

Migrants & Housing Communications Messaging

Context:

Politicians across Canada are increasingly scapegoating migrants for the government's failure to address the true drivers of Canada's housing and homelessness crisis.

Purpose of this guide:

To equip the housing justice sector with aligned messaging—especially leading up to the 2025 federal election—to shift government and public opinion away from the scapegoating of migrants and instead, focus on addressing the **real** drivers of Canada's housing and homelessness crisis by living up to the human rights commitments under Canada's right to housing legislation.

How your organization can participate:

- Integrate this key messaging throughout your day-to-day advocacy and government relations work as you see fit.
- Sample social media and newsletter copy, as well as graphics, are provided below to help you amplify this core message.

When and how to use this key messaging:

Make this messaging your own! We recognize that each organization is coming into this conversation with your own contexts and different audiences. The key messaging provided below are just an example of what you can say in your advocacy efforts while also helping you stay aligned with the core message: **that the scapegoating of migrants by government is not a real solution. Instead, we need human rights-based solutions that will genuinely fix Canada's housing crisis.**

Graphics:

We have an editable Canva template for partners, which you can add your logo to and tweak to meet your audience. [The template can be accessed here.](#)

Alternatively, pre-made graphics that are ready for download are [available here.](#)

Core Messaging:

*When in doubt, this is the core messaging that we want to keep coming back to when we want to combat the narrative that migrants is causing the housing crisis. We need to keep coming back to the **real drivers of housing unaffordability**.*

- **“Scapegoating migrants isn’t the answer to Canada’s housing crisis. It’s time to focus on real and rights-based solutions:**
 - **Stronger tenant protections**
 - **Increased income supports**
 - **Reversing decades of underinvestment by all levels of government into affordable housing and more”**
- **“Canada’s housing crisis is driven by systemic issues like stagnant wages, weak tenant protections, and treating housing as a financial asset rather than a human right. Scapegoating migrants and other marginalized communities won’t fix these issues.”**
- **“Scapegoating migrants is an intentional distraction that will not solve the true causes of Canada’s housing crisis—treating housing as a fundamental human right, *will*.”**
- **“Scapegoating migrants won’t solve Canada’s housing crisis. Let’s address the real reason why housing is so unaffordable: The treatment of housing as a profit-making commodity rather than a fundamental human right for all.”**

The Real Drivers of the Housing Crisis + sample copy for social media:

Use the sample copy below for social media or integrate it into your broader communications / government relations work.

- **Soaring Rents and Stagnant Wages:** “In cities like Toronto and Vancouver, rents have skyrocketed while wages and income supports have not kept up—pushing people into precarious living situations and even homelessness. It’s time to stop scapegoating migrants and re-focus on real solutions: Investment into affordable housing - especially non-market housing and increased income supports for those in greatest housing need.”
- **Skyrocketing Eviction Rates:** “Weak tenant protections allow landlords to evict tenants for profit-driven reasons like renovictions, pushing people out of their homes to maximize rents. It’s time to stop scapegoating migrants and re-focus on real solutions by all levels of government: implementing stronger tenant protections and rent control measures to protect people from losing their homes.”
- **Decades of Underinvestment in Housing:** “The federal government has spent decades underinvesting in critical programs needed to keep housing affordable in Canada. While immigration has been critical in boosting Canada’s economy, there has been little effort to increase the availability of affordable homes for all. It’s time to stop scapegoating migrants and increase government investments into affordable, non-profit, and co-op housing.”
- **The Financialization of Housing:** “For decades, housing in Canada has been treated as an investment asset by private investors, rather than a human right for all. This has driven up housing prices and decreased the number of affordable housing stock. It’s time to stop scapegoating migrants for a housing system that favours developers and start treating housing as the fundamental human right that it is.”
- **A Lack of Legal Protections for Renters:** “Many renters—including migrants—face skyrocketing rents, poor maintenance, and discrimination with little legal support. As the cost-of-living increases, renters are left vulnerable to rents hikes and eviction. It’s time to stop scapegoating migrants and focus on real solutions: implementing stronger tenant protections so that nobody in Canada loses their home because of their income.”

Sample copy for newsletter:

Dear [Subscriber's Name],

As Canada continues to face a housing crisis, we're seeing a rise in the scapegoating of migrants and other marginalized communities. In reality, this is an intentional distraction from the true cause of Canada's housing crisis—the lack of coordinated efforts by all levels of government to address:

- Soaring rents and stagnant wages
- Weak tenant protections to prevent no-fault evictions, like renovictions
- Decades of underinvestment into affordable, non-market housing
- The financialization of housing, where homes are treated as a commodity to be bought and sold for profit rather than a human right for all

These systemic issues are the true drivers of Canada's housing crisis, and they continue to make housing unaffordable, inadequate, and unobtainable for far too many. The impact of these systemic failures is felt even more acutely by those in greatest housing need, including many migrants, as they are often renters who struggle to find housing due to low wages, discrimination, and uncapped rents.

The truth is that migrants are propping Canada's economy up:

- Net immigration accounted for **half of Canada's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth** from 2016 to 2019 and **three-quarters** of growth in 2019. Migrants pay into most social services, but are denied access to the services they fund.
- International students contribute over **\$31 billion annually** to economic growth, surpassing Canada's auto parts and lumber exports, and support over **200,000 jobs**.
- Canada needs an additional **30,000 construction workers annually** to meet new build housing targets. Migrants are central to this labor force but face exploitation and housing precarity because they do not have permanent resident status.
- Migrant scapegoating has led to significant reduction in migrant rights – under new immigration rules, over **3,000 study and work permits are expiring every day in**

2025 and 2026. According to the RBC – that is a loss of **\$50 billion just in tax revenue** each year.

We know the solutions that will work—by investing in affordable housing, strengthening tenant protections, and addressing the financialization of housing, we can build a system where safe, affordable, and adequate housing is accessible to everyone in Canada, regardless of income or background.

Scapegoating is not the answer. The federal government committed to the human right to housing in legislation in 2019 – it's time to stop giving into the distractions and treat housing like the human right that it is.

In solidarity,

[Your Name/Your Organization]

Calls to Action:

- **Support Stronger Rent Controls and Tenant Protections:** Advocate for policies that protect renters from unreasonable rent hikes, evictions, and discrimination.
- **Demand Investment in Affordable Housing:** Push for increased funding for social, non-profit, and co-op housing to meet the needs of a growing population.
- **Focus on People, Not Profits:** Call for policies that treat housing as a basic human right, not a financial asset for investors.