



Social Determinants of Health

Food Security

March 2024

Quality of Care NL is proud to partner
with **Choosing Wisely Canada**



Who We Are



Quality of Care NL is an applied health and social systems research and evaluation program aimed at improving social and health outcomes in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Proud partner of Choosing Wisely Canada  Choosing Wisely NL

Food Security



Food security is the adequate and secure access to nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate food. Food insecurity is the inadequate or insecure access to these types of food due to financial constraints.

Food insecurity is a serious public health problem. It can have significant implications for people's health and well-being beyond just poor nutrition and diet. Individuals who are food insecure may be at an increased risk for a variety of negative health outcomes (i.e., diabetes, obesity, heart disease, mental health disorders and other chronic conditions). Food insecurity can also make it difficult for individuals to manage existing health problems and can lead to worsening conditions.

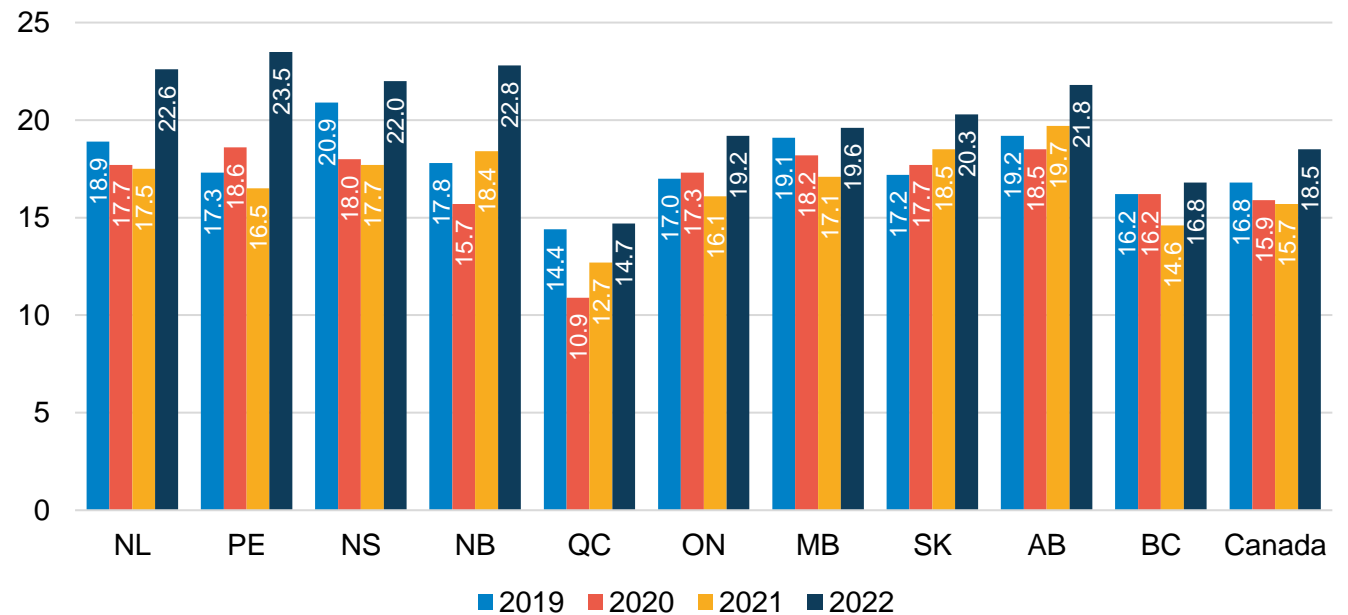


Canadian Income Survey

In Canada, food insecurity is measured through the Household Food Security Survey Module of the Canadian Income Survey (CIS). Households are classified into one of four categories:

- Food secure (no indication of any income-related problems of food access)
 - Marginally food insecure (worry about running out of food and/or limited food selection due to a lack of money for food)
 - Moderately food insecure (compromise in quality and/or quantity of food due to a lack of money for food)
 - Severely food insecure (miss meals, reduce food intake and, at the most extreme, go day(s) without food)
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- Overall, from 2019 to 2022, household food insecurity has increased across Canada.
 - From 2019 to 2022, the rate of food insecurity increased by 19.6% in NL (10.1% for Canada).
 - In 2022, NL ranked eighth for household food insecurity when compared to the other provinces (1=best and 10=worst).

Percentage of People Living in Food-Insecure Households by Province, 2019 to 2022



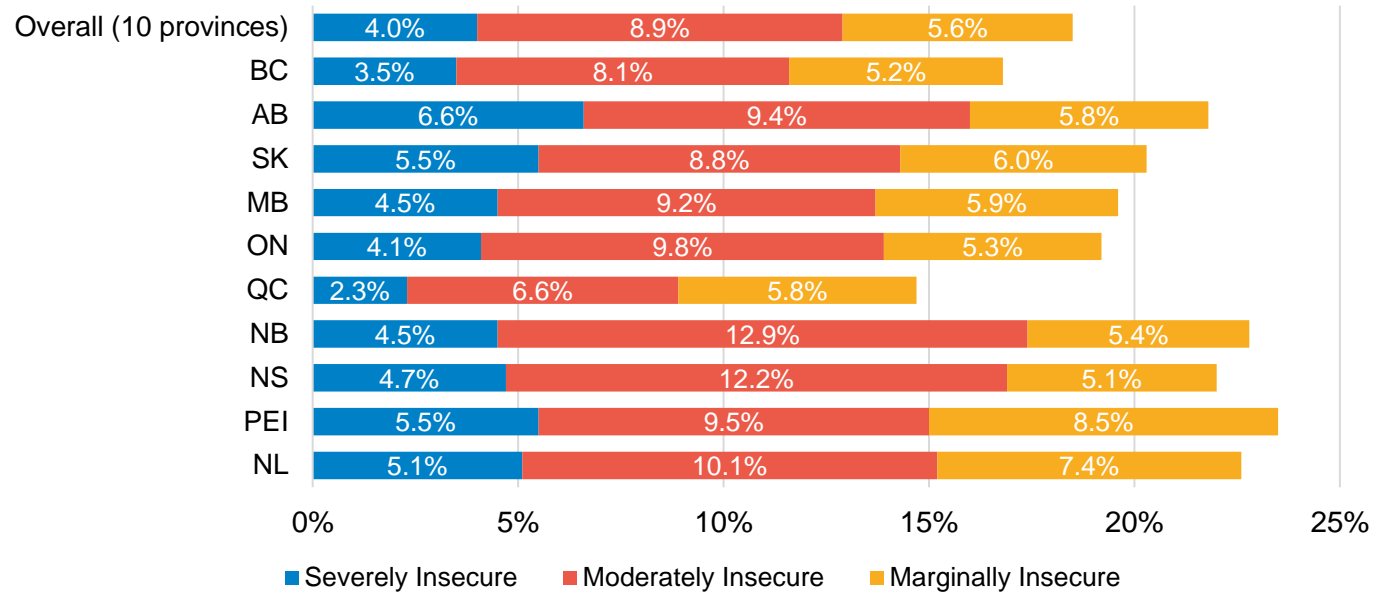
Source: Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0835-01 Food Insecurity by selected demographic characteristics; Canadian Income Survey (CIS), 2019 to 2022

Canadian Income Survey

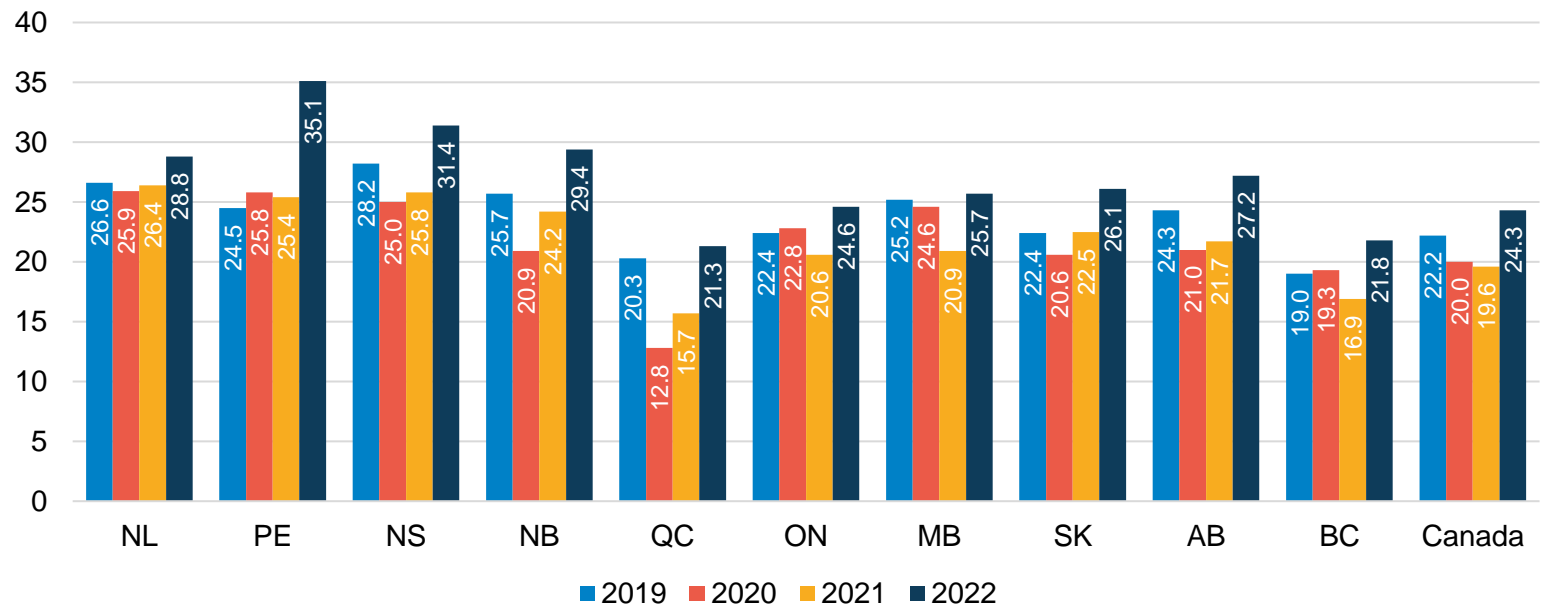
- In 2022, NL had the third highest rate of food insecurity in Canada at 22.6%.
- In 2022, NL had the fourth highest rate of severe food insecurity.
- Overall, from 2019 to 2022, the percentage of children living in food-insecure households increased for all provinces.
- From 2019 to 2022, the rate of food insecurity in children under 18 years of age increased by 8.3% in NL (9.5% for Canada).
- In 2022, NL had the fourth highest proportion of children under 18 years of age living in food-insecure households.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0835-01 Food Insecurity by selected demographic characteristics; Canadian Income Survey (CIS), 2019 to 2022

Household Food Insecurity in Canada by Province and Level of Insecurity, 2022



Percentage of Children under 18 Living in Food-Insecure Households by Province, 2019 to 2022



Cost of Nutritious Food Basket per Week in Newfoundland and Labrador by Region, 2016 to 2022

Region	2016	2017	2018	2021	2022
Eastern	\$262	\$261	\$261	\$261	\$292
Eastern Urban	\$261	\$257	\$259	\$244	\$274
Eastern Rural	\$263	\$272	\$268	\$302	\$340
Central	\$261	\$263	\$260	\$288	\$324
Central Urban	\$258	\$251	\$254	\$246	\$282
Central Rural	\$263	\$268	\$262	\$306	\$342
Western	\$272	\$273	\$256	\$305	\$335
Western Urban	\$271	\$269	\$240	\$298	\$327
Western Rural	\$274	\$279	\$278	\$311	\$342
Labrador-Grenfell	\$275	\$276	\$278	\$314	\$361
Labrador (North Coast)	\$380	\$402	\$368	\$394	\$467
Labrador (South Coast)	\$296	\$308	\$310	\$363	\$413
Labrador (Central West)	\$257	\$256	\$260	\$289	\$324
Northern Peninsula Portion of LGH	\$267	\$258	\$269	\$325	\$385
Province	\$264	\$264	\$261	\$275	\$309

Notes:

1. The 2021 and 2022 Newfoundland & Labrador Nutritious Food Basket (NLNFB) consists of 61 foods from the 2019 Canada's Food Guide. The prices of specific amounts of these foods, combined with the nutrient needs of individuals and families determines the cost of the basket. The NLNFB has undergone revisions since 2018 to include different food items based on the updated Canada's food guide; therefore, calculating the change from 2018 to 2021 is not advised.
2. A change to one item in the basket, store selection and regional definition of North Coast and South Coast Labrador has resulted in adjustments to the 2021 estimates. These changes ensure consistency when comparing 2021 and 2022.

Source: Compiled by the Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency (NLSA) based on survey data from the Newfoundland & Labrador Nutritious Food Basket (NLNFB), 2016 to 2022

Newfoundland & Labrador Nutritious Food Basket

The Newfoundland and Labrador Nutritious Food Basket (NLNFB) consists of 61 foods from the 2019 Canada's Food Guide. The prices of specific amounts of these foods, combined with the nutrient needs of individuals and families determines the cost of the basket.

The basket is calculated based on a family of four, made up of a man and a woman (31-50 years), a boy (14-18 years) and a girl (4-8 years) and provides estimates for both urban and rural locations in Newfoundland and Labrador. Urban is defined as communities with a population of 5,000 and over. All other areas are defined as rural.

- Food costs have consistently been highest in the Labrador-Grenfell region (with the highest being on the North Coast of Labrador) of the province.
- From 2021 to 2022, the cost of a nutritious food basket has increased by 12% in NL.
 - 12% in Eastern
 - 13% in Central
 - 10% in Western
 - 15% in Labrador-Grenfell

Food Banks Canada Report: HungerCount 2023

Since 1997, Food Banks Canada has conducted the HungerCount, a cross-sectional, census-type survey of most food bank agencies, organizations and programs. The HungerCount provides a point-in-time snapshot of food bank use in Canada.

According to survey respondents, the top three reasons people accessed a food bank in March 2023 were:

1. Food costs
 2. Housing costs
 3. Low wages or not enough hours of work
- NL had a 12% increase in food bank usage from March 2022 to March 2023 (the eighth highest increase amongst the Canadian provinces).

Source: Food Banks Canada. (2023). HungerCount 2023. When is it Enough? <https://hungercount.foodbankscanada.ca>

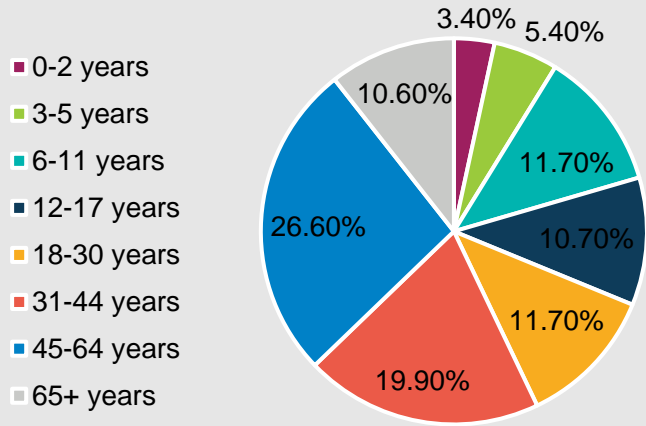
Food Bank Visits and Age Distribution of Users by Province, March 2023

Region	Total Visits, March 2023	Total Visits (children), March 2023	% change in total visits (2022-23)	% change in total visits (2019-23)	Age Category Served as % of total		
					<18 years	18-64 years	65+ years
NL	15,425	5,305	12.4%	44.1%	31.2%	58.2%	10.6%
PEI	4,212	1,420	26.9%	42.3%	33.6%	59.5%	6.9%
NS	32,498	10,039	8.8%	26.8%	31.4%	62.0%	6.6%
NB	29,846	10,322	24.7%	34.0%	34.0%	60.3%	5.7%
QC	682,724	240,325	38.0%	97.8%	35.7%	55.7%	8.6%
ON	681,292	202,914	40.1%	100.6%	30.6%	60.8%	8.6%
MB	57,351	20,794	30.4%	-	42.3%	52.9%	4.8%
SK	55,753	22,193	24.3%	49.8%	40.3%	55.15	4.6%
AB	174,311	63,729	11.9%	94.1%	35.1%	59.5%	5.4%
BC	195,925	62,481	20.0%	57.1%	30.9%	59.4%	9.7%
Canada	1,935,911	642,257	32.0%	79.0%	33.1%	59.0%	7.9%

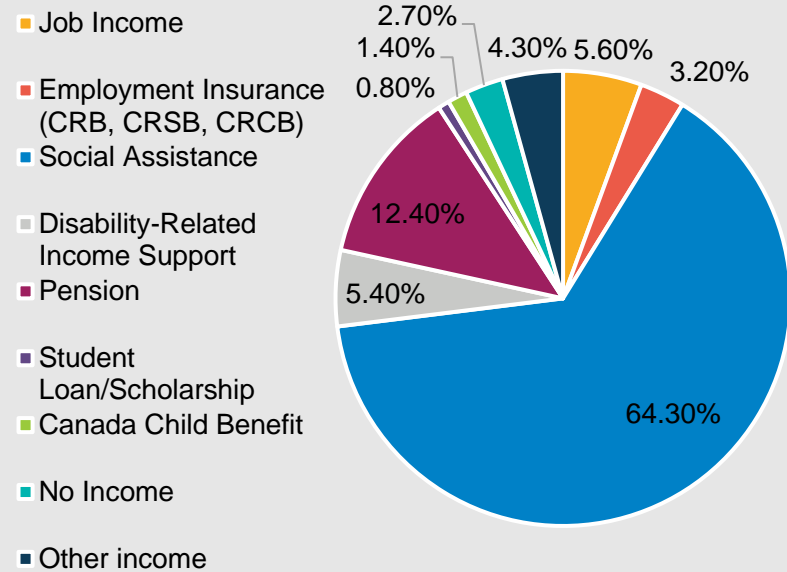
Characteristics of Food Bank Clients by Province, March 2023

Region	Household Type		Source of Income			Housing Type		
	% single-parent families	% single people	% social assistance	% job income	% pension income	% rental market tenants	% social housing tenants	% homeowners
NL	22.6	49.5	64.3	5.6	12.4	50.1	26.5	20.1
PEI	15.3	41.8	23.1	32.9	3.9	57.9	26.6	9.3
NS	17.6	48.7	35.9	17.9	9.9	70.4	10.0	12.7
NB	17.0	50.0	43.7	13.8	10.2	61.5	15.8	14.8
QC	18.9	37.1	42.4	18.6	12.0	67.5	15.4	7.5
ON	16.3	46.8	20.5	13.0	8.8	71.2	14.7	5.3
MB	17.2	34.7	25.7	15.8	5.5	48.2	25.0	11.9
SK	25.5	41.3	40.7	14.3	7.3	71.4	13.1	7.0
AB	19.2	40.9	22.6	21.7	8.6	64.7	7.4	10.4
BC	12.2	53.3	16.9	21.7	12.8	72.7	8.0	7.7
Canada	17.3	43.8	28.8	16.7	9.9	67.7	15.0	7.7

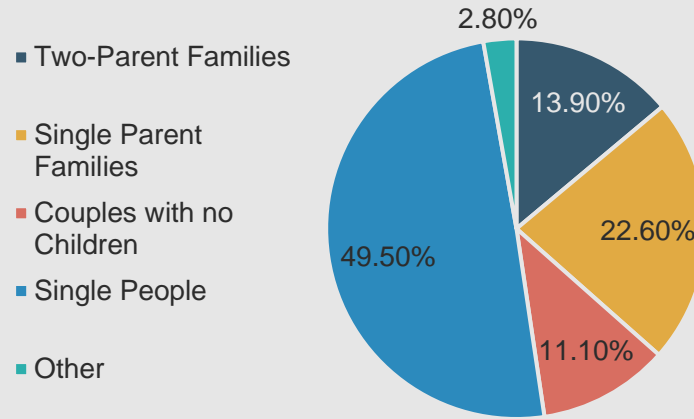
Age Categories Served as a % of Total, by Age Group, March 2023



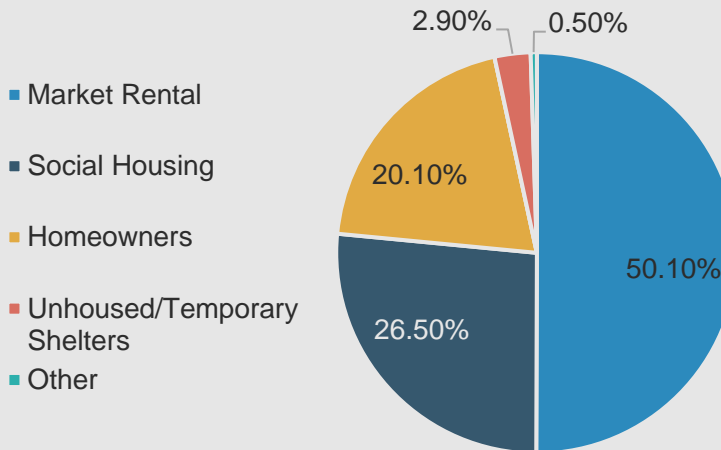
Primary Source of Income, March 2023



Household Type, March 2023



Housing Type, March 2023



Food Banks Canada Report: HungerCount 2023

Newfoundland and Labrador Food Bank User Statistics

- 31.2% of food bank clients in NL are children (< 18 years) and 10.6% are seniors (65+ years).
- Single-person households account for 49.5% of food bank clients in NL (the third highest rate amongst Canadian provinces).
- 64.3% of food bank clients in NL were receiving social assistance (the highest rate amongst the Canadian provinces) and 18% were either employed or receiving a pension.
- Renters and social housing tenants make up over 76% of food bank clients in NL.



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