Newfoundland has experienced an unprecedented economic growth since the beginning of the offshore oil industry. Most of this growth has happened in the city-region of St. John’s which has been the scene of soaring housing prices since 2001. While incomes have increased, housing affordability has become a growing concern for a large part of the population.

The proposed research seeks to describe and analyse the long-term regional impacts of housing price volatility in the context of a resource-based economy. The project more specifically aims to analyse how these broad dynamics may differentially affect households across space and over time, looking at four dimensions of housing affordability and household vulnerability between 1996 and 2011: housing cost and quality, and household stress and tenure. Has there been a growing problem of housing affordability since the rise of the oil industry? How are these dynamics taking place among the different income groups within the population? Are there new spatial dynamics emerging within St. John’s city-region?

The project will rely on the use of Statistics Canada’s Census microdata from 1996 to 2006, combined with microdata from the 2011 National Household Survey. The data will be structured in a single dataset which will be integrated in a Geographical Information System (GIS). The database will allow concordances of household characteristics for the analysis of their evolution across time and space for different income groups. We expect to find growing patterns of socioeconomic polarizations over the period, with the potential geographic clustering of vulnerability characteristics taking place over time.