

## THE PROSPERITY PROJECT, Wave 2

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## Methodology

Methodology: On behalf of the Prosperity Project, Pollara Strategic Insights conducted an online survey among a randomlyselected, reliable sample of $\mathbf{N}=1,003$ adult (18+) Canadians.

Field Window: January 26 to Feb 1, 2021
Reliability: As a guideline, a probability sample of this size carries a margin of error of $\pm 3.1 \%, 19$ times out of 20 . The margin of error is larger for sub-segments. Although demographic and regional quotas were employed to ensure reliable and comparable subsegment analysis, the data was weighted by the most current gender, age, \& region Census data, to ensure the sample reflects actual population of adult Canadians. Discrepancies in total $\%$ are due to rounding.

| Region | Number of Interviews | Margin of error |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| British Columbia | 126 | $\pm 8.7 \%$ |
| Alberta | 127 | $\pm 8.7 \%$ |
| Saskatchewan | 98 | $\pm 9.9 \%$ |
| Manitoba | 94 | $\pm 10.1 \%$ |
| Ontario | 252 | $\pm 6.1 \%$ |
| Quebec | 204 | $\pm 6.9 \%$ |
| Atlantic Canada | 102 | $\pm 9.7 \%$ |
| Canada | $\mathbf{1 , 0 0 3}$ | $\pm \mathbf{3 . 1 \%}$ |

## Reporting Conventions

- Working mothers = Those who are women, are currently employed and have children under 18 years of age
- Working dads = Those who are men, are currently employed and have children under 18 years of age
- Working women = Those who are women, and are currently working, whether employed or self-employed
- Working men = Those who are men, ands are currently working, whether employed or self-employed
- Visible Minority women = Those who are women and identify as a someone whose membership in a minority group in Canada is visible due to skin colour or other physical features
- White women $=$ Those who are women and identify as White or Caucasian


## Key Insights

The current financial situation is the same among men and women, where most are likely to say it is the same as it was before the pandemic. Many have been cutting back expenses and saving more during the pandemic. However, a third have also experienced setbacks and two-fifths have had to use their savings to make ends meet. Overall, however, spending and saving habits are similar among men and women

- Economic and financial concerns are at the same level among men and women, albeit lower than the levels seen in August 2020. However, those who do anticipate negative impacts on their finances are still as concerned. Women continue to be somewhat more concerned than men about managing household finances.
- In August 2020, women were more likely to have experienced changes in their work conditions, however, the work situation has somewhat stabilized now - there is an almost equal impact on both men and women, in terms of job losses or reduction in working hours.
- Women and men face similar financial situations - half say the situation is the same as it was before the pandemic, one-tenth say it has improved, while for more than third, it has worsened. For those who perceive their financial status as better or at least the same as it was before the pandemic, attribute it to the reduced spending during the pandemic, not spending on outings and saving on travel expenses.
- During the pandemic, both men and women have been equally prudent about their spending, with majority saying they are cutting back on expenses or putting off larger spends to after the pandemic. However, when it comes to putting money into savings, while some have been able to, an equal number say they have not been able to do so. Four-in-ten have had to use their savings to make ends meet during the pandemic.
- Those who have managed to save during the pandemic plan to hold on to this money, with women simply keeping it in savings, and men being more likely to save or invest.


## Key Insights

Women are more likely to feel the negative mental health impacts due to COVID than men, this is particularly true for working mothers. They are overall more stressed about managing household responsibilities, helping kids with schoolwork and about the safety of their kids in school. They are also more likely to turn down jobs, overtime, promotions and have considered quitting their jobs or altering their working conditions

- Women are much more likely than men to feel anxious, stressed, and depressed, during the second wave as compared to the first. Additionally, they are also more likely than men to say that these levels will increase if the second wave were to continue for another 3 months. Stress levels among men and women have increased to a similar extent when it comes to managing household expenses and keeping themselves safe during the second wave of the pandemic.
- That said, these feelings of anxiety, stress and depression are much higher among parents, but particularly among working moms - they are a lot more stressed about helping their kids with remote schoolwork, and the overall safety of their kids in school. In addition, they also have added responsibility of caring for an elderly member of the family.
- A slight majority of women agree that since COVID-19, they have disproportionately taken up more household and child care responsibilities; only plurality among men agree. Notably, three-quarters of working mom feel this way.
- In addition, mothers are more likely to feel guilty about not spending time with kids and are more likely to turn down jobs or promotions to spend more time with family and kids. During the second wave, they are also more likely to consider quitting employment, ask for reduced working hours or take up a job with different working conditions.


## Key Insights

Majority of women agree there is a gender-bias where they are paid lower than men. In fact, half believe they are under-paid for the job they do. Four-in-ten among both men and women agree that women have experienced disproportionate job losses/pay cuts than men. And moving to the future, many also believe that women are more likely to face an economic recession and would be less likely to be considered for jobs once the pandemic is over.

- Majority of women agree that women are paid lower than men. Moreover, almost half of the working women feel they are under-paid for the job they do, while four-in-ten men feel the same.
- Two-fifths agree that women in Canada have disproportionately had more job losses/pay cuts than men. While many don't have an opinion, the men are more likely to disagree than the women. Among those who say yes, the reasons are almost aligned - majority agree its probably due to more childcare responsibilities and because women are likely to be front-line workers. Women are more likely to think it is also due to household responsibilities, while fewer among men think so.
- Women are more likely to feel that they will face an economic recession and would be less likely to be considered for jobs postpandemic; fewer men believe that women's job prospects would be impacted post-pandemic.


## Key Insights

While women, as well as men, would consider upgrading their skills, they are more worried about the risks involved, particularly parents. More than half feel that women are being encouraged to enter these fields and believe that if women took up STEM jobs that would help boost the economy post-COVID. That said, there are other factors that play a role in choosing jobs, especially among women, who more likely choose jobs with flexible hours to be able to manage their household and childcare responsibilities

- While a large majority of both working men and women are happy with their current jobs, a third would consider a change. In particular, for women who are looking for a change, the main supports they need are remote/online and affordable learning, and support from their employers. For working moms, along with these, they also need better access to childcare.
- Four-in-ten among both men and women want to upgrade their skills, and are worried that if they don't, they won't get better or higher paying jobs; however, the risk of changing or losing their job is a deterrent, as they are concerned about household responsibilities.
- One-in-five women are interested in the STEM industry, while one-in-ten would also consider administrative, business and finance sectors. More than half, among both men and women, feel that women are being encouraged to enter technical fields, but just a third agree that they have been given ample opportunities to do so. More than half also feel that if women transition into STEM sectors that would help boost the economy post-COVID.
- Women and men have different notions as to why and how women choose their jobs - half of the women themselves, say that they or other women choose their jobs based on flexible hours to manage household responsibility rather than advance their careers or salary offered. Fewer among men think this way.


Economic Concerns \& Personal Finances

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## The likelihood of the outbreak negatively impacting household income, getting laid off or losing hours/pay is somewhat lower in Jan 2021 compared to Aug 2020

- The proportion of men and women who have experienced job losses, loss of pay or a negative impact on their finances is almost at par and nearly at the same levels as seen in Aug 2020. Even though Canada is experiencing a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the overall likelihood to experience these reduces, which may imply that the financial and job situations have somewhat stabilized. That said, men are slightly more worried about these factors than women.
- Those who have children, are more likely to feel the negative impacts on their household income compared to those who don't have kids - but these concerns are felt equally by parents, regardless of gender.



## Those who anticipate a negative impact on household finances due to the COVID-19 outbreak, are still as worried about finances now as they were back in Aug 2020

- Women continue to be more worried about their household finances, particularly about repaying debts they already have and paying household bills. However, plurality of men are also concerned.
- Working parents are much more concerned about all these aspects than those who don't have children. Between moms and dads, the concern levels are the same - while concern levels among working moms remain the same since Aug 2020, concern levels among working dads increase.
- Visible minority women are 10-20\% more likely to be concerned about household finances than White women; most notable difference is that they are much more concerned about being evicted (47\%) than White women (27\%).



## Current personal financial situation between men and women is the same - for half it the same as it was before the pandemic, 14\% say it has improved, while more than a third say it is worst off

- Reasons for feeling they are better off or in the same financial situation as before the pandemic are also aligned - most have had reduced expenditure due to restrictions, not spending as much on entertainment and outings and have saved up on travel expenses.



## Both men and women are equally prudent about their spending either cutting back on expenses to have a bigger safety net during the pandemic or putting off major spends to after the pandemic

- When it comes to actually being able to put more money into savings, views are mixed - while some agree that they have been able to save and invest, an almost equal number disagrees.
- Four-in-ten among both men (41\%) and women (40\%) say they have had to use their savings during the pandemic to make ends meet. Working parents, more so working moms (48\%; $44 \%$ working dads), agree to using their savings to make ends meet than those without kids ( $35 \%$ women; $38 \%$ men).
- Visible minority women are much more prudent about their spending - $80 \%$ are cutting back and $75 \%$ are putting off major expenses compared to fewer of the White women (61\%; $54 \%$ resp.). They have also been able to put more money into savings ( $63 \%$ ) than White women ( $42 \%$ ). However, half ( $50 \%$ ) say they have tapped into their savings compared to $38 \%$ of White women.



## Those who have managed to save during the pandemic plan to hold on to this money, with women simply keeping it in savings, and men being more like to save or invest

- Other than keeping it as savings, women and men are likely to use their savings in a similar manner - travelling, paying down debt and investing are some of the top of mind things they would do; women are more likely to consider a vacation whereas men would more likely consider investing.




## Mental health, Stress levels and Balancing responsibilities

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## Women are more likely than men to say they are experiencing higher levels of anxiety, depression and stress during the second wave of the pandemic in comparison to the first wave; men are more likely to say there is no change

- Additionally, women are somewhat more likely to feel that if the second wave continues for longer, they may experience higher levels of anxiety, depression and stress. While $40 \%$ of men also feel they will experience more anxiety and stress, fewer say they will experience higher levels of depression (35\%). Notably, women are more likely to say that their levels of stress ( $18 \%$ ), anxiety ( $17 \%$ ) and depression ( $16 \%$ ) are going to be much higher than the men (10-12\%).
- Working moms report experiencing higher levels of stress ( $52 \%$ ), anxiety ( $47 \%$ ) and depression ( $43 \%$ ), compared to working women without children ( $36 \%$; $38 \%$; $29 \%$ ). These levels are also higher when compared to working dads (37\%; 40\%; 27\%).
- Likewise, if the second wave continues for another 3 months, almost six-in-ten working moms are much more likely to say that they will experience higher levels of stress ( $59 \%$ ) and anxiety ( $58 \%$ ), and half ( $52 \%$ ) will experience higher levels of depression. For working dads, the increase is $12-16 \%$ lower than seen among working moms and $3-6 \%$ higher than the average among men. In comparison, fewer working women without children ( $40-41 \%$ ) say they may experience higher levels of these negative emotions if the pandemic continues.


| $12 \% 3 \%$ | $39 \%$ | $30 \%$ | $10 \%$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $16 \% 3 \% 6 \%$ | $39 \%$ | $25 \%$ | $\mathbf{4 0 \%}$ |
| $11 \% 4 \% \%$ | $39 \%$ | $28 \%$ | $\mathbf{3 5 \%}$ |

## Overall, both men and women are likely to experience similar levels of increased stress when it comes to household management, keeping safe, and dealing with their family's stress and anxiety

- However, working moms experience higher levels of stress - $41 \%$ are finding managing household expenses; $46 \%$ dealing with their family's anxiety and $58 \%$ keeping family safe as more stressful now than when the pandemic started. Working dads are finding manging expenses more stressful now (50\%), but are not as worried about safety ( $21 \%$ ) or dealing with their family's anxieties ( $38 \%$ ). In comparison, working women without kids ( $23-28 \%$ ) are a lot less stressed about these aspects.
- Working moms also have the additional stress of caring for an elderly family member (33\%). This is again higher when compared to working dads (22\%), women without kids (14\%) and women who aren't working (21\%).
- Visible minority women are more stressed about all aspects than White women; they are more worried about managing expenses ( $32 \% \mathrm{vs}$. $25 \%$ ), and are much more stressed about keeping safe ( $50 \%$ vs. $35 \%$ ) and dealing with their family's stress and anxiety ( $55 \%$ vs. $31 \%$ ).



## During the second wave, mothers are feeling a lot more stressed about helping their kids with remote schoolwork, and overall safety of their kids in school; in comparison dads are less stressed about these aspects

- For mothers who are working, managing their kids schoolwork while working from home ( $47 \%$ ) and having to continue to help their kids with schoolwork if the second wave continues for longer (50\%) are causing more stress now than they are for working dads ( $33 \% ; 31 \%$ respectively). On the other hand, moms who are not working are less stressed about helping kids with schoolwork (36\%).
- Overall, balancing family and household responsibilities with work during the second wave (as compared to Spring 2020) is becoming more stressful for parents now than those without kids. Among the parents, again, the working moms have it harder, with $44 \%$ saying they are more likely to be stressed than the dads ( $38 \%$ ). For those without kids, the converse is true - the men are more stressed about balancing home and work ( $28 \%$ ) than the women (18\%).
- White women are less stressed about balancing responsibilities ( $26 \%$ ), helping kids with schoolwork while working from home ( $39 \%$ ) and are also less stressed about having to continue helping their kids with remote learning if the second wave continues ( $41 \%$ ), compared to visible minority women ( $40 \%$; $59 \%$; $57 \%$ respectively).



## Mothers are more likely to feel guilty about not spending time with kids and are more likely to turn down jobs or promotions to spend more time with family and kids

- Though these proportions are somewhat lower than seen in Aug 2020, the sentiment stays the same, that is, women are more likely to focus on family and children than men.
- Working moms feel even more guilty about not spending enough time with their children (54\%) and are more likely to turn down jobs or promotions (35\%) compared to working dads ( $34 \% ; 28 \%$ respectively). The working moms are also more likely to have their kids enrolled in childcare/ daycare (39\%) then the dads ( $28 \%$ ).
- Parents ( $42 \%$ working moms; $39 \%$ working dads) are more likely to turn down extra work or overtime, than those without kids ( $14 \%$ women; $21 \%$ men).



## Women are much more likely to agree that since COVID, they have disproportionately taken up more household and child care responsibilities; plurality among men agree

- Three-quarters (72-73\%) of working moms agree that they have taken up more of these responsibilities since COVID; in comparison only 40-49\% of working dads agree. Even working women who don't have kids are more likely to agree that women have taken up more childcare responsibilities in the pandemic (58\%).



## Women (26\%) with kids under 18 are more likely to consider quitting employment to help their kids with schoolwork, than the fathers (19\%)

- Additionally, working moms are more likely to quit their jobs (not specifically for schoolwork; $24 \%$ vs. $11 \%$ ); ask for less hours ( $27 \%$ vs. $16 \%$ ) or take up a job with different working conditions ( $30 \%$ vs. $22 \%$ ) compared to working dads.
- Visible minority women are more likely to consider all these options than White women - quitting their jobs ( $27 \%$ vs. 11\%), quitting their jobs specifically for helping their children ( $32 \%$ vs. $22 \%$ ), asking for fewer working hours ( $28 \%$ vs. $10 \%$ ) or take up a job with different working conditions ( $39 \%$ vs. $17 \%$ ).
- That said, overall, the proportion of both men and women who are considering to quit paid employment is the same and does not vary much from the proportions seen in Aug 2020.



Work-related Gender Biases

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## Two-fifths of men and women agree that women in Canada have disproportionately had more job losses/pay cuts than men; many don't have an opinion

- However, fewer among women disagree (15\%) than men (25\%).
- Visible minority women more strongly agree (60\%) that there have been disproportional job cuts for women that White women (41\%).
- Among those who say yes, the reasons are almost aligned - majority agree its probably due to more childcare responsibilities and because they are front-line workers. Women are more likely to think it is also due to household responsibilities, while fewer among men think so.



## Majority (64\%) of women agree to a gender bias, that women are paid lower than men in Canada, in comparison 43\% of men agree

- Women aged 18-54 are less likely to feel there is a gender bias (57-58\%) than those $55+(72 \%)$.
- Four-in-ten (44\%) women feel that they will face an economic recession and lack of job prospects once the pandemic is over, and somewhat likely to feel that women would be less likely to be considered for jobs than men post-pandemic (30\%). In comparison, fewer men believe that women's job prospects would be impacted post-pandemic ( $30 \%$; $22 \%$ resp.).
- Visible minority women $(41 \%)$ are more in agreement that women would be less likely to be considered for jobs after the pandemic, than White women (29\%).



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## Eight-in-ten among both men and women are happy with their current job, however, a third among both groups would consider a change

- Equal proportions say they are unhappy, however, $5-6 \%$ would still not consider changing their jobs.
- Slightly higher numbers among working moms ( $88 \%$ ) and working dads ( $85 \%$ ) say they are happy with their current job; among them $48 \%$ moms and $44 \%$ dads would not consider a change.
- On the other hand, fewer among those without kids are happy with their jobs (75-78\%). Among women who don't have kids, despite being unhappy with their job (19\%), only half would consider a change (9\%). In comparison, $14 \%$ of men in this group are unhappy, and $9 \%$ would consider switching jobs.
- *Working women who despite being unhappy with their jobs, would not consider changing jobs because they feel they don't have the ability to work in a different sector or field, are worried about income flow or don't know how to go about making the change. For the men, paying bills and household responsibilities are the main barriers to making this change. *These results are only directional and not statistically significant as the base size of those who answered this question is very small.



## In order to change jobs, women (more than men) need remote learning opportunities, affordable education and support from employers

- For one-tenth of women, support from the family and better childcare support is needed. While men are more likely to require family support, they are in less need of childcare.
- For working moms along with availability and affordability, one-third need more support from their employers in terms of reducing work hours, while $20 \%$ need better access and support for childcare. Fewer cite affordability of childcare (9\%) or support from family (9\%) as a barrier.



## Four-in-ten among both men and women want to upgrade their skills, and are worried that if they don't, they won't get better or higher paying jobs; however, the risk of changing or losing jobs is a deterrent

- Fewer women are worried about losing their jobs, either in trying to upgrade their skills ( $25 \%$ ) or if they don't update their current skills ( $19 \%$ ), compared to men ( $30 \%$; $31 \%$ ). Overall, working parents are more worried about the risks of either losing their jobs while upgrading their skills ( $36 \%$ ) or changing jobs ( $65-70 \%$ ), because they have household responsibilities to consider, than those without kids.
- Notably, while half ( $49 \%$ ) of the women feel they are under-paid at their current jobs, fewer among men (38\%) feel the same about their jobs. Working moms are more likely to feel under paid (57\%) than working dads (37\%), working women without kids (42\%) or working men without kids (39\%).
- Visible minority women (55\%), not only feel under-paid compared to White women (46\%), they are also more worried that they wont get better jobs ( $63 \%$ vs. $36 \%$ ) or will lose their jobs ( $34 \%$ vs. $15 \%$ ) if they don't upgrade their skills. Thus, are much more keen on wanting to upgrade their skills, but are worried about the risks and their job security.
- Half of those women who are not currently working want to upgrade their skills but either don't know how to ( $50 \%$ ) or cant afford to ( $51 \%$ ).



## Compared to men, women are less interested in STEM fields but more interested in Administrative jobs

- $21 \%$ among working women would consider STEM fields as an area to upgrade their skills and $12 \%$ among those not working, with higher inclination towards the technology/IT sector (16\%; 9\% respectively).
- Visible minority women are more keen to look at STEM fields (30\%) than White women (14\%), and would look for skills in business, finance and administration to a somewhat higher extent. That said, only $12 \%$ are not looking to upgrade their skills versus $37 \%$ of White women. Younger women are more keen to upgrade their skills - only $5 \%$ among $18-34$ year olds and $22 \%$ among 35-54 year olds say they are not looking to upgrade their skills.




## More than half, among both men and women, feel that women are being encouraged to enter technical fields, but just a third agree that they have been given ample opportunities to do so

- However, more than half among women (51\%) and men (54\%) agree that if women transition into STEM sectors, it will help boost the economy.
- Women aged $18-54$ are less likely to feel that women are being encouraged ( $48-52 \%$ ) than those $55+(66 \%)$.



## Women and men have different notions as to why and how women choose their jobs

- Women are more likely to admit that they or other women choose their jobs based on flexible hours to manage household responsibility rather than advance their careers (53\%) or salary offered (50\%), fewer among the men think this way ( $39 \%, 31 \%$ respectively).
- Among the working women less than half agree that they choose on the basis of flexible hours rather than salary (46\%) or to advance careers (48\%). However, among those who are not working, higher numbers agree that that is how women choose their jobs ( $58 \%$; $66 \%$ respectively).
- Further, working moms are more likely to agree that salary is the not their main criteria to choose their job (59\%), whereas, those without kids are less likely to agree (36\%).
- Interestingly, the younger women (18-34 years) are less likely to think that women choose their jobs based on flexible hours rather than salary or career prospects ( $39 \%$ ). The $35+$ women are more likely to think so (53-64\%).




## APPENDIX

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## Current Employment Status

- Overall, $50 \%$ of women are working, either employed or self-employed, and $58 \%$ of men are working. Higher number of men work full-time jobs than women, whereas more women work part-time jobs than men.



## Employment Status since COVID-19 Outbreak

- More women are working from home than men. Overall, equal number of men and women have had changes in their working situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic - $13 \%$ of women were laid off versus $11 \%$ of men. In Aug 2020, a higher number of women were laid off compared to the men (11\% vs, $6 \%$ ).



## Children in the household




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