

# A Sustainable Community Development Project-Social Sustainability & Housing Affordability In Regina, SK

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Source: City of Regina

## Introduction

Cities in Canada have been facing a severe housing crisis in recent years. This affects social sustainability, hinders economic and environmental developments, and leads to concerns about affordability and a rise in homelessness. Therefore, this project analyses various factors related to social sustainability and housing affordability in the City of Regina and aims to identify key challenges and opportunities for improving the quality of life for the communities.

## Background

The City of Regina is Saskatchewan's capital and economic hub, with numerous parks, sports facilities, and educational and cultural centres. It has lower housing costs than other Canadian regions, making it highly attractive. However, with the current change in demographics, growing concerns about rising housing costs, and economic uncertainties, this project looks to delve into variables, reflecting measures of social sustainability and housing affordability by analysing the data between 2011, 2016, and 2021 to find patterns and relationships and to recommend policies accordingly.

## Analysis

### Demographics

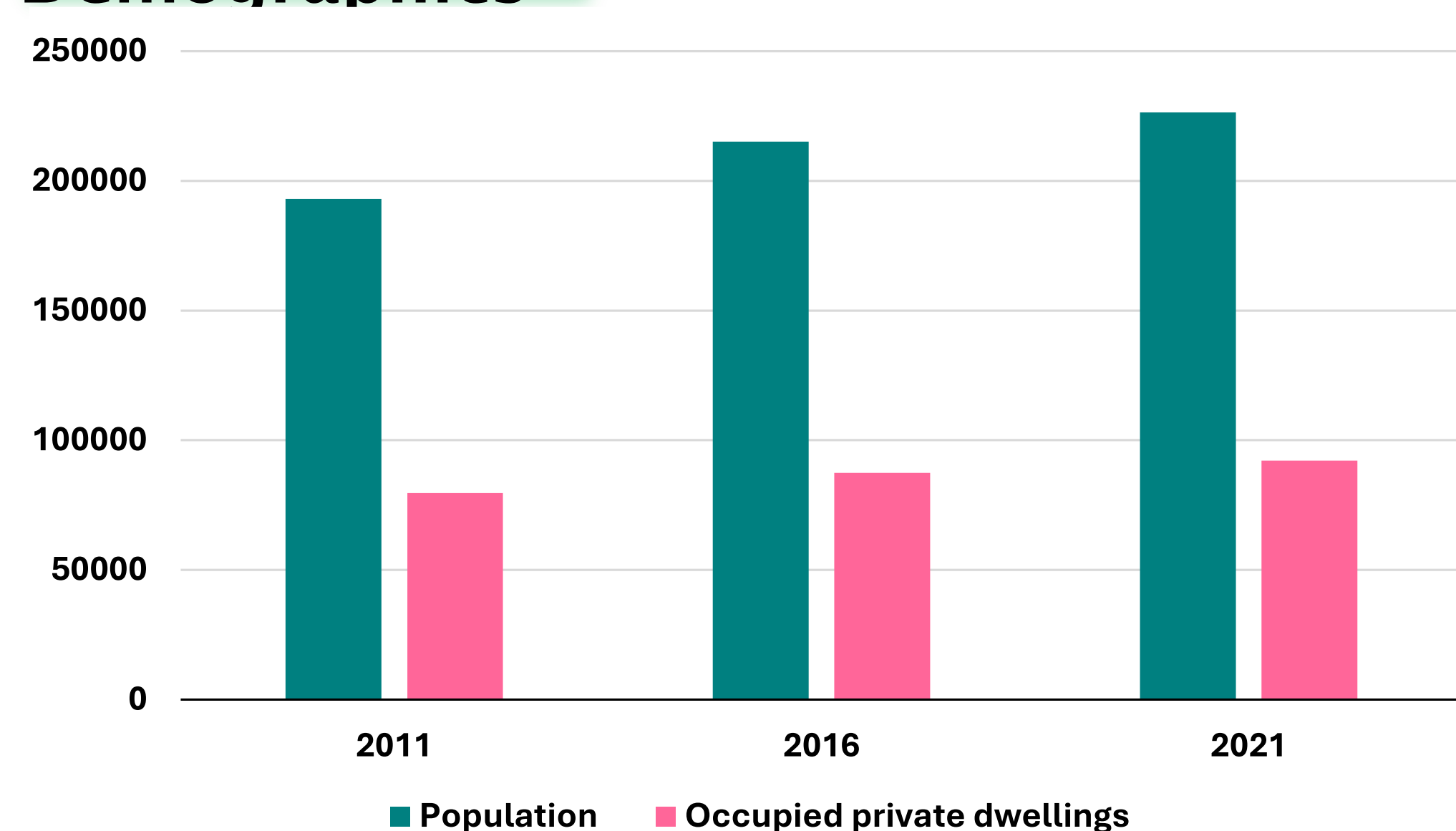


Fig. 1. Total Population Occupied private dwellings

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021, 2016, 2011

This data shows a proportionate and consistent upward trend in population and housing availability, with an increase of 17.25% and 15.72%, respectively, from 2011 to 2021.

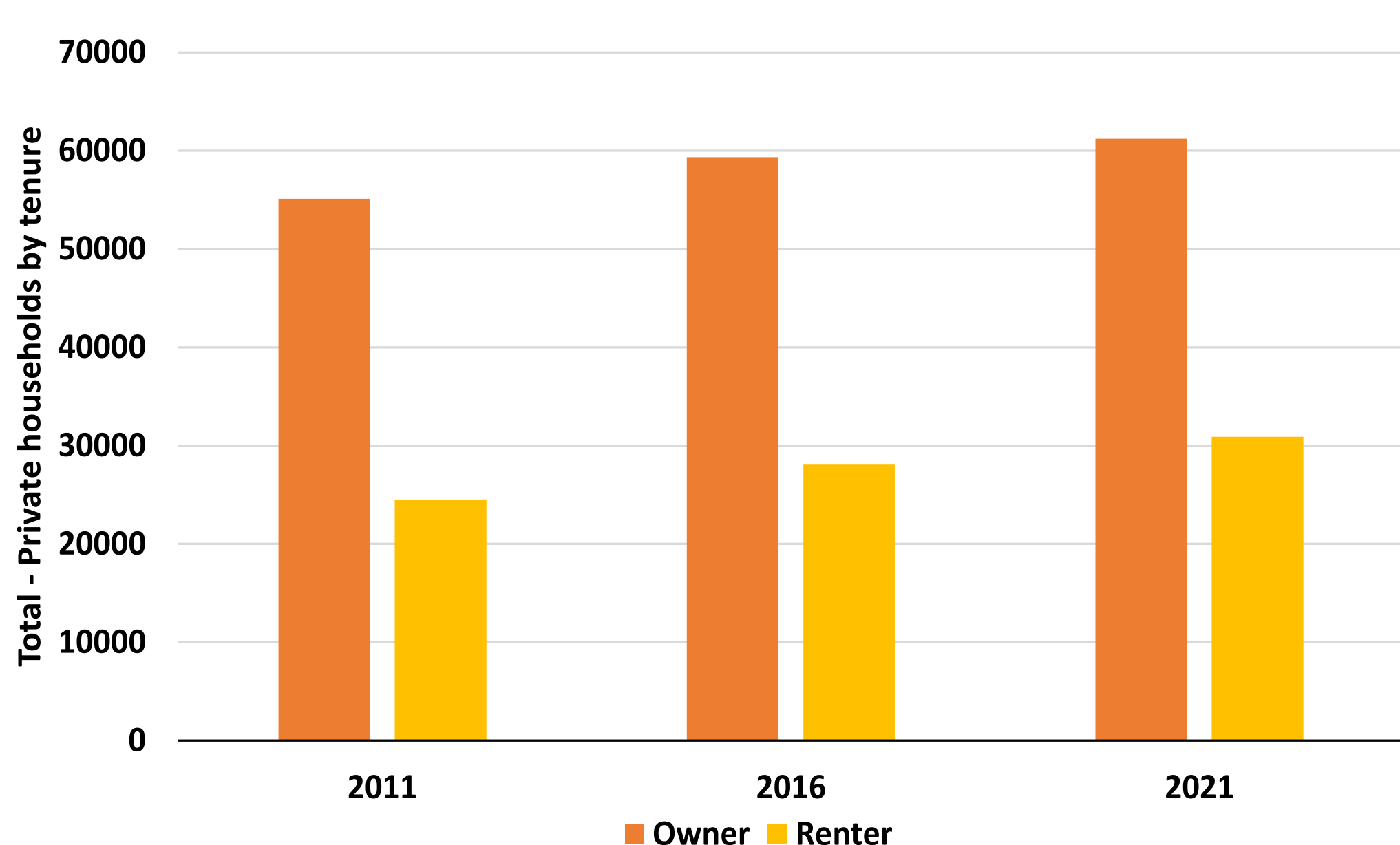


Fig. 2. Ownership vs. Rental Status

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021, 2016, 2011

The increase in demographics from Fig. 1 is also reflected here, as homeownership increased by 11.07%, and renters increased by 26.21% from 2011 to 2021. This suggests a stable economic environment and more affordable housing options.

Table 1. Mobility and Immigrant Status

	2011	2016	2021	% Change (2011-2016)	% Change (2016-2021)
<b>Mobility status 5 years ago:</b>					
Movers	77400	90160	88435	16.49%	-1.91%
Intraprovincial Migrants	11200	10840	13090	-3.21%	20.76%
Interprovincial Migrants	9515	9610	6630	1.00%	-31.01%
<b>Immigrants</b>	<b>21180</b>	<b>36145</b>	<b>45210</b>	<b>70.66%</b>	<b>25.08%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021, 2016, 2011

The mobility trend demonstrates that Regina attracted many newcomers in the early 2010s, likely due to job opportunities and better living conditions. However, the decrease in new residents later in the decade suggests a stabilization in Regina's growth or a shift in attractiveness, potentially due to changes in the job market or the rising appeal of other regions. It is interesting to note that between 2016-2021, intra-provincial migrants increased by 20.76%, and inter-provincial migrants decreased by -31.01%, which reflects that Saskatchewan's economy was relatively more stable or offered more opportunities than other provinces during this period.

### Income and Household Characteristics

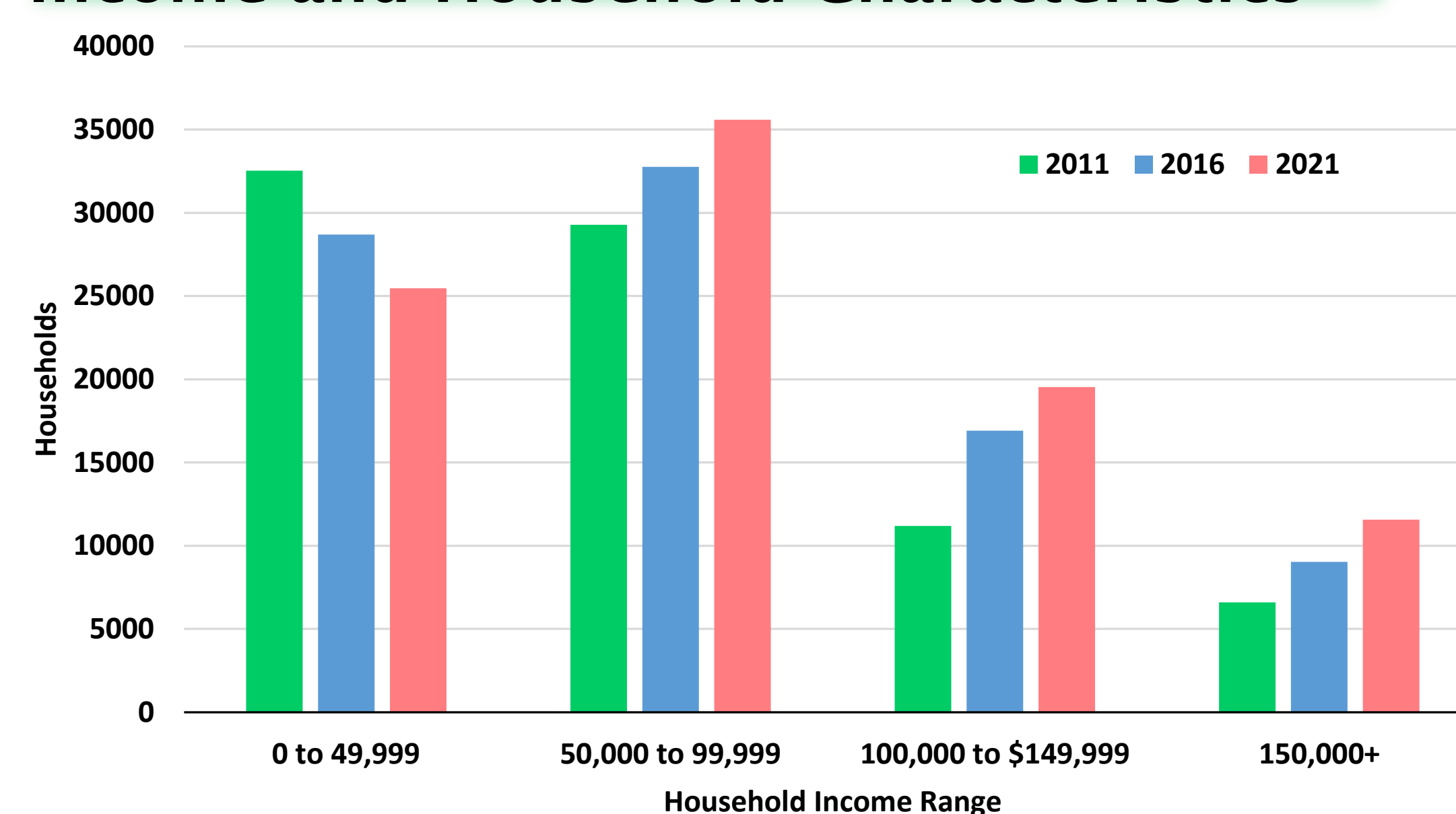


Fig. 3. Total Household after-tax income groups

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021, 2016, 2011

Table 2. Median after-tax income of household (base year=2020)

Year	Median After-Tax Income of Households (\$)
2011	69,842
2016	76,280
2021	76,500
% Change (2011-2016)	9.22%
% Change (2016-2021)	0.29%
% Change (2011-2021)	10.1%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021, 2016, 2011

Comparing 2011 to 2021, the median after-tax income of households increased by 10.1%, as seen in Table 2, which is also reflected in the after-tax income groups in Fig. 3, where there are a large proportion of households with above \$50,000 incomes compared to the other years suggesting better economic sustainability.

Table 3. Median monthly shelter costs for owned and rented dwellings and Median value of dwellings (base year=2021)

Year	Monthly shelter costs (\$) (owners)	Monthly shelter costs (\$) (renters)	Value of dwellings (\$)
2011	1159	1057	359,099
2016	1406	1224	381,945
2021	1400	1150	340,000
% Change (2011-2016)	21.31%	15.80%	6.36%
% Change (2016-2021)	-0.24%	-6.00%	-10.98%
% Change (2011-2021)	20.80%	8.80%	-5.32%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021, 2016, 2011

It is interesting to note that median monthly shelter costs for owned and rented dwellings decreased in 2021 compared to 2016, and the values of homes decreased by 10.98% and 5.32% between 2016-2021 and 2011-2021. Thus, the data suggests that housing in Regina is highly affordable.

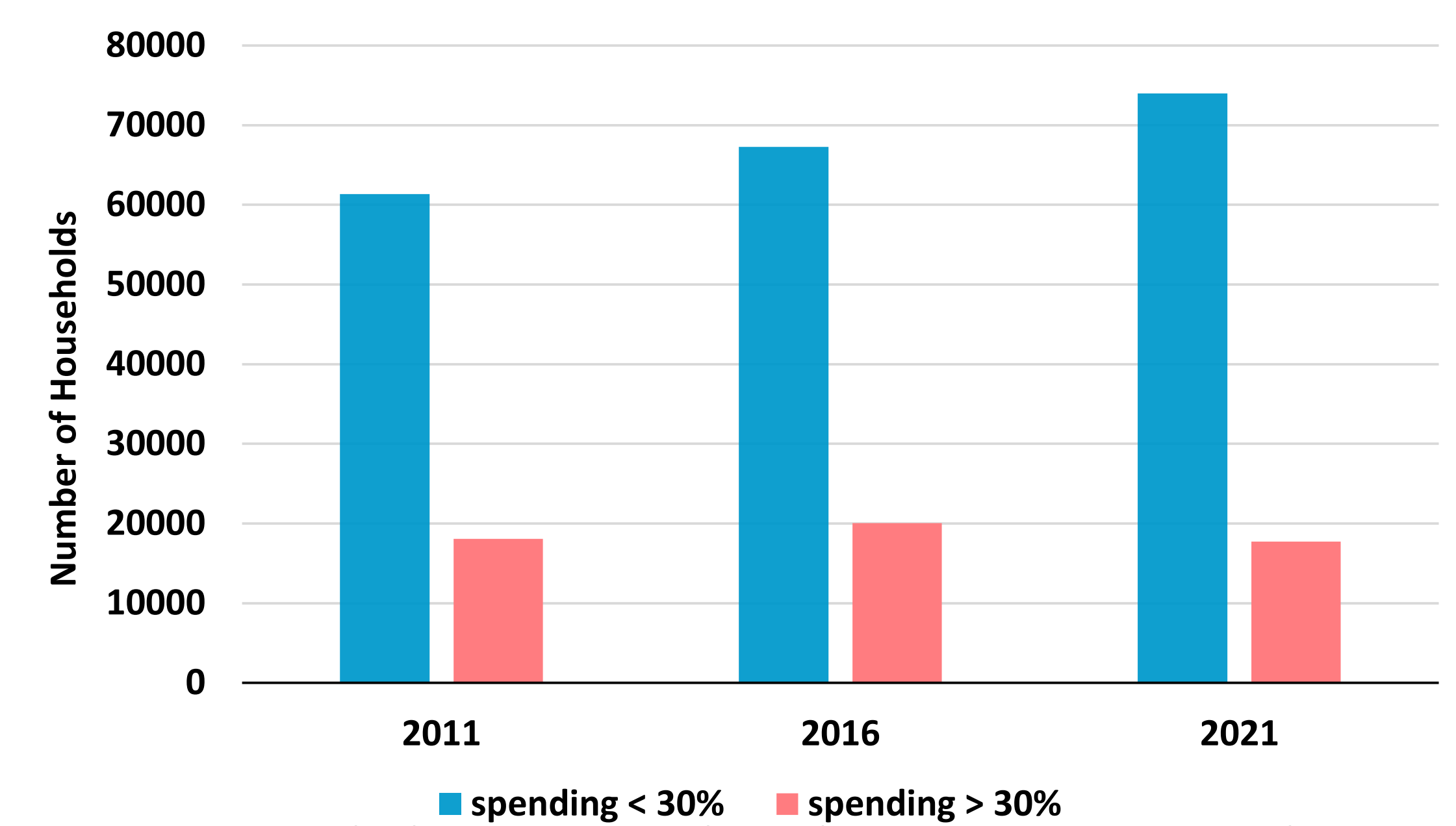


Fig. 4. Households spending less than 30% and more than 30% of household total income on shelter costs

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021, 2016, 2011

From 2011-2021, the proportion of households spending less than 30% of their income on shelter costs increased by 20.58%. Households allocating 30% or more saw a slight decrease of 2.02%, while a noticeable 11.76% decrease was observed from 2016 to 2021. This indicates an improvement in housing affordability and income levels.

Table 4. Cost of Living Comparison

Goods/Services	Kamloops	Regina	% Change
Restaurants (\$)	28.9	25.7	-12.7%
Groceries (\$)	7.1	6.5	-8.8%
Transportation (\$)	12.5	19.8	37.0%
Utilities (monthly) (\$)	137.2	141.2	2.9%
Sports and Leisure (\$)	44.0	31.0	-41.8%
Clothing and Shoes (\$)	111.1	109.6	-1.4%

Source: Cost of Living Comparison

Regina usually offers better prices for goods and services compared to Kamloops.

### Socioeconomic Inequality

Table 5. After tax (LIM-AT)

Year	Low-income measure (%)
2011	12.7
2016	11.8
2021	10.8

Source: Statistics Canada

Table 6. Homelessness

Year	Homeless Counts
2015	232
2018	286
2022	488

Source: CBC 2021

Table 7. Gini Index

	2011	2016	2021
adjusted household total income	0.347	0.326	0.326
adjusted household market income	0.415	0.397	0.427
adjusted household after-tax income	0.306	0.289	0.287

Source: Government of Canada, "Gini Coefficients"

A lower LIM-AT implies fewer people are considered low-income, and a lower Gini Index indicates that income is more evenly spread among residents. Hence, these changes indicate progress toward a more economically equitable society. However, the increase in homelessness remains a critical issue.

### Conclusion

Regina's population and occupied dwellings have increased; median household incomes rose 10.1% from 2011 to 2021, indicating economic growth. Housing affordability improved, leading to more households spending less than 30% of their income, and median monthly shelter costs for owned and rented dwellings have decreased. Despite a decrease in social inequality metrics, homelessness remains a challenge, highlighting the need for policies to strengthen social equality and economic stability. Regina is a city that performs well regarding housing affordability, social sustainability, and reduced inequality.

### References

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