

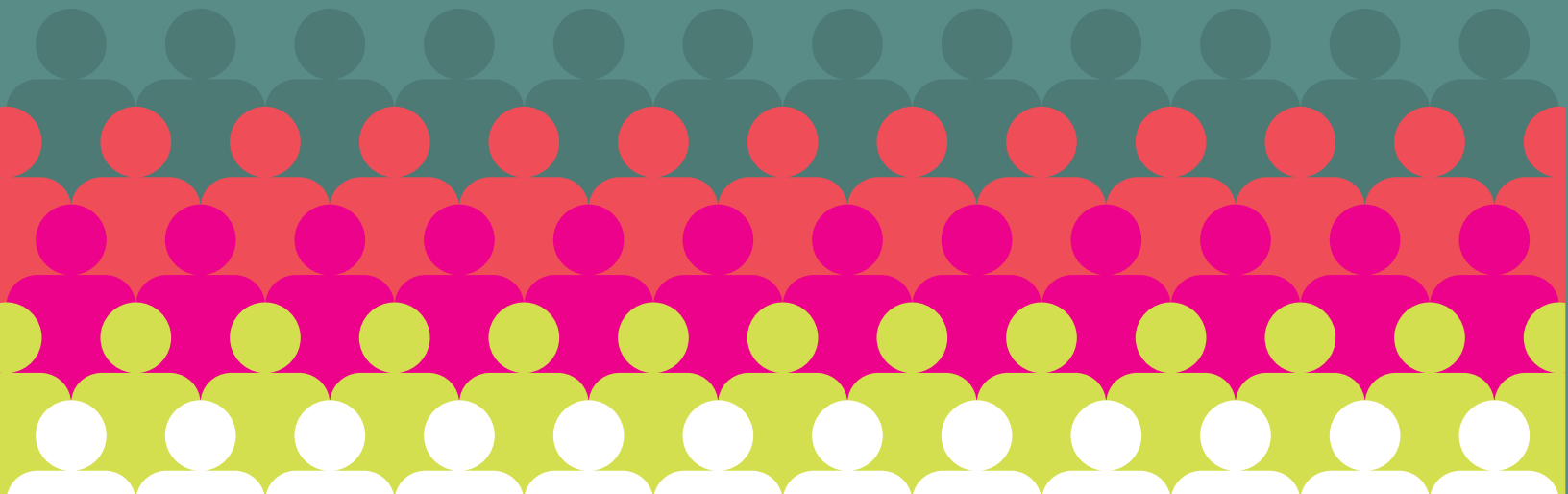
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Full Report  
September 2024

CANADAWEST  
FOUNDATION

# Finding Their Place: Manitoba youth mobility

Stephany Lavery & Janet Lane



# Canada West Foundation

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This report was written by Stephany Lavery, Senior Policy Analyst, Skills, Innovation and Productivity and Janet Lane, Former Director, Skills, Innovation and Productivity and now Senior Fellow, at the Canada West Foundation.

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Rural Manitoba Economic Development  
YES! Winnipeg

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# Executive Summary

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**Manitoba is rich in diversity in both its people and opportunities.**

It has one of the youngest populations in Canada. It is diverse with large First Nations, Métis, Francophone and immigrant communities who call Manitoba home. The province's arts and cultural sector reflects the richness that creativity and diversity bring. Its economy, with jobs in sectors that range from biosciences to transportation and logistics, aeronautics and manufacturing, offers many meaningful work opportunities for youth. And while other provinces experienced wild economic fluctuations during the pandemic, Manitoba's wide range of industries and businesses helped maintain economic stability with youth employment rates that are still better than the national average.

Despite all of this, youth are leaving.

This follows a decades-long trend. Those leaving the province include youth who born here in the province and those who immigrated from outside of the country.

Out-migration is a challenge that must be resolved if the province is to continue to grow and thrive. To find the root causes of this trend, a project administered by the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce through funding from the Government of Manitoba's COVID-19 Long-Term Recovery Fund was launched, asking the Canada West Foundation to investigate the following research question:

***How can the Government of Manitoba and the business ecosystem support the attraction and retention of young talent to the province?***

Canada West Foundation completed an extensive literature review and a broad investigation into the reality of life in Manitoba. This information has been compared to the perceptions expressed by 1,584 young adults (aged 18-45 years) from across Canada (400 in Manitoba and 300 each in Vancouver, Toronto, Calgary and Edmonton) and 116 employers from across the province through online surveys. Additional surveys of newcomers, First Nations youth, Francophones, and post-secondary alumni added to the understanding of the perceptions of young adults in Manitoba and their mobility intentions. This information has been verified through focus groups and roundtables as well as a variety of interviews.

### **Context**

Canada West Foundation published two pertinent reports in 2022. The first, *The Young are Restless: Western Youth Migration*, illuminated youth migration and economic patterns across Western Canada. The second, *Work to Live: Alberta Youth Mobility*, discussed the reasons why, between 2015 and 2021, and in a complete reversal of the usual pattern, more youth had left Alberta than moved to it. Canada West Foundation was contracted to conduct a similar study to determine the attitudes of youth in Manitoba.

Manitoba results show that except for the first year of the pandemic, the province has consistently experienced net out-migration of about one per cent of young adults aged 25-34 every year since 1986.

Students leaving high school decide whether to enter the workforce, upgrade their education or enter post-secondary studies. In their early 20s, youth decide to continue their chosen path, return to school from the workforce, or enter the workforce after further studies. In their late 20s or early 30s, youth consider where they can best advance their career and/or settle down.

## **Findings**

Long standing perceptions of Manitoba as rural and Winnipeg as unsafe tell part of the story for why youth may choose to leave or not come to Manitoba.

On the other hand, Manitoba youth may regard Winnipeg as an attractive location for post-secondary education as the tuition rates are comparatively cheaper than in other provinces and a move to the city allows youth to stay close to family. Rural youth also perceive Winnipeg to have more career opportunities than their home communities (in many cases this could be true).

One distressing finding is that since the pandemic, youth have increasing pessimism about their ability to live and be successful anywhere.

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### **Cost of living**

The top economic factors to attract and retain youth are housing/rental costs, low tax rates and vehicle expenses/affordability of travel home.

But while Manitoba offers comparatively affordable housing and rental options, that gap is closing. Income and property taxes are amongst the highest in the western provinces. Middle income earners are particularly hard pressed.

Travel and transportation are comparable to other provinces while vehicle insurance rates are more affordable. Flights to the north are expensive across all provinces while bus travel is cheaper but time consuming.

Tuition is affordable for both domestic and international students, but tuition costs were not as significant of an attraction or retention factor. People will pay for education if they believe it sets them up for success.

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### **Workforce attraction and retention**

Manitoba's economy is relatively more diverse than those in the other western provinces and its youth fared comparatively well during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods for unemployment.

The minimum wage increase was a step in the right direction for young talent in the province as the gap between minimum wage and living wage is the lowest amongst the cities which are most attractive to youth. However, wages are still comparatively lower in Winnipeg than other large western Canadian cities.

In addition to wages, benefits including advancement opportunity, flexible hours and remote work options are attractive to youth. While the majority of employers in Manitoba do offer these benefits, hourly earners are more likely to be ineligible for them, and fewer rural employers offer them. There are wage disparities within groups – women, particularly First Nations women, face a pay gap and are likely to face additional barriers to employment which make them more reliant on government support.

The combined challenge of wages that are less competitive and fewer other benefits may make it more difficult for Manitoba to both attract and retain talent compared to other jurisdictions. Businesses outside Winnipeg reported they were less likely to engage with post-secondaries to ensure students meet job requirements, which may also partially explain why employers struggle to find workers with the skills they need.

First Nations youth would leave the province to work for an Indigenous employer – only five per cent of businesses in Manitoba are First Nations owned and operated.

Recognition of learning and competencies built outside of formal education or in other countries remains a barrier to workforce entry for young people. For example, newcomers may have to pay tuition to obtain credentials that they have already earned elsewhere.

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## **Beyond the economics**

Manitoba respondents to the surveys were more likely to consider a move to another province or community due to social factors than economic or quality of life factors.

In fact, safety, family, and clean communities/reputation of province were the top social factors for Manitobans to consider. Crime, particularly violent crime, is both a perceived and real issue in Winnipeg. As people outside Manitoba tend to view Manitoba as synonymous with Winnipeg, those issues become extrapolated to the rest of the province by provincial outsiders.

There is a close connection between poverty and violent crime rates. Manitoba has the second highest child poverty rate for both youth under the age of 18 and under the age of six. While the rates were in decline in 2019 and 2021, there was a reversal of those trends in 2021 after pandemic supports were removed. Overall and violent crime rates for Manitoban youth also spiked in 2021 after trending downward over the past decade.

While youth spent increasingly more time online prior to the pandemic, the overnight shift to virtual environments for social life, learning and work redefined how youth who have digital access connect with their friends, employers and community. Youth who lacked broadband access, and who live in low-income communities, were more disconnected. This transition disrupted the essential period when youth build connections outside their families and childhood friends.

Youth understand that Manitoba has an abundance of nature and value clean and green spaces but safety concerns and the homebody, virtual nature of this generation of youth may make them less likely to get out and enjoy those spaces.

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### **Manitoba's cooler than you (and they) think**

Manitoba has become synonymous with Winnipeg for those who live outside the province. The rest of the province is relatively unknown unless individuals have a personal connection to the province.

Of the quality-of-life factors surveyed, youth value walkability, urban recreation and outdoor recreation. They want things to do in their communities and do not want to have to travel far to get to those activities. If they do have to travel, they want quality transit options. Manitoba fares comparatively well in quality-of-life factors which attract youth.

While the majority of Winnipeg respondents view their province in a favourable light, a higher proportion of respondents in other major cities see their province favourably.

Among the focus group participants there was a pervading sense that areas outside Winnipeg were boring with limited diversity of food, arts, and culture. This aligns with the perceptions of those outside Manitoba.

Winnipeg has one of the best bikeability scores in Western Canada, second only to Victoria and Vancouver, while walkability is comparable to cities across the prairies.

Manitoba's intra-provincial transit is behind that of Alberta, B.C., Ontario and southern areas of Saskatchewan. Transit within communities is limited to certain communities, such as Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson. Winnipeg is one of the only major cities in Western Canada to not offer LRT service and reliability and transit safety are issues.

Those outside Manitoba view the province as comparatively colder in temperature and more snowy than other parts of the country. While the cold certainly starts earlier in the year and lasts longer, the city does not get as much average snowfall as Edmonton or Saskatoon and is more comparable to Calgary.



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## Further observations

There are huge opportunities for Manitoba's young people to experience an affordable quality of life that is not as readily available to their counterparts in the rest of the country. Unfortunately, the stories being told prevent people from considering the province as a place to realize their aspirations. There are also long-standing, real challenges that the province faces and there are no easy solutions or quick fixes.

Youth want communities that offer a diversity of experiences and people. Perhaps this is why, despite its cost, British Columbia has been a draw for youth from all demographics. While Manitoba has an abundance of outdoor recreation, communities outside Winnipeg are often seen and described as boring – even by the youth that live in those communities. While Winnipeg offers such diversity, the city is comparatively more expensive than other parts of the province. Youth also view Winnipeg as a place to start a career but view other major cities as having more long-term potential, particularly in emerging industries which are more attractive to this generation.

Youth may have different motivating factors depending on their cultural community. A large proportion of immigrant youth, especially those who have been in Manitoba for more than 10 years, indicated a willingness to move to another province and present a large portion of out-migration from Manitoba each year. More recent newcomers want communities which are inclusive and have policies that support newcomer settlement and integration.

The issues faced by First Nations youth persist, especially in the North. While First Nations youth are less likely to leave the province, they are more at risk of intra-provincial migration – moving from rural communities to urban centres such as Brandon and Winnipeg. First Nations youth respondents to the surveys also indicated they are willing to consider moving to another province – especially for a job with an Indigenous-owned business.

Francophone youth have limited options within the province for post-secondary education. If they do choose to stay in the province, they choose Université de Saint-Boniface. Francophone communities outside of Winnipeg are often more rural and have the same perceptual challenges of other rural communities. Francophone youth looking for larger, younger Francophone populations may consider areas in Ontario or Quebec.

## Conclusions

Manitobans collectively can work together to change these and other narratives. Where perceptions are more negative than reality, there is an opportunity to reframe and address misperceptions to show the opportunity that Manitoba offers. Where reality and perceptions align, Manitobans can come together to form the solutions that they view work best from their own experience and deep understanding of their communities and contexts.

# Background

Manitoba is rich in diversity in both its people and opportunities. It has one of the youngest populations in Canada at a median age of 37.7 years.<sup>1</sup> First Nations, Métis, Francophone and immigrant communities call Manitoba home, and the province's arts and cultural sector reflects its "cultural richness and diversity."<sup>2</sup> Its economy, with jobs in sectors that range from biosciences to transportation and logistics, aeronautics and manufacturing, offers many meaningful work opportunities for youth.

While other provinces experienced wild economic fluctuations during the pandemic, Manitoba's wide range of industries and businesses helped the province maintain economic stability and its youth participation and employment rates are still better than the national average.<sup>3,4</sup> After the worst of the pandemic, labour markets tightened across the country. However, like those in the rest of the country, Manitoba's labour market is not as tight as it was in 2022. There were fewer vacant jobs in May 2024 compared to June of 2022 (27,200 versus 32,290) and the province's job vacancy rate sat at 3.6 per cent, down from Q3 2022, when it was 5.1 per cent.<sup>5</sup> In June 2024, unemployment was 5.1 per cent, compared to 6.4 per cent nationally.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile the unemployment rate for those aged 15-24 at 9.9 per cent, was much lower than the national youth unemployment rate of 13.5 per cent.

Despite this breadth and depth of opportunity and diversity and the relatively positive labour market for youth, Manitoba has historically experienced net loss of those aged 15-35 through interprovincial migration, primarily to Ontario and Alberta.<sup>7</sup> Canada West Foundation published two pertinent reports in 2022. The first, *The Young are Restless: Western Youth Migration*, illuminated youth migration and economic patterns across Western Canada. The second, *Work to Live: Alberta Youth Mobility*<sup>8</sup>, discussed the reasons why, between 2015 and 2021, and in a complete reversal of the usual pattern, more youth had left Alberta than moved to it.

With all this in mind, a project administered by the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce through funding from the Government of Manitoba's COVID-19 Long-Term Recovery Fund was launched, asking the Canada West Foundation to investigate the following research question:

## ***How can the Government of Manitoba and the business ecosystem support the attraction and retention of young talent to the province?***

<sup>1</sup> Statista. (2022, October 17). "Median age of the resident population of Canada in 2022, by province." Last modified October 17, 2022. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/444816/canada-median-age-of-resident-population-by-province/>

<sup>2</sup> Travel Manitoba. "Arts, culture & history." <https://www.travelmanitoba.com/things-to-do/arts-culture/>

<sup>3</sup> Lundy, Matt. "Manitoba's 'diverse economy avoids worst of pandemic hit,'" *The Globe and Mail*, July 1, 2020. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/article-manitobas-diverse-economy-avoids-worst-of-pandemic-hit/>

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada. "Table 14-10-0287-03: Labour force characteristics by province, monthly, seasonally adjusted." Last updated July 5, 2024. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl/en/tv.action?pid=1410028703>

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada. "Table 14-10-0371-01: Job Vacancies, payroll employees and job vacancy rate by province." Last updated July 25, 2024. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl/en/tv.action?pid=1410037101>

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada. "Table 14-10-0287-03: Labour force characteristics by province, monthly, seasonally adjusted." Last updated July 5, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.25318/1410028701-eng>

<sup>7</sup> Lane, Janet, & Aaron Murray. *The Young are Restless: Western Youth Migration*. Canada West Foundation, March 2022. [https://cwff.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CWF\\_TheYoungAreRestless\\_Report\\_MAR2022.pdf](https://cwff.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CWF_TheYoungAreRestless_Report_MAR2022.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Lane, Janet, Stephany Laverty & Dr. David Finch. *Work to Live: Alberta Youth Mobility*, Canada West Foundation, March 2022. [https://cwff.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CWF\\_WorktoLive\\_Report\\_MAR2022-1.pdf](https://cwff.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CWF_WorktoLive_Report_MAR2022-1.pdf)

# Methodology

Primary and secondary research methodologies have been used to provide an in-depth and nuanced understanding of youth and employer perspectives and experiences and answer the primary research question.

## Primary research

- Survey 1 (1,584 respondents completed): Online survey of those aged 18-45 including almost 400 Manitobans and 300 in each of Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, and Toronto.
  - Survey gauged participant perceptions of the province, their level of interest in and likelihood of leaving the province, and the factors that draw them to leave or to stay.
- Survey 2 (113 respondents completed): Online survey of Manitoba employers to understand:
  - Their workforce needs.
  - How they perceive the skills, attitudes and interest in their industry of Manitoban youth.
  - Any tools they use to attract/retain employees.
  - Additional supports they might need to become employers of choice.
  - Their interaction with Manitoba's post-secondary education system and perceptions of how the system meets the needs of their workforce.

Survey 1 was adapted to specified groups and researchers used the information gained from Survey 2 to create the following:

- Survey 3 (116 respondents): On-line survey of Manitobans aged 18-45 who self-identify as newcomers to understand:
  - Pre-landing perceptions of Canada and quality of life.
  - Landing experience, including access and availability of service and intention to stay in or leave Manitoba.
  - Current experience of Manitoba and whether expectations of education, quality of life, employment and other factors match the reality of living in Manitoba.
- Survey 4 (47 respondents): On-line survey of Manitobans aged 18-45 who self-identify as Francophone to understand:
  - The experiences of Francophone youth who grew up in Manitoba and those who have moved from other provinces or countries.
  - Strength of ties to Francophone communities and family and the extent to which those ties serve as a retention factor.
  - Factors which would attract surveyed youth to non-Francophone communities within Manitoba or to non-Francophone or Francophone communities either within Canada or globally.

- Survey 5: (81 respondents) On-line survey of Manitobans aged 18-45 who self-identify as Indigenous to understand:
  - o The experiences and perceptions of Manitoba of First Nations youth who currently live in Manitoba, whether they live in a First Nations or other parts of the province.
  - o The extent to which identity, family, employment, education or community act as a retention factor.
  - o The factors which would attract surveyed youth to communities outside Manitoba, whether within Canada or international.
- Survey 6 (49 respondents): On-line survey of students aged 18-45 enrolled in classes at University College of the North (UCN) or UCN's regional learning centres to understand the experiences and perceptions of those who grew up or live in northern Manitoba
  - o The extent to which identity, family, employment, education, or community act as a retention factor to northern Manitoba.
  - o The factors which would attract surveyed youth to communities in southern Manitoba or to other Canadian or international regions.
- Survey 7 (141 respondents). On-line survey of Manitobans aged 18-40 who were alumni of Assiniboine Community College (44 respondents) and University of Manitoba (97 respondents) to understand:
  - o The type of education alumni pursued and whether they would encourage others to attend the same institution, program etc.
  - o Whether they have or intend to complete advanced studies at Manitoban PSIs.
  - o The experiences and perceptions of alumni on how useful their education was to achieve the goals they had for their education, such as employment or continued studies.
  - o Whether their education helped them find employment or advanced studies in Manitoba or whether they had to move elsewhere.

- Survey 8: (175 respondents). On-line survey of Manitobans aged 18-44 using a modified and condensed version of the original baseline survey circulated through Léger at the end of March 2024, to understand:
  - o How views of the general Manitoban youth population have shifted since the original baseline survey was fielded.
  - o To ask specific questions which have arisen from analysis of the survey data and focus groups.
- Focus groups: Five focus groups were conducted with representatives of Manitoba's socioeconomic, age, regional, and cultural demographics. (Focus groups were virtual, face-to-face, or hybrid as appropriate). Demographic groups were determined in discussion with the project steering committee.
  - o Provided the opportunity to delve deeper into the factors which drive youth intentions to leave or to stay in the province.
  - o Facilitator was familiar with the issues that face Manitobans and understood the contexts which colour the lived experience of focus group participants.
- The focus groups included 18-24- and 25-30-year-olds who lived in Winnipeg and southern Manitoba, outside Winnipeg. One focus group was held with UCN students in the north.
  - o Two events, one in Brandon and one in Winnipeg, were held in June 2023 to verify our findings and generate preliminary ideas for solutions with employers.
  - o The research team joined Manitoba Chambers of Commerce's Economic Development Tour to Flin Flon in October 2023.
- Stephany Laverty also presented initial findings of relevance to northern Manitoba at UCN's Linkages Conference in November 2023.
- The northern tour and UCN conference allowed researchers to have community-focused discussions and gain further insight into the challenges northern communities face in attracting and retaining talent.

## Secondary research

Literature review: Research related to young talent attraction and retention generally and literature relevant to the Manitoba context.

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### **Young people's perspectives and influences on attraction and retention**

Sourced prior research on talent attraction and retention within Manitoba either generally or specific to socioeconomic groups, such as youth, and for Indigenous people, immigrants, and the Francophone community.

Primary research results informed a solutions-focused literature review to find research which specifically addresses the identified challenges. Where possible, researchers sourced literature specific to socioeconomic groups and Indigenous people, immigrants and, where possible, the Francophone community.

Cross-jurisdictional analysis considered how other jurisdictions have addressed similar challenges and how solutions from these regions may apply to the Manitoba context.

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### **Employer perspectives**

Sourced prior research on young talent attraction and retention relevant to Manitoba's major industries, including research specific to socioeconomic groups, Indigenous people, immigrants, and Francophone communities where possible.

Researchers used primary research to identify points of divergence and convergence in employer and youth perspectives. These points of divergence and convergence informed a literature review to identify ways to build upon shared perceptions and bridge differences.

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### **Role of education and post-secondary education**

Sourced prior research on the role of education and post-secondary education in attraction and retention for socioeconomic groups and Indigenous people, immigrants and the Francophone community. Manitoba-specific research was prioritized but general research was also considered.

Primary research through the surveys of specific sociodemographic groups allowed the researchers to consider intersectional experiences of Manitoba's education system.

Economic and population modelling: The Canada West Foundation previously prepared data on interprovincial migration for the western provinces, including Manitoba. This information has been updated, and new population projections prepared.

Statistical data has also been used to ascertain:

How Manitoba's population will change over time using population perspective models with particular focus on the Indigenous and immigrant populations. Workforce projections model future workforce supply and demand to identify which industries most need to attract and retain young Manitobans.

#### **Student patterns**

- Identified patterns and, where possible, segments within current and historical student migration data from the Post-secondary Student Information System (PSIS).
- Student retention data is not readily available, but efforts were made to find available data or research.

#### **Immigrant patterns**

- Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) was used to provide data on interprovincial migration of immigrants, post landing. Landed immigrant data collected, segmented, and presented in a suitable format.
  - Patterns of where immigrants are likely to move identified.
- Variables such as pre-admission experience (whether they were a student or had a work visa before admission was reviewed).
- Admission category was analyzed separately to determine if this was a factor for remaining in the province of admission.
  - Data is available until 2020. Projections made using the current provincial-level retention rates and applying them to the forecast immigration rates.

#### **First Nations population**

- A statistical portrait of the First Nations population of Manitoba and comparison to rest of Western Canada and Canada total.
- Population breakdown and growth patterns by on-reserve and off-reserve populations. Identification and exploration of trends in the data and population projections.
- Compilation of income, housing and poverty metrics overall. Education and employment outcomes, including educational attainment level, participation rates, employment and unemployment rates and related trends.

For the literature review, youth were defined as those aged 15-35 years old to capture the different decision points that youth face as they transition from childhood to adulthood. This definition and scope align with the project Canada West Foundation completed previously in Alberta and allowed researchers to draw on and expand prior research.

For the surveys, this age definition shifted to include those aged 18-45. This shift was required for two reasons: 1) Youth over the age of 18 do not need parental permission to participate, and 2) Life stage considerations: Eighteen-year-olds, compared to those who are younger, are at the end of secondary education and are more likely to have decided if and where they want to enter the workforce or pursue additional education. Those aged 35-45 have for the most part, as previous research in Alberta demonstrates, made their decisions on where to settle and grow their careers. Their perspective can help inform why someone would or would not choose Manitoba.

An examination of previous research helped to build an initial understanding of the experience young Manitobans and their perceptions of their communities and the opportunities and barriers for engagement in society and the workforce. Research into the general Manitoban perspective was also considered. It is important to understand the stories that others tell about the province as these narratives can also influence youth decisions to stay or move.

The literature review emphasized the need to consider how intersectional and socioeconomic experiences of community may differ. Studies predominately identified the barriers which prevent youth from engaging in society, the workforce and education in Manitoba. Most studies were also focused on a specific community of youth within Manitoba, which underscored that youth are not a monolith. Intersectional and socioeconomic position can all influence perceptions as well as the barriers and opportunities youth may experience. The baseline survey provided a starting point from which to understand general trends and provide insight into what further surveys and focus groups of specific communities could further unpack.

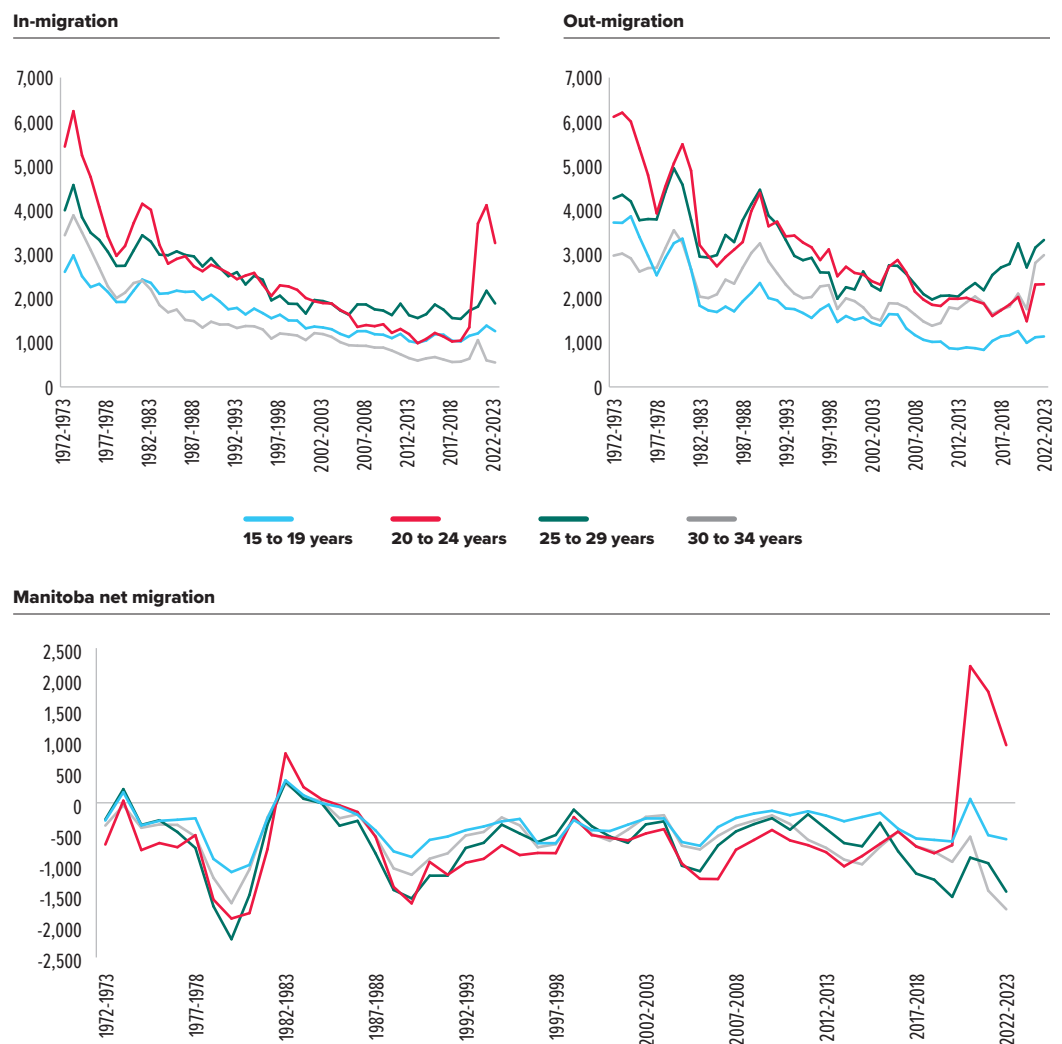
Survey design and structure: The survey used a similar format and lessons learned from the Alberta survey with edits to reflect the Manitoban context and the expanded scope of this project. The questions were developed in partnership with Manitoba-based partners at Léger.



# Manitoba migration

Manitoba has experienced a net loss of youth to interprovincial migration since the mid-1980s

Figure 3.1



During the COVID-19 pandemic, many youth who would have otherwise chosen to leave (often to attend post-secondary education) remained in the province. However, the long-term trend has persisted and the 2022-23 net outmigration levels for the 25–34-year age cohort surpassed pre-pandemic levels. Between 2012-2013 and 2019-2020, there was a net loss of approximately one per cent of the population of 25-29- and 30–34-year-olds each year. In 2022-2023, a net 1.3 per cent of 25–29-year-olds and almost two per cent of 30–34-year-olds left the province.

While it is expected that those aged 15-24 years old will leave to pursue education and explore the world, the net loss of the 25-34-year-old age cohort raises concerns. This group makes decisions about where they want to settle, purchase homes and raise their families. They may have been educated in Manitoba and built work experience in the province and then choose to those skills elsewhere. Once this age cohort settles into a new place, they are less likely to be attracted back to Manitoba.

Those aged 15-19 are typically deciding whether they want to directly enter the workforce or continue their education. Older populations tend to be more settled and have determined a career path, they may have children and be less willing to uproot their families. However, Manitoba experiences a net loss of youth across all age categories which suggests that Manitobans may be more willing to uproot themselves at these life stages compared to those in other provinces.

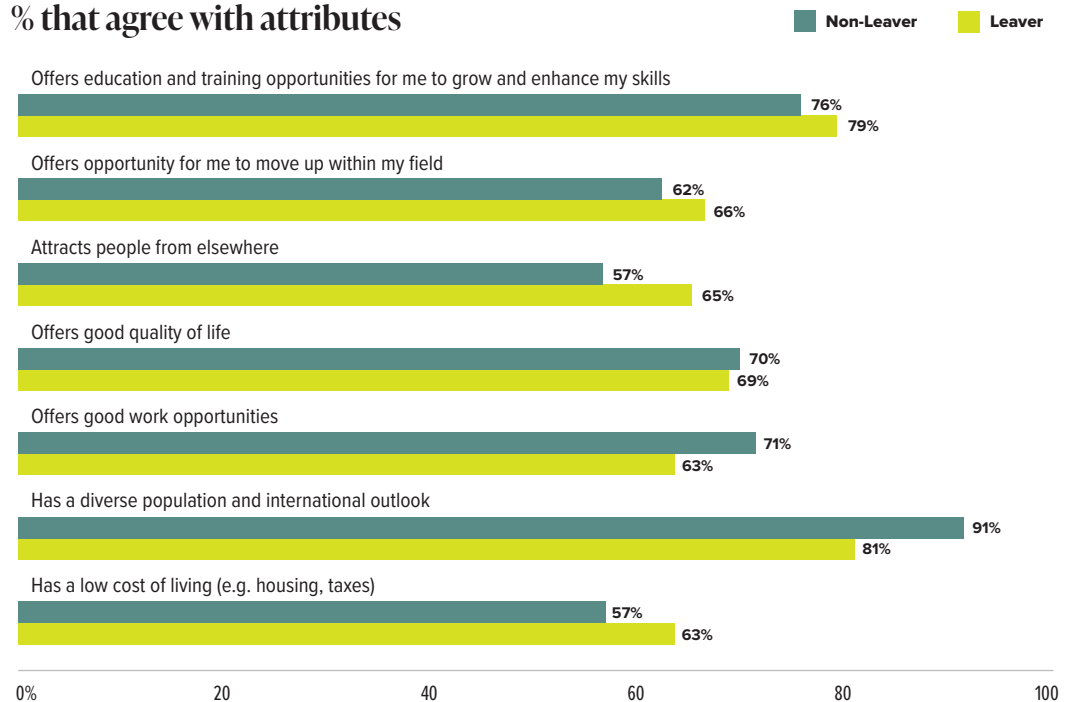
### Who chooses Manitoba?

The following chart compares the level of agreement with statements about Manitoba of survey respondents who said they would leave the province within the next year for a job with those who said they would never move for a job

**Figure 3-2**

### Leavers vs. non-leavers' attitudes toward Manitoba

% that agree with attributes

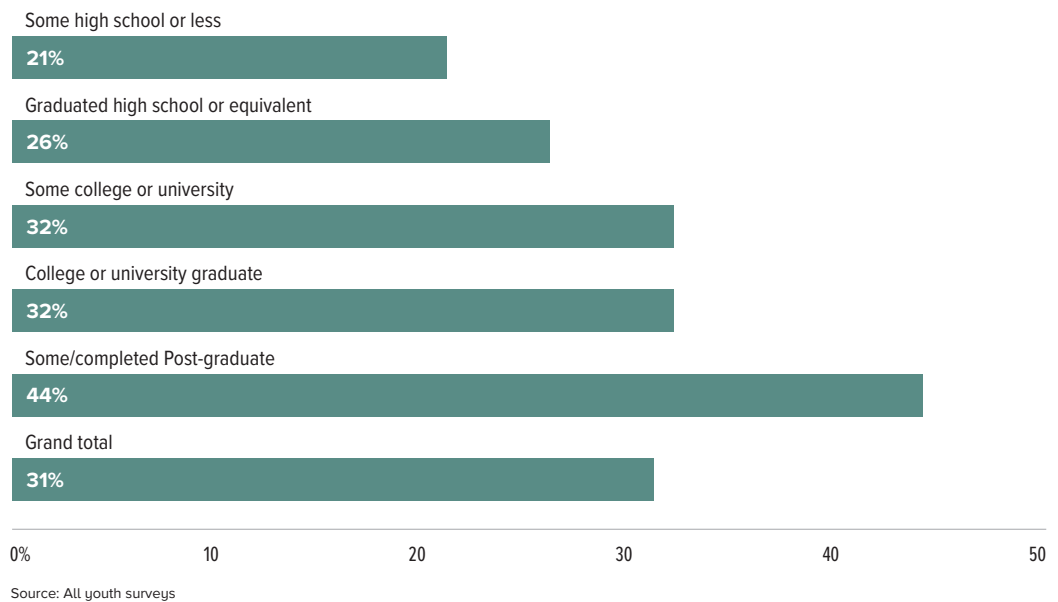


Source: All youth surveys

Respondents who would leave are generally more optimistic about the province's education, attractiveness and cost of living but are more pessimistic about the quality of life and work opportunities in Manitoba. Younger Manitobans aged 18-24 are more likely to leave for work, particularly men. As workforce attachment typically increases with age, older Manitobans are less likely to say they would leave the province for a job. They are more likely to leave for quality of life or social reasons. Those who have higher levels of education are also more likely to leave. Canadians who choose Manitoba do so because they are familiar with the province; they either currently live there or have lived there previously.

**Figure 3-3**

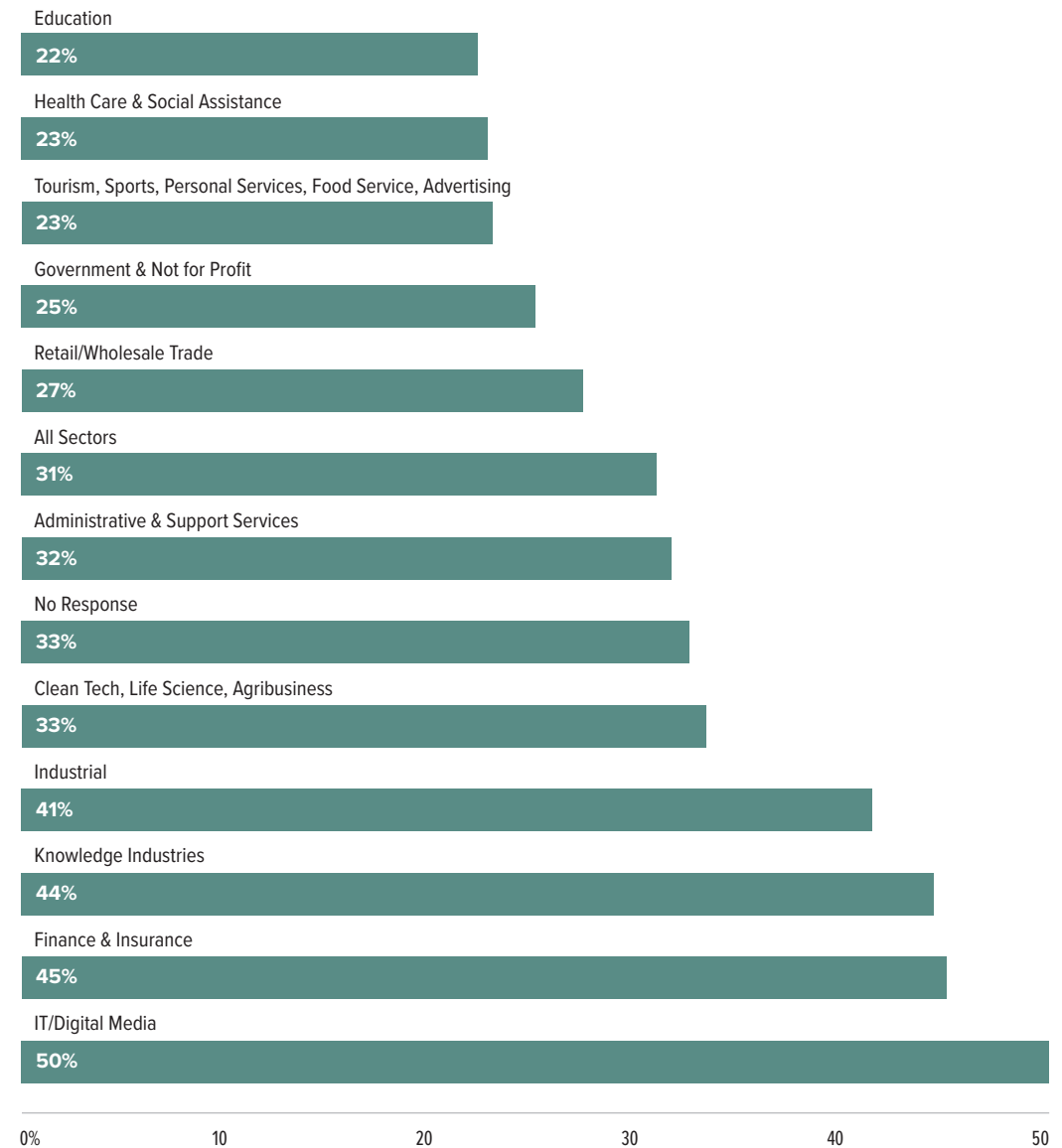
### Manitoba youth seeking out of province work by education level



Those who studied engineering/professional sciences, management and marketing and the liberal arts were the most likely to leave along with those who work in IT/digital media, finance and insurance and knowledge industries such as professional services, arts, culture and entertainment and clean tech/life science.

**Figure 3-4**

### Propensity to seek work outside Manitoba – all Manitoba respondents



Source: All youth surveys

Survey respondents in Winnipeg were less likely to move for economic or quality of life reasons while those outside Winnipeg were more likely to move for social or economic reasons rather than quality of life reasons.

**Table 3-1**

## Individuals who would NOT move for specific reasons (% respondents by region)

	All respondents	Winnipeg	Elsewhere Manitoba	Vancouver	Calgary	Edmonton	Toronto
<b>Economic</b>	13%	21%	9%	14%	12%	11%	11%
<b>Social</b>	11%	17%	6%	12%	11%	7%	12%
<b>Quality of life</b>	15%	21%	16%	14%	16%	11%	15%

Source: Baseline survey, all respondents

## First Nations

First Nations youth have traditionally not had a choice about whether they stayed in or moved away from their home communities for a variety of reasons: the residential school system, restrictions under the *Indian Act*, the Sixties Scoop, Millennium Scoop, and intergenerational trauma resulting from this collective history. Cultural connection to community and family may also keep individuals close to home. For these and other reasons, First Nations youth have typically remained in the province.

However, as the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are implemented and improve outcomes and remove barriers for First Nations youth, their education and income levels should increase and they may become more mobile. First Nations respondents said they are more likely to move, particularly if there is benefit to their own community or if they could work and learn in culturally safe spaces, such as for a First Nations employer.

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## Newcomers

Newcomers choose Canada because they want to build a better life and improve their economic situation. Those who choose Manitoba do so because they either have family there or they perceive immigration to the province is easier than to other provinces. When compared to First Nations and Francophone youth, newcomers have the highest propensity to move locations – the first move is the hardest.

Family can act as a protective factor and help people build roots and settle into a community more easily. Research also shows that family can influence individuals to leave a location if family members become dissatisfied or fail to find community and build connections independent of their family. Those who are looking for easier immigration pathways may still be in a transitory period when they move to the province and may not be willing to fully settle or integrate until they have weighed their options.

Statistics Canada compiles data about people who have moved in the last year. The next table shows their results for First Nations and newcomer youth.

**Table 3-2**

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### Youth aged 15-44 movers and stayers by population group (Census 2021)

	Total Population	First Nations	Immigrant
<b>Total population</b>	519,295	57,525	119,120
<b>Non-movers</b>	81.1%	83.4%	81.4%
<b>Movers</b>	18.9%	16.7%	18.6%
<b>Moved in same city</b>	12.8%	12.2%	13.7%
<b>Within province</b>	3.0%	3.7%	1.6%
<b>From out of province</b>	2.0%	0.7%	1.1%
<b>From out of country</b>	1.1%	0.0%	2.2%

Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-10-0376-01 and Table: 98-10-0366-01

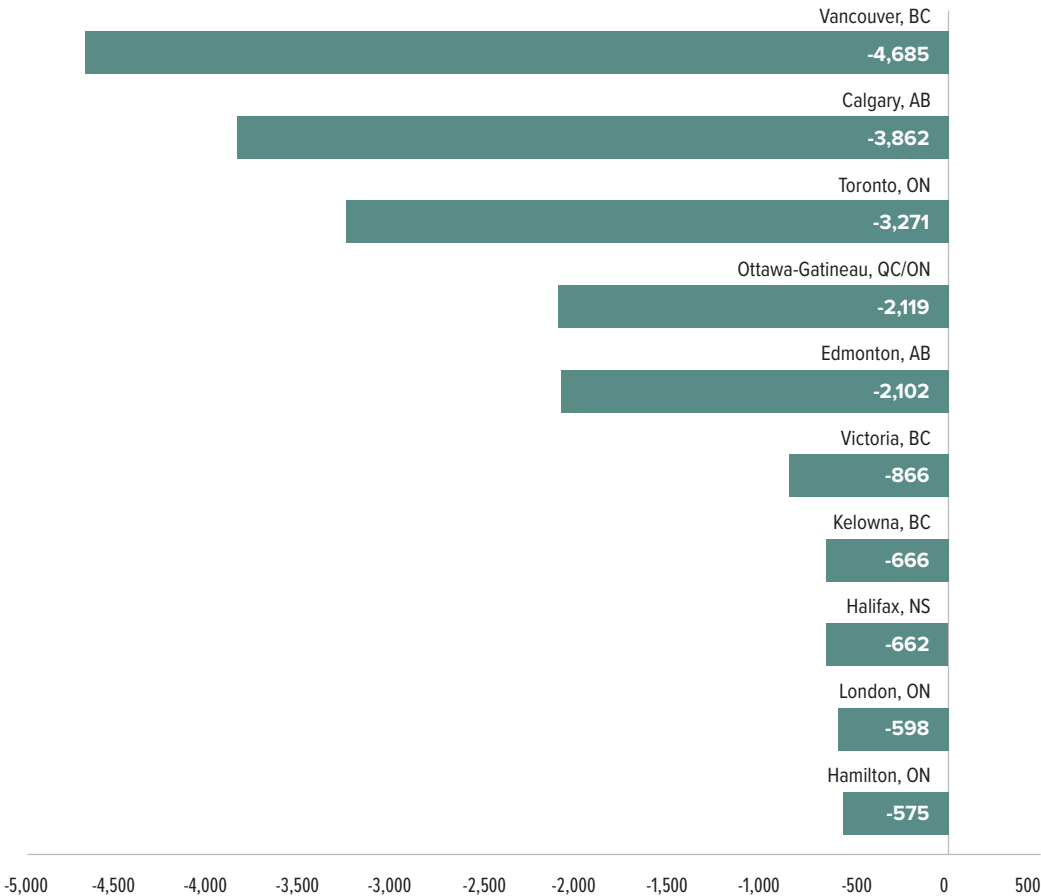
**Internal migration**

People from rural and northern Manitoba tend to move to Brandon and Winnipeg. There are some exceptions; for instance, people who move from Steinbach tend to choose to stay in more rural areas.

If Winnipeggers leave home, they most likely move to a different province.

**Figure 3-5**

**Top 10 communities which attract Winnipeggers (Net)  
2016-2021 cumulative**



Source: 17-10-0141-01 and CWF own calculations, those communities with net negative migration

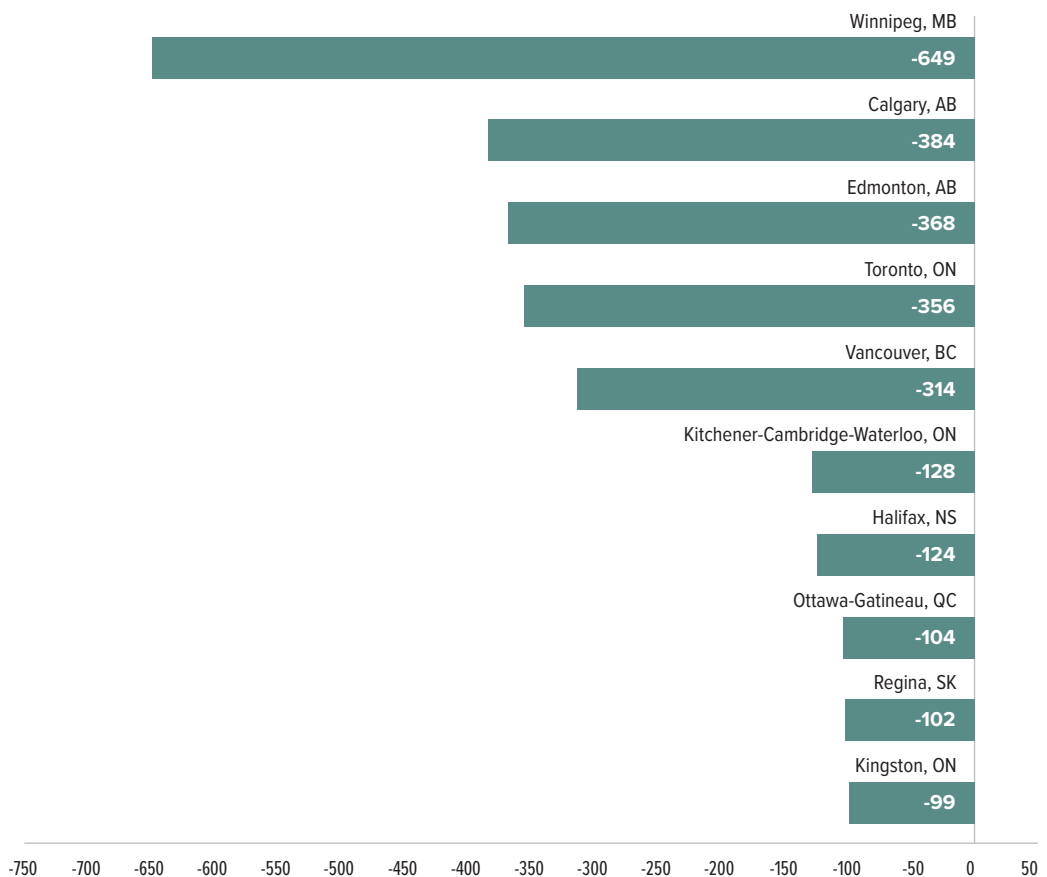
People from Brandon are more likely to choose communities within Manitoba, particularly Winnipeg, or Alberta (Figure 4-4).

Post-secondary education and career-growth and advancement were the most common reasons to move given by focus group participants who said that they would leave rural southern Manitoba. These reasons were followed by lack of diversity not only in experiences and things to do but also people, foods and cultures. People who lived in Brandon similarly expressed a lack of diversity and opportunity in Brandon.

These trends were readily apparent in the survey and focus group data. Participants in the focus groups in the south (outside Winnipeg) and the north all stated that they would only encourage someone to move to those regions if they had family ties or an understanding of what living a rural lifestyle meant and wanted that for themselves. Consequently, for the purposes of this report, the north will be defined as the northern economic region, 'rural' will include the Interlake, North Central, Parklands, South Central, Southeast and Southwest economic regions excluding Brandon. Urban will include the City of Brandon and the Winnipeg economic region. Any mention of the South will mean all regions excluding the northern economic region.

**Figure 3-6**

### Top 10 communities which attract people from Brandon (Net) 2016-2021 cumulative



Source: 17-10-0141-01 and CWF own calculations



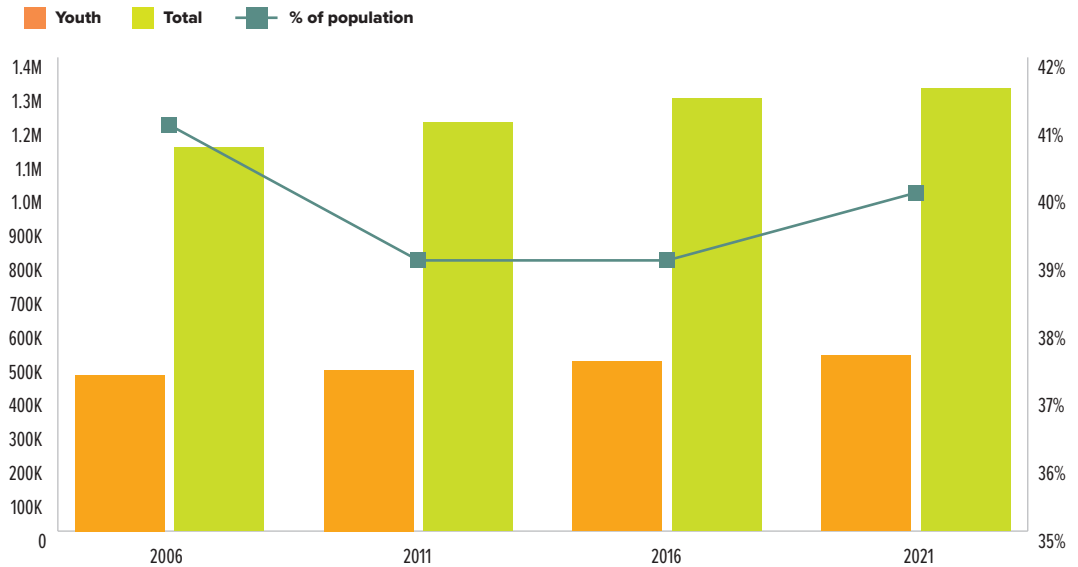
## Population growth and age demographics

Age Demographics (Census 2021)

While Manitoba's population has increased since 2006, the proportion of the population aged 15-44 is slightly lower than in 2006.

Figure 3-7

### Manitoba youth (15-44 years) vs total population



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census Data

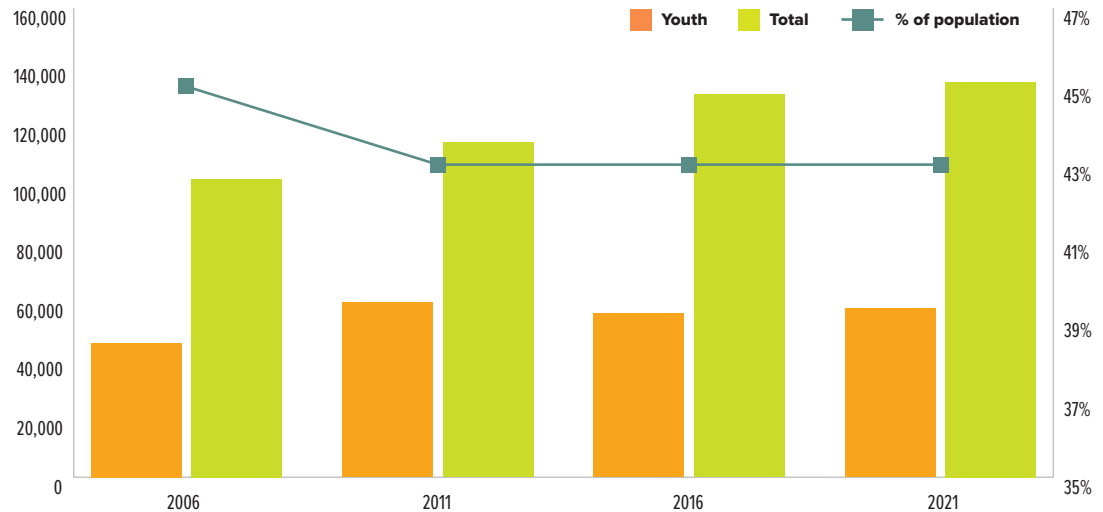
The northern population is comparatively younger than that in the south while rural areas have older populations than the urban centres of Brandon and Winnipeg.

The South Central and Interlake regions have the highest total population of young people in rural Manitoba. Interestingly, Brandon and Winnipeg have a very similar age composition, but Winnipeg has a larger overall population. The rural regions have older populations compared to the north and urban areas.

The proportion of First Nations people who are aged 15-44 has decreased, as has the Francophone population. However, the proportion of youth in the newcomer population is growing rapidly.

**Figure 3-8**

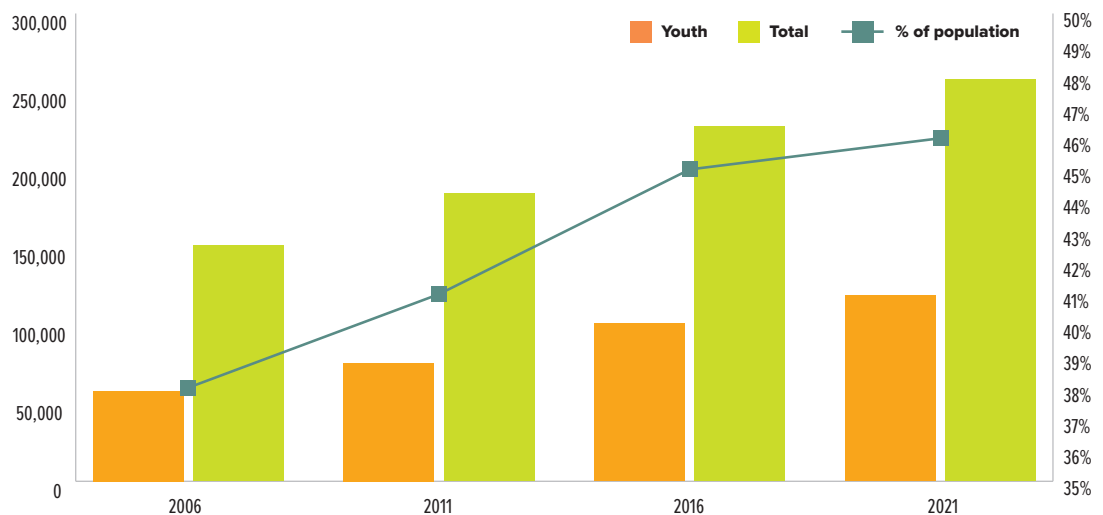
### Manitoba First Nations youth population aged 15-44



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census Data

**Figure 3-9**

### Manitoba immigrant youth population aged 15-44

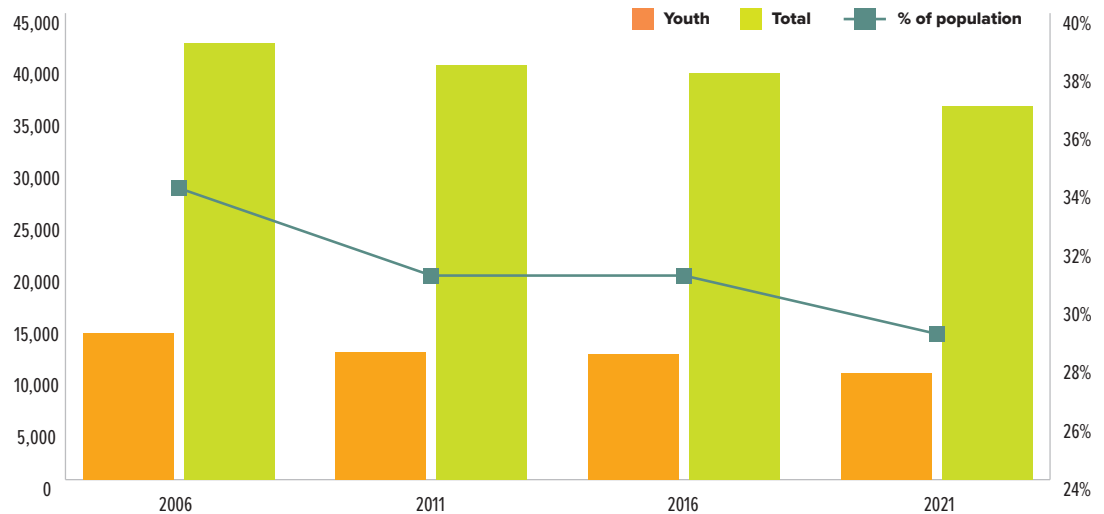


Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census Data

## Francophone

Figure 3-10

### Manitoba youth who identified French as their first official language



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census Data

## Population growth

### Manitoba population growth forecasts

The Indigenous population is younger and faster growing than the domestic, non-Indigenous population and contributes more proportionally to natural population growth. This impact is easing slightly as Indigenous community growth rates “have slowed.”<sup>9</sup> In 2020, Manitoba led provinces with the total proportion of Indigenous population at 18 per cent.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, the Francophone community is in decline in Manitoba. Overall population growth is attributed to immigration as growth through births and also the “natural increase is often more offset by net [interprovincial migration].”<sup>11</sup>

By 2035, First Nations who are Registered or Treaty Indian and newcomer youth will account for all youth population growth in Manitoba. First Nations youth will comprise almost 20 per cent of growth while newcomer youth will account for the rest. Only Saskatchewan will experience higher rates of population growth from these demographics in the western provinces with almost 132 per cent of growth coming from these groups. However, Saskatchewan also has a smaller population base from which to grow and other population groups are in decline.

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada. “Indigenous population continues to grow and is much younger than the non-Indigenous population, although the pace of growth has slowed,” *The Daily*, September 9, 2022. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220921/dq220921a-eng.htm>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Ferris, Chris. “Why should Manitoba employers consider hiring immigrants,” *Winnipeg Economic Digest*. Economic Development Winnipeg, November 17, 2023, para. 4.

**Table 3-3: First Nations population growth****Population growth 2021-2035, total population, youth, Registered or Treaty Indians (1,000s)**

		2021	2035	Growth	% Growth
<b>Ontario</b>	Total Population	14,884	18,234	3,350	22.5%
	Youth Population 15-44	5,938	7,097	1,159	19.5%
	Registered or Treaty Indians	209	240	31	14.8%
	Registered or Treaty Indians 15-44	93	103	10	10.8%
	Registered or Treaty Indians % of Population and Growth	1.6%	1.5%	0.9%	
<b>Manitoba</b>	Total Population	1,388	1,612	224	16.1%
	Youth Population 15-44	562	639	77	13.7%
	Registered or Treaty Indians	151	174	23	15.2%
	Registered or Treaty Indians 15-44	70	85	15	21.4%
	Registered or Treaty Indians % of Population and Growth	12.5%	13.3%	19.5%	
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	Total Population	1,181	1,367	186	15.7%
	Youth Population 15-44	470	517	47	10.0%
	Registered or Treaty Indians	131	160	29	22.1%
	Registered or Treaty Indians 15-44	62	74	12	19.4%
	Registered or Treaty Indians % of Population and Growth	13.2%	14.3%	25.5%	
<b>Alberta</b>	Total Population	4,486	5,912	1,426	31.8%
	Youth Population 15-44	1,903	2,400	497	26.1%
	Registered or Treaty Indians	152	185	33	21.7%
	Registered or Treaty Indians 15-44	74	87	13	17.6%
	Registered or Treaty Indians % of Population and Growth	3.9%	3.6%	2.6%	

Source: Statistics Canada Tables 17-10-0146-01, 17-10-0146-01

**Table 3-4: Newcomer population growth****Population growth 2021-2035 total population, youth, immigrant, immigrant youth (1,000s)**

		2021	2035	Growth	% Growth
<b>Ontario</b>	Total Population	14,884	18,234	3,350	22.5%
	Youth Population 15-44	5,938	7,097	1,159	19.5%
	All Immigrants	4,483	6,644	2,161	48.2%
	Immigrants 15-44	1,633	2,532	899	55.1%
	Immigrant Youth % of Population and Growth	27.5%	35.7%	77.6%	
<b>Manitoba</b>	Total Population	1,388	1,612	224	16.1%
	Youth Population 15-44	562	639	77	13.7%
	All Immigrants	284	442	158	55.6%
	Immigrants 15-44	134	197	63	47.0%
	Immigrant Youth % of Population and Growth	23.8%	30.8%	81.8%	
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	Total Population	1,181	1,367	186	15.7%
	Youth Population 15-44	470	517	47	10.0%
	All Immigrants	161	284	123	76.4%
	Immigrants 15-44	88	138	50	56.8%
	Immigrant Youth % of Population and Growth	18.7%	26.7%	106.4%	
<b>Alberta</b>	Total Population	4,486	5,912	1,426	31.8%
	Youth Population 15-44	1,903	2,400	497	26.1%
	All Immigrants	1,065	1,831	766	71.9%
	Immigrants 15-44	493	800	307	62.3%
	Immigrant Youth % of Population and Growth	25.9%	33.3%	61.8%	

Source: Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0146-01

# Current youth context

*Note: In this report, information in the sections labelled 'Perceptions' are predominantly the findings from the surveys and focus groups, while the information in the 'Reality' sections is derived from the secondary research. Readers are encouraged to think about how the gaps between reality and perceptions can best be bridged.*

## Perceptions

Survey respondents were asked whether they agreed with the following statements about life in their community. This question paralleled one in the 2021 survey done for the Alberta Young Talent Attraction and Retention project. The comparison for the cities in both surveys shows some interesting changes some of which may be attributable to the effects of the pandemic.

## Youth are more pessimistic than they were at the start of the pandemic.

**Table 4-1**

### Agree with statements about life, change from 2021-2023

	Toronto		Vancouver		Calgary		Edmonton	
	2023 (%)	% Change 2021	2023 (%)	% Change 2021	2023 (%)	% Change 2021	2023 (%)	% Change 2021
<b>Making environmentally conscious/sustainable choices is a priority for me</b>	73	-7	63	-18	70	-6	69	-9
<b>I get involved in a lot of community activities and events through volunteering</b>	43	-8	43	-7	45	-5	36	-13
<b>I like the challenge of doing something I haven't done before</b>	75	-7	72	-6	78	-1	73	-10
<b>I like the adventure of exploring new places and things</b>	81	-9	79	-11	85	-5	85	-6
<b>I will do anything to achieve my dreams</b>	68	-5	63	-11	72	-2	65	-8
<b>I prefer to adapt to my current environment instead of going somewhere else</b>	67	-4	69	-4	69	6	67	1
<b>I consider myself a homebody</b>	68	4	71	-1	70	2	76	9
<b>I feel capable that I can live and be successful anywhere</b>	67	-8	67	-12	67	-13	74	-4

Source: 2021 and 2023 baseline survey, respondents from select Canadian cities

While the Government of Manitoba fully removed all pandemic restrictions on March 15, 2022, the current impacts of those restrictions on youth remain a common theme in discussions with employers, educators, community leaders, and youth themselves.

The only value statement that saw an increase across all provinces between 2021 and 2023 was that a higher percentage of youth considered themselves homebodies. Calgary and Edmonton youth also had an increase in the number of respondents that said they prefer to adapt to their current environment instead of going somewhere else. While in 2021, youth were less likely to say that they were involved in community activities, such as volunteering, compared to the other value statements, youth were even less likely to say they were engaged in community activities in 2023. There was also, perhaps unsurprisingly but distressingly, increasing pessimism about their ability to live and be successful anywhere.

It is also possible that while individuals may aspire to these statements, they could have less motivation to see them come to fruition which may help explain the high percentage which agree with the homebody statement. On the most recent survey completed in March 2024, almost a year after the baseline survey, agreement with the homebody statement was down 11 percentage points in Winnipeg and 10 outside Winnipeg. This change could mean that youth are rebuilding relationships and engagement outside of their homes. Winnipeg youth agreed even less with the statement about volunteering and community activity while youth in the rest of the province agreed more. So, youth in Winnipeg could be getting out more but still not engaging much with community activities. Agreement with all statements was down in Winnipeg on the most recent survey while youth in other parts of the province agreed more with the statement that they volunteer and will do anything to achieve their dreams.

**Table 4-2**

## Agree with statements about life (% respondents agree)

	Original Baseline		Post-Script Survey		Change (%)	
	Winnipeg (%)	Other MB (%)	Winnipeg (%)	Other MB (%)	Winnipeg (%)	Other MB (%)
<b>Making environmentally conscious/sustainable choices is a priority for me</b>	77	81	69	70	-7	-11
<b>I get involved in a lot of community activities and events through volunteering</b>	56	55	44	61	-12	6
<b>I like the challenge of doing something I haven't done before</b>	80	82	75	73	-5	-9
<b>I like the adventure of exploring new places and things</b>	86	88	78	85	-8	-3
<b>I will do anything to achieve my dreams</b>	73	77	69	82	-4	5
<b>I prefer to adapt to my current environment instead of going somewhere else</b>	79	79	70	76	-9	-3
<b>I consider myself a homebody</b>	84	89	73	79	-11	-10
<b>I feel capable that I can live and be successful anywhere</b>	81	78	73	73	-8	-5
<b>I value my family connection and prioritize staying close to them</b>	-	-	81	73	-	-
<b>I want to live in an inclusive community with diverse people, food, and arts and culture</b>	-	-	75	85	-	-

Source: Baseline survey, Postscript survey, Manitoban respondents



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## First Nations

First Nations youth respondents in Manitoba strongly agreed with almost all statements, particularly around adventure of exploring, willingness to do anything to achieve dreams, and liking the challenge of new experiences. They were the least likely to say that they were homebodies. While First Nations youth least agreed with the volunteering statement, they still agreed with the statement more than the baseline and sub-group respondents.

**Table 4-3**

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### Agree with statements about life – First Nations in Manitoba

	All (%)
<b>Making environmentally conscious/sustainable choices is a priority for me</b>	87
<b>I get involved in a lot of community activities and events through volunteering</b>	61
<b>I like the challenge of doing something I haven't done before</b>	96
<b>I like the adventure of exploring new places and things</b>	99
<b>I will do anything to achieve my dreams</b>	99
<b>I prefer to adapt to my current environment instead of going somewhere else</b>	82
<b>I consider myself a homebody</b>	73
<b>I feel capable that I can live and be successful anywhere</b>	87
<b>I value my family connection and prioritize staying close to them</b>	94

Source: Indigenous job fair and UCN survey, First Nations respondents

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## Newcomers

Recent newcomers were less likely to say that they were homebodies compared to those who had been in Manitoba for more than five years. Those who had been in Manitoba for more than 10 years were more likely to describe themselves as homebodies. Newcomers who had been in the country for fewer than 10 years were most likely to say that they volunteered compared to other groups.

One study found that volunteering “can help immigrants develop wider [networks] and key contacts with individuals of high status [and] immigrants should be encouraged to participate in voluntary associations, especially immigrants with limited social resources”<sup>12</sup> However, the study also concludes that if a newcomer is a member of a visible minority they may face difficulties in building those networks and making those connections.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 4-4**

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### Agree with statements about life – Newcomers in Manitoba

	>5 years	5-10 years	Over 10
<b>Making environmentally conscious/sustainable choices is a priority for me</b>	87	71	73
<b>I get involved in a lot of community activities and events through volunteering</b>	64	61	46
<b>I like the challenge of doing something I haven't done before</b>	87	75	85
<b>I like the adventure of exploring new places and things</b>	95	86	81
<b>I will do anything to achieve my dreams</b>	84	82	73
<b>I prefer to adapt to my current environment instead of going somewhere else</b>	78	75	77
<b>I consider myself a homebody</b>	80	79	85
<b>I feel capable that I can live and be successful anywhere</b>	96	75	69
	n=55	n=28	n=26

Source: Baseline survey, newcomer respondents only

<sup>12</sup> Fong, Eric & Jing Shen. “Participation in Voluntary Associations and Social Contact of Immigrants in Canada,” *American Behavioural Scientist* 60, 5-6, p. 632.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

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## Francophone

Francophone youth were less likely to agree with the statements compared to other respondents.

**Table 4-5**

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### Agree with statements about life – Francophone

	All (%)
<b>Making environmentally conscious/sustainable choices is a priority for me</b>	66
<b>I get involved in a lot of community activities and events through volunteering</b>	53
<b>I like the challenge of doing something I haven't done before</b>	64
<b>I like the adventure of exploring new places and things</b>	66
<b>I will do anything to achieve my dreams</b>	57
<b>I prefer to adapt to my current environment instead of going somewhere else</b>	57
<b>I consider myself a homebody</b>	57
<b>I feel capable that I can live and be successful anywhere</b>	64
<b>I value my family connection and prioritize staying close to them</b>	57

Source: Francophone survey

# Reality

## Truth and Reconciliation

The work of the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls as well as the discovery of the remains of approximately 215 children at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia's Interior by the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc community brought renewed attention on Canada's colonial past and its ramifications for current generations. Recommendations from the NCTR and the NIMMIWG on how to move forward in the spirit of truth and reconciliation at various levels of Canadian society have been made.

In a 2019 Environics survey, 64 per cent of non-Indigenous Canadian youth said that they were aware of residential schools, with western Canadian youth leading overall awareness (about 75 per cent).

Indigenous youth in Manitoba/Saskatchewan (MB/SK) were more optimistic and non-Indigenous in Manitoba and Saskatchewan were more pessimistic about relations between communities compared to the national average. Non-Indigenous youth in MB/SK were more likely to say they had participated in more reconciliation activities compared to the national average.

**Table 4-6**

### % Youth positive views on reconciliation (2019)

	All Indigenous	All Non-Indigenous	MB/SK Indigenous	MB/SK non-Indigenous
<b>Agree Relations will only improve if social and economic inequalities are reduced</b>	67	66	63	71
<b>Important for Non-Indigenous people to understand Indigenous history</b>	89	87	85	83
<b>Optimistic for reconciliation to be achieved in lifetime</b>	73	68	70	60
<b>Close friends Non-Indigenous/Indigenous</b>	85	29	80	36
<b>Current relations positive</b>	45	31	32	20
<b>Relations improving</b>	38	34	33	30
<b>Indigenous people rarely subject to discrimination</b>	9	13	8	17
<b>Personally involved in reconciliation activities</b>	33	17	29	30
<b>Interested in reconciliation activities</b>	56	45	55	45

Source: Environics Canadian Youth Reconciliation Barometer, 2019 Final report and detailed data tables

Indigenous youth were more likely to describe barriers to reconciliation as major or moderate while non-Indigenous youth were more likely to describe barriers as moderate or minor. Despite this view, Indigenous youth were more optimistic about reconciliation in their lifetime and more willing to participate in reconciliation activities.

**Table 4-7**

### % MB/SK youth aged 16-19 rank barriers to reconciliation

	Indigenous			Non-Indigenous		
	Major	Moderate	Minor	Major	Moderate	Minor
<b>Myths/stereotypes about Indigenous people</b>	57	21	14	41	29	22
<b>Non-Indigenous lacks knowledge of Indigenous history/culture</b>	54	20	19	22	31	37
<b>Lack of political will</b>	53	24	13	21	32	39
<b>Socio-economic inequality</b>	49	34	8	42	33	15
<b>Lack of willingness to accommodate needs of other</b>	48	35	9	26	45	19
<b>Lack of Indigenous control over education</b>	42	23	26	10	34	41
<b>Lack of Indigenous control over lands/resources</b>	41	32	18	19	24	41
<b>Worldview/values</b>	40	37	15	30	46	17

Source: Environics Canadian Youth Reconciliation Barometer, 2019 Final report and detailed data tables

### Digitalization

Even before the pandemic, youth in many parts of the country connected and met online through gaming platforms, social media and online forums. Even so, in 2021 “90% of those 15 to 34 years of age indicat[ed] that they had done more activities online” than prior to the pandemic. Video conferencing, streaming digital content, ordering groceries and online shopping became the norm. Learning spaces, such as classrooms and labs, and workplaces also moved online overnight.<sup>14</sup>

Youth in communities which lacked broadband access were excluded from this move to the digital. Garden Hill First Nations and Shamattawa First Nations closed their schools completely primarily due to internet connectivity issues. Students in both communities were held back to repeat the grades they were in when the schools closed. Some students were also held back in Cross Lake Cree Nation.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Bilodeau, Howard, Abby Kehler & Nicole Minnema. “Internet use and COVID-19: How the pandemic increased the amount of time Canadians spend online.” Statistics Canada, June 24, 2021, para. 2. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2021001/article/00027-eng.htm>

<sup>15</sup> Stranger, Darrell. “Garden Hill First Nation in Manitoba decides students will repeat grade next year because of pandemic.” *APTN National News*, June 4, 2021. <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/garden-hill-first-nation-in-manitoba-decides-students-will-repeat-grade-next-year-because-of-pandemic/Hobson>, Brittany. “‘Getting these kids back on track’: Manitoba First Nations adapt to school year lost to COVID-19.” *CBC News*, last updated September 12, 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/back-to-school-manitoba-pimicikamak-shamattawa-garden-hill-first-nation-covid-19-1.6173038>

The federal government committed that all communities within Canada would have affordable, internet reaching 50/10 Mbps by 2030. A 2023 General's report found that the government will not meet this target because of delays in reaching rural and remote communities.<sup>16</sup> For Manitoba, the initial 2021 target was 90 per cent of households but the program reached only 81.3 per cent. The 2026 target is 98 per cent but the report now projects only 93.7 per cent of the population will have access to such speeds by that time.<sup>17</sup> The Auditor General does not provide specifics for why the targets will not be met, however in Manitoba, there were delays in the project review and approval stages. While \$2.4 billion in funding was allocated for project spending between 2022-23, only 40 per cent of the budgeted amount was spent. The auditor general also notes that given the time frame, the government should reassess whether the target speed of 50/10 Mbps will be sufficient in 2030 and whether the infrastructure will be flexible enough to accommodate future demand for higher speeds.<sup>18</sup>

Most communities in the North are underserved, that is they do not meet the 50/10 standard<sup>19</sup>, or are unserved access and have no access at all. Thompson, Flin Flon, The Pas and Swan River have the highest level of access. In the south, the underserved/unserved populations are concentrated in the northernmost and southernmost areas of the economic regions.

Only residents of Thompson and The Pas in the North, Dauphin in Parkland, Brandon, Minnedosa, Carberry, and Killarney in the Southwest, Portage la Prairie in South Central, Niverville, Steinbach, and Beausejour in Southeast and Winnipeg can connect through DSL/Fibre internet. Most of the population connects through fixed wireless connection. Currently fibre offers the highest speeds for both uploading and downloading but tend to be more expensive than other connections.<sup>20</sup> Fixed wireless internet is wireless but requires "a mounted receiver with a direct line of sight to the nearest tower"<sup>21</sup> with connections more easily disrupted and typically slower than 5G wireless or other, wired connections. However, fixed internet is usually one of the cheapest options.<sup>22</sup> Despite the connectivity issues, fixed wireless is widely seen as one of the best options for rural broadband access because there is less reliance on cables.

<sup>16</sup> Auditor General of Canada. "Report 2: Connectivity in Rural and Remote Areas." *Independent Auditor's Report*. Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2023. [https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/parl\\_oag\\_202303\\_02\\_e.pdf](https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/parl_oag_202303_02_e.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. "Manitoba: Progress as of December 2023." *High-Speed Internet Access Dashboard*, August 1, 2024. <https://ISED-Isde.canada.ca/sts-sst/hsiad-tbihs/high-speed-internet-canada/en/universal-access/broadband-dashboard.html>

<sup>18</sup> Auditor General of Canada. "Report 2."

<sup>19</sup> The 50/10 standard means that download speeds reach 50 mbps and upload speeds reach 10 mbps.

<sup>20</sup> Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. "Broadband Internet Coverage, unserved/underserved population." Cartovista, accessed December 5, 2023. <https://crtc.gc.ca/cartovista/internetcanada-en/>

<sup>21</sup> Anders, David & Sean Jackson. "Internet connection types explained – and ranked worst to best." CNET, April 6, 2024, para. 16. <https://www.cnet.com/home/internet/internet-connection-types-explained-and-ranked-best-to-worst/>

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Connecting communities to the virtual world is only one aspect of digitalization. Those who have limited digital access also need support to build the skills and competencies to integrate digital technology into their work and daily life.<sup>23</sup> A study of coding clubs for those aged 7-14 across the Western Manitoba Regional Library system identifies some key components of programs which aim to teach digital skills. These components include:

- Digital “champions” who advocate for skill development
- Community funders and partners
- Digital literacy for program providers
- Appropriate software to meet goals
- Collaborative learning opportunities<sup>24</sup>

Programs which support digital literacy for newcomers and Indigenous communities are also important. Those living in First Nations communities typically have even less access to high speed, reliable internet than those in other rural and remote communities.<sup>25</sup> Newcomers may come from or move to communities which are also more rural and remote and have less broadband access. Wayne Kelly with the Rural Development Institute in Brandon estimates that “46 per cent in rural Manitoba and [...] 26 percent”<sup>26</sup> of First Nations communities have access. Although finding specific data to track access is quite challenging with private and not-for-profit, provincial and federal initiatives involved.

Within communities which have digital access, “vulnerable populations (low-income households; some newcomers/migrants; Indigenous peoples) sometimes lack the means to sustain high speed internet connections and purchase digital devices.”<sup>27</sup> A focus on regional connectivity can ignore those disparities within communities. Provincial and federal projects are currently focused on regional divides and less on those that exist at the community level.<sup>28</sup> When individuals move from the north or rural areas into Brandon and Winnipeg or immigrate, they may not know where to go to access technology if they do not have their own devices and they may face language or financial barriers to training programs and services.<sup>29</sup>

There are fears that artificial intelligence may further exacerbate these challenges both across and within communities. Trucano posits that in education this divide could mean those youth in wealthier, digitally connected schools will have “teachers to help them use [AI]” and other kids will simply have “access”<sup>30</sup> without any support.

<sup>23</sup> Janet Lane and Sarah Pittman. *Upgrade: Towards a Rural Digital Economic Strategy*. Canada West Foundation, July 2020. <https://cwff.ca/research/publications/report-upgrade-towards-a-rural-digital-economic-strategy/>

<sup>24</sup> Kelly, Wayne, Brian McGrath, & Danielle Hubbard, “Starting from ‘scratch’: Building young people’s digital skills through coding club collaboration with rural public libraries,” *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 55, 2, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09610006221090953>

<sup>25</sup> Marty Klyne. “Canada’s digital divide hurts Indigenous and rural communities.” *SenCA+*. Senate of Canada, February 8, 2023. <https://sencanada.ca/en/sencaplus/opinion/canadas-digital-divide-hurts-indigenous-and-rural-communities-senator-klyne/>

<sup>26</sup> As cited in Daisy Woelk. “Advocates call for better connectivity in rural, remote communities in Manitoba.” *Global News*, March 8, 2024, para. 2. <https://globalnews.ca/news/10346391/rural-and-remote-connectivity>

<sup>27</sup> Koch, Katharina. “The territorial and socio-economic characteristics of the digital divide in Canada.” *Canadian Journal of Regional Science* 45, 2, 2022, p. 90. [https://idjs.ca/images/rcsr/archives/V45N2\\_4-KOCH.pdf](https://idjs.ca/images/rcsr/archives/V45N2_4-KOCH.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Lukawiecki, Jessica, Gurpreet Bedi, & Aiza Khan. *Newcomer families in Canada and the digital divide*. Community Engaged Scholarship Institute, 2022. <https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/server/api/core/bitstreams/76bde4be-10e1-4be7-818d-55d781e238da/content>

<sup>30</sup> Trucano, Michael. “AI and the next digital divide in education.” *Commentary*, July 10, 2023. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/ai-and-the-next-digital-divide-in-education/>

**Figure 4-1**

## Seven Oaks by the numbers: Cultivating student growth and wellbeing

	2018	2022	2023
<b>Students who value school outcomes</b>	76%	67%	65%
<b>Students with positive homework behaviours</b>	73%	66%	69%
<b>Students who reported they tried hard to succeed in their learning</b>	71%	64%	64%
<b>Students who are interested and motivated in their learning</b>	45%	36%	36%
<b>Aspirations to finish high school</b>	81%	75%	69%
<b>Planning for post-secondary education</b>	66%	55%	52%
<b>Planning to pursue apprenticeship program</b>	22%	12%	10%

Source: Seven Oaks School Division, *Seven Oaks by the Numbers: Cultivating Student Growth and Wellbeing*, 2023

Winnipeg's Seven Oaks School Division's report *Seven Oaks by the Numbers: Cultivating Student Growth and Wellbeing*<sup>31</sup> provides a granular case study. Students' future aspirations and behaviours to support those aspirations have also dropped, in some responses alarmingly so, since 2018.

Students in French immersion, particularly younger children, experienced language learning delays during the pandemic, particularly if they had parents who did not have the language skills to support their education at home.<sup>32</sup>

As students in high school or recent graduates were at the stages of forming bonds outside of their family and learning how to integrate into larger communities, the pandemic disrupted those processes for an entire generation of young people.<sup>33</sup> Within Manitoba, some programs such as CareerTrek, which allows those in primary and secondary education to explore careers, are still in the process of returning to communities they used to serve. The pandemic limited opportunities for some youth who planned to enter the workforce or go to post-secondary for the first time, and some youth may have needed to put their plans on hold.<sup>34</sup> These impacts were also disparately felt across populations with greater increases in youth who were not in employment, education, or training (NEET) for Indigenous and immigrant communities.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Seven Oaks School Division. *Seven Oaks by the Numbers: Cultivating Student Growth and Wellbeing*, 2023. <https://www.7oaks.org/News/By%20the%20Numbers/Seven%20Oaks%20by%20the%20Numbers%202023.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Macintosh, Maggie. "Pandemic erects huge language barrier." *Winnipeg Free Press*, December 15, 2021. <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2021/12/15/pandemic-erects-huge-language-barrier>

<sup>33</sup> Colleen Walsh, "Young adults hardest hit by loneliness during the pandemic," *The Harvard Gazette*, February 17, 2021, <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/02/young-adults-teens-loneliness-mental-health-coronavirus-covid-pandemic/>

<sup>34</sup> Jaclyn Layton. "The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training: A regional analysis and international perspective." *Education Indicators in Canada: Fact Sheet*. Statistics Canada, October 18, 2022. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/81-599-x/81-599-x2022001-eng.htm>; Environics Institute. *Making up time: The impact of the pandemic on young adults in Canada*. November 2021. [https://fsc-ccf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report\\_Making-up-time\\_The-impact-of-the-pandemic-on-young-adults\\_EN.pdf](https://fsc-ccf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Report_Making-up-time_The-impact-of-the-pandemic-on-young-adults_EN.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> Layton, Jaclyn. "The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic."

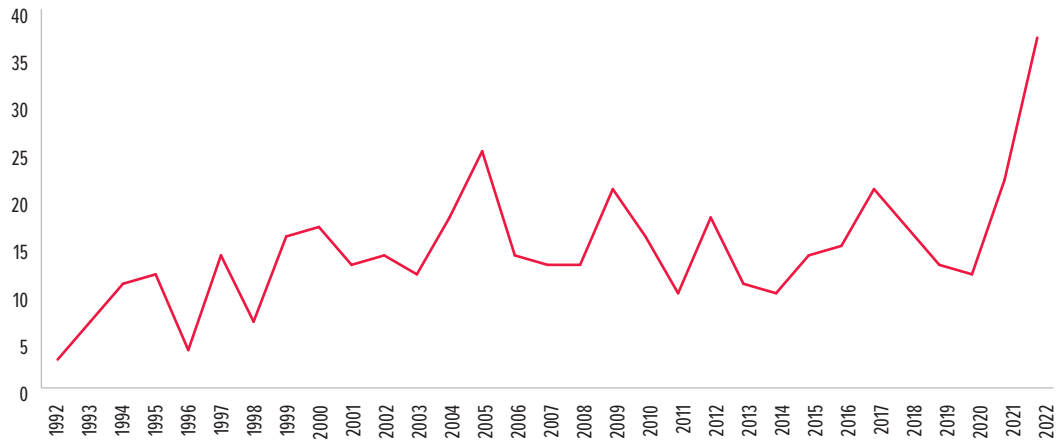


## The ultimate cost of poor mental health in young people

In 2022, 36 Manitobans under the age of 21 took their lives, the most in one year since at least 1992. The Manitoba youth advocate stated that “[s]eventy per cent of the suicides were in First Nations communities.”<sup>36</sup>

Figure 4-2

### Manitoba - Number of suicides of those under the age of 21, 1992-2022



Source: Manitoba Advocate for Youth Annual Reports 2021-2022 and 2022-2023

The Advocate for Children and Youth completed a youth listening tour in 2021. Substance use, mental health and wellbeing and poverty were the top three issues for youth. Youth explained that they used substances because of “boredom [...] conflict, to socialize, have fun and escape from stress, anxiety, depression and hunger.”<sup>37</sup> Pandemic impacts were specifically referenced as a factor affecting youth’s mental health. Poverty was closely linked to homelessness and, in rural areas, lack of transportation to essential services and community.<sup>38</sup>

Cost of living pressures in the post-pandemic period have also exacerbated pressures and are now top of mind for young people both in Manitoba and other parts of Canada.

<sup>36</sup> As cited in Brock, Taylor. “Manitoba seeing spike in youth suicide rate.” CTV News, December 5, 2023, para. 8. <https://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/manitoba-seeing-spike-in-youth-suicide-rate-1.6673176>

<sup>37</sup> Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth. *The Right to be Heard: A Special Report on the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth’s Youth Listening Tour, 2021*. The Office of the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, 2021, p. 20. MACY-Mini-Youth-Report-Listening-TourSCREEN-Spreads-FIN.pdf (manitobaadvocate.ca)

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

# Economic priorities for youth

## Perceptions

When youth in Manitoba and the four major centres were asked to select the top three economic factors to consider a move to a different community or another province, housing/rental costs led followed by low tax rates. The third most selected factor was vehicle expenses when considering a move to another community and affordability of travel to home province/territory when considering a move to another province.

Besides a good job, housing costs have become the most important economic factor when youth consider moving.

**Table 5-1**

**Top *economic* factors when considering a move to a different community/province/territory, all respondents (%)**

	<b>Community</b>	<b>Province</b>
<b>Housing/rental costs</b>	78	73
<b>Low tax rates</b>	42	50
<b>Vehicle expenses (Fuel, insurance, etc.)</b>	37	34
<b>Affordability of travel to home province/territory</b>	35	39
<b>Affordable amenities for children / childcare</b>	31	27
<b>Recreation costs, such as owning a cottage</b>	18	16
<b>Low tuition fees</b>	12	15
	n= 1371	

Source: Baseline survey, all respondents who selected at least one factor

Housing/rental costs and low tax rates were also a chief concern for those within Manitoba. However, for respondents who lived outside Winnipeg, the second most selected factor when considering a move outside Manitoba was vehicle expenses followed by tax rates.

Table 5-2

**Top *economic* factors when considering a move to another community/  
province/territory, Manitobans (%)**

	Winnipeg		Elsewhere MB	
	Community	Province	Community	Province
<b>Housing/rental costs</b>	78	72	81	74
<b>Low tax rates</b>	44	53	43	38
<b>Vehicle expenses (Fuel, insurance, etc.)</b>	36	33	51	40
<b>Affordable amenities for children / childcare</b>	34	32	33	31
<b>Affordability of travel to home province/territory</b>	33	32	33	32
<b>Low tuition fees</b>	14	17	10	10
<b>Recreation costs, such as owning a cottage</b>	14	15	12	13
	n=236		n=86	

Source: Baseline survey, all Manitobans who selected at least one factor

A higher percentage of Edmontonian youth selected housing/rental costs as a key factor compared to respondents in the other major Canadian cities. In Winnipeg compared to the rest of the country, a slightly smaller percentage chose housing/rental costs as a factor when considering a move to another province or community. On the other hand, when they considered a move to another community, Winnipeggers placed slightly more emphasis on childcare costs and tuition rates. For a move to another province, lower tax rates and again low tuition fees were more of a factor compared to the other cities.

Recreation costs were slightly more selected by Vancouverites than other cities however recreation and tuition fees were the least selected factors across all cities.

Prior to the data collection period, the researchers heard that the comparatively low cost and high availability of recreational cottages and lakeside living was a major draw for residents of Manitoba. This may have been the case previously, and no doubt was an advantage for older generations, but the data shows that the cost of owning a cottage does not rank highly among the youth surveyed – within or outside of Manitoba. On the contrary, their priority is having affordable things to do within their communities. Out of all the locations surveyed, Winnipeg had the highest percentage of respondents who would not move for any of the stated economic reasons followed by Vancouver.

## First Nations

For First Nations youth who would consider a move to another community for economic reasons, housing/rental costs are by far the most important factor to consider followed by affordability of travel home, tax rates and vehicle expenses. More First Nations youth said that they would not move for these economic factors compared to social or quality of life factors, but fewer First Nations youth said they would never move for these reasons compared to the baseline survey respondents in Winnipeg.

**Table 5-3**

### Top *economic* factors when considering a move to another province/territory, First Nations respondents in Manitoba (%)

	Community	Province
<b>Housing/rental costs</b>	90	79
<b>Low tax rates</b>	37	39
<b>Vehicle expenses (Fuel, insurance, etc.)</b>	31	46
<b>Affordability of travel to home province/territory</b>	10	10
<b>Vehicle expenses (Fuel, insurance, etc.)</b>	18	15
<b>Affordability of travel to home province/territory</b>	48	55
<b>Affordable amenities for children / childcare</b>	27	18
<b>Recreation costs, such as owning a cottage</b>	85	
<b>Low tuition fees</b>	15	
	N=84	

Source: Indigenous youth and UCN survey, all respondents who self-identified as First Nation

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## Newcomers

Of the economic factors provided, housing costs are less important to respondents to the newcomer survey than to respondents to the baseline survey. On the other hand, recreation costs and tuition costs were more important. Housing costs were more important to those who had been in Canada for less than five years or more than ten. The longer a respondent had been in Canada, the more willing they were to move for the stated economic reasons. Newcomer respondents who had been in the country over ten years said they were more willing to move for economic reasons than any other survey group in or outside Manitoba.

**Table 5-4**

### **Top *economic* factors when considering a move to another community/ province/territory, all newcomer respondents in Manitoba (%)**

	<b>Community</b>	<b>Province</b>
<b>Housing/rental costs</b>	69	64
<b>Low tax rates</b>	38	29
<b>Vehicle expenses (Fuel, insurance, etc.)</b>	48	59
<b>Affordability of travel to home province/territory</b>	16	22
<b>Affordable amenities for children / childcare</b>	15	17
<b>Recreation costs, such as owning a cottage</b>	41	33
<b>Low tuition fees</b>	38	33
<b>Would move for economic reasons</b>	77	
<b>Would never move for these reasons</b>	23	
	N=112	

Source: Baseline survey, all newcomer respondents

Note: Includes those newcomers who did not know how long they had been in Canada n=3

Immigrants who have lived in Manitoba for more than 10 years are more likely than recent immigrants to consider moving out of the province.

**Table 5-5**

**Top *economic* factors when considering a move to another province/territory, newcomers in Manitoba by years in Canada (%)**

	<b>&gt;5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>10+</b>
<b>Housing/rental costs</b>	68	63	68
<b>Low tax rates</b>	24	29	32
<b>Vehicle expenses (Fuel, insurance, etc.)</b>	65	58	52
<b>Affordability of travel to home province/territory</b>	26	29	12
<b>Affordable amenities for children / childcare</b>	9	21	20
<b>Recreation costs, such as owning a cottage</b>	24	42	40
<b>Low tuition fees</b>	47	13	36
<b>Would move for economic reasons</b>	68	86	96
<b>Would never move for these reasons</b>	24	14	4
	n=55	n=28	N=26

Source: Baseline survey, all those who knew how many years they had been in Canada

## Francophones

An affordable home was the top priority for Francophone youth but was less important when moving to a new province while tax rates and recreation costs were more important for a move to another province. Tuition fees and childcare costs were more important when looking to move communities. A higher percentage of Francophone youth said they would not move for these factors compared to Indigenous respondents and those located outside Winnipeg.

**Table 5-6**

### **Top *economic* factors when considering a move to another community/ province/territory, Francophone respondents in Manitoba (%)**

	Community	Province
<b>Housing/rental costs</b>	82	74
<b>Low tax rates</b>	42	42
<b>Vehicle expenses (Fuel, insurance, etc.)</b>	24	32
<b>Affordability of travel to home province/territory</b>	24	18
<b>Affordable amenities for children / childcare</b>	34	24
<b>Recreation costs, such as owning a cottage</b>	18	37
<b>Low tuition fees</b>	34	24
<b>Would move for economic reasons</b>	81	
<b>Would never move for these reasons</b>	19	
	N=47	

Source: Francophone survey, all respondents



# Reality

## Home affordability

There are two factors which should be considered when comparing rental affordability across regions. First is the average rent currently paid for occupied properties. In October 2023, Selkirk had the most expensive average (all bedroom types) in Manitoba based on available data. Winkler had the lowest average rent.

Table 5-7

## Manitoba –Average rent occupied all bedroom types by census metropolitan area, October 2023

	Average Rent (\$)		Average Rent (\$)
<b>Brandon</b>	963	<b>Thompson</b>	1,030
<b>Hanover Rural Municipality</b>	1,014	<b>Winkler</b>	840
<b>Portage la Prairie</b>	1,047	<b>Winnipeg</b>	1,263
<b>Selkirk (City)</b>	1,275	<b>Manitoba</b>	1,229
<b>Steinbach</b>	976		

Source: CMHC, Manitoba — Historical Rental Market Statistics Summary

Average rents for occupied properties in most of the Atlantic provinces and Québec were on average about \$170 cheaper per month than in Manitoba. Saskatchewan was only slightly cheaper and Alberta slightly more expensive on average. Of the regions which attract a significant number of Manitobans, B.C. and Ontario had the highest rents.

Table 5-8

## Canada – Average rent occupied all bedroom types by provinces, October 2023

	Average rent (\$)	Difference from MB (\$)		Average rent (\$)	Difference from MB (\$)
<b>Manitoba</b>	1,229	-	<b>Saskatchewan</b>	1,194	-35
<b>Newfoundland &amp; Labrador</b>	1,004	-225	<b>Alberta</b>	1,368	139
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	1,079	-150	<b>British Columbia</b>	1,660	430
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	1,451	222	<b>Yukon Territories</b>	**	-
<b>New Brunswick</b>	1,120	-109	<b>Northwest Territories</b>	1,840	611
<b>Quebec</b>	1,022	-207	<b>Canada</b>	1,314	85
<b>Ontario</b>	1,609	380			

Source: CMHC, Canada – Rental Market Statistics Summary by Province

The other factor which needs to be considered when comparing rents is the average rent for vacant apartments. While landlords and property managers may be restricted in how much they raise rent for occupied properties, when the property becomes vacant, the owner is often free to raise/lower rents based on the market and government policy. These averages and year-over-year increases give a sense of market conditions and what newcomers to the market can expect.

Average listed rents and the year-over-year increase in March 2024 were lower in Manitoba than the Canadian average. Of those provinces that attract Manitobans, Saskatchewan had lower average rents for vacant properties while Alberta was slightly higher, similar to currently occupied suites. Alberta had the highest year-over-year increase in rent of the selected provinces. Ontario and British Columbia have the highest rents for vacant rentals but there was little change from the previous year.

**Table 5-9**

### Canada – Average listed rent all bedroom types by provinces, March 2024

	Average rent (\$)	Difference from MB (\$)	Year-over-year change (%)
<b>Manitoba</b>	1,554	-	9
<b>Alberta</b>	1,708	154	20
<b>British Columbia</b>	2,481	927	1
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	2,146	592	13
<b>Ontario</b>	2,431	877	1
<b>Quebec</b>	1,981	427	9
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	1,262	-292	16
<b>Canada</b>	2,146	592	12

Source: Rentals.ca March 2024 National Rent Report, Provincial Overview

## A move to Calgary would cost Winnipeg renters 30% more per month while a move to Regina would cost 16% less.

Of the 25 cities with available data, Winnipeg ranks 21st for average total rent cost. Only Quebec City, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Regina have average rents for new vacancies lower than Winnipeg. Out of the cities which attract the most Manitobans, Edmonton and Calgary had the highest year-over-year rent increases. Average rents for vacant properties in Vancouver and Toronto were almost double those of Winnipeg.

**Table 5-10**

### Canada – Average listed rent all bedroom types by select municipality, February 2024

	Rank	Average rent (\$)	Difference from MB (\$)	Year-over-year change (%)
<b>Winnipeg</b>	21	1,566	-	9.3
<b>Calgary</b>	15	2,047	481	12.8
<b>Edmonton</b>	23	1,479	-87	17.1
<b>Ottawa</b>	10	2,219	653	9.1
<b>Toronto</b>	2	2,830	1,264	2.4
<b>Regina</b>	25	1,311	-255	18.5
<b>Saskatoon</b>	24	1,312	-254	11.3
<b>Vancouver</b>	1	3,055	1,489	-3.0

Source: Rentals.ca February 2024 National Rent Report, Municipal Overview (the March 2024 overview did not include all bedroom type averages for Winnipeg)

For those who want to purchase a home, Manitoba provides a comparatively affordable housing market. Within Manitoba, Winnipeg has some of the most expensive housing prices. Prices are well below the national average of \$685,809 and have not changed as dramatically over the past year compared to other municipalities. Greater Vancouver housing prices are on average three and half times as expensive as houses in Winnipeg, and five times as expensive as Brandon and Portage La Prairie. In Saint John's, Fredericton, Gatineau and Regina, housing is less expensive than Winnipeg but more expensive than Brandon and Portage La Prairie. Lethbridge and Edmonton are \$30,000 more expensive than Winnipeg and even more expensive than Brandon and Portage La Prairie.

**Table 5-11**

## Select Canadian cities – Average home price or \*HPI Benchmark, October 2022 and October 2023

	2022 (\$)	2023 (\$)	Difference from Winnipeg (\$)	Year-over-year change (%)
<b>Winnipeg*</b>	329,800	345,400	-	4.7
<b>Brandon</b>	219,033	226,371	-119,029	3.4
<b>Portage La Prairie</b>	189,090	218,147	-127,253	15.4
<b>Halifax-Dartmouth*</b>	504,300	531,200	304,829	5.3
<b>Fredericton and Area*</b>	269,200	290,300	-55,100	7.8
<b>St. John's*</b>	318,000	328,800	-16,600	3.4
<b>Montréal</b>	502,000	519,100	173,700	3.4
<b>Gatineau</b>	450,035	472,375	126,975	5.0
<b>Regina*</b>	300,900	310,600	-34,800	3.2
<b>Saskatoon*</b>	367,800	388,300	42,900	5.6
<b>Greater Toronto*</b>	1,089,300	1,093,900	748,500	0.4
<b>Ottawa*</b>	611,200	628,500	283,100	2.8
<b>Calgary*</b>	515,700	567,900	222,500	10.1
<b>Edmonton*</b>	361,700	375,300	29,900	3.8
<b>Lethbridge</b>	338,626	376,231	30,831	11.1
<b>Greater Vancouver*</b>	1,132,600	1,183,300	837,900	4.5
<b>Victoria*</b>	846,600	848,000	502,600	0.2
<b>Interior B.C.*</b>	654,100	651,300	305,900	-0.4
<b>Canada</b>	662,527	685,809	340,409	3.5

Source: Canadian Real Estate Association National Price Map, 2023

\*The home price index benchmark provides an estimate of the average home price in a community.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Canadian Real Estate Association. "Try the MLS® HPI tool," *MLS® Home Price Index*, last updated June 2024. <https://www.crea.ca/housing-market-stats/mls-home-price-index/>

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The average Manitoban earns less than their western counterparts and is taxed more highly.

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## Taxes

### Income taxes

Average income earners in Manitoba typically paid more in taxes in 2021 than their western Canadian counterparts but less than those in Quebec and Atlantic Canada.

**Table 5-12**

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## Median after tax income 2021

<b>Canada</b>	\$68,400	<b>Ontario</b>	\$73,000
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	\$62,100	<b>Manitoba</b>	\$64,700
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	\$62,500	<b>Saskatchewan</b>	\$68,200
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	\$60,200	<b>Alberta</b>	\$77,000
<b>New Brunswick</b>	\$60,000	<b>British Columbia</b>	\$68,500
<b>Quebec</b>	\$61,400		

Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0190-01 and CWF calculations

Manitoba's income tax brackets and rates are higher across all brackets compared to the other western provinces and Ontario. While there are some adjustments to the tax brackets for the 2024 tax year across provinces, the income tax rates will stay the same. In Manitoba, those who make over \$100,000 in income will fall in the highest tax bracket, while their counterparts in B.C. will pay less tax until they reach about \$172,000. The province's exemption increase moved Manitoba from second last to fourth for total basic personal amount which is now the same as the federal amount.<sup>40</sup> For low-income earners, B.C. and Ontario have the lowest income tax rates while Alberta has the lowest tax rates for middle- and high-income earners.

**Table 5-13**

### Income tax brackets by select Canadian province, 2023

	Bracket (\$)	%		Bracket (\$)	%
<b>Manitoba</b>	Basic personal amount – 15,000	-	<b>Saskatchewan</b>	Basic personal amount: 17,661	-
	Up to 36,842	10.80		Up to 49,721	10.50
	36,842-79,625	12.75		49,721-142,058	12.50
	Over 79,625	17.40		Over 142,058	14.50
<b>Alberta</b>	Basic Personal amount – 21,003	-	<b>Ontario</b>	Basic personal amount – 11,865	-
	Up to 142,292	10.00		Up to 49,231	5.05
	142,292-170,151	12.00		49,231-98,463	9.15
	170,151-227,668	13.00		98,463-150,000	11.16
	227,668-341,502	14.00		150,000-220,000	12.16
	Over 341,502	15.00		Over 220,000	13.16
<b>British Columbia</b>	Basic personal amount – 11,981	-	<b>Federal</b>	Basic personal amount: 15,000	-
	Up to 45,654	5.06		Up to 53,359	15.00
	45,654-91,310	7.70		53,359-106,717	20.50
	91,310-104,835	10.50		106,717-165,430	26.00
	104,835-127,299	12.29		165,430-235,675	29.00
	127,299-172,602	14.70		Over 235,675	33.00
	172,602-240,716	16.80			
	Over 240,716	20.50			

Source: Fidelity, 2023 Income Tax Brackets

<sup>40</sup> Government of Manitoba. "Fiscally responsible outcomes and economic growth strategy." *Budget 2023*. <https://www.gov.mb.ca/budget2023/fiscally-responsible-outcomes-and-economic-growth1.html>

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## Property taxes are higher in Winnipeg than in other major Canadian cities.

### Property taxes

When comparing property taxes across municipalities, it is important to consider a few factors. The first is mill rate which “represents \$1.00 of taxes for every \$1,000 of portioned assessment.”<sup>41</sup> The second factor, the per cent change to the mill rate, gets the most attention as this denotes if taxes will go up, stay the same, or be reduced. The third factor is the commercial to residential ratio which shows how much commercial businesses are paying in property tax for every dollar of residential tax paid.

Winnipeg has amongst the highest mill rates among urban centres in provinces which attract the most Manitobans, while Calgary, Toronto and Vancouver have the lowest. Part of the challenge is population size as Winnipeg at the last census had only about 750,000 residents to share the tax burden while Calgary had just over 1.3 million and Toronto almost 2.8 million.<sup>42</sup>

Local context is also important. For the City of Vancouver, there are more cross-jurisdictional levies to cover services provided across Greater Vancouver. For example, TransLink is the transportation authority for Metro Vancouver and each city in the region includes a TransLink levy as part of their tax collection. The larger cities also have a higher commercial to residential property tax ratio which can keep residential taxes lower but can increase pressure on businesses.<sup>43</sup> Finding the balance between the two is a challenge for all municipalities.

<sup>41</sup> City of Winnipeg. “How taxes are calculated –Tax rates.” *Assessment and Taxation*, last updated April 11, 2024. <https://assessment.winnipeg.ca/AsmtTax/English/Property/TaxRates.stm>

<sup>42</sup> Statistics Canada. “Key indicators” *Census of Population*, July 16, 2024. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm>

<sup>43</sup> City of Vancouver. “Residential property taxes.” *Property tax rates*. <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/residential.aspx>

**Table 5-14****2023 single family residential mill rate (excludes amounts for other funds)**

	<b>2023 Mill Rate</b>	<b>% Change from 2022</b>	<b>Commercial/Residential Ratio</b>
<b>Winnipeg</b>	19.42	2.2	1.93:1
<b>Calgary</b>	4.33	3.4	3.36:1
<b>Edmonton</b>	7.01	3.5	2.59:1
<b>Toronto</b>	5.06	5.5	3.26:1
<b>Vancouver</b>	1.63	10.7	3.37:1
<b>Regina</b>	10.13	2.2	1.5:1
<b>Saskatoon</b>	7.6	3.93	1.61:1

Source: Municipal government websites and CWF calculations and Altus Group's Canadian Property Tax Rate Benchmark Report 2023<sup>44</sup>

Within Manitoba, Winnipeg is not the most expensive for overall mill rates and while the city did have a property tax increase in 2023 and some communities lowered taxes, other communities levied higher increases. Local context and population in addition to municipal government budgetary decisions can help explain these differences. For someone looking to live in Manitoba, property taxes might be a secondary concern to the cost of rent or home purchase price.

**Table 5-15****2023 single family residential mill rate (excludes amounts for other funds)**

	<b>Mill Rate</b>	<b>2023 Change (%)</b>
<b>Winnipeg</b>	19.42	2.2
<b>Brandon</b>	4.33	3.4
<b>Beausejour</b>	7.01	3.5
<b>Flin Flon</b>	5.06	5.5
<b>Selkirk</b>	1.63	10.7
<b>The Pas</b>	10.13	2.2
<b>Thompson</b>	7.6	3.93

Source: Municipal government websites, CWF calculations

<sup>44</sup> Altus Group. *Canadian Property Tax Rate Benchmark Report*, October 2023, p. 4 <https://www.altusgroup.com/insights/canadian-property-tax-benchmark-report/>



### Northern tax credit

Northern residents are eligible for a federal tax credit to help offset the additional expense of living in northern communities. In 2022, those who live in a prescribed northern zone, such as Churchill, Gillam and Lynn Lake<sup>45</sup> could claim “a basic residency amount of \$11.00 for each day”<sup>46</sup> that they resided in the community (about \$4,000 per year). Those who live in a prescribed intermediate zone<sup>47</sup>, such as Flin Flon, The Pas and Thompson, could claim \$5.50 per day they resided in the community.

A travel tax credit is also available for up to two personal travel trips per family up to \$1,200 and for all medical travel.<sup>48</sup>

### Transportation and travel costs

As transportation was an important factor for youth, researchers also examined the costs of various modes of transportation. At the end of 2023, within Manitoba, Winnipeg offered just under 85 bus routes and the most expensive cost per trip at \$3.15. Brandon offered the least expensive bus service and nine bus routes. Thompson had two bus routes while Flin Flon and Selkirk had one. Each community offered youth passes with most communities except Selkirk offering a discounted youth pass. Only Brandon and Winnipeg offer post-secondary passes.

Winnipeg offers similar services to other major urban centres in Canada, but not light rail transit (LRT). Saskatoon also does not offer LRT services and only about half as many bus routes as Winnipeg. The cost per trip and youth passes are also comparable to the other major urban centres while post-secondary passes are some of the most expensive amongst the selected cities. The average Winnipeg transit user also has a lower average income than in other urban centres and there are perceptual and real challenges which prevent increased ridership. The City of Winnipeg plans to consult with the public in 2024 to identify ways to transform the transportation system to attract more users.<sup>49</sup>

There are no large carriers for public transportation between the major cities such as Brandon and Winnipeg. Rather, there is an airport shuttle service between Brandon and Winnipeg Airport. The cost is comparable to transportation between major cities in other provinces. Air travel to the north is more expensive and less frequent than travel between cities in the southern parts of the country.

In the case of northern travel, Calm Air is often one of two or the sole provider of air service to northern Manitoba and the Kivalliq region in Nunavut. Saskatchewan also relies on smaller providers for air service to remote communities. Alberta and B.C. have service from WestJet and northern Ontario has service from Air Canada.

For bus service, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation operates a bus line which provides daily travel between Thompson and Winnipeg. Mahihkan Bus Lines based in Opaskwayak Cree Nation also provides service between Flin Flon and Winnipeg with stops in communities such as The Pas, Dauphin and Portage La Prairie along the way.<sup>50</sup> Bus travel is comparatively cheaper in Manitoba and anecdotally there appears to be more northern bus service in Manitoba than in Saskatchewan.

Given the expense of air travel and the length of time for bus travel, most Manitobans who want to travel may opt to drive. This could help explain why vehicle costs and affordability of travel to home province were closely tied for third place in the economic factor rankings.

<sup>45</sup> Canada Revenue Agency. “Table of the prescribed northern or intermediate zones for Manitoba.” Line 25500-Places located in prescribed zones, January 23, 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/about-your-tax-return/tax-return/completing-a-tax-return/deductions-credits-expenses/line-25500-northern-residents-deductions/line-25500-places-located-prescribed-zones.html>

<sup>46</sup> Canada Revenue Agency. “Line 25500-Calculate your residency deduction. Claiming deductions, credits, and expenses, January 1, 2023. <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/about-your-tax-return/tax-return/completing-a-tax-return/deductions-credits-expenses/line-25500-northern-residents-deductions/line-25500-calculate-residency-deduction.html>

<sup>47</sup> CRA. “Table”

<sup>48</sup> CRA, “Line 25500”

<sup>49</sup> Brass, Emily. “Winnipeg family gives up on car free lifestyle after struggles with public transit.” CBC News, November 21, 2023. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/family-quits-car-free-lifestyle-transit-struggles-1.7034206>

<sup>50</sup> Mahihkan Bus Lines. “Sunday to Friday schedule.” <https://mahihkanbuslines.com/bus-tickets/>

## Vehicle costs

While Alberta may have affordable tax rates, insurance premiums for drivers are amongst the highest in the country with young, male drivers paying the most. Alberta and Ontario are the only provinces listed that have private instead of public insurance providers. Manitoba has some of the most affordable car insurance premiums in the country followed by Saskatchewan. Gas prices in Manitoba are comparable to parts of British Columbia and Ontario and are more expensive than Saskatchewan or Alberta.

**Table 5-16**

## Vehicle cost comparison across select Canadian cities, insurance (2022) and gas prices (2023)

	Insurance premiums: Male, aged 22	Insurance premiums: Female, aged 22 <sup>51</sup>	Average gas price (c/liter) <sup>52</sup>
<b>Brandon</b>	1,427	1,427	148.9
<b>Thompson</b>	1,283	1,283	155.9*
<b>Winnipeg</b>	1,492	1,492	149.9
<b>Edmonton</b>	4,376	3,827	130.2
<b>Grande Prairie</b>	3,730	3,039	134.9
<b>Red Deer</b>	3,786	3,112	130.8
<b>Abbotsford</b>	2,588	2,586	160.6
<b>Prince George</b>	1,790	1,790	161.6
<b>West Kelowna</b>	1,971	1,971	161.6
<b>Sudbury</b>	2,899	2,620	148.6
<b>Thunder Bay</b>	3,730	3,039	151.4
<b>Toronto</b>	3,232	2,755	146.7
<b>Saskatoon</b>	1,470	1,470	141.7

Source: EY, *Canadian Private Passenger Vehicle Insurance Rate Comparisons*, October 22, Kalibrate, or \*GasBuddy

<sup>51</sup> Insurance comparison from Pantaleo, Cosimo. *Canadian Private Passenger Vehicle Insurance Rate Comparisons*, EY, October 22, 2022. <https://assets.ctfassets.net/nnc41duedoho/3CotxeVLCbMhAhA7PCEPyB/553b0a29697566237f6b69bfdea6d1fa/Canadian-Insurance-Rate-Comparisons-Oct-2022.pdf>

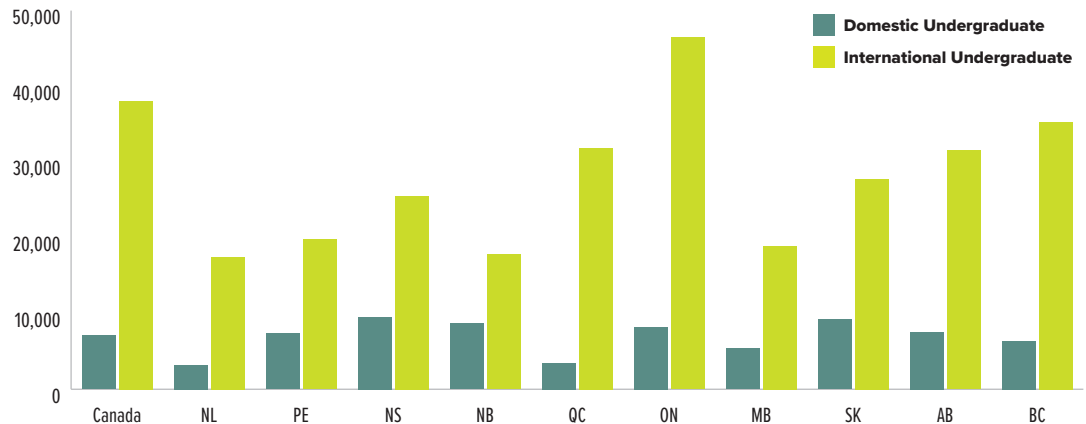
<sup>52</sup> Average gas prices are for November 27, 2023 from Kalibrate data <https://charting.kalibrate.com/Charting/FullMonty#> or \*GasBuddy <https://www.gasbuddy.com/>

## Tuition

Manitoba has amongst the most affordable average undergraduate tuition rates all provinces. Tuition rates were of particular concern to the Francophone and newcomer respondents. The average tuition at Université Saint-Boniface for domestic students in 2023/2024 was \$6,133 for university programs which was above the provincial average in 2023/2024. For international students, the average tuition cost was \$13,336, which was below the Canadian provincial average.

Figure 5-1

### 2023/2024 undergraduate tuition in Canada, domestic and international



Source: Statistics Canada Table 37-10-0045-01

Anecdotally, there is the perception that Manitoba is easier to immigrate into and individuals decide where to move within the country once they become permanent residents. This perception could help to explain why Manitoba may be more attractive for international students as tuition is comparatively affordable and they believe that permanent residency will be easier to achieve once they graduate.

While youth care about tuition, the cost of tuition was one of the least important factors when considering where to move for those inside and outside Manitoba. Sometimes the perception of being cheaper can also lead to perceptions that the education is not as high quality. Post-secondary institutions have limited presence in rural regions, so students often need to move to go to school. While they may choose Brandon or Winnipeg, they may also look outside of the province.

## Further observations

While Manitoba is one of the more affordable provinces for both house prices and rents, Alberta and Saskatchewan would also be attractive and offer comparable or lower taxes at the provincial and municipal level. British Columbia and Ontario would be more affordable options if housing and rents were not so high as the provinces offered comparable or less expensive taxes, affordable travel options, and more extensive transit and transportation options.

Those who live in northern Manitoba who move outside Manitoba could find travel home to be expensive if flying and challenging if travelling by bus while those who live in southern Manitoba may find travel home to be more affordable and less time consuming. Those who live outside Manitoba and would consider moving to Winnipeg are slightly more likely to prioritize living costs in which Manitoba does comparatively well.

Tuition rates within Manitoba are also more affordable than most other provinces but tuition was not a significant economic pull factor in comparison to the other economic factors considered. However, the perception of Manitoba as an easier province to gain permanent residency combined with lower international tuition rates and housing affordability may make the province more economically attractive to newcomers, particularly those for whom Manitoba is the first point of entry into the country.

# Education

## Perceptions

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### First Nations

Of those surveyed First Nations youth who were either in or had completed post-secondary education, 80 per cent generally felt that their education was preparing them for further education or jobs while 20 per cent, all of whom were attending UCN, felt that their education was not.

Two-thirds of surveyed First Nations youth who had completed high school generally felt that their education had prepared them for the workforce or advanced education. Some First Nations youth expressed concerns about quality of education on reserve and not being able to complete education in their home communities but there was an overall recognition that education was improving and incorporating more Indigenous worldviews. The need for more support for life skills and transition to post-secondary was a common concern across all sub-population surveys.

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### Newcomers

The majority of newcomers who attended primary or secondary school in Manitoba felt their education was good (64 per cent) and prepared them for work or advanced education. Those who have children in primary or secondary education in Manitoba were slightly less satisfied with only 56 per cent saying their education was good. The higher the parents' education level, the more likely they were to be unsatisfied with their children's education at either the primary/secondary or post-secondary level.

Permanent resident respondents who were educated outside Canada often had their credentials recognized at a lower level (34 per cent) or not recognized at all (23 per cent). Only 35 per cent had their credentials fully recognized. Those with post-graduate education were most likely to say that their education was treated as equivalent, those with high school only were more likely to say that it was recognized but at a lower level. Those who had university or college undergraduate degrees and diplomas were most likely to say their credentials were not recognized.

Respondents with university or college education below the post-graduate level were most likely to say that they had to restart their careers in a new field or a lower position in their current field or were just doing what they could to survive. Those with higher levels of education were also less satisfied with their family's decision to move either to Canada or Manitoba. However, the survey population was small and the government may want to further examine these specific groups to gain additional perspective.

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## Francophones

For students who want to proceed past post-secondary in French, the Université-Saint Boniface (USB) is the primary option; most of the respondents to the Francophone survey said they attended USB. USB offers online programs but no satellite programs in rural Francophone communities so Francophone students who want to pursue education in French move to Winnipeg or look to other parts of the country. In a focus group, one Francophone individual mentioned that they had a bursary to study at USB and this kept them in the province.

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## Employers

Employers were asked about their relationship with their local post-secondary institutions and the level of preparedness for jobs of the graduates they hire. While employers seek them, there is no such thing as a job ready candidate. Lack of experience was the most cited reason most graduates do not meet job requirements.

Employers can work with their local post-secondary institutions to build the programs that meet their needs. Winnipeg employers are more likely to do this.

**Table 6-1**

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### Employers' relationship with Manitoban post-secondary institutions (PSIs), Respondents (%)

Degree of contact	Winnipeg region	Other Manitoba regions
<b>Yes, we work closely with PSIs</b>	24	2
<b>Yes, we work with PSIs but not very closely</b>	26	16
<b>No, we have never thought of working with PSIs</b>	9	10
<b>No, we do not have the time</b>	7	5
<b>No, we do not know how to engage with PSIs</b>	3	12
<b>No, PSIs do not welcome our input</b>	5	5
<b>No, for other reasons</b>	14	34
<b>Unsure</b>	12	16
<b>NET Yes</b>	50	17
<b>NET No</b>	38	67

Source: Employer survey, all respondents

## Reality

Educational opportunities and results vary across the province.

### Graduation rates

Northern and very rural populations have the lowest six-year graduation rates. These areas also have a higher proportion of First Nations students.

**Table 6-2**

### Public schools average 4, 5- and 6-year graduation rates by economic region, 2016 cohort

	Total students	% population	4-year rate	5-year rate	6-year rate	% remaining
<b>North</b>	406	3	55.3	63.33	66.5	33.5
<b>Rural</b>	4,642	34	84.51	86.87	88.06	11.94
<b>North and very rural (Frontier SD)</b>	184	1	34	40.5	43.5	56.5
<b>Urban</b>	6,819	51	83.1	86.98	89.2	10.8
<b>Francophone</b>	334	2	96.2	99.7	100	0
<b>Funded Independent</b>	1,083	8	95.1	97.8	97.9	2.1

Source: Government of Manitoba Divisional High School Rates, 2016 Cohort June 2020-June 2022 and CWF calculations

### First Nations

Education for First Nations students is not uniform across the province and depends on whether a student lives on or off reserve, the region and community they live in, their grade level and whether they need additional learning supports. On-reserve education typically falls under the jurisdiction of the federal government, but the Education Partnerships Program is working to establish regional education agreements. This program would see the federal government continue to fund on-reserve education “while supporting regional and local diversity and the principle of First Nations control of First Nations education.”<sup>53</sup>

First Nations youth who live off reserve typically attend provincially funded and administered schools. Not all communities offer education up to Grade 12. Students may have to move away to finish high school. Often, children choose to stay in their communities rather than move and do not attend school beyond what they can do at home. Or they may transition from federally funded, on-reserve schools to provincially funded schools.

<sup>53</sup> Indigenous Services Canada. *Education partnerships program: Regional Education Agreement Component: National Program Guidelines 2022 to 2023*. Government of Canada, September 6, 2023, para. 6. <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1654194365701/1654194420760>

This dilemma is part of the reason First Nations youth are more likely to have no credential or only high school level education than non-First Nations youth, but does not explain the whole story. There are many reasons why someone may leave school early including becoming a parent, lower socioeconomic class and language barriers.<sup>54</sup>

**Table 6-3**

### First Nations youth Aged 15-44 educational attainment, 2021

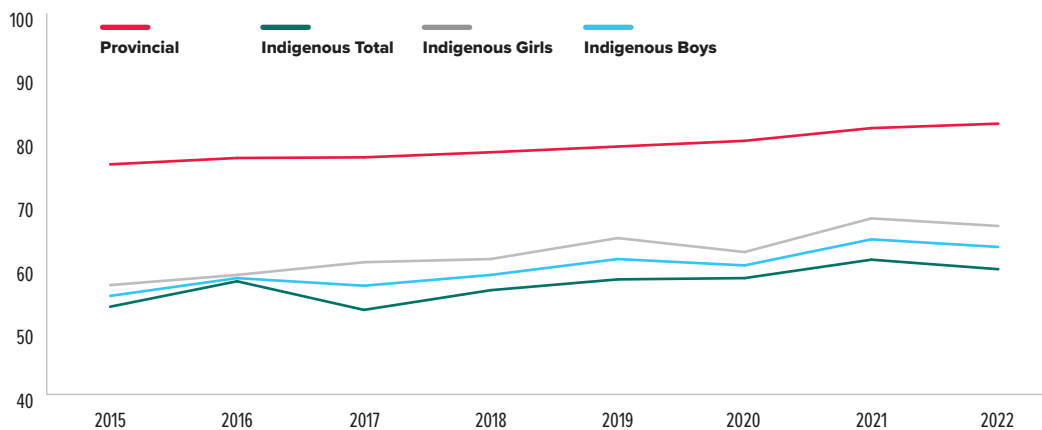
	First Nations	First Nations %	Non-First Nations youth %
<b>No certificate, diploma or degree</b>	26,820	46.6%	14.8%
<b>High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate</b>	19,605	34.1%	33.3%
<b>Post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree</b>	11,105	19.3%	51.9%
<b>Total</b>	57,530	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-10-0426-01

Programs and initiatives to increase First Nations-led education and expand opportunities within communities appear to work as graduation rates have improved. Indigenous girls continue to outperform Indigenous boys.

**Figure 6-1**

### 6-Year Indigenous graduation rates and provincial rates, 2013-2022



Source: Government of Manitoba, Manitoba's student-tracked high school graduation rate, 2016 cohort

<sup>54</sup> Statistics Canada. "First Nations youth: Experiences and outcomes in secondary and postsecondary learning. StatsCAN Plus, September 21, 2023. <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/o1/en/plus/4548-first-nations-youth-experiences-and-outcomes-secondary-and-postsecondary-learning>



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## For First Nations youth, 70% of boys and 75% of girls living off reserve had a diploma compared to 42% and 49% on reserve (2021 Census).

Within provincially funded schools, First Nations children may have additional needs for learning supports because they do not have learning support or technology at home, or they have exceptionalities and/or disabilities.<sup>55</sup> Jordan's Principle<sup>56</sup> is intended to ensure that First Nations children receive these supports as quickly as possible and without the fear that the request will be refused. The Southern Chiefs Organization has established Jordan's Principle Coordinators at the school level to help children and their families navigate requests.<sup>57</sup> Those who are no older than 26 and were in the care of child and youth care services as children can also receive supports for education and training.<sup>58</sup>

First Nations youth who live off-reserve are more likely to have a high school diploma and go to university. In the 2016 Census, 70 per cent of boys and 75 per cent of girls living off reserve had a diploma compared to 42 and 49 per cent on reserve. Almost 50 per cent of girls living off reserve were either in or had finished post-secondary education.

First Nations youth take longer to complete their high school education and often live in rural or northern communities. Those who do finish will then most likely have to move to attend post-secondary education unless they find a remote option with the program they want to take.

Once in post-secondary, First Nations and other Indigenous students are less likely to complete their studies and the reasons for doing so range from the “systemic [to the] individual.”<sup>59</sup> Systemic reasons can include the lack of Indigenous culture and worldview, racism and stereotypes and the “legacy of residential schools [which] has created intergenerational trauma.”<sup>60</sup>

Opportunities to find “community and support at school [are] a primary need for Indigenous students and significantly impact[s] their success.” Maintaining connections to family and home is also important. Those who have a “strong sense of Indigenous identity” were less likely to leave school, but maintaining a strong identity on campus is a challenge. At a personal level, “students’ motivations may contradict the school’s definitions of success and competency” and they may make decisions based on what is best for their families and communities not just themselves. Academic achievement, language and exceptionalities may also affect whether a student stays in post-secondary or leaves.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc. *First Nations Special Education: Procedure Handbook*, 2021. [https://mfnerc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/FNSEPH-2021-01-18\\_FINAL.pdf](https://mfnerc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/FNSEPH-2021-01-18_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal definition of Jordan's Principle can be summarized as “a child-first principle meant to prevent First Nations children from being denied essential public services or experiencing delays in receiving them” because of “jurisdictional dispute.” Jordan River Anderson was a five-year old child from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba who passed away while waiting for a dispute to be resolved over who would pay for his care.

<sup>57</sup> Southern Chiefs Organization Inc. *Jordan's Principle Program*. <https://scoinc.mb.ca/jp-program/>

<sup>58</sup> Manitoba Keewatinow Okimakanak Inc. *Jordan's Principle and Post Majority Support Services*. <https://mkonation.com/services/jordans-principle-and-post-majority-support-services/>

<sup>59</sup> Herkimer, Jaiden. *Holding our ground: Indigenous student post-secondary persistence and early leaving*, 2021, p. 4. <https://indspire.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Holding-Our-Ground-Report-EN-Final-WEB1.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, p. 6

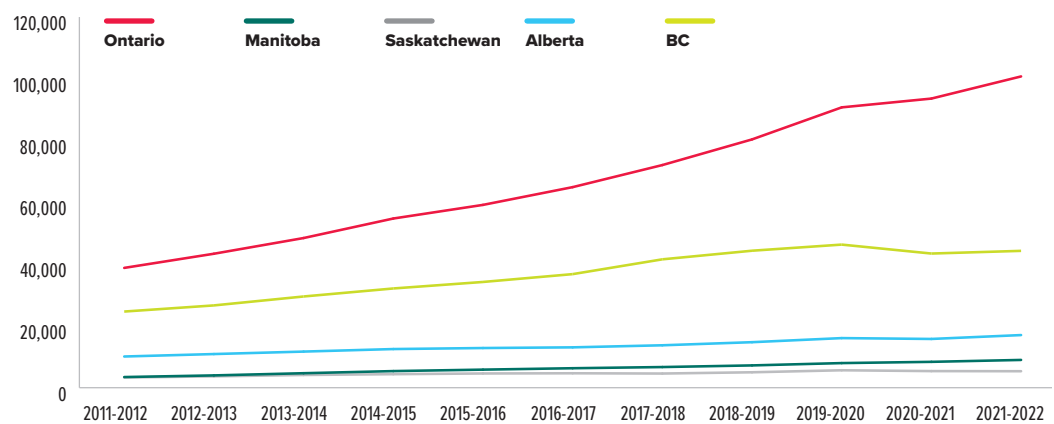
<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

## Newcomers

Newcomers admitted on a student visa can attend any designated learning institution at the K-12 or post-secondary level. Most international students attend post-secondary institutions. Graduates can then apply for a Post Graduate Work Permit and then for permanent residency. International student university enrollments follow trends seen in interprovincial migration and newcomer retention rates with most students opting for Ontario, B.C. and Alberta. Recent changes to the international student visa program suggested that provinces would see a decline in international student enrollment. However, the federal government is approving visas “at a faster pace than [2023]”<sup>62</sup> and it is unclear what effect the changes will have on Manitoba. Policy in other provinces may help attract youth to Manitoba. For example, the B.C. government announced that international students can comprise no more than 30 per cent of an institution’s total student population.<sup>63</sup>

Figure 6-2

### International student university enrollments by select province, 2011-2022



Source: Statistics Canada Table 37-10-0232-01, includes upper secondary, short cycle and post-secondary non-tertiary education

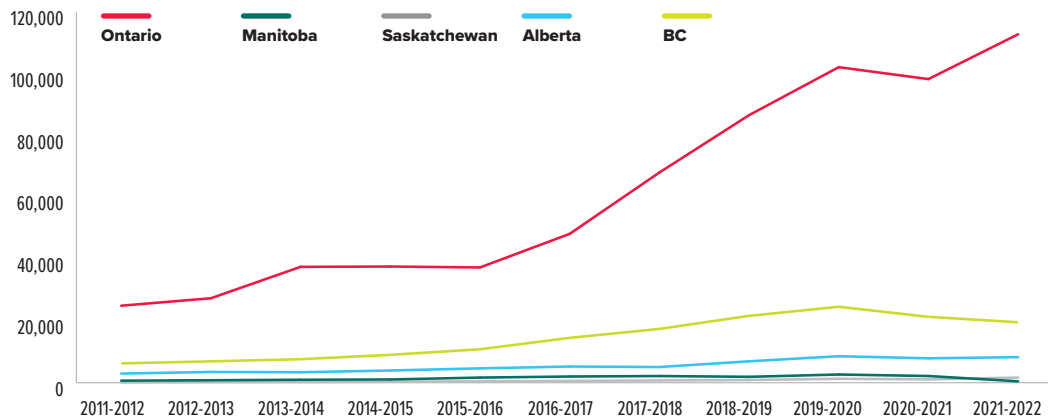
<sup>62</sup> Possifume, Bryan. “Foreign student permits are already outpacing 2023’s record numbers,” *National Post*, July 22, 2024, para. 1. <https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/foreign-student-permits-are-already-outpacing-2023s-record-numbers>

<sup>63</sup> The Canadian Press. “B.C. caps international post-secondary student enrollment,” *Radio-Canada International*, July 17, 2024. <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/rci/en/news/2089069/international-post-secondary-student-enrolment-cap>

International enrollments in colleges follow similar trends but Ontario has a greater share of the population. Enrollments in colleges outside Ontario have yet to recover from the pandemic decline. Of the western provinces Manitoba has the lowest international student college enrollment.

**Figure 6-3**

### International student college enrollments by select province, 2011-2022



Source: Statistics Canada Table 37-10-0232-01, includes upper secondary, short cycle and post-secondary non-tertiary education

### Francophone

The Francophone school division had the highest K-12 graduation rate of all urban, rural and northern regions. However, French-language studies at the post-secondary level in Manitoba are very limited to non-existent; USB offers undergraduate and graduate programs only.

Other provinces offer more selection. Campus Saint Jean at the University of Alberta offers college level programs in Early Childhood Education, Health Care Aide and Business Administration technician. Its satellite program in Calgary offers the first year in Calgary or online, the second and third year on campus, and a practicum is completed wherever the student lives.<sup>64</sup> In Ontario, amongst other institutions, Collège Boréal serves the Francophone population and operates 37 sites including eight campuses in 27 communities.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-saint-jean/programs/college/admissions.html>; <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-saint-jean/programs/distance-education/calgary.html>

<sup>65</sup> <https://collegeboreal.ca/en/about-us/who-we-are/>

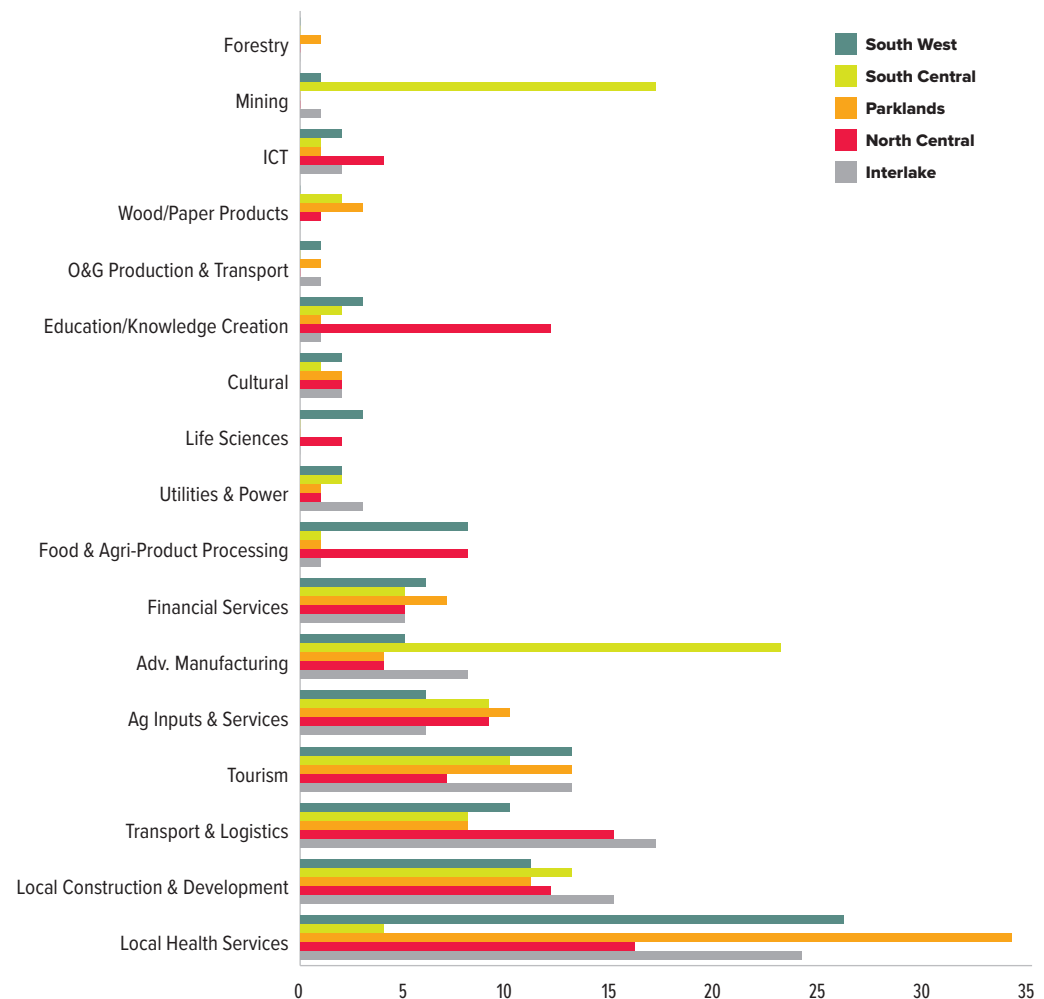
## Employers

The poorly developed relationship between employers and post-secondary institutions, especially in rural regions and the North is not surprising as Manitoba's post-secondary education is heavily concentrated in Winnipeg and Brandon. UCN covers the whole of the North. Religious institutions, predominately Christian, are concentrated in the southeast region. There are very few post-secondary satellite campuses in rural parts of the province. There are some online programs through Manitoba's post-secondary institutions but not all programs are offered this way, and reliable internet is a requirement. Some post-secondary institutions do offer telephone or correspondence learning through eCourses Manitoba, but those options are very limited.

Outside of Winnipeg and Brandon, offered programs do not necessarily reflect labour market demand for the specific region or what students are interested in taking—which may or may not overlap with local demand. In Interlake, jobs are concentrated in healthcare, construction, transportation and logistics, tourism and advanced manufacturing.

**Figure 6-4**

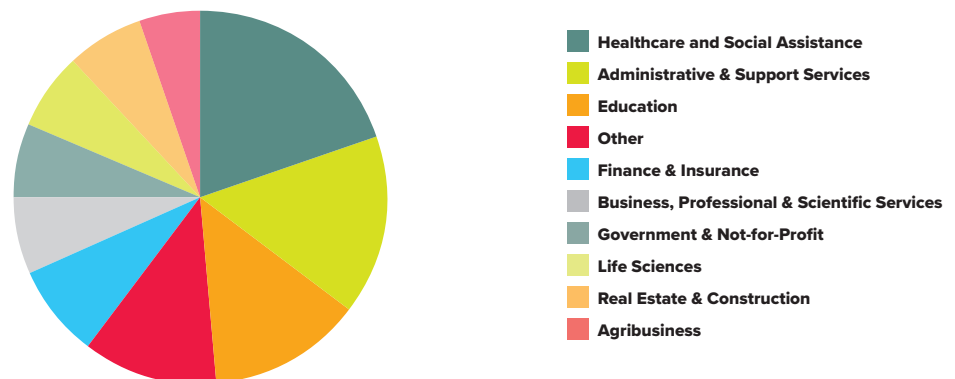
### % share of jobs (4-digit NAICS) rural Manitoba by industry cluster, 2022



Source: Rural Manitoba Economic Development regional profile reports

**Figure 6-5**

### Top 10 Sectors rural Manitoban youth aspire to work, % of 18-45 year old respondents



Source: Baseline survey, respondents outside of the North, Winnipeg and Brandon

Red River College Polytech is the only public post-secondary offering in-person education in the Selkirk region. The programs are business administration, health care aide and educational assistant which they offer at each of their satellite campuses. Youth who want to work in healthcare and want to stay home for school could do the health care aide program but would have to move to take anything more advanced, such as nursing. Those who want to work in business could take a business administrator program and work in support services across sectors. However, if a young person wanted to work in tourism or manufacturing, they would have to look at programs in Winnipeg or Brandon.

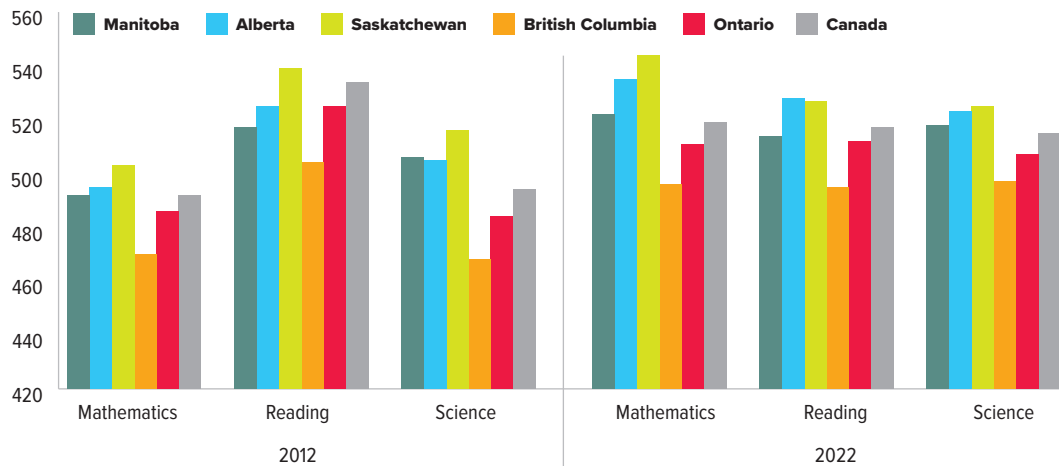
The private Academy of Learning offers many programs in Selkirk and Pine Falls with more specific programs in healthcare, such as medical office transcription, and business, such as business management, some ICT programs and language training. The Academy of Learning will also admit students without a high school diploma or GED but tuition costs are not publicly available to compare to public institutions. It is also unclear whether employers recognize credentials from such an institution compared to credentials from a public, post-secondary institution.

## Further observations

While graduation rates have been improving, particularly in Indigenous communities, Manitoban students tend to score lower on international testing than their counterparts in other provinces. Manitoba's children also face significant barriers to quality education, including high child poverty rates which are amongst the highest in the country.

**Figure 6-6**

### PISA scores comparison 2012 and 2022, select Canadian provinces



Source: Statistics Canada and OECD data

Not all youth complete their education or have a credential, particularly in First Nations or remote communities. People from remote communities and First Nations youth who do go to post-secondary are more likely to leave before graduating compared to those who are non-Indigenous.

The economy has shifted and there are many more new and different occupations available than there were just a decade ago. High school students in general do not have a full understanding of the opportunities that are available. Manitoba's youth, even if they know where their interests lie and have made a choice of where to begin their career may not know how to qualify for it or believe that they cannot grow their career in Manitoba.

Manitoba has many opportunities for those who want to work in a variety of career paths or even become entrepreneurs. Programs to support students in understanding those opportunities may have temporarily ceased during the pandemic and not yet be fully operational again.

# Workforce attraction and retention

## Perceptions

As labour shortages are the most pressing challenge facing employers, particularly in areas outside Winnipeg, understanding what can attract and keep talent – besides wages – is crucial. Survey participants outside Manitoba who would consider a move to Winnipeg identified advancement, better benefits, flexible hours, remote work, and more vacation as the top five factors when considering a move to another province/territory for a job – in addition to wages. UCN students and alumni prioritized career advancement the most. The pandemic has influenced where and when people work, with workers looking for more flexibility and remote work options compared to the past.<sup>66</sup>

**Table 7-1**

### % Selected factors to consider when moving provinces for a job

	Outside Manitoba	Manitobans	UCN students	Alumni
<b>Benefits</b>	38	45	43	29
<b>Flexible hours</b>	32	37	23	22
<b>Career advancement</b>	35	37	49	54
<b>More than minimum required vacation</b>	26	24	19	24
<b>Pension/RRSP matching</b>	18	21	15	22
<b>Professional development and training</b>	18	19	38	20
<b>Mentorship and career advancement</b>	16	17	21	35
<b>Good reputation of the sector/ employer</b>	14	14	9	20
<b>Equity, diversity and inclusion policies</b>	10	13	28	5
<b>Non-traditional benefits</b>	14	12	11	9
<b>Opportunity to build professional network</b>	8	8	11	10

Source: Baseline, UCN and Alumni survey

<sup>66</sup> Robert Half. "The state of remote work: Five trends to know for 2023," *Press Releases*, February 21, 2023. <https://press.roberthalf.ca/2023-02-21-The-State-of-Remote-Work-Five-Trends-to-Know-for-2023>

Almost all respondents at UCN said that they would move to another province or territory for a job particularly if a job offered advancement opportunities. Students also prioritized training and equity, diversity and inclusion policies more than those in the south and Winnipeg. Flexible hours and remote work were less of a priority.

## First Nations

First Nations youth were also willing to move for work, particularly if the job was for an Indigenous employer or in an Indigenous environment, offered flexible hours, better benefits and professional development and training.

**Table 7-2**

## Most important factors when moving to another province/territory for a job – Demographic groups

	First Nations	Francophone	Newcomers
<b>Work for an Indigenous employer or in an Indigenous environment</b>	56	-	-
<b>Work for a Francophone employer or in a Francophone environment</b>	-	23	-
<b>Flexible hours</b>	44	47	38
<b>Better benefits (i.e. dental and health)</b>	35	37	47
<b>Professional development and training</b>	31	28	23
<b>Advancement opportunities</b>	25	47	32
<b>Mentorship and career advancement</b>	25	21	17
<b>Ability to work remotely</b>	18	12	32
<b>Non-Traditional benefits</b>	15	7	12
<b>Equity, diversity and inclusion Policy</b>	13	19	19
<b>Pension (or RRSP matching)</b>	11	14	12
<b>Reputation of the sector/employer</b>	9	9	18
<b>Proximity to home province/territory</b>	7	9	13
<b>Access to professional network</b>	5	14	14
<b>More vacation</b>	5	19	24
<b>Would move for a job</b>	96	91	99
<b>I would never move to a different province/territory for a job</b>	4	9	1
	N=57	N=47	N=112

Source: EY, Canadian Private Passenger Vehicle Insurance Rate Comparisons, October 22, Kalibrate, or \*GasBuddy



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## 99% of newcomer respondents would move to another province or territory for a job regardless of how long they have been in Canada.

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### Francophone

Francophone youth who would move for a job prioritized flexible hours and advancement equally followed by better benefits and professional development and training.

In 2017, four per cent of businesses in the province were Francophone owned (at least 50 per cent of the ownership identified French as their first official language spoken).

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### Newcomers

Ninety-nine per cent of newcomer respondents would move to another province or territory for a job regardless of how long they have been in Canada. Newcomers identified better benefits, flexible hours, remote work, and advancement as the top reasons they would consider such a move.

Such willingness to move for economic opportunity and a job is not a surprise. Of the top five reasons Permanent Residents gave for their move to Canada, most were related to improving their economic situation or life for themselves or their children.

**Figure 7-1**

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### Top five reasons permanent residents choose Canada

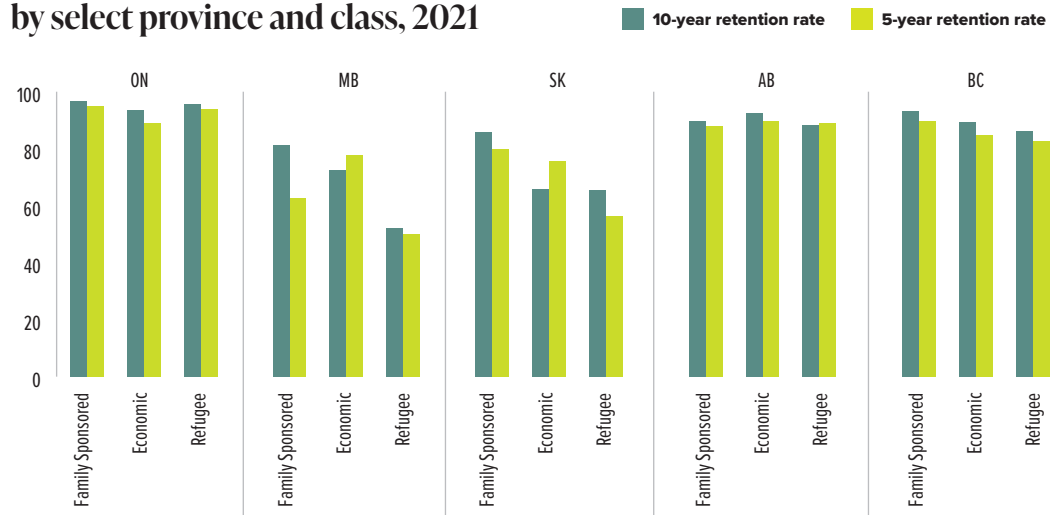


Source: Newcomer survey, all permanent resident respondents

However, only nine per cent of respondents said that they chose Manitoba for a specific job offer. Fifty-four per cent chose Manitoba because family were there already or because immigration to the province was easier. If newcomers cannot find economic opportunity in Manitoba, they are more than willing to look elsewhere. Manitoba has some of the lowest retention rates across all immigration streams and for the 15-24 and 24-54 age cohorts compared to the other western provinces and Ontario.

**Figure 7-2**

**5 and 10 year newcomer retention rates (%) for 15-24 year olds  
by select province and class, 2021**



Source: Statistics Canada Table 43-10-0024-01

**Figure 7-3**

**5 and 10 year newcomer retention rates (%) for 24-54 year olds  
by select province and class, 2021**



Source: Statistics Canada Table 43-10-0024-01

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## **18-24-year-olds were more pessimistic about opportunities to grow their careers within the province.**

Talent loss to other provinces is particularly concerning as about 50 per cent of companies surveyed reported labour force challenges all the time or often.

Businesses outside of Winnipeg were also more likely to report facing labour challenges more often or all the time. Skilled labour recruitment was also more of a challenge for those who required high school or less or post-graduate education. Talent retention challenges were similar to those for recruiting talent. Businesses outside Winnipeg were more likely to report challenges in retaining skilled employees all of the time or often.

Perceptions of the opportunity, or lack thereof, in rural areas compared to urban areas could help explain talent attraction. Retention challenges and the difference in what Winnipeg employers offer for wages and non-wage benefits suggest this perception could also be a reality. Employers also recognize the disparity - 74 per cent of businesses in Winnipeg compared to 47 per cent of businesses outside Winnipeg said that they had a culture which attracts/retains employees.

The cohort of 25–30-year-olds who were working in communities outside Winnipeg had the most positive focus group responses when asked about career opportunities in Manitoba. This cohort also had more stable, long-term work than those in the other focus groups. Younger youth were more pessimistic about opportunities to grow their careers within the province. The 18–24-year-old cohort living outside Winnipeg agreed they had to go to Winnipeg to find opportunity because they perceived less opportunity in other parts of the province. The same age cohort in Winnipeg felt like they had to leave the province to find opportunity.

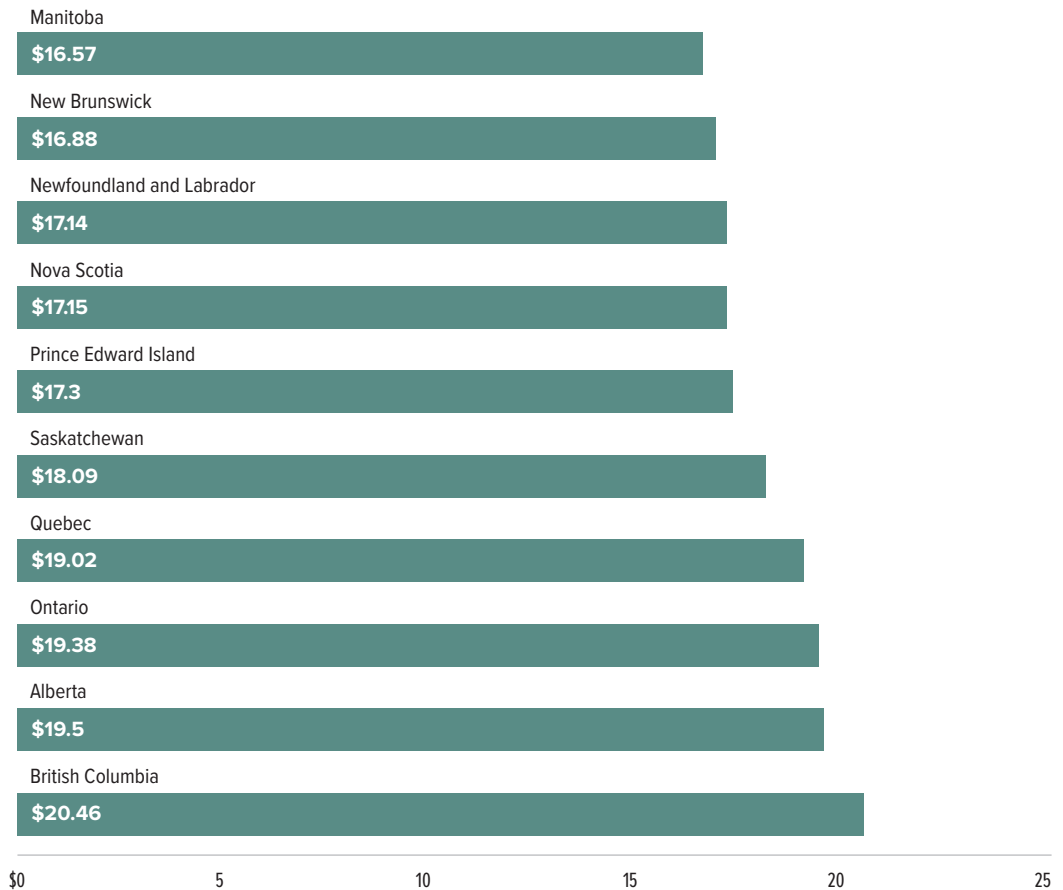
# Reality

## Wages

Wages are the most important factor in talent attraction. For youth entering the workforce or looking to grow their careers amidst increased economic pressures, income is more pressing than other concerns.

Figure 7-4

### Average hourly wage (\$) youth aged 15-24, 2022



Source: Statistics Canada Table 14-10-0417-01

Note: Statistics Canada reports hourly wages for 15-24-year-olds, and annual wages for 16-24-year-olds. And while it reports hourly wages in January for the previous year, annual wages are not reported until March for the period two years prior.

For youth aged 15-24, Manitoba had lowest average hourly wage out of all provinces at \$16.57 in 2022. The increase to \$18.10 in 2023, still left the province paying close to the bottom average wage; only Nova Scotia paid less – by \$0.04 per hour. A move to Saskatchewan would, on average, gain a youth \$0.83; to Alberta, \$2.37 per hour.

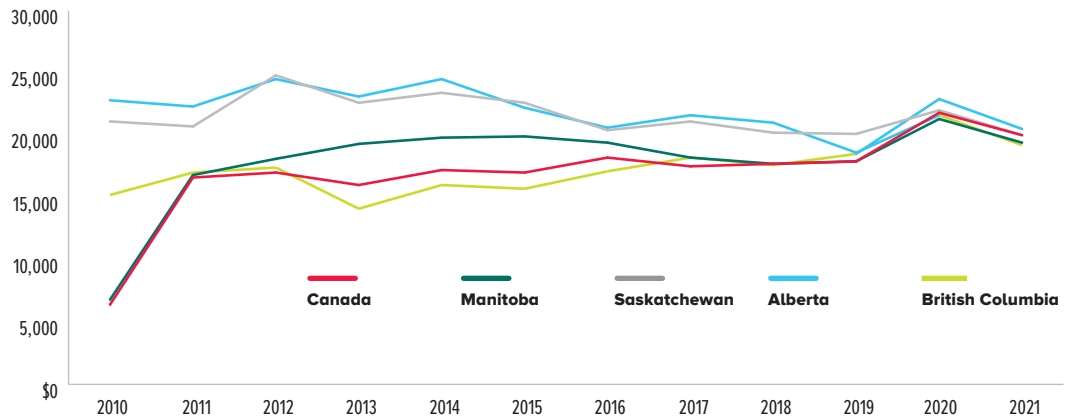
The province had the second lowest minimum wage in the country at \$13.50 in 2022 before the provincial government raised the minimum to \$14.15 on April 1, and then to \$15.30 on October 1, 2023. Other provinces, such as Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, have taken similar steps to raise provincial minimum wages. It is not yet clear how these changes will impact provincial comparisons in the future.

The Centre for Policy Alternatives calculates the income required to live at a basic level for major communities across the country. In Winnipeg, the living wage has risen to \$19.21 per hour, in Brandon to \$15.69 per hour, and in Thompson to \$17.48 per hour. In Winnipeg, this is an increase of 87 cents (five per cent) over last year.

In 2020, B.C. surpassed Alberta and Saskatchewan for average income for youth aged 16-24. Between 2011 and 2017 this age group in Manitoba, while still earning less than those in Alberta and B.C., beat the Canadian average and since 2017, has roughly kept pace with it.

**Figure 7-5**

### Average income (\$) for youth (15-24)

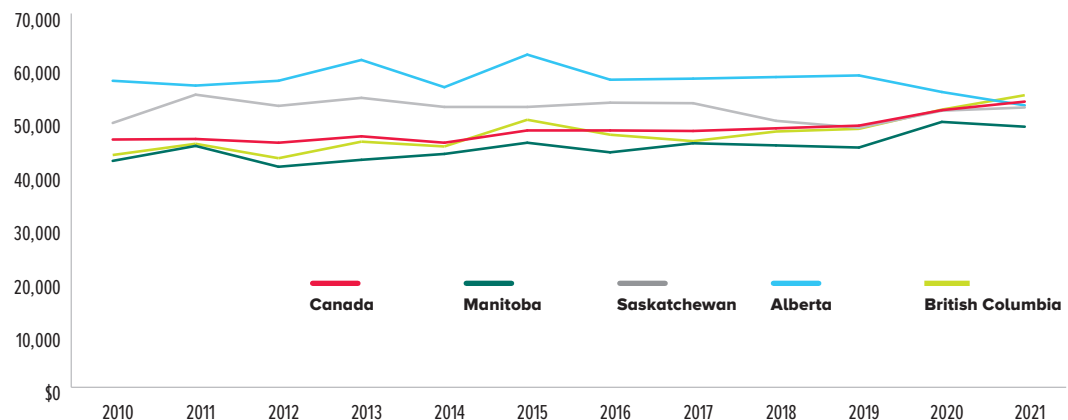


Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0239-01

For Manitoban youth aged 25-34, the disparity in average wage between the Canadian average and other western provinces is more pronounced. This trend is concerning as this age cohort is at the life stage when youth decide where they want to grow their careers and where to settle more permanently. Reduced wages and economic opportunity likely explain why this cohort may choose to look elsewhere. With the cost of rents and housing in other parts of the country, Saskatchewan and to a lesser extent Alberta could continue to be attractive options.

**Figure 7-6**

### Average income (\$) for youth (25-34)



Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0239-01

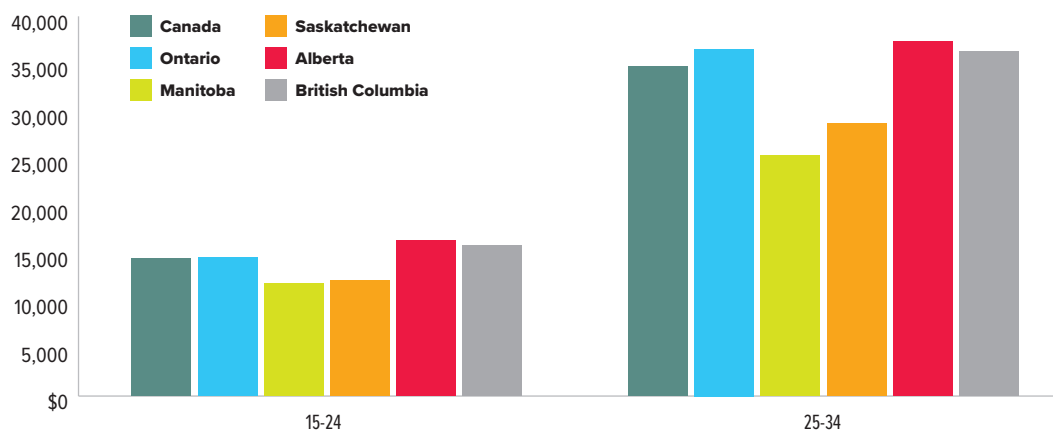
Within Manitoba, First Nations women typically earn the least regardless of education level, while non-Indigenous men make the most.

### First Nations

While wages in Manitoba are lower on average than the other western provinces, First Nations youth in Manitoba have even lower average full-time wages both across provinces and within Manitoba.

Figure 7-7

### Average full-time income (\$) for First Nations youth (15-34) by highest credential, 2020

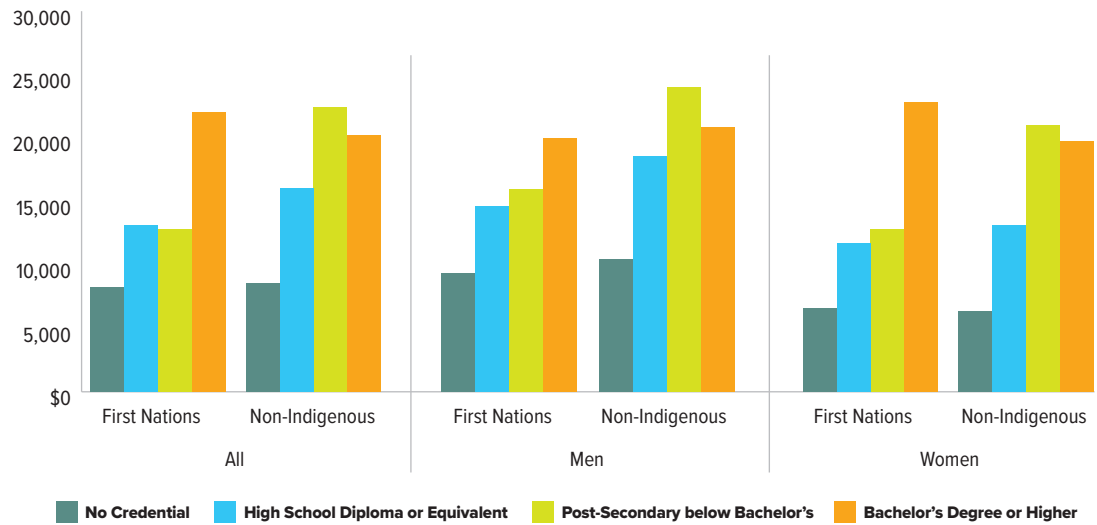


Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-10-0281-01, 25% Sample Data

Within Manitoba, First Nations women typically make the lowest average full-time income across all credential types while non-Indigenous men make the most.

**Figure 7-8**

### 2020 average full-time income (\$) by credential, 15-24 year old First Nations and non-Indigenous Manitobans



Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-10-0281-01, 25% Sample Data

Wages can impact mobility in First Nations communities. A Statistics Canada study found that for journeypersons, “Indigenous men were almost twice as likely to certify in a jurisdiction different from their place of residence or employment, compared with their non-Indigenous counterparts (15% vs 8%) [and] the share of First Nations women who were mobile (9%) was almost twice as high as that seen for non-Indigenous women (5%).”<sup>67</sup> Wages often drove these decisions with individuals seeking out locations where they would be paid more for their trade.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Su, Sophie & Hyeongsuk Jin. “Labour market outcomes of Indigenous journeypersons in Canada,” *Education, learning and training: Research paper series*, March 13, 2023, para. 21 <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/81-595-m/81-595-m2022001-eng.htm>

<sup>68</sup> Ibid

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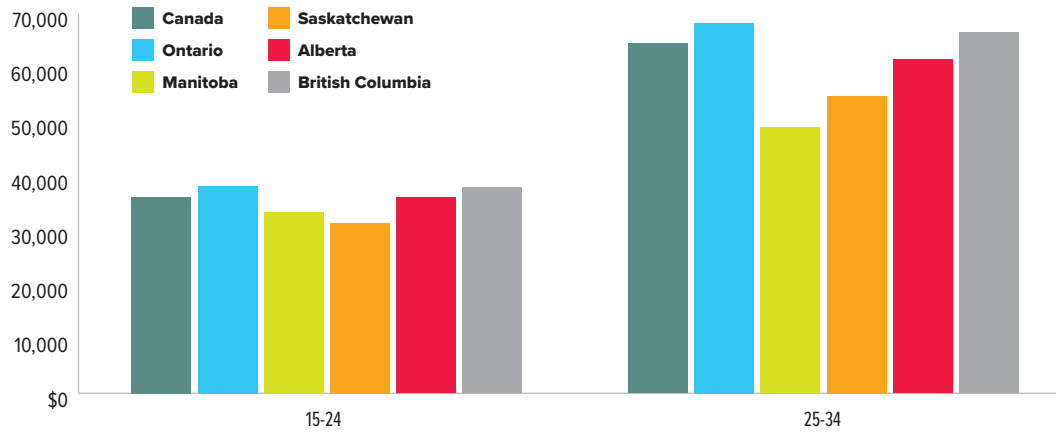
## Newcomers

Young newcomers in Manitoba make among the lowest average full-time incomes amongst the provinces which attract the most newcomers. Those who had been in Manitoba longer were more motivated by economic factors compared to other factors and to the other population groups surveyed.

**Figure 7-9**

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### Average full-time income (\$) for immigrant youth (15-34) by highest credential, 2020



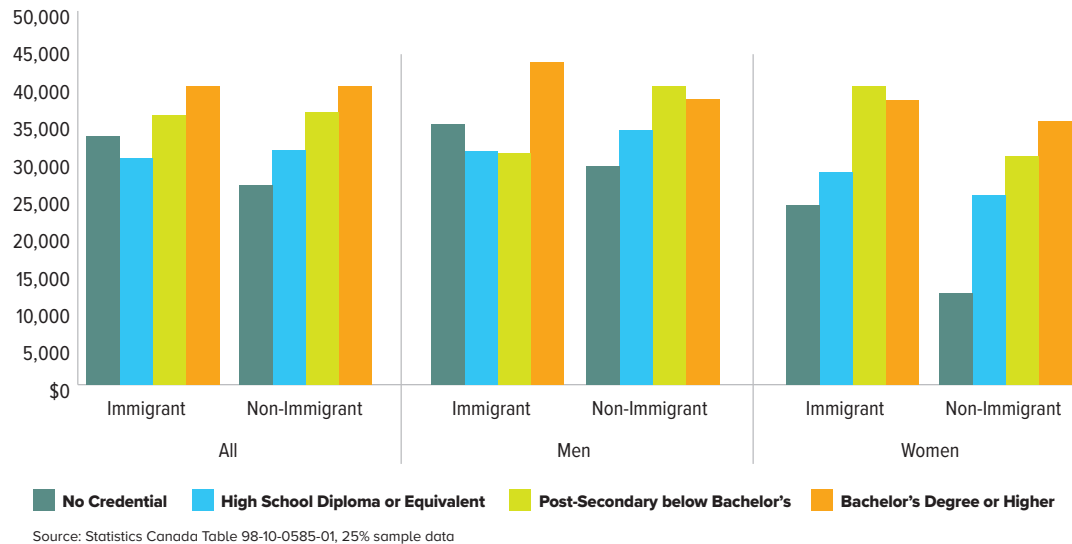
Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-10-0281-01, 25% Sample Data



Newcomer youth aged 15-24 tend to make a higher or comparable wage across all credential types compared to non-Immigrant Manitobans. However, 25–34-year-old non-Immigrant Manitobans tend to make more. Immigrant and non-Immigrant men make more than their female counterparts.

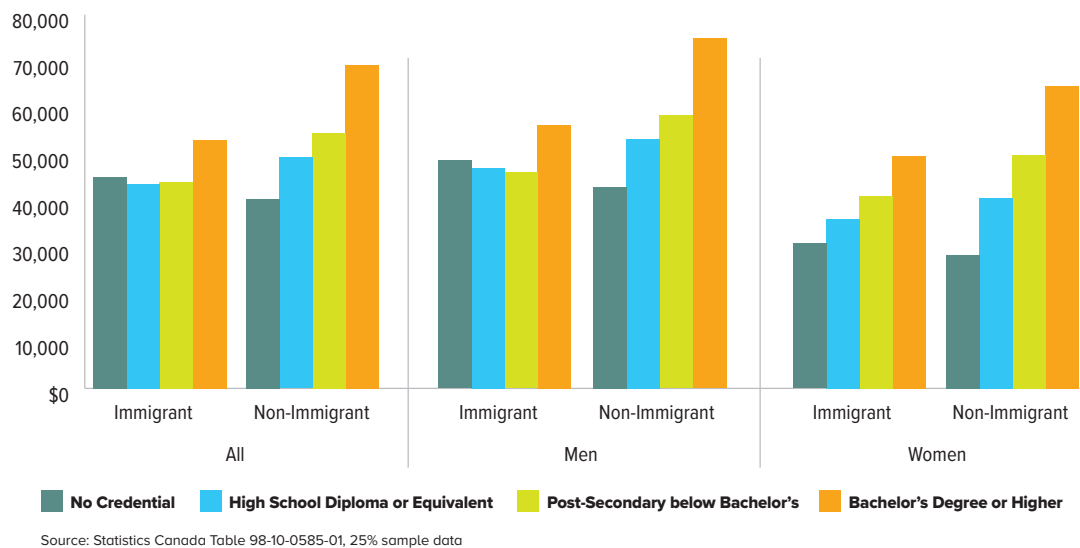
**Figure 7-10**

### 2020 average full-time income (\$) by credential, 15-24 year old immigrant and non-immigrant Manitobans



**Figure 7-11**

### 2020 average full-time income (\$) by credential, 25-34 year old immigrant and non-immigrant Manitobans



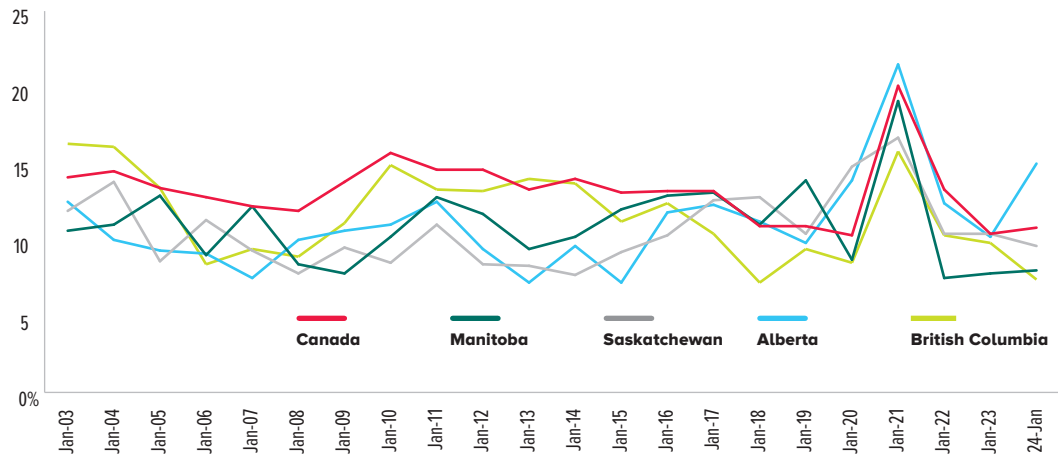
## Francophone

Comparisons between the Anglophone and Francophone population are challenging as Statistics Canada used to report on the wage gaps between these populations in Manitoba and elsewhere, but those comparisons are no longer publicly available.

## Youth (un)employment

Figure 7-12

### Youth (15-24) unemployment rates (%)



Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0239-01

Compared to Saskatchewan and Alberta, which has been until recently more reliant on the oil and gas sector, Manitoba has a more diversified economy which means that youth experience less boom and bust in employment.<sup>69</sup> In 2020, while youth across the country experienced high unemployment as industries which employ higher percentages of youth shutdown, (e.g., hospitality), Manitoban youth experienced a faster rebound. Amongst the western provinces, Manitoba had the lowest youth unemployment rate at the start of 2023. In March 2024, Manitoba and B.C. had the lowest youth unemployment rates in Western Canada.

<sup>69</sup> The Conference Board of Canada. "Document highlights," *Its diversified economy will help Manitoba cope: Manitoba's two-year outlook*, March 18, 2021. <https://www.conferenceboard.ca/product/its-diversified-economy-will-help-manitoba-cope-manitobas-two-year-outlook/>

First Nations youth are less engaged in the work force.

**Table 7-3**

### First Nations youth (15-44) labour force engagement in Manitoba, 2021

	Participation Rate	Employment Rate	Unemployment Rate
<b>First Nations</b>	44.40%	33.50%	24.60%
<b>Non-First Nations Youth</b>	80.60%	73.60%	8.70%

Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0239-01

The Centre for the Study of Living Standards reported to the Assembly of First Nations that unemployment and wage gaps for First Nations individuals can be attributed to education outcomes. “The legacy of residential schools, inadequate funding, and the absence of culturally relevant curricula has had a profound impact on the educational success of First Nations youth, particularly on reserve.” See the Education (Chapter 6) for more on information specific to the education system and outcomes.

Immigrant youth are highly engaged in the workforce with higher participation and employment rates and lower unemployment compared to the non-immigrant population.

**Table 7-4**

### Immigrant youth (15-44) labour force engagement in Manitoba, 2021

	Participation Rate	Employment Rate	Unemployment Rate
<b>Immigrant</b>	80.1%	73.5%	8.2%
<b>Non-immigrant youth</b>	75.6%	67.9%	10.1%

Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-10-0615-01

The immigrant population tends to have higher levels of education. Those newcomers who “immigrated at a very young age, at a maximum age of 14 years, and were schooled in Canada [...] are more likely to be well-integrated and to face lower employment barriers”<sup>70</sup> compared to those who have not had those experiences. A study of immigrants in Alberta found that immigrant families also experience “a strong sense of intergenerational obligation”<sup>71</sup> compared to non-Immigrant, European heritage families. Parents may pressure their children to succeed because of their own “experiences of unemployment and underemployment in Canada, feelings of sacrifice, and high expectations for their children”<sup>72</sup> while children were “acutely aware of the sacrifices made for them” which led them to “pursue university education for professional careers.”<sup>73</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Canadian Council for Youth Prosperity and Labour Market Information Council. *Labour market outcomes for immigrant youth: Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic*, 2023. <https://lmic-cimt.ca/labour-market-outcomes-of-immigrant-youth/>

<sup>71</sup> Taylor, Alison & Harvey Krahn. “Living through our children: Exploring the education and career ‘choices’ of racialized immigrant youth in Canada,” *Journal of Youth Studies* 16, 8, March 6, 2013, p. 1017.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, p. 1017

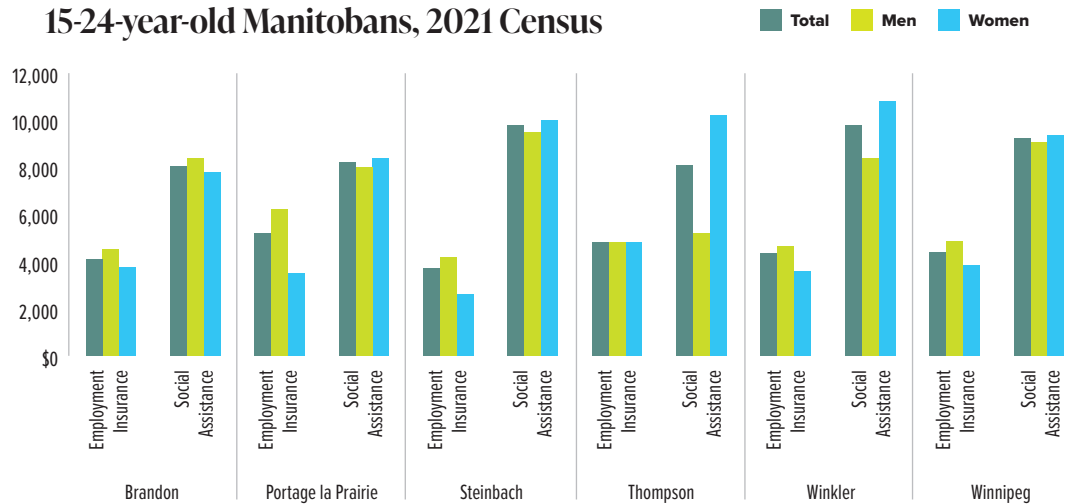
<sup>73</sup> Ibid, p. 1011-12

## Income Assistance

In Manitoba's larger communities, youth aged 15-24 are more likely to receive employment insurance than social assistance, particularly men, except in Thompson. In Thompson, the percentage of 15-24-year-olds on social assistance is greater than those on employment insurance. This can be attributed to the high percentage of women (mothers) on social assistance compared to employment insurance.

**Figure 7-13**

### Average amount (\$) of regular EI or Social Assistance for 15-24-year-old Manitobans, 2021 Census

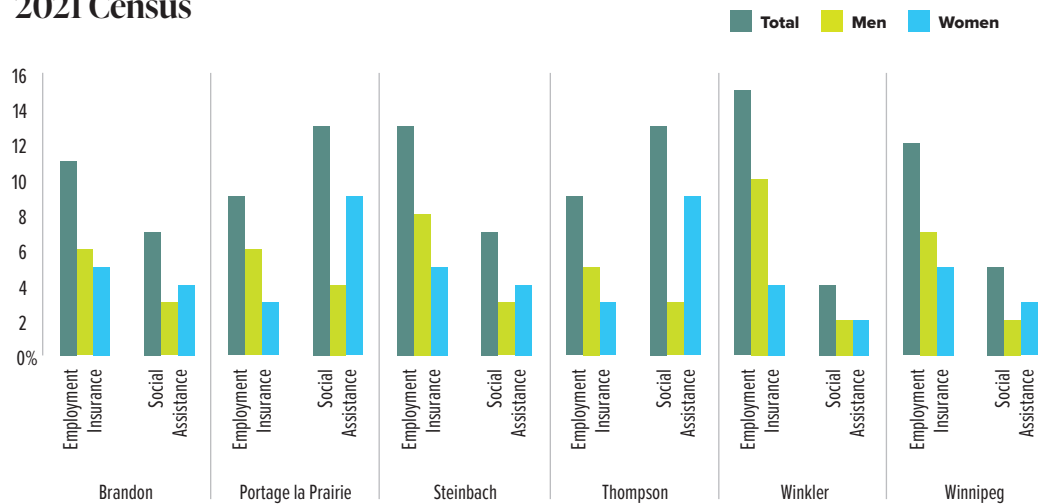


Source: Statistics Canada Census Table 98-10-0068-01 and CWF Calculations

The numbers are higher in the 25-34-year-old age bracket but the situation is the same – except in Portage La Prairie and Thompson.

**Figure 7-14**

### % of 25-34-year-old Manitobans receiving regular EI or Social Assistance, 2021 Census



Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-10-0068-01 and CWF calculations

Men on average receive higher employment insurance payments than women, which makes sense as men typically earn a higher wage. Women on average receive higher social assistance payments; they are more likely to be single parents. Individuals on reserve receive social assistance transfers from the federal government while those living off reserve receive social assistance through Manitoba's Employment and Social Assistance program.

Provincial social assistance recipients can earn up to \$200 net pay before benefits are reduced. Once that threshold is reached, only 30 per cent of income earned over the threshold can be kept before "EIA benefits are reduced."<sup>74</sup> For those receiving employment insurance, an individual "can keep 50 cents of [their] benefits for every dollar [they] earn, up to 90%" of what they earned each week while working.<sup>75</sup> Anecdotally, these limits may prevent individuals from entering the workforce as they prefer to maintain a reliable income through assistance rather than take work, which reduces their assistance payments and may not be high-paying or consistent.

Adjusting thresholds for EI and social assistance might provide an opportunity to bring more people into the workforce to ease the number of job vacancies. Manitoba has higher job vacancy rates than would be expected given the growth in its labour force.<sup>76</sup> It is likely that there is a disconnect between the skills needed by employers and those available in the workforce. To really make a difference in the number of people on assistance payments, job specific training and affordable childcare may be required.

**Table 7-5**

### Job vacancy rate (%) by economic region, Q3 2023

	Rate		Rate
<b>Parklands and North</b>	5.2	<b>Southeast</b>	3.6
<b>Interlake</b>	4.7	<b>Southwest (includes Brandon)</b>	4.0
<b>South Central and North Central</b>	3.5	<b>Winnipeg</b>	3.8

Source: Statistics Canada Table 14-10-0398-01

<sup>74</sup> Government of Manitoba. "For general assistance," *Employment and Income Assistance*, para. 70. [https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/eia/eia\\_general.html](https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/eia/eia_general.html)

<sup>75</sup> Employment and Social Development Canada. "Employment Insurance – Working while on a claim," *Benefits and Programs*, September 7, 2023, para. 11. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/ei/ei-list/working-while-claim.html>

<sup>76</sup> Orlando, James & Matt Palucci. *The Provincial Divide in Canada's Job Market*, TD Economics, January 4, 2024. <https://economics.td.com/ca-provincial-divide-job-market>

## Employers

Just as there is wage variation between and within subpopulation groups, there were also wage variations across regions. Winnipeg employers were more likely to have salaried employees while employers in other parts of the province were more likely to have workers paid hourly.

Figure 7-15

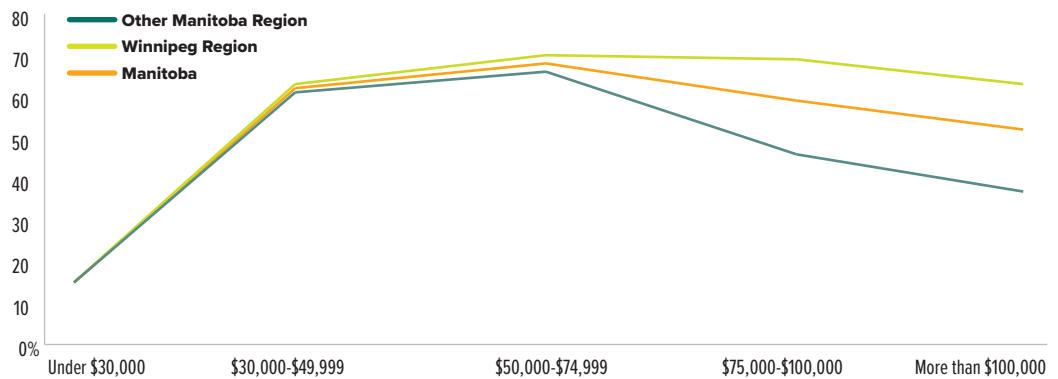
### Breakdown by type of employee



Source: Employer Survey

Figure 7-16

### % of salaried employees by wage range (non-executive)



Source: Employer Survey

While employers in Manitoba, particularly in Winnipeg, said that they offered advancement opportunities, a common focus group sentiment was that Manitoba may be a good place to start a career, but people would have to move elsewhere to grow their careers. It might be valuable to compare advancement opportunities for businesses in Winnipeg to other major Canadian cities.

**Table 7-6**

## % Employers said that they offered to employees by wage type and location

	Winnipeg		Elsewhere MB	
	Hourly	Salary	Hourly	Salary
<b>Benefits</b>	57	95	57	62
<b>Career advancement opportunities</b>	64	74	47	36
<b>Flexible hours</b>	41	76	45	41
<b>More vacation</b>	36	79	36	41
<b>Pension/RRSP matching</b>	47	79	31	29
<b>Professional development and training</b>	60	90	57	53
<b>Mentorship and career advancement</b>	47	57	53	43
<b>Good reputation of the sector/employer</b>	53	67	17	24
<b>Equity, diversity and inclusion policies</b>	67	86	64	57
<b>Non-traditional benefits</b>	41	60	40	29
<b>Opportunity to build professional network</b>	45	78	29	40

Source: Employer survey, all respondents who said they offered at least one

Manitoban employers offered varying degrees of remote work opportunities depending on whether employers were salaried or hourly and where the business was located. Winnipeg employers were more likely to offer employees a choice between remote, hybrid and in-person options. They were also more likely to clearly state whether a position is in-person, remote or hybrid. Employers were more likely to give salaried employees the option to work remotely.

**Table 7-7**

## Any remote work style attraction factor vs. what Manitoban employers offer

### Remote Attraction Factor

<b>Inside Manitoba</b>	23%
<b>Outside Manitoba</b>	51%

<b>Winnipeg Businesses</b>	<b>Any remote options</b>	<b>Fully Remote</b>	<b>Hybrid</b>	<b>Fully In person</b>
<b>Offer hourly</b>	23%	14%	31%	57%
<b>Offer salaried</b>	51%	29%	72%	81%
<b>Elsewhere Manitoba</b>				
<b>Offer hourly</b>	8%	7%	9%	60%
<b>Offer salaried</b>	14%	3%	24%	48%

Source: Employer and baseline surveys

Employers met more of these job attraction factors for salaried employees than for hourly paid. Outside Winnipeg, employers were less likely to differentiate between hourly and salaried employees for benefits. If those benefits were provided, they were provided at a comparable rate. However, employers were less likely to offer these non-wage benefits compared to those in Winnipeg so there may be more competition for positions which offer these benefits in rural areas. There may also be opportunity for employers who do not offer these benefits to look at ways they can introduce them to attract talent.



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## First Nations youth are highly likely to move for a job in an Indigenous owned business or work environment. But only about 5% of businesses in Manitoba are Indigenous owned.

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### First Nations

First Nations youth are highly likely to move for a job in an Indigenous owned business or work environment. Approximately five per cent of businesses in Manitoba are Indigenous owned. Those businesses which have registered with the provincial government’s Indigenous Business Directory are concentrated in Winnipeg, rural areas and the North outside of Thompson and in the construction, professional services, and maintenance and repair sectors.<sup>77</sup>

**Table 7-8**

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### Private sector businesses by majority\* Indigenous ownership

	2022	2023	2024
<b>All private sector businesses</b>	30,923	32,104	30,147
<b>First Nations, Métis, or Inuit Majority ownership</b>	1,496	1,773	1,618
<b>% majority owned by First Nations, Métis, or Inuit</b>	4.8%	5.5%	5.4%

\*Majority is defined as over 50% ownership.

Source: Statistics Canada Table 33-10-0492-01, 33-10-0769-01, 33-10-0492-01 Canadian Survey on Business Conditions

<sup>77</sup> Government of Manitoba. "Indigenous Business Directory" accessed February 2024. [https://www.gov.mb.ca/central/psc/pubs/api/indigenous\\_business\\_directory.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/central/psc/pubs/api/indigenous_business_directory.pdf)

## Further observations

Youth are prepared to move for a variety of workplace benefits on top of attractive wages. However, average wages for youth aged 15-24 years are the lowest in the country (tied with Nova Scotia). While the majority of employers in Manitoba offer an attractive package that includes benefits youth are looking for, hourly waged employees and those working outside of Winnipeg are less likely to be eligible to receive them. Manitoban youth earning minimum wage can move to Alberta and make a \$2.37 more per hour.

Meanwhile, of the First Nations youth surveyed, 56 per cent indicated they would consider moving out of the province for a job with an Indigenous owned business or in an Indigenous environment. It was this sub-group's top chosen economic mobility factor. As only five per cent of businesses registered in Manitoba are Indigenous owned, this could become more of a driver of First Nations youth interprovincial migration.

Newcomers come to this country and Manitoba for a better life for themselves and their families. Many have received points through the Canadian immigration system that led them to believe that their credentials were in demand and that they would easily find good jobs in their adopted country. This generation of newcomers is not prepared to lower their expectations, believing that at least their children will have a better life than they would in their home country.

However, newcomers earn a lower average wage in Manitoba compared to other provinces which have higher newcomer retention rates and are generally more attractive to Manitobans. While newcomers can find a job, lack of credential recognition may keep them from working in their fields completely or they may have to take a more junior role. Once newcomers settle and start weighing their options, they may choose to go where they can get to work faster and make more money. Manitoba is losing not just workers but people who can help build the diverse and vibrant communities that are welcoming and inclusive.

# Beyond the economics – social factors

## Perception

Youth work to live and have “determination to be fulfilled and defined by other aspects of life [and] they expect employers to recognize that and promote policies that encourage work-life balance.”<sup>78</sup> Social and quality of life factors also help explain why youth may choose to move or not move to a particular community or province. Safety was the most important social factor regardless of whether an individual would move to another community or province. Family was the second most important consideration. The two least important factors were political views and inclusion.

**Table 8-1**

**Top *social* factors when considering a move to another province/territory, all respondents (%)**

	Community	Province
<b>Safe community</b>	68	59
<b>Proximity to family</b>	40	37
<b>Clean community</b>	39	33
<b>Proximity to friends</b>	28	25
<b>Reputation of community</b>	26	19
<b>Diversity</b>	17	29
<b>Reputation of province/territory</b>	18	21
<b>Inclusion</b>	16	17
<b>Political views</b>	14	19
	n=1402	

Survey data from Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Manitoba and Toronto.

<sup>78</sup> Nguyen, Terry. “Gen Z does not dream of labor,” VOX, April 22, 2022, para. 13. <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/22977663/gen-z-antiwork-capitalism>

Table 8-2

**Top *social* factors when considering a move to another community/  
province, all Manitoban respondents (%)**

	Winnipeg		Elsewhere MB	
	Community	Province	Community	Province
<b>Safe community</b>	65	57	66	61
<b>Proximity to family</b>	43	38	48	38
<b>Clean community</b>	37	32	48	39
<b>Proximity to friends</b>	28	26	28	20
<b>Reputation of community</b>	23	22	38	32
<b>Reputation of province/territory</b>	16	26	18	36
<b>Diversity</b>	14	17	8	14
<b>Inclusion</b>	15	14	11	14
<b>Political views</b>	11	13	13	15
	n=247		N=88	

Source: Baseline survey, Manitobans who would move for at least one social factor

]Out of all cities, Edmontonians and Calgarians prioritized safety the most. Winnipeggers prioritized safety the least in comparison to the other communities surveyed. Vancouverites and Torontonians placed more importance on diversity, inclusion and political views compared to the prairie cities. Manitobans placed more emphasis on proximity to family than the those in the other cities while Torontonians and Vancouverites placed the least importance on proximity to family and more emphasis on proximity to friends. Slightly fewer Manitobans said that they would not move for social factors compared to economic or quality of life factors which suggests that Manitobans may place more importance on social factors than economic factors when considering a move or that they may be more motivated to move because of these factors.

## First Nations

Indigenous youth who responded to the Indigenous job fair survey prioritized communities with Indigenous cultures and communities when considering a move to another community or province. Safety was the most important factor for First Nations youth respondents to the job fair and UCN surveys, followed by family proximity and reputation of the community/province or territory and diversity. Respondents in the north were more likely to say that they would move for social reasons compared to those in other parts of the province. First Nations youth in the north were much more likely to select safety and family than those respondents on the baseline survey. They were slightly more likely to move for these reasons than the general population and more willing to move for these reasons than economic.

**Table 8-3**

### Top *social* factors when considering a move to another community/ province, all First Nations respondents in Manitoba (%)

	Job Fair		UCN	
	Community	Province	Community	Province
<b>Proximity to friends</b>	10	10	12	8
<b>Proximity to family</b>	39	27	44	56
<b>Diversity</b>	20	24	28	28
<b>Inclusion</b>	16	24	20	16
<b>Political views</b>	6	8	8	8
<b>Reputation of community</b>	24	14	36	24
<b>Reputation of province/territory</b>	6	27	20	28
<b>Safe community</b>	63	59	84	64
<b>Clean community</b>	24	14	36	44
<b>Indigenous cultures and communities</b>	73	61	-	-
<b>Would move for social reasons</b>	86		93	
<b>Never move for these reasons</b>	14		7	
	N=57		N=27	

Source: Indigenous and UCN surveys, all First Nations respondents

## Francophone

Francophones similarly prioritized a safe community, their culture and community and proximity to family and friends.

**Table 8-4**

### Top *social* factors when considering a move to another community/ province, all Francophone respondents in Manitoba (%)

	Community	Province
Proximity to friends	35	33
Proximity to family	35	35
Diversity	30	26
Inclusion	21	14
Political views	5	16
Reputation of community	23	23
Reputation of province/territory	21	16
Safe community	49	49
Clean community	16	19
Francophone culture and community	37	37
Would move for social reasons	91	
Never move for these reasons	9	
	n=47	

Source: Francophone survey

## Newcomers

While a safe community was the most important factor for the other surveyed groups, newcomers prioritized family when moving to a community and inclusion and political views when moving to a province. Political views and family were the second or third most important depending on whether the move was to a community or province. Those who had been in the country the longest selected proximity to family the most while those who had been in the country for less than five years selected inclusion the most when considering a move out of province. Recent newcomers were much less likely to move for social reasons while those who had been in the country longer were much more likely to say they would move for these reasons.

**Table 8-5**

### Top *social* factors when considering a move to another community/ province, all newcomer respondents in Manitoba (%)

	Community	Province
<b>Safe community</b>	20	20
<b>Proximity to family</b>	40	37
<b>Clean community</b>	24	27
<b>Proximity to friends</b>	20	17
<b>Reputation of community</b>	12	12
<b>Reputation of province/territory</b>	24	17
<b>Diversity</b>	19	36
<b>Inclusion</b>	38	39
<b>Political views</b>	39	39
<b>Would move for social reasons</b>	79	
<b>Would never move for these reasons</b>	21	
	n=112	

Source: Baseline survey, all newcomer respondents

For recent newcomers to Manitoba inclusion is the most important social factor when considering a move to another province.

**Table 8-6**

**Top *social* factors when considering a move to another province/territory, newcomers in Manitoba by years in Canada (%)**

	<b>&gt;5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>10+</b>
<b>Safe community</b>	13	16	24
<b>Proximity to family</b>	29	28	40
<b>Clean community</b>	18	24	32
<b>Proximity to friends</b>	15	16	12
<b>Reputation of community</b>	2	20	12
<b>Reputation of province/territory</b>	9	24	16
<b>Diversity</b>	31	24	32
<b>Inclusion</b>	39	36	24
<b>Political views</b>	22	48	40
<b>Would move for social reasons</b>	65	89	96
<b>Would never move for these reasons</b>	39	11	4
	n=55	n=28	N=26

Source: Baseline survey, all respondents who knew how long they had been in the country



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**For all other groups surveyed, safety was the #1 social factor when considering a move to another province.**

## Reality

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### Safety

The Crime Severity Index (CSI) provided by the University of Waterloo allows for comparison of the “prevalence of crime within a community, and the seriousness of the crimes committed.”<sup>79</sup> The statistics are not entirely without controversy with “[m]ayors of small cities from Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia [...] calling on Statistics Canada to halt the release [...] until consultations are held with smaller communities and Indigenous leaders”<sup>80</sup> as the numbers have affected willingness for individuals to move to those communities. Indigenous leadership also have concerns about the data as there are systemic issues within the criminal justice system that lead to the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the system, such as over-policing of Indigenous communities, alongside concerns of hyperinflation of statistics for small communities.<sup>81</sup>

Individuals looking to move are using these to make decisions about where to go. It is still important to understand what these numbers say and how they can drive perceptions of safety in a particular community particularly as safety is such an important factor for individuals when considering a move.

<sup>79</sup> Peck, Samuel. “Crime severity index in Canada by city,” Canada Crime Index, accessed December 2023. [https://canadacrimeindex.com/crime-severity-index?sort=population&min\\_population=0&province=](https://canadacrimeindex.com/crime-severity-index?sort=population&min_population=0&province=)

<sup>80</sup> Clausing, Shane. “Small cities ask StatsCan to halt ‘detrimental’ Crime Severity Index,” 650 CKOM, March 1, 2024, para. 1. <https://www.ckom.com/2024/03/01/small-city-mayors-say-crime-severity-index-rankings-hurting-their-communities/>

<sup>81</sup> Fenrich, Miguel. “Behind the headlines: Deconstructing the Crime Severity Index,” 620 CKRM. <https://www.620ckrm.com/2024/03/21/behind-the-headlines-deconstructing-the-crime-severity-index/>

Until other metrics are developed which address these concerns, the CSI will continue to play a role in shaping perceptions about a place.

Across all measures of overall violent and non-violent crime types, rural and northern communities have the highest CSI numbers meaning that the prevalence and severity of these crimes is much higher than in larger cities. Western Canadian communities lead CSI numbers regardless of community size or type of crime. Out of all provinces, Manitoba had the highest year-over-year increase in the overall CSI with a 14 per cent increase.<sup>82</sup>

Of the top 30 communities for overall crime, 25 per cent are in Saskatchewan, 25 per cent in British Columbia, and 20 per cent in Manitoba. The remainder are distributed amongst the northern territories, Alberta, and Ontario. Winnipeg ranks fourth for overall crime out of all cities with populations of over 100,000.

**Table 8-7**

### Top ten communities' *overall crime* by population size, Crime Severity Index (CSI), 2022

Rank	Pop. Under 10K	CSI	Pop. 10-100K	CSI	Pop. 100K+	CSI
1	Black Lake, SK	1,237.20	North Battleford, SK	557.1	Langley City, B.C.	229.5
2	La Loche, SK	1,034.40	Thompson, MB	531.4	Victoria, B.C.	157.7
3	Pelican Narrows, SK	1,002.60	Wetaskiwin, AB	367.2	Kelowna, B.C.	150.7
4	Sheshatshiu, NL	875.4	Yellowknife, NWT	310.4	Winnipeg, MB	144.4
5	La Ronge, SK	631.3	Prince Albert, SK	302.2	Nanaimo, B.C.	140.3
6	The Pas, MB	617.2	Portage La Prairie, MB	265.3	Saskatoon, SK	126.2
7	Iqaluit, NU	562.5	Williams Lake, B.C.	246.3	Codiac Regional, NB	117.9
8	Swan River, MB	506.7	Quesnel, B.C.	245.2	Regina, SK	111.0
9	Inuvik, NWT	497.5	Duncan, B.C.	226.4	Edmonton, AB	110.7
10	Cambridge Bay, NU	486.3	Dawson Creek, B.C.	209.0	Surrey, B.C.	98.8

Source: Canada Crime Index, Crime Severity Index in Canada by city, 2022

<sup>82</sup> Statistics Canada. "Policy-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2022," *The Daily*, July 27, 2023. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/230727/dq230727b-eng.htm>

Out of the top 30 communities for violent crime, just over a quarter are located in B.C., just under a quarter are located in Saskatchewan and about 20 per cent are located in Manitoba with the rest divided amongst the northern territories, Alberta and Ontario. Thompson, Manitoba, has the highest CSI for violent crime out of cities with populations between 10,000 and 100,00 while Winnipeg has the highest CSI for violent crimes out of cities with populations greater than 100,000.

**Table 8-8**

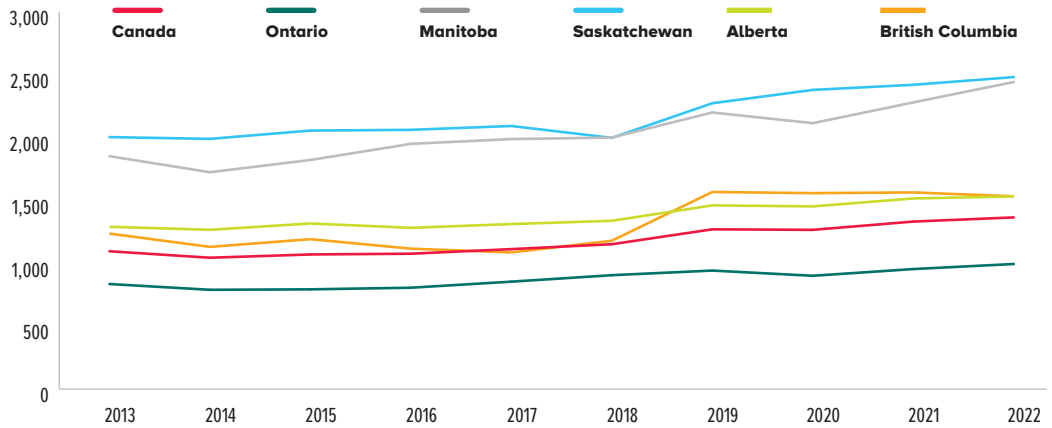
### Top ten communities for *violent crime* by population size, Crime Severity Index (CSI), 2022

Rank	Pop. Under 10K	CSI	Pop. 10-100K	CSI	Pop. 100K+	CSI
1	Pelican Narrows, SK	2,019.30	Thompson, MB	991.6	Winnipeg, MB	205.4
2	La Loche, SK	1,476.70	North Battleford, SK	606.8	Langley City, B.C.	196.6
3	Black Lake, SK	1,107.40	Prince Alberta, SK	487.4	Victoria, B.C.	164.5
4	Sheshatshiu, NL	1,055.50	Wetaskiwin, AB	450.4	Saskatoon, B.C.	147.1
5	The Pas, MB	994.6	Portage La Prairie, MB	364.7	Nanaimo, B.C.	147.1
6	La Ronge, SK	971.2	Yellowknife, NWT	352.3	Codiac Regional, NB	126.8
7	Cambridge Bay, NU	835.8	Williams Lake, B.C.	330.8	Edmonton, AB	126.7
8	Flin Flon, MB	763.4	Prince Rupert, B.C.	300.1	Brantford, ON	125.8
9	Rankin Inlet, NU	676.4	Quesnel, B.C.	230.7	Regina, SK	125.3
10	Iqaluit, NU	673.7	Whitehorse, YT	222.6	Kelowna, B.C.	123.3

Source: Canada Crime Index, Crime Severity Index in Canada by city, 2022

Figure 8-1

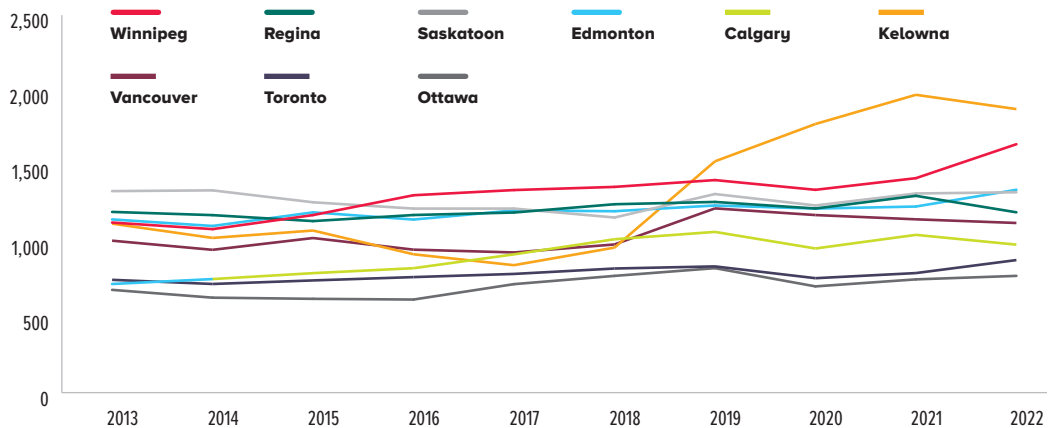
### Police reported violent crime incidents per 100,000 by select Canadian province, 2013-2022



Source: Statistics Canada, Crime Information Hub, Select Crime Factors

Figure 8-2

### Police reported violent crime incidents per 100,000 by select Canadian province, 2013-2022



Source: Statistics Canada, Police-Reported Information Hub, Select Crime Factors

For violent physical crimes in Western Canada, Winnipeg leads the CSI for homicides while Saskatoon leads for Level 3 assaults. These assaults are described as “wounding, maiming, disfiguring, or endangering the life of someone.”<sup>83</sup> Between 2015 and 2020, Manitoba had the second “highest rates of homicide involving an Indigenous victim”<sup>84</sup> at 14.46 per 100,000 people. Saskatchewan led at 17.57 while Alberta had the third highest rate at 13.24.<sup>85</sup>

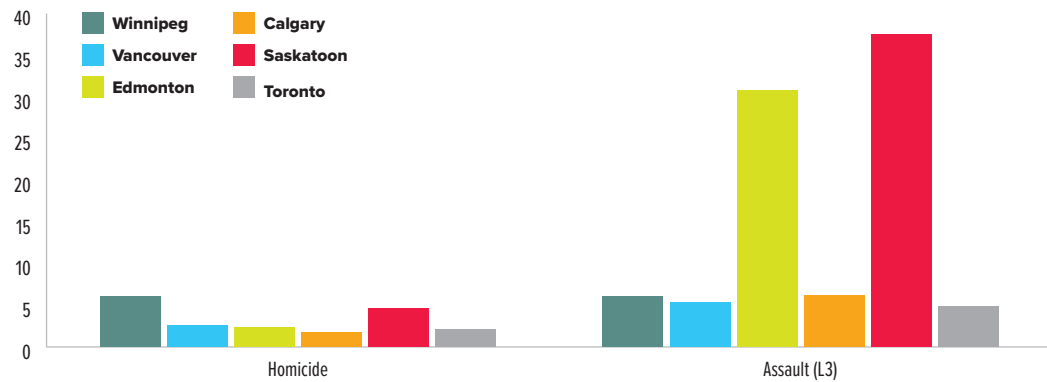
<sup>83</sup> May, Jenessa, “Assault in Canada,” Blog, June 24, 2024, para. 5. <https://www.torontodefencelawyers.com/assault-in-canada/>

<sup>84</sup> Statistics Canada, “Criminal victimization of First nations, Métis and Inuit people in Canada, 2018 to 2020,” The Daily, July 19, 2022, para. 17. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220719/dq220719c-eng.htm>

<sup>85</sup> Ibid

Figure 8-3

### Comparison of homicide and severe assault across Western Canada, Crime Severity Index 2022

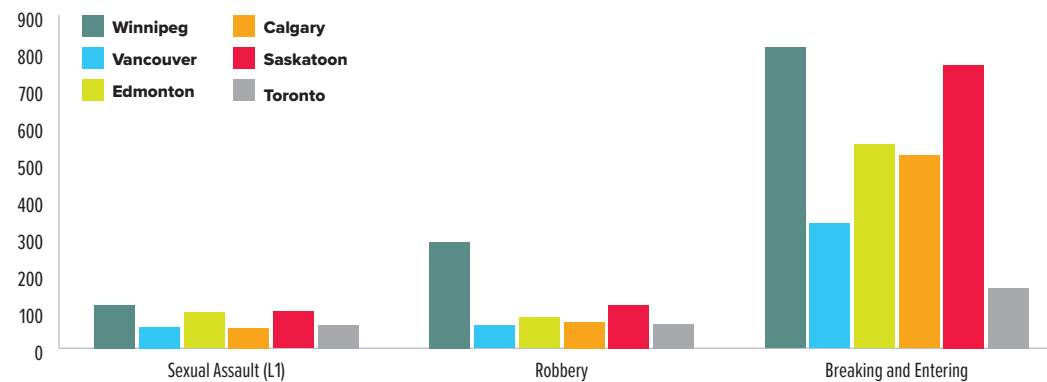


Source: Statistics Canada, Police-Reported Information Hub, Select Crime Factors

Winnipeg also leads western Canadian cities followed by Saskatoon and Edmonton for Level 1 Sexual Assault. This type of sexual assault includes those crimes in which “the sexual integrity of the victim is violated”<sup>86</sup> and there are limited, other minor injuries or no other physical injuries present. Winnipeg also leads Western Canada for property crimes, such as robbery and breaking and entering. Vancouver leads western Canadian cities for drug and impaired driving crime, followed by Saskatoon and Edmonton. Human trafficking is more prevalent in Toronto and Saskatoon while hate crimes are more prevalent in Edmonton and Vancouver.

Figure 8-4

### Comparison of sexual assault and property crime across Western Canada, Crime Severity Index 2022



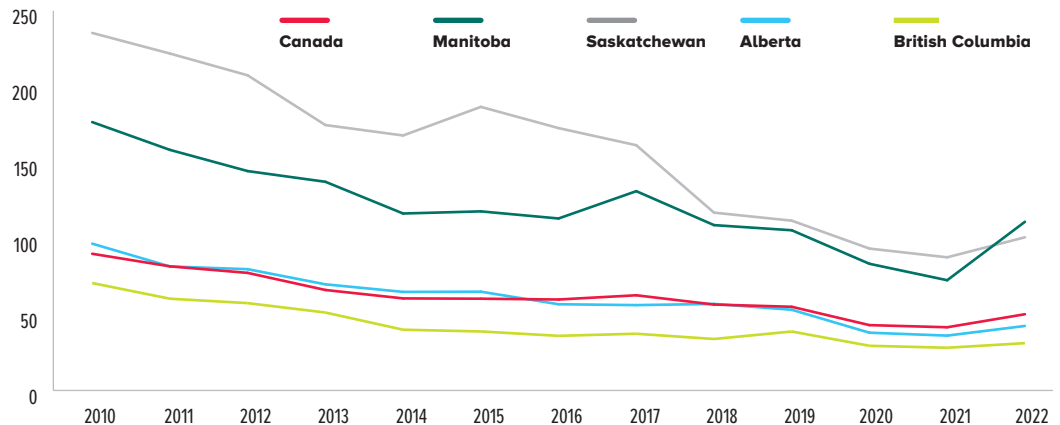
Source: Canada Crime Index, Crime Statistics in Canada by city, 2022

<sup>86</sup> As cited in Government of Canada. *An estimation of the economic impact of violent victimization in Canada, 2009*, para. 10. [https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/victim/rr14\\_01/p10.html](https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/victim/rr14_01/p10.html)

Manitoba and Saskatchewan surpass the Canadian average CSI for overall youth crime with Manitoba taking the lead over the past two years. Statistics which breakdown police reported youth violent crime crimes per 100,000 are not available.

**Figure 8-5**

## Youth Crime Severity Index Overall western Canadian provinces 2010-2022



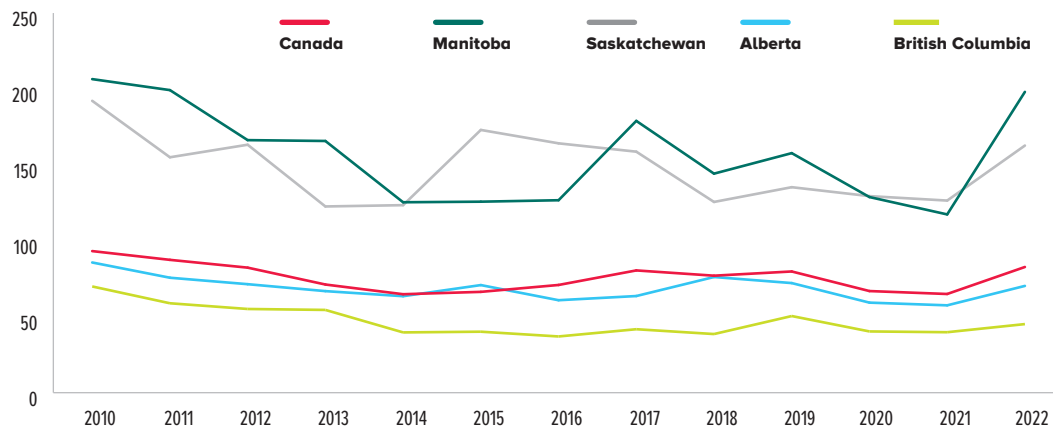
Source: Statistics Canada Table 35-10-0026-01

The sharp increase is predominately due to the rapid increase in the CSI for violent crimes committed by youth while non-violent crime has only increased slightly after a long-term, gradual decline.

The pandemic and its shutdown of services for vulnerable youth is believed to be spurring the increase in violent crime. Interventions which may have supported youth and helped steer them away from negative influences and provided community connection rather than social isolation were less available due to shutdowns.<sup>87</sup>

**Figure 8-6**

## Youth Crime Severity Index Violent crimes western Canadian provinces, 2010-2022



Source: Statistics Canada Table 35-10-0026-01

<sup>87</sup> Hobson, Brittany. "Social services decimated by COVID-19 a factor as violent crime surges among Winnipeg teens: Advocates," *CBC News*, December 31, 2022. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitobans-influences-youth-crime-advocates-1.6700824>

## Poverty is a safety issue too

Manitoba has historically had amongst the highest child poverty rates in the country and children living in poverty are more vulnerable to crime, whether as perpetrators or victims.

**Table 8-9**

### Child poverty rates, all Canadian provinces and territories, 2020

	<b>Under 18 (%)</b>	<b>Under 6 (%)</b>		<b>Under 18 (%)</b>	<b>Under 6 (%)</b>
<b>Nunavut</b>	28.1	35.4	<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	14.1	14.8
<b>Manitoba</b>	20.7	24.0	<b>Ontario</b>	13.4	14.4
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	19.7	22.2	<b>British Columbia</b>	13.3	13.0
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	18.4	21.3	<b>Alberta</b>	12.8	13.8
<b>New Brunswick</b>	16.6	18.3	<b>Quebec</b>	10.6	9.8
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	16.4	19.6	<b>Yukon</b>	9.0	18.4
<b>Northwest Territories</b>	15.8	18.4			

Source: Campaign 2000, Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada

Non-permanent residents and First Nations have the highest poverty rates for youth aged 18-24 in Winnipeg. Within these groups, First Nations women and non-permanent resident men have higher poverty rates. Recent immigrants experience higher poverty rates than those who have been in the country longer.

**Table 8-10**

### Poverty rates (%) in Winnipeg for 18-24-year-olds, 2021 Census

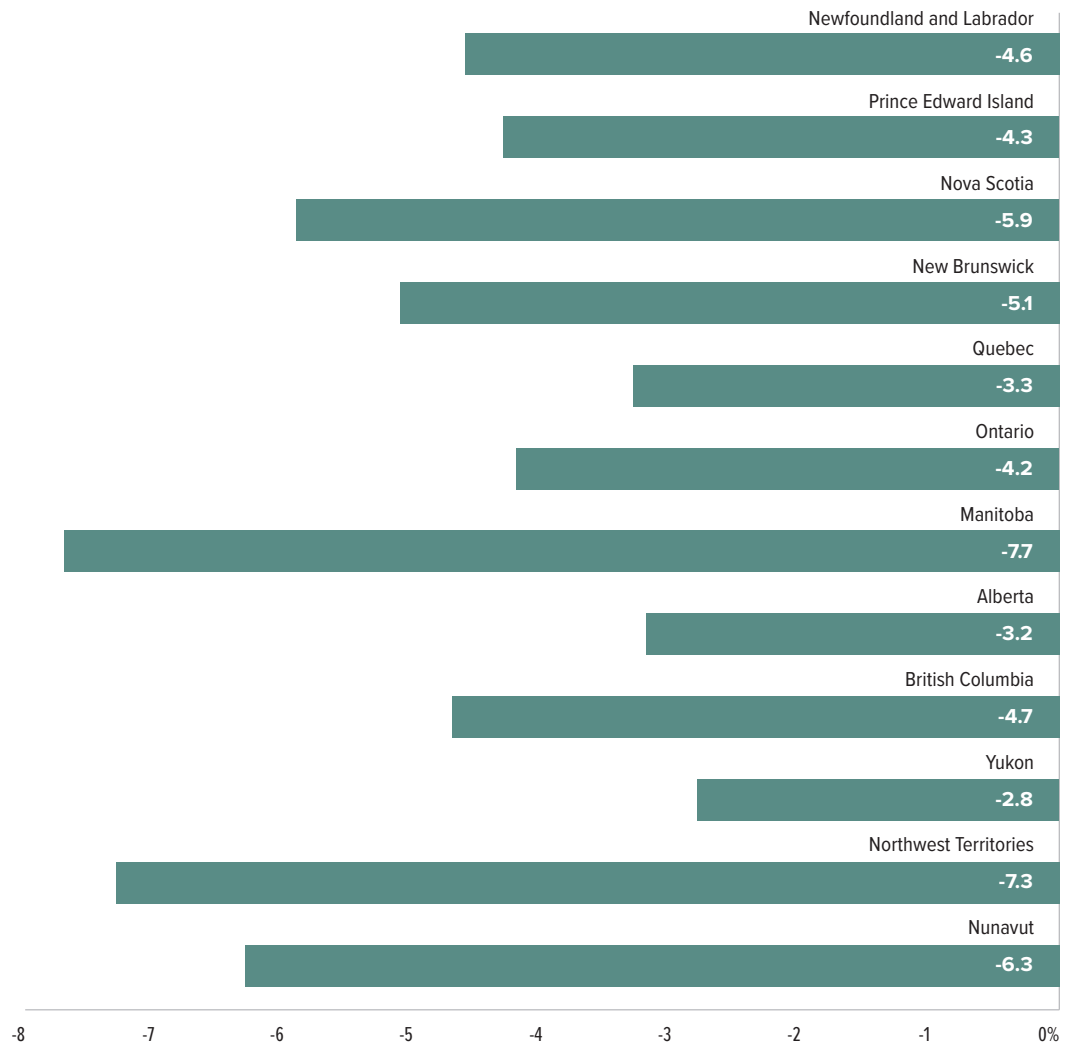
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
<b>Non-Permanent Residents</b>	55.4	55.5	55.1
<b>Immigrants within five years</b>	19.0	19.8	18.2
<b>Immigrants within 10 years</b>	11.5	11.9	10.9
<b>First Nations, Registered or Treaty Indian</b>	32.8	29.7	35.8
<b>Non-Indigenous</b>	17.8	18.4	17.1
<b>Non-Immigrants</b>	11.4	10.5	12.4

Source: Statistics Canada Tables 98-10-0117-01 and 98-10-0116-01

All provinces and territories experienced a continual decline in child poverty rates in the years prior to the pandemic and even in the first year of the pandemic. While Manitoba has the second highest child poverty rate in 2020, Manitoba had the largest rate decrease between 2019 and 2020.<sup>88</sup>

**Figure 8-7**

## Percentage point change in under-18 poverty rates, 2019-2020



Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0018-01

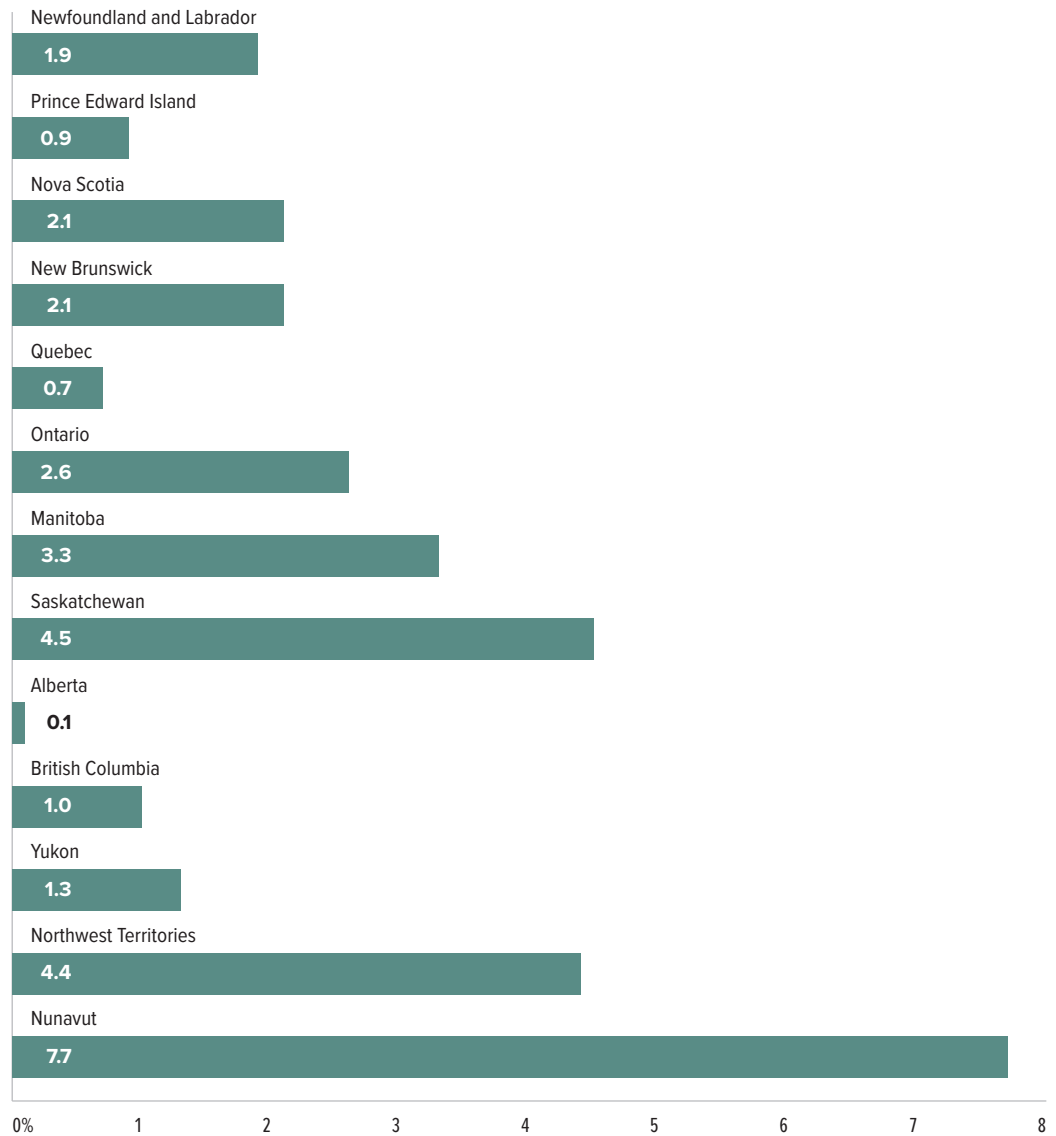
<sup>88</sup> Campaign 2000. "Pandemic lessons: Ending child and family poverty is possible," Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada, 2022. [https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/English-Pandemic-Lessons\\_Ending-Child-and-Family-Poverty-is-Possible\\_2022-National-Report-Card-on-Child-and-Family-Poverty.pdf](https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/English-Pandemic-Lessons_Ending-Child-and-Family-Poverty-is-Possible_2022-National-Report-Card-on-Child-and-Family-Poverty.pdf)



The removal of pandemic income supports in 2021 saw a short-term reversal in child poverty rates with Manitoba having the fourth largest increase out of all provinces and territories. Monitoring numbers to ensure that rates return to pre-pandemic trajectories will be important. These statistics also include all family types. Single parent, in particular single-female parent families, typically experience higher rates of poverty.<sup>89</sup>

**Figure 8-8**

### Percentage point change in under-18 poverty rates, 2020-2021



Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0018-01

<sup>89</sup> Ibid

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## Family and friends

Family and friends are key drivers and influencers of youth mobility decisions. Youth also cite friends and family as their primary source of news and information. For those looking to attract or retain talent, it is important to understand that word of mouth can spread the perceptions and misperceptions of a company, sector, community or province.<sup>90</sup> Times of crisis, such as the pandemic, can also reinforce and strengthen family and friendship bonds amidst broader community disconnect so that the influence of friends and family can be even more pronounced.<sup>91</sup>

The baseline survey results, compared to the 2021 survey results from the Alberta study, show a greater emphasis on staying close to family and home and less of an emphasis on friends and exploring the world. Traditionally, for those in high school, there is a move away from the home into the workforce and external peer networks become more important. While youth were physically at home, these peer networks transitioned online during the pandemic through social media, such as Instagram and TikTok, or through online gaming platforms.<sup>92</sup> Positive interactions with family and friends were also integral to mental health and wellness for youth during the pandemic and to help counter feelings of isolation and disconnect.<sup>93</sup>

For youth, family connection may be prioritized over other community connection as those bonds have been integral to getting through a period of crisis. Youth may be hesitant to leave comfortable and familiar surroundings of home for other areas and may need support in rebuilding community engagement.

One study found that fathers reported feeling “closer” or “much closer” to their children as families had to stay home and spend more time together. The role of parents expanded as students switched to remote learning with parents taking on more home schooling and education support roles.<sup>94</sup>

However, positive outcomes in the parent-child relationship were tied to the existence of positive or supportive relationships prior to the pandemic. The pandemic also escalated pre-existing conflicts and challenges in family dynamics.<sup>95</sup>

Not all parents had the resources to be able to support their children and not all children had digital access during the pandemic. Low-income parents were more likely to face layoffs or financial stress during the pandemic which placed “students from disadvantaged backgrounds in more vulnerable positions.”<sup>96</sup> Parents may have been working in essential industries and may not have been able to stay home with their children to ensure that they were learning or going to school. Absenteeism, school disengagement, and learning loss is more likely to affect these children. The pandemic “exacerbated food insecurity for children and families, especially those living in poverty”<sup>97</sup> as some children relied on school food programs.

<sup>90</sup> Lane et al. *Work to Live*.

<sup>91</sup> Malika Shah et al. “Growing Up Under COVID-19: Young People’s Agency in Family Dynamics,” *Frontiers in Sociology* 6, 722380, October 5, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2021.722380>

<sup>92</sup> Jiang, Jingjing. “Teens who are constantly online are just as likely to socialize with their friends offline,” *Short Reads*, Pew Research Centre, November 28, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2018/11/28/teens-who-are-constantly-online-are-just-as-likely-to-socialize-with-their-friends-offline/>

<sup>93</sup> Mental Health Commission of Canada. *Lockdown life: Mental health impacts of COVID-19 on youth in Canada*, February 2021. [https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/drupal/2021-02/lockdown\\_life\\_eng.pdf](https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/drupal/2021-02/lockdown_life_eng.pdf)

<sup>94</sup> Walsh, Colleen. “Report finds fathers feel closer to children during pandemic,” *The Harvard Gazette*, September 14, 2020, para. 2. <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/09/study-reveals-how-parents-and-kids-interact-amid-lockdown/>

<sup>95</sup> Janssens, Julie J. et al. “The Impact of COVID-19 on Adolescents’ Daily Lives: The Role of Parent–Child Relationship Quality,” *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 31, 3, 2021. [https://ppw.kuleuven.be/okp/\\_pdf/Janssens2021TIOCO.pdf](https://ppw.kuleuven.be/okp/_pdf/Janssens2021TIOCO.pdf)

<sup>96</sup> Pathways to Education. “Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on low-income communities,” *Research*, June 13, 2020, para. 10. <https://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/research/impacts-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-low-income-communities/>

<sup>97</sup> Government of Manitoba. *Final Report of the Poverty and Education Task Force*, February 2023, p. 29.

The February 2023 *Final Report of the Poverty and Education Task Force*<sup>98</sup> provides a comprehensive overview of the “voices and experiences of people who live in and with poverty”<sup>99</sup> and those who work with the community with specific recommendations on how to address long-standing and pandemic-exacerbated barriers for youth living in poverty.

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## Clean communities

The environment and sustainability are important to this generation and this carries over into what they want to see in their communities. In 2018, youth aged 15-30 gave more donations proportionally to environmental organizations than those aged 30 and over. Air and water quality and access to clean and green spaces are a priority.<sup>100</sup> Winnipeg fares comparatively well to the other major Canadian cities for air quality.<sup>101</sup> Air pollution in the city and province is predominately due to “transportation, residential heating, agricultural and industrial activities.”<sup>102</sup>

While Manitoba is home to 100,000 lakes and rivers, 70 per cent of the water originates outside the province making it difficult to control water quality.<sup>104</sup> But efforts are being made to clean up the province’s lakes and rivers. The provincial government recently announced \$8 million to support efforts to clean Lake Winnipeg and upgrade Winnipeg’s North End Water Pollution Control Centre. It also has a water management strategy “aimed at protecting, maintaining, and improving water resources.”<sup>103</sup> Take Pride Winnipeg is a local charitable organization which stemmed from efforts in the 1980s to clean up the city. The organization has a summer youth employment program and has supported clean-up efforts in other Manitoban communities.

Manitoba has “92 provincial parks, 15 provincial forests, and two national parks,”<sup>104</sup> and systemic and localized improvements are needed to modernize parks and support tourism and access.<sup>105</sup> Communities across the province also have urban parks and varying levels of recreation.

## Further observations

Generally, respondents, except newcomers, prioritized safety the most when considering any move to a different location. However, while there is some dispute over CSI metrics, Manitoba and Winnipeg face a perceptual if not real safety problem, particularly for violent crime. Those who live in the north and rural areas, particularly First Nations individuals, expressed concern about youth moving to Winnipeg and away from the safety of their home communities and families.

Newcomer youth want communities and government policies which create welcoming and inclusive communities. They viewed Manitoba as a place to start out but not a place to settle. Poverty rates for non-permanent resident youth in Winnipeg are particularly high. Average wages for newcomers are lower than in other communities, particularly for newcomer women. Those who had been in the province for over 10 years were the most likely to move for any factor. Among participants in the focus groups, newcomers were least likely to stay in the province.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, p. 6

<sup>100</sup> Arriagada, Paula & Lauren Pinault. “Chapter 5: Youth and the environment,” *Portrait of Youth in Canada: Data Report*, Statistics Canada, April 7, 2022. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/42-28-0001/2021001/article/00005-eng.htm>

<sup>101</sup> Government of Manitoba. *Questions and answers: Air quality measurements*, 2019, para. 6. [https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pubs/climate-air-quality/fact\\_sheet-air\\_quality\\_measurements\\_august\\_2019.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pubs/climate-air-quality/fact_sheet-air_quality_measurements_august_2019.pdf)

<sup>102</sup> Government of Manitoba. *Clean water. For me. For you. Forever.* [https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pubs/water/clean\\_water\\_guide.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pubs/water/clean_water_guide.pdf)

<sup>103</sup> Government of Manitoba. “Manitoba’s water management strategy,” *Environment and Climate Change*, para. 9. <https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/water/index.html>

<sup>104</sup> MNP, Prairie Research & Associates, & HTFC Planning and Design. Evaluating the tourism potential of Manitoba’s provincial parks, accessed December 2023, p. 4. [https://www.manitoba.ca/sd/parks/\\_resources/en/pdf/parks-evaluation-study-executive.pdf](https://www.manitoba.ca/sd/parks/_resources/en/pdf/parks-evaluation-study-executive.pdf)

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

# Manitoba's cooler than you (and they) think

## Perception

The baseline survey asked respondents to share their perceptions of Manitoba. Respondents both within and outside Manitoba had a common perception of Manitoba as a mostly rural province with Winnipeg the only urban area. Rural life was often associated with boredom. Those outside of Manitoba also focused on the winter with respondents often describing Manitoba using terms such as cold or winter.

**Figure 9-1: Youth in major Canadian cities' descriptions of Manitoba**

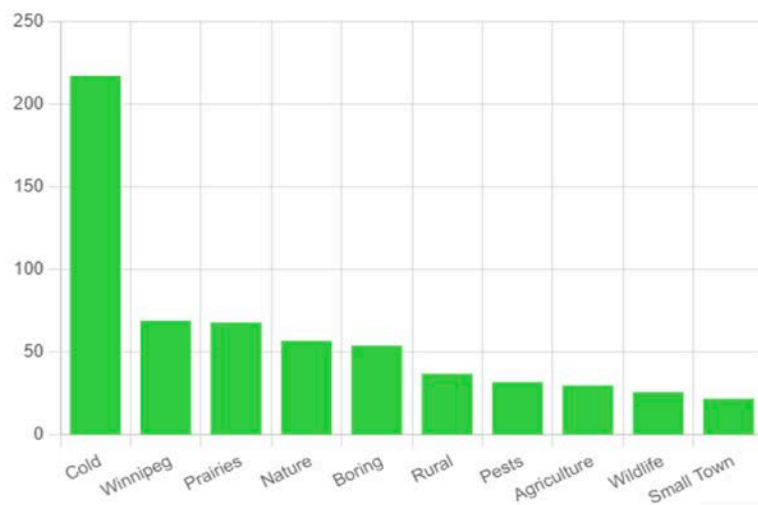


Figure 9-2: Manitoban baseline respondents views of Manitoba



Figure 9-3: Indigenous job fair respondents views of Manitoba



Figure 9-4: Francophone respondents views of Manitoba



Figure 9-5: UCN respondents views of Manitoba



There were few comments from either Manitobans or those in the major cities that described the province as providing economic opportunities for success or affordability. For quality of life, comments about nature focused on the lakes and rivers while references to wildlife were mostly about polar bears. There was also an association with sports. References to Winnipeg included comments about the Winnipeg Jets and Blue Bombers.

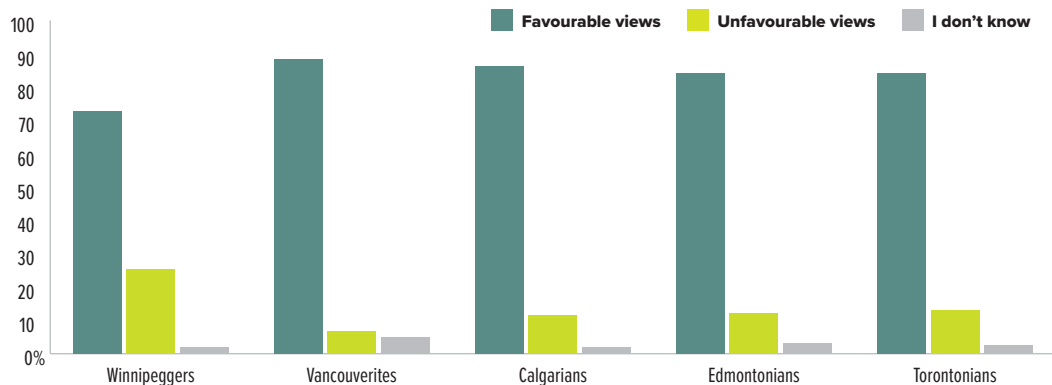
While youth want outdoor recreation, they are more focused on what they can find close to home and in their communities. Walkability was the most important quality of life factor for all respondents when choosing either a province or community followed by urban parks and recreation and transit within communities. Respondents outside Manitoba are more likely to associate the province with Winnipeg, and to have negative, wintery perceptions about provincial outdoor recreation. Respondents in Manitoba who know more about the province may be more concerned about rates of crime which can make public spaces and transit feel unsafe.

### Manitobans more negative

While the majority of Winnipeg respondents view their province in a favourable light, a higher proportion of respondents in other major cities see their province favourably. More Winnipeggers see their home province unfavourably than their counterparts in other cities. Manitobans view British Columbia and Alberta less negatively than Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan. Respondents in other provinces ranked their province most highly and then typically ranked B.C. second.

Figure 9-6

### Views of home province by select Canadian city, 2023

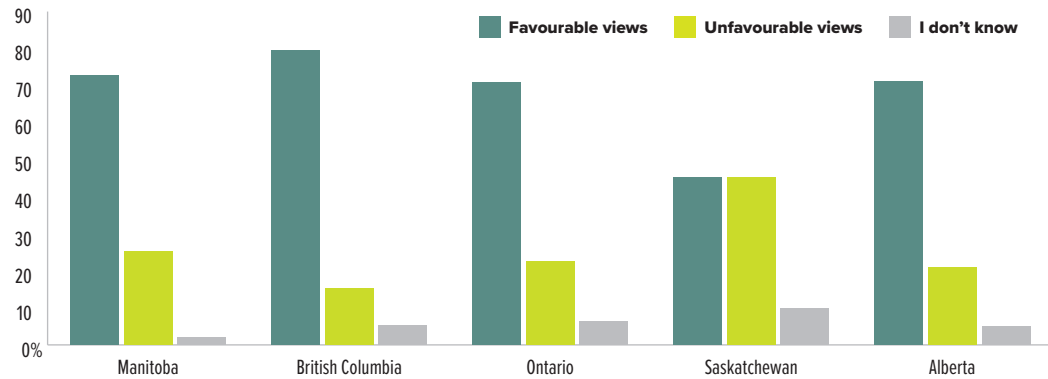


Source: Baseline survey, all respondents in major cities

While Winnipeggers viewed British Columbia the most favorably, other Manitobans viewed their own province and B.C. equally favorably. Those outside Winnipeg were less critical of Saskatchewan and slightly more critical of Ontario.

**Figure 9-7**

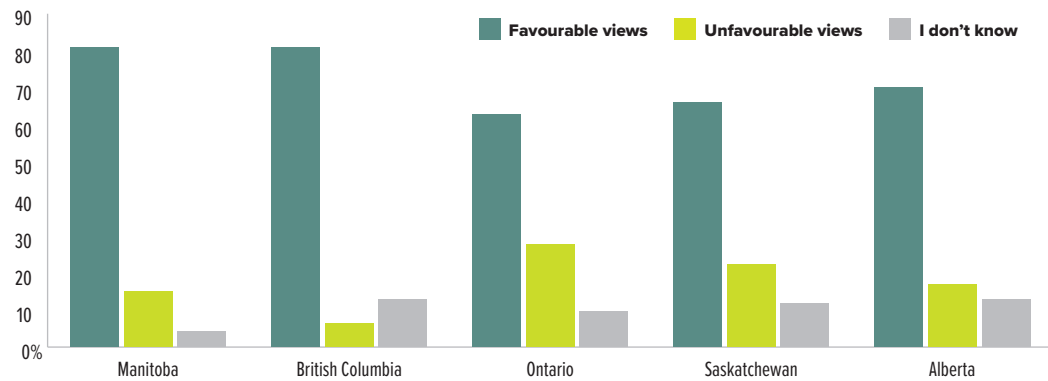
### Winnipeggers' views of select Canadian provinces, 2023



Source: Baseline survey, all Winnipeg respondents

**Figure 9-8**

### Manitobans' (outside Winnipeg) views of select Canadian province, 2023



Source: Baseline survey, all Manitoban respondents outside Winnipeg

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## Quality of life factors

Youth value walkability, urban recreation and then outdoor recreation. They want things to do in their communities and do not want to have to travel far to get to those activities. If they must travel, they want quality transit options.

**Table 9-1**

### *Top quality-of-life factors when considering a move to another province/territory, all respondents (%)*

	Community	Province
<b>Walkable communities</b>	52	44
<b>Urban parks and recreation</b>	43	38
<b>Quality transit within community</b>	34	33
<b>Quality public transportation to surrounding communities</b>	31	32
<b>Outdoor recreation (camping, lakes, skiing, etc.)</b>	30	36
<b>Arts and cultural scene</b>	19	22
<b>Organized sports/recreational activities</b>	17	15
<b>Bike paths</b>	15	13
<b>Nightlife</b>	12	13
<b>Professional sports</b>	9	10
	n=1342	

Source: Baseline survey, all respondents who selected at least one quality of life factor<sup>1</sup>



Walkable communities are the top quality of life factor when considering a move to another community for youth across Manitoba. Recreation is the second most important factor but for youth within Winnipeg urban recreation is the priority while youth outside Winnipeg prioritize outdoor recreation followed by urban recreation. Quality transit within a community is the third most important factor when considering a community, closely followed by transportation to surrounding communities and outdoor recreation. Professional sports and nightlife were prioritized the least. Quality-of-life factors were less important than social or economic factors for Winnipeg youth when considering a move to another province.

**Table 9-2**

***Top quality-of-life factors when considering a move to another province/territory, all Manitoban respondents (%)***

	<b>Winnipeg</b>		<b>Elsewhere MB</b>	
	<b>Community</b>	<b>Province</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Province</b>
<b>Walkable communities</b>	53	49	54	48
<b>Urban parks and recreation</b>	40	34	39	38
<b>Quality transit within community</b>	31	31	24	28
<b>Quality public transportation to surrounding communities</b>	26	28	14	24
<b>Outdoor recreation (camping, lakes, skiing, etc.)</b>	25	32	46	48
<b>Arts and cultural scene</b>	22	24	20	22
<b>Organized sports/recreational activities</b>	19	18	28	14
<b>Bike paths</b>	19	17	22	18
<b>Nightlife</b>	12	11	10	6
<b>Professional sports</b>	8	9	10	10
	n=236		n=79	

Source: Baseline survey, all respondents who selected at least one quality of life factor

In the focus groups, there was a pervading sense that areas outside Winnipeg were boring with limited diversity of food, arts and culture which aligns with the perceptions of those outside Manitoba. There are some areas where perception does not match Manitoba's reality. These could offer opportunities for improved communications.

First Nations youth prioritized walkability and outdoor recreation when considering any move. Urban recreation was the third most important consideration for moving communities while arts and culture was more important when considering provinces.

**Table 9-3**

**Top *quality-of-life* factors when considering a move to another community/province, all First Nations respondents in Manitoba (%)**

	<b>Community</b>	<b>Province</b>
<b>Nightlife</b>	20	22
<b>Walkable communities</b>	52	40
<b>Quality transit within community</b>	20	18
<b>Quality public transportation to surrounding communities</b>	18	24
<b>Arts and cultural scene</b>	32	38
<b>Urban parks and recreation</b>	44	34
<b>Outdoor recreation (camping, lakes, skiing, etc.)</b>	46	48
<b>Organized sports/recreational activities</b>	36	30
<b>Professional sports</b>	6	14
<b>Bike paths</b>	10	10
<b>Would move for quality-of-life reasons</b>	88	
<b>Never move for these reasons</b>	12	
	N=84	

Source: Indigenous and UCN survey, all First Nations respondents

## Newcomers

Newcomers were less likely to move for quality-of-life reasons compared to social or economic reasons. Similar to the other factors, willingness to move for quality-of-life factors increased for those who had been in Canada longer, with those who had been in the country for over 10 years more willing to move for quality-of-life reasons than respondents to other surveys. Walkability was most important for all groups. More recent newcomers also prioritized public transit both within and between communities when considering a move to another province. Those who had been in the country longer than 10 years prioritized transportation to surrounding communities, urban parks and outdoor recreation equally.

**Table 9-4**

### **Top *quality-of-life* factors when considering a move to another community/province, all newcomer respondents in Manitoba (%)**

	<b>Community</b>	<b>Province</b>
<b>Nightlife</b>	10	13
<b>Walkable communities</b>	50	41
<b>Quality transit within community</b>	36	36
<b>Quality public transportation to surrounding communities</b>	35	39
<b>Arts and cultural scene</b>	16	19
<b>Urban parks and recreation</b>	33	33
<b>Outdoor recreation (camping, lakes, skiing, etc.)</b>	27	33
<b>Organized sports/recreational activities</b>	23	19
<b>Professional sports</b>	9	11
<b>Bike paths</b>	17	16
<b>Would move for quality-of-life reasons</b>	79	
<b>Never move for these reasons</b>	21	
	n=112	

Source: Baseline survey, all newcomer respondents

**Walkability is the most important quality-of-life factor for all survey respondents who would consider a move to another province.**

**Table 9-5**

**Top *quality-of-life* factors when considering a move to another province/territory, newcomers in Manitoba by years in Canada (%)**

	<b>&gt;5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>10+</b>
<b>Nightlife</b>	11	8	13
<b>Walkable communities</b>	44	36	50
<b>Quality transit within community</b>	28	28	25
<b>Quality public transportation to surrounding communities</b>	44	36	38
<b>Arts and cultural scene</b>	19	12	25
<b>Urban parks and recreation</b>	28	28	38
<b>Outdoor recreation (camping, lakes, skiing, etc.)</b>	33	32	38
<b>Organized sports/recreational activities</b>	19	16	25
<b>Professional sports</b>	11	12	17
<b>Bike paths</b>	19	24	4
<b>Would move for quality-of-life reasons</b>	65	89	92
<b>Never move for these reasons</b>	35	11	8
	n=55	n=28	N=26

Source: Baseline survey, all newcomer respondents who knew how many years they had been in Canada

## Francophones

Francophone youth prioritize transit within a community, walkability and arts and culture when considering a move to another community. They also prioritized transit (both within and between communities), arts and culture and outdoor recreation when considering a move to another province.

**Table 9-6**

### **Top *quality-of-life* factors when considering a move to another community/province, all Francophone respondents in Manitoba (%)**

	<b>Community</b>	<b>Province</b>
<b>Nightlife</b>	13	13
<b>Walkable communities</b>	33	23
<b>Quality transit within community</b>	48	45
<b>Quality public transportation to surrounding communities</b>	25	50
<b>Arts and cultural scene</b>	33	35
<b>Urban parks and recreation</b>	25	30
<b>Outdoor recreation (camping, lakes, skiing, etc.)</b>	25	35
<b>Organized sports/recreational activities</b>	28	15
<b>Professional sports</b>	18	15
<b>Bike paths</b>	8	3
<b>Would move for quality-of-life reasons</b>	85	
<b>Never move for these reasons</b>	18	
	n=47	

Source: Francophone survey

# Reality

## Walkability and transit

Communities in Manitoba offer comparable and even better walkability compared to their counterparts in other western provinces. Brandon has the highest bike score out of the listed CAs in part because of the city's Share the Road program which provides "cross-town bicycle traffic"<sup>106</sup> with dedicated cycle routes to key businesses and services, including Brandon University.<sup>107</sup>

**Table 9-7**

## Walk and bike scores for western Canadian Census Agglomerations

	Walk Score	Bike Score		Walk Score	Bike Score
<b>Brandon</b>	40	57	<b>Weyburn</b>	36	49
<b>Portage la Prairie</b>	32	39	<b>Red Deer</b>	22	31
<b>Steinbach</b>	31	45	<b>Cold Lake</b>	24	18
<b>Thompson</b>	32	10	<b>Grande Prairie</b>	29	25
<b>Winkler</b>	32	45	<b>Cranbrook</b>	33	36
<b>Yorkton</b>	34	22	<b>Kamloops</b>	23	26
<b>Prince Albert</b>	35	16	<b>Prince George</b>	29	19
<b>Estevan</b>	41	41	<b>Fort St. John</b>	36	19

Source: Walkscore.com

For larger urban areas, Winnipeg has one of the best bike scores in Western Canada below only Victoria and Vancouver while walkability is comparable to cities across the prairies. The city has different types of bike paths depending on whether the route is off the street, such as multiuse paths, or on-street, such as protected and painted bike lanes. There is also a map of the routes and types of paths that cyclists can use.<sup>108</sup>

**Table 9-8**

## Walk and bike scores for western Canadian Census Metropolitan Areas

	Walk Score	Bike Score		Walk Score	Bike Score
<b>Winnipeg</b>	40	57	<b>Edmonton</b>	36	49
<b>Regina</b>	32	39	<b>Kelowna</b>	22	31
<b>Saskatoon</b>	31	45	<b>Abbotsford</b>	24	18
<b>Lethbridge</b>	32	10	<b>Vancouver</b>	29	25
<b>Calgary</b>	32	45	<b>Victoria</b>	33	36

Source: Walkscore.com

<sup>106</sup> City of Brandon. "Walking & bike trails," accessed December 2023, para. 5. <https://brandon.ca/walking-and-bike-trails>

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> City of Winnipeg. "Winnipeg cycling map," accessed December 2023. <https://legacy.winnipeg.ca/publicworks/pedestriansCycling/pdf/WinnipegCyclingMap.pdf>

For transit within communities, Winnipeg and Saskatoon are the only major western Canadian cities which do not offer light rail transit (LRT) services. The city developed the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan in 2021, but progress has taken longer with the revamp of routes expected in 2025. Rather than an LRT, the plan includes additional rapid transit bus routes. The average user of Winnipeg transit also has a lower average income than in other urban centres and there are perceptual and real challenges including safety which prevent increased ridership. The City of Winnipeg plans to consult with the public in 2024 to identify ways to transform the transportation system to attract more users.<sup>109</sup>

Reduced ridership due to the pandemic has been a challenge with the provincial government providing Brandon, Thompson, Selkirk and Flin Flon with funds in 2023 to make up the shortfall.<sup>110</sup> Manitoba is not alone as other communities are also struggling to increase ridership. The post-pandemic spike in crime on transit is also a significant deterrent with communities across the country increasing the presence of police and peace officers.<sup>111</sup> For a city such as Winnipeg which faced real and perceptual challenges due to crime even before the pandemic, there could be even more of a challenge in drawing riders back into the system.

For travel between communities, there are limited options in Manitoba. Air travel is comparatively expensive, particular to the North, but is faster than bus travel. While the other western provinces have larger transportation companies which operate intra and interprovincially, bus service in Manitoba is ad hoc and dependent on smaller operators. For example, travel from Thompson to Winnipeg is available through NCN Thompson Bus Lines which is owned and operated by Nischawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN).<sup>112</sup> Travel from Winnipeg to Brandon is through Brandon Airport Shuttle which goes from Brandon to the Winnipeg airport and is available for those flying or those who need to travel between communities for business, family or medical reasons.<sup>113</sup>

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## Urban and outdoor recreation

There are 92 provincial parks, seven national historic sites, and two national parks in Manitoba. Winnipeg has just over 1000 parks with a total of 3,500 hectares of land.<sup>114</sup> There are also two docks, three boat launches and four canoe launches.<sup>115</sup> Brandon has roughly 60 greenspaces with a variety of amenities and three dog parks while Thompson has 16 parks and a few sports fields and courts. Just outside of Selkirk is the 6.6 km Selkirk Forest Walking Trail which loops through the forest just outside of town. There are also over 100,000 lakes and 16 per cent of the province is covered in water.<sup>116</sup> Churchill, Manitoba is on Hudson's Bay and the first Arctic cruise ship to reach the community in at least 15 years arrived in 2023. More ships are expected in the future.<sup>117</sup> Tourists to Churchill come to see polar bears in the fall, northern lights in the winter, birds in the spring and beluga whales in the summer.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>109</sup> Brass, Emily. "Winnipeg family"

<sup>110</sup> CBC News. "Manitoba pledges \$13M to help struggling transit system in 5 cities," *CBC News*, December 28, 2022. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-transit-money-1.6698804>

<sup>111</sup> The Canadian Press. "Violence on transit has increased post-pandemic, police and union officials say," *CTV News*, April 13, 2023. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/violence-on-transit-has-increased-post-pandemic-police-and-union-officials-say-1.6355053>

<sup>112</sup> NCN Thompson Bus Lines. *Schedule & Fares*, accessed November 2023. <https://www.thompsonbus.com/schedule-rates/>

<sup>113</sup> Brandon Air Shuttle. *Schedules and Fares*, accessed November 2023. <https://brandonairshuttle.com/schedules-fares/>

<sup>114</sup> City of Winnipeg. "More than 1,000 Winnipeg parks for you to explore," *Our city, our stories*, accessed November 2023. <https://www.winnipeg.ca/people-culture/our-city-our-stories/more-1000-winnipeg-parks-you-explore>

<sup>115</sup> City of Winnipeg. "Boat and canoe launches," *Things to do*, accessed November 2023. <https://legacy.winnipeg.ca/publicworks/parksOpenSpace/ThingsToDo/BoatLaunches.stm>

<sup>116</sup> Government of Manitoba. "Lakes, beaches and rivers," *Water*, accessed November 2023. <https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/water/lakes-beaches-rivers/index.html>

<sup>117</sup> Axelrod, Gavin. "Port of Churchill welcomes first cruise ship in over a decade during busy weekend," *CBC News*, July 17, 2023. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/port-of-churchills-busy-weekend-boosts-local-economy-1.6908438>

<sup>118</sup> Travel Manitoba. "Churchill experiences," *Everything Churchill*, accessed November 2023.

In the winter, the City of Winnipeg operates a 7-10 km skating trail which connects the downtown and surrounding areas.<sup>119</sup> There are also outdoor ponds which freeze over for skating, indoor rinks, cross-country skiing trails and approximately 13,000 km of snowmobile trails across the province.<sup>120</sup> Year-round fishing and seasonal hunting are also embedded in Manitoba's culture, particularly in the North and First Nations communities. The Northern Manitoba Trappers Festival, one of the longest running winter festivals in Manitoba, includes a dog sled race, parade, craft show, beer fest and competitions to crown the Trapper King and Trapper Queen. Contests for king include fileting a fish, trap setting and flour packing.<sup>121</sup>

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## Arts and culture

Manitoba is home to The Royal Winnipeg Ballet which is "Canada's premiere ballet company and the longest continuously operating ballet company in North America."<sup>122</sup> The company also operates a ballet school which is internationally recognized. The Anna McCowan-Johnson Aspirant Program allows those at the post-secondary level to earn two years of advanced ballet training and receive credit at the University of Winnipeg's Faculty of Theater and Film.<sup>123</sup>

There are art councils located across the province. When the first mine began operations in Flin Flon, recruiters ensured those hired had other talents, such as singing or playing an instrument. The legacy has carried forward with Flin Flon providing essential arts and culture to the border region through the Flin Flon Arts Council.<sup>124</sup> Flin Flon is home to the Blueberry Jam Music Gathering which takes places at the Flin Flon Tourist Bureau and Campground. Attendees can camp and watch three days of open mic, live music performances.<sup>125</sup>

There are 128 museums spread across the province including the world renowned Canadian Museum for Human Rights. In the survey, there were few references to arts and culture, most comments were about the Royal Canadian Mint in Winnipeg. The mint offers tours for individuals to learn about the coin production process.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>119</sup> To do Canada. *Skate on Winnipeg's iconic Nestaweya River Skating Trail*, January 4, 2023. <https://www.todocanada.ca/skate-on-winnipeg-its-legendary-nestaweya-river-skating-trail>

<sup>120</sup> Tourism Winnipeg. "Nine spots to lace up the skates and make nice on Winnipeg's ice," *Only in the Peg*, January 21, 2021. <https://www.tourismwinnipeg.com/things-to-do/only-in-the-peg/read,post/1181/nine-spots-to-lace-up-the-skates-and-make-nice-on-winnipeg-s-ice>; Travel Manitoba. "Snowmobiling: Welcome to sledding country," *Things to do*, accessed November 2023. <https://www.travelmanitoba.com/things-to-do/outdoor/snowmobiling/>

<sup>121</sup> Northern Manitoba Trappers Festival. *Events*, accessed November 2023. <https://www.trappersfestival.ca/events>

<sup>122</sup> Royal Winnipeg Ballet. "History," *Who we are*, accessed November 2023. <https://www.rwb.org/who-we-are/>

<sup>123</sup> Royal Winnipeg Ballet. "Anna McCowan-Johnson Aspirant Program," *Programs*, accessed November 2023. <https://www.rwb.org/school/professional-division/programs/aspirant-program/>

<sup>124</sup> Lebar, Erin. "At the heart of the arts, a mine," *Winnipeg Free Press*, April 8, 2016. <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/entertainment/music/2016/04/08/at-heart-of-the-arts-a-mine/>; Flin Flon Arts Council. "Who we are," *About*, accessed November 2023. <https://www.flinflonartsCouncil.ca/>

<sup>125</sup> Flin Flon Blueberry Jam. "About," *Event/site information*, accessed November 2023. [https://flinlonblueberryjam.ca/?page\\_id=201](https://flinlonblueberryjam.ca/?page_id=201)

<sup>126</sup> Royal Canadian Mint. "Guided tours," *Visit the Mint*, accessed December 2023. <https://www.mint.ca/en/visit-the-mint/guided-tours>

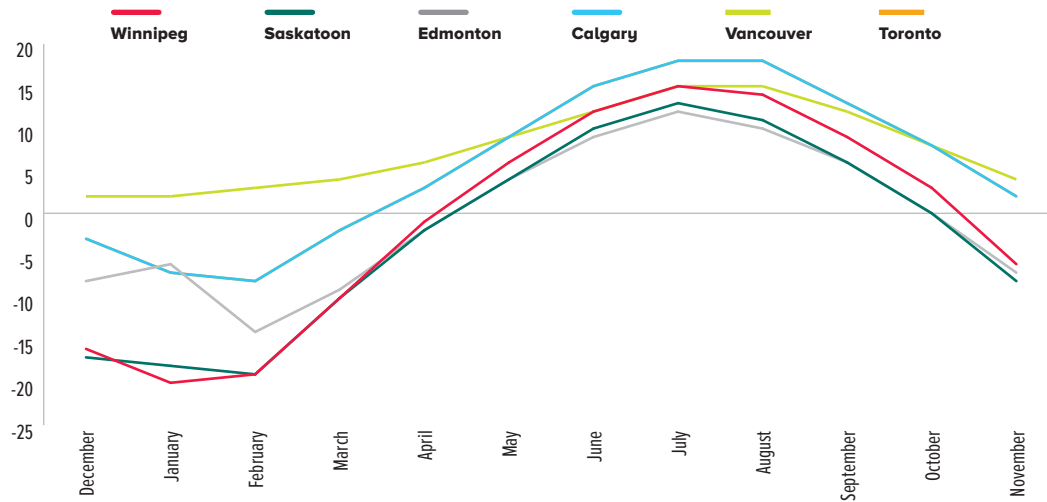


## Weather

Winnipeg's average lows are comparable to the other prairie cities except at the start of winter when temperatures dip more quickly.

Figure 9-10

### Historical average monthly lows (°c), select Canadian cities 2000-2024

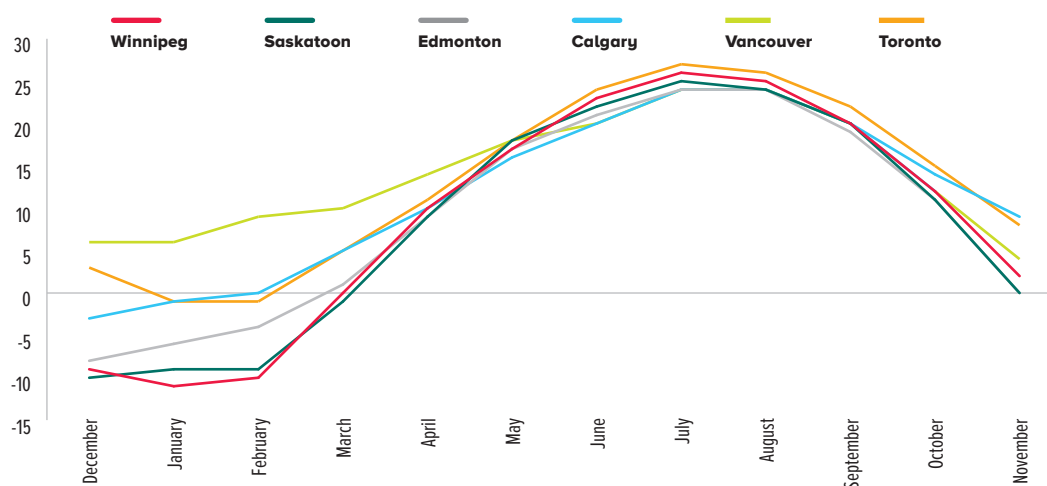


Source: The Weather Network, Historical Averages

Summers in Winnipeg are hotter compared to the other major cities, except for Toronto. The period of warm weather is also shorter due to the quicker onset of cooler temperatures compared to the other cities. The longer cold spell could help explain why Manitoba has become synonymous with winters and cold temperatures.

Figure 9-11

### Historical average monthly highs (°c), select Canadian cities 2000-2024

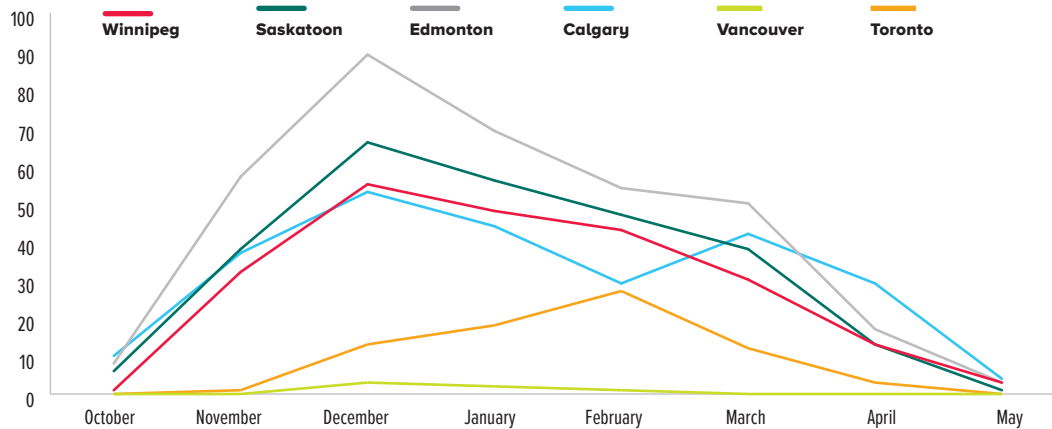


Source: The Weather Network, Historical Averages

Despite the long-lasting cooler temperatures, there is less snowfall on average in Winnipeg during the winter months compared to Saskatoon and Edmonton and comparable snowfall to Calgary. Calgary has warm winter winds, Chinooks, which can rapidly increase the temperature and melt snow while Winnipeg does not have a similar phenomenon.

**Figure 9-12**

## Historical average snowfall (cms), 2000-2024



Source: The Weather Network, Historical Averages, October-May.

## Further observations

Manitoba's natural beauty shines from the polar bears and beluga whales of Churchill, the beauty of Clearwater Lake in the Pas, and at the confluence of the Red River and Assiniboine River at the Forks in Winnipeg. The province has a vibrant arts and cultural scene and a deep, rich history of supporting the arts.

While Manitoban youth expressed pride in the province's natural beauty, youth often did not know what they could do in their communities or what other parts of the province have to offer. Consequently, Manitoba's advantages can sometimes not be enough to keep young adults in the province. There was a sense of frustration at the lack of diversity in people, foods and culture. Those in Brandon, rural and northern Manitoba generally agreed with the perception that areas outside of Winnipeg lacked limited options for things to do within communities.

People outside Manitoba were generally unfamiliar with the province and associated the province with Winnipeg.

# Conclusions

There are huge opportunities for Manitoba's young people to experience an affordable quality of life that is not as readily available to their counterparts in the rest of the country. Unfortunately, the stories being told, and some of the social issues that many face, reduce their understanding of these opportunities. There are also long-standing, realistic challenges that the province faces and there are no easy solutions or quick fixes.

Youth want communities which offer a diversity of experiences and people. Perhaps this is why, despite its cost, British Columbia has been a draw for youth from all demographics. While Manitoba has an abundance of outdoor recreation, communities outside Winnipeg are often seen and described as boring – even by the youth that live in those communities. Winnipeg offers such diversity, but the city is comparatively more expensive than other parts of the province. Youth also view Winnipeg as a place to start a career but view other major Canadian cities as having more long-term potential, particularly in emerging industries which are more attractive to this generation.

Youth may have different motivating factors depending on their cultural community. A large proportion of immigrant youth, especially those who have been in Manitoba for more than 10 years, indicated a willingness to move to another province and present a large portion of out-migration from Manitoba each year. More recent newcomers want communities which are inclusive and have policies that support newcomer settlement and integration.

The issues faced by First Nations youth persist, especially in the north. While First Nations youth are less likely to leave the province, they may move within the province, for example leaving rural communities for the urban centres of Brandon and Winnipeg. First Nations youth respondents to the surveys also indicated they are willing to consider moving to another province – especially for a job with an Indigenous owned business.

Francophone youth have limited options within the province for post-secondary education. If they do choose to stay in the province, they choose Université de Saint-Boniface. Francophone communities outside of Winnipeg are often more rural and have the same perceptual challenges of other rural communities. Francophone youth looking for larger, younger Francophone populations may consider areas in Ontario or Quebec.

Manitobans collectively can work together to change these and other narratives. Where perceptions are more negative than reality, there is an opportunity to reframe and address misperceptions to show the opportunity that Manitoba offers. Where reality and perceptions align, Manitobans can come together to form the solutions that they view work best from their own experience and deep understanding of their communities and contexts.

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