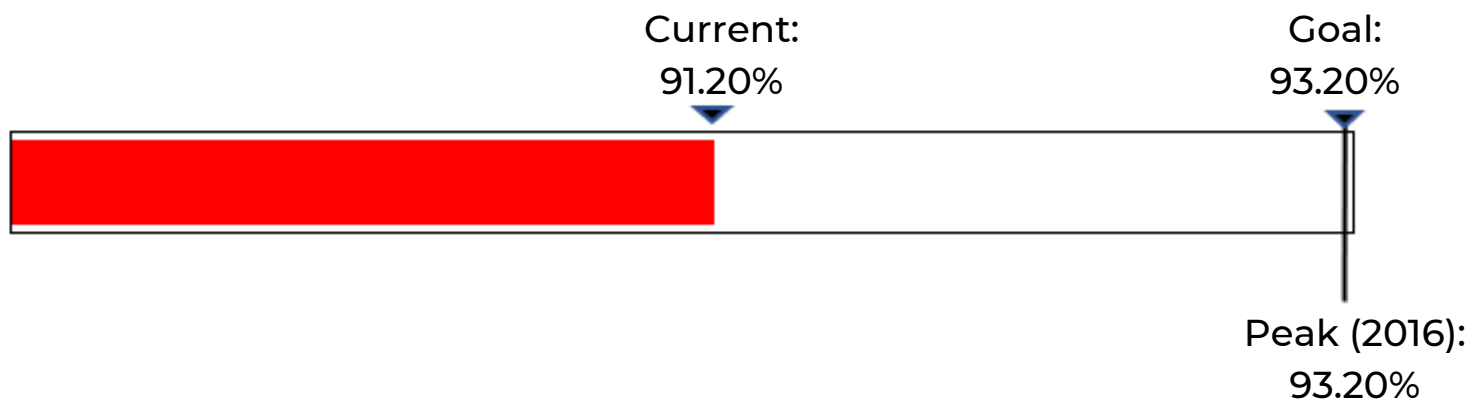




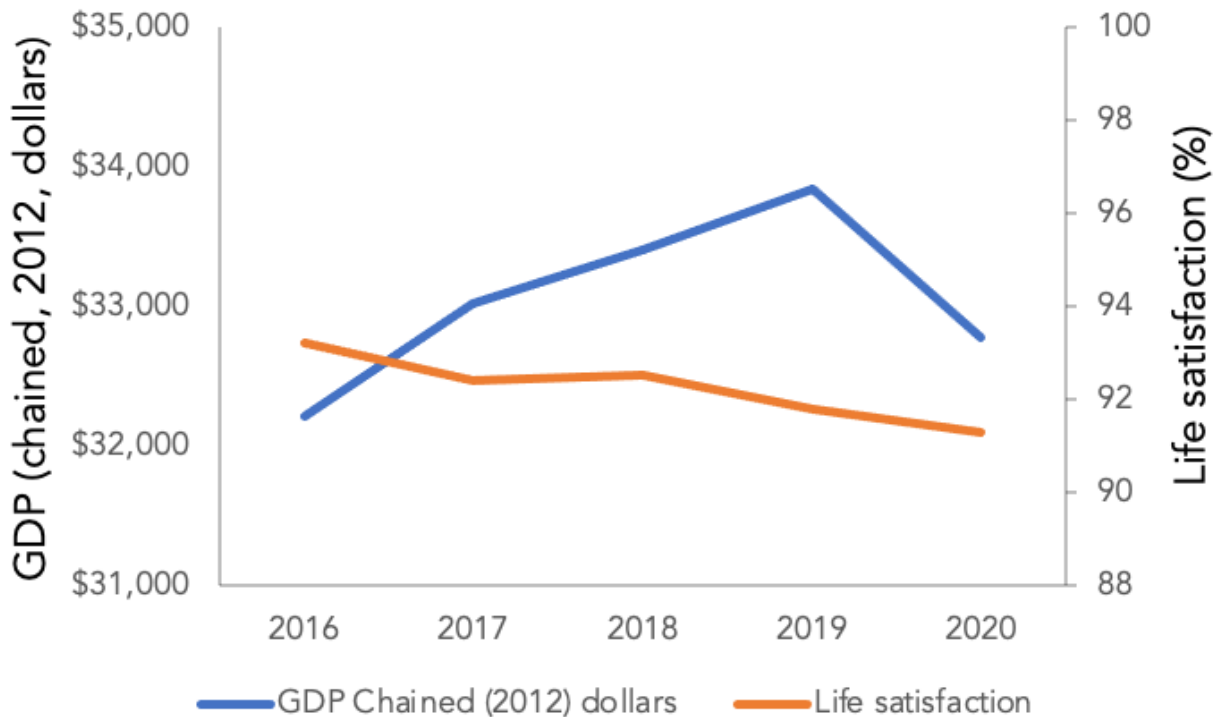
LIFE SATISFACTION

STATUS:  NOT PROGRESSING



New Brunswick will aim to maintain the high quality of life in the province and high levels of life satisfaction

Figure 1: GDP (chained 2012 dollars) vs. Life Satisfaction (percentage of those who are satisfied or very satisfied - indicated a value of 6-10 on the 10-point scale)



(See full data in Appendix A)

Comparing GDP and Life Satisfaction

Figure 1 above shows the comparison between GDP and life satisfaction in New Brunswick. While there is a saying that "Money can't buy happiness," it is also general knowledge that income does play an important role in determining how satisfied and happy an individual or group is in life. As seen in the figure below, life satisfaction initially decreases with an increase in GDP. However, as GDP continues to increase, life satisfaction begins to show a steady declining trend. Furthermore, life satisfaction decreases with both increasing and decreasing GDP, which suggests that there is no correlation between per capita GDP and life satisfaction. Therefore, it is important and interesting to look at other social dimensions that may influence life satisfaction levels.

OVERVIEW

Importance

Happiness, or subjective well-being, can be measured in terms of life satisfaction, which involves a favourable attitude toward one's life, rather than an assessment of current feelings. Such measures, while subjective, are a useful alternative to income based/material measures of well-being such as GDP per capita. Life satisfaction is not evenly shared across the provinces; however, New Brunswick has a high level of life satisfaction and quality of life. This is important, as life satisfaction and higher levels of happiness are associated with better overall physical health and fewer long term health conditions.

Problem

Life satisfaction appears to be dependent on age, tends to be U-shaped, where life satisfaction decreases as the population ages and then increases again after the age of 65. Aging can often be associated with poorer health and greater financial stress. Subjective well-being (SWB) indicates the impacts of GDP growth on New Brunswickers' happiness.

Cause

There may be different factors that affect the life satisfaction of New Brunswickers. For instance, the personal health, income, sense of belonging, social cohesiveness, feelings of safety, and perceived stress levels of individuals may play an active role in influencing levels of life satisfaction and happiness.

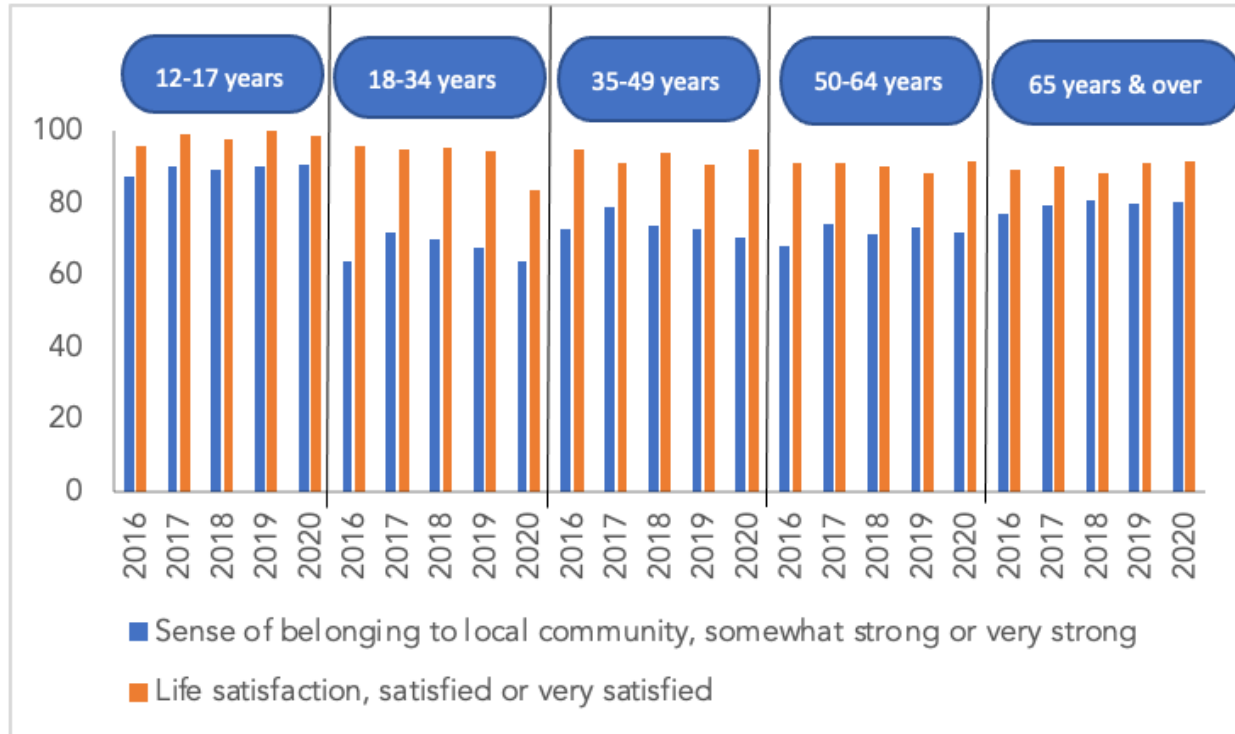
IN THE NUMBERS

Life Satisfaction and Sense of Belonging

Measuring feelings like happiness and life satisfaction can be very subjective in nature. In order to collect this data, researchers have relied primarily on self-report scales to assess happiness and life satisfaction. People respond to numbered scales (0-10), and their responses are then converted into percentages to indicate their levels of satisfaction, positive feelings, and lack of negative feelings. Subjective data can provide a personal evaluation of an individual's health, education, income, personal fulfilment, and social conditions. This data is usually collected in the form of surveys and questionnaires.

Figure 2 shows that people have a higher life satisfaction and sense of belonging in their community when they are younger (12-17 years of age). However, once they reach a certain age (18-34 years), their sense of belonging as well as life satisfaction seems to drop. People aged 35 years and above have a relatively consistent life satisfaction and sense of belonging to a community, with life satisfaction in New Brunswick remaining relatively constant after a certain age, and sense of belonging increasing after age 35.

Figure 2: Life Satisfaction and Sense of Belonging (%)



(See full data in Appendix B)

A CLOSER LOOK

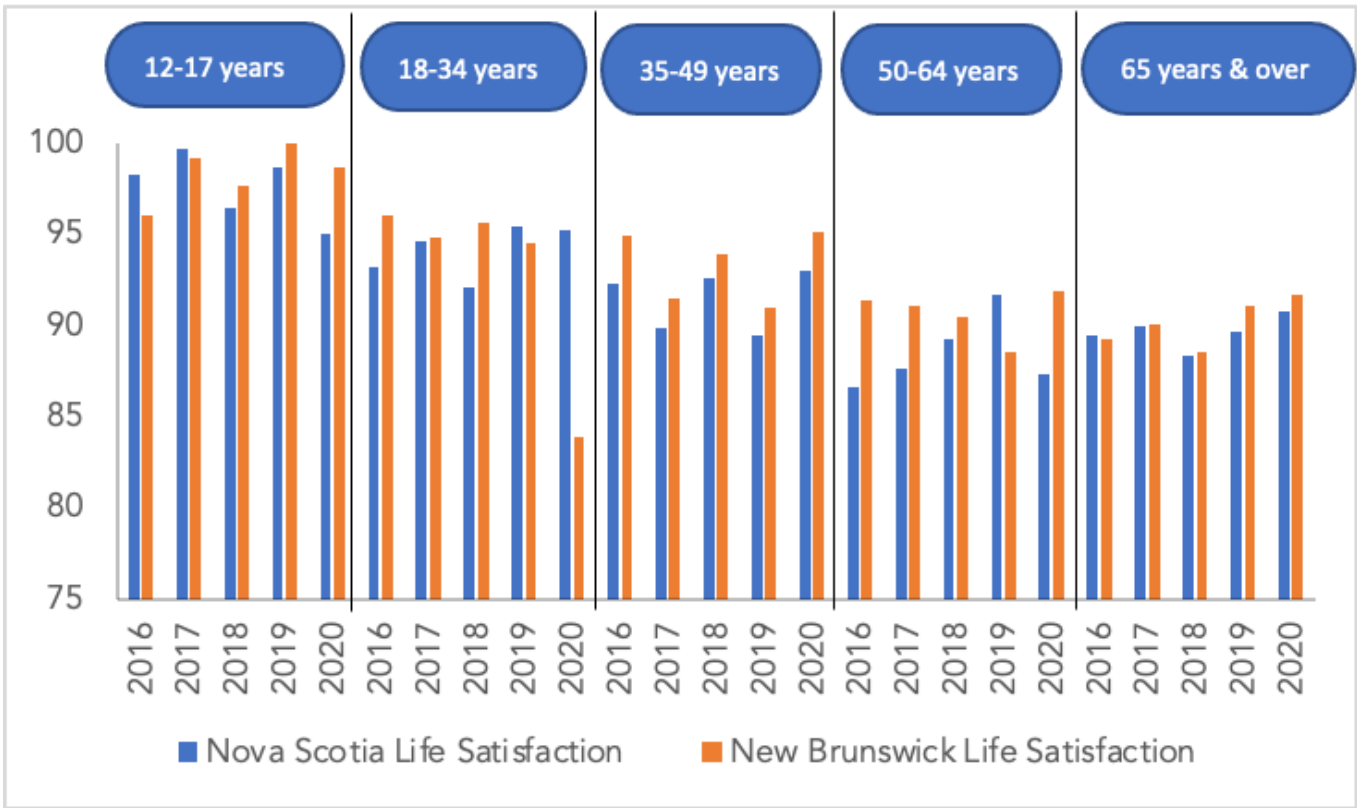
Life Satisfaction Compared to Nova Scotia

New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have similar geographic and population demographics. Hence, it is interesting to compare trends for life satisfaction between the two provinces. In the past three consecutive years, New Brunswick has ranked slightly higher than Nova Scotia in life satisfaction among younger age groups (12-17 years of age).

Figure 3 shows that as populations age, life satisfaction in both provinces undergoes a decline for those aged 17 and above and continues to decline with increases in age across various groups. This may be due to factors like joining the workforce, extra responsibilities,

concerns on health and a decrease in sense of belonging to a community. Although there is a decline in life satisfaction with age, life satisfaction levels in both provinces are high overall.

Figure 3: Life Satisfaction Across New Brunswick and Nova Scotia (%)

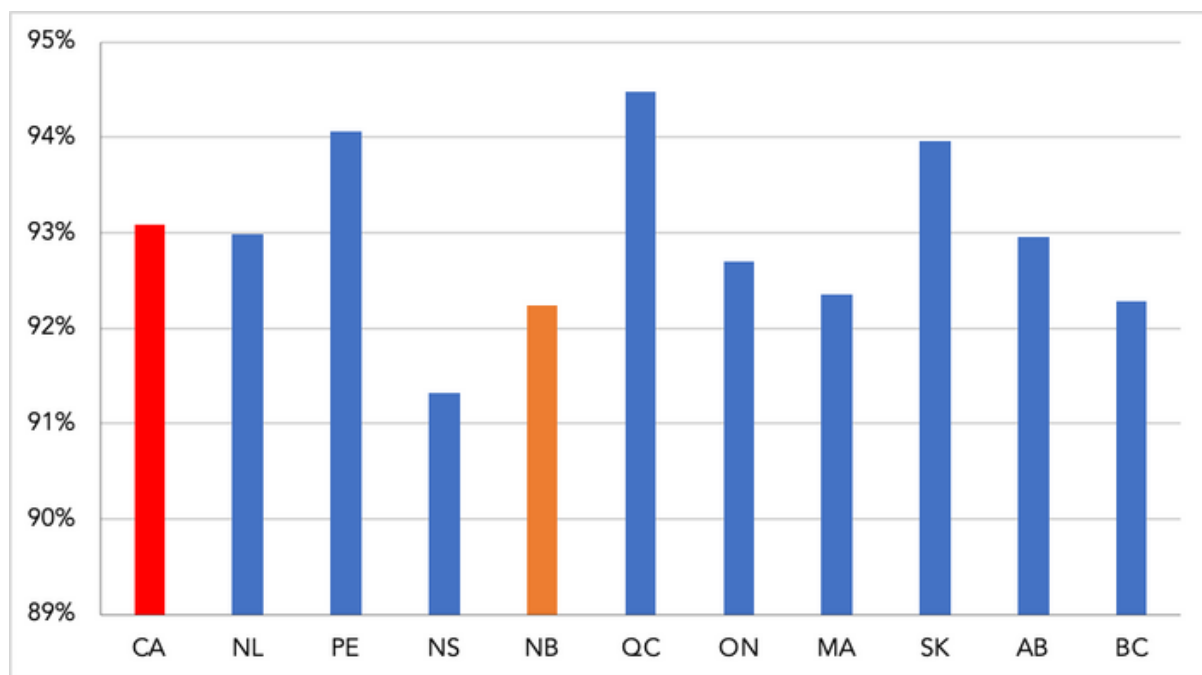


(See full data in Appendix C)

Figure 4 shows the percentage of people who report being satisfied or very satisfied in each province. This is collected by Statistics Canada by asking the question “Using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means “Very dissatisfied” and 10 means “Very satisfied”, how do you feel about your life as a whole right now?” Figure 6 shows the percentage of people who respond with a six or higher, indicating they are satisfied or very satisfied with life. Over a five-year average, New Brunswick recorded the second-lowest level of life satisfaction compared to other Canadian provinces as

well as the second lowest in the year 2020 alone. This is likely in no small part due to New Brunswick's older population and the tendency of older people to report lower levels of satisfaction. Although after the age of 50-64 life satisfaction begins to increase again it does not reach the same levels as younger age groups. In New Brunswick, just over 92% of people responded with a six or higher while the Canadian average was about 93%. Quebec recorded the highest levels of satisfaction with about 94.5% of people reporting being satisfied or very satisfied. Yearly data can be found in Appendix D.

Figure 4: Life Satisfaction by Province, 5 Year Average



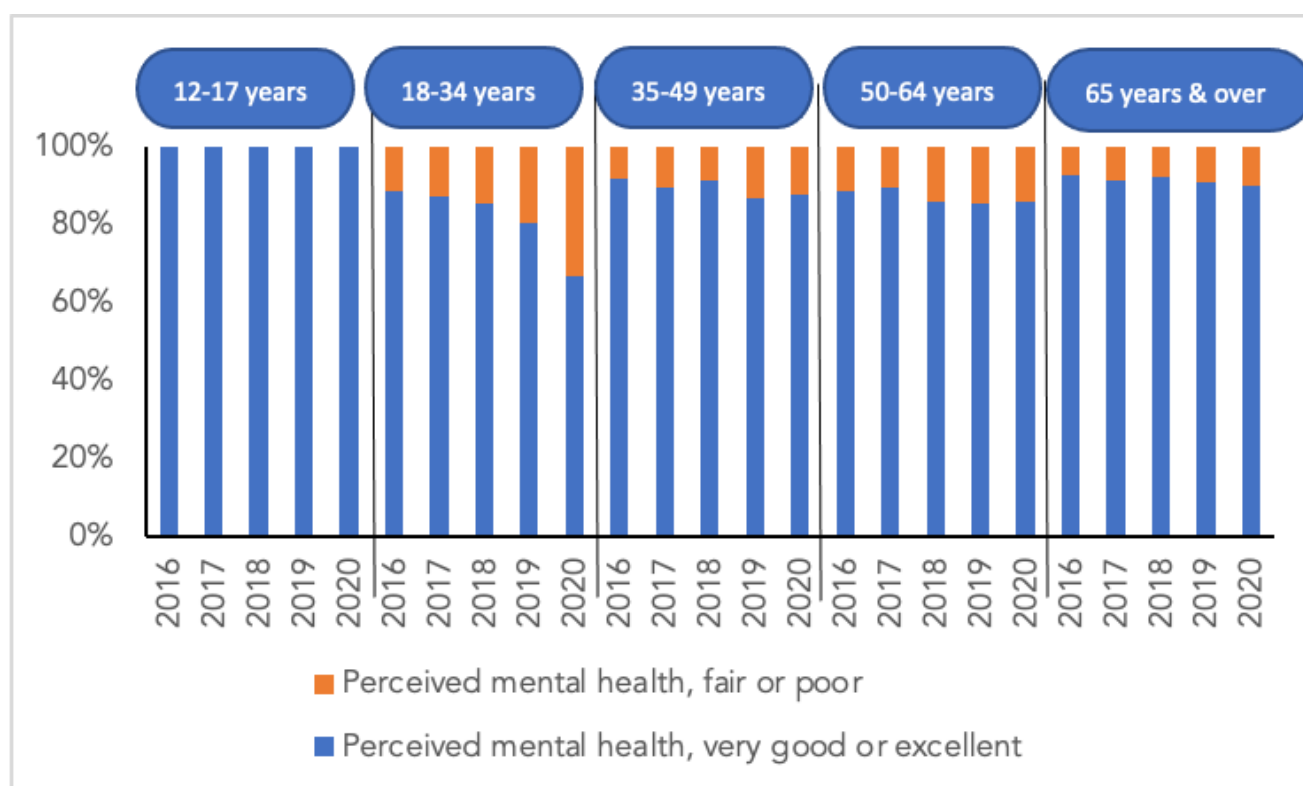
(See full data in Appendix D)

Perceived Mental Health Among Age Groups

Figure 5, shows the perceived mental health characteristics of different age groups in New Brunswick. The quality of a population's mental health corresponds with the people's quality of life. Excellent or good perceived mental health can indicate the presence a healthy population, and consequently a healthy workforce.

In New Brunswick, the percentage of people with fair or poor mental health in comparison to those with excellent or good mental health is relatively low. People aged 18-34 years score lower than all age groups, which means that the young working-age population of the province has lower quality of mental health. Perceived mental health appears to decline with age until age 34, after which it appears to fluctuate.

Figure 5: Mental Health Among Different Age Groups



(See full data in Appendix E)

Perceptions of Health Among Different Age Groups

Figure 6 shows the perceived health characteristics (excellent or good, and fair or poor) for different age groups of New Brunswickers. The data on perceived health characteristics (fair or poor) has not been available for individuals aged 12-17 years since 2016 and since 2020 for the years, as it is deemed too unreliable to publish by Statistics Canada. While it is

imperative to look at the health of the population in order to know how well a province is doing, the data used must be approached with caution due to its subjective nature.

A healthy population is an indication of a healthy workforce; moreover, it also reflects upon the province's access to affordable, high quality health care services, good infrastructure, and public policies. New Brunswickers seem to express discontentment with their health as they age.

Figure 6: Perceptions of Health Among Different Age Groups



(See full data in Appendix F)

SUMMARY

Currently, New Brunswick enjoys high levels of life satisfaction, although still falling short of the highest in the country. The GDP of the province alone may not be a determinant of life satisfaction, although higher levels of income (up until a point) do allow for less financial stress, which is a determinant of one's life satisfaction.

Standard of living and quality of life are reflections of social outcomes, and they are influenced by social factors such as sense of belonging to a community, quality of physical and mental health, age, and social cohesiveness - all of which play an equally important role in determining and influencing life satisfaction and happiness.

Seeing as 2022 is the second year BoostNB has examined life satisfaction in New Brunswick, it is uncertain if this goal is progressing. As more data is analyzed in years to come, the progression of this goal (or lack thereof) will become more apparent.

APPENDIX A

GDP (2012) Chained Dollars vs. Life Satisfaction in NB

Age group	Reference period	New Brunswick	Life satisfaction
12 years and over		GDP Chained (2012) dollars	
	2016	\$32,213	93.2
	2017	\$33,014	92.4
	2018	\$33,401	92.5
	2019	\$33,844	91.8
	2020	\$32,772	91.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Table 36-10-0222-01 Gross domestic product, expenditure-based, provincial and territorial, annual (x 1,000,000); Table 13-10-0096-01 Health characteristics, annual estimates

APPENDIX B

New Brunswick Life Satisfaction and Sense of Belonging to a Community

Age group	Reference period	Sense of belonging to local community, somewhat strong or very strong	Life satisfaction, satisfied or very satisfied
12 to 17 years	2016	87.4	96.1
	2017	90.5	99.2
	2018	89.5	97.7
	2019	90.5	100
	2020	90.9	98.7
18 to 34 years	2016	64	96.1
	2017	72.2	94.9
	2018	70.2	95.7
	2019	67.6	94.6
	2020	64.1	83.9
35 to 49 years	2016	72.7	95
	2017	78.9	91.5
	2018	73.9	93.9
	2019	72.8	91
	2020	70.4	95.2
50 to 64 years	2016	68	91.4
	2017	74.5	91.1
	2018	71.6	90.5
	2019	73.2	88.6
	2020	72	91.9
65 years and over	2016	77.2	89.3
	2017	79.3	90.1
	2018	80.8	88.6
	2019	79.9	91.1
	2020	80.3	91.7

Source: Statistics Canada (CCHS Data), Table 13-10-0096-01 Health characteristics, annual estimates

APPENDIX C

Life Satisfaction Across New Brunswick and Nova Scotia

		Nova Scotia	New Brunswick
Age group	Reference period	Life Satisfaction	Life Satisfaction
12 to 17 years	2016	98.3	96.1
	2017	99.7	99.2
	2018	96.5	97.7
	2019	98.7	100
	2020	95.1	98.7
18 to 34 years	2016	93.2	96.1
	2017	94.7	94.9
	2018	92.1	95.7
	2019	95.5	94.6
	2020	95.3	83.9
35 to 49 years	2016	92.3	95
	2017	89.9	91.5
	2018	92.6	93.9
	2019	89.5	91
	2020	93	95.2
50 to 64 years	2016	86.6	91.4
	2017	87.7	91.1
	2018	89.3	90.5
	2019	91.7	88.6
	2020	87.4	91.9
65 years and over	2016	89.5	89.3
	2017	90	90.1
	2018	88.4	88.6
	2019	89.7	91.1
	2020	90.8	91.7

Source: Statistics Canada (CCHS data), Table 13-10-0096-01 Health characteristics, annual estimates

APPENDIX D

Life Satisfaction by Province 2015-2020

Geography	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5 Year Average
Canada	93.2	92.5	92.9	93.4	93.4	93.2	0.931
Newfoundland and Labrador	90.8	93.2	92.3	92.8	92.2	94.4	0.930
Prince Edward Island	94.2	94.1	92.4	93.2	94.1	96.5	0.941
Nova Scotia	92.3	90.8	91.1	90.9	92.1	91.7	0.913
New Brunswick	90	93.2	92.4	92.5	91.8	91.3	0.922
Quebec	93.5	93.9	94	94.3	95.3	94.9	0.945
Ontario	93.3	91.8	92.8	93.5	92.6	92.8	0.927
Manitoba	92.5	92	93.8	92.6	93.4	90	0.924
Saskatchewan	92.6	95.1	91.9	93.5	94.2	95.1	0.940
Alberta	93.8	92.9	92.6	93.3	93	93	0.930
British Columbia	93	91.7	91.8	92.4	93	92.5	0.923

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0096-01 Health characteristics, annual estimates

APPENDIX E

Perceived Health and Mental Health Among Age Groups

Age group	Reference period	Perceived mental health, very good or excellent	Perceived mental health, fair or poor
12 to 17 years	2016	78.2	
	2017	77.5	
	2018	71.7	
	2019	72	
	2020	66.5	
18 to 34 years	2016	67.3	8.5
	2017	67.6	9.7
	2018	62.4	10.3
	2019	55.4	13.3
	2020	46	22.5
35 to 49 years	2016	70.6	6.3
	2017	65.7	7.5
	2018	70.2	6.6
	2019	61.7	9.3
	2020	69.9	9.5
50 to 64 years	2016	66.6	8.5
	2017	65.1	7.4
	2018	60	9.7
	2019	65.1	10.8
	2020	57.6	9.4
65 years and over	2016	64.7	5.1
	2017	66.4	6.3
	2018	69.4	5.8
	2019	66.6	6.5
	2020	65.6	7

Source: Statistics Canada (CCHS data); Table 13-10-0096-01 Health characteristics, annual estimates

APPENDIX F

Perceptions of Health Among Different Age Groups

Age group	Reference period	Perceived health, very good or excellent	Perceived health, fair or poor
12 to 17 years	2016	72.4	
	2017	74.4	
	2018	71.4	
	2019	71.1	
	2020	79.8	
18 to 34 years	2016	61.8	8.3
	2017	69.9	10.6
	2018	65.1	7.6
	2019	64	8
	2020	63.3	
35 to 49 years	2016	65.5	8.4
	2017	60.1	13.4
	2018	62.4	9.7
	2019	52.9	13.2
	2020	59.4	8.3
50 to 64 years	2016	58	13.9
	2017	45.6	18.5
	2018	47.5	21
	2019	48.1	20.1
	2020	44.2	16.1
65 years and over	2016	41.2	27.2
	2017	47.5	22.7
	2018	43.9	25
	2019	42.4	22.1
	2020	46.9	21.3

Source: Statistics Canada Table 13-10-0096-01 Health characteristics, annual estimates