



# INDICATORS

CPABC's *BC Check-Up* uses the selected economic indicators to evaluate BC as a place to **LIVE**.



## Housing Prices

How has the cost of residential housing changed?



## Rental Market

How have residential rental prices and the availability of units changed?



## Median Income

How much after-tax income does a representative family make in BC?



## Housing Supply

How many housing units were completed across BC?



## Population Change

How has BC's population changed, and where are the changes coming from?



## Demographic Trends

What is the age distribution across BC's population?

# PROVINCIAL SUMMARY

Attracting immigrants continues to be a long-term goal of the provincial and federal governments, both to help offset Canada's aging population and to fill a rising number of job vacancies. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, British Columbia was successful in attracting a growing number of residents from other parts of the country and internationally.

However, BC's **population growth rate slowed in 2020 and into 2021** as the travel restrictions and uncertainty arising from the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the normal flow of migration. While faring better than other provinces, BC's population growth from July 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021 was the slowest it's been since 2011.

The province **added 56,077 residents in 2021**, but that was well below the annual average of about 68,400 from 2010 to 2019. This was primarily the result of a **continued slowdown in the number of international immigrants** coming to the province; though a growing number of residents arriving from other provinces helped offset that decline. In fact, for the first time in the past decade, **interprovincial migration was a larger contributor to population growth than international migration**.

The slowdown in population growth in 2021 helped narrow the gap in housing supply. In 2021, over **39,000 housing units were completed, about 0.7 per new resident**. This is well above the 0.4 units per new resident in 2019 and 0.3 at the recent low point in 2016. **Approximately 77% of this new supply was attached units**, such as condos and apartments, up from 65% in 2016.

However, it is necessary to note that in the **latter half of 2021, the province experienced a significant uptick in population growth as immigration rebounded**. This trend is anticipated to continue in the near future, and will add additional pressure on housing demand.

The pandemic also shifted housing demand towards larger homes. This increase in demand coupled with a low interest rate environment continued to push housing prices to new heights. By May 2022, the average house sold across BC cost **\$980,324, up by 8.6% compared to May 2021 and 38.0% from May 2020**.

Rental units became scarcer in 2021, and despite a provincial freeze on rent increases for existing tenants, the average cost of a rental was up across the province. The average rent for a **three+ bedroom in BC was \$1,923 a month** and a one bedroom was \$1,322, **up 8.1% and 1.9% respectively from 2020**. Compared to 2017, the average three+ bedroom monthly rental rate was up by nearly \$500 a month, while a one bedroom increased by over \$200.

The median after-tax income for a family in BC was \$94,300 as of 2020, a 6.4% gain since 2017, and \$36,700 for single individuals up 19.9%, both well behind housing price growth over that period. While the increase in income for single individuals was significant, **this was primarily due to the temporary government supports during the pandemic**, rather than employment income. While 2021 data is not available and the province has seen a recovery in GDP growth, many government programs also winded down which had supported incomes in 2020 (especially for low-income individuals). Given the significant growth in housing prices in both 2021 and so far into 2022, **the gap over income growth is expected to have further widened**.

To better understand the outlook on affordability and the economy, CPABC also surveyed its members who work on the front line of business in BC. **Rising labour shortages, housing prices, and wages** were identified as the three biggest challenges for business success in BC in 2022, and two-thirds (67%) of the respondents expect housing affordability to worsen in their region in 2022.

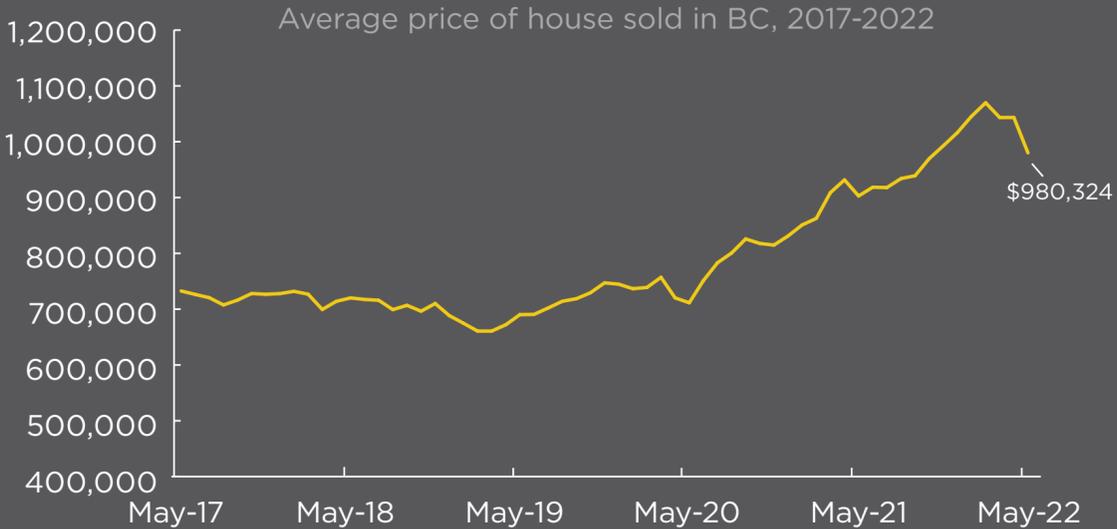
Despite these rising challenges, the overall economic outlook is relatively positive in BC. **Nearly three-in-four BC CPAs believe BC's economy will be stable or improve in 2022** compared to 2021, and four-in-five expect their organization's economic prospects to stay the same or improve.

# PROVINCIAL SUMMARY



### HOUSING PRICES\*

Driven by strong demand for detached homes and a low interest rate environment, BC's real estate prices have rapidly increased. The average home sold for \$980,324 in May 2022 - up by 8.6% compared to May 2021 and 38.0% from May 2020.



### RENTAL MARKET

Rental units became scarcer in 2021, and despite a provincial freeze on rent increases for existing tenants, the average cost of a rental was up significantly. Three+ bedroom unit prices increased the most, up 8.1% compared to 2020 and 33.4% since 2017.



### MEDIAN INCOME\*\*

The median after-tax income for a family in BC was \$94,300 as of 2020, a \$5,700 gain since 2017, and \$36,700 for single individuals, up \$6,100. The increase in 2020 was primarily due to government supports during the pandemic, rather than employment income.



Family Income  
**\$94,300**  
 (↑6.4% from 2017)



Individual Income  
**\$36,700**  
 (↑19.9% from 2017)

\*Residential housing prices are based on monthly housing sales data from the CREA and is primarily useful to understand housing trends. The rapid price escalation in late 2020 through 2022 is in part due to the increased number of detached (more expensive) units being purchased.

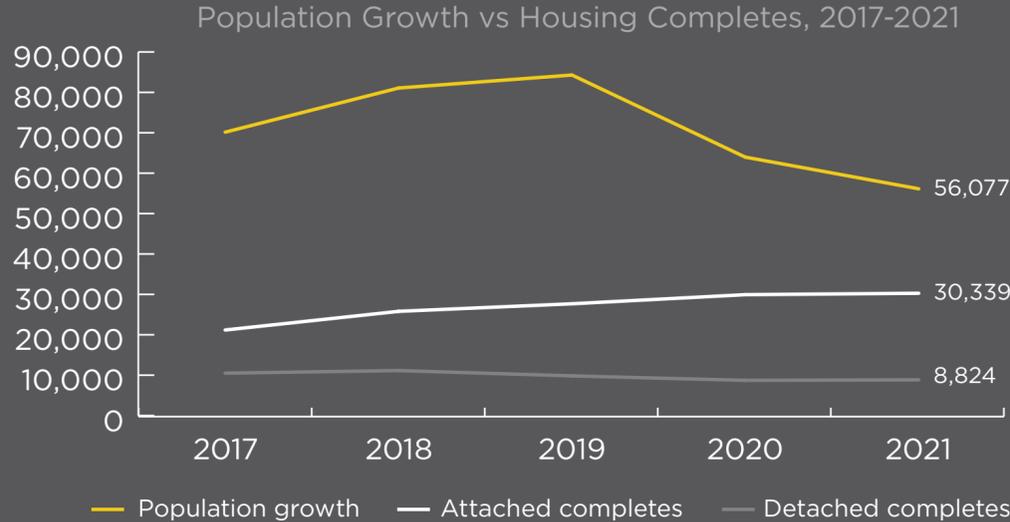
\*\*Median income after tax and government transfers. Family income is defined as an economic family of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law, adoption, or a foster relationship. The individual income is defined as a person not in an economic family, living either alone or with others who are unrelated, such as roommates or a lodger.

# PROVINCIAL SUMMARY



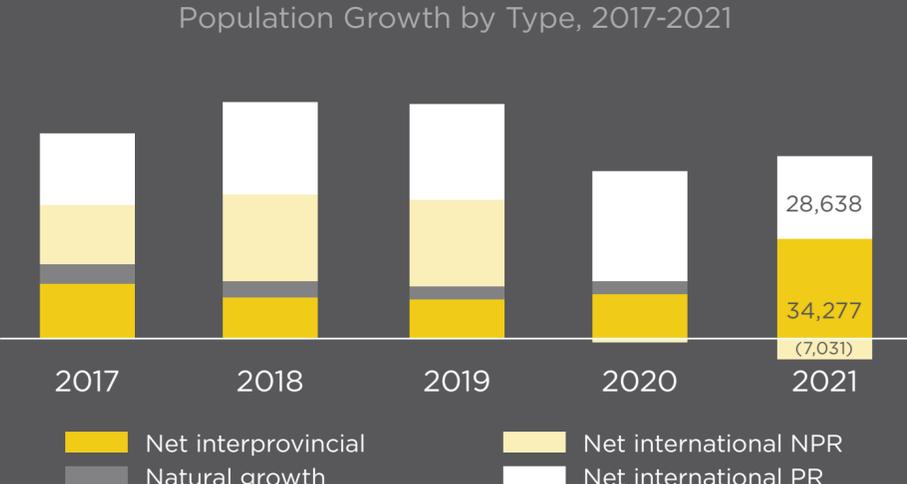
## HOUSING SUPPLY

BC's population growth continued to be below pre-pandemic levels, up by 56,077 from 2020 to 2021\*. The number of housing units completed increased slightly to 39,163 in 2021. Nearly four-fifths were attached units such as condos and apartments, compared to two-thirds in 2017.



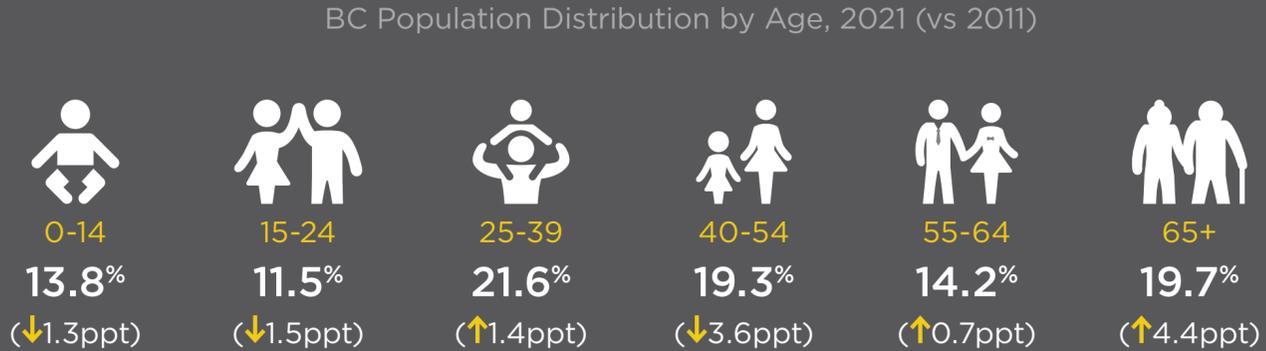
## POPULATION CHANGE\*

International non-permanent resident migration, which includes students, saw a net outflow of residents in 2021. For the first time in a decade, interprovincial migration was a larger contributor to population growth than international migration. Natural growth (births minus mortalities) reached a record low.



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

BC's average age was 42.8 in 2021, compared to 40.8 in 2011. Those aged 65+ made up nearly a fifth of the population, the fastest growing cohort, while those aged 25-39 were the largest group. The proportion of those aged 0 to 24 and 40 to 54 have been on the decline.



\*Population estimate as of July 1 of each year. BC's population growth rate increased in the latter half of 2021.

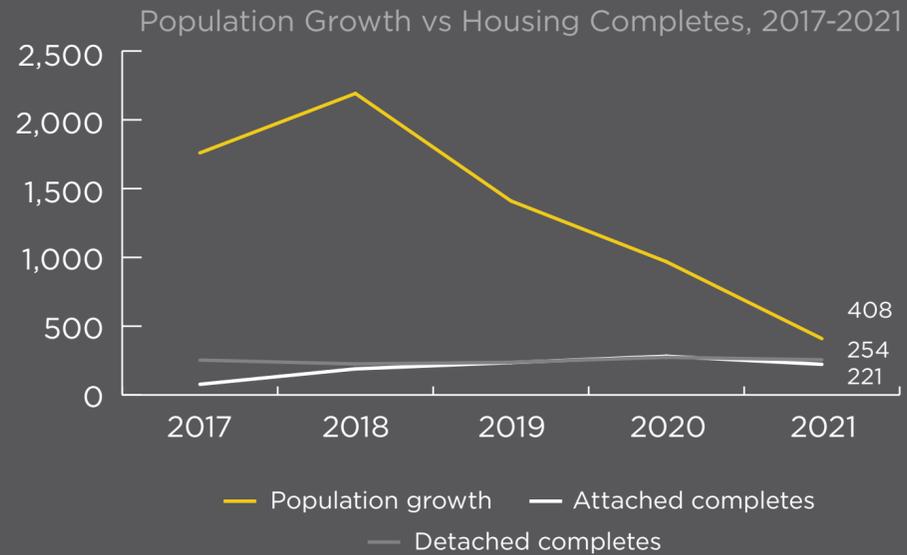


# CARIBOO



## HOUSING SUPPLY

In the Cariboo, the gap between population gains and housing completes has narrowed since 2018 as population growth slowed. There were 475 housing units completed in 2021\*, down from 2020 but above the 316 annual average from 2010 to 2019.



## HOUSING PRICES

Rental prices were up in 2021 in Prince George, and housing prices were up in all three of the Cariboo's largest municipalities.

### Prince George Rental Rates 2021\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$830 (↑7.8%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$1,128 (↑11.9%)

### Average Assessed Property Value 2021\*\*:

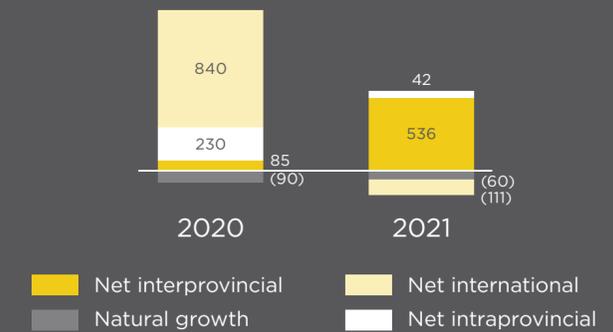
- Prince George: \$ 341,075 (↑7.1%)
- Williams Lake: \$257,476 (↑5.5%)
- Quesnel: \$234,664 (↑4.5%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

Population growth slowed to the lowest rate since 2012 due to a decline in international and within BC migration. The region's population growth benefited from an increase in the number of new residents arriving from other provinces.

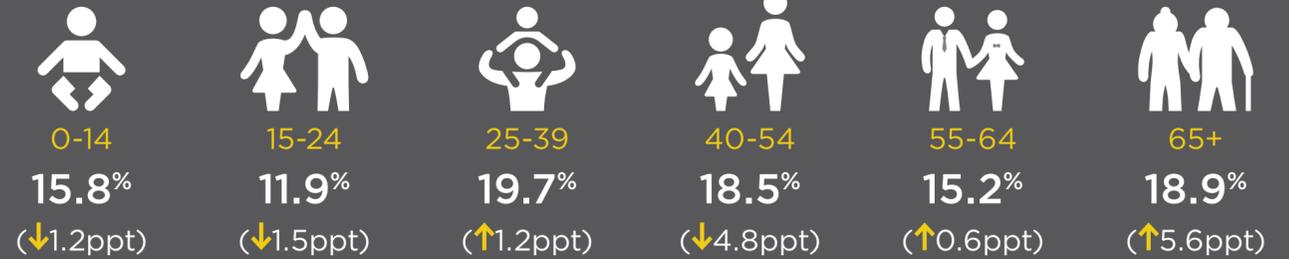
### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The Cariboo's average age of 42.0 was slightly younger than the provincial average. However, the proportion of those aged 65+ increased by over 40% over the past ten years.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2021 (vs 2011)



\*Housing unit completion data for the region is only available for Prince George, Quesnel and Williams Lake. Population estimate as of July 1 of each year. BC's population growth rate increased in the latter half of 2021.

\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year. Housing prices based on BC Assessment average 2020 property value as the Canadian Real Estate Association does not provide recent housing sale information for this development region.

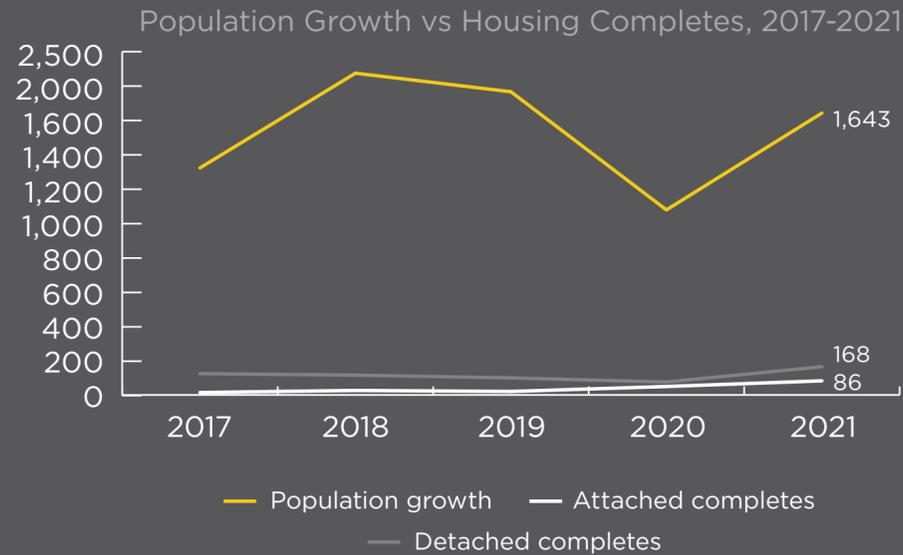


# KOOTENAY



## HOUSING SUPPLY

There continued to be a significant gap between population and housing supply growth in the Kootenays. The 254 housing units completed in 2021\* in Cranbrook and Nelson were the highest in the past decade, as both attached and detached completes increased.



## HOUSING PRICES

Rental prices in Cranbrook continued to increase, while the average price of a house sold in the Kootenays exceeded \$500,000 for the first time.

### Cranbrook Rental Rates 2021\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$785 (↑3.2%)

### Kootenay Housing Sales Price

#### May 2022\*\*:

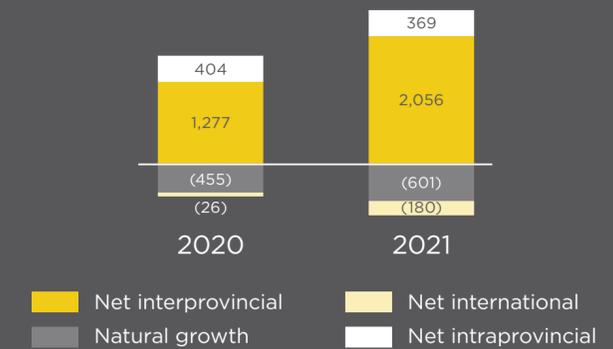
- Average price: \$511,987 (↑12.3%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

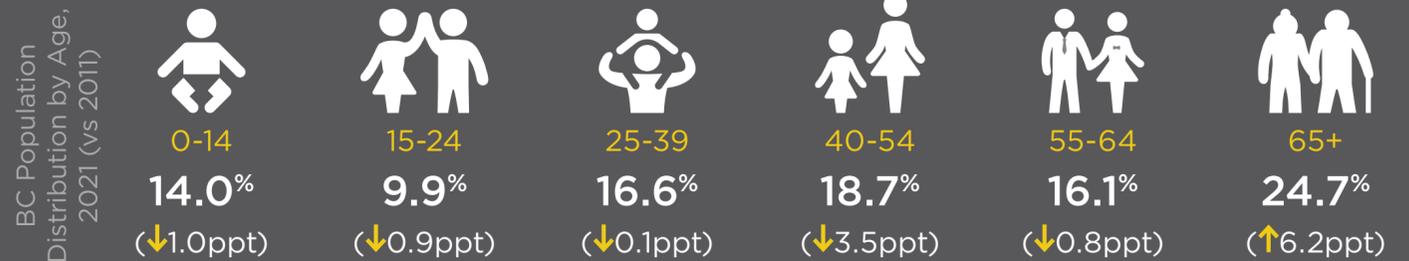
Interprovincial migration continued to be the largest source of new residents, while negative natural growth (births minus mortalities) has been increasingly slowing down the region's population growth.

### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The proportion of residents aged 65+ was the only age group to increase over the past decade, and made up about a quarter of the population in 2021. The region's average age of 45.6 was the second oldest in the province.



\*Housing unit completion data for the region is only available for Cranbrook and Nelson. Population estimate as of July 1 of each year. BC's population growth rate increased in the latter half of 2021.

\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year.

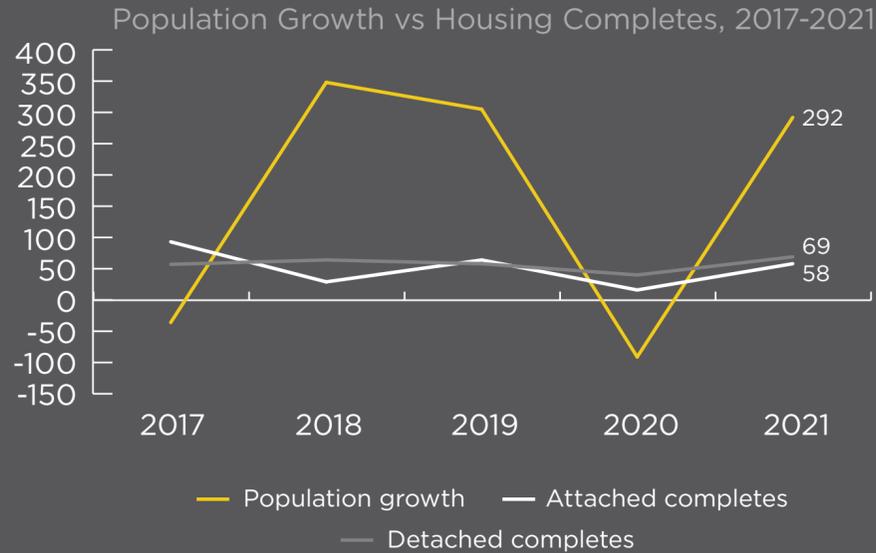


# NORTHEAST BC



## HOUSING SUPPLY

The 127 housing units completed in 2021\* were more than twice the number completed in 2020, but lower than the average of 325 from 2010 to 2019. Northeast BC's population growth recovered in 2021 as the region added 292 new residents.



## HOUSING PRICES

After rapidly increasing in 2021, housing prices in South Peace River have since fallen moderated. Rental prices in Fort St. John were up slightly overall and remained low relative to the provincial average.

### Fort St. John Rental Rates 2021\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$747 (↓0.4%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$1,005 (↑2.6%)

### South Peace River Housing Sales Price May 2022\*\*:

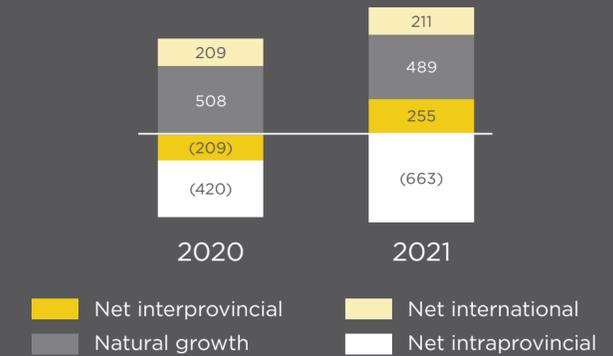
- Average price: \$ 297,050 (↑8.9%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

Northeast BC continued to lose residents to other parts of the province. This was offset by a strong natural growth rate (births minus mortalities), and a significant increase in the number of residents arriving from other provinces.

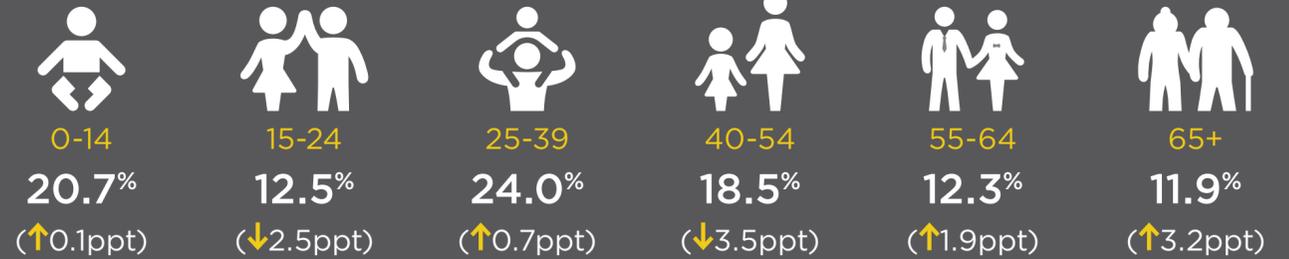
### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

With an average age of 36.9 in 2021, Northeast BC continued to be the youngest region in the province, almost six years younger than the provincial average. The proportion of those aged 0-14 and 25-39 are the highest of any region in the province.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2021 (vs 2011)



\* Housing unit completion data for the region is only available for population centers of 10,000+, such as Fort St. John and Dawson Creek. Population estimate as of July 1 of each year. BC's population growth rate increased in the latter half of 2021.  
\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year.

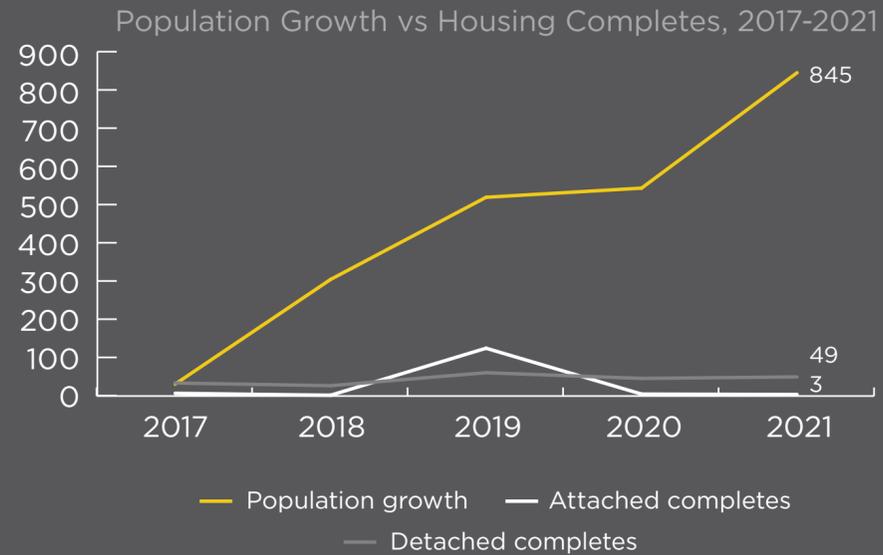


# NORTHWEST BC



## HOUSING SUPPLY

Northwest BC continued to see its population growth rate increase, and the 845 new residents in 2021 pushed the region's population over 100,000. The number of housing units completed in Terrace and Prince Rupert in 2021\* was up slightly compared to 2020.



## HOUSING PRICES

While housing prices did not increase as fast as other regions in 2021, prices are well above 2019 levels in all the listed municipalities.

### Average Assessed Property Value 2021\*\*:

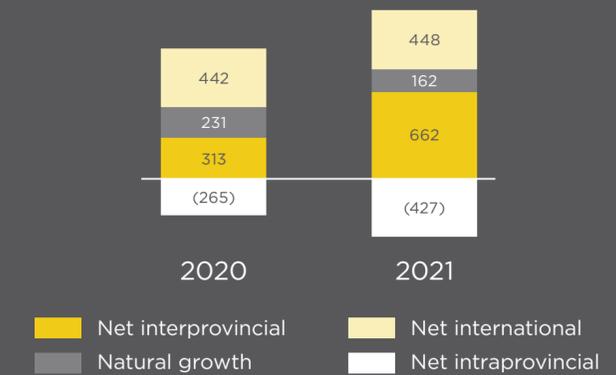
- Smithers: \$349,592 (↑13.3%)
- Terrace: \$383,306 (↑1.4%)
- Prince Rupert: \$310,008 (↑6.5%)
- Kitimat: \$344,780 (↓1.2%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

Northwest BC's population growth continued to be primarily driven by a net gain of residents from other countries or provinces. The region has also continued to see a net outflow of residents to other parts of the province.

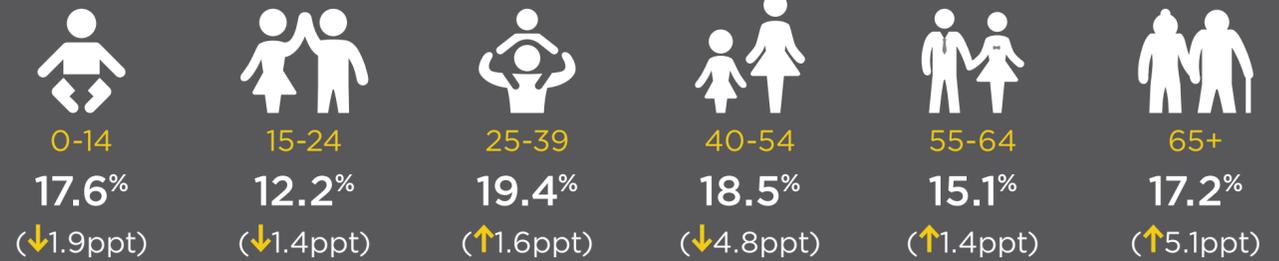
### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

With an average age of 40.6 in 2021, Northwest BC residents were the second youngest in the province. However, the region's average age rose by 2.2 over the past decade, faster than the increase for the province as a whole.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2021 (vs 2011)



\*Housing unit completion data for the region is only available for population centres of 10,000+ such as Terrace and Prince Rupert and excludes municipalities such as Smithers and Kitimat. Population estimate as of July 1 of each year. BC's population growth rate increased in the latter half of 2021.

\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year. Housing prices based on BC Assessment average 2020 property value as the Canadian Real Estate Association does not provide recent housing sale information for this development region.

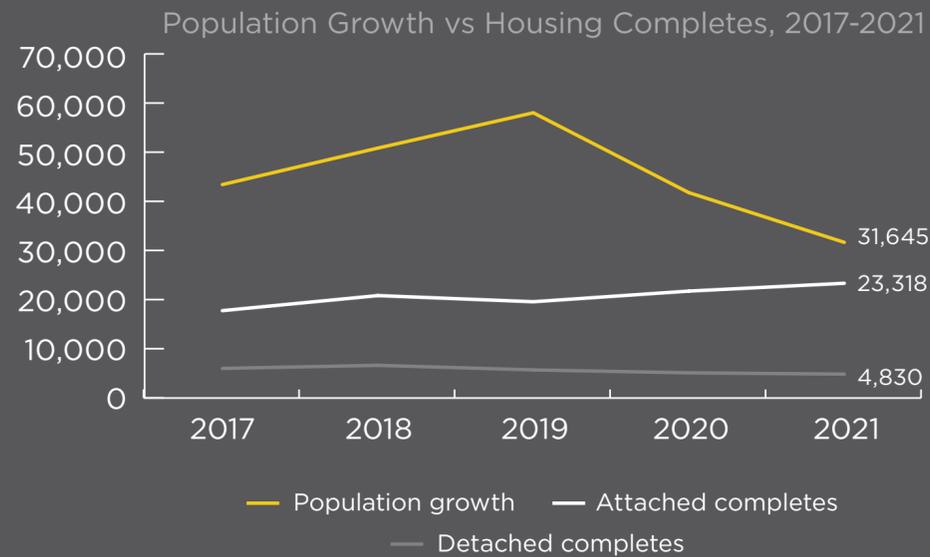


# SOUTHWEST BC



## HOUSING SUPPLY

The gap between housing supply and population growth narrowed in Southwest BC as its population growth slowed to the lowest in over a decade\*. There were 28,148 housing units completed in 2021, of which over four-fifths were attached units such as condos and apartments.



## HOUSING PRICES

Rental rates were up the most for larger units in 2021, while vacancy rates were down for all types of units. Both apartments and larger family homes saw double digit price increases.

### Greater Vancouver Rental Rates 2021\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$1,434 (↑1.3%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$2,326 (↑5.4%)

### Lower Mainland Housing Sales Price May 2022\*\*:

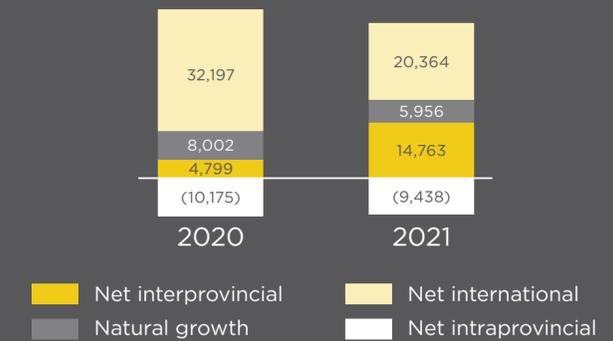
- Single family home: \$1,884,700 (↑19.2%)
- Apartment: \$720,900 (↑17.7%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

The slowdown in population growth was primarily due to a decline in international immigration and residents leaving for other parts of the province. However, that loss was offset by a growing number of residents coming from other provinces.

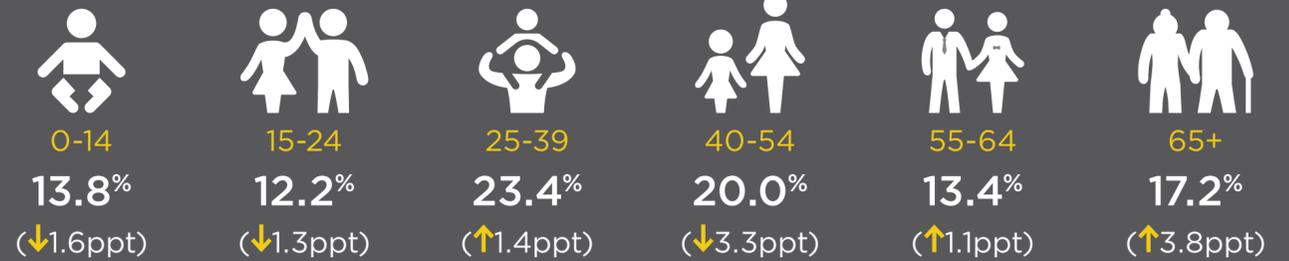
Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The average age for a Southwest BC resident was 41.6 in 2021, 1.2 years younger than the provincial average. The proportion of those aged 65+ grew faster than any other age group over the past decade.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2021 (vs 2011)



\*Population estimate as of July 1 of each year. BC's population growth rate increased in the latter half of 2021.

\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year.

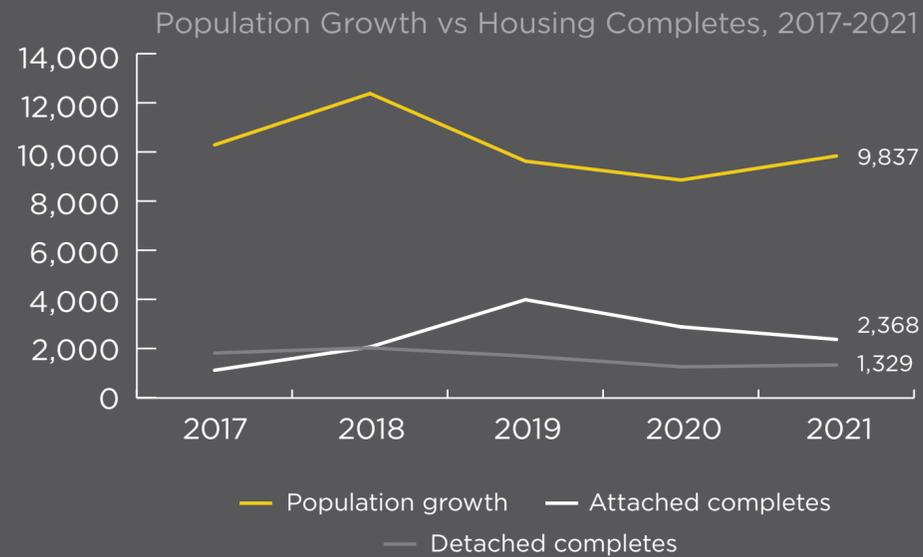


# THOMPSON-OKANAGAN



## HOUSING SUPPLY

The gap between housing supply and population growth widened as the region added the most residents in 2021 over the past five years\*. Housing completes have been on the decline since 2019, with attached units such as condos and apartments down the most.



## HOUSING PRICES

Rental rates were up the most for larger units in Kelowna, with vacancy rates of all unit types below one percent. Housing prices in the region have rapidly increased over the past year.

### Kelowna Rental Rates 2021\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$1,191 (↑4.0%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$1,709 (↑7.1%)

### Okanagan Housing Sales Price May 2022\*\*:

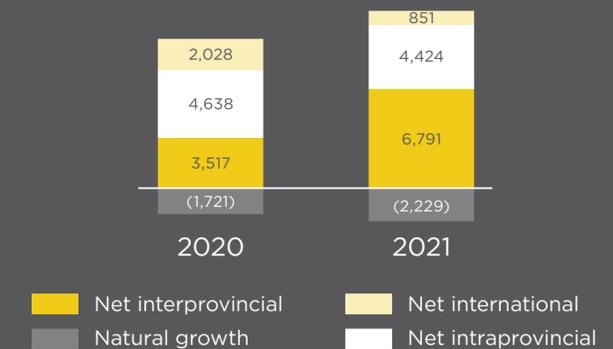
- Average price: \$785,660 (↑9.6%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

The region's population growth is primarily from residents moving from other provinces and other regions in BC. The pandemic forced non-permanent migration down in 2021, while the region's mortality rate continued to exceed its birth rate (natural growth).

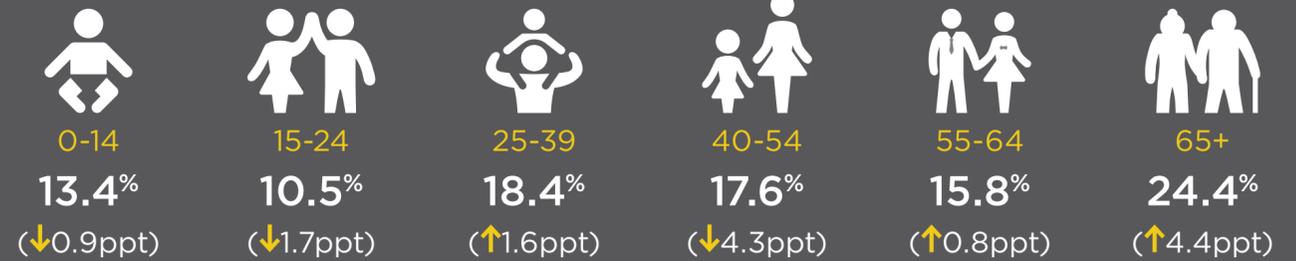
### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The average age of a resident in the region was 45.4 in 2021, well above the 42.8 provincial average. Those aged 65+ made up nearly a quarter of the population, up from a fifth in 2011.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2021 (vs 2011)



\*Population estimate as of July 1 of each year. BC's population growth rate increased in the latter half of 2021.

\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year.

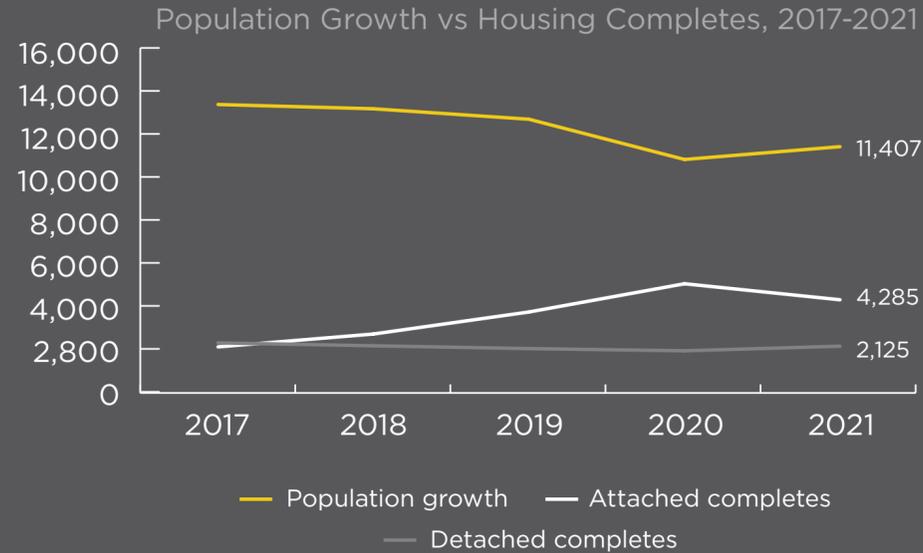


# VANCOUVER ISLAND/COAST



## HOUSING SUPPLY

The number of housing units completed was down, as attached completes such as condos and apartments declined by nearly 15% compared to 2020. After falling year-over-year since 2016, there was a modest increase in the population growth rate in 2021\*.



## HOUSING PRICES

### Rental Rates 2021\*\*:

- Greater Victoria**
- One bedroom: \$1,214 (↑2.4%)
  - Three+ bedroom: \$1,894 (↑7.7%)
- Nanaimo**
- One bedroom: \$1,092 (↑8.1%)
  - Three+ bedroom: \$1,542 (↑13.4%)

### Housing Sales Price May 2022\*\*:

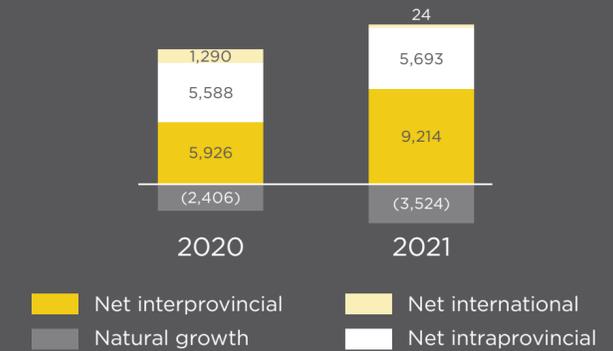
- Vancouver Island**
- Single family home: \$855,300 (↑30.2%)
  - Apartment: \$446,100 (↑36.2%)
- Greater Victoria**
- Single family home: \$1,277,600 (↑27.3%)
  - Apartment: \$611,300 (↑27.0%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

The region's negative natural growth rate (births minus mortalities) has nearly tripled since 2017. Population growth was positive in 2021 due to the region's strength in attracting immigrants, particularly from other BC regions and other provinces.

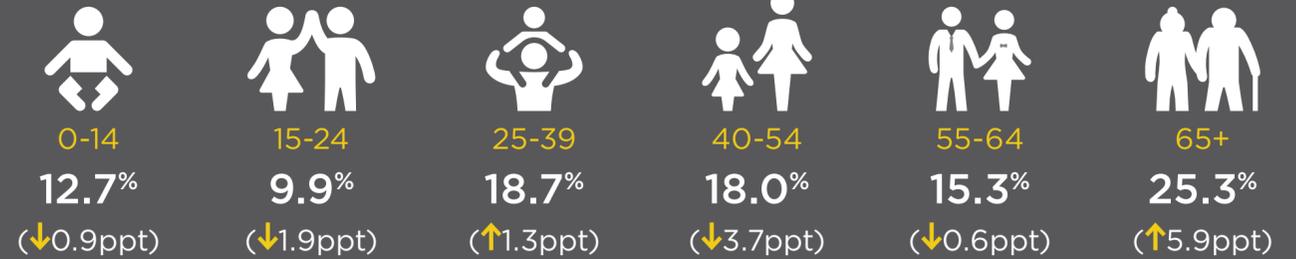
### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The region's average age of 45.9 was the highest in the province in 2021, 3.1 years older than the overall average. Those aged 65+ made up more than a quarter of the population, compared to less than a fifth in 2011.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2021 (vs 2011)



\*Population estimate as of July 1 of each year. BC's population growth rate increased in the latter half of 2021.

\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year.

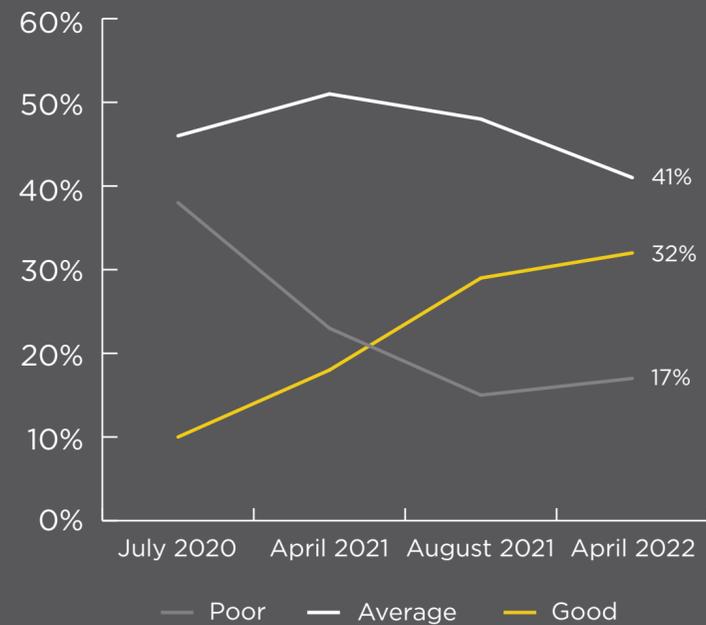
# SURVEY RESULTS

## Outlook on the Economy

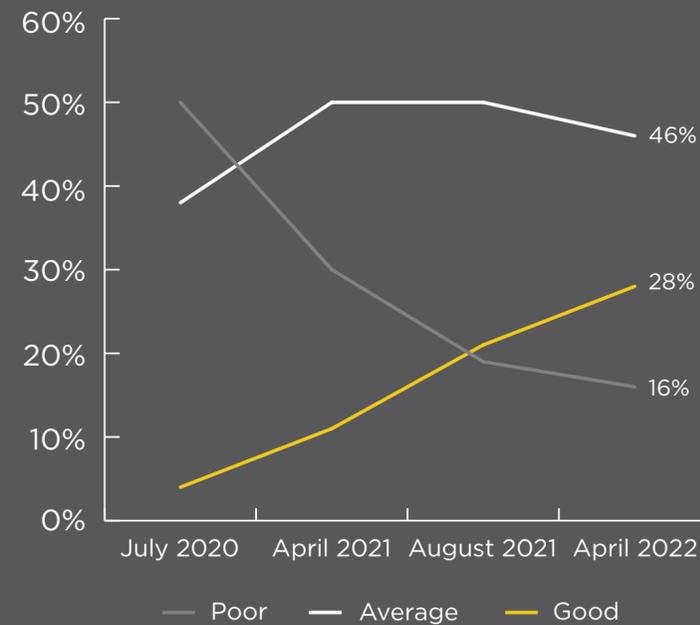
Based on results from the *BC Check-Up: Live survey\**, BC CPAs indicate that...



73% of BC CPAs expect the provincial economy to be average or good in 2022, down slightly from August 2021. However, **nearly a third expect BC's economy to be good in 2022**, the highest rating in the past two years.



**Nearly three-quarters** of BC CPAs believe Canada's economy will be **average or good in 2022**, slightly above the outlook for BC. The 28% that expect the Canadian economy to be good is a seven-fold increase from 2020.



**Over a quarter are more confident about their organization's prospects** compared to 2021, nearly twice the number who have lost confidence. A majority have the same outlook as last year.



INCREASE  
27%



SAME THE SAME  
54%



DECREASE  
14%



DON'T KNOW  
3%

\* April 2022 results, n=710; August 2021 results: n=889; April 2021 results: n= 757. July 2020 results: n = 563. Survey results may not sum to 100% due to exclusion of Don't Know/No Opinion responses and/or rounding.

# SURVEY RESULTS

## Outlook on Affordability and Government

Based on results from the *BC Check-Up: Live* survey\*, BC CPAs indicate that...



**Rising labour shortages, housing prices, and wages** were identified as the three biggest challenges for business success in BC in 2022.

Largest challenges for business success\*:

	July 2020	April 2021	April 2022
1	Consumer debt	Housing prices	Ability to attract and retain skilled labour
2	Consumer confidence	Consumer debt	Housing prices
3	Labour compensation	Ability to attract and retain skilled labour	Labour compensation



**Two in every three BC CPAs expect housing affordability to worsen** in their region in 2022. While still a high ratio, this is a decline compared to housing price expectations in 2021.



IMPROVE  
10%



STAY THE SAME  
20%

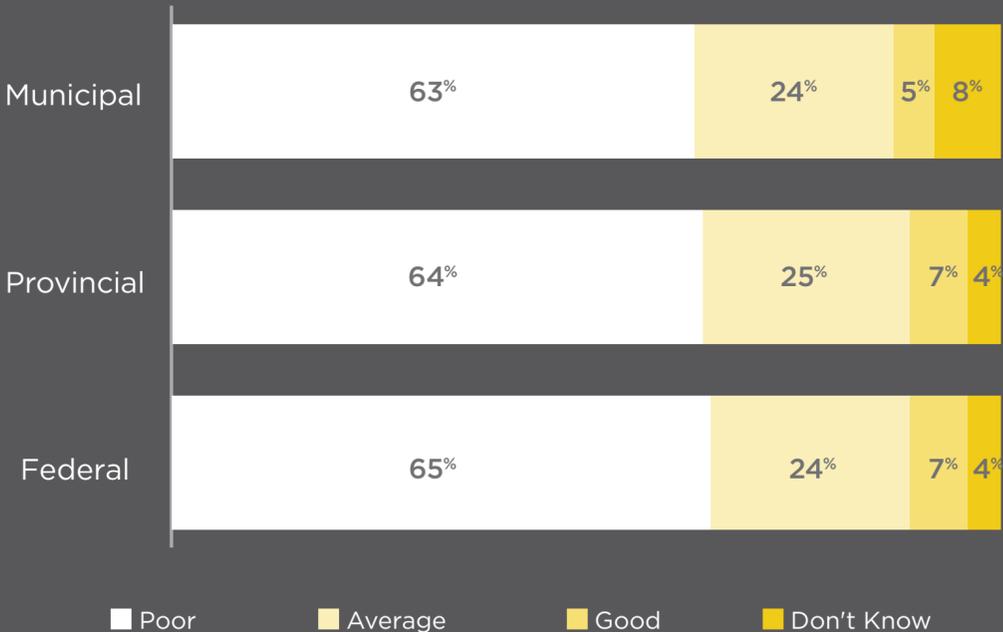


WORSEN  
67%



With housing prices on the rise, CPAs believe **governments at all levels need to do more to improve affordability\*\***.

Rating on government performance to improve affordability



\* April 2022 results, n=710; April 2021 results: n= 757. July 2020 results: n = 563. Survey results may not sum to 100% due to exclusion of Don't Know/No Opinion responses and/or rounding

\*\*Rating given for the performance of each of the levels of government when it comes to making life more affordable for residents in BC.

# BC CHECK-UP 2021 **LIVE**

As leaders in developing, analyzing, and validating information, CPAs are often called upon to provide independent, fair, and objective information to assist in decision-making. It is our hope that BC Check-Up will make a positive public policy contribution to the province by stimulating discussion about how to make BC a better place in which to **WORK**, **INVEST**, and **LIVE**.

*BC Check-Up* is available online at [bccheckup.com](https://bccheckup.com).

## MEDIA CONTACT

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The report is prepared by the Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia. Opinions expressed in the report do not necessarily reflect those of individual chartered professional accountants. Data is derived from Statistics Canada, Canadian Real Estate Association, BC Stats, BC Assessment, and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Association. For more details contact [aaerts@bccpa.ca](mailto:aaerts@bccpa.ca).

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**SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS** **Who are they?** 710 CPABC members **Where are they from?** Southwest BC 67% Vancouver Island/Coast 17% Thompson-Okanagan 8% Rest of BC/outside BC 7%

CPABC commissioned Leger Marketing to conduct a web-based survey of CPABC members about their impressions of the economy and their region. A total of 757 surveys were completed in March and April, 2021, representing an overall response rate of 16%.