

# BC CHECK-UP 2023 **LIVE**



# 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

After briefly slowing during the COVID-19 pandemic, British Columbia's population growth has rebounded strongly. In fact, **the province's population grew at the fastest rate in 25 years**, adding nearly **117,000 new residents** from July 1, 2021 to July 1, 2022. This is important for BC's economy, as attracting more migrants has been a goal of both the provincial and federal governments to help offset our aging population and to fill the large number of job vacancies across the province.

BC's population growth in 2022 was primarily due to the province welcoming many migrants from other countries. The province gained a **net 103,674 new residents from other countries in 2022, accounting for nearly 89% of the annual population growth**. This was well above the average annual net international migration of around 46,500 from 2017 to 2021, and is largely a result of the federal government's objective of accepting record levels of international immigrants over the coming years. The province also continued to see a net gain of residents from other provinces, with 15,869 new residents from interprovincial migration. However, **for the first time in BC's history, natural growth (births minus mortalities) was negative**.

The increase in population growth in 2022 came at the same time as the number of completed housing units slowed. In 2022, there were **34,892 housing units completed**, down from 39,163 in 2021. In 2022, that meant that there were just 0.3 new housing units completed per new resident, the second-lowest ratio since 1996. This gap between demand and supply growth will put further pressure on housing affordability in the province. **Approximately 77% of this new supply was attached units**, such as condos and townhouses, up from 67% in 2017.

**As the inflation rate reached a 40-year high in 2022, the Bank of Canada raised its interest rate from 0.25% in March 2022 to 5.0% as of July 2023**. This has weakened the purchasing power of homebuyers and reduced demand, which resulted in housing prices falling in some markets over the past year. The **average home sold in BC in April 2023 was \$940,200, down 10.9% from April 2022**. However, that **remained 37.6% higher than in April 2019**. Further, higher interest rates have significantly increased the cost of servicing mortgages.

Even though the province capped rent increases at 1.5% for existing tenants in 2022, affordability for rental units continued to erode. The average rent for a three-plus bedroom in BC was \$2,067 a month and a one bedroom was \$1,432, **up 7.5% and 8.3% respectively from 2021**. Compared to 2017, the average three-plus bedroom monthly rental rate was up by \$626 a month, while a one bedroom increased by \$320.

The **median after-tax income for a family in BC was \$97,800 as of 2021**, a 0.4% gain since 2020, and \$39,200 for single individuals, up 3.4%. Compared to in 2017, the median after-tax income in BC grew by 5.2%, considerably lower than the corresponding growth in housing and rental prices.

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. **Labour shortages, housing prices, and wages** were identified as the three biggest challenges for business success in BC in 2023, and half (53%) of the respondents expect housing affordability to worsen in their region in 2023.

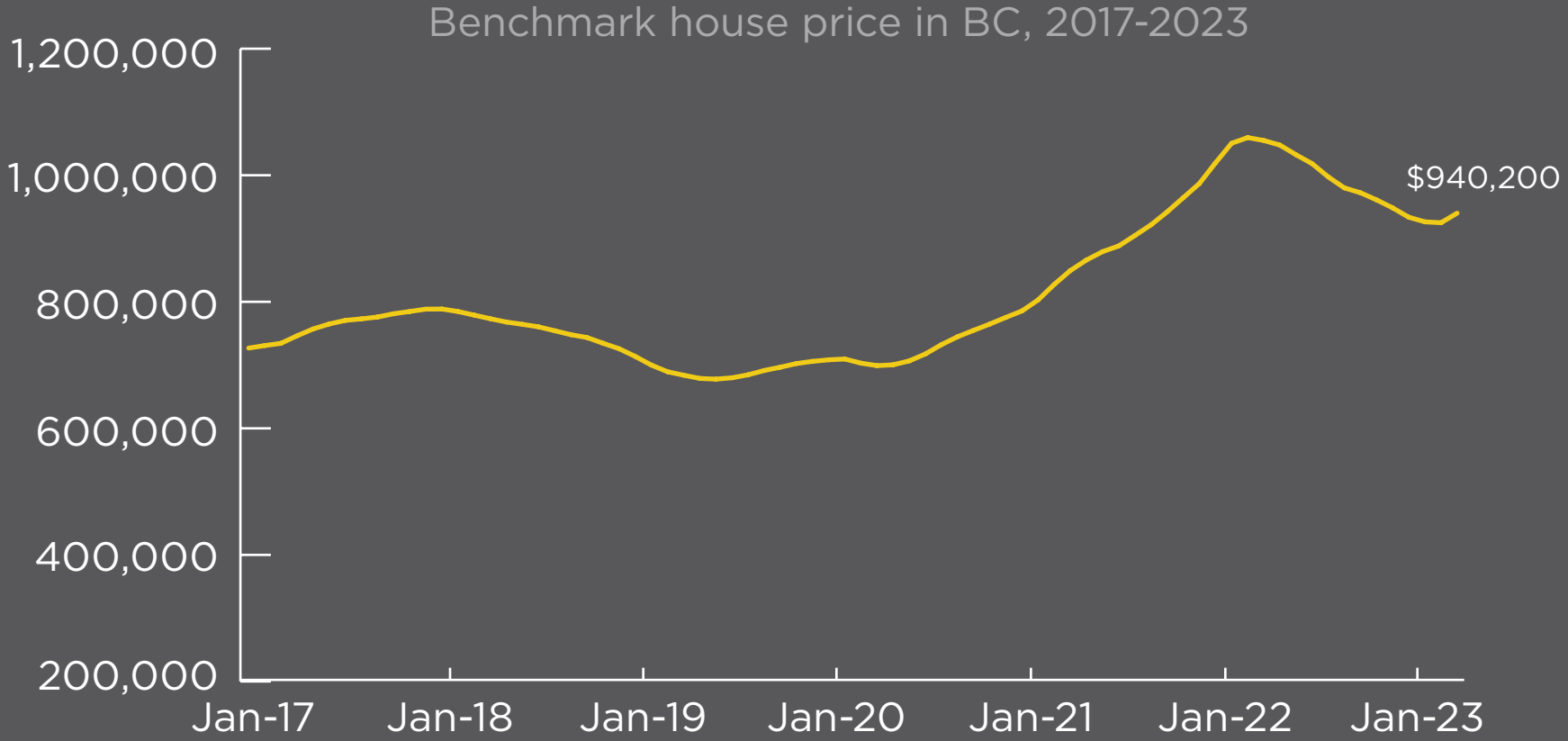
While optimism has eroded compared to last year, the economic outlook remains relatively stable. **Four-in-five BC CPAs believe BC's economy was average or good in April 2023**, and 67% believe their organization's economic prospects this year are the same or better than in 2022.

# PROVINCIAL SUMMARY



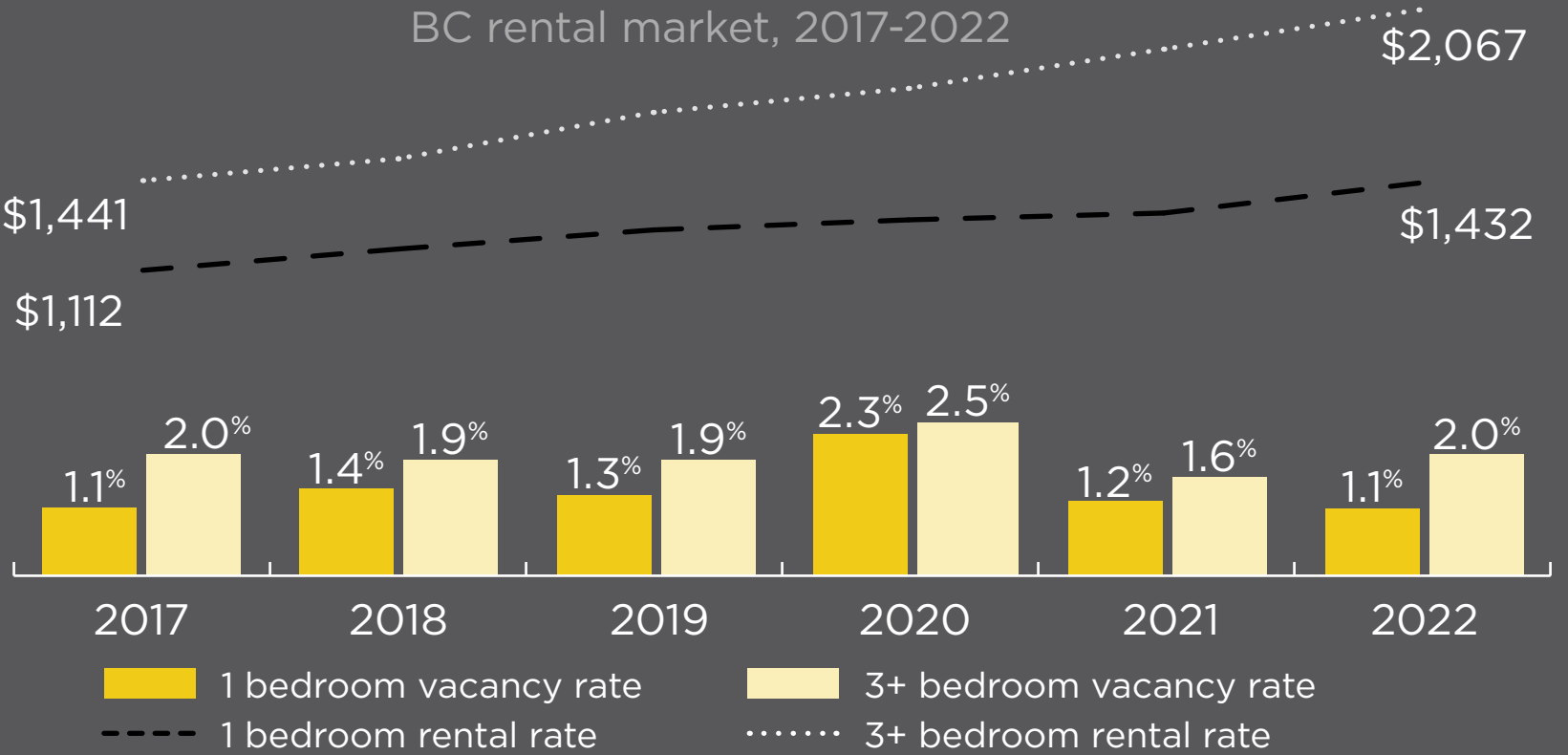
### HOUSING PRICES\*

Weakened by high interest rates, the average price of a home sold in April 2023 was down 10.9% compared to April 2022. However, prices have begun to stabilize and remained 37.6% higher than in April 2019.



### RENTAL MARKET

Rental units are scarce in BC, with one-bedroom units the most difficult to secure. Though annual rent increases for existing tenants were capped at 1.5% in 2022, the average rental price increased nearly six times that rate. Three-plus bedroom unit prices increased the most over the past five years, up 43.4% since 2017.

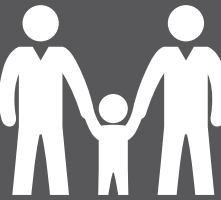


### MEDIAN INCOME\*\*

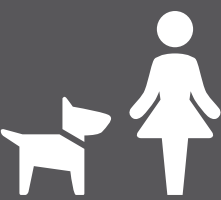
Conventional mortgage interest rates are the highest since 2008. The monthly interest based on the BC benchmark house price in April 2023 at that rate was about \$3,600 (with a 20% downpayment).

**Mortgage lending rate\*\*:** 5.75% April 2023  
(3.44% January 2022)

### MEDIAN INCOME 2021\*\*\*



**Family Income**  
**\$97,800**  
(↑0.4% from 2020)



**Individual Income**  
**\$39,200**  
(↑3.4% from 2020)

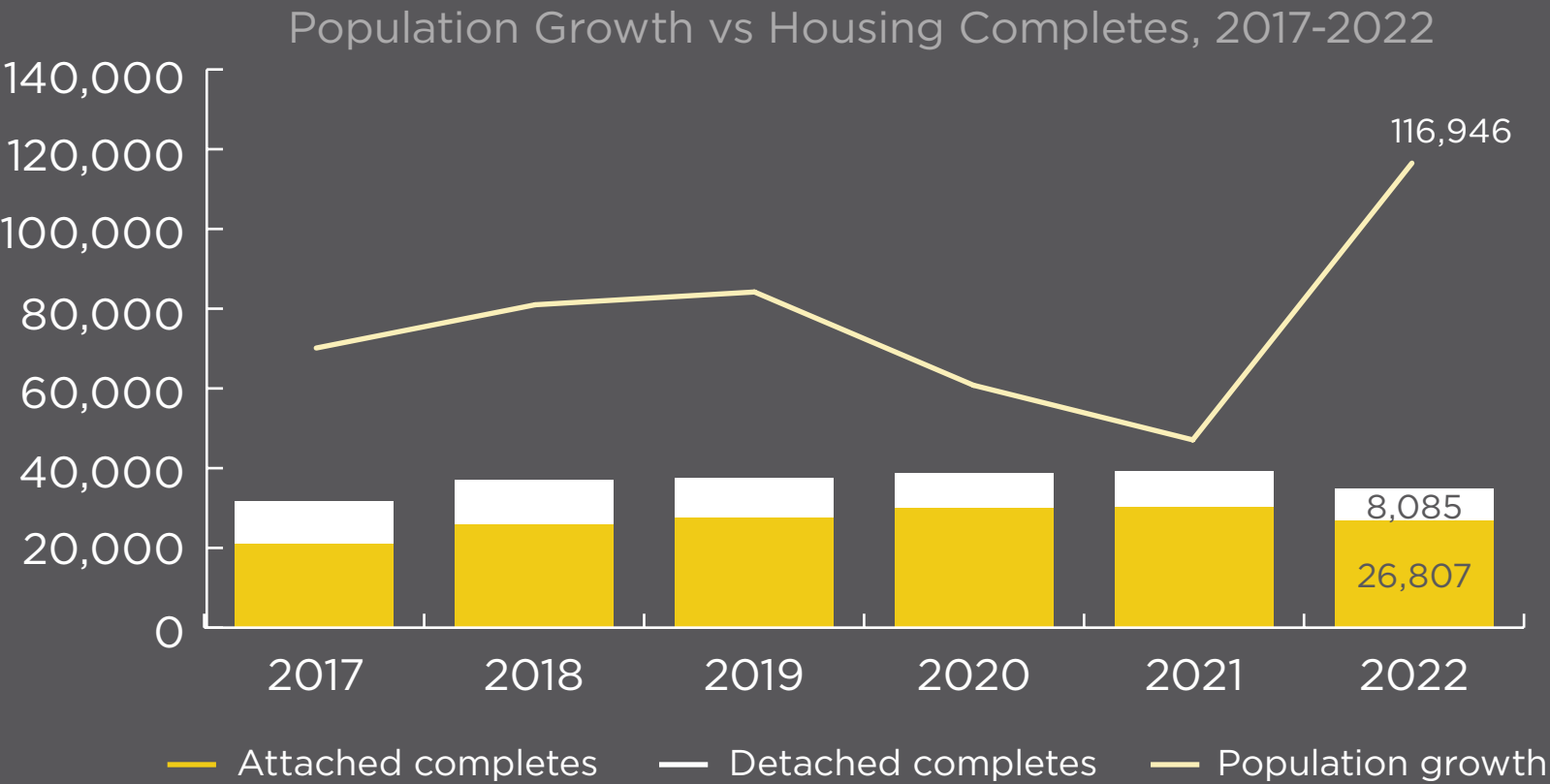
\*Based on CREA's benchmark home price in BC, which defines a "typical" home based on a set of features of homes that have been bought and sold.  
 \*\*Mortgage lending rate defined as per StatsCan conventional mortgage lending rate on a five year term.  
 \*\*\*Median income after tax and government 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



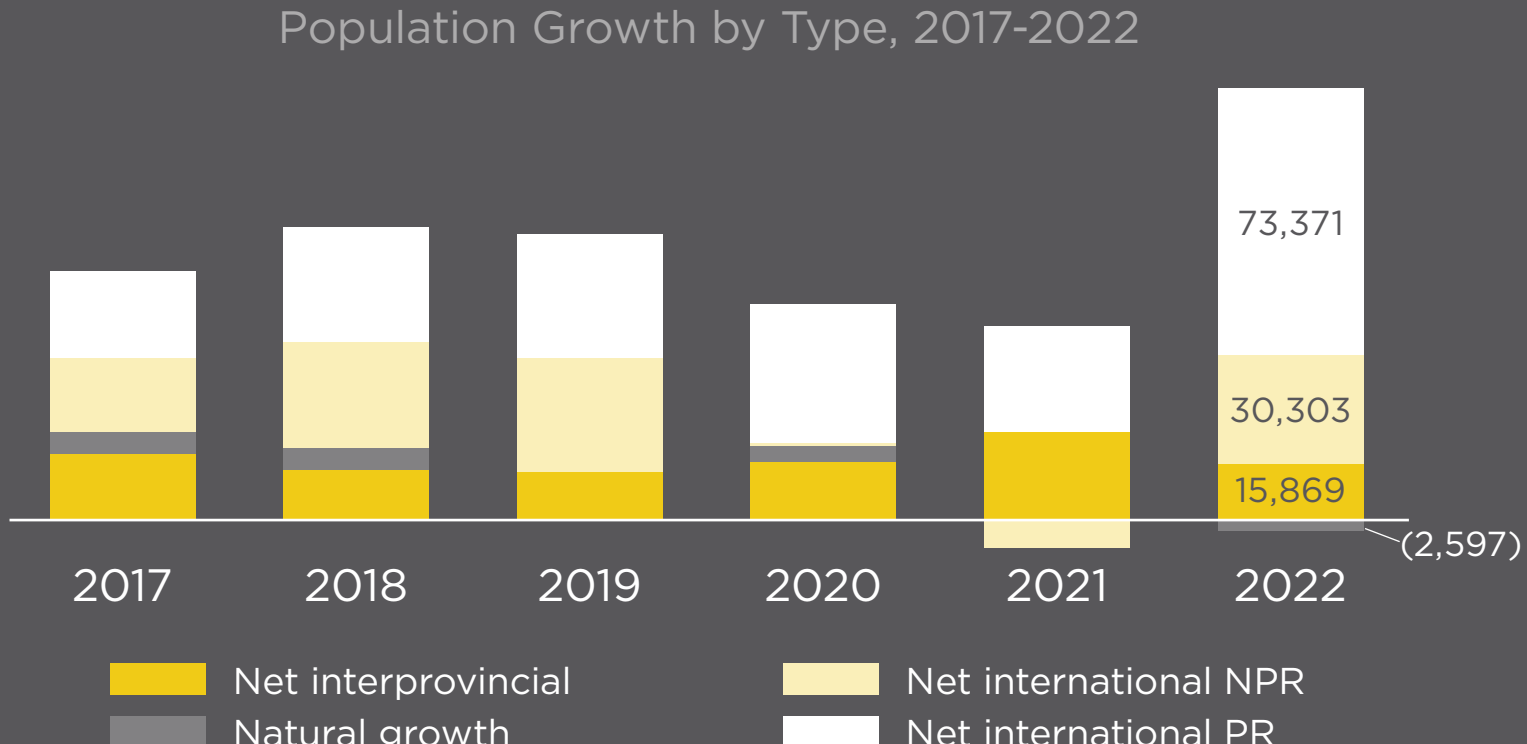
## HOUSING SUPPLY\*

BC's population growth rebounded in 2022, reaching a new record of nearly 117,000 new residents\*. There were 34,892 housing units completed in 2022, a decline of 10.9% compared to 2021. The 0.3 new units per new resident was the second lowest since 1996.



## POPULATION CHANGE\*

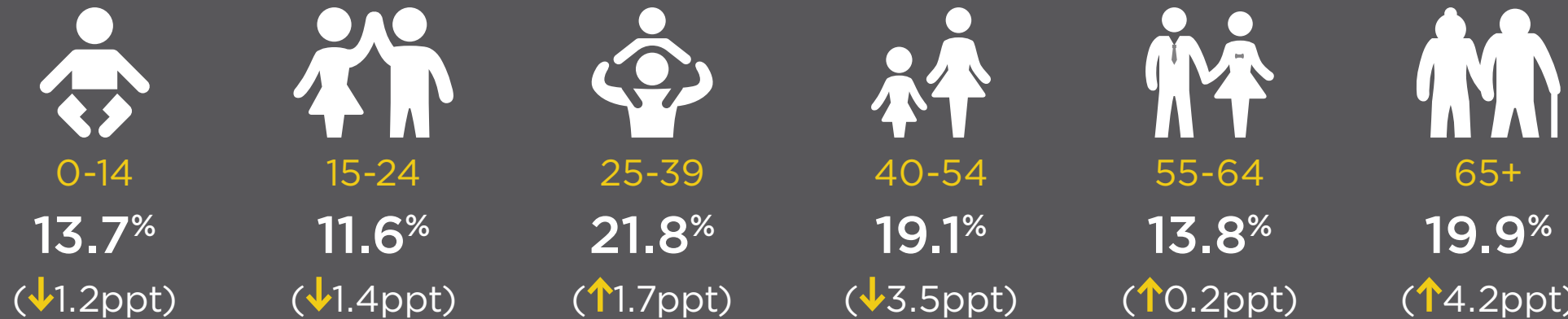
Net international migration accounted for nearly 104,000 of the new residents (88.7%) in 2022, with BC attracting a high level of both non-permanent and permanent residents. For the first time in the province's history, the number of mortalities exceeded the number of births.



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

BC's average age was 42.8 in 2022, compared to 41.0 in 2012. Those 65+ made up nearly a fifth of the population, the fastest growing cohort, while millennials were the largest group. The proportion of those aged 0 to 24 and 40 to 54 have been on the decline.

BC Population Distribution by Age\*\*, 2022 (vs 2012)



\*Housing units completed in municipalities with populations of 10,000 or more.  
 \*\*Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.

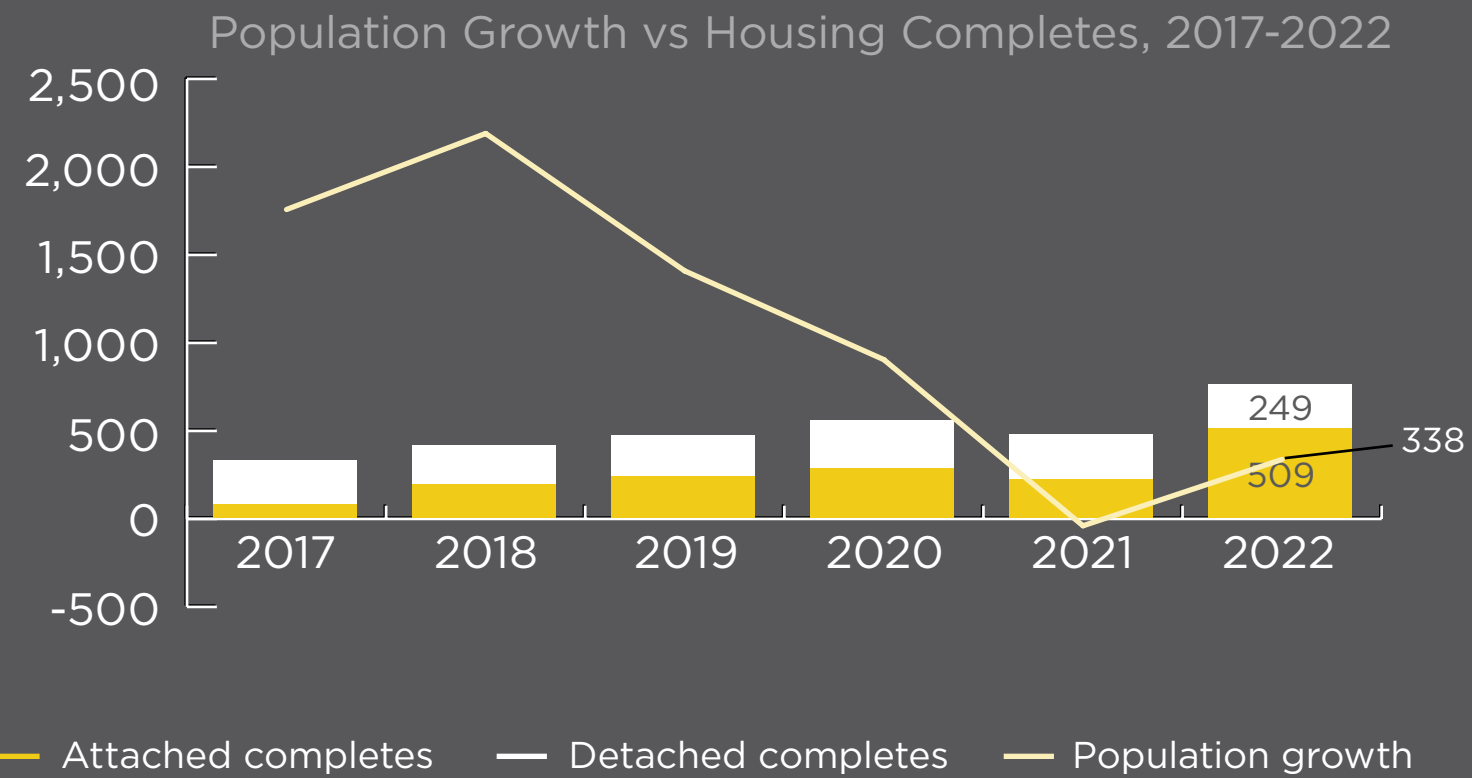


# CARIBOO (POPULATION: 169,716)



## HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION\*

The Cariboo added 338 residents in 2022, reversing a trend of declining population growth from 2018 to 2021. There were 758 housing units completed, above the 447 average completed from 2017 to 2021.



## HOUSING PRICES

One-bedroom rental prices increased the most in Prince George, up 11.2% from 2021 and 30.4% since 2017. Property values increased significantly in the region's largest three cities from July 2021 to July 2022.

### Prince George Rental Rates 2022\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$923 (↑11.2%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$1,085 (↓3.4%)

### Average Property Value July 2022\*\*:

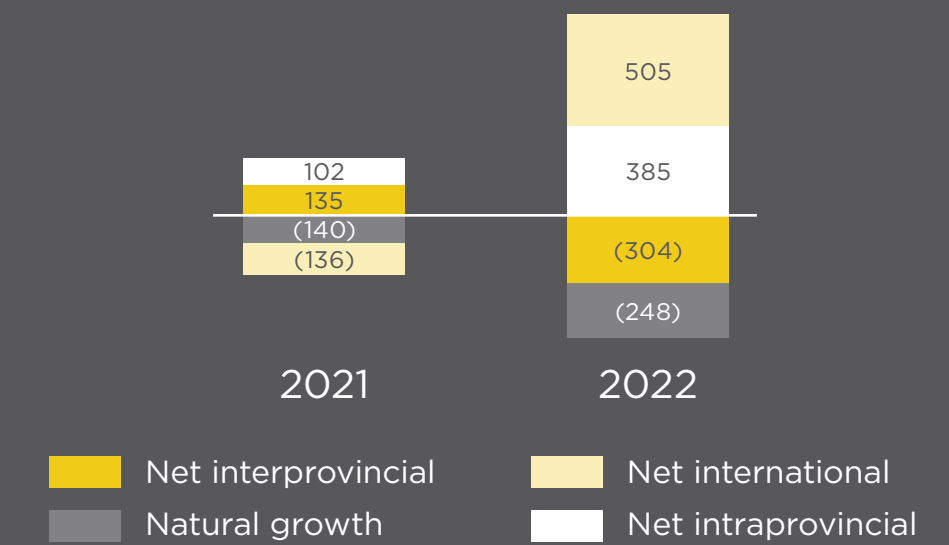
- Prince George: \$410,891 (↑20.5%)
- Williams Lake: \$330,955 (↑28.5%)
- Quesnel: \$306,891 (↑30.8%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

The Cariboo's population growth in 2022 was from residents arriving from other parts of the province and outside the country. Conversely, population growth was hindered by negative natural growth (births minus mortalities) and residents moving to other provinces.

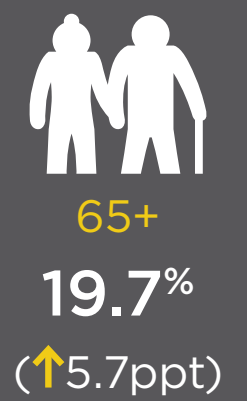
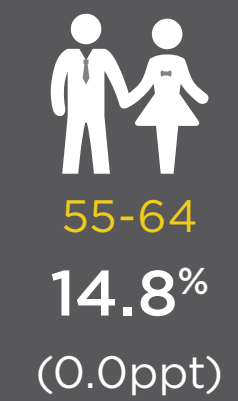
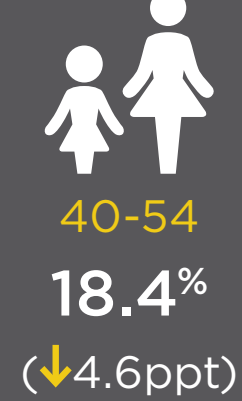
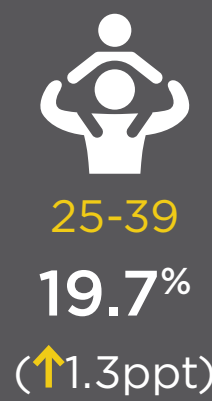
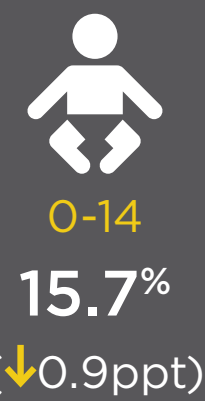
### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The Cariboo's average age of 42.3 was slightly younger than the provincial average. However, nearly a fifth of the population was aged 65+, compared to 14.0% in 2012.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2022 (vs 2012)



\*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.

\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year. Housing prices based on BC Assessment average 2022 property value as the Canadian Real Estate Association does not provide recent housing sale information for this development region.

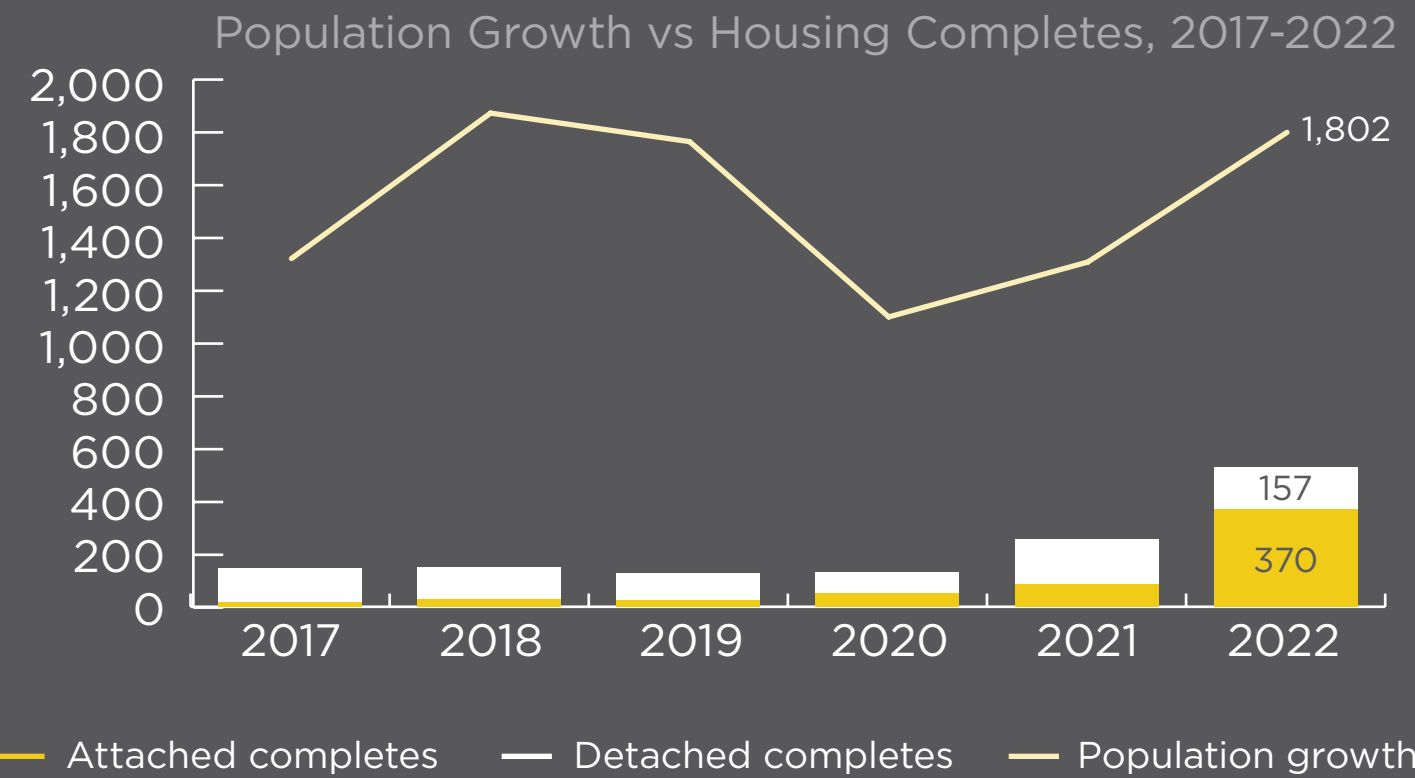


# KOOTENAY (POPULATION: 166,301)



## HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION\*

There were over 1,800 new residents in the Kootenays' in 2022, the highest growth since 2018. The 527 housing units completed in 2022 in Cranbrook and Nelson was more than twice the number completed in 2021 and the highest in the past decade.



## HOUSING PRICES

Rental prices in Cranbrook continued to increase, with the cost of a one-bedroom up by 23.2% over the past five years. Despite interest rate increases, the price of homes sold in the region were down only slightly over the past year.

### Cranbrook Rental Rates 2022\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$844 (↑7.5%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$1,103 (N/A)

### Kootenay Housing Sales Price April 2023\*\*:

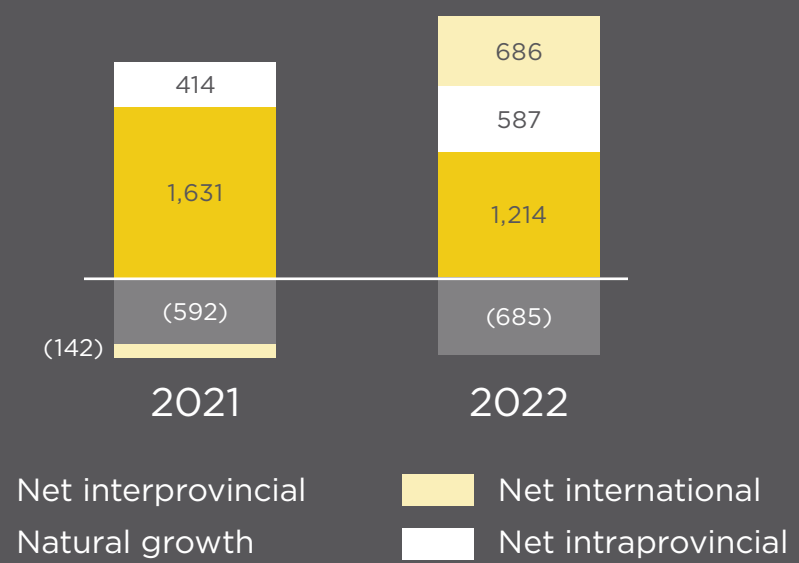
- Average price: \$453,601 (↓3.9%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

The region's population growth in 2022 was due to residents arriving from other regions in the province, other provinces, and from outside the country. Negative natural growth (births minus mortalities) has been increasingly slowing down the region's population growth.

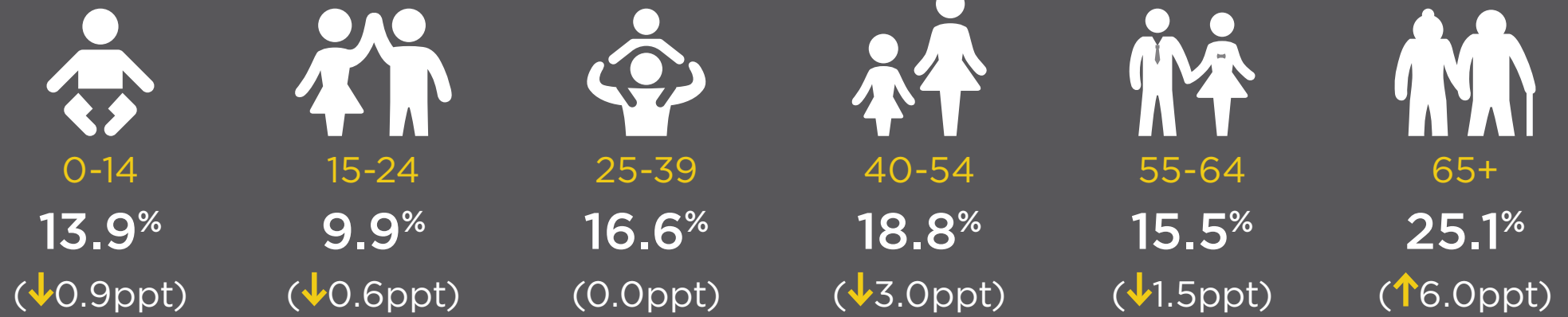
Population Growth by Type



## 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 2022. The region's average age of 45.6 was the second oldest in the province.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2022 (vs 2012)



\*Housing unit completion data for the region is only available for Cranbrook and Nelson. Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.

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

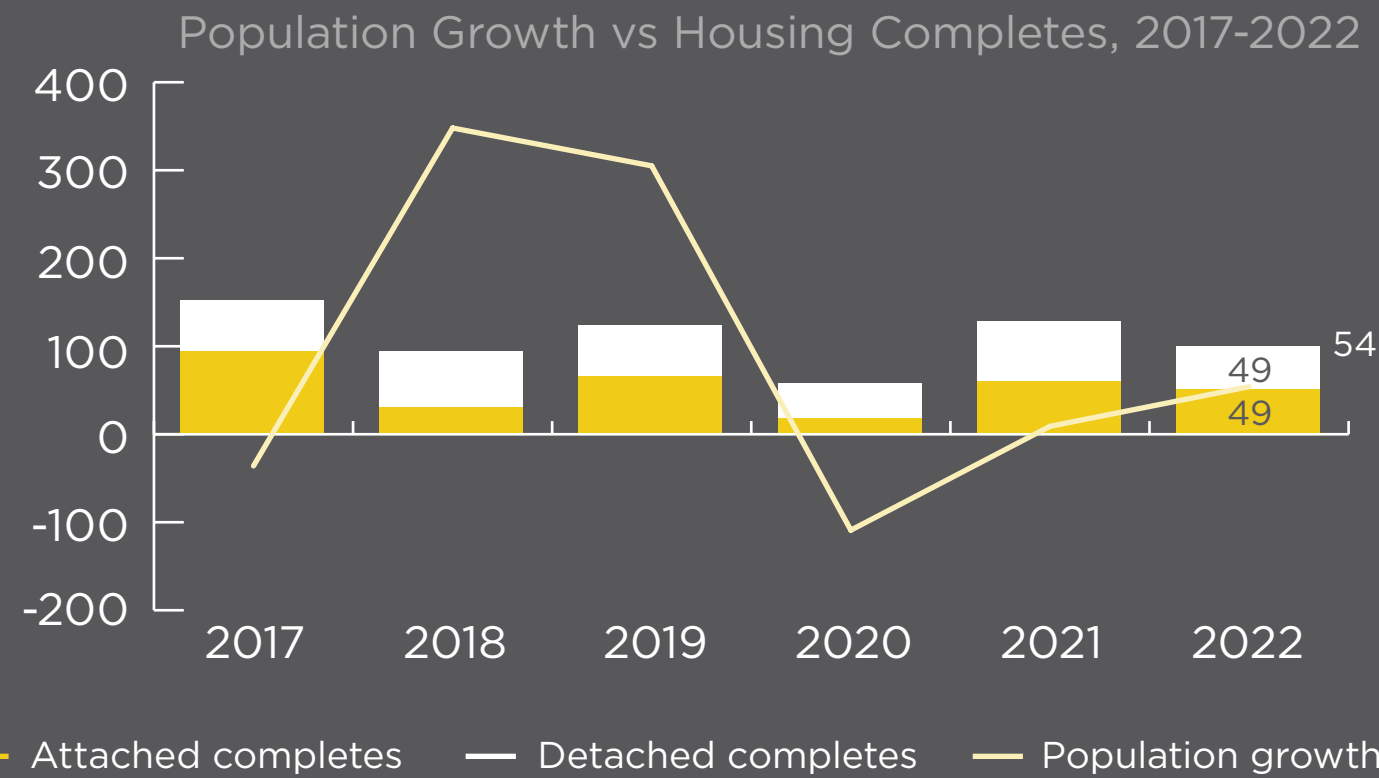


# NORTHEAST BC (POPULATION: 72,162)



## HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION\*

Northeast BC's population grew by 54 in 2022, an increase from 2021 but below the 103 average from 2017 to 2021. The 98 housing units completed in Fort St. John and Dawson Creek was down from the 127 completed in 2021.



## HOUSING PRICES

The cost of rental units were up significantly in Fort St. John in 2022. Housing values in the region's two largest municipalities increased by around 7% from July 2021 to July 2022, but were only up slightly compared to in 2019 (3.5%).

### Fort St. John Rental Rates 2022\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$772 (↑3.3%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$1,120 (↑11.4%)

### South Peace River Housing Sales Price April 2023\*\*

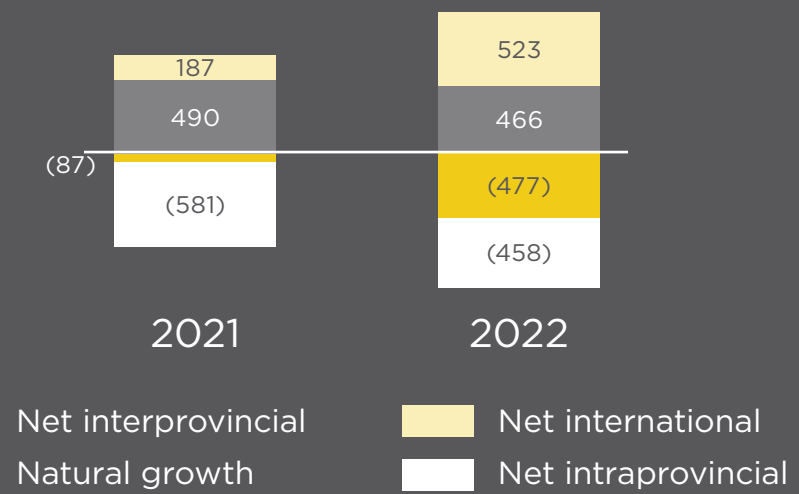
- Average price: \$258,383 (↓4.2%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

In 2022, Northeast BC saw a net of over 900 residents leave to other parts of the province or to other provinces. This was offset by the region's strong natural growth rate (births minus mortalities) and residents arriving from outside the country.

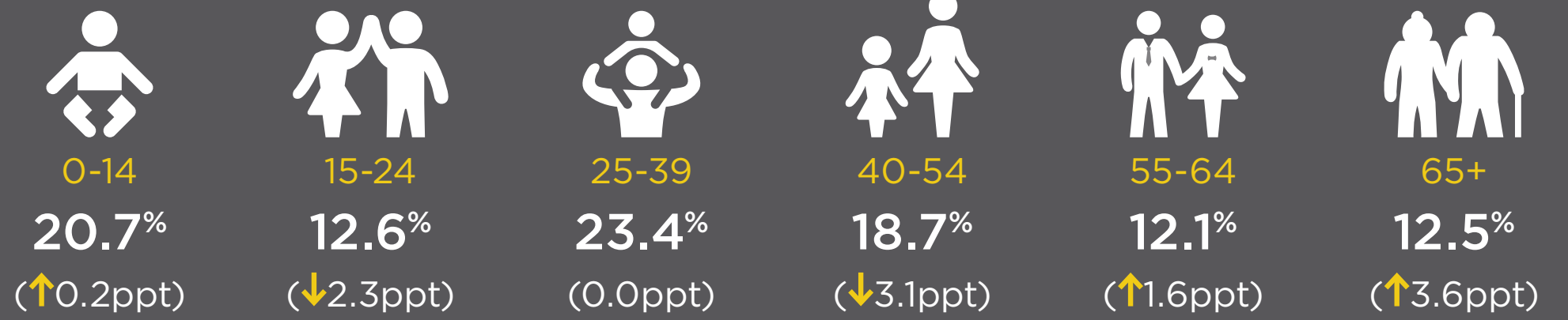
### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

With an average age of 37.1 in 2022, Northeast BC continued to be home to the youngest population in the province. More than half (56.7%) of the population was under 40, compared to 47.2% across the province.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2022 (vs 2012)



\*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.

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



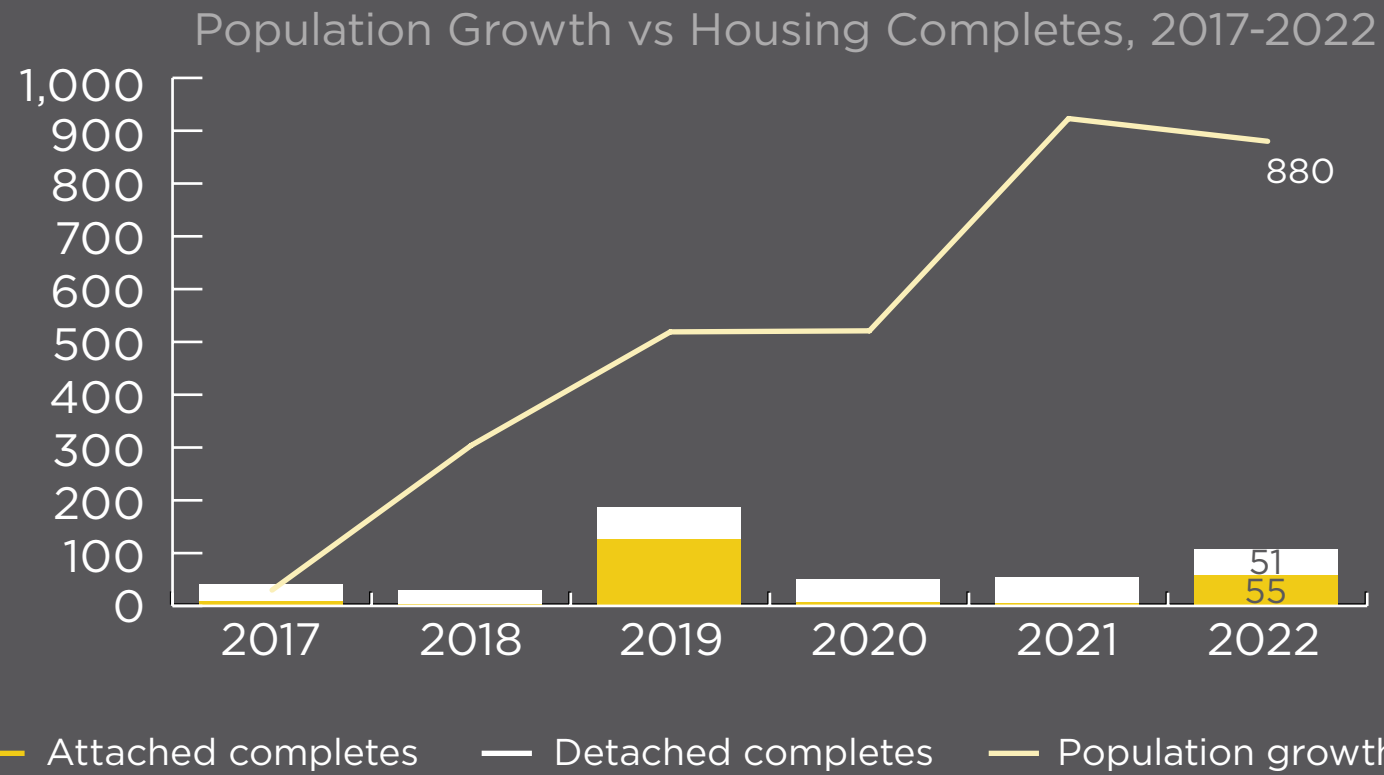


# NORTHWEST BC (POPULATION: 101,378)



## HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION\*

Northwest\*\* BC's population continued to increase, adding 880 new residents in 2022 up from an average of 459 from 2017 to 2021. The 106 housing units completed in Terrace and Prince Rupert in 2022\* was over twice the number completed in 2021.



## HOUSING PRICES

The largest increase in housing prices was in Prince Rupert, up by 31.4% from July 2021 to July 2022. However, prices weakened across the region in the latter half of 2022.

### Average Property Value July 2022\*\*:

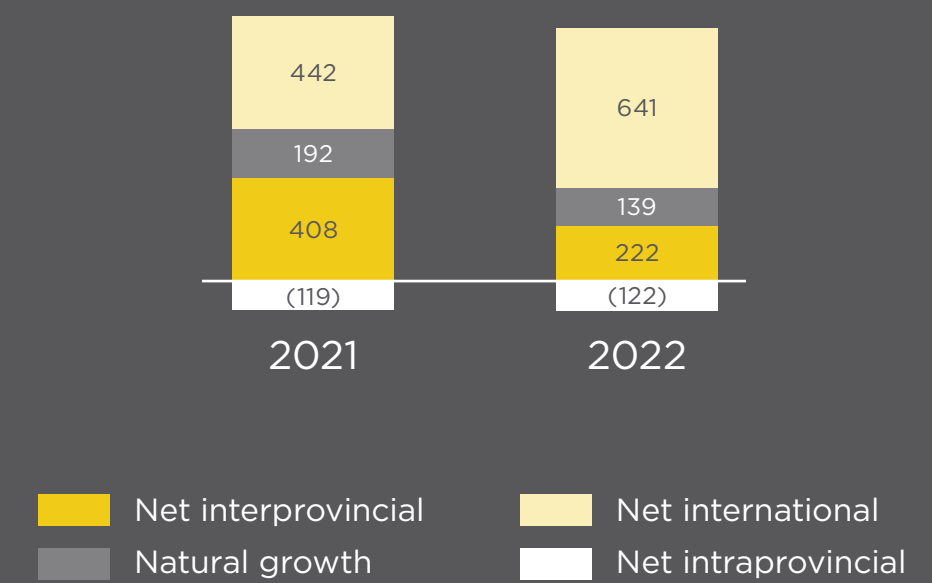
- Prince Rupert: \$421,013 (↑31.4%)
- Terrace: \$440,376 (↑14.9%)
- Smithers: \$349,592 (↑20.4%)
- Kitimat: \$344,996 (↑0.1%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

Northwest BC population growth in 2022 continued to be primarily driven through a net gain of residents from other countries. The region has also continued to see a net outflow of residents to other parts of the province.

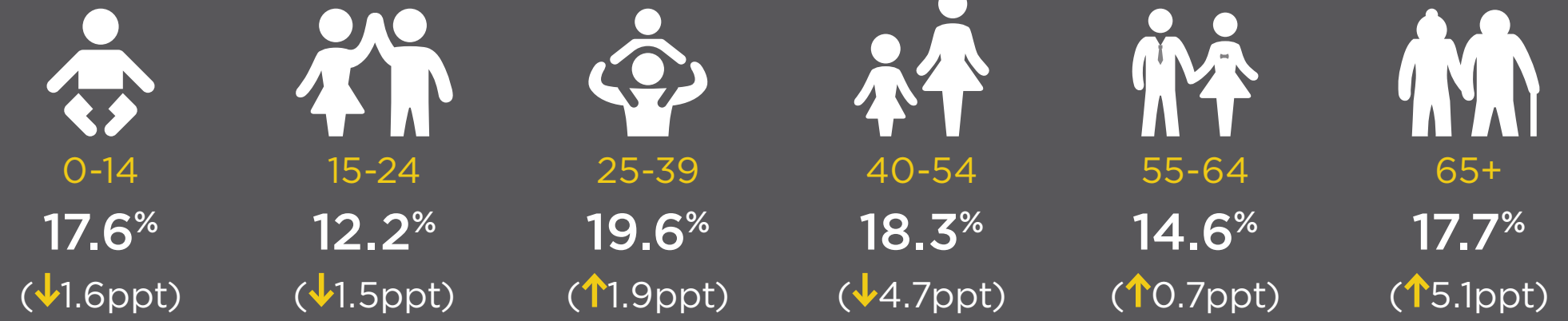
### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

With an average age of 40.7 in 2022, Northwest BC residents were the second-youngest in the province. However, the region's average age rose by 2.0 over the past decade, faster than the 1.8 increase for the province as a whole.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2022 (vs 2012)



\*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.  
\*\*Northwest BC encompasses the North Coast & Nechako regions.

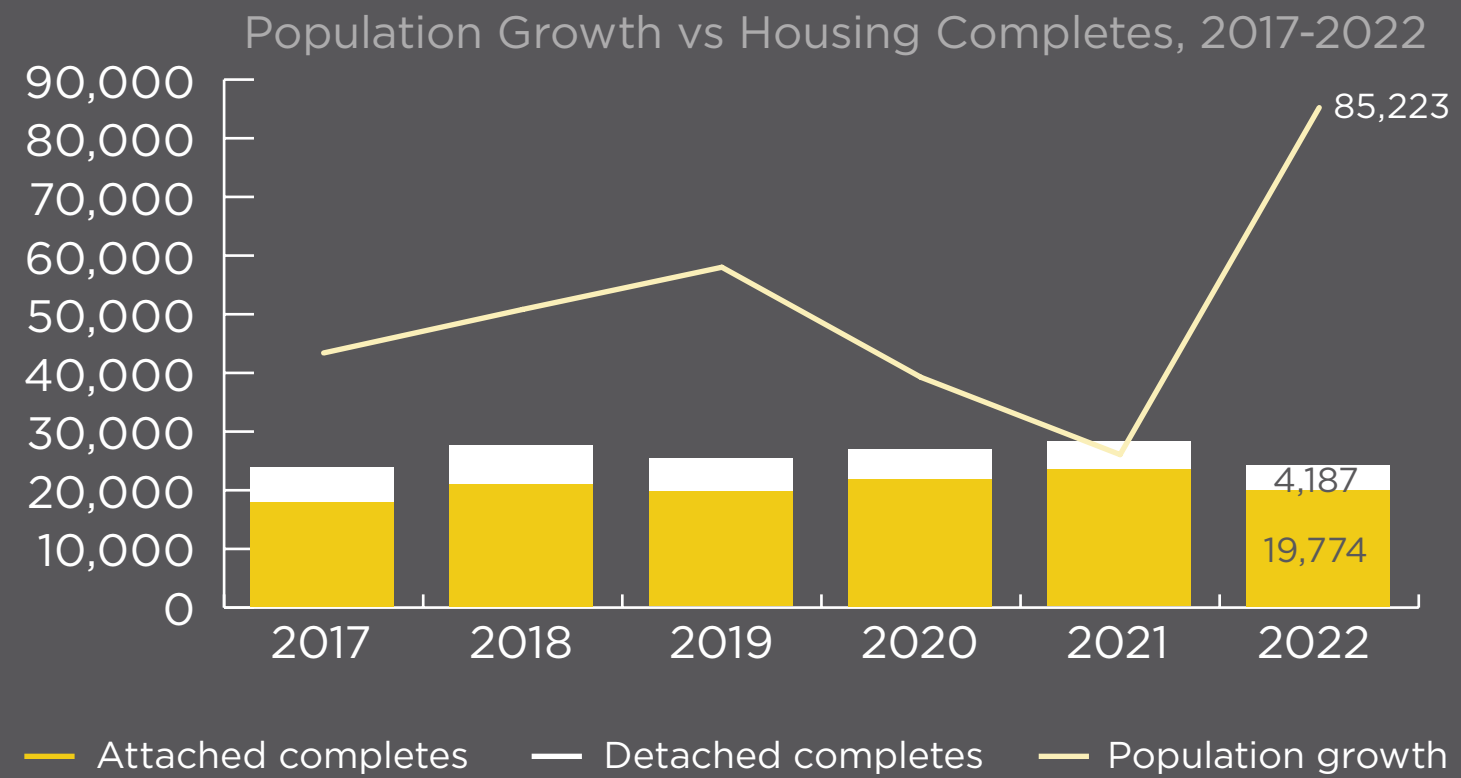


# SOUTHWEST BC (POPULATION: 3.27 MILLION)



## HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION\*

Southwest B.C., which includes the Lower Mainland, saw its population grow by 85,223 in 2022, setting a record high. There were 23,961 housing units completed in 2022, just 0.28 per new resident, down from the 26,271 average from 2017 to 2021.



## HOUSING PRICES

Rental prices continue to escalate, up by 27.3% over the past five years. Rentals are increasingly difficult to find with a vacancy rate of 0.9%. Housing prices have fallen over the past year as high interest rates weakened the market.

### Greater Vancouver Rental Rates 2022\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$1,543 (↑7.6%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$2,511 (↑8.0%)

### Lower Mainland Housing Sales Price April 2023\*\*:

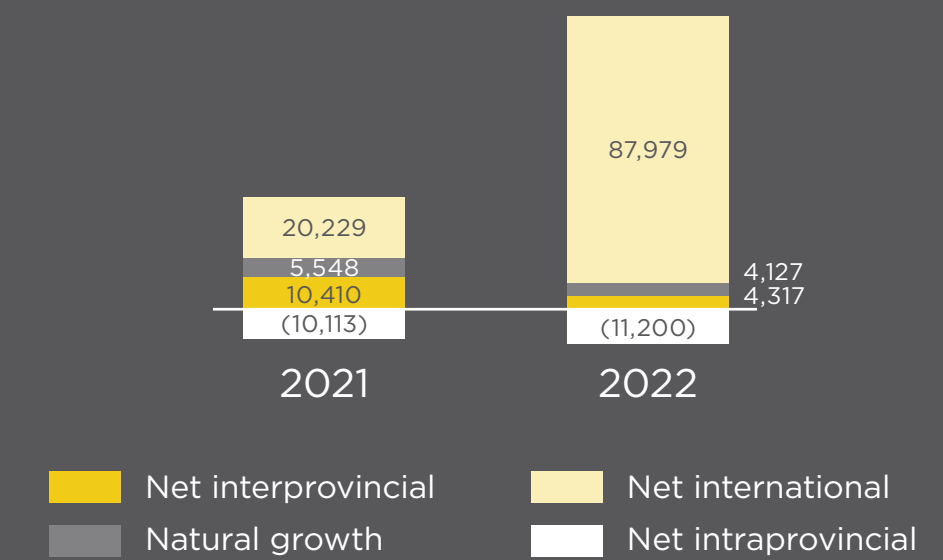
- Single family home: \$1,666,500 (↓12.3%)
- Apartment: \$679,700 (↓4.6%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

BC's record population growth in 2022 was due to the net number of new residents from other countries more than quadrupling to almost 88,000. The net gain from other provinces fell and the region continued to lose residents to other parts of the province.

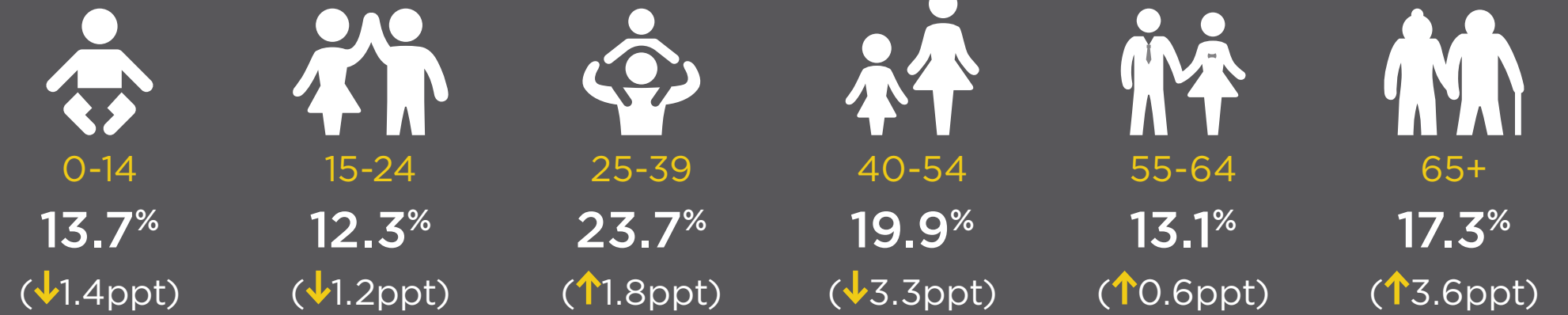
Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

For the first time since at least 2006, the Lower Mainland's average age declined year-over-year from 41.6 in 2021 to 41.5 in 2022. This was due to 87.5% of new residents arriving from other countries in 2022 being under 40.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2022 (vs 2012)



\*Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.  
\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year.

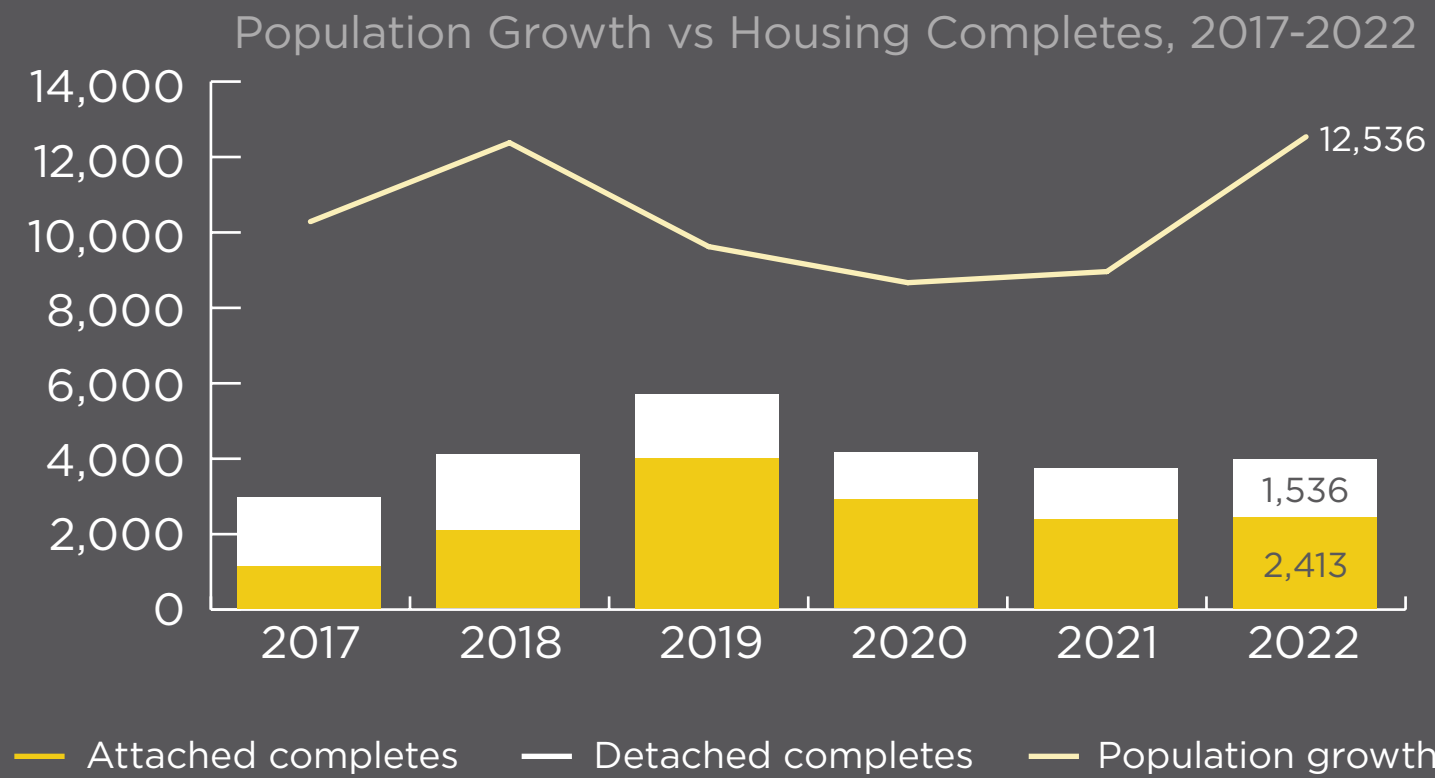


# THOMPSON-OKANAGAN (POPULATION: 631,367)



## HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION\*

The region added 12,500 residents in 2022, and had the fastest growth rate in the province over the past five years. The 3,949 housing units completed in 2022 was up from 2021, but slightly below the 4,105 average from 2017 to 2021.



## HOUSING PRICES

Rental prices continue to rapidly increase in Kelowna, with the price of a three+ bedroom unit up by 69.7% since 2017. The average price of a house sold in the Okanagan was down \$108,000 over the past year due to rising interest rates.

### Kelowna Rental Rates 2022\*\*:

- One bedroom: \$1,306 (↑9.7%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$2,188 (↑28.0%)

### Okanagan Housing Sales Price April 2023\*\*:

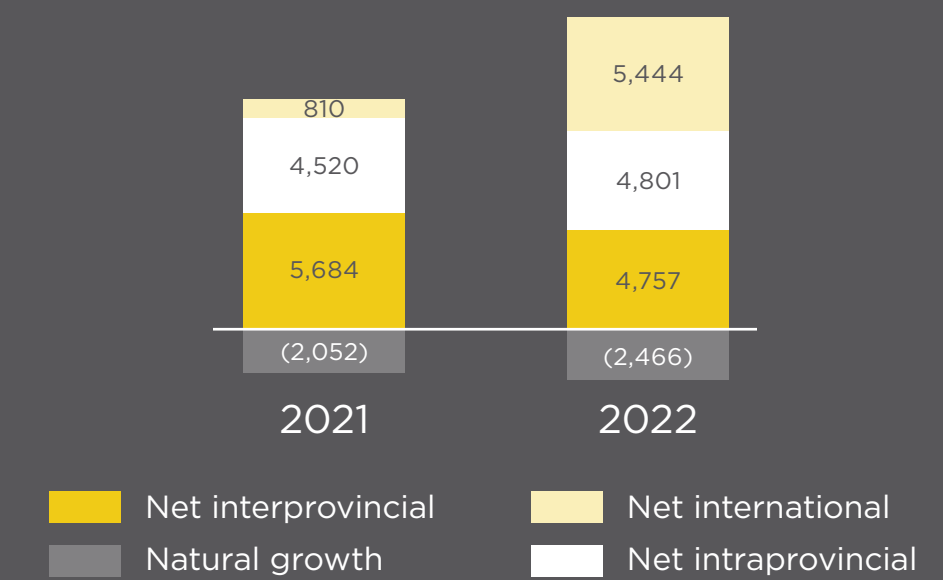
- Average price: \$748,937 (↓9.7%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

The strong population growth in 2022 was due to residents arriving from other parts of the province, other provinces, and other countries. The region's natural growth (births minus mortalities) continued to decline.

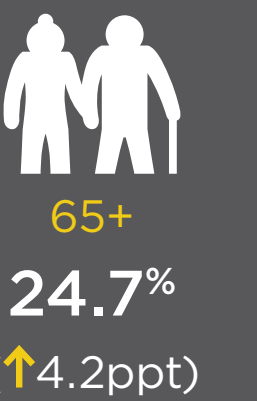
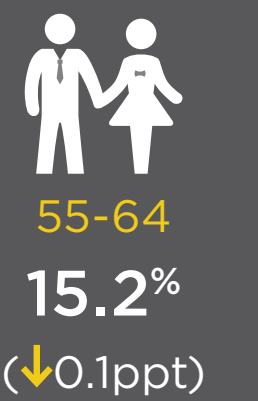
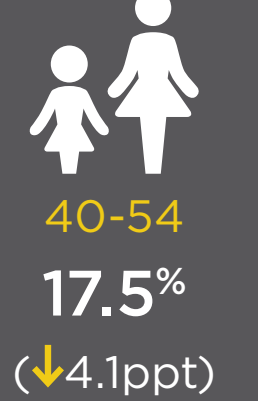
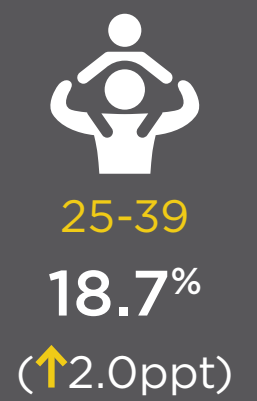
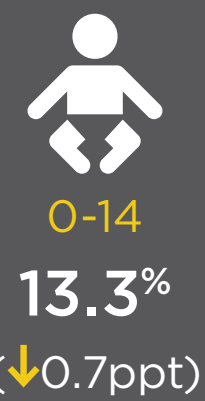
### Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The average age of a resident in the region was 45.3 in 2022, above the 42.8 provincial average but down from 45.2 in 2021. Those 65+ made up nearly a quarter of the population, up from around a fifth in 2012.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2022 (vs 2012)



\*Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.  
\*\*Changes compared to the same period of previous year.



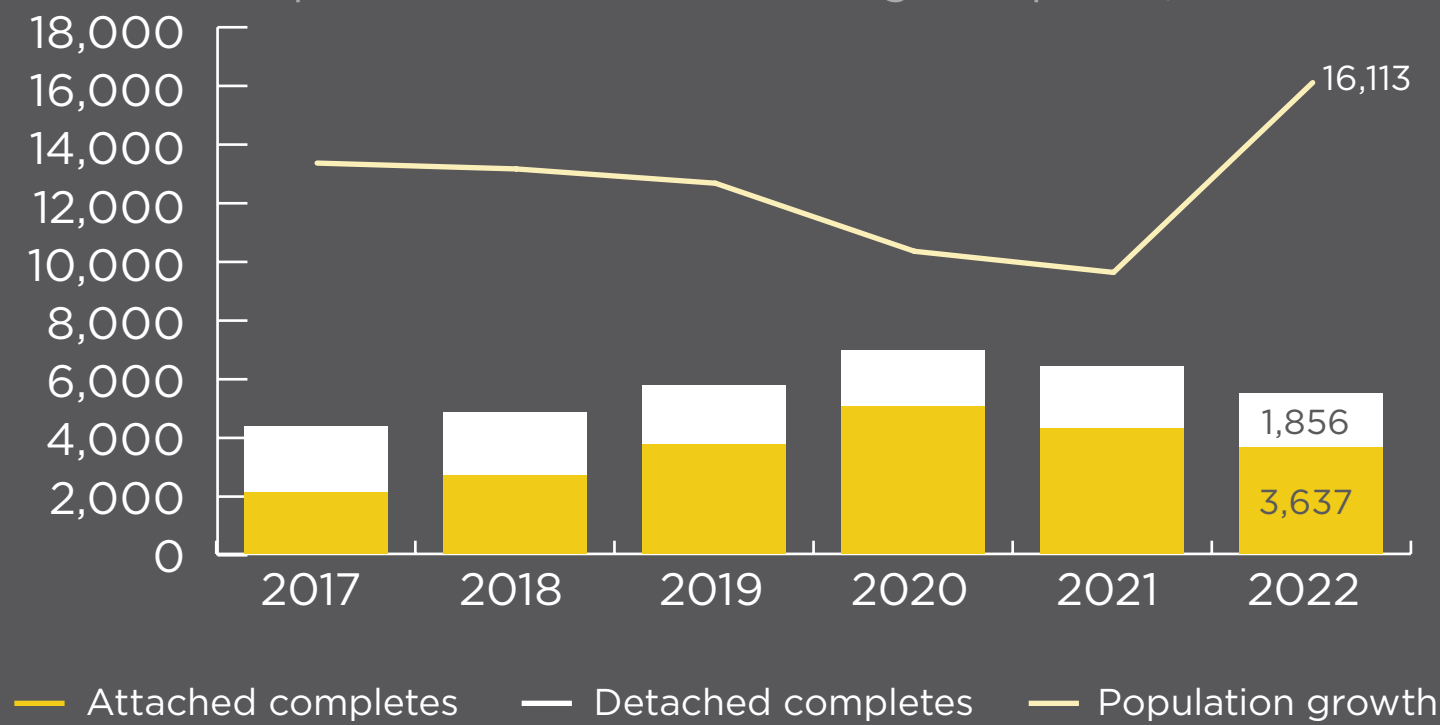
# VANCOUVER ISLAND/COAST (POPULATION: 907,480)



## HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION\*

The region's population growth rate rebounded strongly in 2022, added 16,113 new residents compared to an average of 11,845 from 2017 to 2021. The number of attached and detached housing units completed both declined compared to in 2021.

Population Growth vs Housing Completes, 2017-2022



## HOUSING PRICES

### Rental Rates 2022\*\*:

- Greater Victoria**
- One bedroom: \$1,341 (↑10.5%)
  - Three+ bedroom: \$2,176 (↑14.9%)
- Nanaimo**
- One bedroom: \$1,230 (↑12.6%)
  - Three+ bedroom: \$1,619 (↑13.4%)

### Housing Sales Price April 2023\*\*:

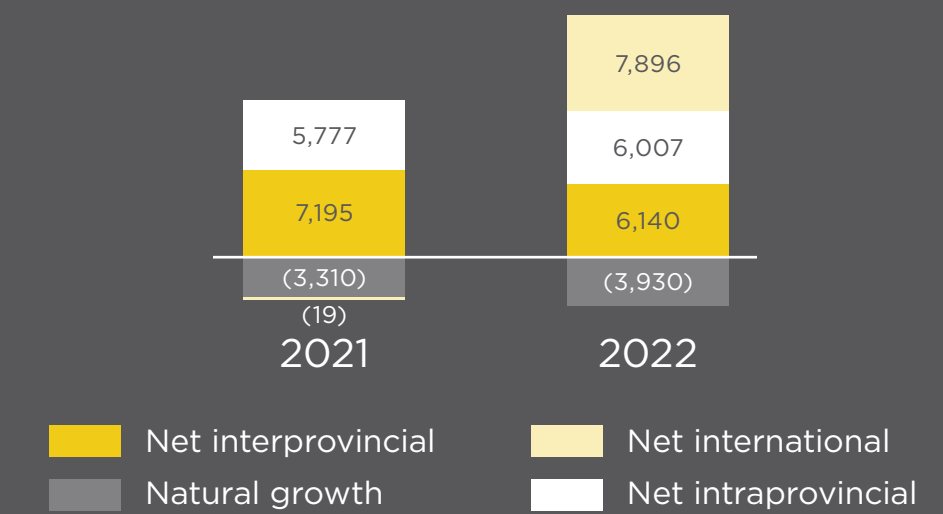
- Vancouver Island**
- Single family home: \$733,400 (↓13.6%)
  - Apartment: \$406,500 (↓9.7%)
- Greater Victoria**
- Single family home: \$1,115,200 (↓12.0%)
  - Apartment: \$557,700 (↓8.8%)



## POPULATION CHANGE

The number of residents arriving from other countries rebounded in 2022, and the region continued to attract residents from other provinces and other regions in the province. Negative natural growth (births minus mortalities) continued to weaken population growth.

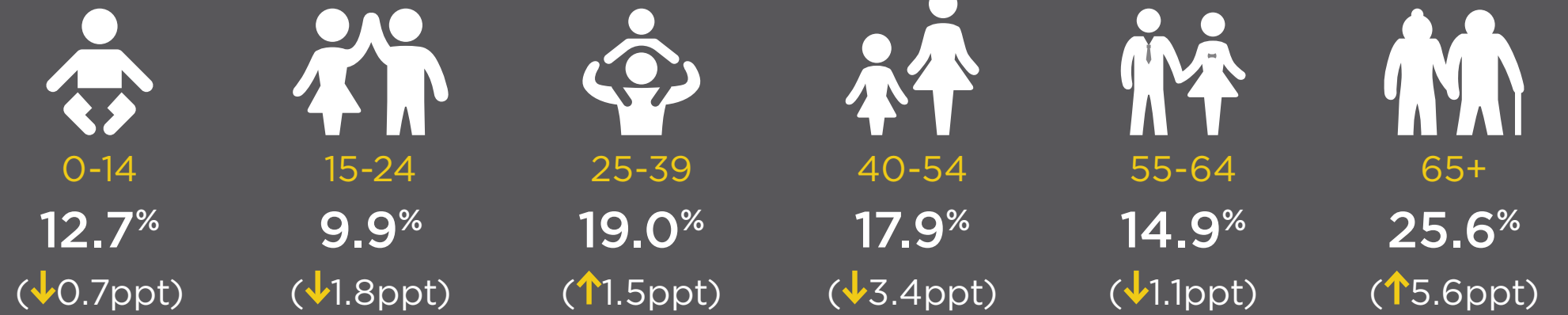
Population Growth by Type



## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The region's average age of 45.9 was the highest in the province in 2022, 3.1 years older than the overall average. Those 65+ made up more than a quarter of the population, compared to a fifth in 2012.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2022 (vs 2012)



\*Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.

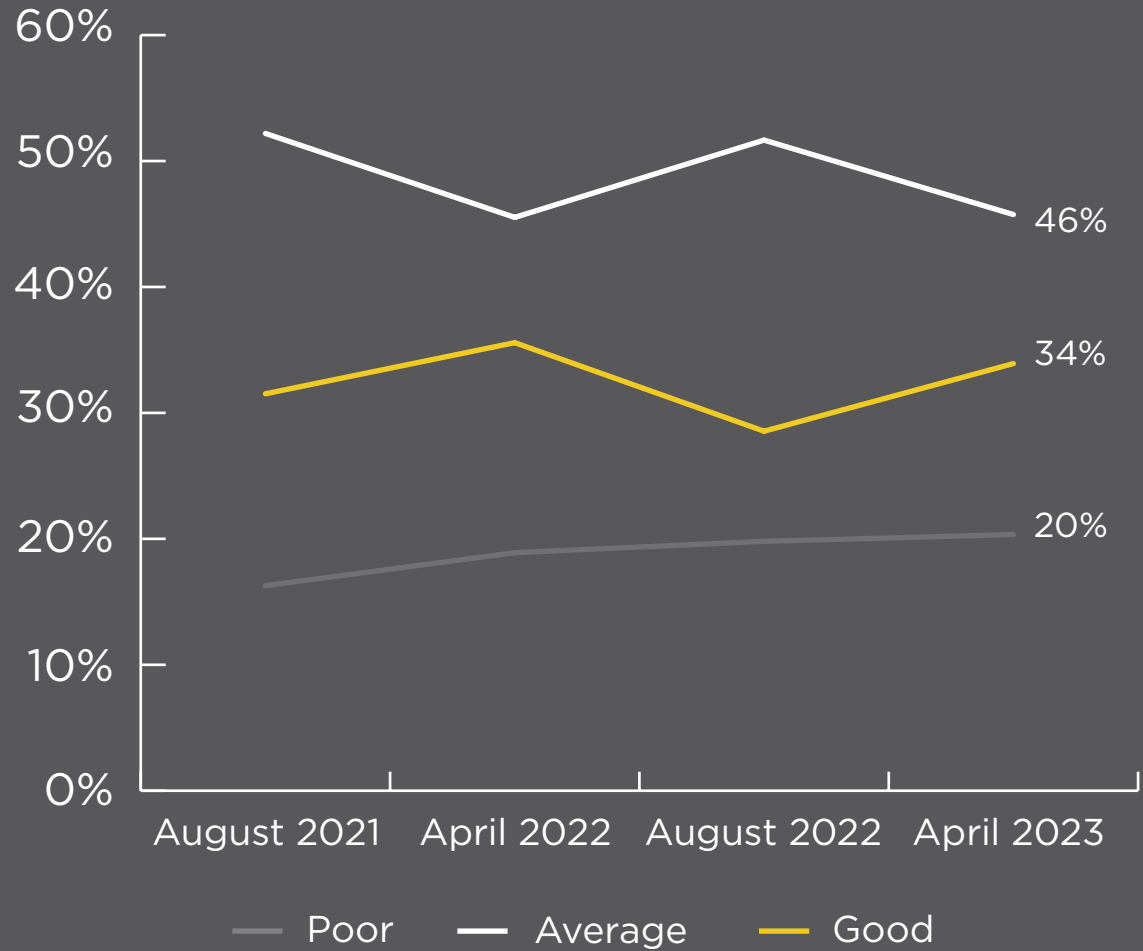
# SURVEY RESULTS

## Outlook on the Economy

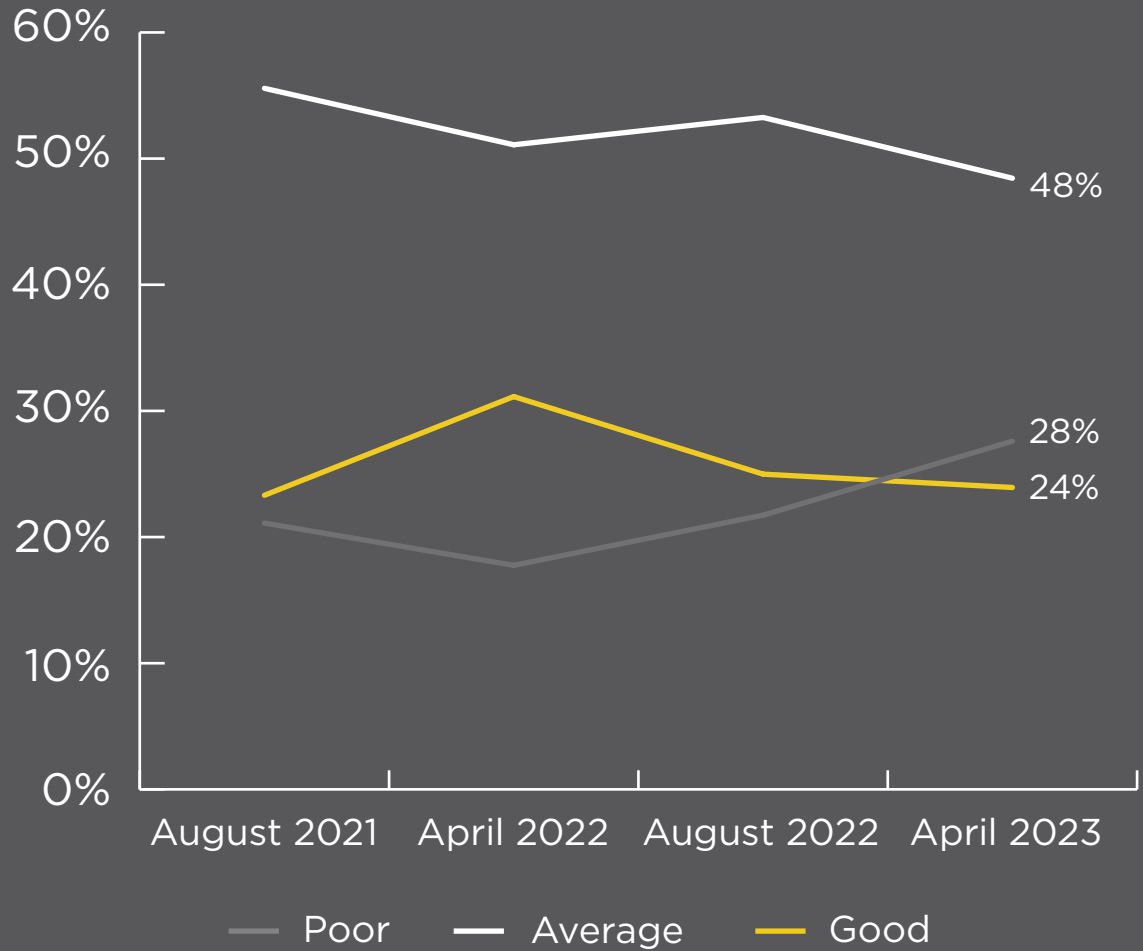
Based on results from the *BC Check-Up: Live* survey\*, BC CPAs indicate that...



**Four in every five (80%) graded the provincial economy as average or good in April 2023.** A greater proportion thought the economy was good in April 2023 (34%) than in August 2022 (29%), but slightly lower than in April 2022 (36%).



**The sentiment about the state of the Canadian economy has worsened,** with 28% of respondents indicating the economy was poor in April 2023, up from 18% in April 2022. Still, 72% graded it as average or good in April 2023.



67% have the same or greater confidence in their organization's prospects compared to last year. **The other third (33%) believe they've worsened over the past year, the most pessimistic result since 2020.**



INCREASE  
25%



SAME THE SAME  
42%



DECREASE  
33%

\* April 2023 results, n=714; August 2022 results, n = 655; April 2022 results, n=710; August 2021 results: n=889. 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...



**Labour shortages, housing prices, and wages** were identified as the three biggest challenges for business success in BC in 2023.

Largest challenges for business success (% selected)\*:

	August 2022	April 2023
1	Ability to attract and retain skilled labour (87%)	Ability to attract and retain skilled labour (83%)
2	Labour compensation (83%)	Housing prices (82%)
3	Housing prices (79%)	Labour compensation (79%)



Despite high interest rates, **more than half (53%) believe housing affordability in their region will worsen this year**. However, that's down from the 67% in April 2022 and 82% in April 2021.



IMPROVE  
10%



STAY THE SAME  
36%

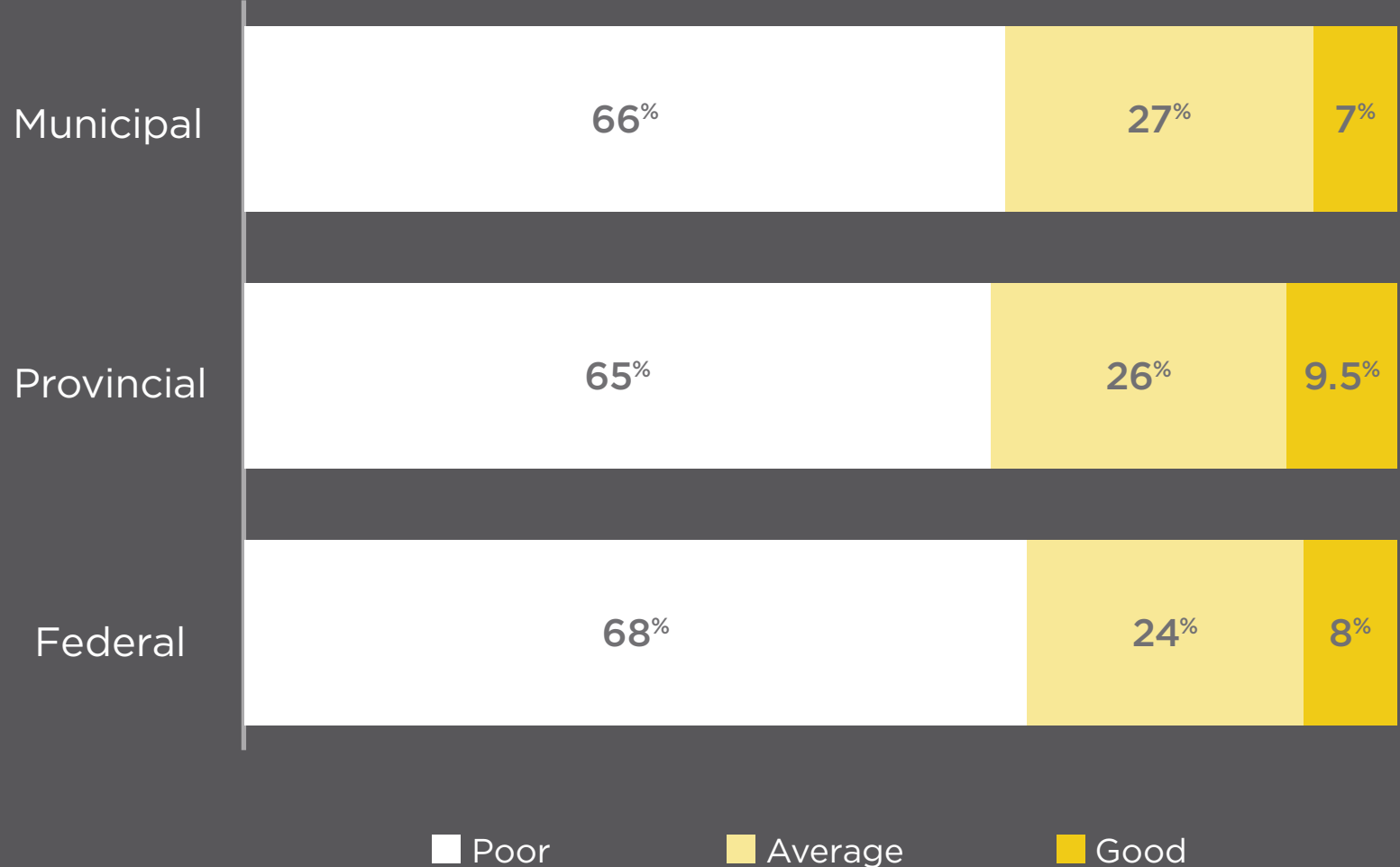


WORSEN  
54%



With housing prices still very high across BC, a large proportion of CPAs believe **governments at all levels need to do more to improve affordability\*\***.

Rating on government performance to improve affordability:



\*April 2023 results, n=714; August 2022 results, n = 655; April 2022 results, n=710; August 2021 results: n=889. 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 2023 **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

Vivian Tse

Director of Communications

604-616-3216 | [news@bccpa.ca](mailto:news@bccpa.ca)

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 [news@bccpa.ca](mailto:news@bccpa.ca).

© BC Check-Up, Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia

**SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS** **Who are they?** 714 CPABC members **Where are they from?** Southwest BC 65% Vancouver Island/Coast 19% Thompson-Okanagan 8% Rest of BC/outside BC 7%

CPABC commissioned Leger to conduct a web-based survey of CPA members regarding their impressions on the current and future of the economy and their current workplace environment. A total of 714 surveys were completed between March 31 to April 28, 2023, which presents an overall response rate of 11%.