

**i** CANADIAN  
**ndex**  
OF WELLBEING

Measuring what matters  
Making measures matter

# A Profile of Wellbeing in Ontario

# THE EAST REGION

Ontario  
Trillium  
Foundation



Fondation  
Trillium  
de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario.  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario.



UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO  
FACULTY OF APPLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

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Bryan Smale  
Director, Canadian Index of Wellbeing

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# WHAT IS WELLBEING?

**There are many definitions of wellbeing. The Canadian Index of Wellbeing has adopted the following as its working definition:**

The presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression focused on but not necessarily exclusive to: good living standards, robust health, a sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic participation, and access to and participation in leisure and culture.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**A movement is underway not only in Ontario and Canada, but internationally that recognises the value of having accurate, relevant data to assist in decision-making and in the development of policy. “Evidence-based decision-making” is not just a catchphrase. It is a meaningful strategy leading to better community processes and outcomes that can enhance the quality of life of all Ontarians. It helps us recognise innovative solutions to the problems and issues, rather than relying on conventional practices that might not have produced the results we hoped for.**

The Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) recognises how important data are in helping us understand a complex society — a society that is made up of a number of interconnected systems — the domains of the CIW framework — where different sectors, our communities, and our governments interact, influence, and have impacts on the wellbeing of Ontarians. Efforts to improve wellbeing in one system, such as leisure and culture, will inevitably have positive impacts on others, such as community vitality, healthy populations, and the environment, and ultimately, on the entire community or society. This is a “systems thinking” approach, and a key goal of the CIW is to identify and understand the interconnections among the eight domains — each of which represents a system — and the many factors that comprise them to influence overall wellbeing. This approach leads to greater collaborations and to new and innovative solutions that have collective impact in our communities. At the core of the approach is the evidence.

## **SO, WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE RESIDENTS IN THE EAST REGION OF ONTARIO?**



## WELLBEING IN EAST ONTARIO

**The East region of Ontario has a population that is somewhat older, is made up of families who are living in their own homes, and boasts one of the highest percentages of people with knowledge of both of Canada's official languages.**

People in the region enjoy one of the highest after-tax median incomes in the province as well as a good employment rate and the lowest level of unemployment. Not surprisingly, then, the region has among the lowest percentages of the population in Ontario in low income and facing food insecurity. Overall, it is a fairly economically secure, family-oriented region of the province.

Most people in the East region feel safe in their communities and they enjoy the lowest level of serious crime in the province. They volunteer more and more people help others in need, which is consistent with their view, more so than anywhere else in the province, that most people can be trusted. Even though residents in the East turned out to vote in greater numbers in the last federal election, they are less involved politically and have less confidence in their Parliament — which might have motivated them to get out and vote.

East region residents are facing similar environmental issues like smog and greenhouse gas emissions as elsewhere in the province. Their participation in waste reduction is somewhat lower, but this might be due to a slower pace of expansion of the Blue Box program than elsewhere in the province.



More so than anywhere in the province, elementary schools in the East region are measuring students' progress in their health and wellbeing, their socio-emotional skill development, and in the school learning environment. The libraries in the region are also offering a greater number of children's programs, so taken together, early childhood development appears to be getting a real commitment in the East. Perhaps because of all of these other opportunities, parents are spending the least amount of time in talk-based interactions with their children.

Residents in the East region spend more time with friends and have more active lifestyles as they participate more frequently each month in physical activity during their leisure time. They also volunteer more for recreation and cultural organizations than people in any other region of the province. However, residents spend the least amount of time in arts and culture activities than any other Ontarians and make the fewest visits to their libraries.

Finally, about 6 of 10 people in the East region report having good overall health, even better mental health, few health or activity-related limitations to their day-to-day living, and the lowest levels of work-related stress in the province. The region also has the highest percentage of people getting immunized against influenza. Overall, a majority of residents (87.3%) report being satisfied with their lives — the highest level in the province.

There is much to celebrate about living in the East region of Ontario. As this portrait of wellbeing illustrates, however, there are numerous factors across all domains of life that contribute to and detract from the residents' quality of life. By recognising how these circumstances interact and intersect to affect the lives of the East region's residents in different ways, we are in a better position to make informed decisions that can lead to enhanced quality of life in their communities, and ultimately, the province overall.

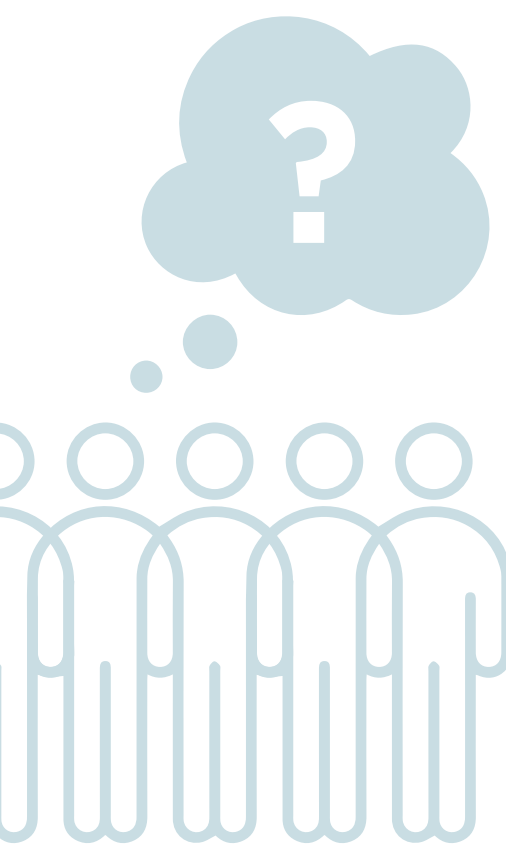







WITH THIS REPORT,

we are in a better position to make informed decisions that can lead to enhanced quality of life in communities, and ultimately, the province overall.

## IMPLICATIONS

The results of this exploration has provided some interesting insights as well as intriguing questions concerning the wellbeing of residents living in the East region of Ontario that could be considered when deciding on action. For example:

- 
-  In what ways might residents, especially children and youth, be encouraged to engage more in arts and cultural activities and to make greater use of the resources offered by libraries? Are there programs or services not currently available that would broaden their choices and access to opportunities?
  -  As a more engaged population, are there things that could be done to leverage that strength and create more opportunities that enhance residents' sense of belonging to their communities?
  -  How can residents become greater stewards of the environment? Are there ways in which they could help reduce, or work with industry to reduce, the overall carbon footprint of the region?
  -  Even though the levels of low income and food insecurity are among the lowest in the province, what more can be done to ensure fewer people face such economic hardships?
  -  What can be done to encourage more active participation in the democratic process and advocacy, and thereby contribute to and build greater confidence in our democratic institutions?

These questions are not presented as challenges. Rather, they are intended to stimulate further conversations among those with local knowledge and who are positioned to enhance the wellbeing of Ontarians. By reflecting on these questions and considering innovative solutions that could have an impact on many aspects of people's lives, we hope community leaders will have an even greater understanding of the interconnectedness of the domains that define the wellbeing in people's lives. Doing so leads more often to strategies that will advance policies, services, and programs for — *and with* — residents of the region and thereby create more interest, awareness, and participation in activities that will enhance their wellbeing.



# WHY WE NEED THE CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING (CIW)

**The United Nations and the OECD agree — the true measure of a country’s progress must include the wellbeing of its citizens. The Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) shifts the focus from solely on the economy to include other critical domains of people’s lives.**

Increasingly, citizens and their government are thinking “beyond GDP” as a measure of our progress and quality of life. Even though Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is an important measure of our economic performance, it does not capture those areas of our lives that we care about most like education, health, the environment, and the relationships we have with others. GDP also is not sensitive to the costs of economic growth such as environmental degradation, loss of farmland, or growing income inequality.



COMMUNITY  
VITALITY



EDUCATION



HEALTHY  
POPULATIONS



LIVING  
STANDARDS



DEMOCRATIC  
ENGAGEMENT



ENVIRONMENT



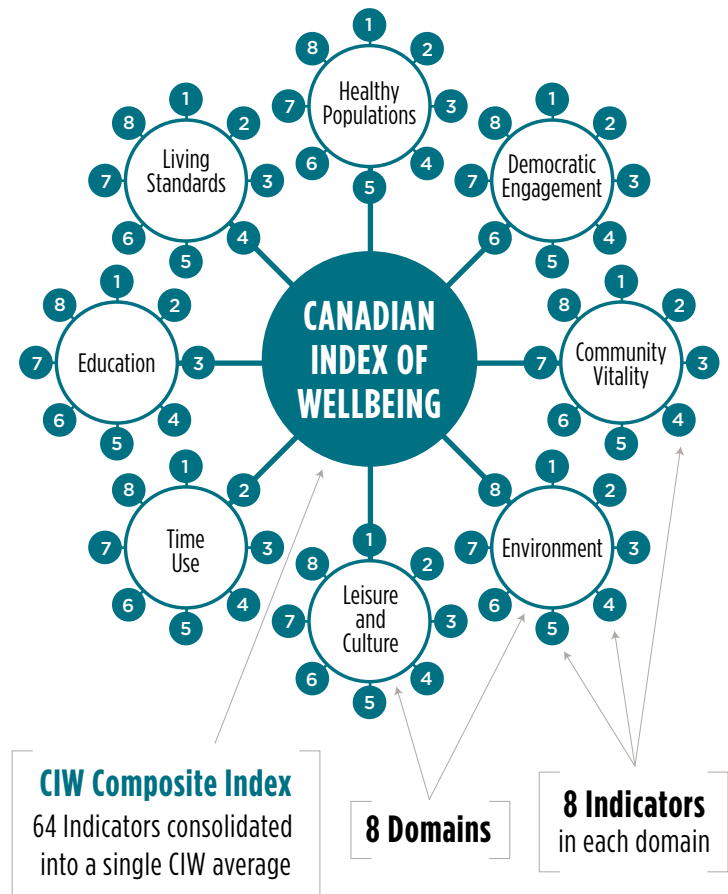
LEISURE AND  
CULTURE



TIME USE

The Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) was created through the combined efforts of national leaders and organizations, community groups, international research experts, indicator users, and in particular, consultation with hundreds of Canadians. Those efforts and consultations led to the identification of the following eight areas or domains that contribute to, and continuously affect, the wellbeing of Canadians:

- » **Community Vitality**
- » **Democratic Engagement**
- » **Education**
- » **Environment**
- » **Healthy Populations**
- » **Leisure and Culture**
- » **Living Standards**
- » **Time Use**



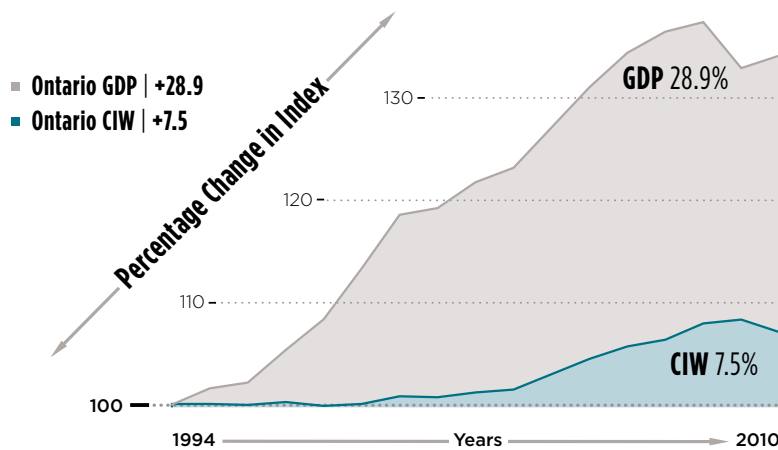
We selected valid, reliable, and relevant measures as the indicators of the various aspects of a domain’s contribution to wellbeing. By integrating the indicators and domains and revealing their complex interconnections, the CIW provides a comprehensive portrait of quality of life in Canada and in Ontario.

The CIW composite index tracks all indicators and domains of wellbeing to measure our progress over time, highlighting where we are doing well and where we could be doing better. By 2014, we have seen GDP rise by 12.7% from its lowest point following the recession of 2008, yet the wellbeing of Canada’s residents continues to lag behind, recovering at a much slower rate.

**The CIW’s call to action is to encourage all sectors to be guided by solid evidence, and to empower Canadians to advocate for change that reflects their needs and values. By putting wellbeing at the heart of policy development, funding decisions, program development, and service delivery, we respond to our desire to know, “How can we do better?”**

# A REGIONAL PROFILE OF THE WELLBEING OF ONTARIANS: HOW ARE WE REALLY DOING?

**Ontario's GDP has recovered by 11.2% from its lowest point following the recession of 2008 — a good sign. However, the 2014 report commissioned by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, “How are Ontarians really doing?”<sup>1</sup>, showed that Ontarians' overall wellbeing continues to lag well behind our economic growth.**



While economic productivity in Ontario continues to recover, although not as quickly as for Canada overall, the wellbeing of Ontarians has not shown signs of rebounding from

the recession in the same way that GDP has. To help address this gap, these reports provide evidence-based illustrations of the wellbeing of Ontarians in five different regions. These reports will therefore help us better understand the different challenges and opportunities that each region faces. We hope that everyone working to help improve wellbeing across the province can use the data provided in these reports to make more informed decisions when choosing how to focus their efforts.

1. Canadian Index of Wellbeing. (2014). How are Ontarians Really Doing? A Provincial Report on Ontario Wellbeing. Waterloo, ON: Canadian Index of Wellbeing and University of Waterloo. Available from: <https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-index-wellbeing/news/new-ontario-index-puts-wellbeing-forefront>

# A SNAPSHOT OF ONTARIO

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Statistics Canada estimates that the population of Ontario in 2016 is 13,873,933 people, which represents 38.5% of the population in Canada. Since 2011, this represents an almost 8% growth in number of residents in Ontario.

The median age of Ontarians in 2011 was 40.4 years with just over 35% being 50 years of age or older. There are three persons per family on average, and of these families, 16.7% are led by a lone parent. In all of these characteristics, Ontario is very much like Canada overall.

Almost 11% of Ontarians have knowledge of both of our official languages, and overall, just under 30% reported that another language other than English or French was their first language. In contrast, across the country, many more Canadians (17.5%) report having knowledge of both official languages, but many fewer people (20.2%) report another language as their first language.

Also in 2011, the unemployment rate had dropped to 8.5% as Ontario continued to emerge from the 2008 recession albeit more slowly than the country overall where unemployment stood at 7.8%. The median after tax annual family income in Ontario was just under \$72,000, which is much lower than the national median income of over \$78,000 per year.



PEOPLE WITH KNOWLEDGE  
OF BOTH OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Ontario	<b>10.9%</b>
Canada	<b>17.5%</b>



PEOPLE WITH ANOTHER  
FIRST LANGUAGE

Ontario	<b>28.7%</b>
Canada	<b>20.2%</b>



## PEOPLE PAYING OVER 30% OF THEIR INCOME ON HOUSING

Ontario	<b>27.0%</b>
Canada	<b>25.2%</b>

## PERSONS WITH SELF- REPORTED DIABETES

Ontario	<b>7.4%</b>
Canada	<b>6.7%</b>

## CIW DOMAINS OF WELLBEING

In this section, we provide an overview of wellbeing in Ontario and how it compares to Canada as a whole based on selected indicators representing each of the CIW's eight domains. The majority of these indicators are from 2014.

Beyond basic demographic information, the **Living Standards** domain highlights areas where economic risk affects Ontarians' wellbeing. In this regard, 13.9% of Ontarians are living in low income (i.e., where "low income" is defined as household income that is less than half of the national median income), and over one-quarter (27.0%) are paying in excess of 30% of their income on housing, which is a recognised benchmark for assessing the affordability of housing relative to income.<sup>2</sup> In both cases, these percentages are higher than the national rates which are just under 10% and slightly over 25% respectively.

Just under 1 in 10 Ontarians (8.3%) report moderate to severe food insecurity, which is slightly higher than in the country as a whole (7.7%). Similar to Canadians overall, over one-quarter of working Ontarians (28.2%) report feeling stressed because of work, which can have an impact on the health and wellbeing of a significant proportion of the working population.

In terms of the **Healthy Populations** domain, almost 6 in 10 Ontarians (59.2%) rate their overall health as very good or excellent and almost three-quarters (70.4%) of residents rate their mental health as very good or excellent — both of which are very similar to what Canadians overall report. Over seven per cent (7.4%) of Ontarians report having diabetes — up significantly from 6.7% in 2013 — and higher than the national rate of 6.7%. In contrast, among teens (12 to 19 years of age),

2. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. (2015). The adequacy, suitability and affordability of Canadian housing, 1991-2011. Research Highlight, Socio-Economic Series. Ottawa, ON: CMHC. Available from: <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/pdf/68310.pdf>



only 5.8% report smoking daily or occasionally, which is much lower than the national average of almost 8%. Over a third of Ontarians (35.4%) received immunization for influenza in the past year — slightly more than elsewhere in Canada (32.5%) — but still down from previous years.

With respect to the **Community Vitality** domain, over two-thirds of Ontarians (68.1%) have a somewhat or strong sense of belonging to their community, which is an increase over previous years, and well over half (57.3%) feel many or most people can be trusted, which is slightly down from previous years. In both instances, these percentages are higher than in Canada overall (65.9% and 51.8%, respectively). Similar to Canada overall, a majority of Ontarians (79.2%) feel safe walking alone after dark in their neighbourhoods, and under 1 in 10 residents (9.6%) report experiencing discrimination due to their ethnicity or cultural background. The Crime Severity Index in Ontario (50.0) is not only much lower than for Canada overall (66.7), but is lower than any other province. Further, the Index dropped 4.6% in Ontario between 2013 and 2014 — the fifth year in a row the Index has fallen.

The **Leisure and Culture** domain contributes to the wellbeing of Ontarians through their participation in a variety of free time pursuits and access to recreation opportunities. For example, on average, Ontarians spend 13.0% of their time on the previous day engaged in social leisure activities and another 4.1% in arts and culture activities. Over 90% of Ontarians engage in some form of physical activity (e.g., sports, walking, exercise) and do so about once per day for at least 15 minutes. In all of these activities, Ontarians are participating at rates very similar to Canadians overall. Ontarians volunteered for culture and recreation organizations for an average of 30.5 hours in the past year, which is, however, quite a bit lower than the national average of 34.3 hours.



#### CRIME SEVERITY INDEX

Ontario	50.0
Canada	66.7

#### AVERAGE HOURS IN PAST YEAR VOLUNTEERING FOR CULTURE AND RECREATION ORGANIZATIONS

Ontario	30.5
Canada	34.3



## PEOPLE FEELING HIGH LEVELS OF TIME PRESSURE

Ontario	<b>19.8%</b>
Canada	<b>17.4%</b>

## PEOPLE WORKING MORE THAN 50 HOURS PER WEEK

Ontario	<b>14.3%</b>
Canada	<b>8.7%</b>

In terms of **Democratic Engagement**, two-thirds of eligible Ontarians (67.8%) voted in the last federal election — up from previous elections — and about 4 in 10 people (39.6%) report that they have quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in Parliament — down from previous years (although this measure was taken prior to the last election). These figures and recent trends are similar to those in Canada overall. Ontario can, however, boast a higher percentage of female Members of Parliament (31.4%) than for Canada overall (26.0%).

As part of setting the stage for life, the **Education** domain shows that over half of Ontario elementary schools are measuring progress both in their learning environments (51.9%) and in their students' health and wellbeing (55.7%). Related to the role of education in preparing students to be engaged in the democratic process, under one-third of elementary schools (29.0%) are measuring progress in students' citizenship skills. As a positive developmental activity for children, Ontario adults spend on average almost 40 minutes per day in interactive, talk-based care of children from 0 to 14 years of age — more than the 35 minutes spent by Canadians overall. With respect to lifelong learning, only about 5% of Ontarians and Canadians 25 years of age and older are participating in education-related activities.

With respect to **Time Use**, almost 1 in 5 Ontarians (19.8%) report high levels of time pressure. This could in part be attributable to the almost one hour spent commuting to and from work (53.7 minutes per day on average) and the work weeks (i.e., over 50 hours per week) in which 14.3% of Ontarians are engaged — both of which are higher than for Canadians overall. Further, only about one-third of residents (30.5%) are getting the recommended 7 to 9 hours of quality sleep, which is a smaller percentage than in Canada overall (35.9%).

More positively, about half of Ontarians (46.1%) have some flexibility in their work hours and they are allocating 90 minutes per day on average to be with their friends. In both cases, these measures are higher than in Canada overall (43.2% and 84.3 minutes, respectively).

For the **Environment** domain, Ontario has a relatively high carbon footprint — it emitted 170 megatonnes of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in 2014, which represents just under one-quarter of the GHG emissions for Canada as a whole. Ontario's contribution in recent years, however, has been declining in part due to the slowing of manufacturing and especially in reductions in residential emissions. Concentrations of ground level ozone in Ontario are at 27.4 parts per billion, which is well below the threshold set by the World Health Organization (WHO) where lung damage and inflammation can occur. Across Ontario, the waste diversion rate — that is, all Blue Box and other materials diverted by municipalities from landfill — is 47.3%, which has been slowly and steadily increasing in recent years.

In terms of overall wellbeing, 85.6% of Ontarians report that they are satisfied with their lives, which is slightly lower than in Canada overall, but up from the previous year.

# WELLBEING IN THE REGIONS OF ONTARIO

In this series of reports, we provide portraits of each of the five regions of Ontario using the most recent data available on selected indicators for each of the domains of wellbeing. By examining selected indicators of wellbeing within and across the eight domains of the CIW, these portraits can help inform the planning, development, and implementation of programs and services that have greater potential to enhance the wellbeing of Ontarians, especially those who might be most marginalized. Creating portraits based on the CIW also provides an opportunity to learn more about the complexity of wellbeing in people's lives and to see how it varies across the five main regions of the province.

Based on boundaries used by several of the Ministries in Ontario, the five regions described in these reports are made up of the counties and districts listed in the table at the right.

We begin with a brief demographic profile of the region, highlighting characteristics that make it unique. In the sections that follow, we present the eight domains of the CIW with descriptions of indicators of wellbeing that reflect how well Ontarians are doing within the region. Finally, a summary section highlights the distinctiveness of the region and points to potential interconnections among the domains. Three appendices are included that provide more detail on the methods and data sources (Appendix A), the specific indicators for the region and Ontario overall (Appendix B), and a glossary of terms used throughout the reports (Appendix C).

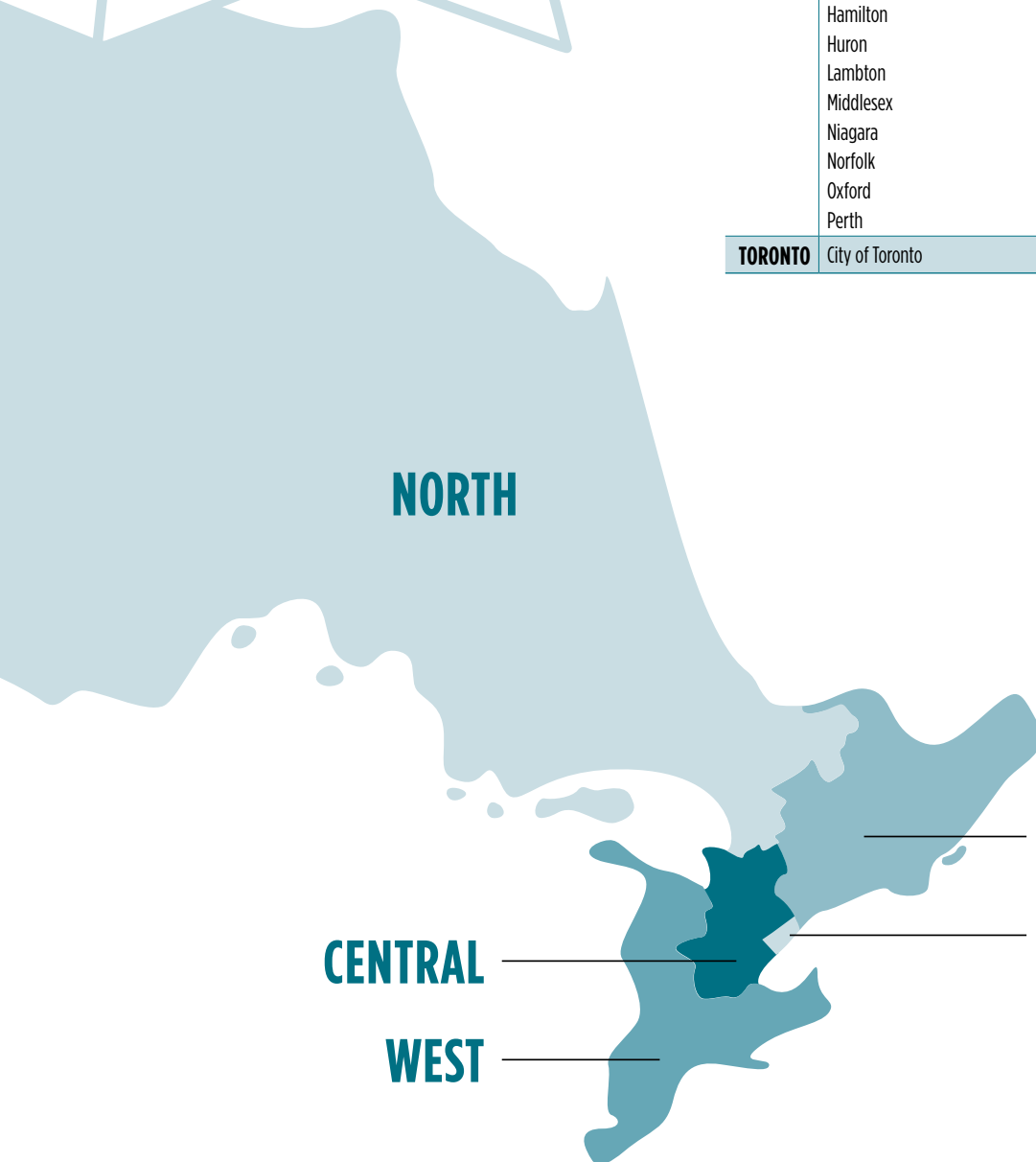
In each section, we compare the indicators of wellbeing within the region to the province as a whole. Such comparisons help us understand how Ontarians are doing relative to the province overall and focuses our attention on areas where we are doing well and where we might choose to direct greater emphasis in planning and allocating resources.

# ONTARIO WELLBEING PROFILE

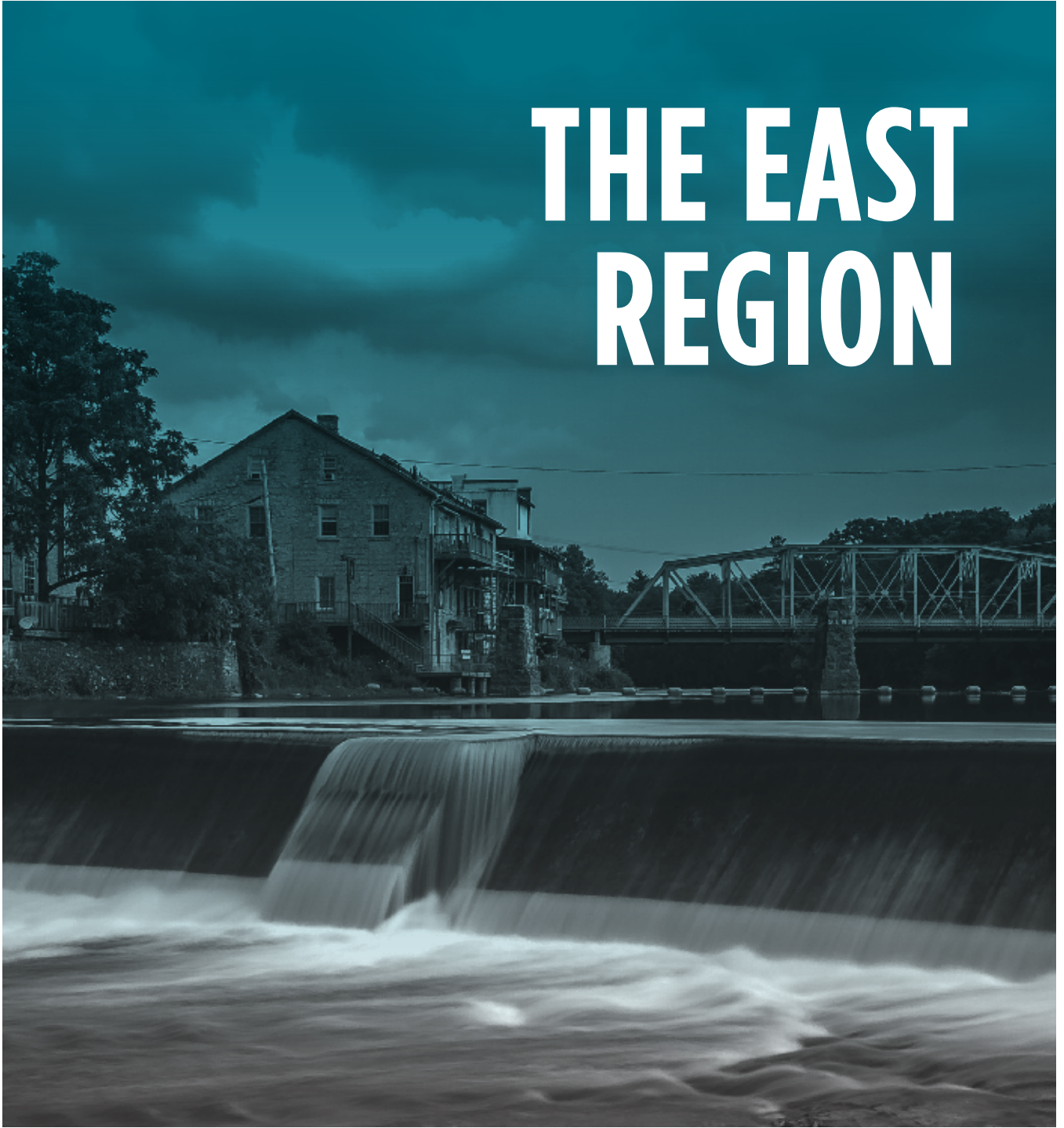


REGION	COUNTY/DISTRICT
<b>CENTRAL</b>	Dufferin
	Halton
	Peel
	Simcoe
	Waterloo
	Wellington
	York
<b>WEST</b>	Brant
	Bruce
	Chatham-Kent
	Elgin
	Essex
	Grey
	Haldimand
	Hamilton
	Huron
	Lambton
	Middlesex
	Niagara
	Norfolk
Oxford	
Perth	
<b>TORONTO</b>	City of Toronto

REGION	COUNTY/DISTRICT
<b>NORTH</b>	Algoma
	Cochrane
	Kenora
	Manitoulin
	Nipissing
	Parry Sound
	Rainy River
	Sudbury (District & City)
	Thunder Bay
Timiskaming	
<b>EAST</b>	Durham
	Frontenac
	Haliburton
	Hastings
	Kawartha Lakes
	Lanark
	Leeds & Grenville
	Lennox-Addington
	Muskoka
	Northumberland
	Ottawa
	Peterborough
	Prescott and Russell
	Prince Edward
	Renfrew
Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry	



# THE EAST REGION



# DEMOGRAPHICS

**Recognising the unique socio-demographic profile of a region is an important first step in understanding the needs and circumstances of its residents. How many people live here? Are the residents generally younger or older than elsewhere in the province? What do their families look like? How diverse is the population? Answers to these questions allow us to make more informed decisions about the types of programs and services that will best contribute to the wellbeing of the region's residents.**

## POPULATION

According to the 2011 Census of Canada, the East region of Ontario is home to 2.67 million people, which represents slightly more than one-fifth of the total population of the province. After the North, which covers over 88% of the province's total land area, the East is the next largest at just 6.1% of the land area.

By 2016, the total population is expected to grow by about 5.5% with that growth split between larger communities — Oshawa and Whitby (8.4%) and Ottawa (8.8%) — and smaller areas — Hawkesbury (6.5%) and Minden Hills (5.4%) — in the region. Only two communities in the 16 counties and districts in the East are projected to see very slight declines in their populations — Lindsay (down 1.8%) and Picton (down 0.9%). Overall, the growth in population in the East is almost identical to the 5.7% growth in Ontario's total population in 2016.



**20.8%** OF THE  
POPULATION



LIVING ON

**6.1%**  
OF THE LAND MASS OF ONTARIO

## PEOPLE 50 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER



East **37.3%**  
Ontario **35.1%**

# 42.0

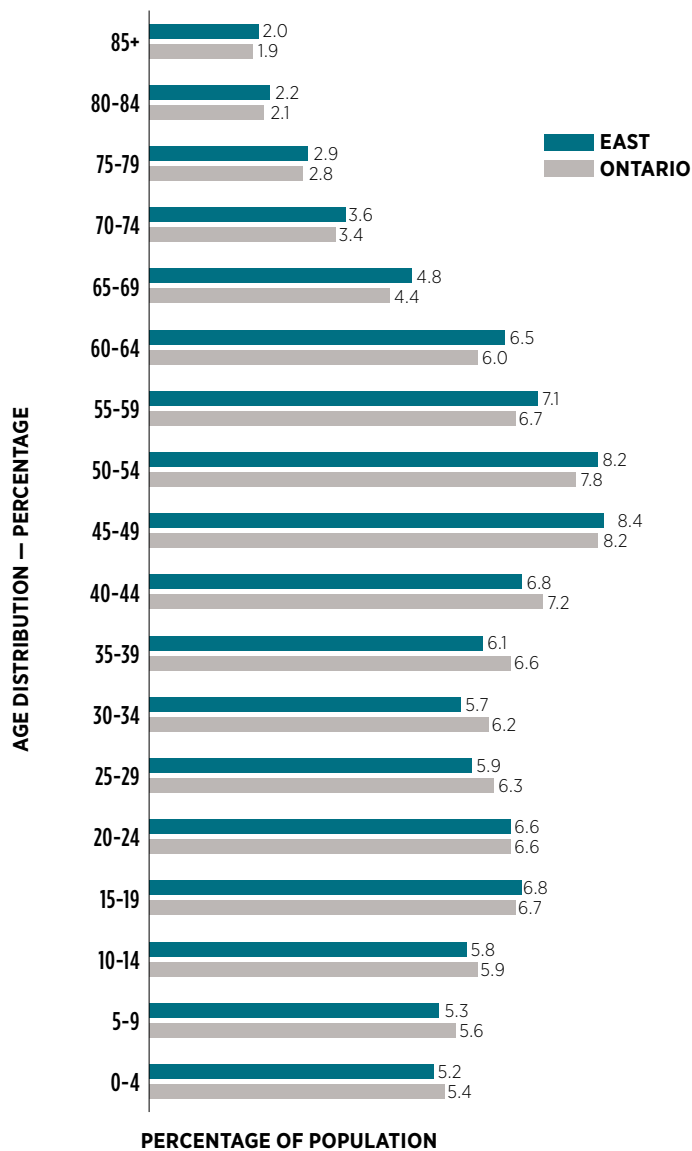
years

MEDIAN AGE

## AGE

The population of the East is very slightly older than in the province overall. The highest percentages of residents are in the age range from 45 to 59 years, and in fact, the East has a higher percentage of residents in every age category 45 years and older than in Ontario overall. Not only are there more people over 44 years of age, there are smaller percentages of people in the East in almost all age categories under 45 than in the province overall, which together leads to a higher median age of 42.0 years compared to 40.4 years for Ontario as a whole.

## HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF OLDER RESIDENTS IN THE EAST REGION COMPARED TO ONTARIO OVERALL





## FAMILIES

Fewer families in the East region are led by a lone parent with almost 4 of 5 of those parents being female (78.7%), both lower than the provincial rate. Well over half of the residents are married or living in a common-law relationship (58.9%), which is very slightly higher than the provincial rate (57.7%).

Like the whole of Ontario, families in the East have an average of almost three persons living in the household. Three-quarters of the population owns their homes (74.7%) — higher than the provincial rate of 71.4% — while one-quarter of the population rents their dwellings (25.3%), which is slightly lower than the province overall (28.5%).



PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES LED BY LONE PARENTS

**15.6%**

## EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

The employment rate in the East (60.8%) is very similar to that of the province at 59.0%, although its unemployment rate of 7.7% is the lowest in the province. The after-tax median family income of just over \$75,000 in 2011 was somewhat higher than the provincial median income of almost \$72,000.

## ETHNICITY AND LANGUAGE

The East has one of the lowest levels of diversity in the province with only 13.6% of the population being part of a visible minority, which is well below the percentage for the province. Even though the East has the second highest percentage of Indigenous peoples living in private households after the North (12.8%), it is only 2.6% and only slightly higher than for the province overall (2.3%).

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

East	<b>7.7%</b>
Ontario	<b>8.5%</b>

### AFTER TAX MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME

East	<b>\$75,307</b>
Ontario	<b>\$71,715</b>

### PERCENTAGE OF VISIBLE MINORITY POPULATION

East	<b>13.6%</b>
Ontario	<b>25.5%</b>

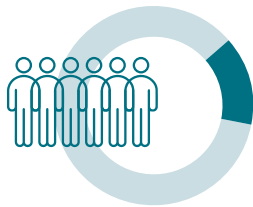


## PEOPLE WITH KNOWLEDGE OF BOTH OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

East	<b>20.5%</b>
Ontario	<b>10.9%</b>

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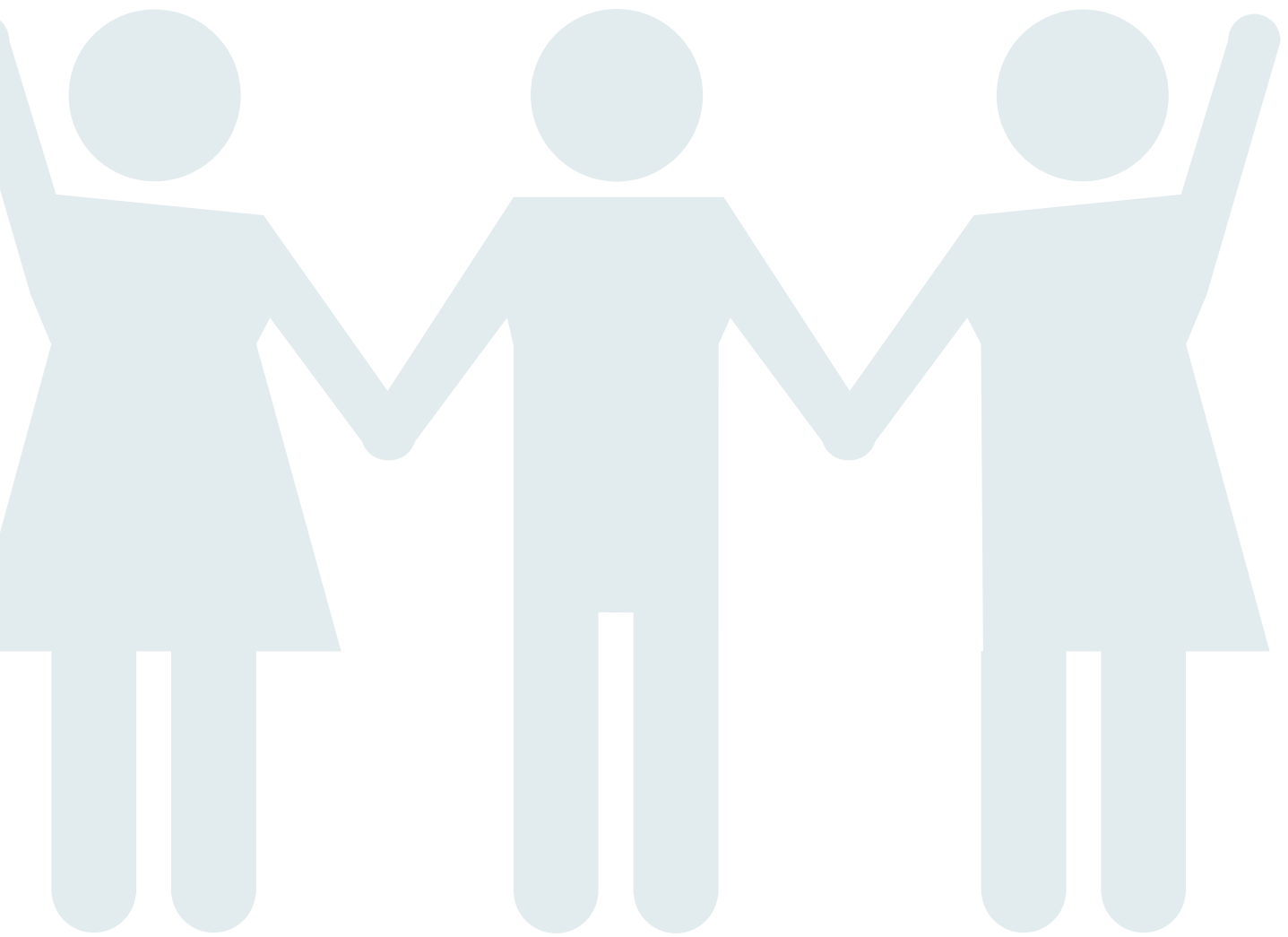
## PEOPLE WITH ANOTHER LANGUAGE AS THEIR FIRST LANGUAGE



East	<b>14.6%</b>
Ontario	<b>28.7%</b>

Just over 85% of the residents in the East report one of Canada's official languages as their first language with the vast majority (76.6%) identifying English as their first language. The East has the second highest percentage of people in the province after the North who have a working knowledge of both official languages (20.5%), which is almost twice the province-wide rate. Another 14.6% of the people report another language as their first language compared to just over one-quarter across the province. Although they represent quite a small proportion of the total population, most other first languages reported by residents have European origins. However, the exception — and largest — to that group is Arabic, which represents just 1.2% of the population in the East.





# COMMUNITY VITALITY

**Vital communities are those that have strong, active, and inclusive relationships among people, private, public, and non-governmental organizations that foster individual and collective wellbeing.**

Their qualities reflect the power and potential of a community to pull together, to adapt, and to thrive. Those qualities include measures of community safety and of caring relationships, participation in organised activities, and residents' sense of belonging to their communities.

## SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Like most Ontarians, residents in the East region generally feel a strong connection to their communities, which reflects the steady rise in sense of belonging in recent years throughout the province. Over two-thirds of the population report feeling a somewhat or strong sense of belonging to their communities, and even though it is only about 1% lower than the province overall, it is the lowest level in Ontario.

Only about 1 in 10 people in the East region live alone, which is very similar to the province overall (9.6%). Also, like other Ontarians, more than half of residents in the East region (53.4%) report having five or more close friends who provide important social support.

People in the East region participate in organised activities, such as a union, a sport or recreation organization, or a cultural or educational group, to a greater degree than Ontarians overall and these engagements serve to reinforce their sense of belonging to their communities.



### PEOPLE WITH STRONG SENSE OF BELONGING TO THEIR COMMUNITIES



East	<b>67.3%</b>
Ontario	<b>68.1%</b>

### PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATE IN ORGANISED ACTIVITIES

East	<b>58.4%</b>
Ontario	<b>55.2%</b>



## COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Crime Severity Index compiles all Criminal Code violations for each year and weights them by their seriousness, thereby providing an index that reflects the severity of criminal activity in an area. The East has the lowest level of the Index at 31.3 than anywhere else in the province. Even more positively, the Index has been dropping steadily over the years in all parts of the province, including the East. Further, over three-quarters of people in the East (78.8%) report feeling safe walking alone after dark in their neighbourhood and this percentage of residents is very similar to that for the province overall (79.2%), which has been rising in recent years throughout Ontario.

Both of these indicators suggest that residents' wellbeing in the East is enhanced by the considerably lower incidence of serious crime and generally high feelings of safety when out walking in their communities.

## SOCIAL NORMS AND VALUES

The higher rates of volunteering among people in the East is related to a shared value to support their neighbours. More than 8 in 10 residents (83.7%) in the East provide unpaid help to others in their communities who are on their own, and this represents a slightly higher percentage than for the province as a whole (81.0%).

Similar to the province as a whole, almost 6 in 10 residents (58.6%) in the East believe that many or most people can be trusted. Building trust can lead to the development of strong interpersonal and community relationships, so the fact that over 40% of residents do not feel others can be trusted is of concern.

Residents in the East region report a relatively low rate of experiencing discrimination (8.4%) due to characteristics such as one's ethnicity, race, or sexual orientation and this rate is lower than for the province as a whole. This rate has remained largely unchanged in recent years. As a factor affecting not only the sense of belonging residents feel, but also their mental and emotional wellbeing, these low rates of discrimination are encouraging. However, we can always strive to do even better to help marginalized peoples feel welcome in our communities.

### PEOPLE REPORTING EXPERIENCE OF DISCRIMINATION



East	<b>8.4%</b>
Ontario	<b>9.6%</b>





# DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT

**Democratic engagement means being involved in advancing democracy through political institutions, organizations, and activities. A society that enjoys a high degree of democratic engagement is one where citizens participate in political activities, express political views, and foster political knowledge; where governments build relationships, trust, shared responsibility, and participation opportunities with citizens; and where citizens, governments, and civil society uphold democratic values at local, provincial, and national levels.**

A healthy democracy needs citizens who feel their votes count, are informed, participate, debate, and advocate. It needs governments at all levels to be transparent, inclusive, consultative, and trustworthy. In essence, political leadership, citizen participation, and communication demonstrate the level of democratic engagement.

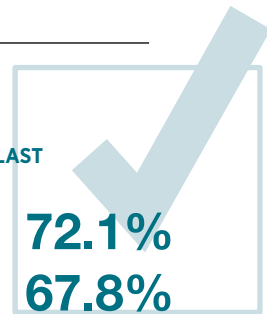
## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

In the most recent federal election in October 2015, more than 7 in 10 eligible voters in the East voted, which is quite a bit higher than the province as whole, and is up significantly from previous elections. Only a little more than one-third of residents in the East region (35.2%), however, have a great deal of confidence in our federal Parliament, although that measure was taken prior to the last election and might not reflect the renewed enthusiasm for democratic engagement resulting with a new government. Nevertheless, people in the East have much less confidence in federal Parliament than Ontarians overall, a level which has dropped considerably in the past decade. Perhaps their turnout at the polls is a reflection of their desire to have their voices heard and to effect change.



VOTER TURNOUT IN LAST  
FEDERAL ELECTION

East	72.1%
Ontario	67.8%



PEOPLE WITH CONFIDENCE  
IN FEDERAL PARLIAMENT



East	35.2%
Ontario	39.6%



## FEMALE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

### PROVINCIALY (MPPs)

East	30.4%
Ontario	34.6%

### FEDERALLY (MPs)

East	33.3%
Ontario	31.4%

Very few residents in the East participate directly in the democratic process by volunteering for a law, advocacy, or political group (3.0%). Further, this rate of volunteering is even lower than in Ontario overall, where only 3.8% of the population is engaged with such groups and down from previous years. This level of engagement in the region and province is unfortunate because participation in political organizations connects citizens with one another and provides them with a forum to share and express opinions about a society they desire.

## POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

About one-third of Members of both the Provincial and Federal Parliaments representing the East are women (30.4% and 33.3%, respectively), and these levels of representation are fairly similar to those for the province over all. Nevertheless, with over 50% of Ontario's population made up of women, our democratic and decision-making institutions should fairly reflect their values and opinions, so more work is needed to encourage women to become involved in our governments and remove barriers to their involvement.

## COMMUNICATION

Members of Parliament for the East region dedicate 7.5% of their total eligible expenses to communications, typically in the form of newsletters or pamphlets mailed directly to householders in their ridings. These expenses are above the provincial average of 6.9%. Politicians' investments in communications is a reflection of the strength of the connection between citizens and their local representative in Parliament, and a means of sharing activities and progress towards goals. With the advent of social media, print materials are relied upon less so the recent decline in budgets dedicated to this form of communication is not unexpected.





# EDUCATION

**Education is the systematic instruction, schooling, or training given to the young in preparation for the work of life, and by extension, similar instruction or training obtained in adulthood.**

Societies that thrive encourage a thirst for knowledge — at every age and stage of life. Education is a process that begins before school age and is reflected in pre-school arrangements such as childcare and early childhood education. It also continues beyond elementary and high school, to college, university, and professional training through apprenticeships. Education continues as lifelong learning.



## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Just over one-quarter of residents in the East region, 25 to 64 years of age, have a university degree, slightly lower than the provincial rate, which has risen steadily in recent years. Also, slightly fewer residents (4.9%) participate in other education-related activities such as formal courses, special interest, and self-development classes than in the province overall where the participation rate is 5.2% of the population. Although low, the rate has increased steadily over recent years both in the province and in the East region.

Participation in education is critical for preparation for work as well as for ongoing personal development and its positive impact on our living standards and social networks. Creating more opportunities and encouraging greater participation in education-related activities would serve to enhance wellbeing because of their influence in many domains.



25 TO 64 YEAR  
OLDS WITH A  
UNIVERSITY  
DEGREE



East **26.2%**  
Ontario **28.5%**

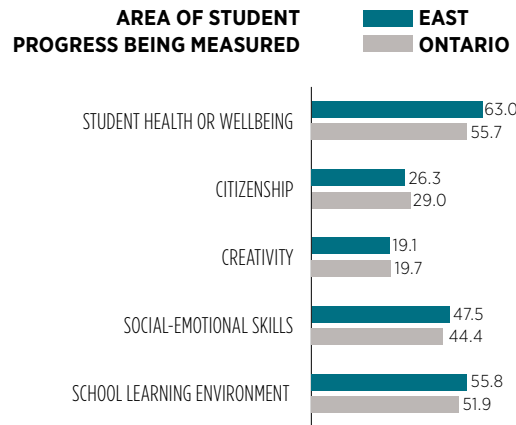


**LIBRARY-BASED EARLY LITERACY  
AND LEARNING PROGRAMS PER  
1,000 CHILDREN**

East **22.8**  
Ontario **25.8**

## MEASURING PROGRESS

Elementary schools in Ontario make important contributions to the early development of our children and their preparation for life. In the past year, the Ontario Ministry of Education added “wellbeing” to its goals for the education system and many schools are now including softer skills such as creativity and socio-emotional skills among its key measures of progress.<sup>3</sup>



**PERCENTAGE OF ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING**

As can be seen in the chart, the higher percentages of elementary schools in the East suggest a greater commitment than anywhere else in the province to measuring progress in the school learning environment and social-emotional skills, and especially in student health and wellbeing. However, a somewhat smaller percentage of schools in the East are measuring student progress in the development of citizenship skills.

## CONTRIBUTION OF LIBRARIES

Beyond their traditional role in providing citizens with the content they need to succeed, libraries in our communities have evolved to play a central role as a hub for community development, learning, and sharing. The many instructional programs and services they offer promote literacy, skill development, and access to technology for people of all ages.<sup>4</sup>

Public libraries in the East region offer an average of 22.8 programs per 1,000 children in the region for early literacy and learning, which is somewhat

3. People for Education. (2015). Ontario's Schools: The gap between policy and reality. Annual Report on Ontario's Publicly Funded Schools 2015. Toronto, ON: People for Education. Available from: [www.peopleforeducation.ca/document/ontarios-schools-the-gap-between-policy-and-reality](http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/document/ontarios-schools-the-gap-between-policy-and-reality)

4. Federation of Ontario Public Libraries. (2012). Annual Report on the State of Public Libraries 2012. Toronto, ON: FOPL. Available from: <http://fopl.ca/news/2011-annual-report-on-the-state-of-public-libraries/>

lower than anywhere else in the province other than the North region. In contrast, the libraries offer an average of an additional 24.2 programs per 1,000 children in other areas (such as arts and culture, health and wellness, and play groups), which is considerably higher than any other region in the province and much above the level of offerings overall in the province at an average of 16.5 programs.

In comparison, libraries offer far fewer programs for adults. On average, libraries in the East region offer one program per 10,000 adults related to career support and advice, job help, and skills training, which is half the provincial average. In contrast, libraries in the East region are offering more learning programs for adults in other general topics of interest than the province as a whole — 3.8 programs per 1,000 adults on average compared to the provincial rate of 2.7 programs. While these figures for the number of programs being offered might appear small, when one considers that for a smaller community of, say, 10,000 people, the figures show that a total of about 38 adult learning programs are being offered to the community.

## CHILD CARE

The availability of quality child care, which has expanded in Ontario in recent years, contributes to our pre-school children's social, emotional, developmental, and educational outcomes, especially for children living in lower income families. In the East region, regulated centre-based child care is available for only about 1 in 5 children from 0 to 4 years of age, which is very similar to the province overall. Spaces made available to pre-school children extend the positive benefits derived from quality child care to more children, especially those most marginalized by income or access, and also provide families with more opportunity to allocate their time differently and reach work-life balance.

Children from 0 to 14 years of age benefit in their cognitive, linguistic, and social development from time spent in talk-based interactions with adults. In the East region, adults spend an average of just over half an hour per day in such interactions with children (33.1 minutes per day), which is the lowest rate in the province. These interactions contribute to our children's overall development.



### LIBRARY-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS PER 1,000 ADULTS

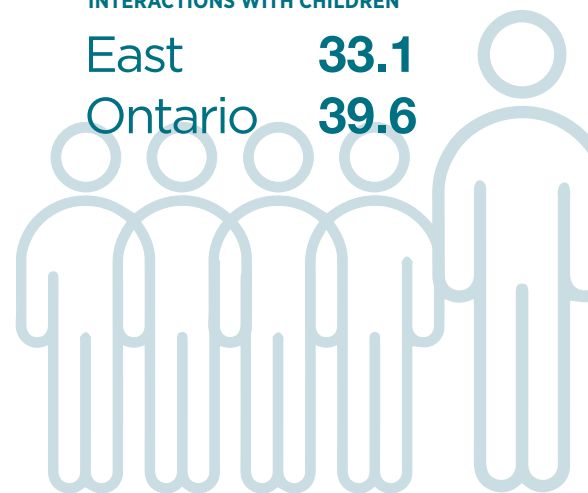
East	3.8
Ontario	2.7

### CHILDREN WITH REGULATED CENTRE- BASED CHILD CARE AVAILABLE

East	19.6%
Ontario	20.7%

### AVERAGE MINUTES PER DAY SPENT IN TALK-BASED INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

East	33.1
Ontario	39.6







# ENVIRONMENT

**The environment is the foundation upon which human societies are built and the source of our sustained wellbeing. On a broader level, environmental protection involves the prevention of waste and damage while revitalizing our ecosystems and working towards the sustainability of all of our resources.**

The environment is the basis for our health, our communities, and our economy. Despite its fundamental importance to human existence and the natural resource wealth it provides to Canada, we often fail to appreciate the various ecosystem services provided by nature that sustain human wellbeing. Indeed, how great is our wellbeing if we cannot breathe the air or drink the water?

## AIR QUALITY

Ground level ozone — or “smog” — represents a potentially serious risk both to the environment (e.g., crop loss), to our health (e.g., respiratory issues), and to our health care system (e.g., increased hospital admissions). While ground-level ozone levels have been largely stable over the past two decades, they have increased in the province over the past year.

In the East region, ground-level ozone is 28.1 parts per billion (ppb), which is slightly higher than the provincial. While these levels are well below standards that place people at risk, we can take action to prevent ozone production by increasing active transportation (i.e., walking, riding bicycles) or taking public transit and ensuring industry meets recommended targets.



### GROUND-LEVEL OZONE (PPB)

East	28.1
Ontario	27.4

Greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), which are a major contributor to climate change, have been declining slowly in recent years in Ontario. While much of this reduction is due to the slowing of manufacturing following the 2008 recession and especially the closure of coal-fired electricity generation plants, in recent years, the reduction of household emissions through conservation efforts also has been, on a proportional basis, a significant factor in helping to reduce overall emissions. Ontarians are doing their part.

Greenhouse gas emissions from the largest facilities in the East region were 5.1 megatonnes of CO<sup>2</sup> in the past year, which represents 11.3% of the total emissions for the province as a whole (45.6 megatonnes)<sup>5</sup>. Several other factors also affect the level of GHGs, including the intensity of economic activity and energy use due to variable climatic conditions throughout the year (e.g., increased use of air conditioning in the summer) — all of which are playing out in the East region.

## WATER QUALITY

The relative abundance of fresh water in the province is a tremendous benefit enjoyed by all Ontarians. The quality of fresh water in Ontario overall, as measured by its pH level, is 8.2, which is slightly alkaline, but well within acceptable limits. Fresh water in the East region has the identical pH level to the province as a whole.

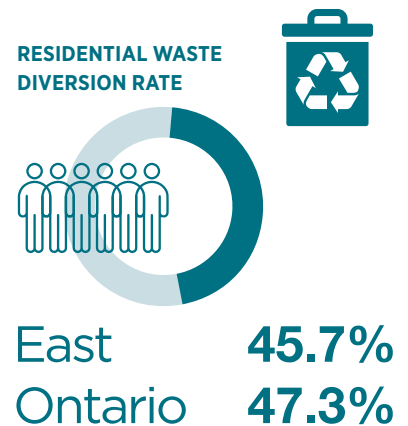
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5. Data on greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) in Ontario's regions are taken from the Reported Facility GHG Data available from Environment and Climate Change Canada (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/ges-ghg/default.asp?lang=En&n=8044859A>), and represent only one part of total GHGs in the province; that is, only emissions generated by the largest operations in the province are reported.

## WASTE REDUCTION

In Ontario, the percentage of all waste diverted from landfill, mainly through recycling programs, is about 25%. About 60% of all waste in Ontario is generated by the non-residential sector (e.g., factories, shopping malls, universities), yet it diverts only about 13% of the waste from landfill. In contrast, residential waste accounts for about one-quarter of the provincial total, yet Ontarians are diverting 47.3% of their waste from landfills, mainly through recycling through the Blue Box and Green Bin programs, and this rate has been improving in recent years.<sup>6</sup> However, while residents of Ontario are doing their part, recycling rates overall have remained largely the same over the past decade.

In the East region, the residential waste reduction rate is 45.7%, which is only slightly lower than the provincial rate. As recycling programs expand across the province, we should expect to see even less waste directed to our landfills, and reduced impacts on the environment.



6. Government of Ontario. (2015). Strategy for a waste free Ontario: Building the circular economy. (Draft for consultation). Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer of Ontario. Available from: [http://www.downloads.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env\\_reg/er/documents/2015/012-5834\\_DraftStrategy.pdf](http://www.downloads.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/er/documents/2015/012-5834_DraftStrategy.pdf)



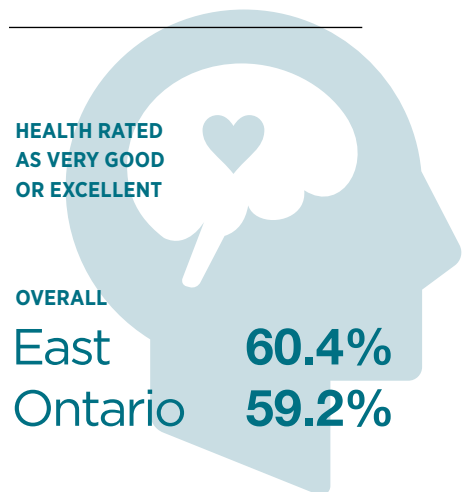
# HEALTHY POPULATIONS

**The healthy populations domain considers the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of the population. It examines life expectancy, lifestyle and behaviours, and the circumstances that influence health such as access to health care.**

Healthy populations captures both the overall health of the population (“health status”) as well as factors that influence health (“health determinants”). This broad perspective is used because individuals’ lifestyles and behaviours are constrained and shaped by broader social factors such as how food is distributed and priced, how houses are constructed and located, how urban transportation is designed, how accessible health care and recreational services are, and how we interact with the natural environment.

## SELF-REPORTED HEALTH

In terms of overall health, 60.4% of residents in the East region say their overall health is very good or excellent and 69.8% report that their mental health is very good or excellent. In both cases, these percentages are very similar to the provincial rates as a whole. While residents’ ratings of their health are not dramatically different from the province overall, they should be monitored because Ontarians’ ratings of their health, especially their mental health, have been declining somewhat in recent years.



## PEOPLE WITH NO HEALTH OR ACTIVITY LIMITATIONS

East **63.7%**  
Ontario **67.9%**

## PEOPLE GETTING INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION

East **38.7%**  
Ontario **35.4%**

## TEENS WHO ARE SMOKING OCCASIONALLY OR DAILY

East **5.6%**  
Ontario **5.8%**

Under two-thirds of the residents in the East region are living with no health or activity limitations (63.7%), which is notably lower than the provincial rate. In fact, the percentage of residents living without such limitations is among the lowest in the province. Further, the incidence of self-reported diabetes has been increasing across the province in recent years, sitting currently at 7.4% of the population. The East region has a nearly identical rate of 7.5% of the population.

## HEALTH-RELATED BEHAVIOUR

Over the past decade, the number of Ontarians getting immunized against influenza each year has remained relatively unchanged at approximately one-third of the population. Well over one-third of residents in the East region got their flu shot (38.7%), which is the highest in the province.

Smoking is widely recognised as a health behaviour associated with a variety of illnesses that could otherwise be prevented. Preventing and reducing smoking at an early age, when such behaviour is typically adopted, is a strategy that ensures better health in later life.

Smoking rates among teens (aged 12 to 19 years) have been steadily decreasing across Ontario over the years and currently, only 5.8% now report smoking occasionally or daily. Slightly fewer teens (5.6%) living in the East region report smoking.

## HEALTH CARE ACCESS

Ontarians' access to a regular health physician, such as a family doctor, is a useful indicator of the capacity and appropriateness of the primary health care system because such access is more effective in sustaining good health than episodic use of emergency care.

In the East region, 93.1% of the residents have a regular health physician, which is slightly higher than the provincial rate.

### PEOPLE WITH A REGULAR HEALTH PHYSICIAN



East	93.1%
Ontario	92.5%





# LEISURE AND CULTURE

**By participating in leisure and cultural activities, whether arts, culture, or recreation, we contribute to our wellbeing as individuals, to our communities, and to society as a whole. The myriad of activities and opportunities we pursue and enjoy benefit our overall life satisfaction and quality of life.**

As forms of human expression, leisure and cultural activities help to more fully define our lives, the meaning we derive from them, and ultimately, our wellbeing. This remains true throughout our lives regardless of age, gender, or social group. The impact of participation in leisure and cultural activities is even greater for people in marginalized groups, such as those living with disabilities, living in poverty, and as members of a minority population.

## LEISURE PARTICIPATION

Spending leisure time with others in pursuits of shared interest and in arts and cultural activities is an important way for people to connect, celebrate diversity, and develop and broaden their passions — all contributors to community social capital.

In the East region, residents spend an average of 12.6% of their time on the previous day engaged in social leisure activities, such as socializing with others at home, going out, and volunteering with civic and family organizations, among other activities. This percentage of time is a little lower than the average for Ontario and one of the lowest averages in the province. Residents of the East spend on average 3.6% of their time on the previous day participating in arts and cultural activities (e.g., going to music concerts, visiting museums and galleries), which is the lowest rate in the province.



TIME ON PREVIOUS  
DAY SPENT IN ...

SOCIAL LEISURE

East	12.6%
Ontario	13.0%

ARTS AND CULTURE

East	3.6%
Ontario	4.1%



# EAST REGION LEISURE AND CULTURE



**AVERAGE NUMBER OF TIMES  
PER MONTH PARTICIPATING  
IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LASTING  
OVER 15 MINS.**

East	<b>31.1</b>
Ontario	<b>28.2</b>

**HOURS SPENT VOLUNTEERING  
FOR RECREATION / CULTURE  
ORGANIZATIONS IN PAST YEAR**

East	<b>39.1</b>
Ontario	<b>30.5</b>

**PROVINCIAL PARKS PER  
100,000 POPULATION**

East	<b>1.8</b>
Ontario	<b>2.2</b>

An active lifestyle has numerous physical, social, and psychological benefits, and in Ontario, over 90% of the population reports participating in some form of regular physical activity during leisure time. In the East region, residents report participating in physical activity lasting at least 15 minutes an average of 31.1 times per month — or at least once every day. Although only slightly higher than the provincial average, this level of activity is one of the highest of any region in Ontario.

When people volunteer, especially for recreation and cultural organizations, they not only derive important personal benefits from their commitment to activities in which they have a passion, but the community also benefits from the activities and programs that volunteering provides to residents. In the previous year, people in the East region gave an average of 39.1 hours of their time to volunteering for recreation and culture organizations, which is the highest rate in the province. As an activity that facilitates engaging with others in the community, these higher volunteering rates are another form of people's participation in social leisure and to their connection to their communities.

Taking regular holidays provides relief from daily routines, opportunities to bond with friends and family, and revitalisation, and the longer the vacation, the greater these benefits. Residents in the East region report an average of 2.8 nights away per vacation trip in the previous year (to destinations at least 80 km away from home), which is identical to the provincial average. Time away on holiday has been steadily decreasing in recent years in Ontario, and if the trend continues, residents will receive fewer of its benefits.

## PROVINCIAL PARKS

As part of their mandate, provincial parks in Ontario provide opportunities for outdoor recreation as well as play an important role in the conservation of the natural environment.

Given the size of its land area and low population density, the North region has by far the highest number of provincial parks in the province — 196 parks representing almost two-thirds of the total parks system (65.1%), so not surprisingly, there are fewer provincial parks per capita in other regions in the more southerly parts of the province. In the East region, there are 1.8 provincial parks for every 100,000 people, and of these, most are recreation

parks affording more opportunities for outdoor recreation as opposed to wilderness or nature reserve parks which restrict visitation to preserve the environment.

The provincial parks in the East region hosted an average of 50,800 visitors per park in the previous year — more than half again as many visitors as the provincial average of almost 33,000 visitors per park.

## LIBRARIES

As noted earlier, libraries provide much more than just content to advance people's education and interests. Indeed, they are important community hubs where people meet, engage in activities, and attend events, thereby strengthening community bonds. In this respect, for every 1,000 people in the East region, 86.0 in-person visits are made in a typical week to the libraries, which is the lowest of any region in Ontario.

In the past year, libraries in the East region offered 15.4 library programs of various types to every 1,000 people, which is lower than the provincial rate. Further, the libraries offered 1.6 arts and cultural events and shows (e.g., Culture Days, poetry and story readings, art shows) per 10,000 people, which is one of the lowest rates in the province and fewer than half as many as offered provincially. Like we saw earlier for educational programs, these figures for the number of programs and events being offered might appear small, but when one considers that for smaller communities of 10,000 people, a total of about 150 programs are being offered each year to the residents — a little more than 2 per month. Despite being comparatively lower than elsewhere in the province, these numbers of programs and events still illustrate the valuable role our public libraries play in delivering recreation and arts programs and services to the community.

By making free computers and internet connections available in public libraries, access to information and resources is provided, especially to people who might otherwise not have it due to financial constraints. Such access is clearly important in the East region where 8.0 internet connections are available in the libraries for every 10,000 people, which is higher than for the province as a whole (7.2 connections), and is the second highest level of provision in the province after the North.



WEEKLY IN-PERSON VISITS TO  
LIBRARIES PER 1,000 PEOPLE

East	86.0
Ontario	103.2

ANNUAL LIBRARY PROGRAMS  
PER 1,000 PEOPLE

East	15.4
Ontario	16.6

ARTS AND CULTURE EVENTS AND  
SHOWS PER 10,000 PEOPLE

East	1.6
Ontario	4.4





# LIVING STANDARDS

**Living standards examines average and median income and wealth, distribution of income and wealth including poverty rates, income fluctuations and volatility, and economic security, including labour market security, and housing and food security.**

Our living standards should reflect our capacity to transform economic growth into stable current and future income streams for everyone. Economic growth does not automatically translate into better living standards. A higher average income, for example, may be achieved at the cost of increased social inequality or greater economic insecurity. In contrast, achieving greater job quality, reducing poverty, and providing basic affordable housing and food security to individuals and families will raise wellbeing for everyone.

## ECONOMIC SECURITY

As noted in the earlier section on Demographics, the East region has one of the highest employment rates (60.8%), the lowest unemployment rate (7.7%), and the second highest after-tax median income (\$75,307) in the province. These characteristics suggest conditions of greater economic security for its residents.

The percentage of persons in low income represents the proportion of Ontarians in families that are spending an additional 20% or more of their income than the average family on food, shelter, and clothing. The percentage of Ontarians in low income has edged up slightly in recent years indicating that their economic security has lessened as well. However, in the East region, the percentage of people in low income



### PERSONS IN LOW INCOME



East	<b>11.9%</b>
Ontario	<b>13.9%</b>

## HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE FOOD INSECURE



East **8.4%**  
Ontario **8.3%**

(11.9%) is one the lowest of any region in Ontario. So despite recent trends of more people in Ontario struggling to make ends meet, the East region has kept the proportion of people in low income comparatively lower. Nevertheless, just over 300,000 people living in the East region are struggling economically.

Food insecurity occurs when nutritious food is not available to people, the amount of food is insufficient, and/or there are barriers to safe and effective food preparation, such as poor drinking water quality or sanitation issues. The numbers of people who are moderately or severely food insecure in Ontario has been rising in recent years, and now sits at 8.3% of the total population. The same percentage of residents in the East region are food insecure, which given recent trends, suggests that the proportion of people who are food insecure is slowly rising in the East as well. This represents approximately 230,000 people in the East region experiencing food insecurity.



## HOUSEHOLDS WITH HOUSING COSTS MORE THAN 30% OF BEFORE- TAX INCOME

East **23.6%**  
Ontario **27.0%**

## HOUSING SECURITY

For housing to be considered affordable, housing costs should be less than 30% of a family's before-tax household income.

In contrast to trends in economic security, the East region has fewer residents spending 30% or more of their income on housing (23.6%) than in the province overall. Housing is a major part of a family's expenses, so similar to the indicators for low income and food security, residents are generally more secure than elsewhere in the province with respect to their shelter needs, which might be linked to the high percentage of people in the region who own their own homes.

## WORK-RELATED STRESS

High levels of stress attributed to work can be related to a variety of factors including poor job quality and low stability — and hence, security — as well as longer hours of work and poor working conditions. One-quarter of working residents in the East region report feeling high levels of work-related stress, which is the lowest among all of the regions. Higher levels of stress are concerning — especially when the region is comparably secure economically — because stress can have a serious effect on one's physical and mental health.

PEOPLE REPORTING HIGH  
LEVELS OF WORK STRESS

East	25.0%
Ontario	28.2%







# TIME USE

**Time use measures how people experience and spend their time. It considers how the use of our time affects physical and mental wellbeing, individual and family wellbeing, and present and future wellbeing. It examines the length of our workweek, our work arrangements, our levels of time pressure, and the time we spend with friends and in other free-time activities.**

The implicit assumption with Time Use is the notion of balance. Most activities are beneficial to wellbeing when done in moderation, but are detrimental when done excessively or not at all. There are only 24-hours in a day, so too much time directed towards one activity can mean not enough or no time at all allocated for other activities that are also critical for our wellbeing. Not only does the amount of time matter, but the pace of and relative control over timing of activities throughout the day can affect overall quality of life.

## TIME

How much time Ontarians devote each day to certain kinds of activities may be beneficial – or detrimental – to their wellbeing. While some people might have the ability to allocate their time to achieve greater work-life balance, too often, factors beyond their control dictate how that time gets allocated.

In the East region, more than 1 in 10 people are working 50 hours or more each week, well beyond the maximum 35 to 40 hours of most full-time employment. However, this is of the lowest percentage in Ontario and recent trends indicate that fewer people are working longer hours.



PEOPLE WORKING  
50+ HOURS PER WEEK



East	<b>12.6%</b>
Ontario	<b>14.3%</b>

## EAST REGION TIME USE



### AVERAGE COMMUTE TIME TO AND FROM WORK (IN MINUTES)

East	<b>51.9</b>
Ontario	<b>53.7</b>

### AVERAGE TIME SPENT PER DAY WITH FRIENDS (IN MINUTES)

East	<b>93.5</b>
Ontario	<b>90.1</b>



Residents in the East region spend on average 52 minutes commuting to and from work each day. This commute time is just a couple of minutes less than the province average.

Perhaps because fewer people are working long hours and commute times are close to the provincial average, residents of the East are, on average, spending more time with friends each day. People spend on average 3.5 minutes more with friends each day, compared to the provincial average of 90.1 minutes per day. While this difference might appear low, the cumulative effect of more time with friends can have a significant impact on people's wellbeing and connection to their communities.

## TIMING

*Timing* considers when activities occur during the day, and how easy or difficult it might be for Ontarians to schedule activities like work, leisure, meals, or volunteer commitments. The more easily people can control their time, the greater their wellbeing.

Having regular, weekday work hours increases the sense of stability and security people feel about their jobs. In the East region, about two-thirds of employees (66.1%) have regular working hours, which is almost the same as the provincial rate (65.9%). Further, the percentage of residents in the East who have access to flexible work hours (i.e., when they choose to begin and end their workday), is the second highest rate in the province. Overall, working people in the East region have marginally more control over their time than elsewhere in the province.

## TEMPORALITY

*Temporality* focuses on the natural rhythms associated with time such as our sleep and waking time rhythms, transitions from day to night, and activities associated with the changing of the seasons.

Sleep is a biological necessity — we need good quality sleep in order to function. Adults require between seven to nine hours of sleep per day, and too much, too little, or poor quality sleep is detrimental to our wellbeing. A little less than one-third of people in the East region (31.1%) report getting between seven and nine hours of quality sleep, which is slightly higher than the provincial rate of 30.5% of the people. Regardless of this small difference, a greater concern is that only about a third of the population report that they are getting a decent night's sleep.

Compared to the provincial rate of almost one-fifth of the working-age population, only 17.3% of people in the East report high levels of time pressure, which is the one of the lowest percentages of any region in Ontario. These lower levels of time pressure might be linked to the lower proportion of residents working long hours and the somewhat shorter commute times they face. Nevertheless, levels of time pressure have remained relatively stable in recent years and suggest the ongoing challenge of achieving work-life balance for many Ontarians.

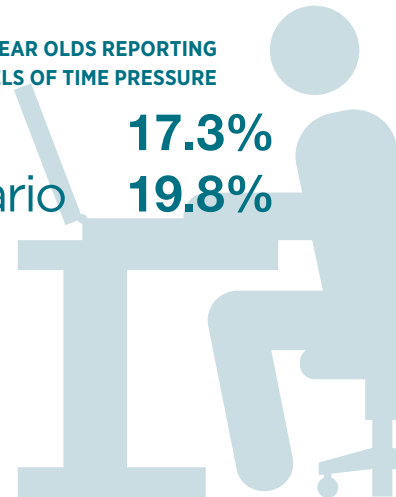


### WORKING PEOPLE WITH FLEXIBLE WORK HOURS

East	<b>49.2%</b>
Ontario	<b>46.1%</b>

### 15 TO 64 YEAR OLDS REPORTING HIGH LEVELS OF TIME PRESSURE

East	<b>17.3%</b>
Ontario	<b>19.8%</b>





# APPENDIX A: METHODS

To create these regional reports on the wellbeing of Ontarians, the most recent data available come from three main sources. These sources of data provided demographic characteristics and indicators for each of the eight domains comprising the CIW's framework identified as critical to our overall wellbeing (i.e., *community vitality, healthy populations, democratic engagement, the environment, leisure and culture, education, living standards, and time use*).

- 1. National survey data and other federal sources** — wherever possible, indicators used for the CIW's national index comprising the eight domains are used. The most recent data, principally from Statistics Canada and other federal agencies (i.e., Ministry of Environment and Climate Change; Legislative Assembly of Canada; Elections Canada) are the main sources for creating portraits of wellbeing. Many of the indicators come from national surveys, including the Canadian Community Health Survey, the General Social Surveys (various cycles on Time Use; Victimization; Social Engagement; Canadian Survey on Giving, Volunteering, and Participating), and the Ethnic Diversity Survey;
- 2. Provincial data sources** — when national data were not available, we chose proxy indicators for several of the domains from provincial agencies and not for profit organizations. The agencies from which indicators were drawn included the Government of Ontario's Public Library Statistics; Government of Ontario's Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network; Ministry of Children and Youth Services; Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport's After-School Program; Ontario Provincial Park Statistics; and People for Education; and
- 3. Census of Canada** — primarily for the section describing the demographic characteristics of Ontarians, data have been taken from the most recent Census of Canada (2011) and augmented by selective use of data from the National Household Survey. The Census also provided the means to adapt selected indicators from national and provincial sources to per capita measures thereby allowing for direct comparisons between regions with quite different population sizes.

Almost all of the data from national sources are for the year 2014. We also used a few data sources from 2013 and at least two from 2015. For the section on demographics, we used the most recent Census of Canada (2011) along with selected indicators from the National Household Survey (2011), where appropriate. To ensure comparability across regions of different population sizes, some indicators have been converted to per capita measures (e.g., number of incidents per 100,000 people). In these cases, we base our population estimates on Statistics Canada guidelines.

The greatest limitation to securing indicators for all of the domains was availability of data at the regional level in Ontario. While indicators could typically be taken from national sources and reported for Ontario as a whole, they could not be disaggregated to the regional level. This limitation occurred for two main reasons. First, the national data simply may not have been available at the regional level, or second, when data were available, the sample was too small for valid reporting on the indicator. We addressed this limitation by seeking out provincial sources of data that could provide appropriate proxy indicators. Provincial sources were scrutinized carefully for conceptual fit, accuracy, and comparability across all provincial regions.

Once we identified, validated, and aggregated the data sources for the five regions of Ontario, portraits of wellbeing across Ontario emerged. These portraits offer a more comprehensive and interconnected understanding of different aspects of wellbeing and how they vary for residents in different regions across the province.

# APPENDIX B: SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR EAST REGION AND ONTARIO

## DEMOGRAPHICS

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
<b>POPULATION</b>	Percentage of provincial population	20.8	100.0
	Percentage of provincial land area	6.1	100.0
<b>AGE</b>	Median age in years	42.0	40.4
	Percentage of population under 15 years of age	16.4	16.9
	Percentage of population 50 years of age and older	37.3	35.1
<b>FAMILIES</b>	Percentage of population 15 years of age or older that is married or living common-law	58.9	57.7
	Percentage of families led by lone parent	15.6	16.7
	Percentage of lone-parent families led by females	78.7	80.5
<b>HOUSEHOLDS</b>	Average number of persons per family	2.9	3.0
	Percentage of population that owns their homes	74.7	71.4
	Percentage of private households occupied by Aboriginal peoples	2.6	2.3
<b>LANGUAGE AND ETHNICITY</b>	Percentage of population with English as first language	76.6	67.5
	Percentage of population with French as first language	8.8	3.8
	Percentage of population with another language as first language	14.6	28.7
	Percentage of population with knowledge of both English and French	20.5	10.9
	Percentage of visible minority population	13.6	25.5
<b>EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME</b>	Employment rate	60.8	59.0
	Unemployment rate	7.7	8.5
	After-tax median family income	\$ 75,307	\$ 71,715

# APPENDIX B

## COMMUNITY VITALITY

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
<b>SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT</b>	Percentage of population reporting somewhat/strong sense of belonging to community	67.3	68.1
	Percentage of population reporting participation in organised activities	58.4	55.2
	Percentage of population living alone	9.9	9.6
<b>SOCIAL SUPPORT</b>	Percentage of population with five or more close friends	53.4	53.7
<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY</b>	Crime Severity Index	31.3	50.0
	Percentage of population who feel safe walking alone after dark	78.8	79.2
<b>SOCIAL NORMS AND VALUES</b>	Percentage of population who provide unpaid help to others on their own	83.7	81.0
	Percentage of population who believe that many/most people can be trusted	58.6	57.3
	Percentage of population reporting experience of discrimination	8.4	9.6

## DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
<b>CITIZEN PARTICIPATION</b>	Percentage of eligible population that voted in last federal election	72.1	67.8
	Percentage of population who volunteer for a law, advocacy, or political group	3.0	3.8
	Percentage with a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in federal parliament	35.2	39.6
<b>POLITICAL LEADERSHIP</b>	Percentage of female Members of Parliament (MPs) federally	33.3	31.4
	Percentage of female Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs)	30.4	34.6
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	Percentage of total expenses used by Members of Parliament (MPs) to send communications to householders in their ridings	7.5	6.9

## EDUCATION

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
<b>ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT</b>	Percentage of population age 25 and older participating in education-related activities	4.9	5.2
	Percentage of 25 to 64 year olds in population with a university degree	26.2	28.5
<b>MEASURING PROGRESS</b>	Percentage of elementary schools measuring progress in student health or wellbeing	63.0	55.7
	Percentage of elementary schools measuring progress in citizenship skills	26.3	29.0
	Percentage of elementary schools measuring progress in creativity	19.1	19.7
	Percentage of elementary schools measuring progress in socio-emotional skills	47.5	44.4
	Percentage of elementary schools measuring progress in school learning environment	55.8	51.9
<b>LIBRARIES</b>	Average number of early literacy and early learning programs per 1,000 children	22.8	25.8
	Average number of other children's programs per 1,000 children	24.2	16.5
	Average number of careers, job help, and skills programs per 1,000 adult population	0.1	0.2
	Average number of adult learning programs per 1,000 adult population	3.8	2.7
<b>CHILD CARE</b>	Percentage of children aged 0 to 4 years for whom there is a regulated centre-based child care space	19.6	20.7
	Average minutes per day spent in interactive (talk-based) child care for children 0 to 14 years of age	33.1	39.6



## ENVIRONMENT

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
AIR QUALITY	Ground level ozone (population weighted in parts per billion)	28.1	27.4
	Overall total GHG emissions (megatonnes of CO2 per year)	5.1	45.6
	Percentage of provincial GHG emissions (megatonnes of CO2 per year) contributed by region	11.3	100.0
WATER QUALITY	pH levels (based on 1 to 14 scale where 7 is considered neutral)	8.2	8.2
WASTE REDUCTION	Percentage of total residential waste diverted by municipalities (includes Blue Box and other materials)	45.7	47.3

## HEALTHY POPULATIONS

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
SELF-REPORTED HEALTH	Percentage of population who rate their overall health as very good or excellent	60.4	59.2
	Percentage of population who rate their mental health as very good or excellent	69.8	70.4
	Percentage of population with no health or activity limitations	63.7	67.9
	Percentage of population with self-reported diabetes	7.5	7.4
HEALTH-RELATED BEHAVIOUR	Percentage of daily or occasional smokers among teens aged 12 to 19 years	5.6	5.8
	Percentage of population getting influenza immunization	38.7	35.4
HEALTH CARE ACCESS	Percentage of population with a regular health physician	93.1	92.5

## LEISURE AND CULTURE

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
LEISURE PARTICIPATION	Average percentage of time spent on the previous day in social leisure activities	12.6	13.0
	Average percentage of time spent on the previous day in arts and culture activities	3.6	4.1
	Average monthly frequency of participation in physical activity lasting over 15 minutes	31.1	28.2
	Average number of hours in the past year volunteering for culture and recreation organizations	39.1	30.5
	Average number of nights away per vacation trip in past year to destinations at least 80 km from home	2.8	2.8
PROVINCIAL PARKS	Number of provincial parks per 100,000 population	1.8	2.2
	Average number of visitors ('000s) per provincial park in past year	50.8	32.9
LIBRARIES	Number of annual library programs in past year per 1,000 population	15.4	16.6
	Number of Culture Days, poetry and story readings, and arts shows in past year per 10,000 population	1.6	4.4
	Number of in-person visits made to the library in a typical week per 1,000 population	86.0	103.2
	Number of library internet connections per 10,000 population	8.0	7.2

## APPENDIX B

### LIVING STANDARDS

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
<b>ECONOMIC SECURITY</b>	After tax median income of economic families	\$ 75,307	\$ 71,715
	Percentage of persons in low income	11.9	13.9
	Percentage of households that are moderately or severely food insecure	8.4	8.3
<b>HOUSING SECURITY</b>	Percentage of households with shelter costs exceeding 30% of before-tax household income	23.6	27.0
<b>WORK-RELATED STRESS</b>	Percentage of population reporting quite a bit or extreme self-perceived work stress	25.0	28.2

### TIME USE

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
<b>TIME</b>	Percentage of population reporting working 50 hours or more per week	12.6	14.3
	Average workday commute time (both ways) for individuals working for pay (minutes per day)	51.9	53.7
	Average amount of time spent with friends (minutes per day)	93.5	90.1
<b>TIMING</b>	Percentage of labour force with regular, weekday work hours	66.1	65.9
	Percentage of individuals working for pay with flexible work hours	49.2	46.1
<b>TEMPORALITY</b>	Percentage of population who report 7 to 9 hours of good quality essential sleep	31.1	30.5
	Percentage of 15 to 64 year olds reporting high levels of time pressure	17.3	19.8

### OVERALL LIFE SATISFACTION

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	EAST	ONTARIO
<b>WELLBEING</b>	Percentage of population reporting being somewhat to very satisfied with life	87.3	85.6

# APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY

## COMPOSITE INDEX

A composite index is a grouping of factors, measures, or other indices that have been combined in a standardized way, providing a useful statistical measure of overall performance over time.

## CRIME SEVERITY INDEX

The Crime Severity Index measures changes in the level of severity of crime in Canada from year to year. The Index includes all Criminal Code violations including traffic, as well as drug violations and all Federal Statutes, and is calculated using Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR2) data. In the index, all crimes are assigned a weight based on their seriousness. The level of seriousness is based on actual sentences handed down by the courts in all provinces and territories. More serious crimes are assigned higher weights, less serious offences lower weights. As a result, more serious offences have a greater impact on changes in the index (Statistics Canada, 2015).

## GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (GHGS)

Greenhouse Gases are any gaseous compounds in the atmosphere that absorb infrared radiation, which results in heat being trapped and held within the atmosphere. As trapped heat increases in the atmosphere, the greenhouse effect results, which leads to global warming. Some forms of human activity (e.g., burning fossil fuels, deforestation) lead to certain types of gas released into the atmosphere, which leads to more warming. Carbon dioxide is the primary gas responsible for the greenhouse effect, but methane, nitrous oxide, and water vapour also contribute to the effect.

## GROUND-LEVEL OZONE

Ground-level ozone is a colorless and highly irritating gas that forms just above the earth's surface. It is called a "secondary" pollutant because it is produced when two primary pollutants react in sunlight and stagnant air — nitrogen oxides and volatile organic

compounds (i.e., carbon-containing gases and vapors such as gasoline fumes and solvents) — which come from both natural sources and human activities (e.g., burning fuels). Ground-level ozone irritates the respiratory tract and eyes, and exposures to high levels result in chest tightness, coughing, and wheezing, so people with respiratory and heart problems are at a higher risk. Ozone also causes agricultural crop loss each year in Ontario and noticeable leaf damage in many crops, garden plants, and trees.

(See: <https://www.ec.gc.ca/air/default.asp?lang=En&n=590611CA-1>).

### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Affordable housing should cost less than 30% of a family's before-tax household income. Shelter costs include, as applicable, mortgage payments (both principal and interest), property taxes, condominium fees, and payments for electricity, fuel, water, and other municipal services (CMHC, 2015).

### LOW INCOME CUT-OFF

Low income cut-off (LICO) is an income threshold below which a family will likely devote a larger share of its income on the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing than the average family. The approach is essentially to estimate an income threshold at which families are expected to spend 20% more than the average family on food, shelter, and clothing (Statistics Canada, 2015. See: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2015001-eng.htm>).

### pH LEVEL

pH level is a measure of the acidity of water and therefore its quality. Pure water is neutral and has a pH level of 7.0. As values fall below 7.0, water is increasingly acidic; as values rise above 7.0, water is increasingly alkaline. Changes in the pH level of water are important for the health of many organisms. Most organisms have adapted to life in water of a specific pH and may die if it changes even slightly. Factors that can affect the pH level include in the type bedrock and soil composition over which water flows; the amount of organic material in the water as it decomposes; and the release of chemicals into the water, typically from human sources.

### WASTE DIVERSION RATE

The waste diversion rate is the percentage of the total amount of waste material that is kept out of landfills. In other words, the rate represents that part of all waste materials diverted as a percentage of the total amount of waste disposed.



CANADIAN  
*i*ndex  
OF WELLBEING

Measuring what matters

Making measures matter



An agency of the Government of Ontario.  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario.

