

Families on the Move in the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Mike Moffatt — November 2025



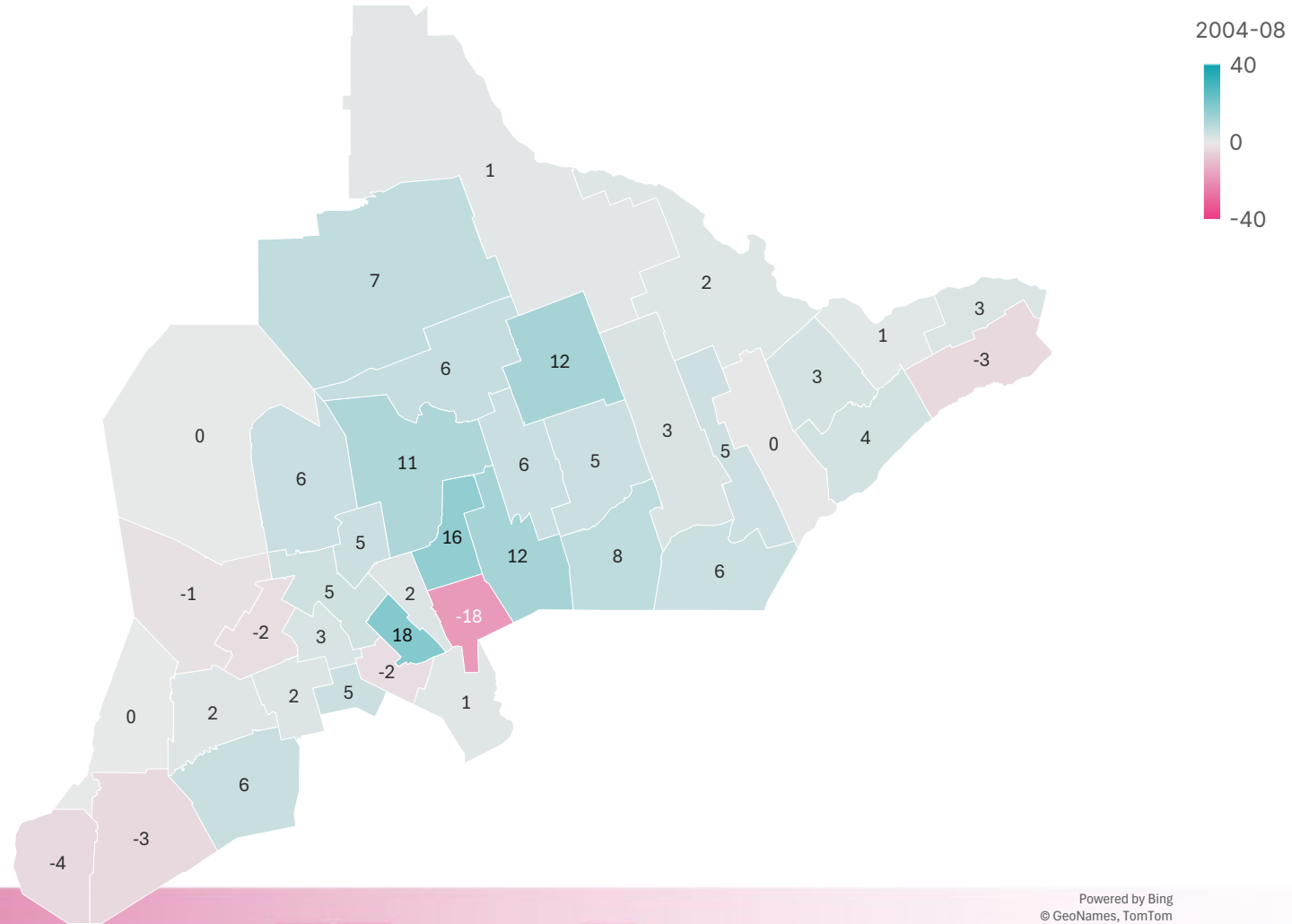
The story...

- Over the past 20 years, families have been increasingly leaving the GTA in search of family-friendly homes that meet their needs.
- This migration has caused the GTA's housing shortages to spread across Southern Ontario.
- There is a particular shortage in ground-oriented 3+ bedroom ownership homes.

The story...

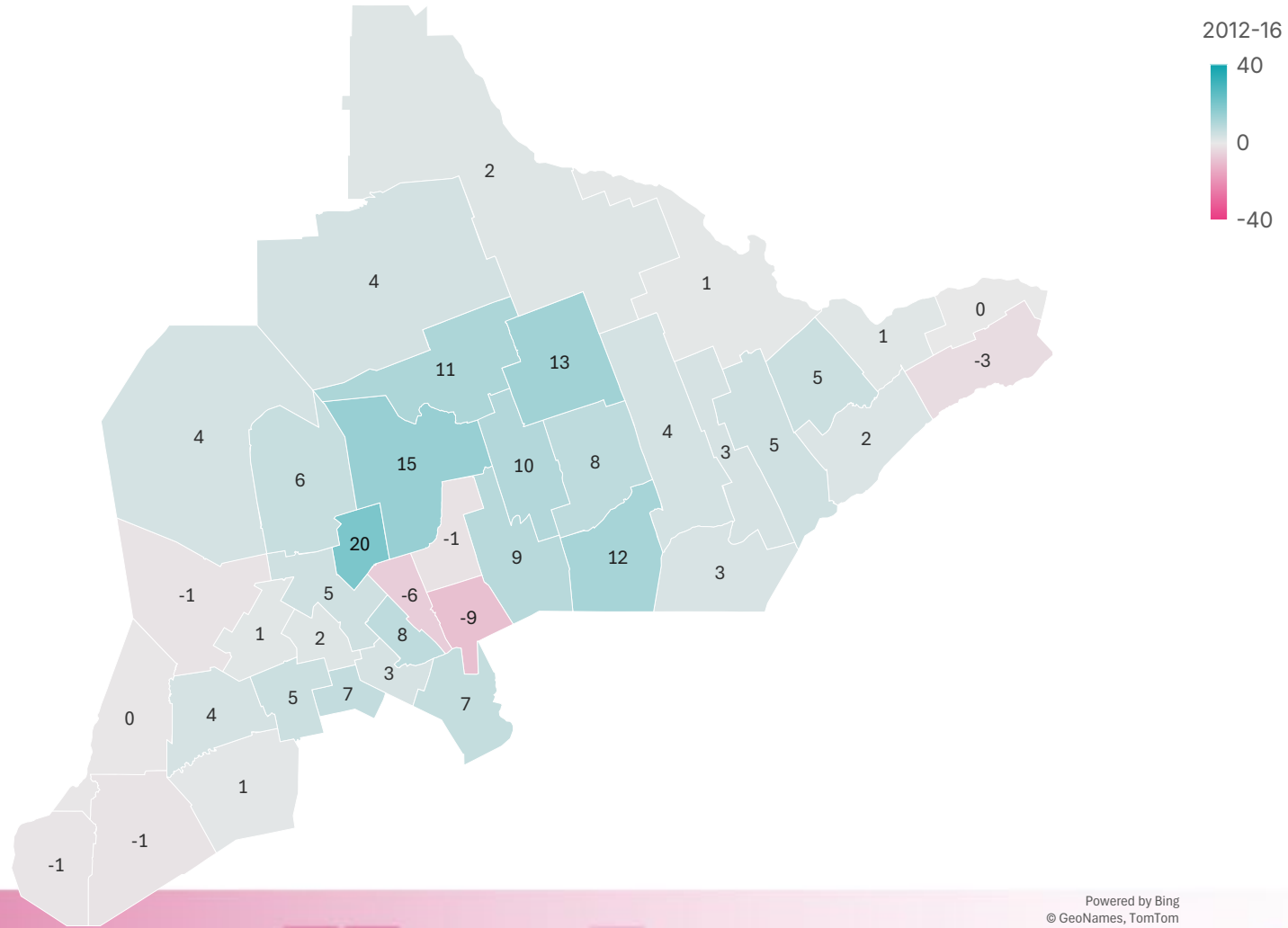
- Governments are not taking into account this shortage in their planning, and are assuming that the future will be like the present, despite evidence to the contrary.
- **The upshot: Governments and planners are underestimating the demand for larger homes, and underestimating the number of families that will leave the GTA in search of larger homes they can own.**

Net Intraprovincial Migration (Within Province), 2004-08, Annual Average Per 1000 Residents



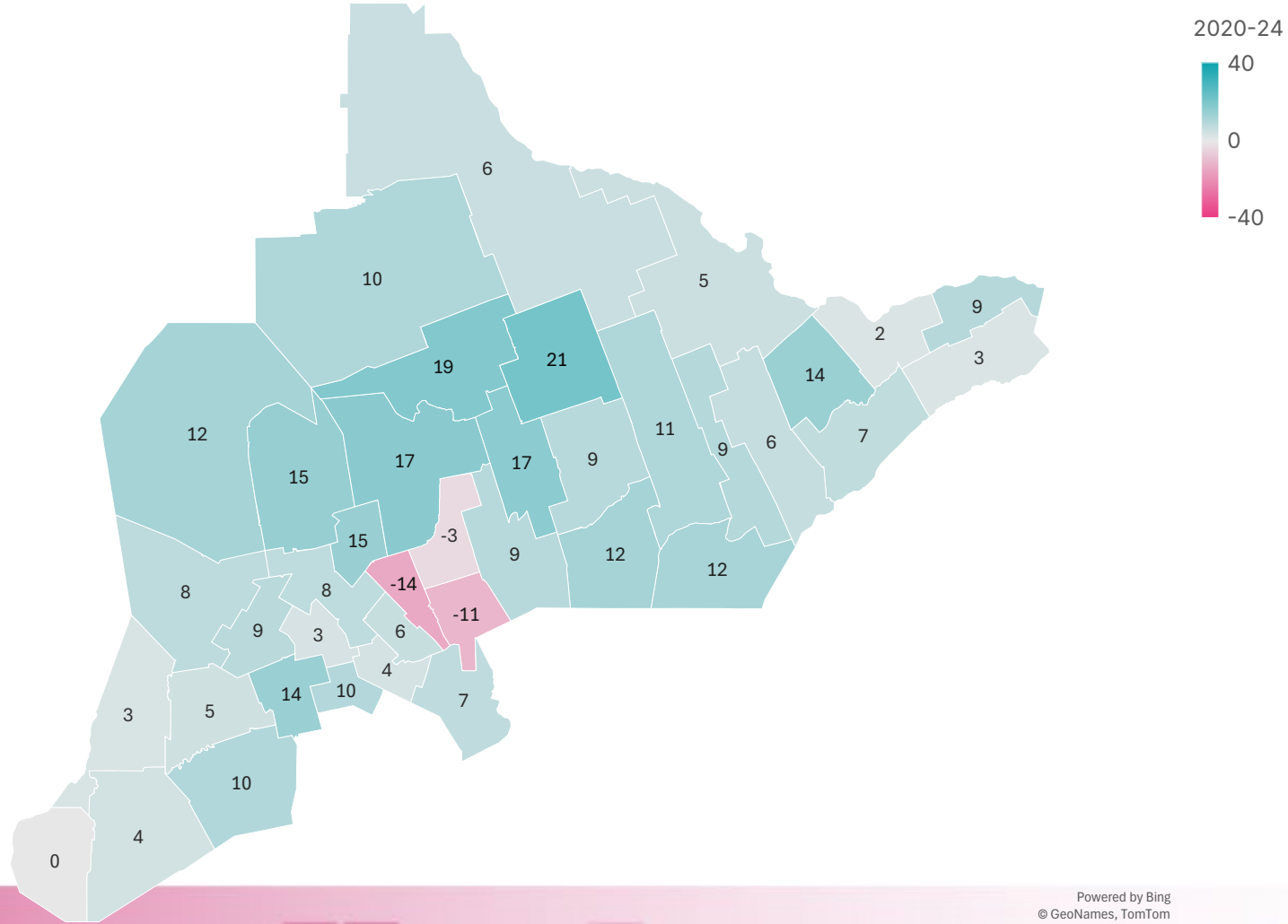
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Net Intraprovincial Migration (Within Province), 2012-16, Annual Average Per 1000 Residents



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Net Intraprovincial Migration (Within Province), 2016-20, Annual Average Per 1000 Residents



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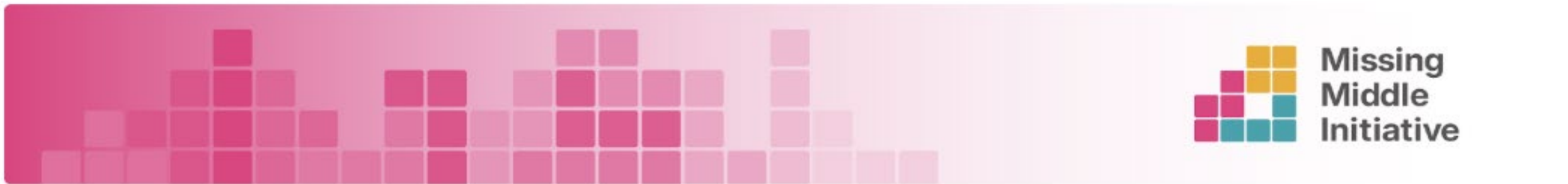
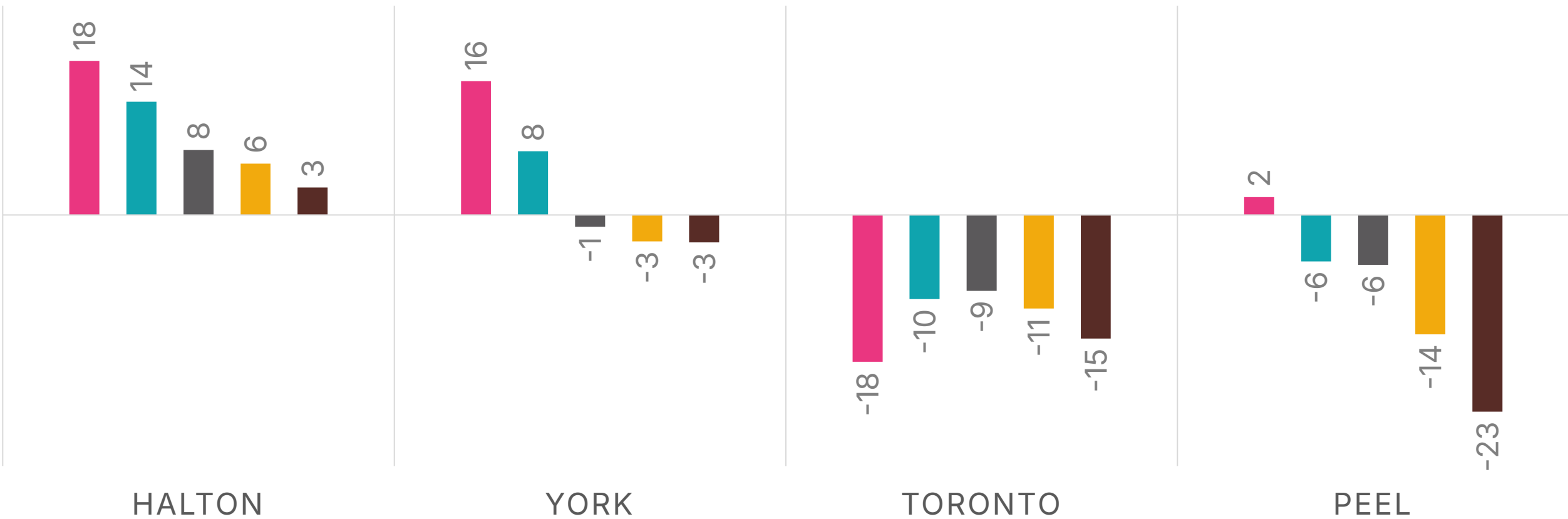
What we have seen so far...

- Intraprovincial migration has been consistently increasing over the past 20 years.
- Not just a pandemic-era phenomenon.
- Substantial outmigration from the GTA.
- Substantial in-migration to smaller communities.

Let's bring the numbers a little closer to home...

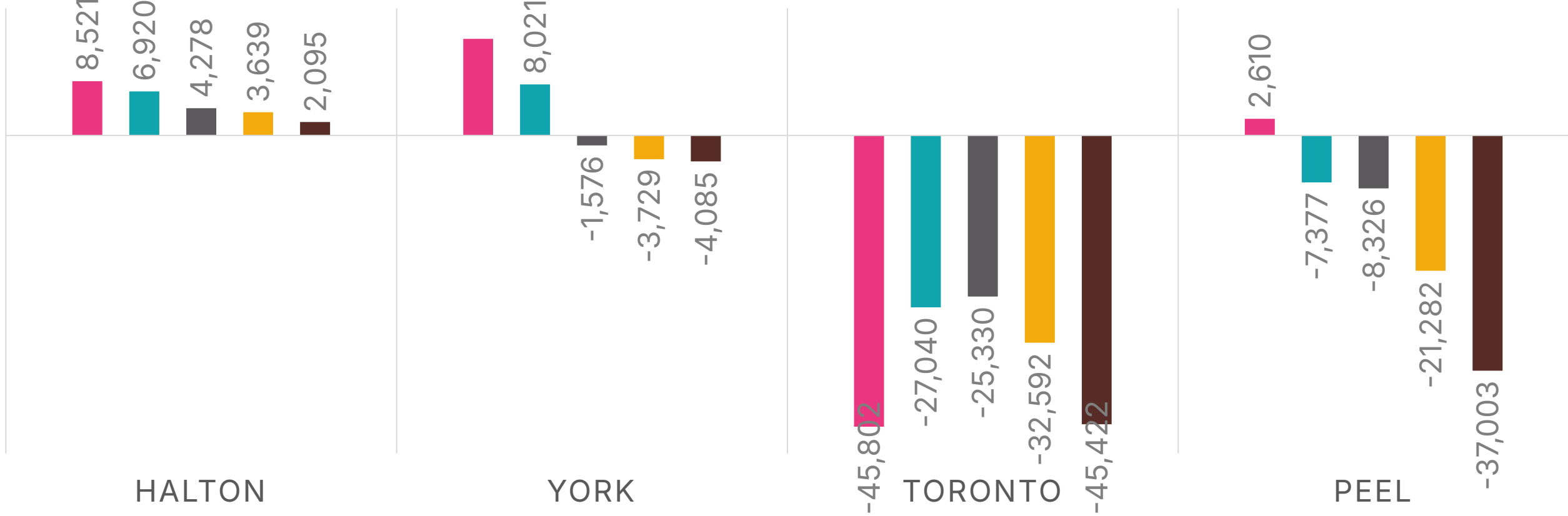
AVERAGE ANNUAL NET INTRAPROVINCIAL MIGRATION PER 1000 RESIDENTS BY CENSUS DIVISION

2004-08 2008-12 2012-16 2016-20 2020-24



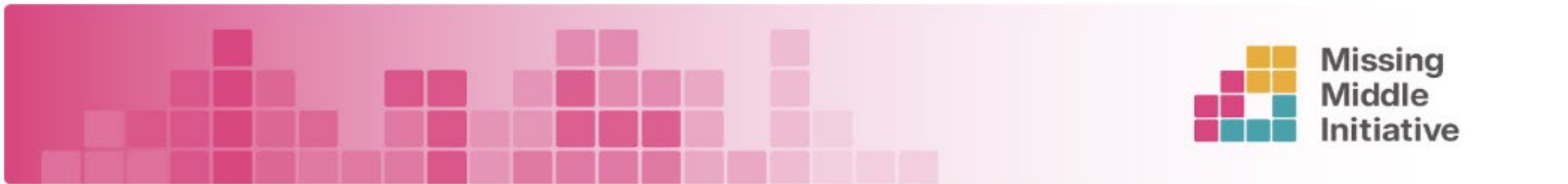
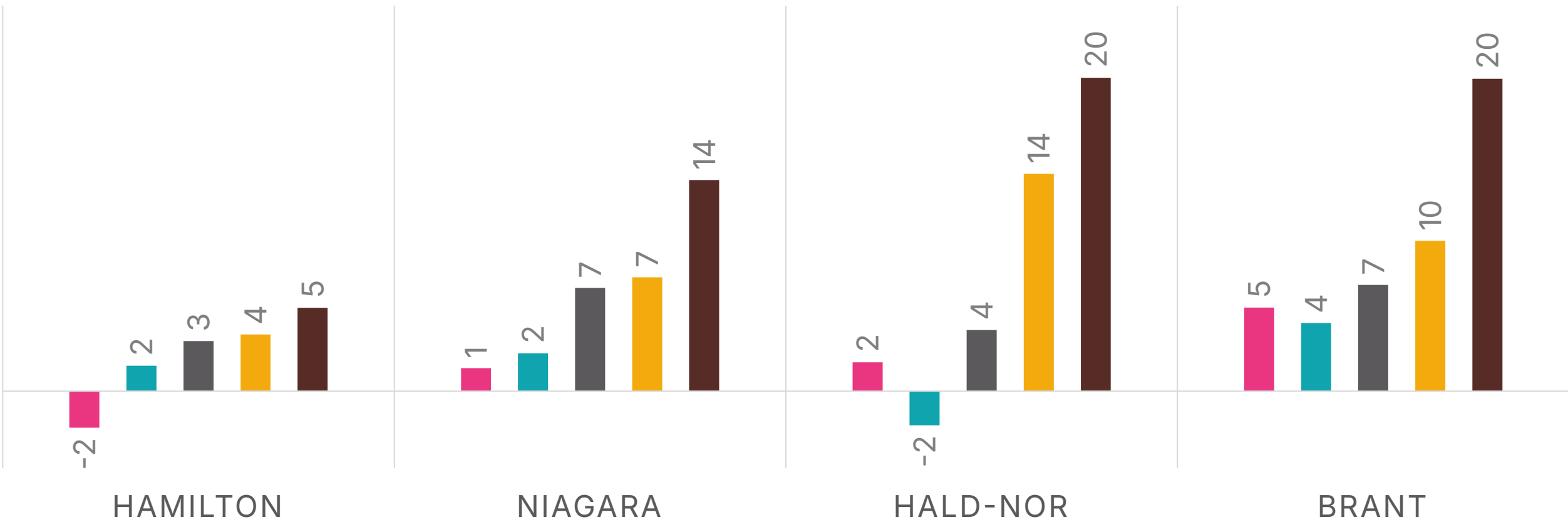
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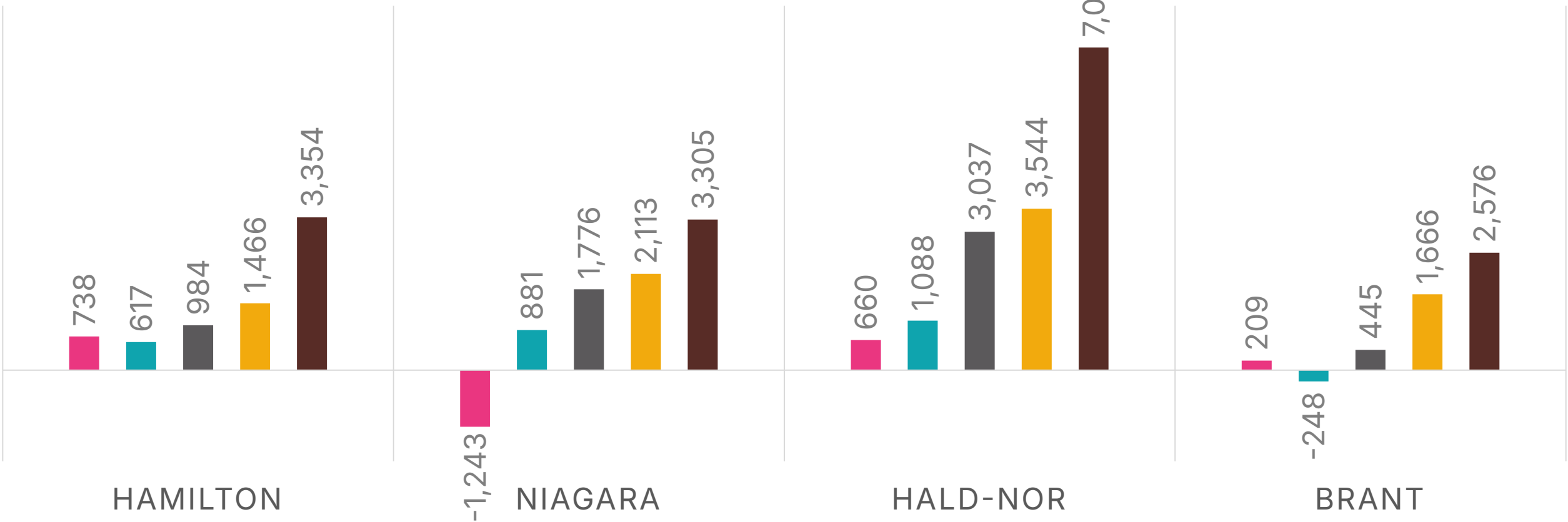
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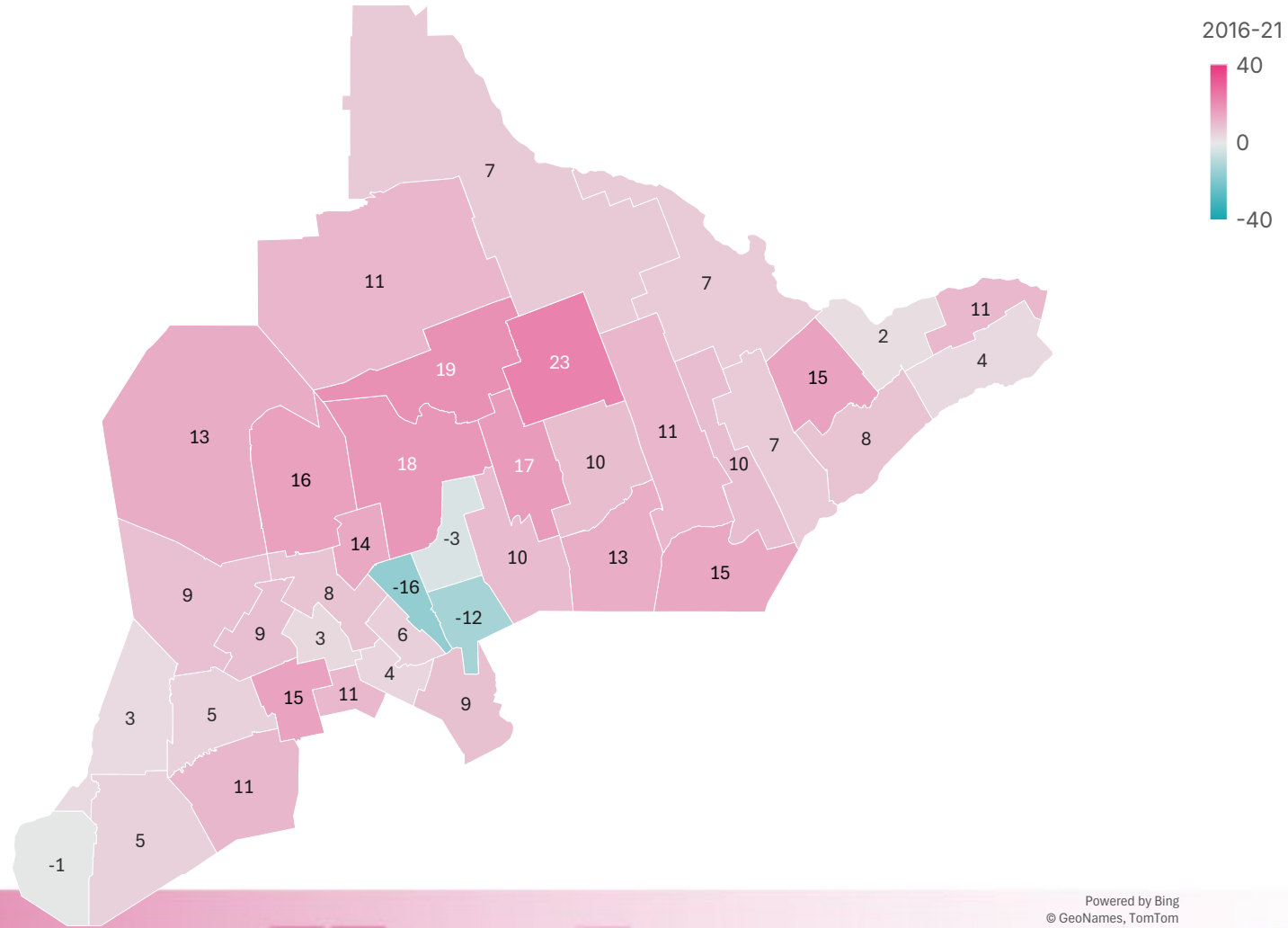
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Going from what to why

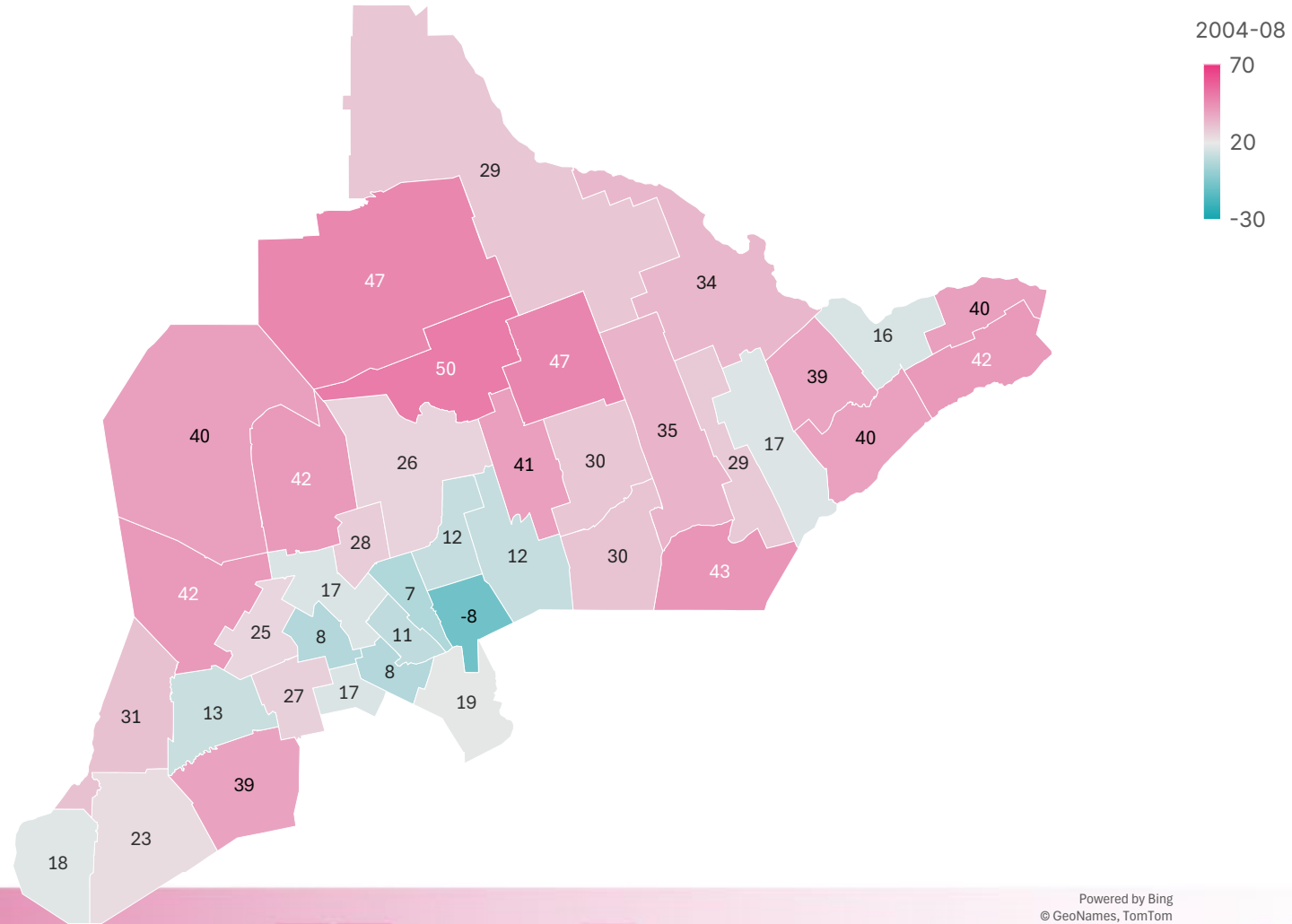
- There can be any number of reasons why individuals and families choose to move to one community or another.
- The strongest correlation we have found for Southern Ontario is between intraprovincial migration and the growth of the ground-oriented housing ownership stock. ($r = 0.71$)
- The relation between housing growth and population growth is two-sided (families go to where housing is being built, and housing gets built in areas families wish to move to).

Net Intraprovincial Migration (Within Province), 2016-21, Annual Average Per 1000 Residents



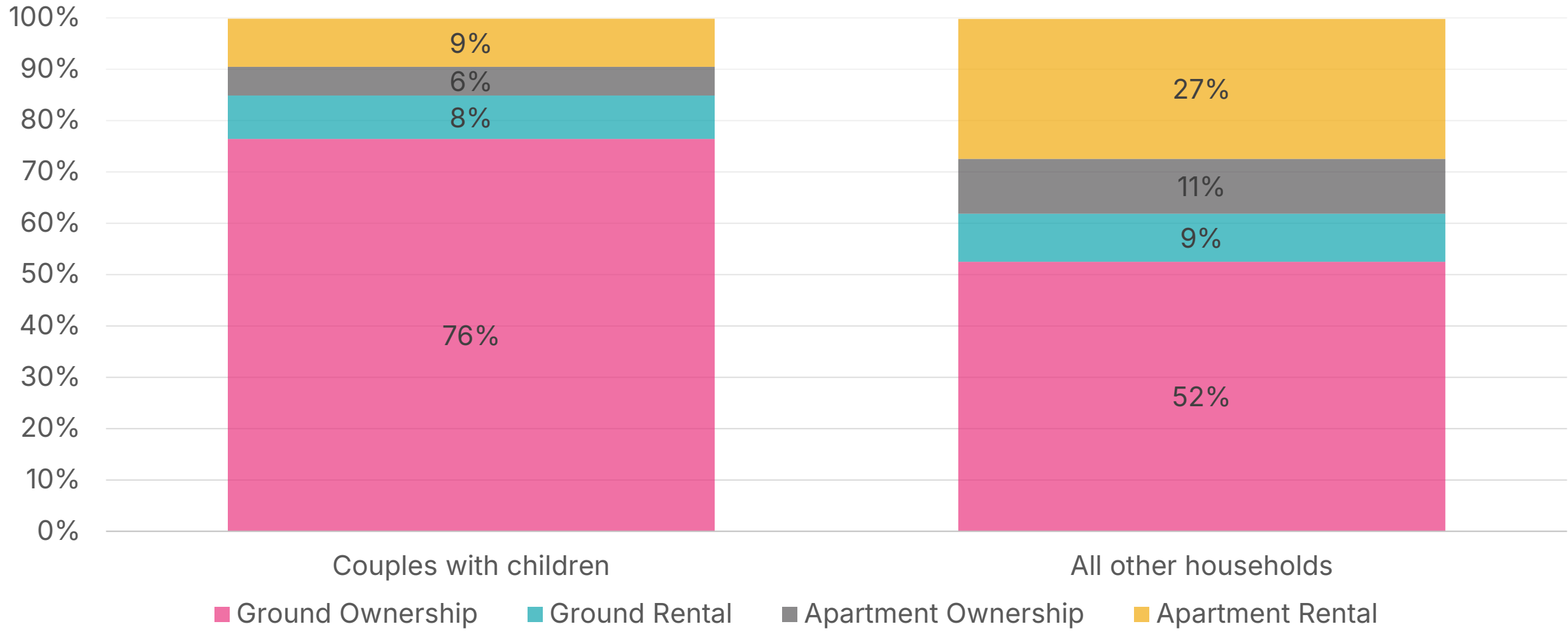
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Increase in Ground-Oriented Ownership Homes Per 100 Person Increase in Age 15+ Population, 2016-21

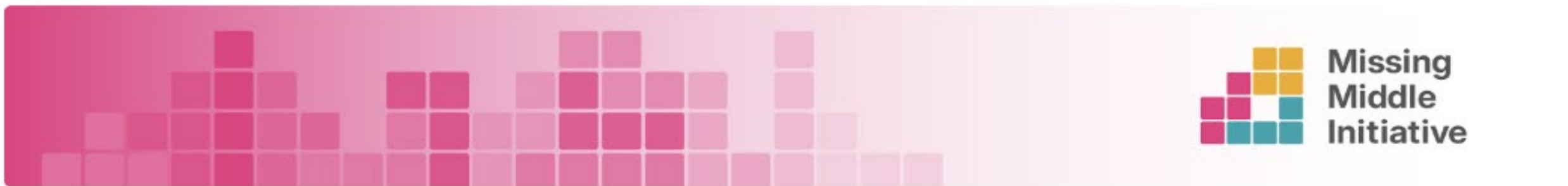
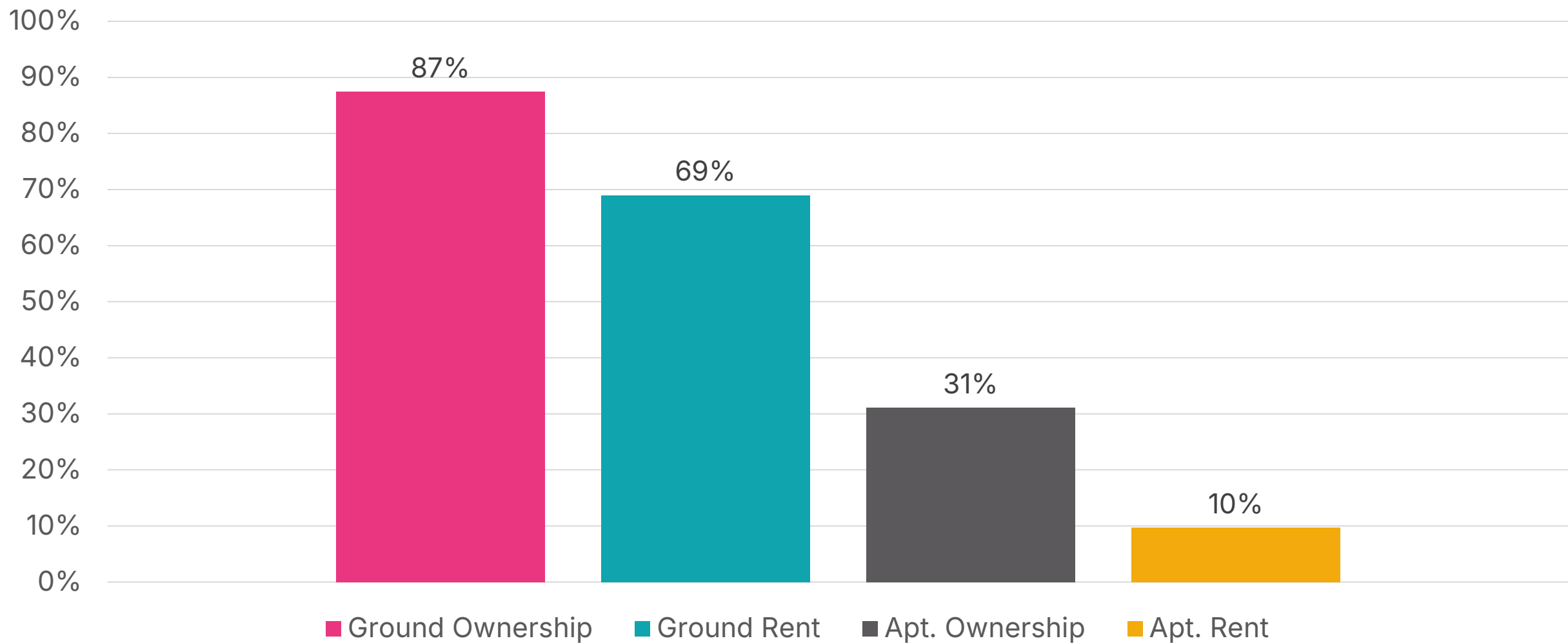


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Ontario: Current Housing Type by Family, Census 2021



3 Bedroom+ Units as Proportion of All Units of Type, Census 2021, Ontario



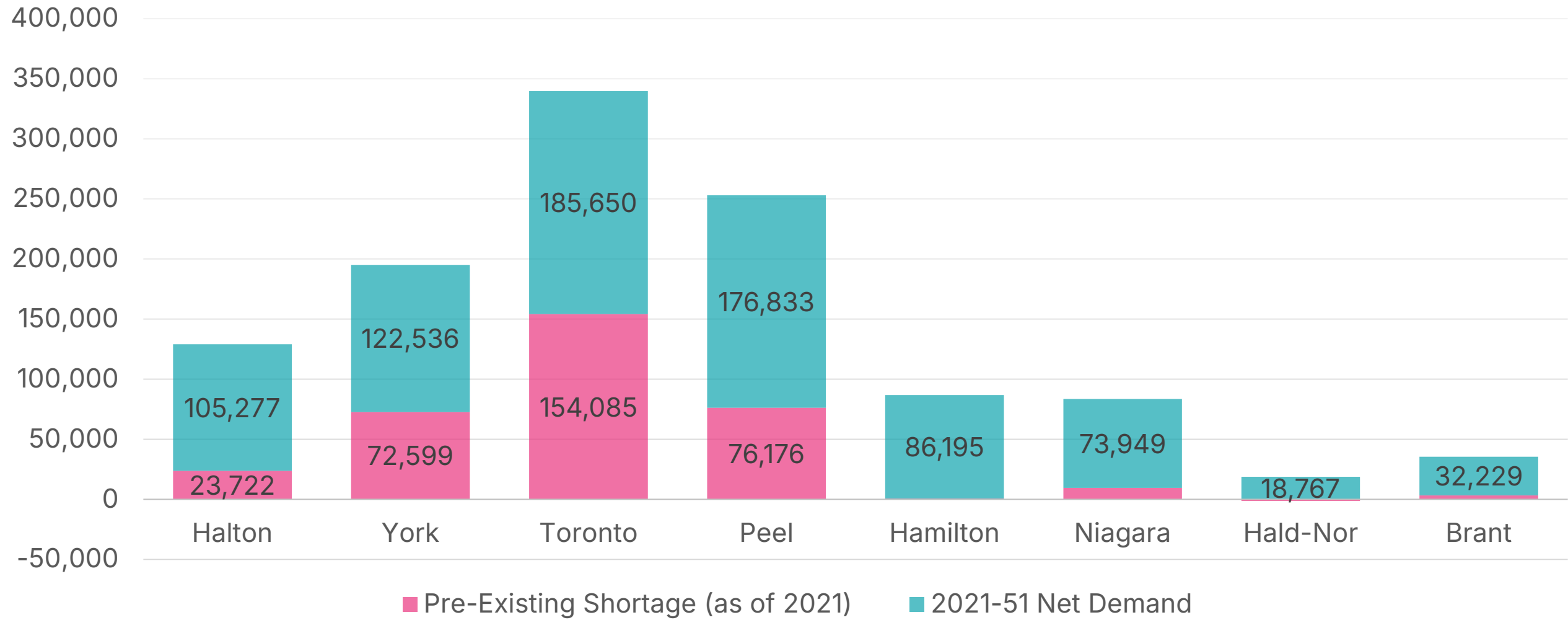
Looking towards the future

- Using Ontario Ministry of Finance Population projections and the RoCA Benchmark 3.0 model, housing demand estimates are projected, by unit type, through 2051.
- The result: GTA communities will not be able to build enough housing to support those families.

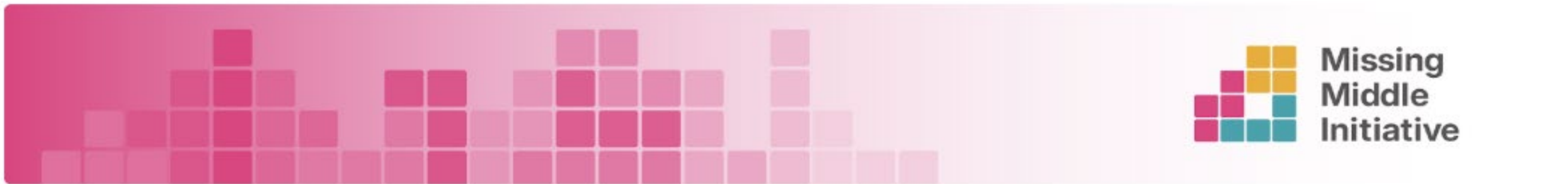
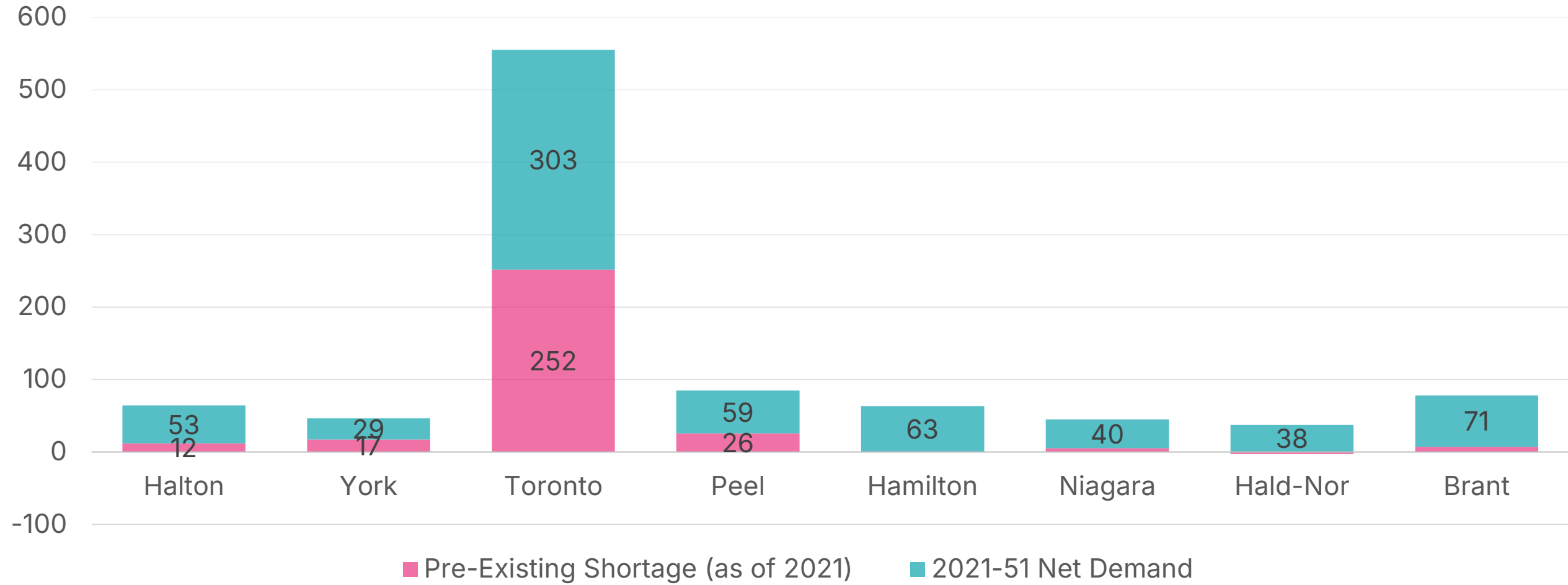
Forecasting for failure

- More families, than the MoF is forecasting, will leave the GTA for other parts of Ontario.
- **The upshot:** The province is underestimating future population growth outside of the GTA. This is a problem, as municipalities are incorporating those growth estimates into their planning.

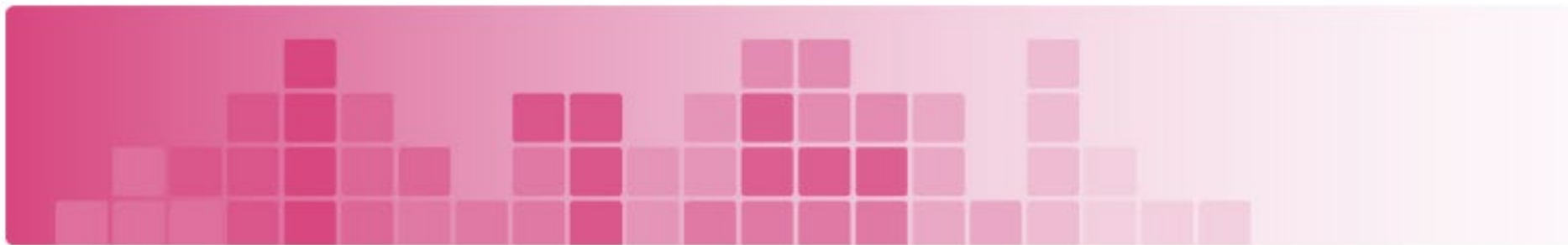
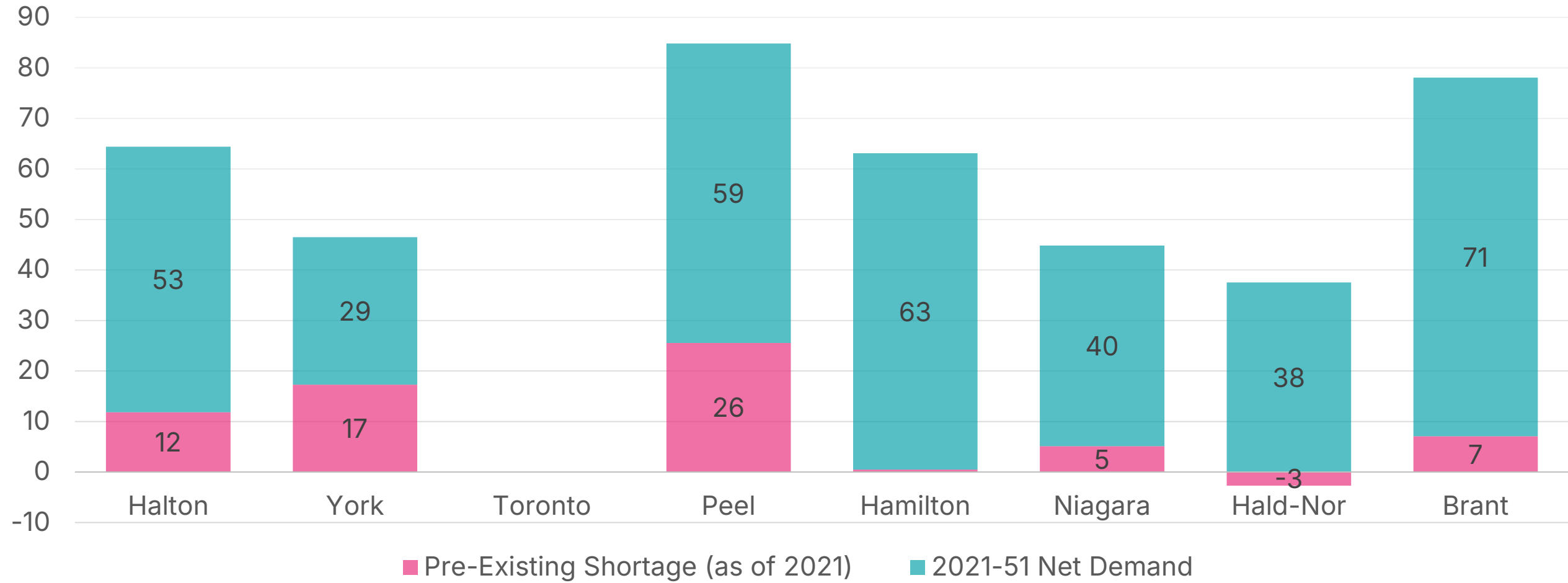
GROUND-ORIENTED HOUSING DEMAND, 2021-51, BY CENSUS DIVISION



NUMBER OF YEARS IT WOULD TAKE TO CREATE 30-YEAR GROUND-ORIENTED HOUSING SUPPLY, AT 2016-21 SUPPLY GROWTH RATES



NUMBER OF YEARS IT WOULD TAKE TO CREATE 30-YEAR GROUND-ORIENTED HOUSING SUPPLY, AT 2016-21 SUPPLY GROWTH RATES



The GTA cannot grow as fast as the Ministry of Finance projects

1. The Toronto Region needs to add nearly 1 million ground-oriented homes between 2021-51.
2. At current pace, this would take 93 years, not taking into account future infrastructure and land use challenges.
3. **Migration of families across Ontario will accelerate, despite projections from MoF.**
4. Those families looking for 3+ bedroom homes they can own.
5. There is still a need for other housing forms, both rental and ownership.

About those MoF population projections

1. Standard demographic model, incorporating births, deaths, etc.
2. They do not incorporate land, infrastructure, etc., constraints.
3. Intraprovincial migration rates based on levels over the last 5 years and rates assumed to **decline** over time.
4. **BUT...** Province now mandating their use (with flexibility) in planning, which will likely lead to non-GTA municipalities underforecasting future housing needs.

Final Thoughts

Final thoughts

Current planning takes into account a number of factors:

- Generational turnover
- “Linear” population projections

Final thoughts

But imperfectly captures others:

- Pre-existing housing shortages
- The types of units that are needed (e.g. BFF)
- Future changes to migration patterns

In short: This part of the province will likely grow faster than policymakers think



Families on the Move: 670,000 More Households in Eastern Ontario by 2051

Oct 2025



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