

This document provides definitions for all terms and indicators that are currently featured on ROI's Community Wellbeing dashboard. Click the links for more information. Definitions for Census-based indicators are based on the [2021 Statistics Canada Data Dictionary](#).

General terminology

Term	Definition	References
Community	Census subdivisions, municipalities, and areas treated as municipal for statistical purposes, including unorganized territories, and Indigenous communities.	2021 Statistics Canada Data Dictionary
Region	Groupings of communities within census divisions.	
Rural communities	Non-Indigenous communities located outside of Census Metropolitan Areas.	Rural Classification . Rural Ontario Institute.
Urban communities	Non-Indigenous communities that are part of a Census Metropolitan Area.	
First Nations communities	Communities designated as First Nations reserves or settlements in Ontario.	2021 Statistics Canada Geographic Attribute Reference Guide

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Demographic indicators

Theme	Indicator	Definition	Data sources
Age Age indicators can help communities develop and deliver services. Demographic indicators also provide important contextual information for interpreting other wellbeing indicators.	Median age	The median age of the population in 2021. Half of the values are below this age and half are above.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Age distribution	The proportion of people in age groups, by gender in 2021.	
	Children	The proportion of people aged 0-14 years in 2021.	
	Youth	The proportion of people aged 15-24 years in 2021.	
	Young adults	The proportion of people aged 25-44 years in 2021.	
	Adults	The proportion of people aged 45-64 years in 2021.	
	Seniors	The proportion of people aged 65 and over in 2021.	
Population Population indicators can be used to estimate the demand for services or the need for targeted programs. Demographic indicators also provide important contextual information for interpreting other wellbeing indicators.	2021 Population	The number of people in 2021.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Population change 2016-2021	The percentage change in population between 2016-2021.	
	Population change for young adults 2016-2021	The percentage change in the population of young adults between 2016-2021. Young adults are people aged 25-44.	
	Population dependency ratio	A ratio of the number of economically dependent people (i.e., children and seniors) per 100 working age people in 2021. A higher ratio indicates there are more dependent people in the community, which could signal workforce issues or the need for increased social supports for people who are not working.	
	Population density	The number of people per square kilometre in 2021.	
	Women+	The proportion of women (and/or girls), as well as some non-binary persons in 2021.	
	Men+	The proportion of men (and/or boys), as well as some non-binary persons in 2021.	

Economic indicators

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
Income These indicators can help communities improve services for vulnerable populations, such as affordable housing, income support, and childcare.	Household income	Median household income in 2020, after taxes. Half of the reported incomes are above the median income and half are below.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Household income distribution	The distribution of after tax, median household income by income categories.	
	Individual income	Median individual income in 2020, after taxes. Half of the reported incomes are above the median income and half are below.	
	Low income measure	The proportion of people in low income. Based on the Statistics Canada low income measure , after tax (LIM-AT). In the 2021 Census, a person is considered to be in low income when their unadjusted after-tax income falls below the threshold for their household size in 2020.	
Employment These indicators can help communities with economic development and workforce planning.	Job	Any position in which a worker provides labour in exchange for monetary compensation. This includes those who work as full-time or part-time employees. This also includes self-employment jobs.	Analyst Next scheduled update: 2026
	Change in jobs 2023-2024	The percentage change in the number of jobs between 2021 and 2022.	
	Industry	A group of businesses that produce similar goods and services, and share similar production processes. Industry names reflect 2-digit codes from the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).	
	Average industry wage	The average wages earned by employees across NAICS industries in 2024. Wage data for self-employment jobs are not available.	
	Living wage	The wage a worker needs to earn to cover their basic expenses and enjoy modest engagement in civic and cultural community.	Ontario Living Wage Network Next scheduled update: 2026

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
	Working age population (15-64)	The number of people aged 15-64 in 2021.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Worked from home	The proportion of the employed labour force who worked from home in 2021.	
	Did not work	The proportion of people who did not work for pay or self-employment in 2020.	
	Local employment	The proportion of people who commuted to work within their census subdivision of residence.	
	Casual employment	Casual employee, seasonal employee, or persons employed for a contract of less than one year from their start date.	
Internet These indicators can help communities track progress on government commitments and identify priorities for investment.	Households with 50/10 broadband service	The proportion of households with broadband internet speeds of 50/10 megabits per second as of November 2023.	Ontario Broadband Resource Hub Next scheduled update: TBD
	Households without internet service	The proportion of households without internet service as of November 2023.	

Housing indicators

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
Core housing need These indicators provide insight into local housing issues and can inform decisions about housing development or service delivery for vulnerable populations.	Core housing need	The proportion of households that fall below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability or suitability, and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Inadequate housing	The proportion of dwellings that are in need of major repair, such as defective plumbing or electrical wiring, and structural repairs to walls, floors, or ceilings. Does not include regular maintenance (e.g., painting or cleaning) or minor repairs (e.g., missing floor tiles, or defective steps, railing or siding	
	Unsuitable housing	The proportion of dwellings that do not have enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the household.	
	Unaffordable housing	The proportion of households spending greater than 30% of their income on shelter costs. Shelter costs are the monthly total of all shelter expenses paid by households, including mortgage payments, rent, property taxes, condominium fees, and utilities.	
	Shelter costs	The median shelter costs for dwellings that are owned or rented by a household member. Shelter costs are the monthly total of all shelter expenses, including mortgage payments, property taxes, condominium fees, rent, and utilities.	
Dwellings The housing market is influenced by the supply and demand for housing. These indicators can inform plans for housing development.	Usual residents	The proportion of dwellings occupied by usual residents in 2021. A high proportion of usual residents indicates that most people live in the community on a permanent basis. A low proportion would signal more seasonal or temporary residents.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Dwelling	A set of living quarters with a private entrance either from outside the building or from a common hall, lobby, vestibule or stairway inside the building. The entrance to the dwelling must be one that can be used without passing through the living quarters of some other person or group of persons.	

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
Households Household characteristics influence people's ability to obtain affordable housing. These indicators can help inform plans for housing development and service delivery.	Household	A person or group of people who occupy the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada or abroad.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Household size	The number of people per private household in 2021. Calculated by dividing the 2021 population by the number of households.	
	Owner households	A private household that is owned by a member of the household.	
	Renter households	A private household that is rented by a member of the household.	

Health indicators

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
Long term care These indicators provide insight into the supply and demand for long term care, which can help with the development of age-friendly plans.	Long term care	Facilities that are designed for people who require the availability of 24-hour nursing care and supervision within a secure setting. These homes are owned and operated by various organizations, including private corporations, municipal councils, and non-profit corporations.	Ontario Long Term Care Association Next scheduled update: 2024
	Number of long term care spaces	The number of long term care spaces in 2023.	
	Wait time for long term care	The average number of days people waited for a long term care space in the 2020-2021 fiscal year.	
	Number of older seniors (aged 85+)	The number of people aged 85 and over in 2021.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Long term care space ratio	The number of long term care spaces for every 100 people aged 85 and over.	
Mental health These indicators can help to develop mental health interventions that reduce risk, build resilience, and create supportive communities.	ConnexOntario	ConnexOntario is a government agency that helps people navigate the health care system and improve access to services for mental health and substance use.	ConnexOntario Next scheduled update: 2025
	Number of calls for mental health services	The number of calls received by ConnexOntario regarding services for mental health and substance use in 2023. People may call ConnexOntario on behalf of someone else, such as a family member or friend. Health care professionals may also call on behalf of a patient.	
	Change in number of calls for mental health services	The percentage difference in the number of calls to ConnexOntario between 2022 to 2023.	
	Most common reasons for calls for mental health services	The top 10 most common reasons for calling ConnexOntario in 2023.	

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
	Number of mental health and addictions facilities	The number of mental health and addictions facilities compiled by the Ministry of Health in 2023.	Ontario Geohub – Ministry of Health Service Provider Locations Next scheduled update: 2024
Access to health services These indicators may reveal priorities for investments in health care facilities that reduce health inequalities and support healthy communities.	Number of health care facilities	The number of health service provider locations in 2023.	Ontario Geohub - Ministry of Health Service Provider Locations Next scheduled update: 2024
	Types of health care facilities	The type of service provided at a health facility, as follows: HIV AIDS & Hep C Programs Community-based organizations that deliver services to those living with or affected by HIV and Hepatitis C. Children's Treatment Centres Community-based organizations serve children with physical disabilities and special needs. Community Health Centre Non-profit organizations provide primary health and health promotion programs for individuals, families, and communities. Community support services Non-profit organizations or private companies that help people to maintain their safety and independence while living at home. Services are delivered either in the home or in different locations around the community. Family Health Team The primary business site for a Family Health Team in Ontario. These are primary health care organizations that include a team	

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
		<p>of family physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, social workers, dietitians, and other professionals who work together to provide primary health care for their community.</p> <p>Hospital - Corporation The location of hospital corporations in Ontario. Public, private and psychiatric hospitals provide round-the-clock care to patients, including emergent, elective, specialized chronic care, and rehabilitation.</p> <p>Hospital - Site The location of additional sites for hospital corporations in Ontario that are not included in the Hospital Corporation spatial data.</p> <p>Independent Health Facility Facilities where people receive health services for which fees are charged or paid in Ontario.</p> <p>Licensed Laboratory Specimen Collection Centre The locations of licensed laboratories in Ontario. Includes laboratories that are privately owned (outside of hospitals) and those located inside hospitals.</p> <p>Local Health Integration Network Office The locations of Local Health Integration Network administrative offices in Ontario.</p> <p>Long Term Care Home Facilities that are designed for people who require the availability of 24-hour nursing care and supervision within a secure setting. These homes are owned and operated by various organizations,</p>	

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
		<p>including private corporations, municipal councils, and non-profit corporations.</p> <p>Mental Health and Addiction Organization The locations of mental health and addiction organizations in Ontario.</p> <p>Midwifery Clinics The locations of midwifery clinics in Ontario that promote normal childbirth and the prevention of health problems. Midwives provide care in both the hospital and home setting.</p> <p>Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic Primary health care organizations that provide comprehensive, accessible, person centred, and co-ordinated primary care services to people across Ontario.</p> <p>Nursing Station Facilities that provide nursing services in rural, remote, and northern communities.</p> <p>Pharmacies Facilities where prescriptions are compounded or dispensed for the public or medications are sold by retail, and includes a remote dispensing location.</p> <p>Public Health Unit Office The locations of Public Health Unit administrative offices in Ontario.</p> <p>Retirement homes</p>	

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
		<p>Privately owned accommodations for seniors who can live independently with little or no outside help. Retirement homes do not provide 24-hour nursing care.</p> <p>Senior Active Living Centres Provide social and recreational programs to promote wellness for seniors. They may also offer preventive, health education, and support services to keep seniors healthy, active, and independent for as long as possible.</p>	

Society indicators

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
Arts & culture These indicators provide insight into local opportunities to participate in arts and culture activities.	Number of arts & cultural facilities	The number of facilities in 2020. Facilities are physical locations that offer programs or services to the general public related to arts and culture.	Open Database of Arts and Culture Facilities Next scheduled update: TBD
	Charitable arts organizations	The number of registered arts organizations, including charitable organizations, private foundations, and public foundations in 2021.	Mass Culture Arts Data Platform Next scheduled update: TBD
Education These indicators may reveal priorities for investment in educational programs.	Post secondary education	The proportion of people aged 25-64 with some post secondary education, including an apprenticeship, college diploma or certificate, university certificate, bachelor's degree or higher in 2021.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	High school diploma	The proportion of people aged 25-64 with a high school diploma in 2021.	
Population diversity These indicators can help communities celebrate their diversity and support marginalized groups by developing strategies to address racism and discrimination.	Indigenous population	The proportion of people who identified with the Indigenous peoples of Canada in the 2021 Census. This includes those who identify as First Nations (North American Indian), Métis and/or Inuk (Inuit).	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Immigrant population	The proportion of people who have been granted the right to permanently live in Canada on or prior to May 11, 2021. Includes immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization.	
	Racialized population	The proportion of people who identified as South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Arab, Latin American, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean, or Japanese in the 2021 Census.	

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources
	Religious and spiritual population	The proportion of people who reported having a connection or affiliation with a religion or system of belief in the 2021 Census.	
	Knowledge of non-official languages	The proportion of the population who can conduct a conversation in a language other than English or French.	

Environment indicators

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources and references
Climate change These indicators provide insight into how much the climate may change between the simulated historical average (1971-2000) and the future (2041-2070). This future time period uses the Shared Socioeconomic Pathway (SSP) 2-4.5, a moderate emissions scenario. This information can help inform plans for climate action and adaptation.	Change in the temperature of the hottest day (°C)	<p>The hottest day describes the warmest daytime temperature in a year.</p> <p>This indicator notes the difference in the temperature of the hottest day between the simulated historical average (1971-2000) and the future (2041-2070) based on SSP2-4.5, a moderate emissions scenario.</p> <p>A positive number means that the hottest day of the year is getting hotter.</p>	<p>Based on the CanDSC-U6 dataset accessed from ClimateData.ca, May 2024.</p> <p>Cannon, A.J., S.R. Sobie, and T.Q. Murdock, 2015: Precipitation by Quantile Mapping: How Well Do Methods Preserve Changes in Quantiles and Extremes? <i>Journal of Climate</i>, 28(17), 6938-6959, doi:10.1175/JCLI-D-14-00754.1.</p> <p>McKenney, D. W., M. F. Hutchinson, P. Papadopol, K. Lawrence, J. Pedlar, K. Campbell, E. Milewska, R. F. Hopkinson, D. Price, and T. Owen, 2011: Customized Spatial Climate Models for North America. <i>Bull. Amer. Meteor. Soc.</i>, 92 12, 1611-1622.</p> <p>Next scheduled update: TBD</p>
	Change in the temperature of the coldest day (°C)	<p>The coldest day describes the lowest nighttime temperature in a year.</p> <p>This indicator notes the difference in the temperature of the coldest day between the simulated historical average (1971-2000) and the future (2041-2070) based on SSP2-4.5, a moderate emissions scenario.</p> <p>A positive number means that the coldest day of the year is getting warmer.</p>	
	Change in length of growing season (days)	<p>The approximate growing season length, also known as the frost-free season, is the number of days between the last spring frost and the first fall frost, equivalent to the number of consecutive days without any daily minimum temperatures below 0°C.</p> <p>This indicator notes the difference in the approximate growing season length between simulated historical average (1971-2000) and the future (2041-2070) based on SSP2-4.5, a moderate emissions scenario.</p>	

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources and references
		A positive number means that the approximate growing season length is getting longer.	
	Change in length of winter season length (days)	<p>The winter season length, also known as frost days, is the number of days where the coldest temperature of the day is lower than 0°C.</p> <p>This indicator notes the difference in the winter season length between the simulated historical average (1971-2000) and the future (2041-2070) based on SSP2-4.5, a moderate emissions scenario.</p> <p>A negative number means that the winter season is getting shorter.</p>	
	Change in the number of humidex days (days)	<p>Humidex days are the number of days where the Humidex rating is greater than 35.</p> <p>This indicator notes the difference in the number of humidex days between the simulated historical average (1971-2000) and the future (2041-2070) based on SSP2-4.5, a moderate emissions scenario.</p> <p>A positive number means that more days with humidex above 35 are occurring.</p>	
	Change in total precipitation (mm)	<p>Total precipitation is the total amount of precipitation (rain and snow combined) that falls in a year.</p> <p>This indicator notes the difference in the total precipitation amount between the simulated historical average (1971-2000) and the future (2041-2070) based on SSP2-4.5, a moderate emissions scenario.</p> <p>A positive number means that there is more precipitation.</p>	

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources and references
Ecological Footprint These indicators are sustainability metrics that measure the human impact on Earth's ecosystems. These indicators can help to inform plans for sustainable development and climate action.	Ecological Footprint	The amount of land needed to support consumption of ecosystem goods and services, shown as global hectares per capita.	Dworatzek, P., Letang, D. Miller, E., Mandel, Y. (2024). Methodological Handbook for Deriving Ecological Footprint and Biocapacity Accounts for Ontario Communities. Report. Prepared for the Rural Ontario Institute.
	Biocapacity	The ability of ecosystems to supply goods and services, measured as global hectares per capita.	
	Biocapacity balance	The difference between biocapacity (ecosystem supply) and Ecological Footprint (ecosystem demand), shown as global hectares per capita. A negative number indicates overconsumption. In cases of overconsumption, reducing greenhouse gas emissions is usually the most effective action to improve sustainability.	
	Global hectares	A standard unit that enables comparisons at different scales and for different locations across the world. A global hectare is the global average amount of biological regeneration for human use. See the Global Footprint Network for details.	
	Components of Ecological Footprint and Biocapacity	The different types of areas that are biologically productive and the corresponding areas required to support human consumption. Carbon The amount of forest area needed to absorb carbon from greenhouse gas emissions. Forest products The area available and needed to produce lumber, and pulp. Cropland The area available and needed to grow crops. Grazing land The area available and required to feed livestock.	

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources and references
		<p>Fishing grounds The area of marine and inland waters available and needed for fish consumption.</p> <p>Built-up land The area of land needed for and occupied by human-made infrastructure.</p> <p>Wetlands The productive capacity of wetlands to absorb carbon.</p>	
	Categories of Ecological Footprint consumption	<p>Household consumption Consumption that supports households including repairs and maintenance, food, electricity, water, and fuels.</p> <p>Fixed capital consumption The use of lands for durable infrastructure such as buildings, infrastructure for transportation and communications, and military equipment.</p> <p>Government consumption Resources consumed by government purchases of goods and services.</p>	
Conservation These indicators demonstrate how much area is protected and can be used to help track Canada's progress towards the target of protecting 30% of our lands and waters by 2030.	Protected areas	The area (square kilometres) and proportion of area that is protected by federal, provincial, or municipal legislation, or by non-profit organizations, land trusts and/or agencies.	Ontario Geohub. Municipal Park . Federal Protected Areas . Provincial Park Regulated . Greenbelt designation . Contains information licensed under the Open Government Licence - Ontario . Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database . Environment and Climate Change

Theme	Indicators	Definitions	Data sources and references
			Canada. Contains information licensed under the Open Government Licence - Canada .
Commuting These indicators provide insight into local transportation patterns, and can inform plans for climate change mitigation.	Mode of commuting	The main mode of transportation a person used to travel to their place of work in 2021.	2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile Next scheduled update: 2026
	Commute by car, truck, or van	Proportion of people who commuted to work by car, truck or van	
	Long commute	Proportion of people with a commute of 45 minutes or longer in 2021.	
	Commute locally	Proportion of people who commuted to work within their census subdivision of residence in 2021.	