

Financial expectations of retired Canadians

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In 2014, a group of non-retired Canadians were asked about their financial expectations for retirement. New data from the fifth wave (2020) of the Longitudinal and International Study of Adults (LISA) reveals how this same group of Canadians—now retired—is doing financially. In 2014, just over two-thirds (67.5%) of these people expected their retirement income to be adequate or more than adequate to comfortably maintain their standard of living. Now retired in 2020, 81.6% found that their retirement income was sufficient to comfortably cover their living expenses.

Similar results were observed for both men and women. In 2014, approximately two-thirds of non-retired men (68.5%) and women (66.4%) expected an adequate or more than adequate retirement income. In 2020, 82.2% of men and 81.0% of women declared their retirement income to be sufficient in comfortably covering their living expenses.

Individuals who belonged to a racialized group, who had ever had a disability or who had a high school education or less were not as optimistic about their expected retirement income. Of individuals belonging to a racialized group, two in five (40.4%) did not expect their retirement income to be adequate to maintain their pre-retirement standard of living. However, once retired, 56.0% of people in this group found that their retirement income was sufficient. In comparison, 83.8% of people in the non-racialized group found their retirement income to be sufficient. Meanwhile, nearly three-quarters of people who had ever had a disability (72.4%) and people who had a high school education or less (73.5%) found that their retirement income comfortably covered their living expenses. These proportions surpassed their expectations by 17.1 and 23.2 percentage points, respectively.

In total, 39.9% of people who had ever had a disability and 30.3% of people who had a high school education or less predicted that their primary source of retirement income would be from a workplace pension plan or their personal retirement savings. In 2020, 44.2% of people who had ever had a disability and 41.2% of people who had a high school education or less received income from a workplace pension plan or a retirement savings plan. These rates were lower than those for people who had no disability (54.7%) or who had a postsecondary education (58.0%).

Additional details are available in today's infographic release that uses LISA data to examine the financial expectations and outcomes of retired Canadians. The microdata file for the fifth wave (2020) of the LISA will also be available at Statistics Canada's research data centres.



Table 1
Retirement income expected to be adequate or more than adequate, 2014

	Yes	No
	%	
Men	68.5	31.5
Women	66.4	33.6
Racialized group	40.4 ^E	59.6
Non-Racialized group	69.8	30.2
Have had a disability	55.3	44.7
No disability	79.3	20.7
High school or less	50.3	49.7
Postsecondary graduate	76.9	23.1
Total	67.5	32.5

^E use with caution

Note(s): Disability status refers to the presence of a disability at some point from 2014 to 2020. Under the social model of disabilities, disability is a fluid concept and can be episodic in nature. As only difficulties or long-term conditions that have or are expected to last for six months or more are considered, people could have a disability at one point in time and not at another.

Source(s): Longitudinal and International Study of Adults (5144).

Table 2
Retirement income sufficient to comfortably cover living expenses, 2020

	Yes	No
	%	
Men	82.2	17.8
Women	81.0	19.0
Racialized group	56.0 ^E	44.0 ^E
Non-Racialized group	83.8	16.2
Have had a disability	72.4	27.6
No disability	90.6	9.4 ^E
High school or less	73.5	26.5
Postsecondary graduate	86.0	14.0
Total	81.6	18.4

^E use with caution

Note(s): Disability status refers to the presence of a disability at some point from 2014 to 2020. Under the social model of disabilities, disability is a fluid concept and can be episodic in nature. As only difficulties or long-term conditions that have or are expected to last for six months or more are considered, people could have a disability at one point in time and not at another.

Source(s): Longitudinal and International Study of Adults ([5144](#)).

Table 3
Expected primary source of income in retirement, 2014

	Government programs ¹	Workplace pension/personal retirement savings	Other
	%		
Men	25.2	55.4	19.4
Women	34.8	44.7	20.5
Racialized group	50.1 ^E	31.1 ^E	18.8 ^E
Non-Racialized group	28.0	52.1	19.9
Have had a disability	41.3	39.9	18.7
No disability	18.4	60.4	21.1
High school or less	48.4	30.3	21.2
Postsecondary graduate	19.5	61.3	19.1
Total	29.7	50.4	19.9

^E use with caution

1. Includes the Canada Pension Plan, the Quebec Pension Plan, Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement.

Note(s): Disability status refers to the presence of a disability at some point from 2014 to 2020. Under the social model of disabilities, disability is a fluid concept and can be episodic in nature. As only difficulties or long-term conditions that have or are expected to last for six months or more are considered, people could have a disability at one point in time and not at another.

Source(s): Longitudinal and International Study of Adults (5144).

Table 4
Income from employer pension plan or retirement savings plan, 2020¹

	Yes	No
	%	
Men	56.8	43.2
Women	46.8	53.2
Racialized group	32.8 ^E	67.2
Non-Racialized group	53.8	46.2
Have had a disability	44.2	55.8
No disability	54.7	45.3
High school or less	41.2	58.8
Postsecondary graduate	58.0	42.0
Total	52.1	47.9

^E use with caution

1. Refers to income from an employer pension plan in 2020 or withdrawals from a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) in 2019, the most recent tax year for which data are available.

Note(s): Disability status refers to the presence of a disability at some point from 2014 to 2020. Under the social model of disabilities, disability is a fluid concept and can be episodic in nature. As only difficulties or long-term conditions that have or are expected to last for six months or more are considered, people could have a disability at one point in time and not at another.

Source(s): Longitudinal and International Study of Adults (5144).

Note to readers

The Longitudinal and International Study of Adults (LISA) is a longitudinal survey that collects information from respondents across Canada on their jobs, education, health and family. Since 2012, the same people have been interviewed every two years to see how changes in work, education and health have affected their lives. With LISA, researchers can now better assess the long-term benefits of postsecondary education, or how job loss or poor health can affect other aspects of people's lives.

New theme content added in 2020 includes questions about homelessness and work schedules.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5144.

The infographic "[Income in retirement: Expectations versus reality](#)" is now available as part of the series *Statistics Canada – Infographics (11-627-M)*.

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