

The Personal Security Index, 2003

by the Canadian Council on Social Development
Backgrounder - Introduction

What is the PSI?

The PSI is a tool to measure annual changes in the security of Canadians according to three key elements:

- ✓ Economic security in the broad sense of job and financial security;
- ✓ Health security in the sense of protection against the threats of disease and injury;
- ✓ Physical safety in the sense of feeling safe from violent crime and theft.

The PSI measures changes in both empirical data and in people's perceptions of their personal security. It is a valuable tool to measure well-being and is unique in combining both objective *and* subjective indicators. The Data Index, using many Statistics Canada databases, is designed to measure changes in "real" outcomes related to personal security, such as levels of income and debt, and rates of crime or poor health. The Perception Index is based on responses to a national survey conducted by EKOS Research Associates, which asked more than 3,000 Canadians how they rated several issues affecting their own personal security. This year, the polling was conducted in January and February 2003.

Why was it created?

The PSI was originally developed by the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) with the support of the Insurance Bureau of Canada, Canadian Heritage, EKOS Research Associates Inc., Health Canada, the Canadian Labour Congress and Human Resources Development Canada. It aims to provide an overview of the many different factors impacting the security of Canadians, and to determine whether the personal security of Canadians is improving overall or deteriorating.

A Five-Year Review

Since this is the fifth year that the Personal Security Index (PSI) has been calculated, this year's PSI also includes a review of five-year trends for the national-level data and highlights changes in Canadians' perceptions between 1998 and 2002.

Backgrounder - Economic Security – PSI 2003

Economic security refers to an assured and stable standard of living that provides individuals and families with the level of resources necessary to participate economically, politically, socially, culturally, and with dignity in their communities. Security goes beyond mere physical survival to encompass a level of resources that promotes social inclusion.

The economic security of Canadians as measured by objective data rose in 2002, thanks in part to increased disposable incomes. The Perception Index on economic security also rose slightly, on the strength of increasing perceptions of job security, although all the other perception indicators moved downward in 2002.

DATA:

- The Canadian economy experienced a good year in 2002, after a slight downturn the year before. Canadian GDP expanded by 3.4% and jobs grew by 2.2% – outpacing other G-7 nations.
- The national unemployment rate rose to 7.7% in 2002. While not as low as it was in 2000 (6.8%) and 2001 (7.2%), it remained lower than it had been five years earlier (8.3% in 1998).
- The long-term unemployed made up 5.2% of the total number of unemployed Canadians in 2002, down from 9.6% in 1998.
- The unemployment rate for young people (aged 15 to 24) climbed from 12.8% in 2001 to 13.6% by 2002. This rate has increased for two consecutive years, although it was lower than the high of 15.1% recorded in 1998.
- The labour force participation rate increased slightly from 66.0% to 66.95% in 2002. This indicator has continued to rise over the five-year period since 1998.
- Canadians' disposable incomes also grew. In 2002, average disposable income was \$20,343 – meaning that Canadians had over \$300 more in their pockets than they had in 2001.
- The national poverty rate fell from 15.8% in 1999 to 14.7% in 2000 – the last year for which there are data. The child poverty rate also fell in that period – from 18% to 16.5% – the 4th consecutive drop in the rate. And while both these trends represent welcome progress, the rates are still above the 1989 figures when the national poverty rate was 14.0% and the child poverty rate was 15.2%. [Poverty is measured using Statistics Canada's before-tax Low Income Cut-offs or LICOs and based on data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics.]

PERCEPTION: Do Canadians feel that their income is adequate to meet their basic needs?

The definition of basic needs by those surveyed included food, shelter, and clothing, as well as the ability to afford such items as a second-hand car, modest vacations and a post-secondary education for children. It also included the ability of the family to participate in civic and social activities.

- Over the last five years, Canadians have expressed decreasing satisfaction with the adequacy of their incomes to meet their basic needs. Whereas 57% of Canadians surveyed felt that their income was *very* adequate in 1998, only 47% felt the same way in 2002 – a drop of ten percentage points. The proportion of Canadians who classified their income as only *moderately* adequate in 2002 rose by 7 percentage points, from 29% in 1998 to 36% in 2002. The proportion who classified their income as inadequate to meet their needs rose by 3 percentage points over that same period, from 14% in 1998 to 17% in 2002.
- Not surprisingly, perceptions about the adequacy of one's household income are strongly linked to income levels. Among Canadians with household incomes over \$80,000, 76.5% felt that their income was very adequate; among those with household incomes under \$20,000, only 18.6% felt that it was very adequate.
- Gender also made a difference in perceptions. Women were less likely than men to report that their income was very adequate – 44% compared to 50%, respectively.
- Perceptions about income adequacy differed substantially by region: 54% of Albertans and 51% of Ontarians considered their income to be adequate, compared to only 40% of residents in Atlantic Canada.

PERCEPTION: Are Canadians worried about losing their jobs?

- Canadians were more confident about their job security in 2002. In fact, the rise in this particular indicator caused the overall Perception Index for economic security to rise. About 62% of Canadians surveyed were not concerned about losing their jobs, significantly more than the 47% who were as confident of their job security in 1998. The proportion who said there was a good chance they would lose their job over the next two years also dropped – to 23% in 2002, down from 28% in 2001 and significantly lower than the 37% of Canadians who worried about losing their jobs in 1998.
- There were considerable variations across the regions. Fear of job loss was lowest in Quebec (16%) and highest in BC (28%).
- In 2002, 57% of working-age Canadians were confident in their ability to find an equivalent position within six months if they lost their job. Canadians' confidence in their employability has grown over the five-year period since 1998, when only 49% felt this way.
- Canadians under age 25 were more confident than older Canadians in their ability to find an equivalent job within six months if needed – 71% of young people compared to only 47% of those aged 45 to 64.
- Across the country in 2002, confidence in finding an equivalent job ranged from a high of 69% in Alberta to only 50% in British Columbia.

The Social Safety Net

DATA:

- The percentage of Canadians covered by Employment Insurance (EI) fell to 45.2%, a decrease of five percentage points between 2001 and 2002. While there has been a small increase over the five-year period since 1998, when 43% were covered, the rate remains significantly lower than it was in the late-1980s and early-1990s when more than 80% of the unemployed were covered.
- EI coverage as a percentage of average weekly earnings has not changed dramatically since 1998 when EI coverage represented 42.5% of average weekly earnings; in 2002, it represented 42.7%.

PERCEPTION: **How confident are Canadians about income support programs?**

- Canadians lack confidence in the ability of our income security programs to adequately sustain them while they look for a new job: 59% of respondents did not feel the programs would properly help them, up from 56% in 2001. Only 23% of respondents said that if they lost their job, the income support programs would sustain them while they looked for a new one.
- These figures are almost identical to those in 1998, when 60% of Canadians were unsure about whether Canada's income security programs would adequately sustain them while they looked for a new job, and 23% were confident they would.
- Residents of British Columbia and Alberta expressed the least confidence in the social safety net (13% and 17%, respectively), while residents of Atlantic Canada were the most confident (30%).
- Confidence varied widely according to income: 50% of those in households earning less than \$20,000 a year – the country's most vulnerable population – did not have confidence in the adequacy of Canada's social safety net.
- By age, confidence in the safety net was highest among those aged 25 and under (36%), and least among those aged 45 to 64 (16%).

Financial Vulnerability

Growing levels of household debt are an important reason why many Canadians worry about their economic security. Some people interpret a higher debt load as a sign that Canadians are more optimistic about their economic security and are therefore willing to spend more money. However, many Canadians are using credit, not to buy more items, but simply to make ends meet.

DATA:

- Since 1998, the amount that Canadians have borrowed to buy homes and consumer goods increased from an average of 95.9% of their total disposable income, to 98.4% by 2002. This is only a 2.5 percentage point increase over five years, but it is an increase of almost 18 percentage

points from a decade earlier – and more than 42 percentage points higher than in 1984, when the average debt to total disposable income ratio was 56%. The biggest contributor to the indebtedness of Canadians is the size of their mortgages. Over the last five years, this has remained fairly constant, with mortgages constituting 68% to 69% of Canadians' disposable income.

PERCEPTION: How financially vulnerable do Canadians feel?

To gauge how financially vulnerable Canadians are feeling, we asked respondents how long they would be able to sustain themselves and their families if they had to rely only on their savings (such as bank accounts and RRSPs).

- The percentage of Canadians who said they could not sustain themselves for more than one month if they and their spouse lost their jobs grew over the year – from 9% in 2001 to 12% in 2002, but this was still a marked improvement from five years earlier when 22% were so financially vulnerable. (Among the Canadians surveyed, 10.4 months was the average length of time respondents felt they could sustain themselves.)
- While there were few variations in responses by region in 2001, this was not the case in 2002. Western Canadians had the highest levels of financial vulnerability, with 15% of Albertans reporting that they had sufficient funds to last less than one month. By contrast, only 10% of Quebecers reported being in the same situation.
- 14% of women and 9% of men said they did not have enough savings to last for more than one month.
- As expected, the most financially secure Canadians are those with higher household incomes. One-quarter (25%) of those with household incomes under \$20,000 had insufficient savings to sustain themselves beyond one month – four times the level of financial vulnerability of those with household incomes over \$80,000.

Background - Health Security – PSI 2003

Being in good physical and mental health, having access to adequate medical care in times of need, and feeling safe from accidents and disease are all basic elements that contribute to a person's sense of health security. They are the indicators monitored in the PSI.

Health security increased in 2002 according to the objective data: there was an increase in life expectancy, a decrease in motor vehicle traffic injuries, and a decrease in time-loss work injuries. But perceptions of health security fell for the third year in a row. The self-rated health of Canadians has declined, and their concerns over their access to health care continued to rise in 2002. Despite prescriptions found in the Romanow report, and the federal and provincial government agreement (in principle) to fix health care, Canadians are sceptical that federal or provincial governments will improve the health care system in the near future.*

Access to health services

More and more Canadians worry that they will not have access to affordable and adequate health services.

PERCEPTION: Are Canadians worried about access to health care services?

- The proportion of Canadians who felt confident that they would be able to access health care services if they became ill continued to fall. It dropped to 53% in 2002, down from 55% a year earlier, and well below the 59% recorded in 1998.
- The proportion who said they were “not confident” rose sharply to 31% in 2002, compared to only 27% five years earlier.
- Similar to previous years, women were somewhat more likely than men to feel that they would not have access to health care services when needed: 32% for women compared to 29% for men.
- Interestingly, people over age 65 gained confidence in their access to the health care system – 65% in 2002 compared to 62% in 2001 – while those under age 25 lost confidence, the proportion falling from 67% to 64% over the same period.
- Residents of the Atlantic region (61%) and Ontario (57%) were the most confident about their access to health care services, while people in BC (43%) and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (47%) were the least confident.

* Data for the health Perception Index were gathered prior to the outbreak of SARS, concerns about Mad Cow disease, and public mobilization efforts against the West Nile virus.



New

Are Canadians confident that their governments (federal/provincial) can fix problems in the health care system?

Many Canadians are worried that neither the federal nor provincial governments can improve the health care system in the near future.

Approximately 40% of Canadians surveyed were not confident that the federal government could improve the health care system in the next two years, while just over 34% expressed confidence. About 43% also said they lacked confidence in the ability of their provincial government to improve the health care system in the next two years.

Health care spending

DATA:

- Total health care expenditures in Canada were estimated at \$97.4 billion in 2000, or \$3,164 per person (in constant dollars). The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) forecasts that these expenditures would reach \$105.6 billion by 2001 and \$112.2 billion by 2002, representing annual increases of 8.4% and 6.3%, respectively.
- Public sector spending on health care has been increasing, growing by almost two full percentage points – by 7.3% in 1998, 7% in 1999 and 9.1% in 2000.
- One of the fastest growing expenses in Canada's health care system is drugs. Between 1975 and 2000, the cost of drugs nearly doubled as a percentage of total health care expenditures, rising from 8.8% in 1975 to 16.2% by 2000. Drugs now constitute the 2nd largest health care expenditure.
- The largest category of health care expenses continues to be hospitals. Over the past 25 years, however, the percentage of total expenditures on hospitals has been shrinking compared to other expenses in the system. It fell from 44.7% of all health care expenses in 1975, to 32.1% in 2000. Hospital expenditures are forecast to rise to \$33.1 billion in 2001 and to \$35.2 billion by 2002, increases of 5.9% and 6.3%, respectively.
- Private sector funding on health care has also grown – by 4.3% in 1998, 8.2% in 1999 and 7.0% in 2000. CIHI has forecast that private sector funding would grow by 8.5% in 2001 and 6.5% in 2002.

Do Canadians lead stressful lives?

The strains and insecurities of a changing labour market and the family obligations of working parents are continuing to make life stressful for Canadians.

DATA:

- The majority of Canadians surveyed (59%) reported that their lives were moderately stressful, down slightly from 60% in 2001, and continuing a four-year trend of modest declines.
- The number who feel that their lives are extremely stressful has remained fairly constant at 22%.
- The number of Canadians who reported that they did not feel stressed has gradually increased, from 16% in 1999, to 17% in 2001, and 19% in 2002.

- Women were slightly more likely than men to say their lives were stressful: 82% of women said their lives were extremely or moderately stressful compared to 79% among men.
- Not surprisingly, household income also seems to influence the amount of stress Canadians report, with the highest levels of stress found among those in the lowest income groups. Canadians with household incomes between \$20,000 and \$29,000 reported the highest levels of stress (25%), followed by those with household incomes under \$20,000.
- There were some variations by region, with more residents of Ontario and Alberta (24%) reporting extremely stressful lives and fewer residents of Quebec (17%).

Self-rated health

PERCEPTION: How do Canadians rate their own health?

Research shows that one of the most reliable indicators of a person's health status is their own assessment of their health. With that in mind, we asked Canadians to rate their health.

- The health of Canadians appears to have declined over the last five years, according to self-reports. In 2002, 68.6% of Canadians said they were in very good or excellent health, down from 69.1% in 2001 and 76.8% in 1998. In 1998, only 5.6% of Canadians said they were in terrible or poor health, but by 2002, this had risen to 8%.
- Men were slightly more likely than women to rate their health as very good or excellent in 2002 – 69.6% compared to 67.7% – while women were more likely to report their health as poor or terrible (8.9% among women and 7.0% among men).
- Perceptions of good health decline with age. Among Canadians under age 25, 81.4% rated their health as good or excellent, whereas only 58.2% of people over age 65 gave their health as good a rating.
- There is also a clear relationship between household income and positive reports of health. As household incomes rise, so too does the proportion of Canadians who say they are in very good or excellent health: 80.9% of those with household incomes of \$80,000 or more rated their health so positively, compared to only 54.1% of those earning less than \$20,000.
- Residents of Alberta and Quebec were the most likely to say they were in very good or excellent health (73.7% and 73.1%, respectively), while residents in the Atlantic region and the Prairies were the least likely (59% and 59.4%, respectively).

Additional information about other indicators of health security – such as data on potential years of life lost, safety at work, and traffic accidents – is available in the full report on this project, *The Personal Security Index, 2003*. The report can be obtained free of charge on the CCSD's website at www.ccsd.ca.

Backgrounder - Physical Safety – PSI 2003

The PSI monitors Canadians' concerns about physical safety by tracking four indicators: the level of violent crime, the level of property crime, and Canadians' perceptions of these types of crime in their own communities.

According to the hard data from 2002, Canadians' overall physical safety remained essentially unchanged from the year before, as violent crime rates rose slightly and property crimes fell slightly.

Violent crime

The PSI examines the most serious forms of violent crime (level 3) – that is, homicide, attempted murder, aggravated assault, and aggravated sexual assault – because these are the crimes about which Canadians express the greatest concerns, and the seriousness of these crimes leads to more reliable and comprehensive reporting.

The most serious forms of violent crime have decreased slightly since 1997, although overall violent crime has increased slightly. Canadians became slightly more concerned about violent crime over that period. Research shows that the fear of crime – particularly violent crime – is disproportionate to the true risk of being victimized. Even if people's fear of crime is “not justified” by objective data, it can still be a negative factor in their lives, often unnecessarily restricting their social activities.

DATA:

- Overall, the violent crime rate¹ in Canada increased by 1.3% between 2000 and 2001, the 2nd consecutive yearly increase. The rate rose from 981.1 violent crimes per 100,000 population in 2000, to 993.6 per 100,000 in 2001.² It should be noted that this national rate for violent crime remains considerably lower than it had been in 1992 (at 1,083.7 per 100,000), and that it had been decreasing from 1997 to 2000 but increased overall from 1997 (990.1 per 100,000) to 2001.
- The rate of level 3 violent crimes remained virtually unchanged in 2001, at 13.3 violent crimes per 100,000 population. This rate is lower than it was five years ago (14.6 violent crimes per 100,000 population in 1997) and it is significantly lower than in 1991, when the rate was 21.9 per 100,000.

¹ Violent crime incidents (numbering approximately 309,000 in 2001) include homicide, attempted murder, assault, sexual assault, other assaults, other sexual offences, abduction and robbery.

² Data on crime rates for 2002 were released after completion of this document, but the trends identified here remain virtually unchanged. Refer to Statistics Canada's website for those data.

- Six of 10 provinces reported an increase in violent crime: Saskatchewan (+8%), Nova Scotia (+5.8%), N.B. (+ 4.8%), Alberta (+3.8), PEI (+2.1), Ontario (+1.8) and Quebec (+0.3). The other provinces posted a small drop in their rates – the largest of which was in BC (-2.8%).
- Again in 2001, violent crime rates were highest in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, with rates of 1,802 and 1,620 respectively per 100,000 population, while Quebec and PEI recorded the lowest rates at 719 and 746 respectively per 100,000 population.

PERCEPTION: Are Canadians concerned about violent crime?

To gauge Canadians' sense of their physical safety, we asked how they would rate their families' safety in their own neighbourhoods with respect to violent crime.

- The vast majority of Canadians (72%) reported feeling very safe from violent crime in 2002, however, this figure was lower than five years earlier (77% in 1998).
- Residents of Alberta and Ontario felt the safest from violent crime, at 77% and 78% respectively.
- Quebec residents were by far the most fearful of violent crime in their neighbourhoods: only 60% of Quebecers reported feeling very safe in 2002. However, more felt safe this year than did last year (an increase of 1.3 percentage points).
- Canadians aged 25 to 44 were the most confident: the vast majority (75%) felt that their neighbourhoods were very safe from violent crime. Seniors were the least likely to share that sentiment, with only 65% feeling very safe. Far more people in this older age group reported feeling moderately safe.
- Men were slightly more likely than women to feel that their neighbourhoods were very safe from violent crime (72% compared to 71%).
- Canadians with high household incomes were significantly more likely than other Canadians to feel that their neighbourhoods were very safe from violent crime.

Property crime

Property crimes are unlawful acts with the intent of gaining property, but they do not involve the use or threat of violence. PSI focuses on two types of property crime that affect people most directly – breaking and entering into a residence and motor vehicle theft. Although property crime rates have fallen substantially over the last decade, hitting their lowest rate in 25 years, Canadians feel increasingly unsafe from property crime in their neighbourhoods.

DATA:

- The overall incidence of property crime has been declining steadily. In 2001, it dropped to 4,043 property crimes per 100,000 population – the lowest rate in more than 25 years.
- In 2001, the rate of property crimes committed by youth decreased by 3.3%, a much larger drop than in the rate for all age groups (-0.6%).
- Motor vehicle theft has been increasing gradually since 1990, while other forms of property crimes have decreased. This year, for the first time, the rate of motor vehicle theft exceeded the rate for

residential break and enter – a stark contrast to 1982, when the residential break and enter rate was more than double the rate for motor vehicle thefts.

- The property crime rate fell in seven provinces, with only Manitoba (+3.1%), BC (+1.2%) and Ontario (+0.7%) experiencing increases.
- The Atlantic Provinces had the lowest rates of property crime in Canada in 2001, and Newfoundland, with a rate of 2,283.8 property crimes per 100,000 population, was the lowest.
- BC continues to have the highest property crime rates among the provinces, at 6,451.2 property crimes per 100,000 population.

PERCEPTION: Are Canadians concerned about property crime?

- A majority of Canadians (65%) felt that their neighbourhoods were very safe from property crime. This was down slightly from 67% in 2001; in fact, the proportion of Canadians who feel very safe from property crime in their neighbourhood has been steadily decreasing for the last three years – it was 68% in 2000.
- 22% of Canadians thought that their neighbourhood was moderately safe from property crime – the same proportion as in 2000 and 2001.
- 13% said their neighbourhoods were unsafe – up from 12% in 2001, and steadily increasing since 1999.
- Among the highest-income households, 74% reported feeling very safe from property crime, while only 58% of the lowest-income households gave the same safety rating.
- Canadians under age 25 were the most likely to report that their neighbourhoods were very safe from property crime (68%).
- Regionally, residents of Atlantic Canada and Ontario were the most likely to report feeling very safe from property crime (74% and 71%, respectively); Quebec had by far the lowest proportion of residents who felt very safe (at 56%), while residents of BC (15.3%) and Quebec (15.2%) were the most likely to report feeling unsafe.

Backgrounder - Regional Differences – PSI 2003

Traditionally, the PSI has measured personal security at the national level. A breakdown of the PSI by region illustrates how personal security differs across Canada. These regional snapshots reveal the positive and negative indicators which influence the PSI ranking. (Please note that regional indexes should be interpreted with caution due to the smaller sample sizes, particularly with respect to indicators of people's perceptions.)

British Columbia

- The fear of job loss in BC was higher (28%) than the national average (23%) and well above the 16% reported by residents of Quebec. However, the proportion of citizens reporting fear of job loss decreased over the last year in BC, as it did in the rest of the country.
- The proportion of BC residents confident in their employability was also the lowest in Canada (50%). In previous years, Atlantic Canadians had been the least confident.
- British Columbians were least confident that they would receive help from government support programs in times of need (13%, compared to 23% nationally) or from friends, family and neighbours (60%, compared to 72% nationally).
- British Columbians had the sharpest decrease in confidence in their access to the health care system (9 percentage points) over the last year. Only 43% of BC residents surveyed felt they could access health care services when needed, compared to 53% nationally.
- British Columbians were also the least likely to believe that the provincial government would be able to improve the health care system over the next two years.
- BC continues to report the highest incidence of property crime.
- It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the major cuts to provincial programs introduced by the Liberal government in BC continued to play a major role in influencing the perceptions of BC residents. In fact, these pessimistic perceptions brought down the overall Canadian index of perceptions of personal security.

Alberta

- Economic security, as measured by the hard data, decreased very slightly over the year, as did perceptions of economic security.
- But Alberta continued to have the highest percentage of residents who felt that their incomes were adequate: 54% compared to 47% nationally.
- Albertans were second only to residents of Quebec in their confidence about their job security, and they remained the most confident in their employability – 69% compared to 57% nationally.
- There was, however, a considerable drop in Albertans' confidence about the ability of income support programs to support them in times of need: only 17% expressed such confidence in 2002 – a drop of 20% from the year before.
- Albertans also reported the highest level of financial vulnerability – 15% of those surveyed said they could survive for less than one month on their savings.

- Albertans also reported an increase in extreme stress. Residents of the province and those in the Atlantic were the only ones to record an increase in this category.
- Albertans also reported a large decrease in confidence in their ability to access health care services if needed – a drop of 18% from 2001. Fortunately, however, they were the most likely to report being in very good or excellent health – 74%, along with residents of Quebec.
- The violent crime rate for level 3 offences increased in Alberta and their perceptions of safety from violent crime decreased. The proportion of Albertans who felt that they were *not safe* from violent crime in their neighbourhoods grew from 4.4% in 2000 to 7.2% by 2002.

Manitoba & Saskatchewan

- Data indicators of economic security fell compared to the previous year, but Prairie residents' perceptions of their economic security rose.
- There was a noticeable increase in the number of Prairie residents who felt that their income was very adequate: 47% in 2002, a 12% increase over the previous year.
- As in other regions, residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba felt more confident of their job security compared to the previous year.
- Residents had more negative assessments of their own health than the Canadian average: in 2002, 11% of Prairie residents surveyed said their health was poor or worse, compared to only 8% nationally who gave such ratings.
- The Manitoba government spent more per capita on health expenditures in 2000 – \$3,693 – than all other provinces.
- Both the data and perception indexes for physical safety fell in the Prairies in 2002. Rates of level 3 violent crimes and property crimes both increased, and the proportion of residents who felt very safe dropped by 5% to 6% over the previous year.
- Saskatchewan and Manitoba continued to show the highest overall violent crime rates at 1,802 and 1,620 violent crimes per 100,000 people, respectively.

Ontario

- Despite decreases in the objective data on economic security, Ontarians' surveyed expressed more confidence in their job security in 2002 than they had the year before – 61% in 2002 compared to 56% in 2001 – and slightly more confidence in their employability – 58% in 2002 compared to 57% in 2001.
- Objective measures of health security in Ontario were up modestly in 2002, while citizens' perceptions of their health security fell slightly.
- Ontario (and Alberta) had the highest proportion of residents (24%) who reported feeling extremely stressed.
- Indicators of physical safety fell due to a rise in the property crime rate in Ontario. However, residents' perceptions improved as they felt safer from violent crime in their neighbourhoods.

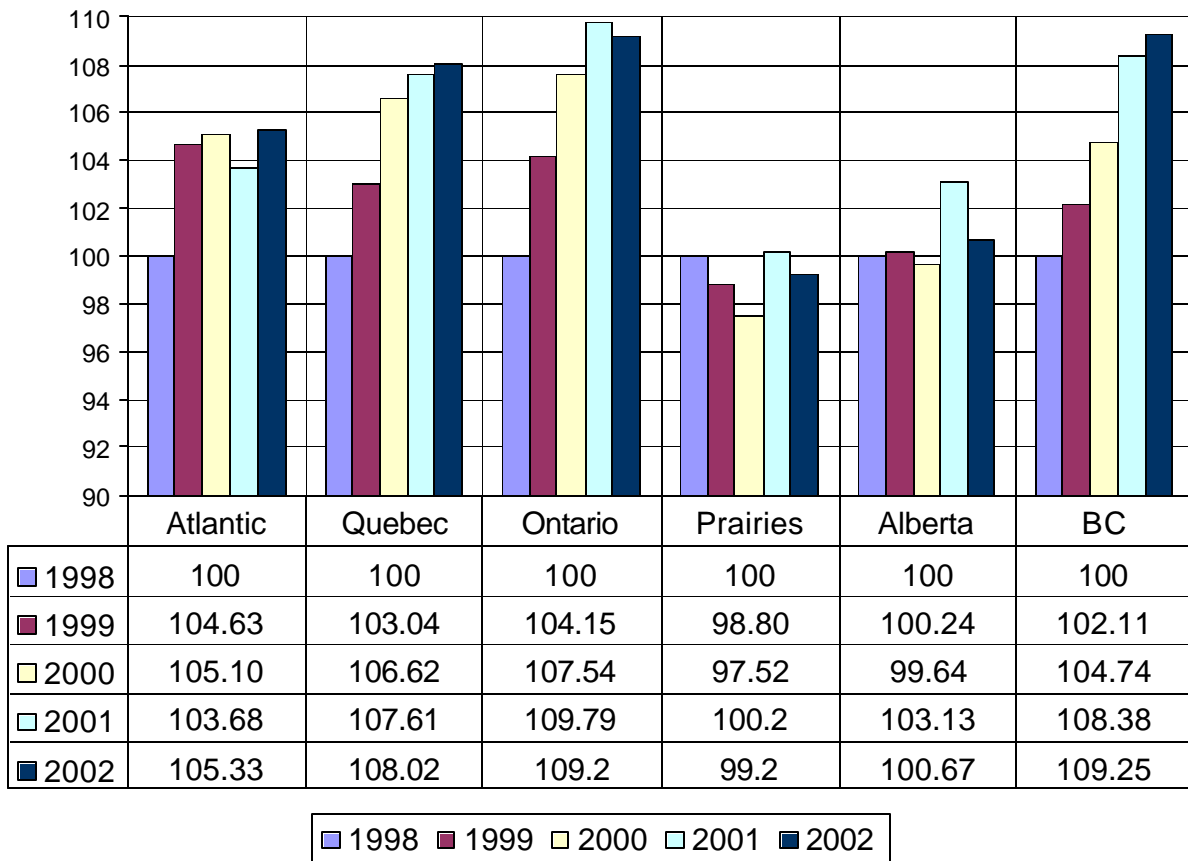
Quebec

- Residents of the province reported more positive assessments of the adequacy of their incomes and more confidence in their job security.
- In fact, compared to the rest of Canadians, Quebecers felt the most certain of their job security. Only 16% of Quebec residents feared losing their jobs, compared to 23% nationally.
- Both the data and perception indicators of health security rose in Quebec. Residents continued to feel good about their health, and 73% of those surveyed rated their health as very good or better, compared to 69% nationally.
- Like the rest of Canadians, Quebecers remained concerned over their access to health care.
- Both violent crime and property crime rates decreased, and likewise fears of violent and property crime decreased. However, residents of Quebec remain the most fearful of crime in their neighbourhoods, whether it is fear of violent crime or property crime.

The Atlantic Provinces

- According to the hard data, economic security increased, but residents' perceptions of their economic security decreased. This was largely due to decreased confidence in government income support programs, with an almost 17% drop in confidence over the previous year.
- Residents of Atlantic Canada were more likely to report that they could rely on friends, family and neighbours if they were in financial need – 78% compared to 72% nationally.
- Atlantic Canada had the lowest percentage (40%) of residents who said their incomes were very adequate.
- Data indicators for health security rose, due to decreases in potential years of life lost and decreases in work and traffic injuries.
- Atlantic residents' perceptions of their health security also rose, with people rating their health status more positively than the previous year and reporting lower levels of stress overall. (They did, however, have a higher number reporting *extreme* levels of stress.)
- Confidence in access to health care services in times of need was highest in the Atlantic region, at 61%.
- Objective indicators of physical safety rose in 2002 due to a decrease in the property crime rate.
- Next to Ontario, residents of Atlantic Canada were the most likely to state that they felt very safe from violent crime and they were the most likely to say they felt safe from property crime. This was supported by the objective data, with the Atlantic region maintaining the lowest incidence of property crime among all regions.

PSI Data Index, by Region 1998-2002



PSI Perception Index by Region, 1998-2002

