing instability when compared to other racial

groups. Many factors have made this percentage so high, such as the historical events they have faced in Canada's attempt to eliminate them. From this, they have been dealing with generational trauma which has made it difficult for families to live together. Children who are vulnerable in these situations are taken out of their homes and placed into the foster system. At this stage, they are placed into non-Indigenous homes where they are losing their knowledge of their cultural values.

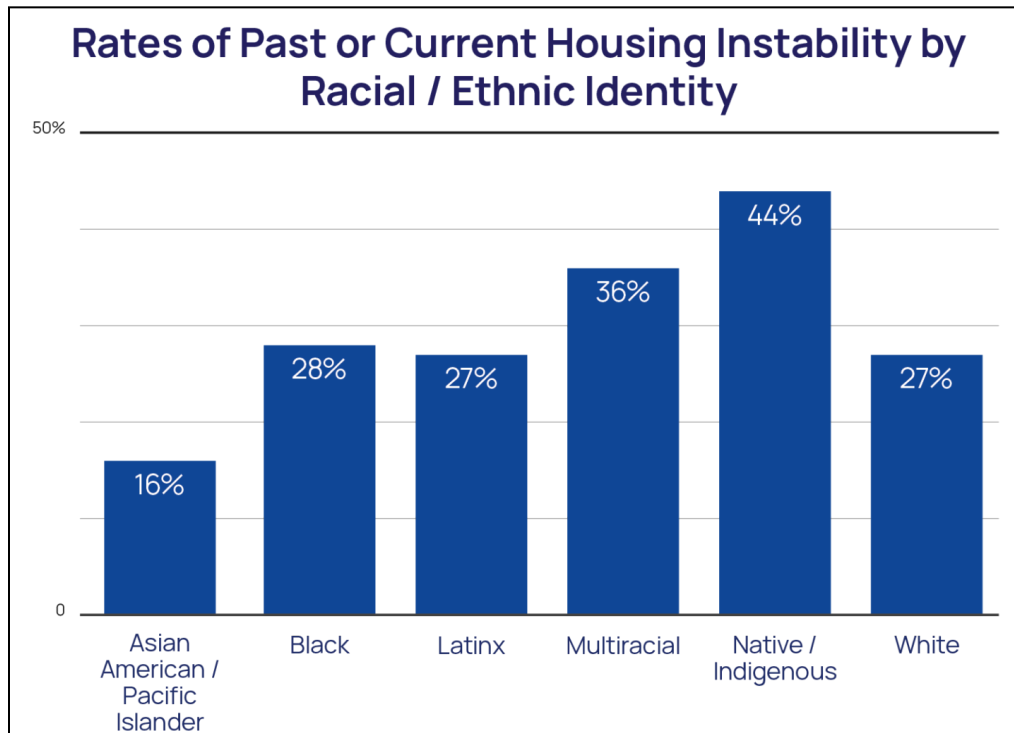


Figure 6: Housing instability by racial and ethnic groups.

Source: thetrevorproject.org

Housing Costs:

Toronto is currently seeing an increase in housing prices. This is due to a supply and demand issue. Since the population is growing immensely, there is a strong need for houses, but there is not enough to cater to the population. As this demand increases, the pricing of houses does as well and there is more opportunity to make a better profit. COVID-19 has played an enormous factor in the increase in housing costs. Once the mandatory quarantine period in Toronto was over, many people felt that they were trapped in their homes. They wanted a fresh start, so they began to sell their houses. As a result, many bidding wars occurred among sellers,

raising the costs of the homes, as people strongly wanted to move into a different area. Figure 7 exhibits that this situation is not getting better, yet it is worsening year by year.

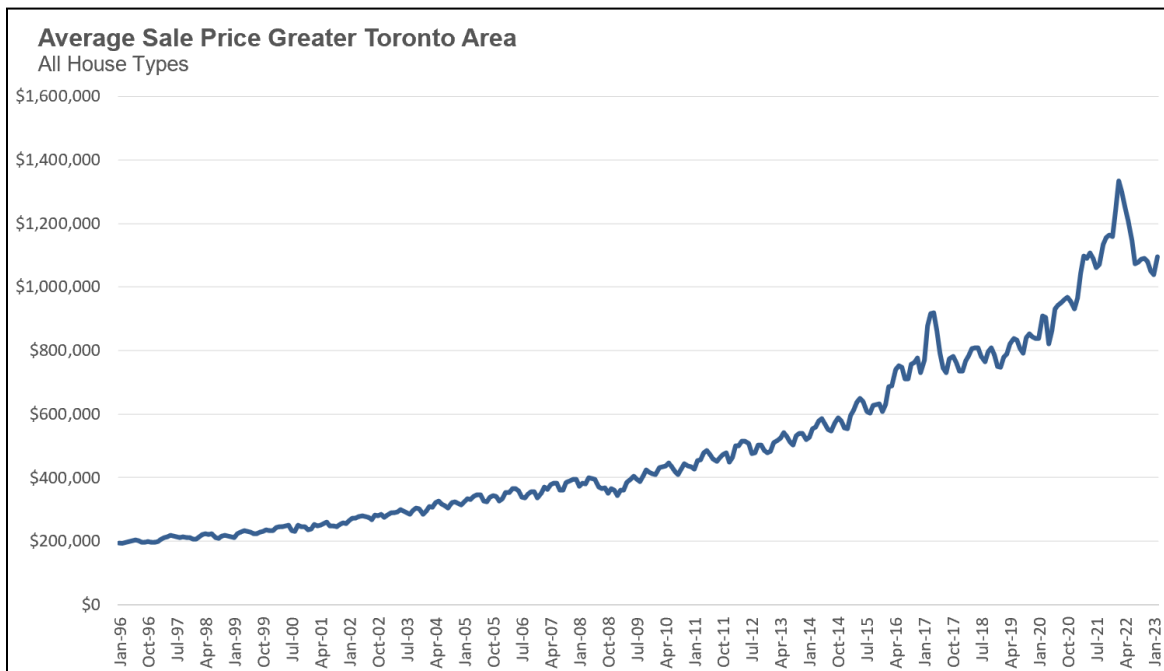


Figure 7: Average Sale Price in the GTA.

Source: movesmartly.com

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

There are many SDGs concerning affordable housing and homelessness in Toronto. If one is homeless, they are most likely experiencing poverty, or close to it. This relates to SDG 1: No Poverty. Individuals may lack access to SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation. Homeless people do not have much access to certain needs such as showers, feminine hygiene products, potable water, etc. As mentioned before, foster children do not have a concrete education, as some children are constantly moving from school to school. This raises concern about SDG 4: Quality Education, as well as limited employment opportunities further in life regarding SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. Figures 8, 9, 10, and 11 show these SDGs and their specific targets in relevance to housing in Toronto.



Figure 8: SDG 1.3



Figure 9: SDG 4.6



Figure 10: SDG 6.1



Figure 11: SDG 8.6

Source: sdg.un.org

Overall, there are many complications regarding affordable housing and homelessness in Toronto. Many factors contribute to this problem, making it extremely difficult for an individual in Toronto to live a stress-free life. Concerns that are strongly suggested to be addressed include the influence of the foster care system, preserving the Indigenous culture, protecting homeless people, and fixing the housing market.

Questions to Consider:

1. What can Toronto do to decrease the number of Indigenous people living on the streets?
2. How can Toronto preserve the Indigenous people's culture regarding the foster care system?
3. How can the education of foster care children improve to better guide them through life?
4. What programs can be put into place to slowly ease older foster kids to leave the system?
5. How can the City of Toronto increase the supply of houses?

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