

This bulletin is a quick inventory of recent social research information. Its purpose is to promptly disseminate the most current external and internal research relevant to social policy.

Welfare in Canada, 2020 by Jennefer Laidley and Mohy Tabbara, Maytree Foundation and Caledon Institute, December 2021.

Welfare in Canada is a series that presents the total incomes of four example households who qualify for social assistance benefits in each of Canada's provinces and territories in a given year. In addition, this year the report includes a new section that looks at the adequacy of welfare incomes in each province over time, an analysis that harkens back to past reports prepared by the National Council of Welfare.

- The highest total welfare income of an unattached single considered employable was in Quebec, at \$13,005, followed by Prince Edward Island, at \$12,968, and British Columbia, at \$12,852
- Alberta had the highest welfare income for an unattached single with a disability, at \$21,600, through its Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program
- British Columbia had the highest welfare income for a single parent with one child, at \$26,049. Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan had the next highest, at \$25,256 and \$25,087 respectively
- Of the six subnational jurisdictions providing COVID-19 pandemic-related payments, British Columbia had the highest, with an additional \$2,875 to both the unattached single considered employable and the unattached single with a disability, \$3,049 to the single parent with one child, and \$5,852 to the couple with two children

Link to the report: https://maytree.com/wp-content/uploads/Welfare_in_Canada_2020.pdf

Canadian Income Survey: Food Insecurity And Unmet Health Care Needs, 2018 and 2019 by Nathalie Caron and Jacob Plunkett-Latimer, Statistics Canada, January 2022.

On August 21, 2018, the Government of Canada released Opportunity for All – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy, which contained long-term commitments to guide current and future government actions and investments to reduce poverty. In this poverty reduction strategy, three main pillars were identified, each containing a set of indicators that would be measured and monitored over time. This paper is about two of these indicators that can now be produced using the Canadian Income Survey: food insecurity and unmet health needs.

- In 2018, 11.5% of people lived in households that experienced moderate or severe food insecurity. This rate decreased to 10.6% in 2019
- Quebec had the lowest food insecurity rate in both 2018 (9.0%) and 2019 (7.1%)
- Food insecurity rates were lowest for persons in senior couples, at approximately 3% in both 2018 and 2019. In contrast, food insecurity rates were highest for persons in female lone-parent families, at about 33% for both years

Link to the study: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2021009-eng.pdf>

The Value of University by Conor Walsh, Centre for Policy Studies, September 2021.

The UK is home to a significant proportion of the world's best universities, which produce world-leading research – not least the work that led to the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine for Covid-19. In the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century, the skills these institutions impart and value they generate provide our country with a priceless advantage. At the same time, however, the university system in England – which is the focus of this paper, due to the different arrangements in the rest of the UK – has some severe problems. [...]The evidence presented by this paper is very clear: that for too many students today, going to university is a very bad deal. Economically speaking, they will have studied courses that do little or nothing to improve their long-term earnings, or even reduce them; and the Government will end up swallowing the cost of a three-year university education that either did little to raise their lifetime earnings or, in extreme cases, actively reduced them.

- [A]pproximately 20% of current undergraduates will be poorer as a result of going to university, not least because some 36% of graduates are in non-graduate jobs
- There is significant variation by course, subject and gender. Men who study Creative Arts, for example, on average earn £94,000 less over their lifetimes than if they'd not studied it
- Our current system leaves students heavily indebted – the typical student debt in the UK is now £45,000, compared to £28,000 in America
- As earnings and returns are correlated, the system targets subsidy at the least productive courses, and those subjects and institutions whose graduates earn the least. For example, Creative Arts receives the largest subsidy of any subject, at £1.2 billion. This works out as £37,000 per student, vs £11,000 for engineers

Link to the report: https://cps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CPS_VALUE_OF_UNIVERSITY-1.pdf

Canadian Social Survey: Loneliness in Canada by Statistics Canada, November 2021.

Given the context of the global pandemic, it is a priority to understand loneliness and its impacts on quality of life. In Canada, loneliness is included as an indicator in the recently established National Quality of Life Framework. The Framework will be used to identify future policy priorities and build on previous actions to improve evidence-based decision-making and budgeting at the federal level. New data from the Canadian Social Survey – Well-being, Activities and Perception of Time, collected in August and September 2021, allow for an exploration of loneliness experienced by Canadians more than one year into the COVID-19 pandemic.

- More than 1 in 10 people aged 15 and older said that they always or often felt lonely when asked in the Canadian Social Survey for August and September 2021
- In comparison, 3 in 10 said they sometimes felt lonely and 5 in 10 said that they rarely or never felt this way. Furthermore, the survey results revealed that those who were frequently lonely reported poorer mental health and lower levels of overall life satisfaction than those who were lonely less often 20% of poor households spend more than 40% of their income on housing costs
- Young people in Canada expressed experiencing loneliness more frequently than older people. Among youth aged 15 to 24 years, nearly 1 in 4 (23%) said they always or often felt lonely. This compared with 15% of those who were slightly older, between the ages of 25 and 34
- [C]lose to half (49%) of those who said that they always or often felt lonely reported that their mental health was either fair or poor

Link to the update: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/211124/dq211124e-eng.htm>

Canadian Health Survey on Seniors, 2020 by Statistics Canada, September 2021.

In 2019 and 2020, Statistics Canada conducted the Canadian Health Survey on Seniors (CHSS) with Canadians aged 65 and older living in the household population to better understand the factors that contribute to healthy aging. New data for the 2020 cycle of the CHSS are now available.

- As of July 2020, nearly one in five Canadians (18%) were aged 65 and older
- From September to December 2020, approximately one-third (31%) of Canadians aged 65 and older reported feeling like they wanted to participate in more social, recreational or group activities
- From September to December 2020, during the pandemic, 11% of Canadians aged 65 and older reported often feeling isolated from others, lacking companionship or feeling left out. This was an increase from 2019, when 7% reported these feelings of loneliness
- 14% of Canadians aged 65 and older reported that they received such informal assistance in the year preceding the survey; this was lower than in 2019 (18%). Older Canadians who lived alone (19%) were more likely than those living with others (12%) to report receiving informal care in fall 2020
- Compared with 2019, there was no statistically significant change in the proportion of older Canadians receiving informal personal care or help with meal preparation or delivery in fall 2020

Link to the update: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/211001/dq211001b-eng.htm>

Generosity in Canada: The 2021 Generosity Index by Fraser Institute, December 2021.

The Fraser Institute's annual Generosity Index measures this private monetary generosity using readily available data on the extent and depth of charitable donations, as recorded on personal income tax returns in Canada. In contrast to previous years, comparable United States data was not available at the time of writing for the 2021 index.

- Nationally, the percentage of Canadian tax filers donating to charity has fallen over the last decade from 23.1% in 2009 to 19.0% in 2019
- The percentage of aggregate income donated to charity by Canadian tax filers has also decreased from 0.58% in 2009 to 0.53% in 2019
- At 0.74%, Manitobans donated the highest percentage of their aggregate income to charity. Residents of British Columbia were next, donating 0.66% of their aggregate income, followed closely by residents of Alberta (0.64%). Quebecers rank last among the provinces; they donated 0.24% of aggregate income to charity—less than one-third the proportion of Manitobans

Link to the bulletin: <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/generosity-index-2021.pdf>

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