



FACTUM

Canadians Remain Resilient: Despite the Roller Coaster of 2021, Most Canadians Have a Positive Outlook on their Personal Happiness, Health Closing Out the Year

However, Grocery (48%, +36), Housing (31%, +19) Costs Cited as Top Barriers to Financial Security, Up Significantly from Last Year

Toronto, ON, December 30, 2021 – The end of the year is typically a time of reflection and taking stock of the last 12 months. In a time of unprecedented uncertainty, a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News finds that Canadians retain a remarkable level of positivity about their personal situation in spite of the challenges 2021 has presented, consistent with how they felt closing out 2020.

While just under half (46%) of Canadians agree that 2021 was better than they thought it would be, a strong majority rate their personal happiness (77%), health (76%), and social life (69%) positively. Compared to this time last year, Canadians’ ratings of their health are down slightly (-4 pts), but their ratings of their social lives have increased by nine points. Two-thirds rate their financial situation positively (66%), unchanged from December 2020. Conversely, 34% remain in a *bad* financial situation.

Consistent with research throughout the pandemic, those in Quebec have a higher level of optimism compared to other regions in the country. Quebecers are more likely to rate the personal happiness, health, social life, and sex or romantic life positively compared to the other regions. For instance, 68% of Quebecers rate their sex or romantic life as positive compared to the other provinces (compared to 61% SK/MB, 57% BC, 57% ATL, 56% ON, 43% AB), and 83% positively assess their personal happiness (compared to 78% BC, 77% SK/MB, 74% ON, 71% AB, 70% ATL).

Older Canadians are less positive about their sex or romantic life compared younger Canadians (50% 55+ vs 62% 35-54, 62% 18-34), though they are *more* positive about their personal happiness than younger Canadians, especially those ages 18-34 (82% 55+ vs 76% 35-54, 69% 18-34).

Thinking about these various aspects of your life, would you rate them to be good or bad?
% Rating Very/Somewhat Good

Area	Dec. 2020	Dec. 2021	% change
Personal happiness	78%	77%	-1
Health	80%	76%	-4
Social life	60%	69%	+9
Financial situation	66%	66%	0
Sex or romantic life	58%	58%	0



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Canadians' Sense of Financial Security Down as Costs of Living Rise

Compared to December 2020, fewer Canadians say they have financial security (14%, -9 pts). With the dramatic inflation of basic necessities in Canada over the past few months, it is perhaps unsurprising that half of Canadians (48%) find the greatest barrier to financial security to be grocery and food costs. Housing costs (31%) are the second highest cited barrier for financial security.

Older Canadians are more likely to cite groceries/food costs (59% 55+ vs 47% 35-54 vs 34% 18-34). On the other hand, younger adults ages 18-34 (33%) and 35-54 (36%) are more likely to cite housing costs (mortgage, rent) as a barrier than those aged 55+ (24%). Those in British Columbia and Ontario are more likely to cite housing costs as the greatest barrier to financial security (39% ON, 38% BC vs 28% AB, 24% SK/MB, 20% QC, 18% ATL).

Moreover, while Canadians' appraisals of their own financial situation (for better or worse) has not changed since December 2020, the portion of Canadians citing barriers to financial security has risen dramatically in the last year, with grocery costs (+36 pts), housing costs (+19 pts), transportation (+18 pts), debt (+11), the ability to save (+10 pts) all rising in the double digits. Close behind are increases in the portion citing taxes (17%, +9 pts) and, notably, low wages (15%, + 8 pts), a reflection of major shifts in Canadians' relationship with work since the pandemic began.

Thinking about your current situation, what is the greatest barrier to financial security for you and your family?

Barrier to Financial Security	Dec. 2020	Dec. 2021	% change
Groceries/food costs	12%	48%	+36
Housing costs	12%	31%	+19
Ability to save	11%	21%	+10
Transportation	2%	20%	+18
Debt	9%	20%	+11
Taxes	8%	17%	+9
Low wages	8%	15%	+7
No barriers/already have financial security	23%	14%	-9
Healthcare costs	2%	11%	+9
Rising interest rates	n/a	10%	n/a
Inability to find work	6%	8%	+2
Childcare costs	n/a	4%	n/a
Looking after elderly parents/loved ones	3%	4%	+1
Paying for my kids' education	1%	3%	+2
Inflation/cost of living/utilities	n/a	1%	n/a

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Half of Canadians Cut Spending This Year

In alignment with rising cost of living, half (48%) of Canadians say they have cut their spending in the past 12 months, a decrease of three points since this time last year. Those 55+ are more likely to say they cut their spending than those aged 18-34 (54% 55+, 46% 35-54, 43% 18-34).

In terms of other changes during 2021, there has been an increase in those who say they started a new job or pursued additional training (17%, +3 pts). Just under one-third (27%) say they struggled with mental health during the past 12 months, on par with this time last year (-1 pt). Women are more likely to report having struggled than men (34% vs 19%), as are younger Canadians (40% 18-34 vs 27% 35-54, 17% 55+). Similar portions of Canadians say they are either in better shape than they were a year ago (33%, no change since 2020) or they have gained weight (29%, -1 pt).

Thinking about the past 12 months, which of the following apply to you personally?

Past 12 Months	Dec. 2020	Dec. 2021	% change
Cut spending	51%	48%	-3
Better shape	33%	33%	0
Gained weight	30%	29%	-1
Struggled with my mental health	28%	27%	-1
Training/new job	14%	17%	+3
WFH for an extended period	18%	15%	-3
Consumed more alcohol	15%	14%	-1
Consumed less alcohol	n/a	14%	n/a
Started or ended a romantic relationship	8%	9%	+1
Started WFH	n/a	9%	n/a
Returned to the office	n/a	7%	n/a
Lost job	9%	6%	-3
Struggled with addiction	7%	6%	-1
None of the above	16%	14%	-2



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between December 10 and 15, 2021, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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