



# The Salvation Army's Annual Canadian Poverty & Socioeconomic Analysis

2023 Edition

November 2023



## METHODOLOGY

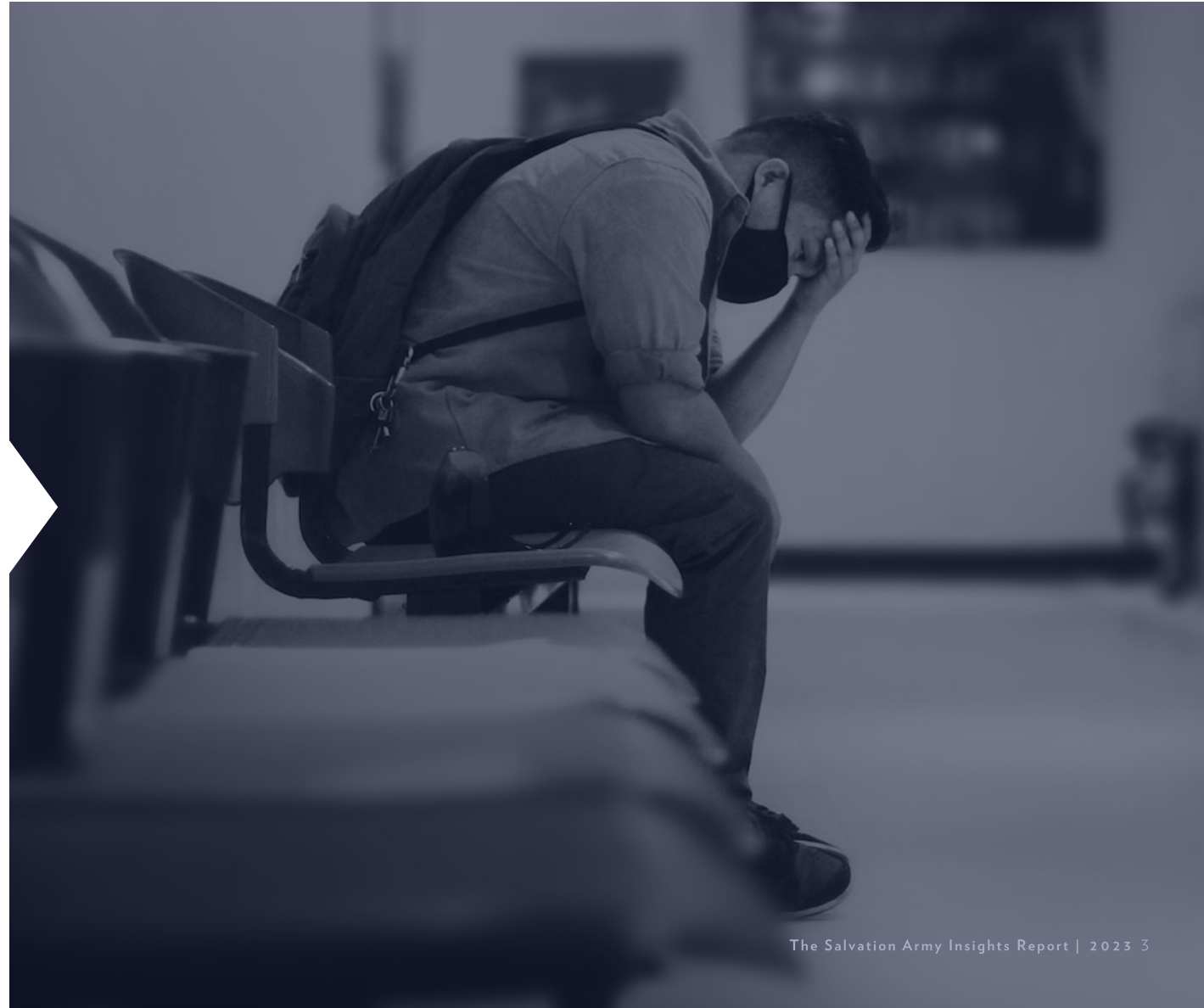
This report contains findings from research conducted by Edelman Data & Intelligence on behalf of The Salvation Army to uncover Canadians' attitudes and experiences with poverty and related socioeconomic issues.

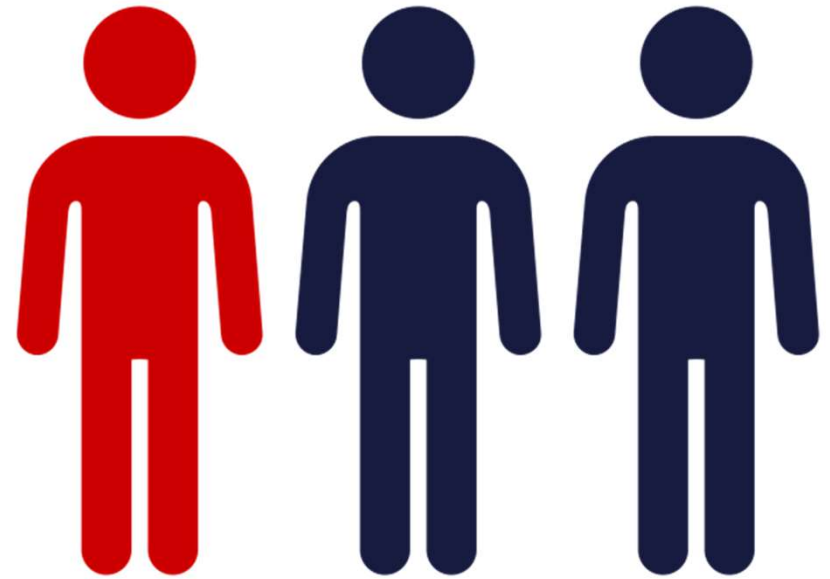
The study was conducted from October 12<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 among a nationally representative sample of 1,515 Canadians who are members of the online Angus Reid Forum, balanced and weighted on age, gender and region. Note: Canadians living in Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut were not included in the survey.

For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. And, where a margin of error is not available, the research department provides a comparable one so that the audience can have some context to the value of the poll.

*Please note that research is not necessarily predictive of future outcomes and captures opinions for a point in time. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online nonprobability sampling polls.*

# CANADIANS' CONCERNS PERSIST



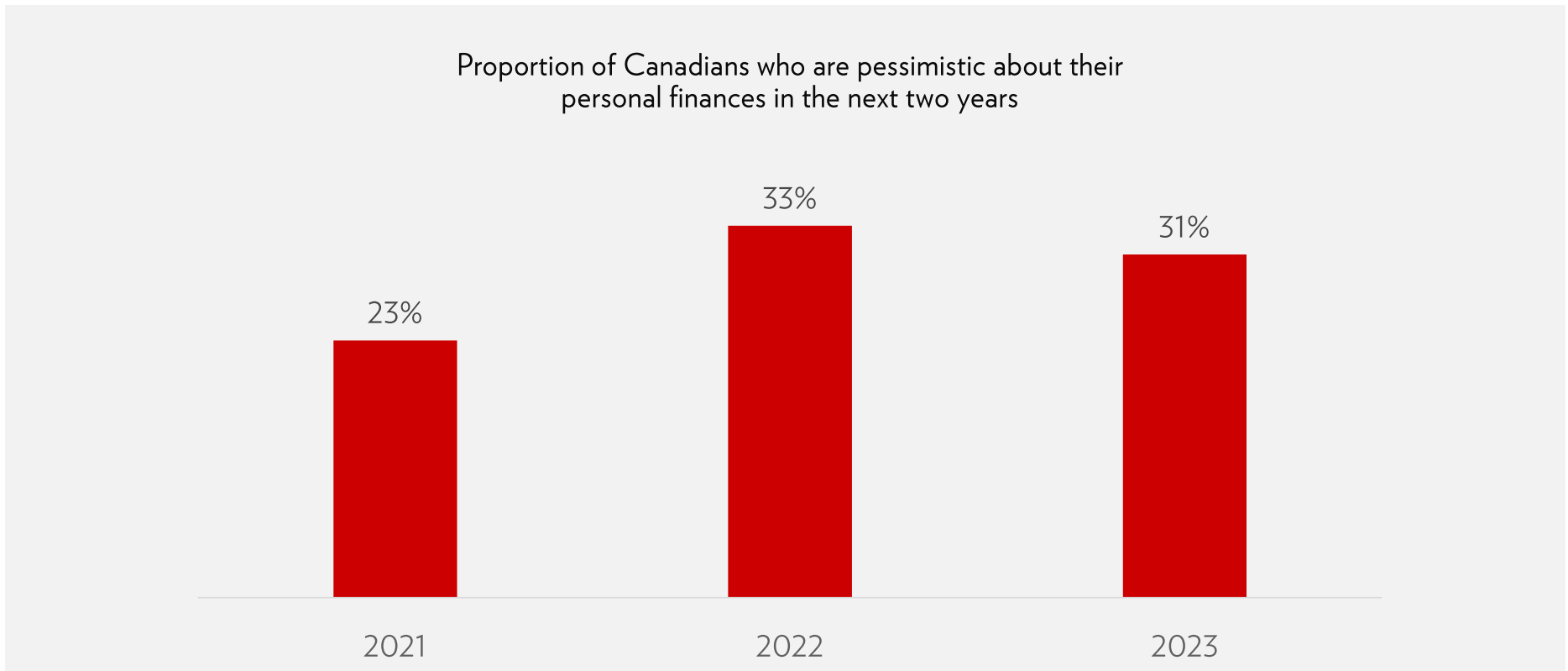


**1 in 3**

(31%) Canadians are pessimistic about their personal finances in the next two years

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## Canadians' level of pessimism about the future of their personal finances has not subsided since rising in 2022.



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, 2021, 2022, & 2023 Quantitative Survey

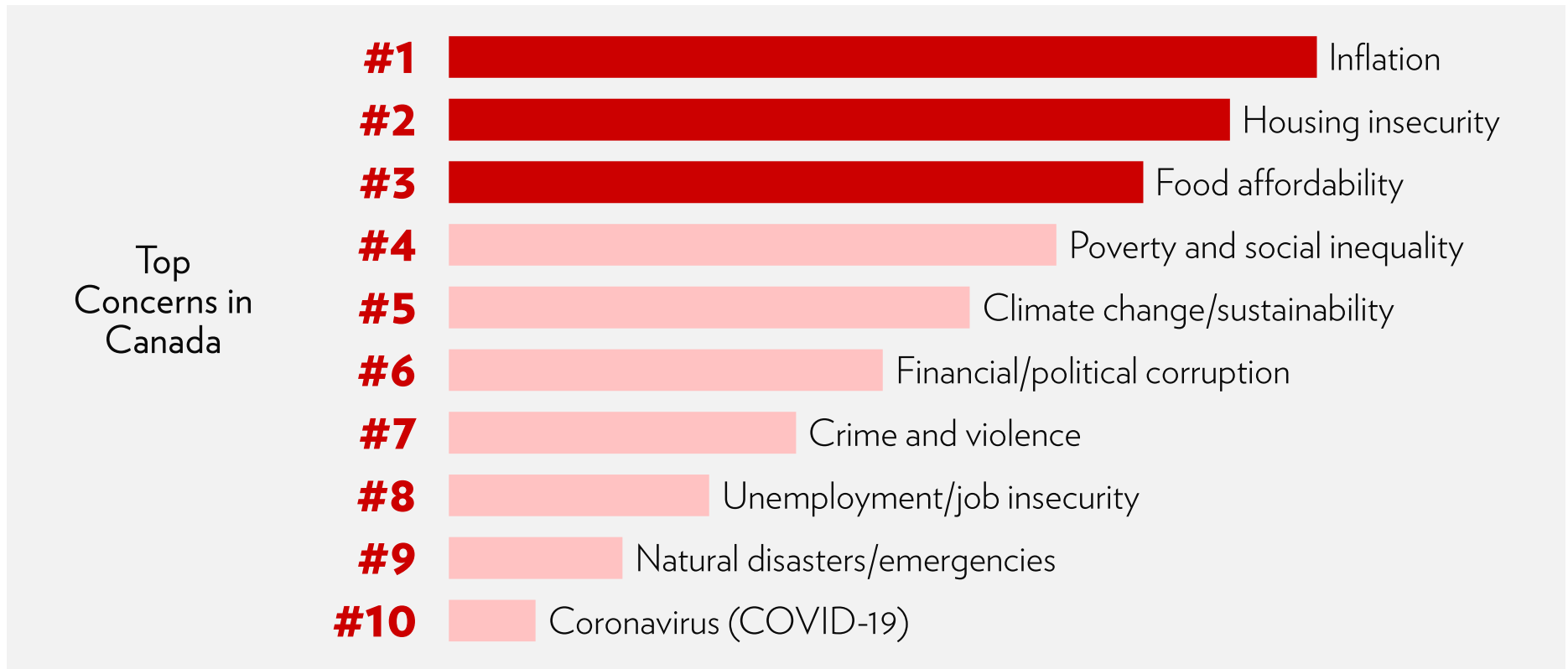
Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)

A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represent your outlook?

[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Very pessimistic" or "Somewhat pessimistic"]

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## Inflation, housing insecurity, and food affordability are top concerns in Canada, followed by other critical issues.



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

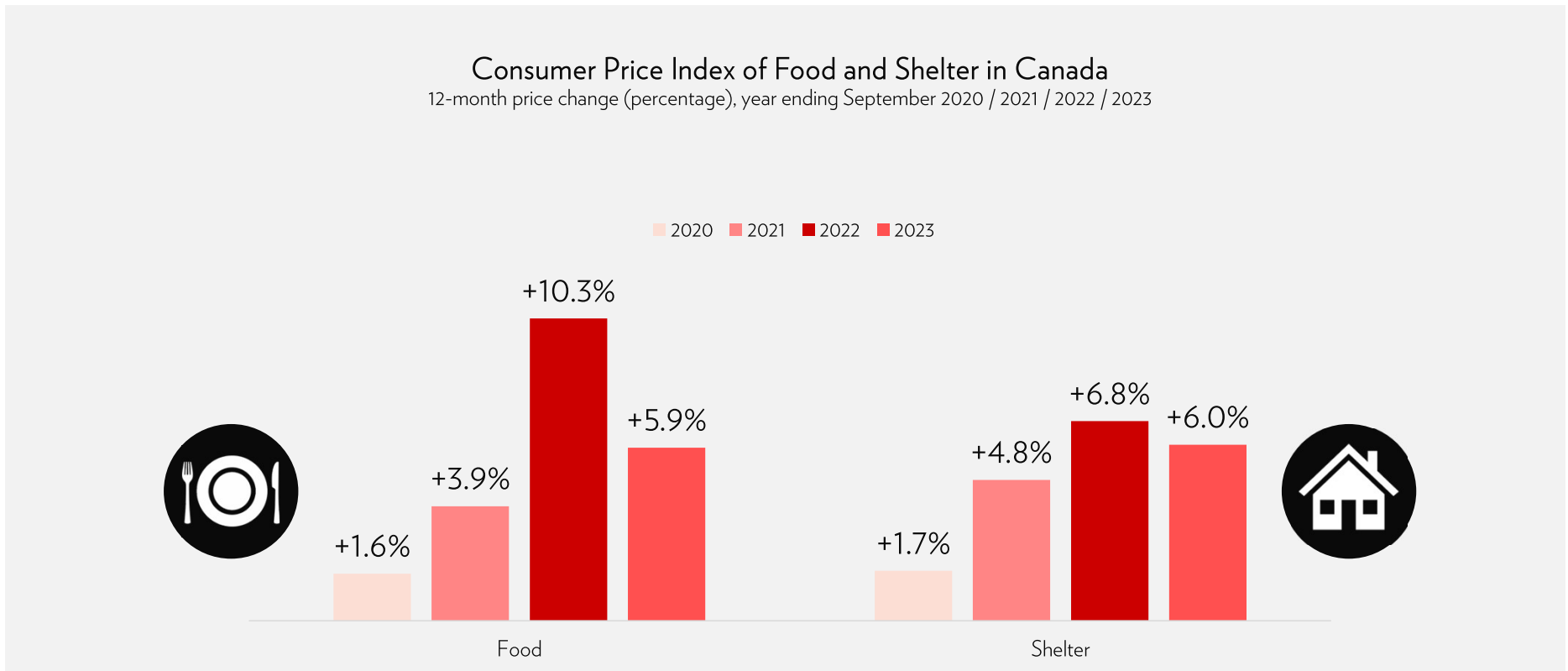
Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)

A7A. Which of the following do you think are the top concerns in Canada? Please select up to 3. All 10 items shown to survey respondents shown.

[Data shown reflects concerns selected as a top 3 concern in Canada out of the 10 concerns provided in the survey]

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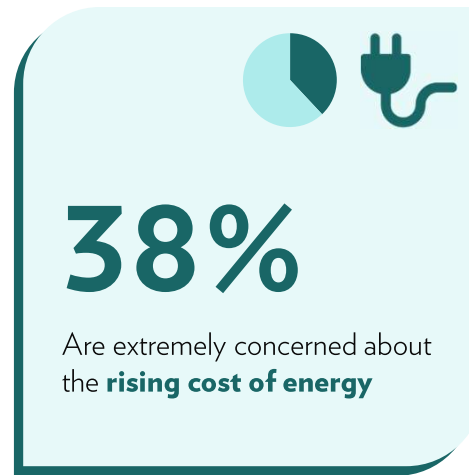
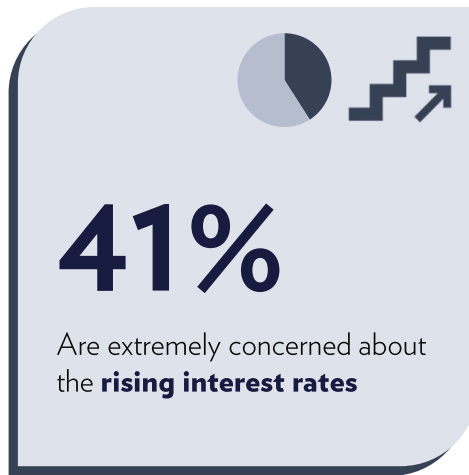
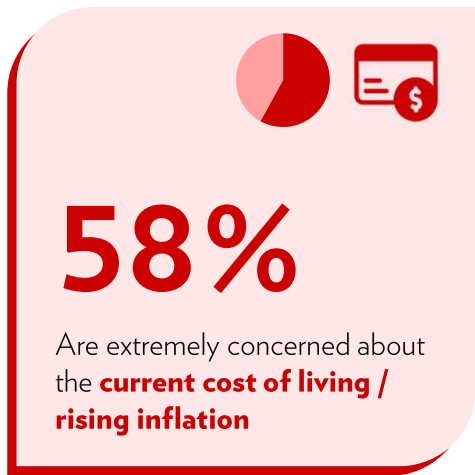
## Prices of food and shelter have seen increases since 2020, driving considerable deterioration to the affordability of living in Canada.



Data Source: Statistics Canada, Consumer Price Index, Canada – Not seasonally adjusted, September 2019 to September 2020 ([link](#)), September 2020 to September 2021 ([link](#)), September 2021 to September 2022 ([link](#)), September 2022 to September 2023 ([link](#))

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## More than half of Canadians are extremely concerned about the current cost of living.



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### CANADIANS AGED 18-34

23%

Are **extremely concerned** about job security, significantly higher than total Canada.

Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey  
Base size: Total sample (n=1,515), Aged 18 to 34 (n=185)  
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following?  
[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Extremely concerned"]



# CHALLENGES MEETING BASIC NEEDS



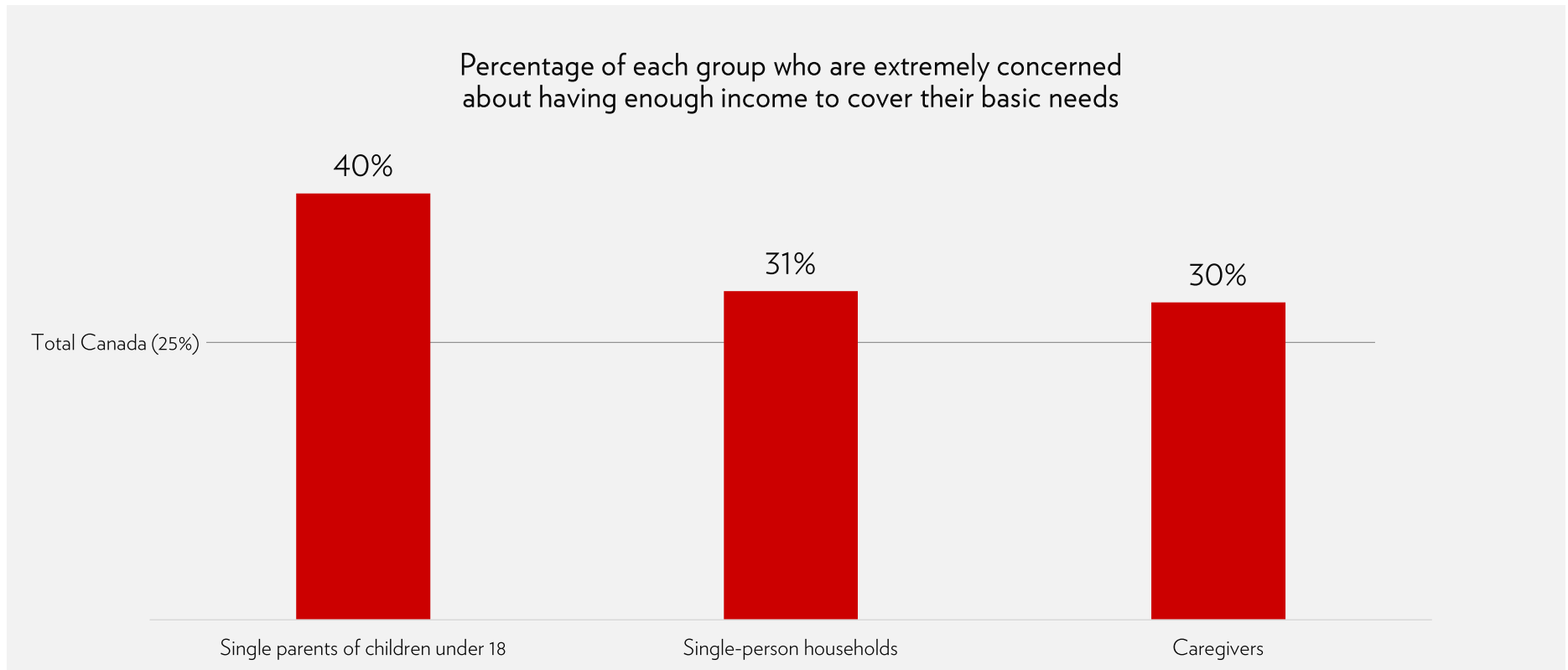


**1 in 4**

(25%) Canadians are extremely concerned about having enough income to cover their basic needs

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## Single parents struggle to have enough income to cover their basic needs, as do single-person households and caregivers.



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample (n=1,515), Single parents of children under 18 (n=48), Single-person households (n=330), Caregivers (n=326)

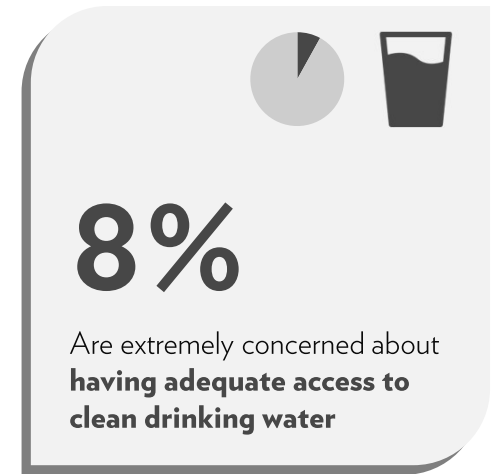
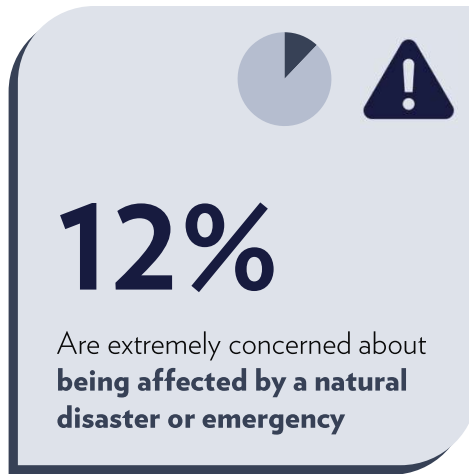
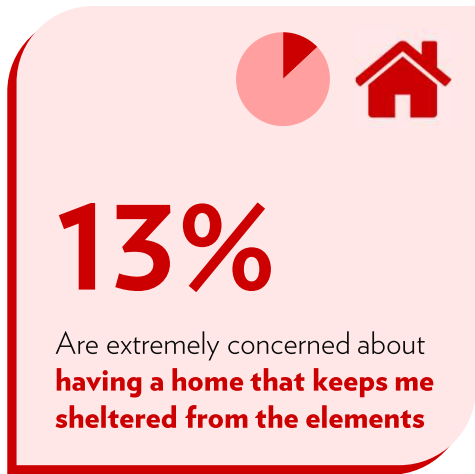
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following?

[Data shown reflects those who selected “Extremely concerned” for “Having enough income to cover my basic needs”]

Caregivers are defined as those who are a primary caregiver, or otherwise have primary or shared decision-making responsibility for the health and wellbeing of adults who are not their children.

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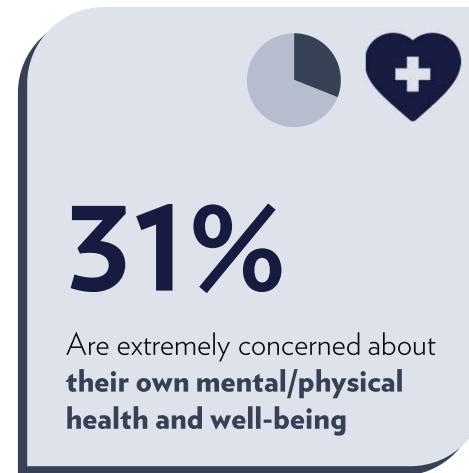
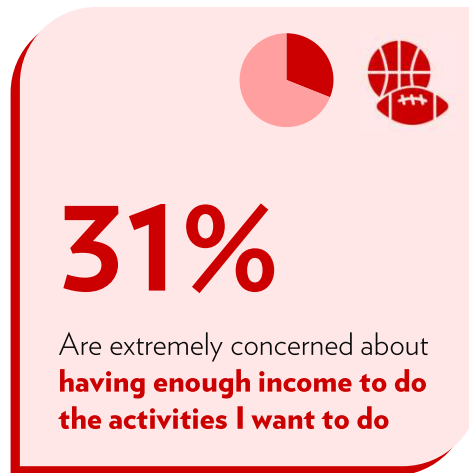
## About 1 in 10 Canadians are extremely concerned about basic human needs, such as shelter and food, or being affected by a natural disaster or emergency.



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey  
Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)  
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following?  
[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Extremely concerned"]

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## Mental and physical wellbeing is a serious concern among roughly 1 in 3 Canadians, as is being able to afford activities they want to do.



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey  
Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)  
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following?  
[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Extremely concerned"]

# CANADIANS ARE STRUGGLING



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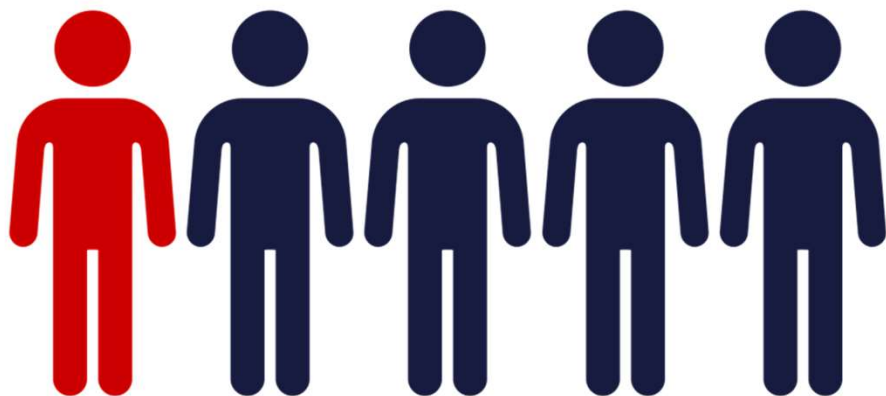
**“Prices are high, and if our little bit can help somebody add to what groceries they’re going to go buy, and help a family or an individual or a senior, whoever is coming to ask for assistance, whether it’s one time, two times or a consistent user [then that’s good]”**

*-Community Ministries Director Ronza Reynard*

**1 in 5**

(21%)

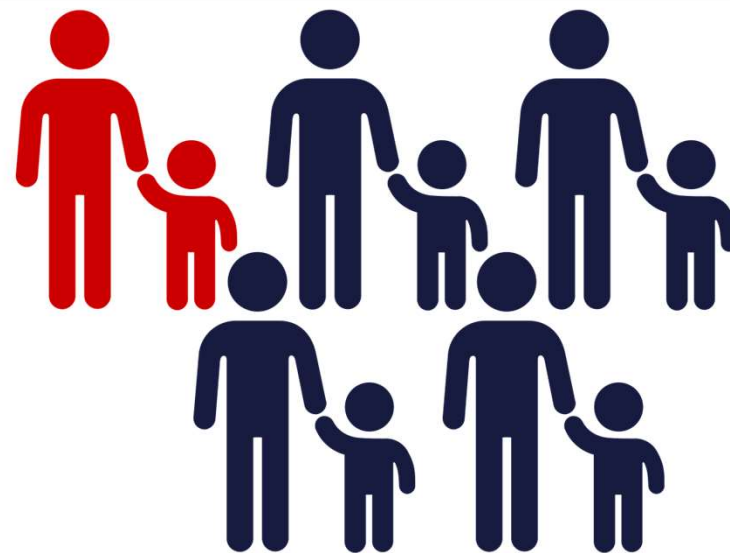
Canadians skipped or reduced the size of at least one meal because they couldn't afford to buy groceries (45% among single parents).



**1 in 5**

(22%)

Parents ate less so their children or other family members could eat (44% among single parents).



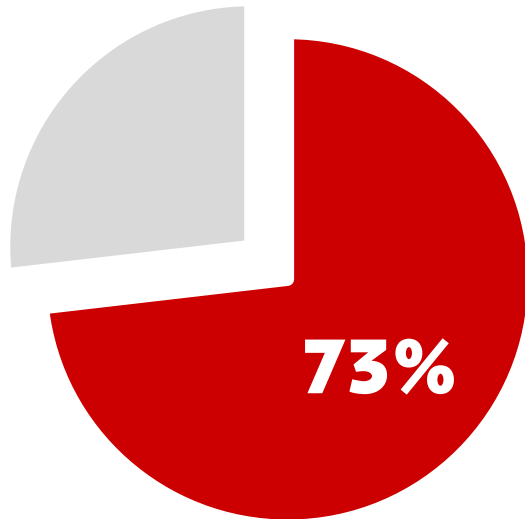
Parents are defined as those with kids under 18 in the household



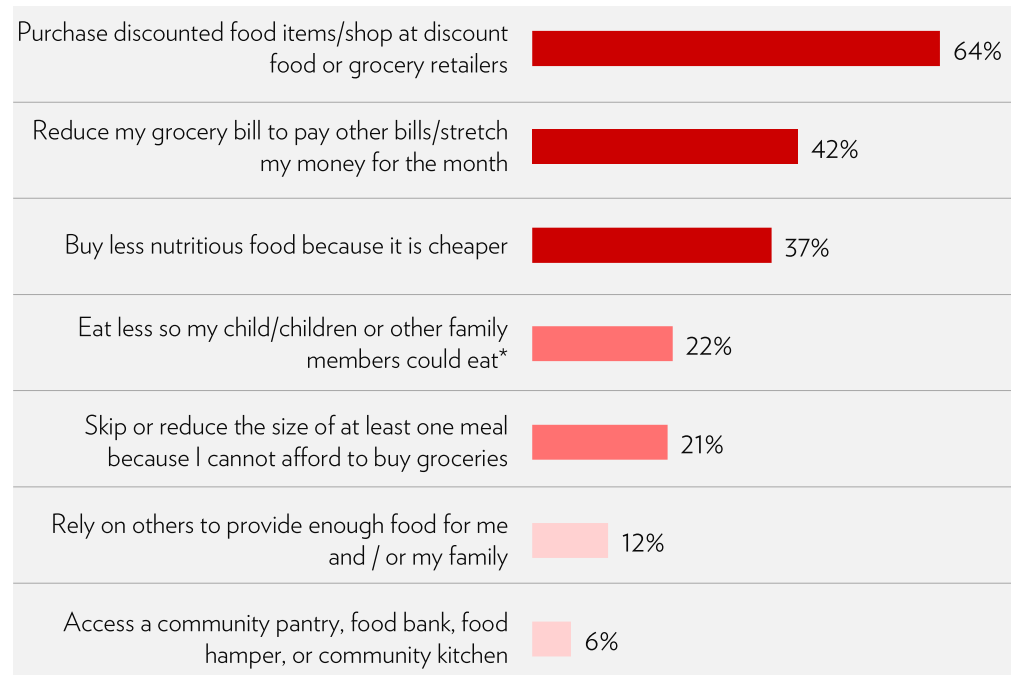
# Almost three-quarters of Canadians faced food security challenges in the past year.



Proportion of Canadians faced with challenges to food security



Similar to 2022, a significant proportion are making trade-offs to their food choices and eating less due to financial strain.



\*Among parents (those with kids under 18 in the household)

Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing?

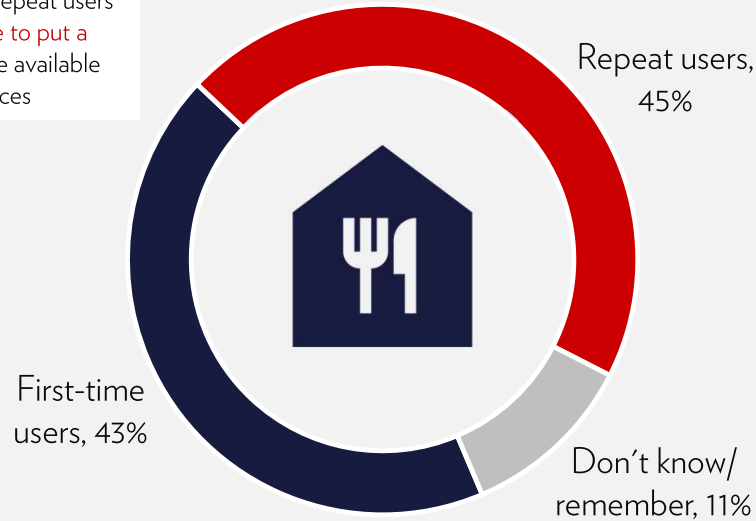
[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year" to statements relating to food security]

**Among those who accessed a food bank in the last year, almost half (43%) were first-time users, and compared to a year ago, frequency of use has increased.**

**Among Canadians who accessed a food bank in the last year** (community pantry, food bank, food hamper, or community kitchen)



The high percentage of first-time and repeat users will **continue to put a burden** on the available resources



**Almost 1 in 3**  
 (29% of those who accessed a food bank in the last year) access a community pantry, food bank, food hamper, or community kitchen **once a week or more often**, more often than last year.

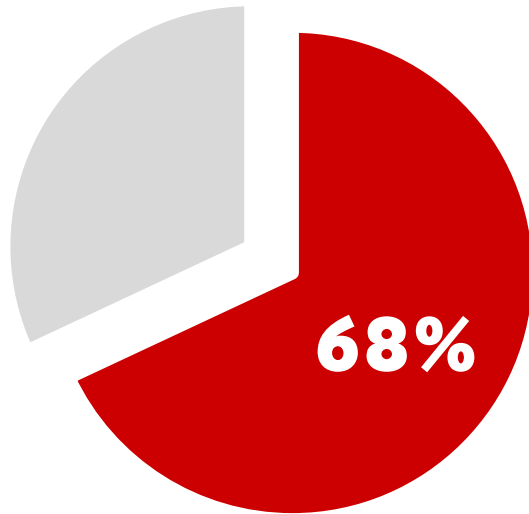
| Year | Access once a week or more often |
|------|----------------------------------|
| 2022 | 18%                              |
| 2023 | 29%                              |

Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey  
 Base size: Accessed a food bank currently or in the last year (n=92)  
 B3A You mentioned that you accessed the following previously. How often did you access the service/s?  
 B3B You mentioned that you have accessed the food bank or shelter. When was the first time you accessed the service/s?

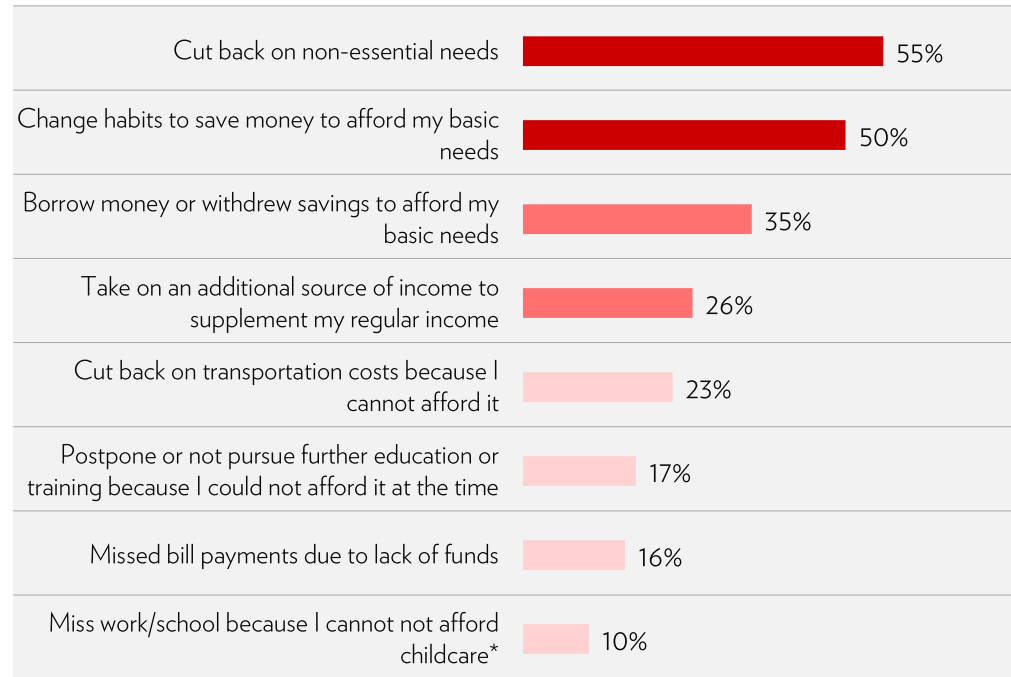
# Over two-thirds faced challenges managing limited financial resources in the past year.



Proportion of Canadians faced with managing limited financial resources



Similar to 2022, many Canadians are altering their spending and seeking additional sources of income to afford basic needs.



\*Among parents (those with kids under 18 in the household)

Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)

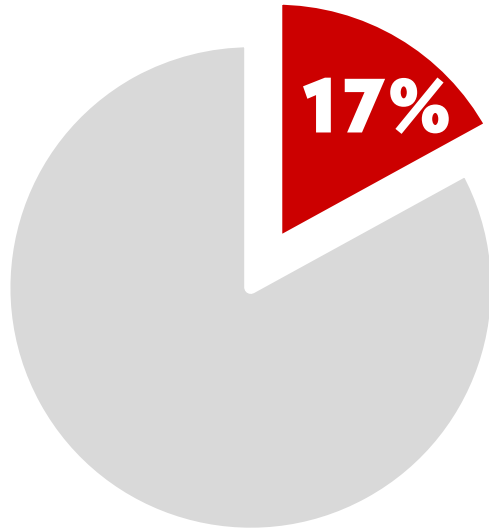
B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing?

[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year" to statements relating to managing limited resources]

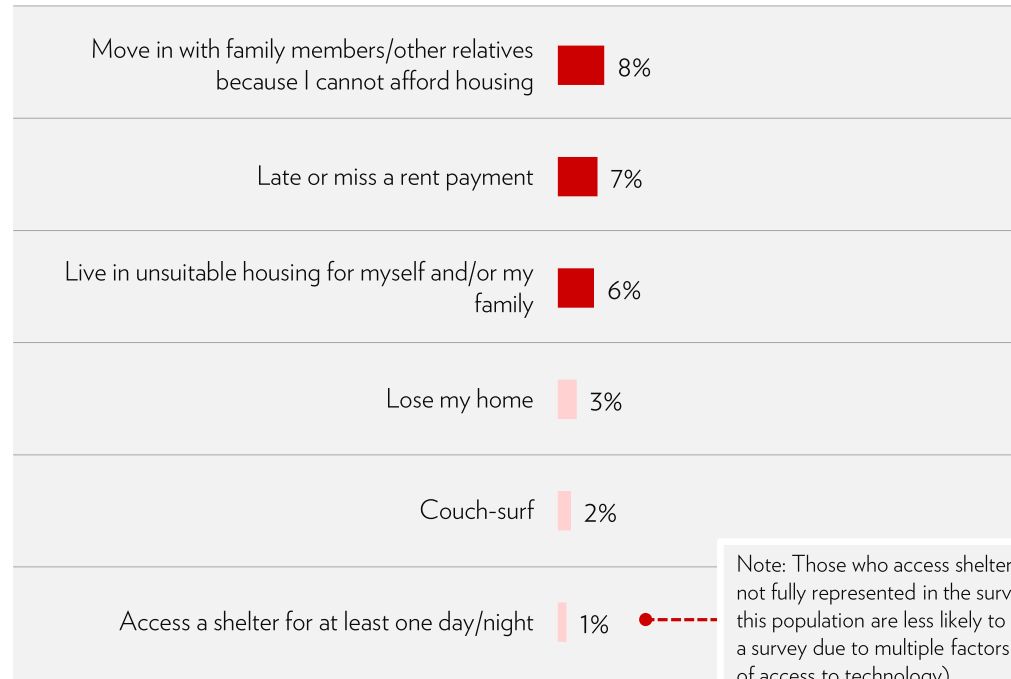
# About 1 in 6 Canadians faced housing security challenges in the past year.



Proportion of Canadians faced with challenges to housing security



Similar to 2022, almost 1 in 10 missed or failed to make a rent payment / needed to couch-surf in the last year.



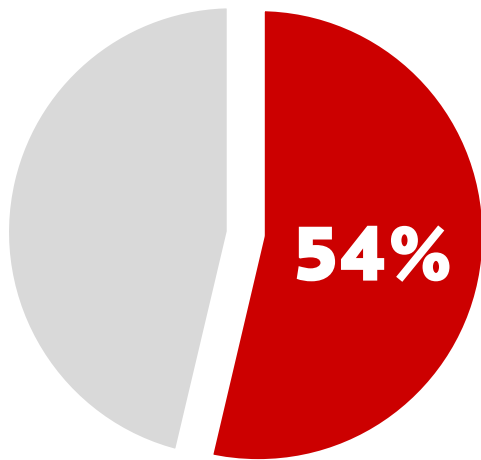
Note: Those who access shelters are likely not fully represented in the survey data as this population are less likely to complete a survey due to multiple factors (e.g., lack of access to technology)

Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey  
Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)  
B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing?  
[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year" to statements relating to housing security]

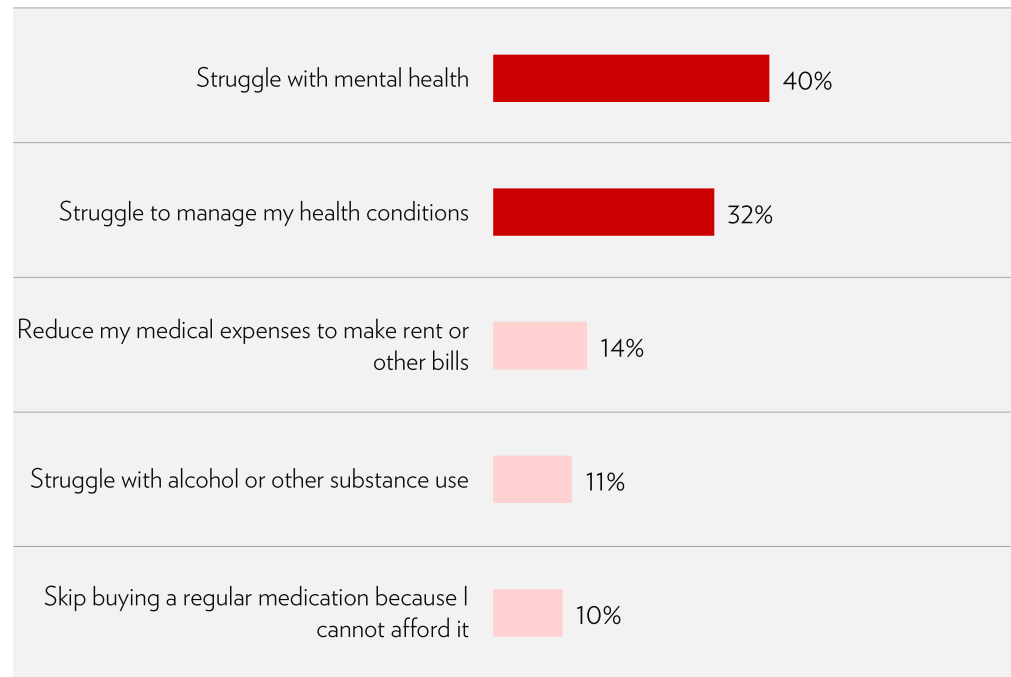
## Over half of Canadians faced issues impacting their health.



Proportion of Canadians facing issues impacting their health



Many Canadians are struggling with mental health and managing health conditions.



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing?

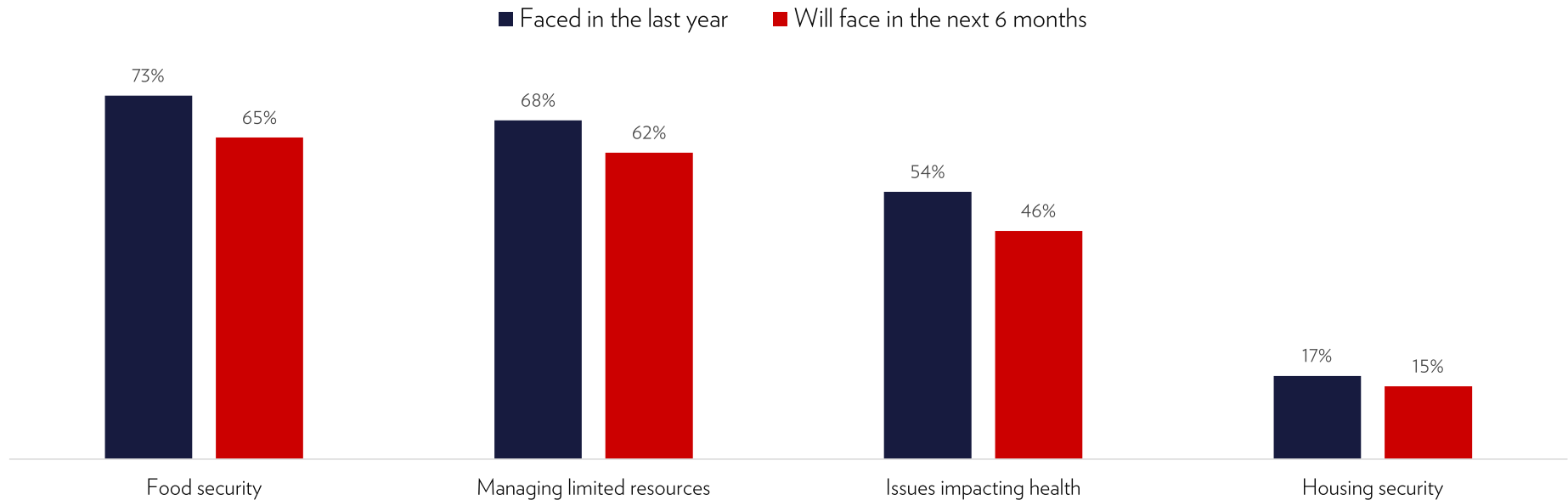
[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year" to statements relating to managing limited resources]

**THE LEVEL OF  
NEED IN  
CANADA IS NOT  
EXPECTED TO  
DECREASE**



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## The proportion of Canadians facing challenges is not expected to improve significantly in the next 6 months.



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing?

[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year" to statements relating to food security]

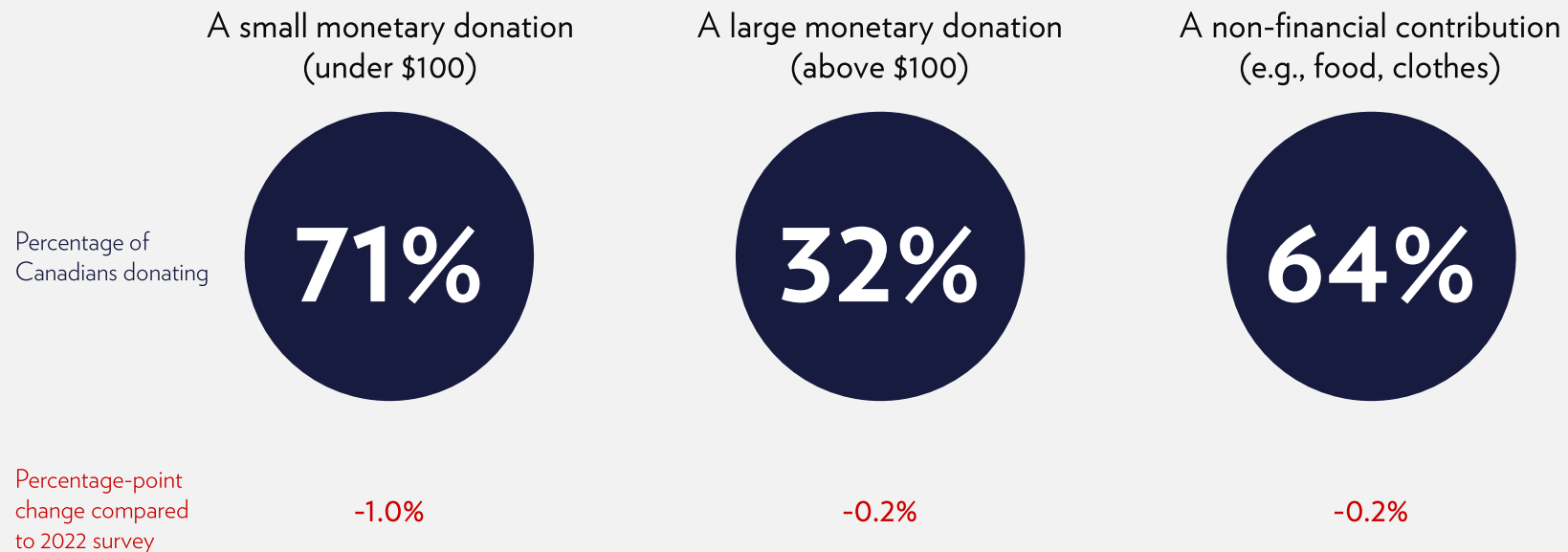
B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months?

[Data shown reflects those who indicated "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely" to statements relating to food security, housing security, and managing limited resources]

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## While there are high numbers of Canadians struggling, donation levels are not increasing to support those in need.

### Percentage of Canadians donating



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey  
Base size: Total sample (n=1,515)  
A5. Which of the following activities have you participated in the past?  
[Data shown reflects those who indicated they participated in activity]





Giving Hope Today

## YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION

The Salvation Army gives hope and dignity to vulnerable people today and every day in more than 400 communities across Canada and in 134 countries around the world!

Data Source: The Salvation Army 2022-2023 Annual Report



**OVER 2.7 MILLION**

people were helped by The Salvation Army in Canada and Bermuda last year



**359,000**

people were helped at Christmas with food hampers and toys.



**82,000**

people were visited in hospitals, nursing homes, daycare centres and other facilities.



**115,000**

students were fed through school meal programs.



**7,487**

children were helped through the Brighter Futures Children's Sponsorship Program.



**3.9 MILLION**

meals were served at shelters and in feeding programs.



**37,000**

people were helped in night patrol, rescue and suicide prevention.



**1,500,000**

people were assisted with food, clothing or practical assistance.



**2,600**

people were helped with language training, through immigrant and refugee services.



**4,800**

shelter, addictions, detox and mental health beds provided.



**1,100**

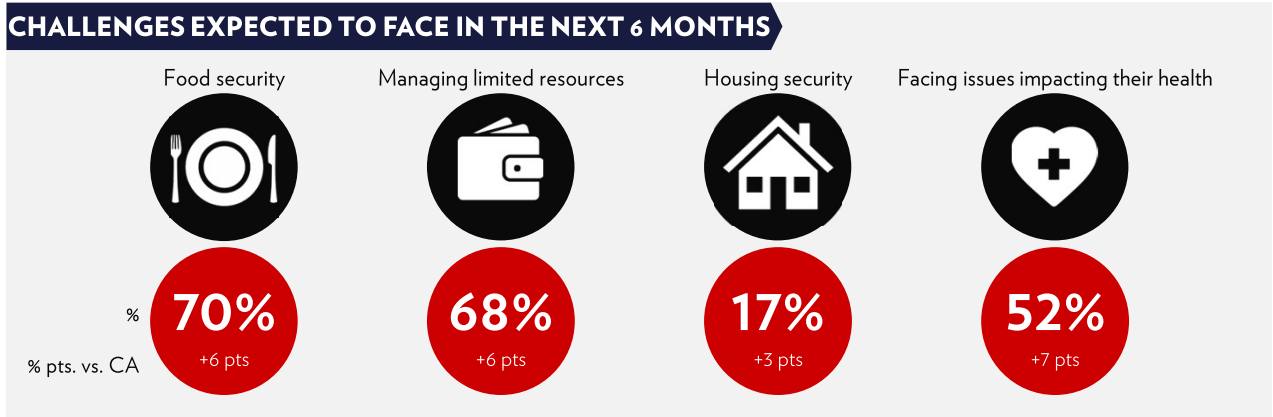
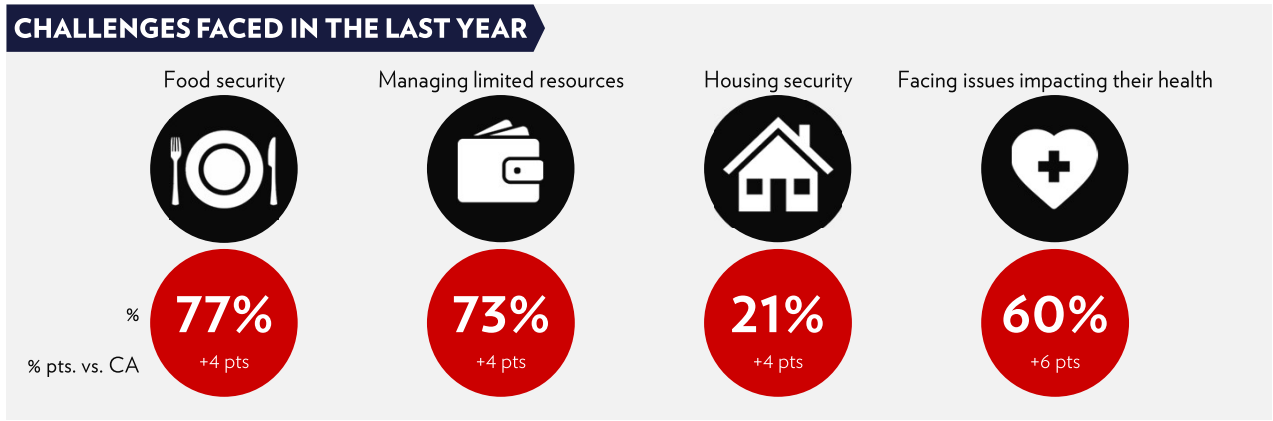
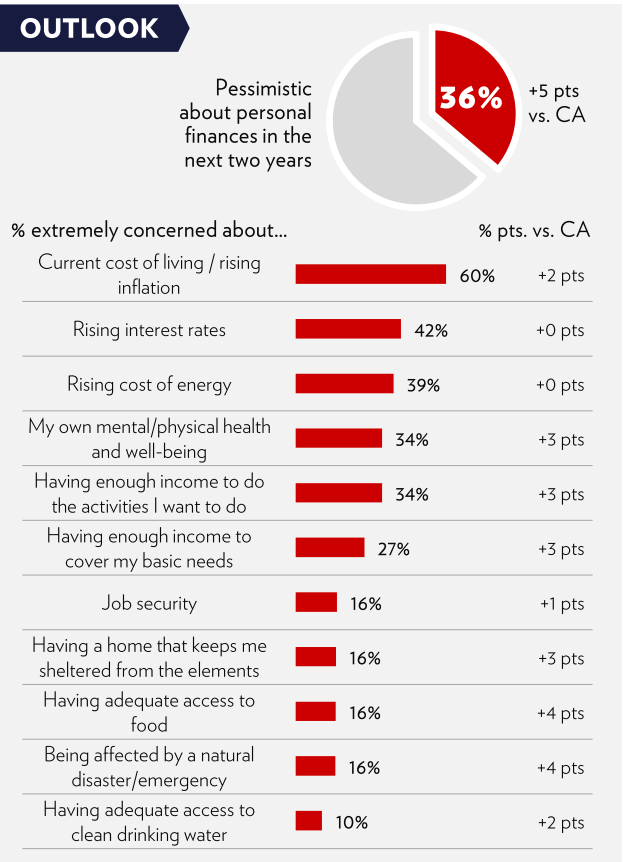
people were helped when an emergency or natural disaster struck.



**2,360**

vulnerable children went to Salvation Army camps.

# Ontario



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample in Ontario (n=571)

A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

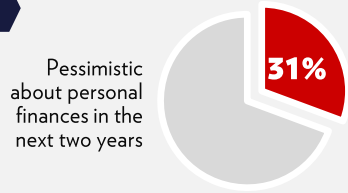
B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]

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# Appendix

# Canada

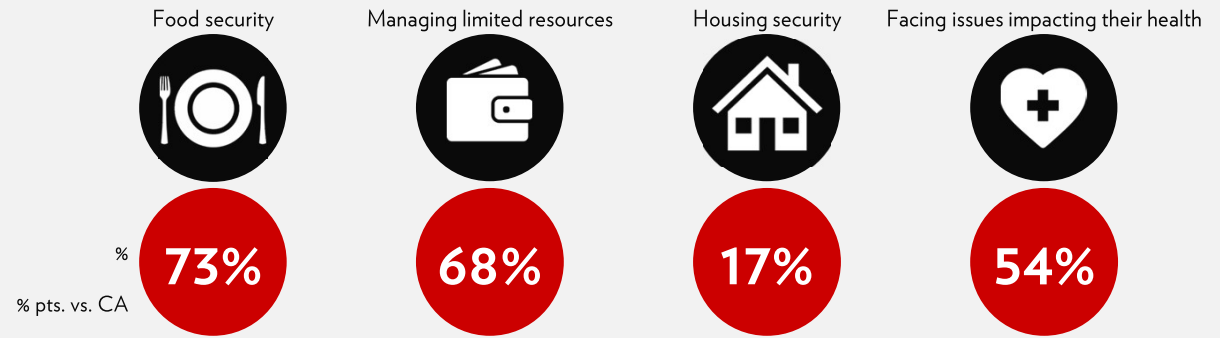
## OUTLOOK



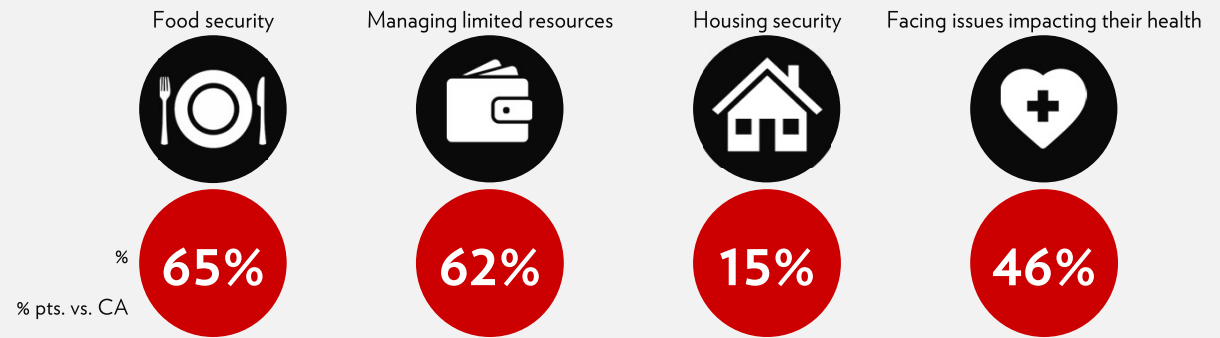
% extremely concerned about...

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Current cost of living / rising inflation               | 58% |
| Rising interest rates                                   | 41% |
| Rising cost of energy                                   | 38% |
| Having enough income to do the activities I want to do  | 31% |
| My own mental / physical health and well-being          | 31% |
| Having enough income to cover my basic needs            | 25% |
| Job security  | 15% |
| Having a home that keeps me sheltered from the elements | 13% |
| Being affected by a natural disaster/emergency          | 12% |
| Having adequate access to food                          | 12% |
| Having adequate access to clean drinking water          | 8%  |

## CHALLENGES FACED IN THE LAST YEAR



## CHALLENGES EXPECTED TO FACE IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample in Canada (n=1,515)

A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

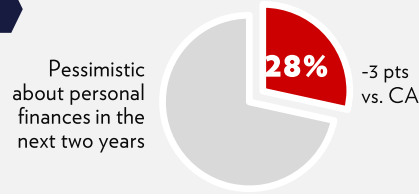
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]

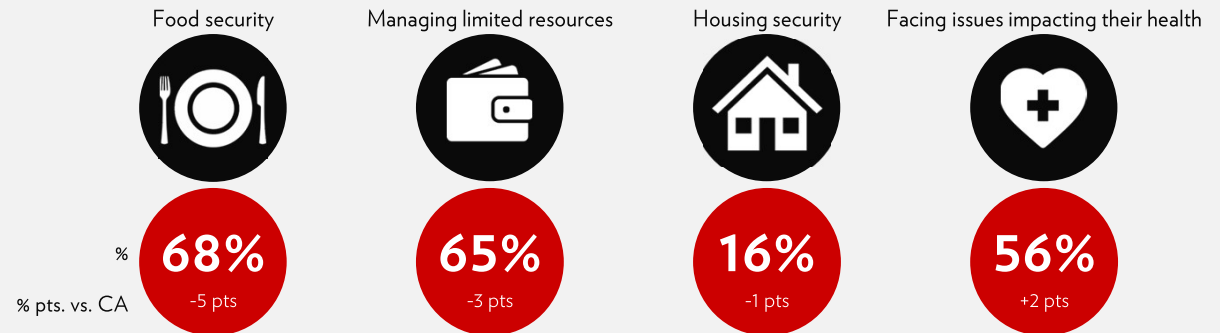
# British Columbia

## OUTLOOK

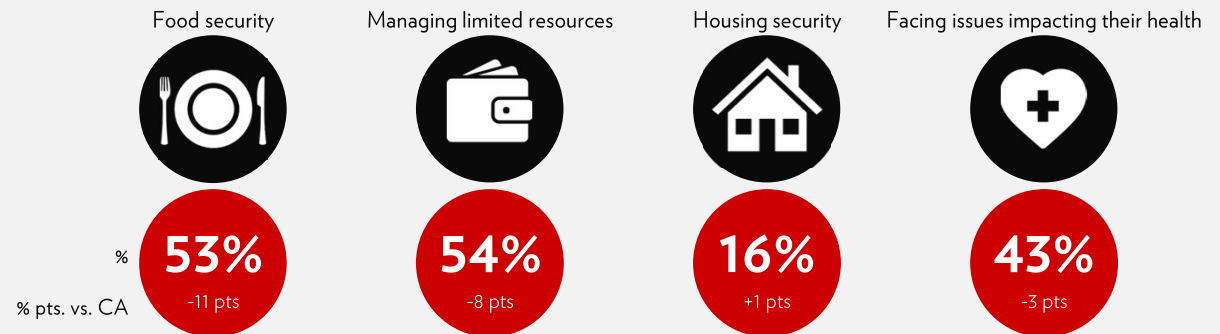


| % extremely concerned about...                          | % pts. vs. CA |
|---|---------------|
| Current cost of living / rising inflation               | 55% -2 pts    |
| Rising interest rates                                   | 42% +1 pts    |
| Rising cost of energy                                   | 40% +2 pts    |
| Having enough income to do the activities I want to do  | 29% -2 pts    |
| My own mental/physical health and well-being            | 21% -10 pts   |
| Having enough income to cover my basic needs            | 19% -5 pts    |
| Having a home that keeps me sheltered from the elements | 13% +1 pts    |
| Job security  | 10% -4 pts    |
| Having adequate access to food                          | 10% -2 pts    |
| Being affected by a natural disaster/emergency          | 9% -3 pts     |
| Having adequate access to clean drinking water          | 6% -2 pts     |

## CHALLENGES FACED IN THE LAST YEAR



## CHALLENGES EXPECTED TO FACE IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample in British Columbia (n=198)

A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

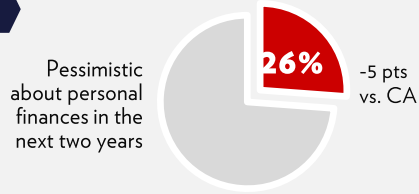
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]

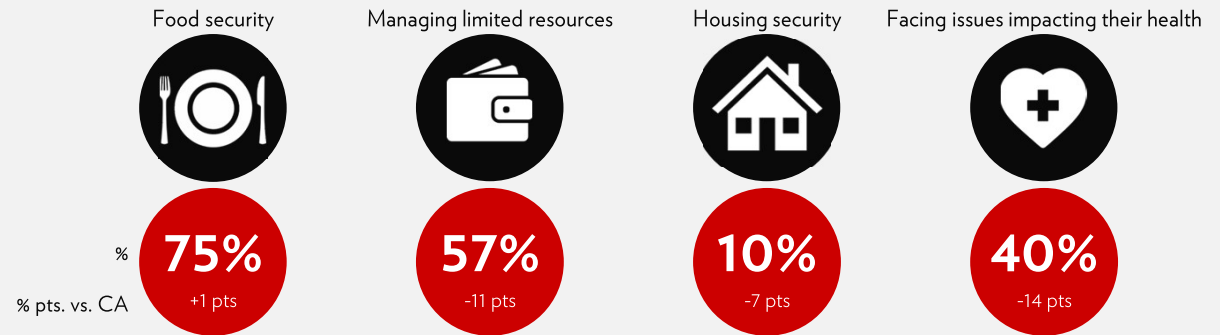
# Quebec

## OUTLOOK

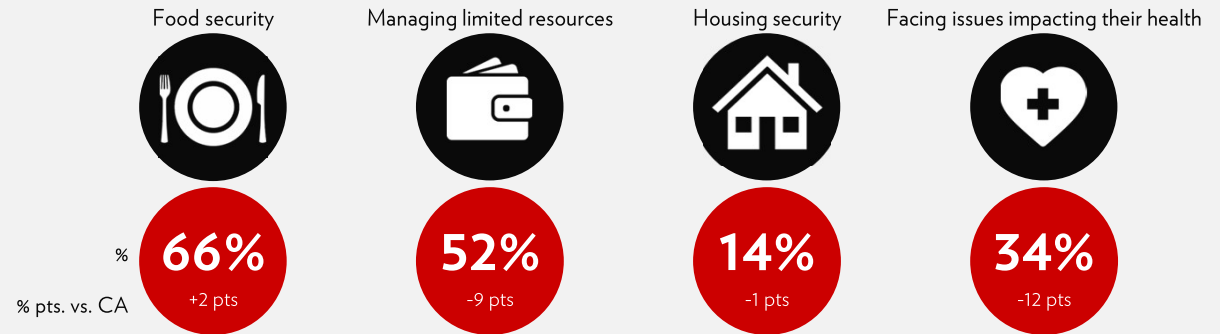


| % extremely concerned about...                          | % pts. vs. CA |
|---|---------------|
| Current cost of living / rising inflation               | 52% -5 pts    |
| Rising interest rates                                   | 36% -5 pts    |
| My own mental/physical health and well-being            | 35% +4 pts    |
| Having enough income to do the activities I want to do  | 29% -2 pts    |
| Rising cost of energy                                   | 26% -13 pts   |
| Having enough income to cover my basic needs            | 25% +1 pts    |
| Job security  | 16% +1 pts    |
| Having adequate access to food                          | 12% -0 pts    |
| Being affected by a natural disaster/emergency          | 11% -1 pts    |
| Having a home that keeps me sheltered from the elements | 11% -2 pts    |
| Having adequate access to clean drinking water          | 8% -1 pts     |

## CHALLENGES FACED IN THE LAST YEAR



## CHALLENGES EXPECTED TO FACE IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample in Quebec (n=357)

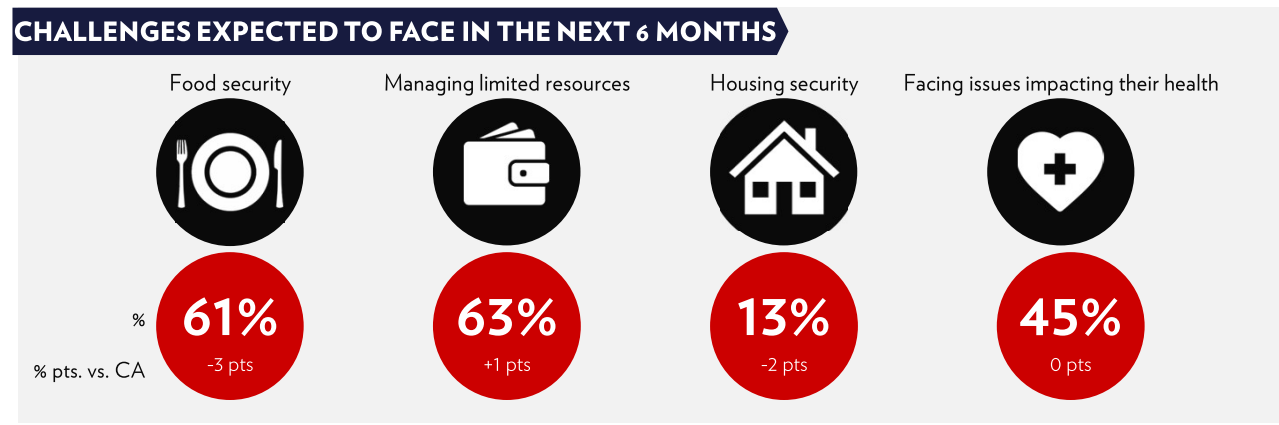
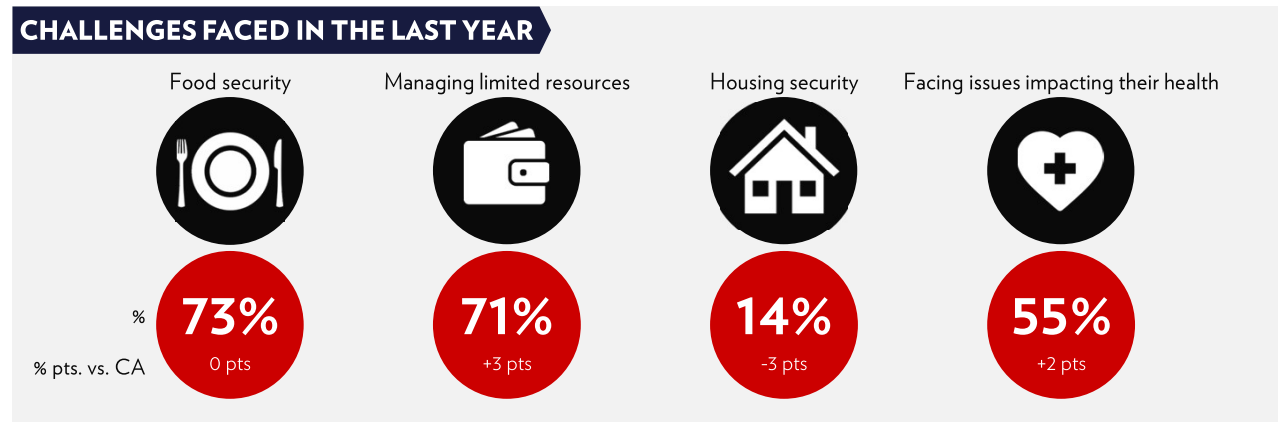
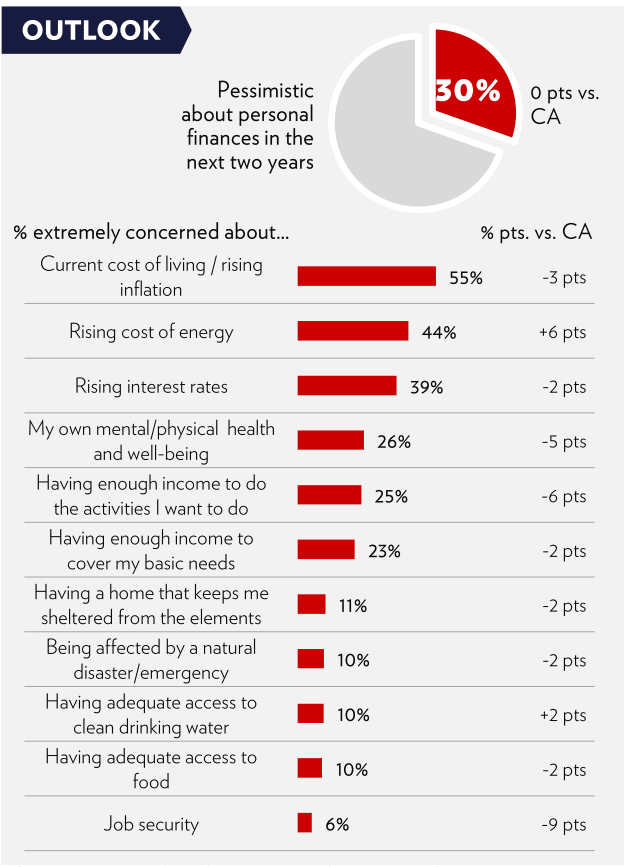
A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]

# Atlantic Provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador)



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample in Atlantic Provinces (n=107)

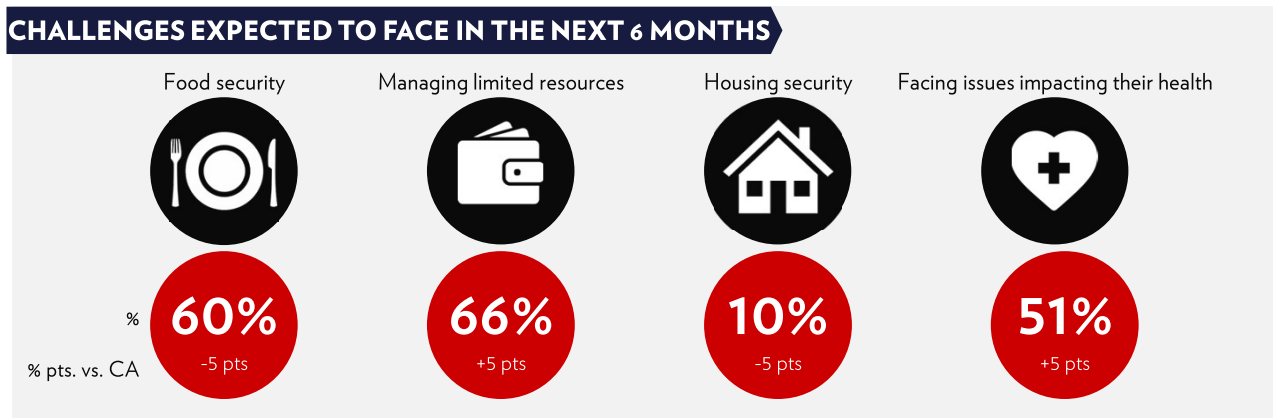
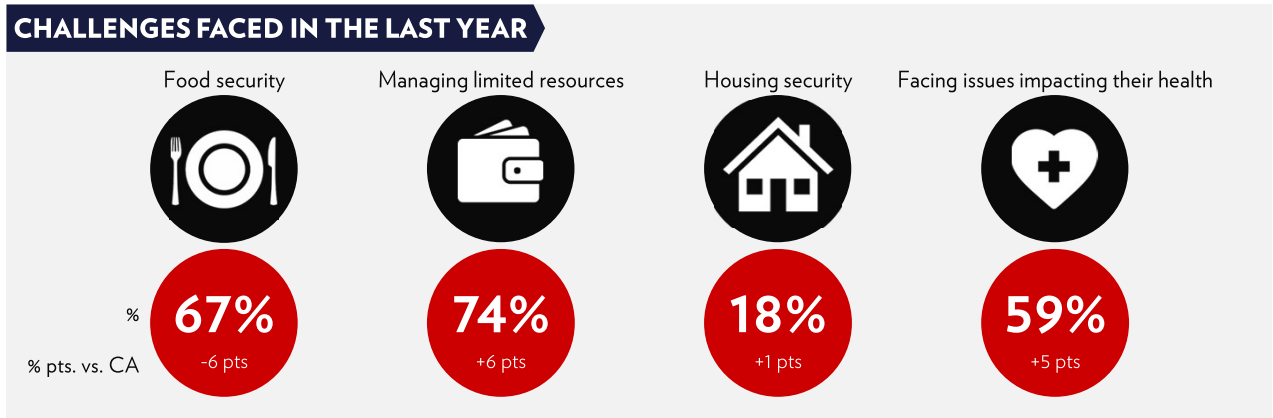
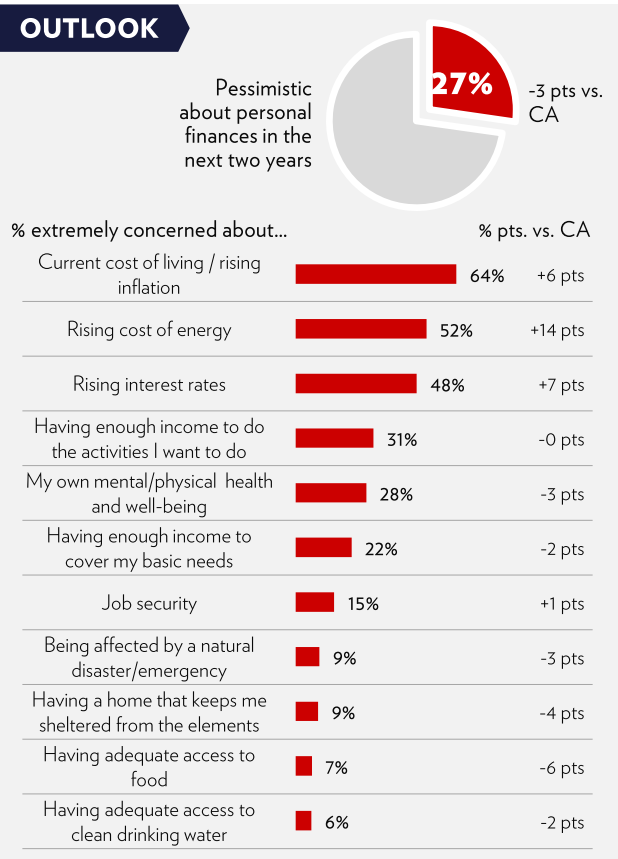
A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]

# Prairie Provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba)



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Total sample in Prairie Provinces (n=282)

A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

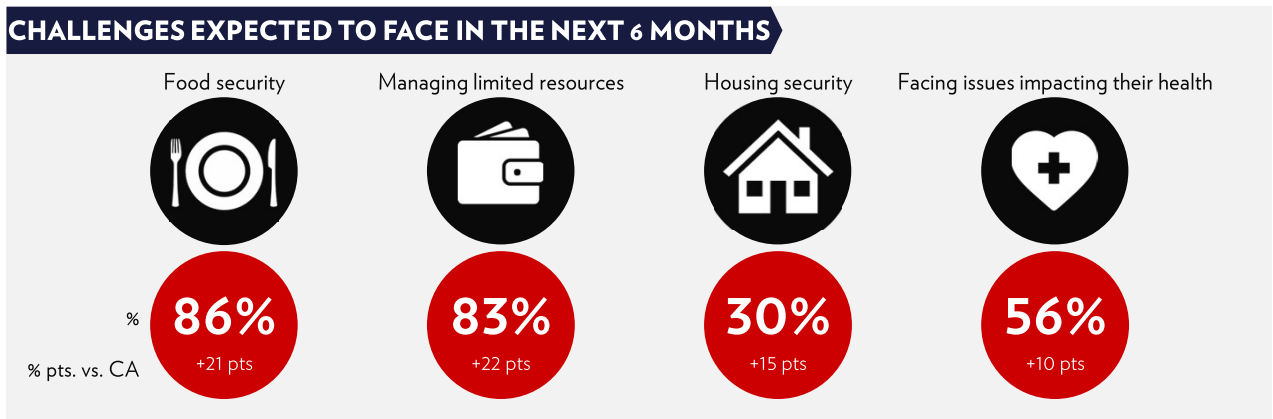
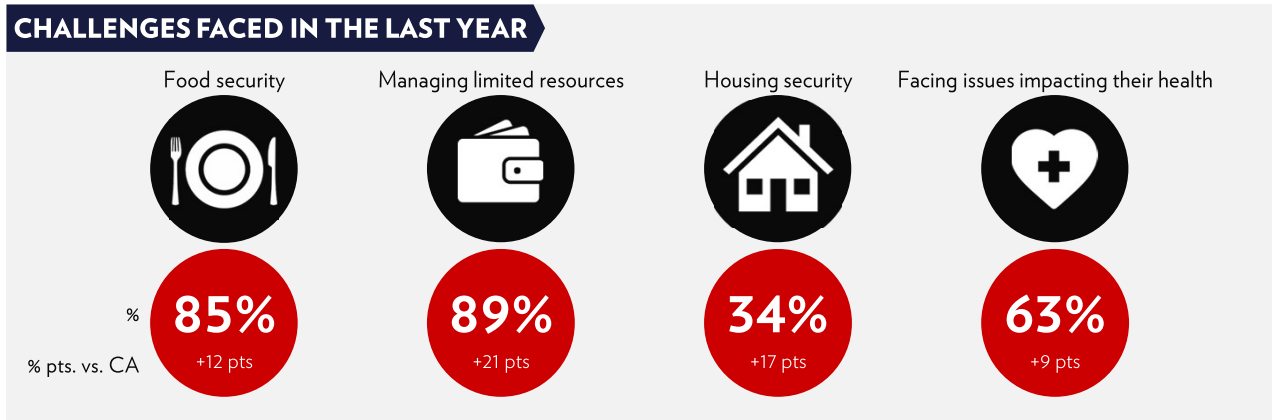
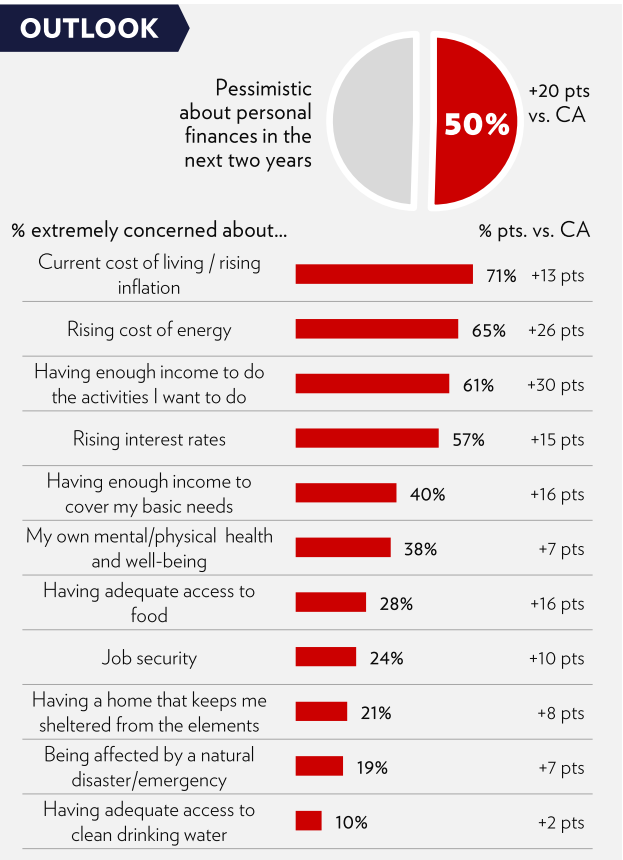
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]



# Single parents of kids under 18



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Single parents of kids under 18 (n=48), **Caution: low base size, interpret findings as directional in nature**

A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

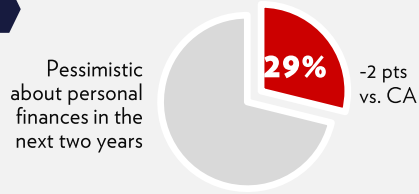
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]

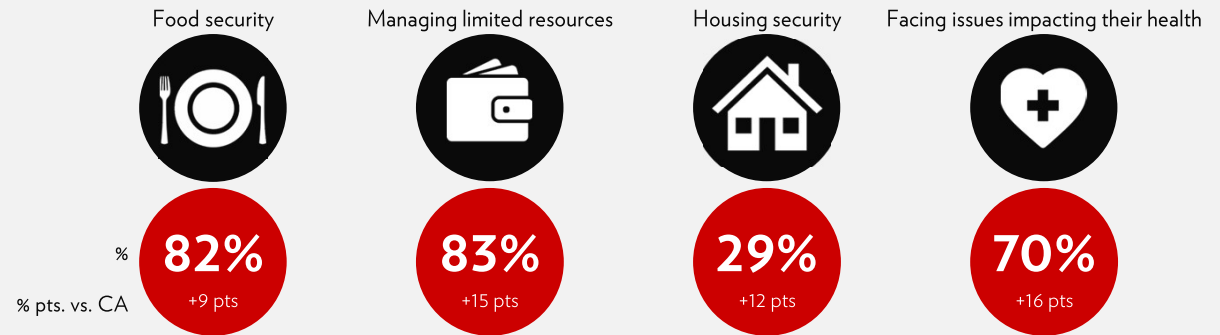
# Aged 18 to 34

## OUTLOOK

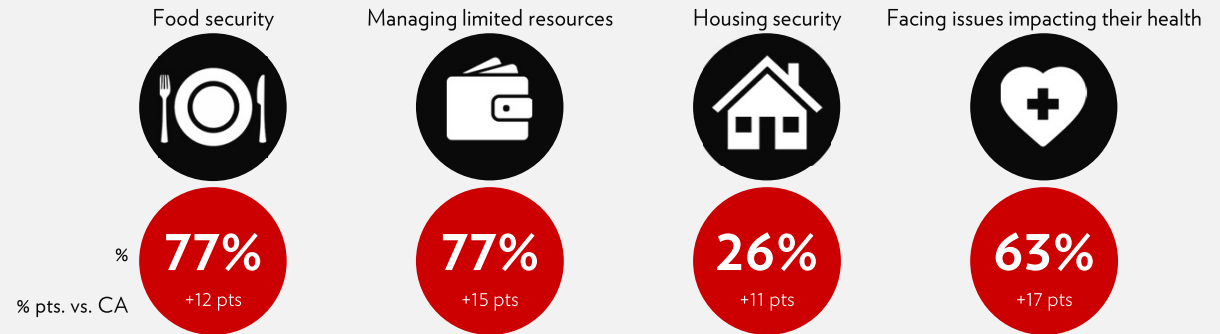


| % extremely concerned about...                          | % pts. vs. CA |
|---|---------------|
| Current cost of living / rising inflation               | 68% +10 pts   |
| My own mental/physical health and well-being            | 41% +10 pts   |
| Rising interest rates                                   | 41% -1 pts    |
| Having enough income to do the activities I want to do  | 40% +9 pts    |
| Rising cost of energy                                   | 37% -1 pts    |
| Having enough income to cover my basic needs            | 26% +2 pts    |
| Job security  | 23% +8 pts    |
| Having adequate access to food                          | 17% +5 pts    |
| Having a home that keeps me sheltered from the elements | 16% +4 pts    |
| Being affected by a natural disaster/emergency          | 15% +3 pts    |
| Having adequate access to clean drinking water          | 11% +3 pts    |

## CHALLENGES FACED IN THE LAST YEAR



## CHALLENGES EXPECTED TO FACE IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Aged 18 to 34 (n=414)

A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

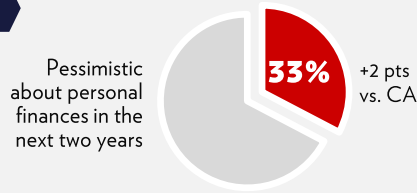
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]

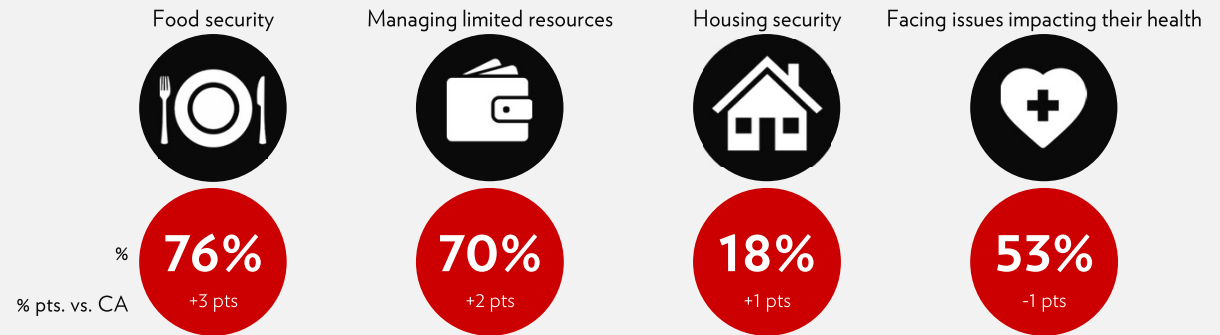
# Aged 35-54

## OUTLOOK

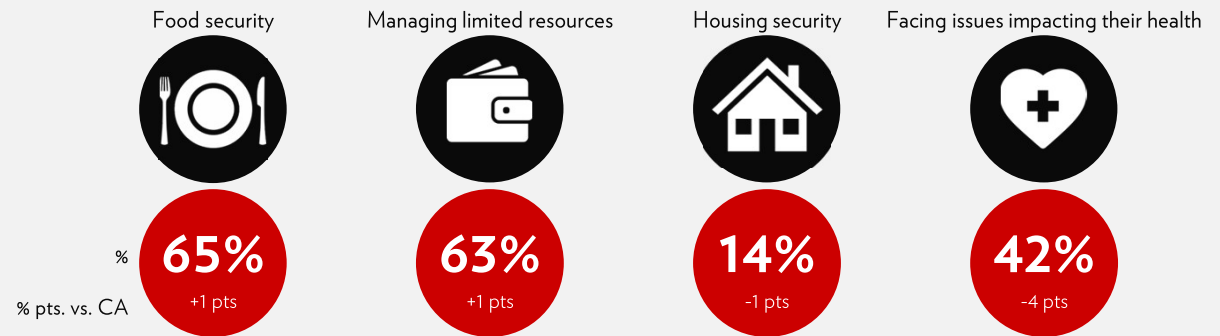


| % extremely concerned about...                          | % pts. vs. CA |
|---|---------------|
| Current cost of living / rising inflation               | 58% 0 pts     |
| Rising interest rates                                   | 52% +11 pts   |
| Rising cost of energy                                   | 41% +2 pts    |
| Having enough income to do the activities I want to do  | 32% +1 pts    |
| My own mental/physical health and well-being            | 27% -4 pts    |
| Having enough income to cover my basic needs            | 24% -1 pts    |
| Job security  | 17% +2 pts    |
| Having a home that keeps me sheltered from the elements | 11% -2 pts    |
| Having adequate access to food                          | 11% -1 pts    |
| Being affected by a natural disaster/emergency          | 10% -3 pts    |
| Having adequate access to clean drinking water          | 6% -3 pts     |

## CHALLENGES FACED IN THE LAST YEAR



## CHALLENGES EXPECTED TO FACE IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Aged 35 to 54 (n=499)

A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

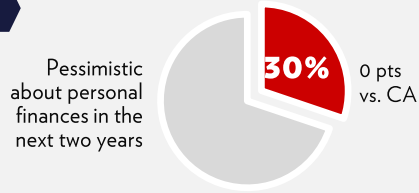
A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]

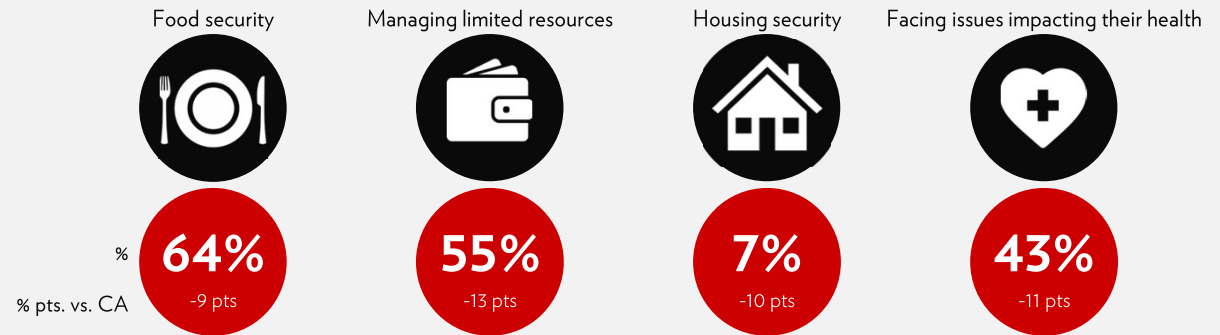
# Aged 55+

## OUTLOOK

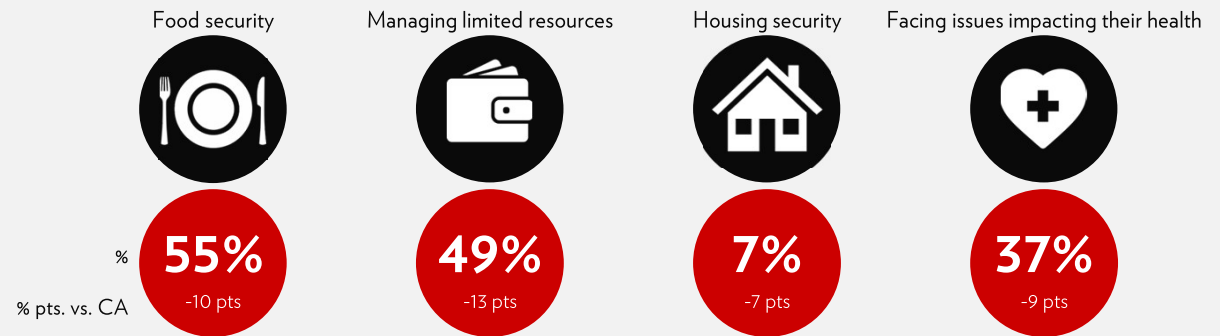


| % extremely concerned about...                          | % pts. vs. CA |
|---|---------------|
| Current cost of living / rising inflation               | 50% -7 pts    |
| Rising cost of energy                                   | 38% -1 pts    |
| Rising interest rates                                   | 33% -9 pts    |
| My own mental/physical health and well-being            | 27% -4 pts    |
| Having enough income to cover my basic needs            | 24% -1 pts    |
| Having enough income to do the activities I want to do  | 24% -8 pts    |
| Being affected by a natural disaster/emergency          | 12% 0 pts     |
| Having a home that keeps me sheltered from the elements | 12% -1 pts    |
| Having adequate access to food                          | 9% -3 pts     |
| Having adequate access to clean drinking water          | 9% +1 pts     |
| Job security  | 7% -8 pts     |

## CHALLENGES FACED IN THE LAST YEAR



## CHALLENGES EXPECTED TO FACE IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS



Data Source: Edelman Dxl, October 2023 Quantitative Survey

Base size: Aged 55+ (n=602)

A2. Thinking about your personal finances in the next two years, which of the following statements best represents your outlook? [Data shown: "Very Pessimistic" or "Somewhat Pessimistic"]

A6. Thinking about your current situation, how concerned are you about the following? [Data shown: "Extremely concerned"]

B2. Which of the following have you experienced/or are currently experiencing? [Data shown: "Currently experiencing" or "Experienced in the last year"]

B4. Now, thinking about the future, how likely do you think you may experience the following in the next 6 months? [Data shown: "Very likely" or "Somewhat likely"]



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