

Younger Canadians experience lower perceived well-being: Insights from the Canadian Social Survey

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Over the past two years, older adults in Canada (aged 65 to 84 years) reported the highest perceived well-being, when considering a handful of available quality of life indicators in a combined analysis. Specifically, 41% of those aged 65 to 84 years had a high combined score, compared with 25% of those aged 20 to 29 years. Men and women reported similar combined perceived well-being scores at all ages.

A new analysis of nine quality of life indicators based on five waves of the Canadian Social Survey (CSS) (2021 and 2022) used factor analysis, a statistical approach that simplifies the analysis of multiple variables. For ease of interpretation, the results are presented by describing the proportion of individuals with a high combined perceived well-being score across these nine indicators.

These nine indicators form part of Canada's [Quality of Life Framework](#), which brings together data for approximately 85 key indicators on the well-being of people in Canada. The Framework enables the federal government to identify future policy priorities and to build on previous actions to improve evidence-based decision-making and budgeting. [As part of the overall framework, the CSS has collected data on several indicators, updated today.](#)

Overall perceived well-being higher in Quebec and in rural regions

Small differences were found in perceived well-being across regions of Canada. Quebec (37%) had the largest proportion of people with high perceived well-being, followed closely by Atlantic Canada (36%), while 30% of those in British Columbia had high perceived well-being. Many of these regional differences were due in part to the responses of young adults (aged 20 to 29 years). For example, 20% of young adults in British Columbia had high perceived well-being, compared with 34% of young adults in Quebec. This difference was less pronounced for older age groups.

In rural regions, 39% of Canadians had high levels of perceived well-being, compared with 32% of those living in urban areas.

Canadians with a long-term condition less likely to experience high perceived well-being

In this report, 12% of people identified as a person with a disability and reported having a long-term condition. A smaller proportion (15%) of those people had high perceived well-being, compared with those who did not have a long-term condition (42%).

Long-term conditions were more prevalent among older age groups, at 61% among those aged 65 years and older, compared with 41% among those aged 15 to 29 years. However, the perceived well-being of younger adults was more strongly affected by the presence of a long-term condition. For example, 25% of Canadians aged less than 60 years with a long-term condition had a high perceived well-being, compared with 51% of those aged 60 years and older. Notably, this analysis does not account for the type of long-term condition present.

Younger LGBTQ2+ Canadians report lower perceived well-being

Overall, 18% of LGBTQ2+ people had high perceived well-being, compared with 34% of non-LGBTQ2+ people. However, among the LGBTQ2+ population, youth and young adults (aged 15 to 29 years) (10%) were less likely to have a high perceived well-being than those aged 60 years and older (32%). About 39% of people aged 60 years and older who were not LGBTQ2+ had high perceived well-being.



In partnership with the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada, the Department of Finance Canada and the Privy Council Office, Statistics Canada is leading work to develop and share data and insights on quality of life in Canada. New tables of quarterly data have been released today (see Note to readers).

Table 1

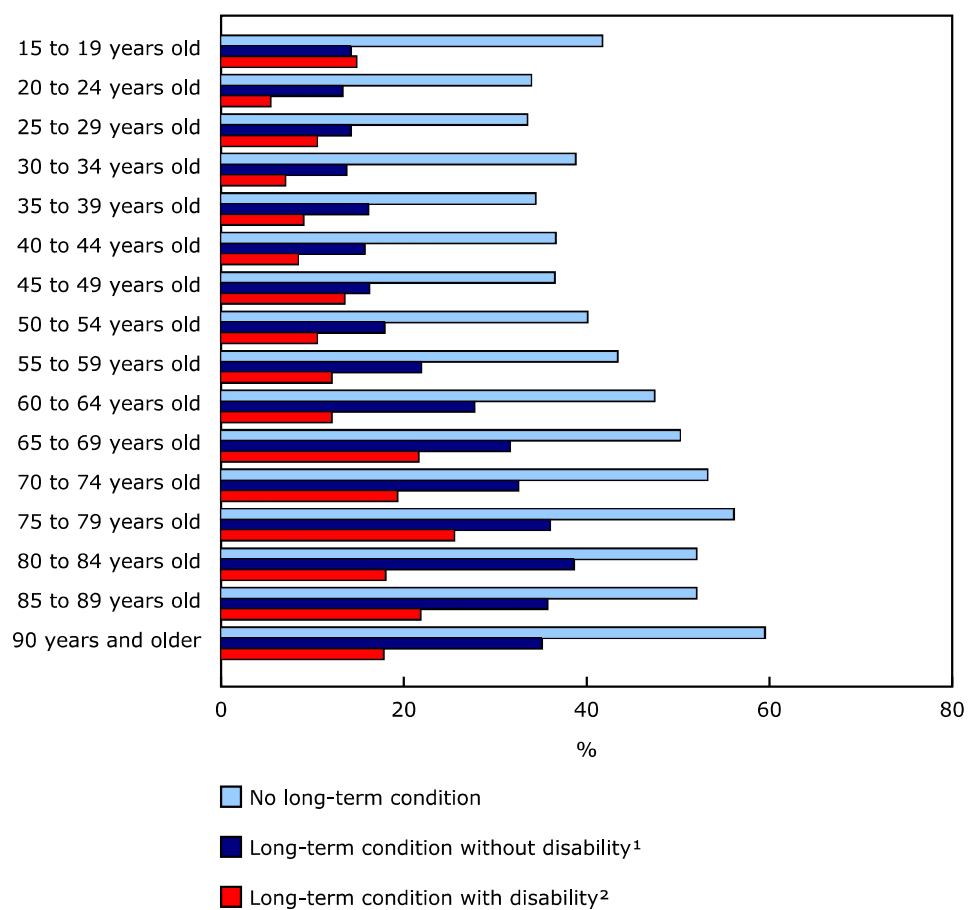
Proportion of Canadians ranked as having high perceived well-being (top third) from factor analysis of nine perceived well-being indicators, by selected socio-demographic characteristics, Canada, 2021 to 2022.

	High perceived well-being (top third)
	%
15 to 19 years old	30.9
20 to 24 years old	24.0
25 to 29 years old	25.6
30 to 34 years old	29.4
35 to 39 years old	27.8
40 to 44 years old	28.7
45 to 49 years old	28.9
50 to 54 years old	30.7
55 to 59 years old	33.4
60 to 64 years old	37.1
65 to 69 years old	40.1
70 to 74 years old	40.4
75 to 79 years old	42.9
80 to 84 years old	39.3
85 to 89 years old	37.0
90 years and older	33.4
Disability status	
Has long-term condition and identify as a person with a disability	15.2
Has a long-term condition without identifying as a person with a disability	23.6
No long-term condition	42.4
Region	
Atlantic region	35.5
Quebec	37.4
Ontario	31.4
Prairie region	31.6
British Columbia	30.2
Rural/Urban	
Rural	39.2
Urban	32.1
LGBTQ2+	
LGBTQ2+	17.6
Non-LGBTQ2+	34.1

Source(s): Canadian Social Survey ([5354](#)).

Chart 1

Proportion of Canadians with high perceived well-being by age group and by disability status



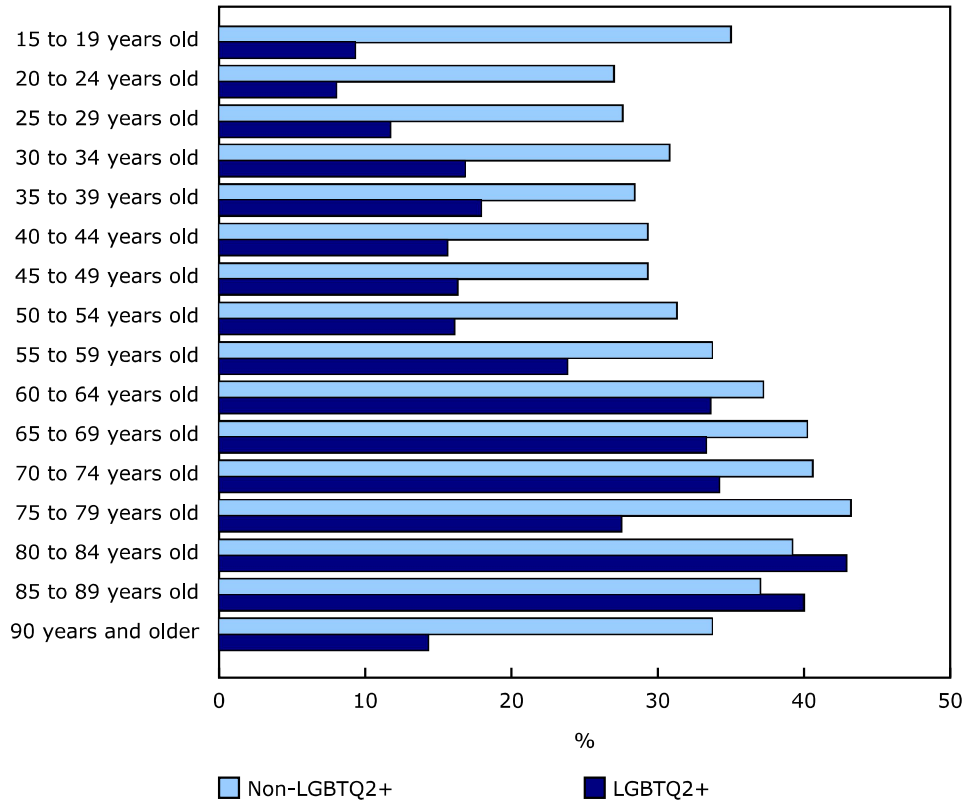
1. Long-term condition without identifying as a person with a disability.

2. Long-term condition and identify as a person with a disability.

Note(s): Proportion of Canadians with high perceived well-being, by long-term condition, disability status and age group, Canada, 2021 to 2022.

Source(s): Canadian Social Survey (5354).

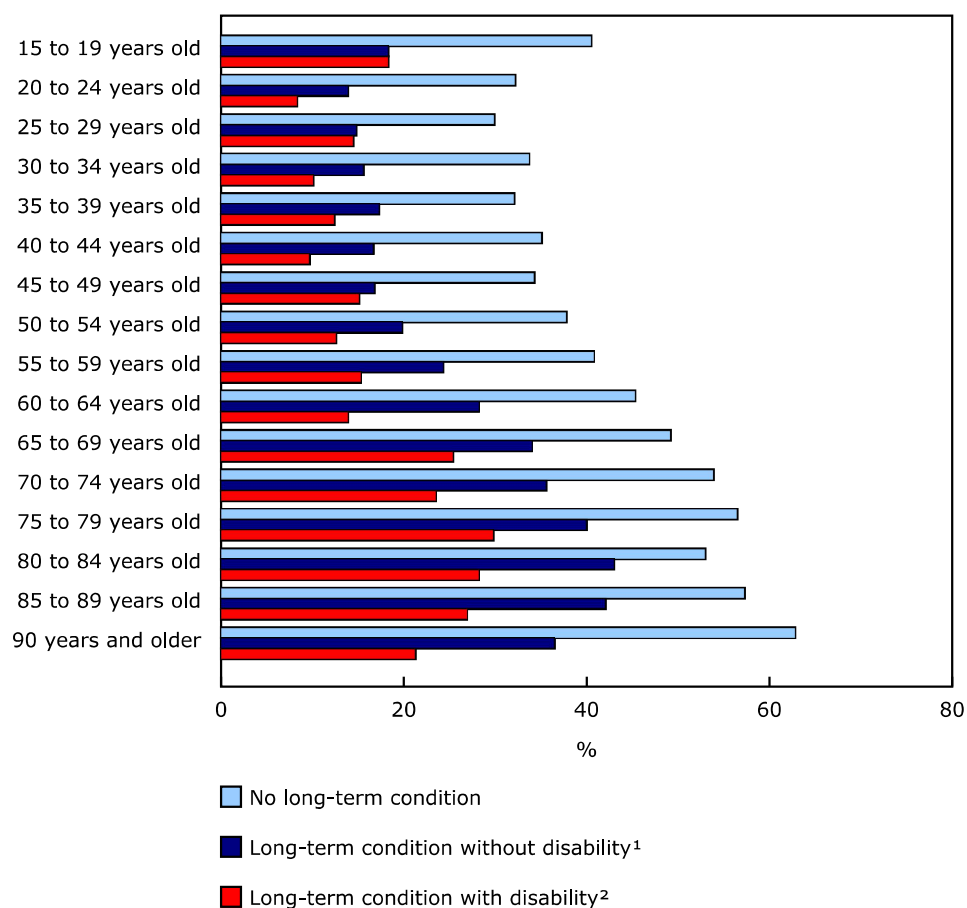
Chart 2
Proportion of Canadians with high perceived well-being by age group and by LGBTQ2+ population



Note(s): Proportion of Canadians with high perceived well-being (top third), from factor analysis by LGBTQ2+ population and age group, Canada, 2021 to 2022.
Source(s): Canadian Social Survey ([5354](#)).

Chart 3

Proportion of Canadians with high life satisfaction by age group and by disability status



1. Long-term condition without identifying as a person with a disability.

2. Long-term condition and identify as a person with a disability.

Note(s): Proportion of Canadians with high levels of life satisfaction (top third), by presence of at least one long-term condition and age group, Canada, 2021 to 2022.

Source(s): Canadian Social Survey (5354).

Note to readers

New quarterly quality of life data available from the Canadian Social Survey

Tables with quarterly data for eight [quality of life indicators](#) based on various iterations of the Canadian Social Survey (CSS) collected in 2021 and 2022 are now available. These indicators include self-rated health, self-rated mental health, satisfaction with local environment, satisfaction with personal relationships, satisfaction with time use, sense of belonging to Canada, trust in others and confidence in institutions.

In addition, tables for six quality of life indicators have been updated to include CSS data from the second and third quarters of 2022. These indicators include life satisfaction, sense of meaning and purpose, future outlook, loneliness, someone to count on and sense of belonging to local community.

The data visualization product [Selected indicators of quality of life in Canada](#) has also been updated.

Methodology

For this release, the following five waves of the CSS were pooled:

- CSS – Well-being, Activities and Perception of Time (collected from August 6 to September 18, 2021)
- CSS – Well-being, Unpaid work, and Family Time (collected from October 26 to December 7, 2021)
- CSS – Well-being, and Family Relationships (collected from January 28 to March 13, 2022)
- CSS – Well-being, Shared Values and Trust (collected from April 22 to June 5, 2022)
- CSS – Well-being and Caregiving (collected from July 15 to August 28, 2022)

The CSS collects information on a variety of social topics such as health, well-being, impacts of COVID-19, changes in the household, work-life balance, time use, intentions to have children and changes in marital status.

In the survey, having a long-term condition was defined as having long-term difficulties with seeing; hearing; physical activities; learning, remembering or concentrating; or emotional, psychological, or mental health.

The CSS aims to better understand social issues rapidly by conducting surveys on different topics every three months. Statistics Canada would like to thank all Canadians who took the time to answer the questions.

A total of nine quality of life indicators were measured across all five waves of the Canadian Social Survey and were used to measure perceived well-being: 1) [life satisfaction](#); 2) [sense of meaning and purpose](#); 3) [self-rated health](#); 4) [self-rated mental health](#); 5) [future outlook](#); 6) [loneliness](#); 7) [someone to count on](#); 8) [sense of belonging to a local community](#); and 9) a measure of difficulty meeting household financial needs, which is related to the perceived well-being indicator of financial well-being.

Factor analysis suggested a one-factor solution, which combined weighted estimates of each of the nine remaining indicators into an overall "perceived well-being" score. Note that this overall score depended on the indicators measured within the CSS and therefore does not represent all 85 indicators of the Quality of Life Framework. Rather, this analysis is meant to provide some initial insights based on the data provided by the CSS thus far.

What is gained by a factor analysis?

Each of the indicators in the Quality of Life Framework can provide insights on different elements of Canadians' overall well-being. Combining multiple indicators through factor analysis can reveal new insights on underlying, otherwise invisible, factors. In this analysis, "life satisfaction" was the indicator that had the strongest influence on the overall perceived well-being score.

When examining life satisfaction (Chart 3), the overall trend was similar to that of the overall perceived well-being factor analysis (Chart 1). However, including other perceived well-being indicators creates a more detailed and nuanced picture, with greater differences across age groups, individuals with long-term conditions and LGBTQ2+ people.

Available tables: [13-10-0843-01](#) to [13-10-0848-01](#) , [45-10-0048-01](#) to [45-10-0053-01](#) and [45-10-0067-01](#) to [45-10-0082-01](#) .

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5354](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).