

BC CHECK-UP 2024 **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

British Columbia's population growth continued its torrid pace in 2023, as the province recorded its second consecutive record-setting year. **BC added more than 162,000 new residents between July 1, 2022, and July 1, 2023**, surpassing the nearly 130,000 added a year earlier. Immigration has become a key strategy used to support BC's economy, which aims to help offset the effects of an aging population and fill job vacancies in key sectors across the province.

BC's population growth in 2023 came entirely from international migration, as the province welcomed a **record number of immigrants and non-permanent residents**. The province gained 175,024 new residents (net) from other countries in 2023, amid rising immigration targets from the federal government. On the other hand, population growth was hindered by a net outflow of residents relocating to other provinces, **marking the first time interprovincial migration was negative in a decade**. Natural growth (births minus mortalities) also reduced BC's headcount for the second time ever, after first turning negative in 2022.

As BC's population swelled – especially in urban areas – so did the gap between new housing demand and new housing supply. Housing construction was virtually flat year-over-year in BC's seven Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), where the vast majority (91.7%) of population growth occurred. In 2023, there were **30,621 housing units completed in BC CMAs**, similar to the 30,323 completed in 2022. That translated into just 0.21 new housing units per new resident in BC's largest urban centres, where residents were already grappling with housing shortages and high prices.

Over the past two years, homeowners and prospective buyers faced higher borrowing costs, as the Bank of Canada (BoC) tried to reign in persistent inflation by raising interest rates. While home prices retreated from all-time highs initially, prices have once again started to increase. The **benchmark price of a home in BC in May 2024 was \$965,100, up 1.2% from May 2023**. Although this represents an 8.2% pullback from the March 2022 peak,

the benchmark price is still 43.3% higher when compared to May 2019. The BoC recently announced its first interest rate cut since the beginning of the pandemic, which is likely to foster further price growth.

Even though the province capped rent increases at 2.0% for existing tenants in 2023, rent prices marched higher as available apartments became increasingly scarce. The average rent for a **one-bedroom in BC was \$1,588 in 2023, up 8.8% from 2022**. Larger units with three or more bedrooms rented for an average of \$2,146, up 3.8% year-over-year. Compared to 2018, average monthly rent increased by \$625 and \$368 for 3+ bedroom and one-bedroom units, respectively.

The **median after-tax income for a family in BC was \$102,300 as of 2022**, down 2.1% from 2021, and \$38,300 for single individuals, representing a larger decrease of 8.6%. Compared to 2018, the median after-tax income grew only 4.9% and lagged considerably behind the increase in shelter costs.

To add some perspective to the headline indicators, CPABC also surveyed its members who work on the front lines of business in BC. **Housing prices, labour shortages, and higher wages** were identified as the three biggest challenges for business success in BC, and nearly two-thirds (61%) of respondents expect housing affordability to worsen in their region in 2024.

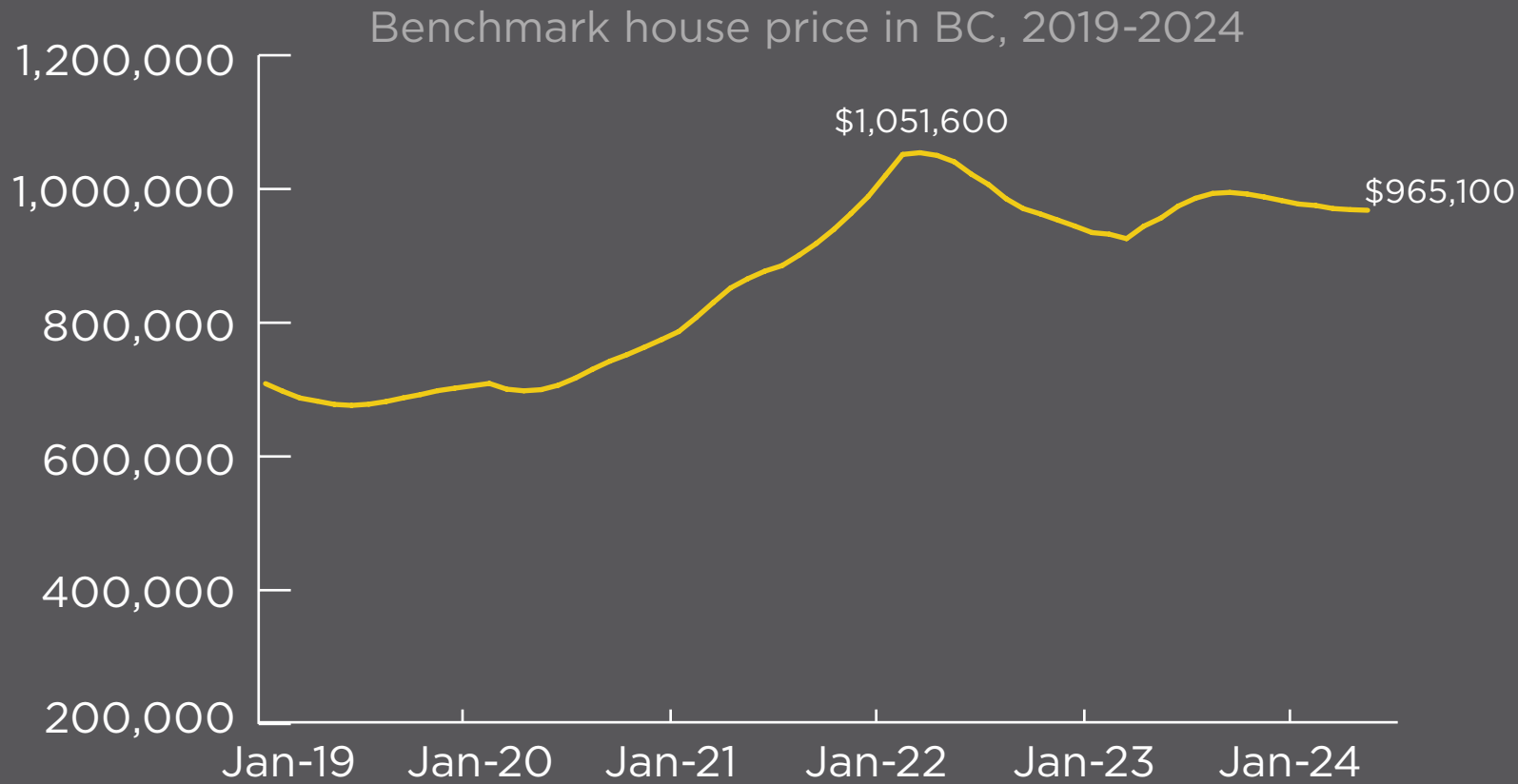
Perceptions about the current state of the economy worsened as well. **Less than three-quarters (73%) of BC CPAs believed BC's economy was average or good in April 2024**, down from 80% in April 2023. Despite the growing pessimism for the economy overall, 65% believed their organization's economic prospects this year were the same or better compared to 2023.

PROVINCIAL SUMMARY



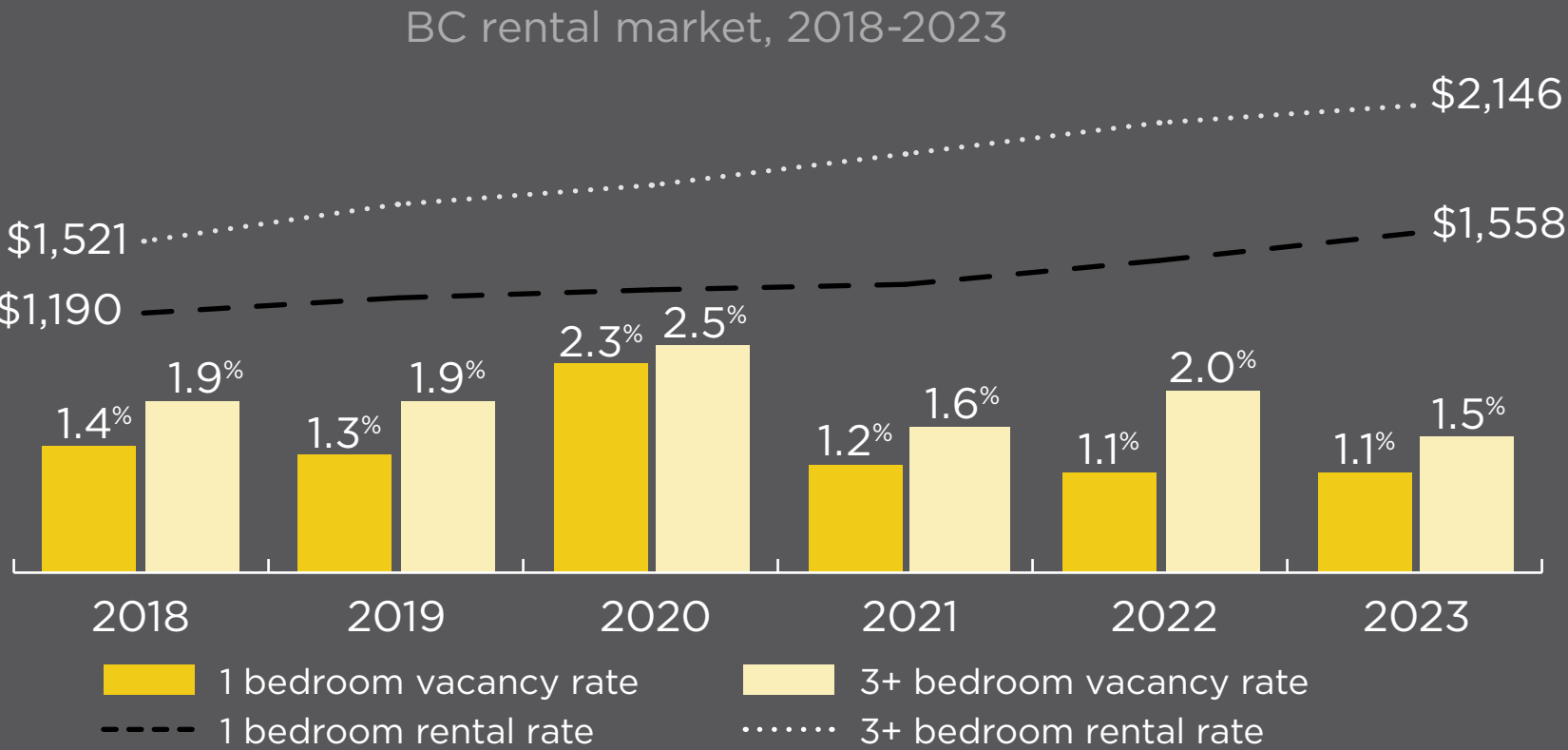
HOUSING PRICES*

After peaking in March 2022 and briefly declining, BC home prices stabilized over the last year. The benchmark price in May 2024 was up 1.2% compared to May 2023 and 43.3% compared with May 2019.



RENTAL MARKET

BC renters faced higher prices and less availability in 2023. The average rent for a one-bedroom apartment increased 8.8% from 2022 to 2023, despite a 2.0% cap for existing tenants. Over the past five years, rent increased by 30.9% for one-bedroom units, and 41.1% for larger units with three or more bedrooms.



MEDIAN INCOME & MORTGAGE INTEREST RATES

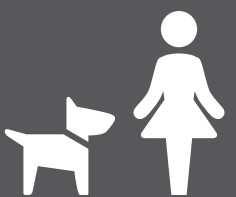
Conventional mortgage interest rates eclipsed the 6% mark in 2023, the first time since 2008. Despite lower prices compared to the 2022 peak, the monthly payment on a representative BC home was around \$650 more in May 2024 compared to March 2022 (assuming a 20% downpayment).

Mortgage lending rate : 6.05% May 2024**
(3.77% March 2022)

MEDIAN INCOME 2022***



Family Income
\$102,300
(↑0.4% from 2018)



Individual Income
\$38,300
(↑9.7% from 2018)

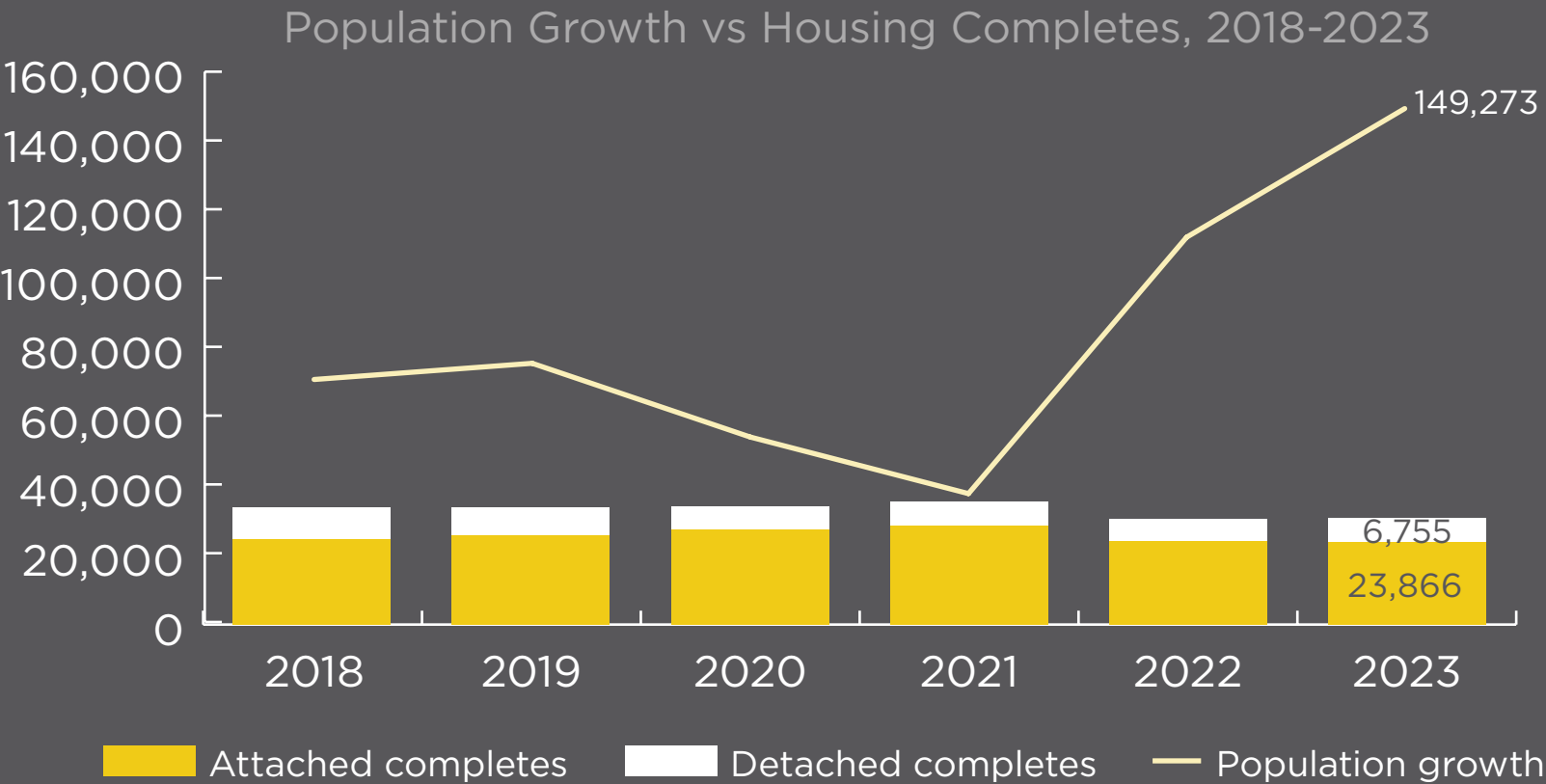
* Based on the CREA composite benchmark home price for British Columbia, seasonally adjusted.
 ** Conventional mortgage lending rate on a five year term, Statistics Canada, table 34-10-0145-01.
 ***Not adjusted for inflation. Median income after tax and government transfers. Family income is defined 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



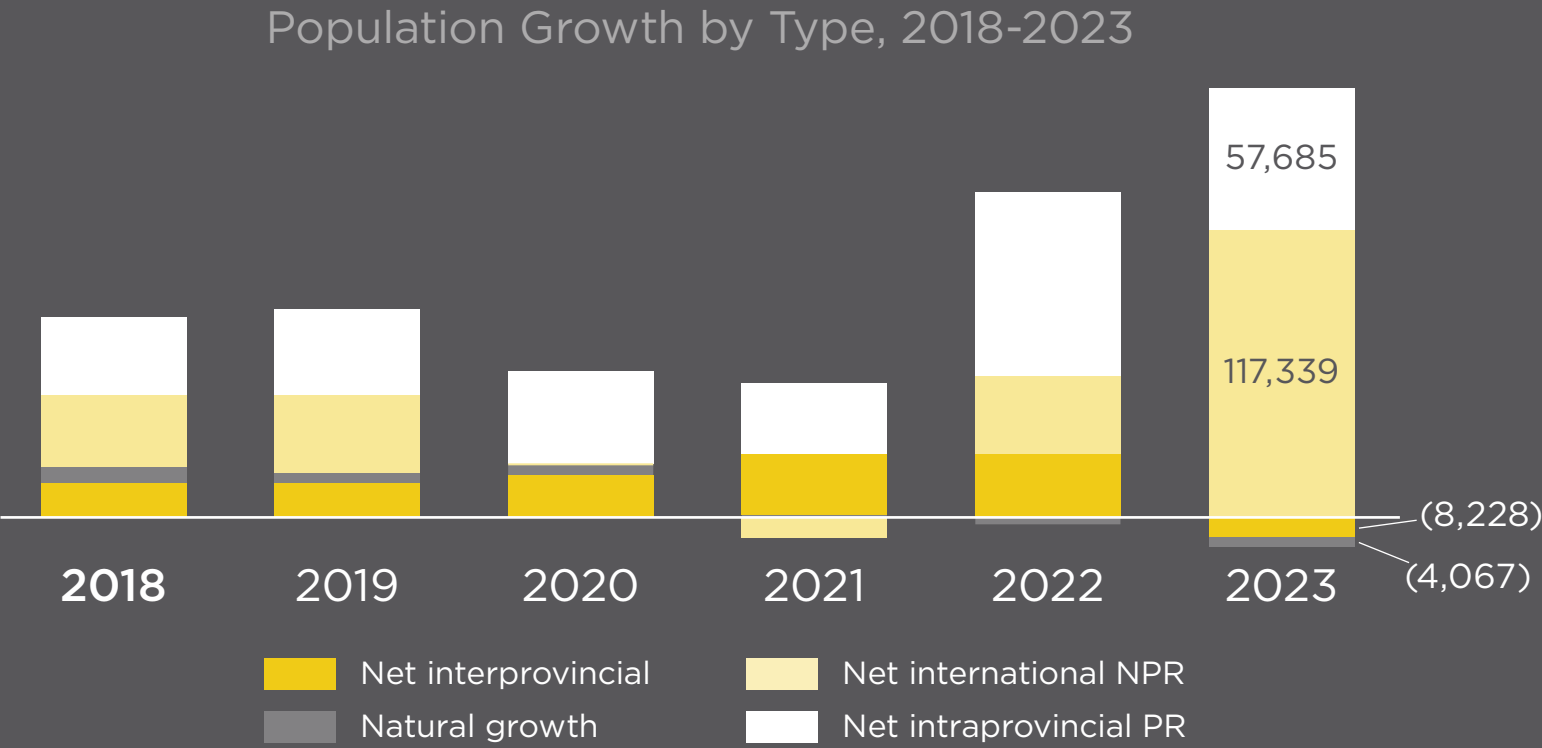
HOUSING SUPPLY*

BC's population growth was concentrated in the province's seven Census Metropolitan Areas, accounting for 91.7% of the provincial increase. In those regions, 30,621 housing units were completed in 2023, representing 0.21 units per new resident.



POPULATION CHANGE**

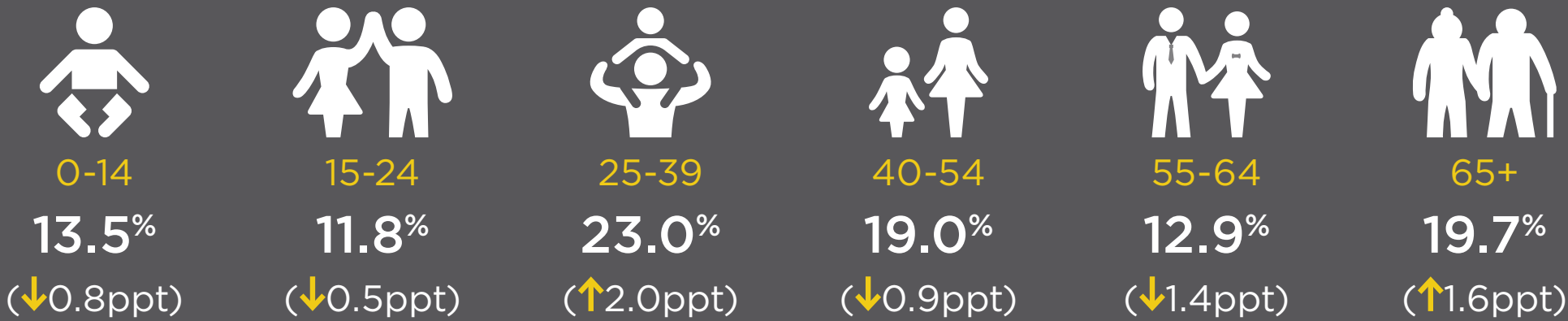
Net international migration accounted for all population growth in 2023, as the province welcomed just over 175,000 international migrants. BC lost residents to other provinces for the first time in a decade, and natural growth was also negative.



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

BC's average age was 42.5 in 2023, compared to 42.1 in 2018. Younger core working age-adults (25-39 year-olds) narrowly surpassed seniors as the fastest growing group due to higher levels of immigration over the last 5 years. Still, people aged 65 and over accounted for nearly one-fifth of the population.

BC Population Distribution by Age**, 2023 (vs 2018)



*Population growth and Housing units completed in BC's Census Metropolitan Areas.
 **Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.

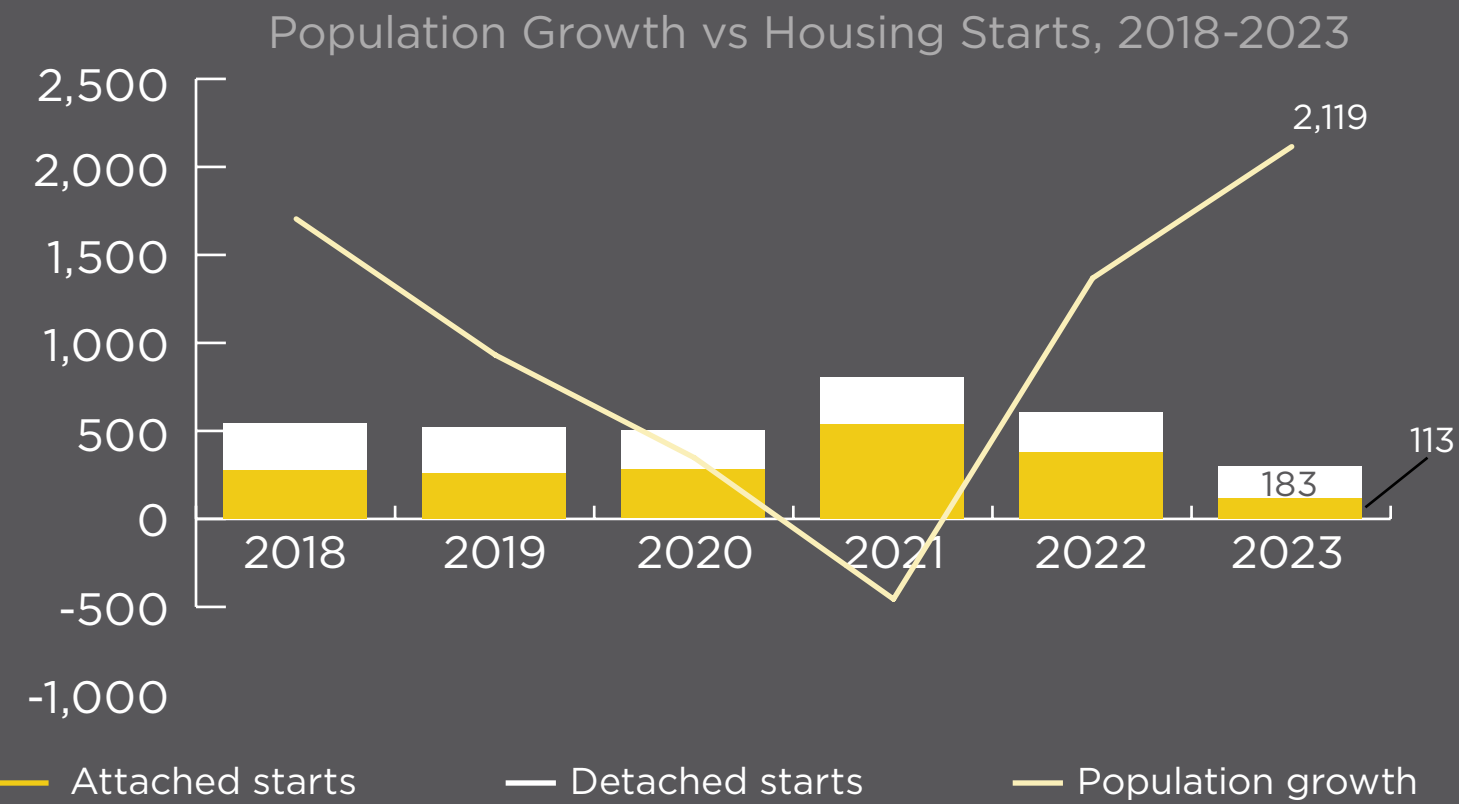


CARIBOO (POPULATION: 170,432)



HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION*

The Cariboo added 2,119 residents (net) in 2023, the most since at least 2002. There were 296 housing units started in 2023, less than half the number started in 2022.



HOUSING PRICES

Rental rates skyrocketed (+84.2%) in Williams Lake as the vacancy rate plummeted from 4.4% in 2022 to 0.9% in 2023. Property values also increased significantly in the region's largest three cities from July 2022 to July 2023.

Williams Lake Rental Rates - 2023**

- One bedroom: \$807 (↑54.5%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$2,100 (↑87.5%)

Average Property Value - July 2023**

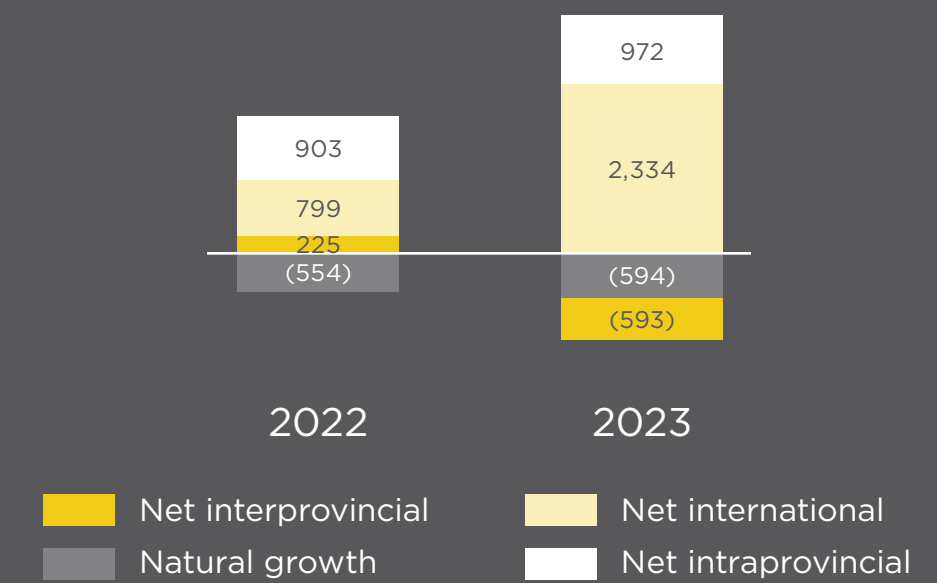
- Prince George: \$460,049 (↑12.0%)
- Williams Lake: \$383,548 (↑15.9%)
- Quesnel: \$345,673 (↑12.6%)



POPULATION CHANGE

The Cariboo welcomed a record number (2,072) of non-permanent residents to the region in 2023, more than half of whom were aged 17 to 22. Similar to last year, the Cariboo attracted residents from other parts of BC.

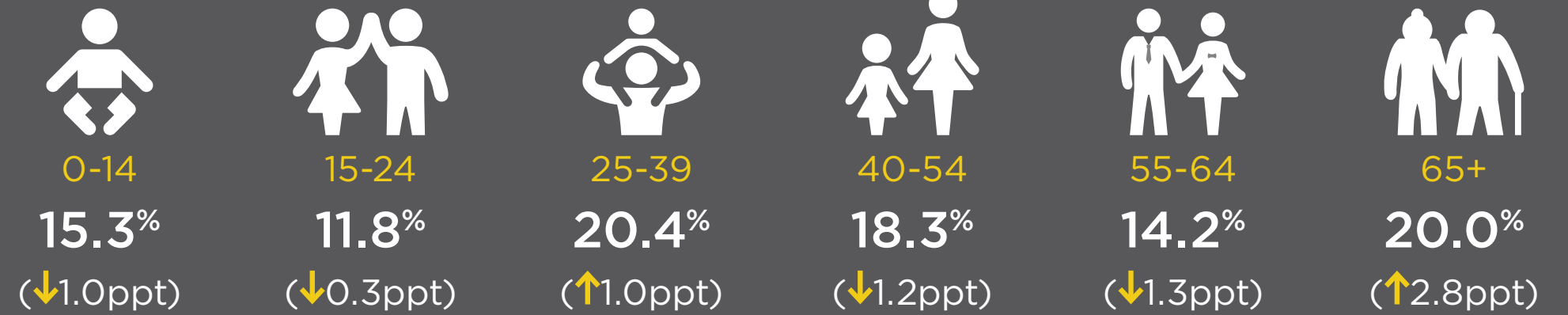
Population Growth by Type



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

One fifth of Cariboo residents were aged 65+, making seniors the fastest growing age group in the region over the last 5 years. The Cariboo's average age of 42.3 was slightly younger than the provincial average.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2023 (vs 2018)



* Housing starts data for the region is only available for Prince George, Quesnel and Williams Lake. Population estimate as of July 1 of each year. Comparable data available for 2001 to 2023. **Changes compared to the same period of previous year. Housing prices based on BC Assessment average 2023 property value as the Canadian Real Estate Association does not provide recent housing sale information for this development region.



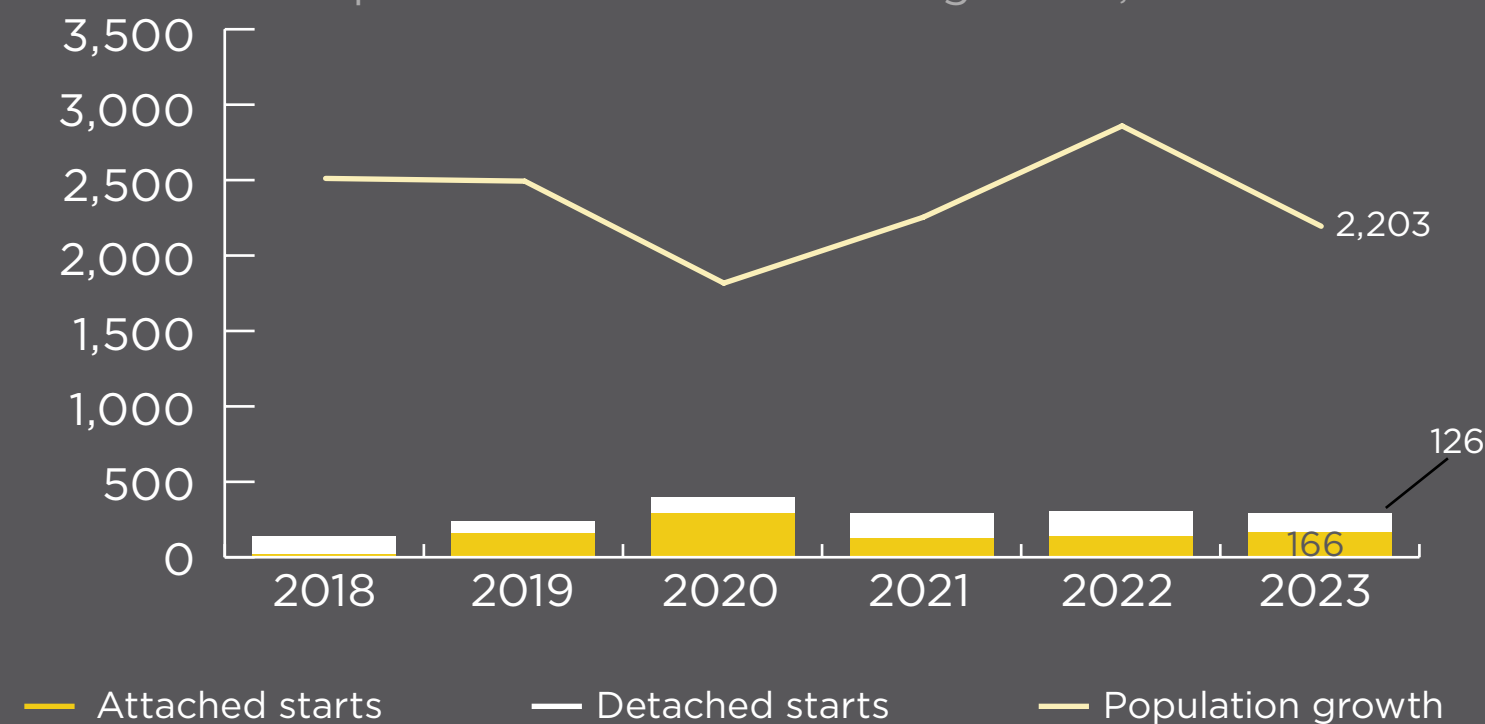
KOOTENAY (POPULATION: 173,059)



HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION*

The Kootenay's population grew by more than 2,200 people for the third straight year in 2023. Housing starts did not keep pace with population growth in Cranbrook, the region's largest population centre.

Population Growth vs Housing Starts, 2018-2023



HOUSING PRICES

The cost of rental units was up significantly in Cranbrook in 2023, with three-bedroom units increasing by 44.7%. The average price of a home sold in the Kootenays in May 2024 was \$563,758, up 3.4% from one year earlier.

Cranbrook Rental Rates - 2023**

- One bedroom: \$968 (↑14.7%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$1,596 (↑44.7%)

Kootenay Home Sales Price - May 2024**

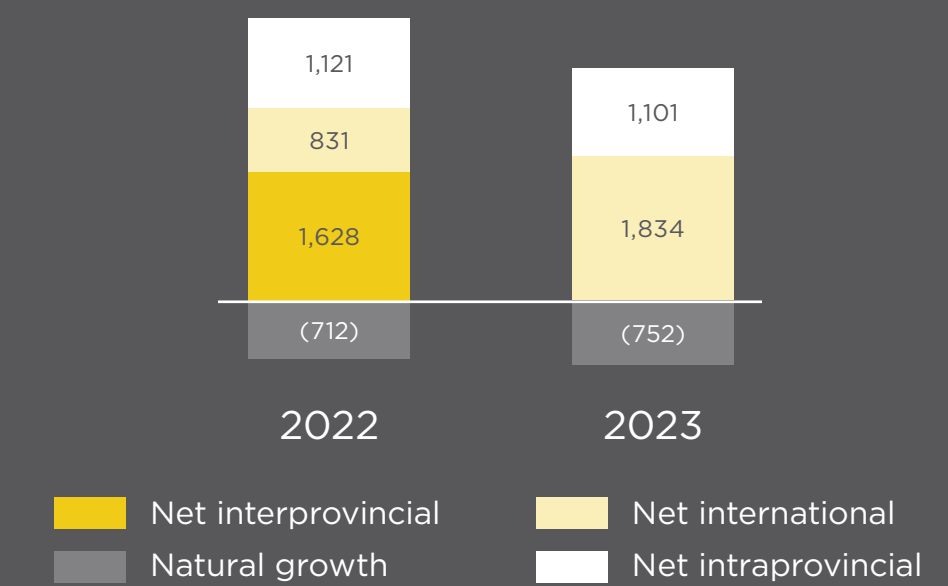
- Average price: \$563,758 (↑3.4%)



POPULATION CHANGE

International migration was the region's largest contributor to population growth in 2023, followed by residents arriving from other parts of BC. Arrivals from other provinces fell off significantly, while natural growth remained negative for the thirteenth straight year.

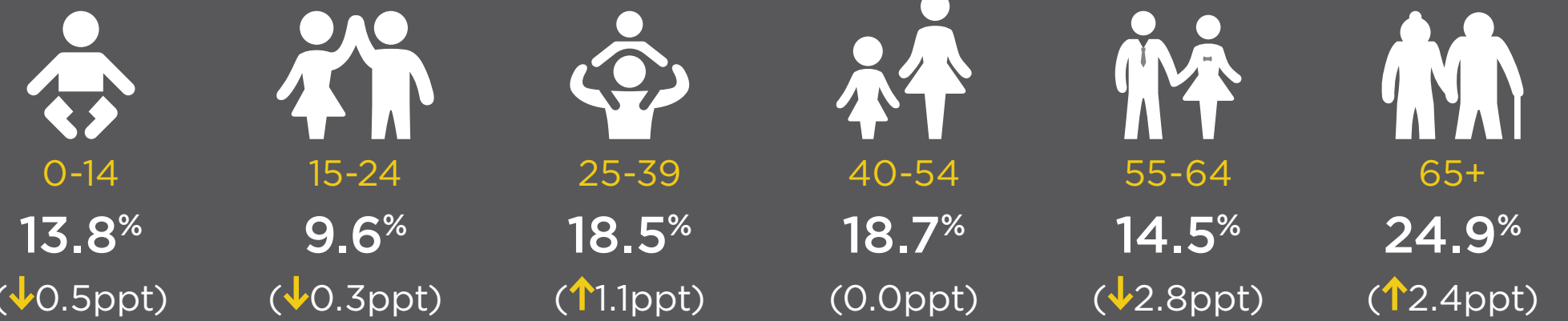
Population Growth by Type



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Nearly one quarter of Kootenay residents were aged 65 or older in 2023, the second highest among all regions in the province. The region's average age of 45.2 was unchanged for the second straight year.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2023 (vs 2018)



*Housing starts data for the region is only available for Cranbrook and Nelson (for all years) and Trail (2023 only). Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.
**Changes compared to the same period of previous year.



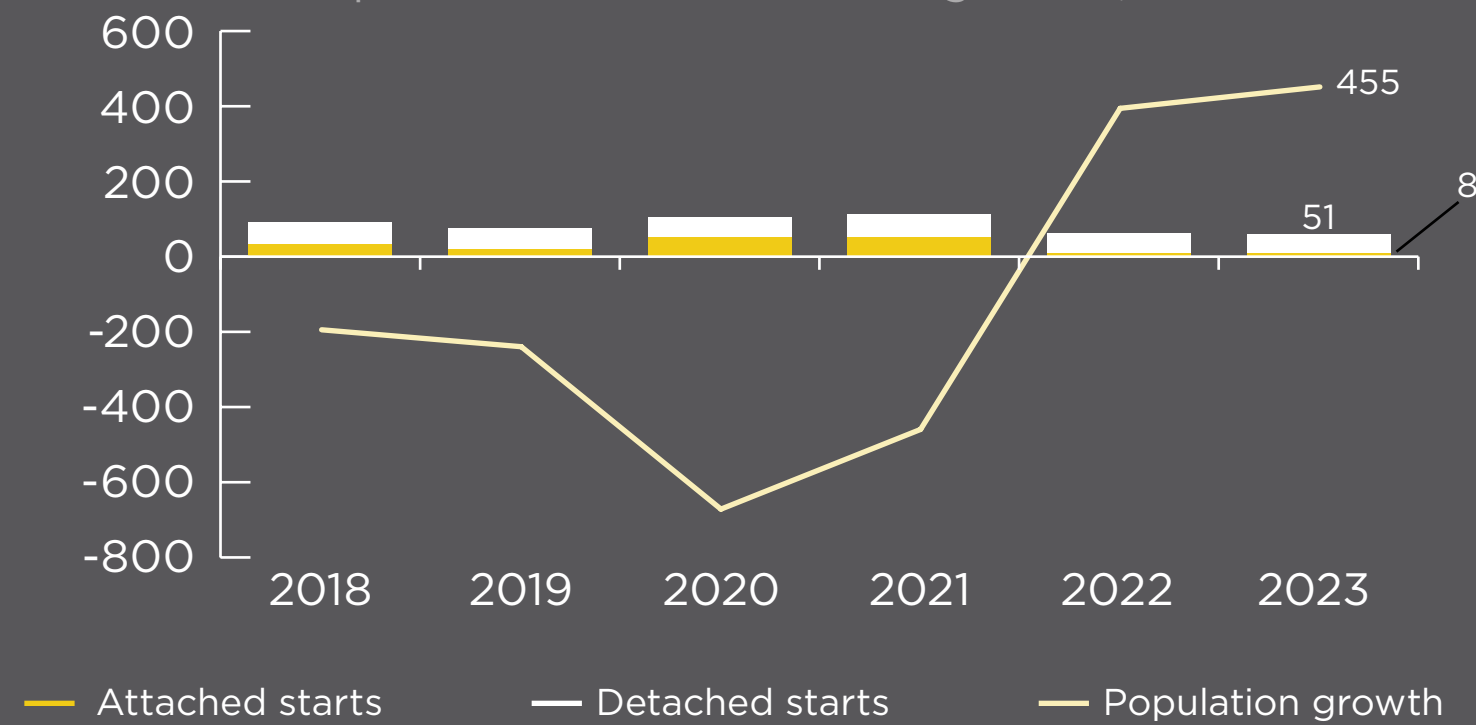
NORTHEAST BC (POPULATION: 70,119)



HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION*

Northeast BC added 455 net new residents in 2023, the second straight year that the region's population increased. At the same time, the pace of new housing construction has slowed in Fort St. John and Dawson Creek.

Population Growth vs Housing Starts, 2018-2023



HOUSING PRICES

The cost of housing increased modestly in Northeast BC over the last year. In the Fort St. John rental market, the cost of one-bedroom units were up 4.5% in 2023. Meanwhile, the average sale price of a home price rose 7.9% between May 2023 and May 2024.

Fort St. John Rental Rates - 2023**

- One bedroom: \$807 (↑4.5%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$1,071 (↓4.4%)

South Peace River Home Sales Price - May 2024**

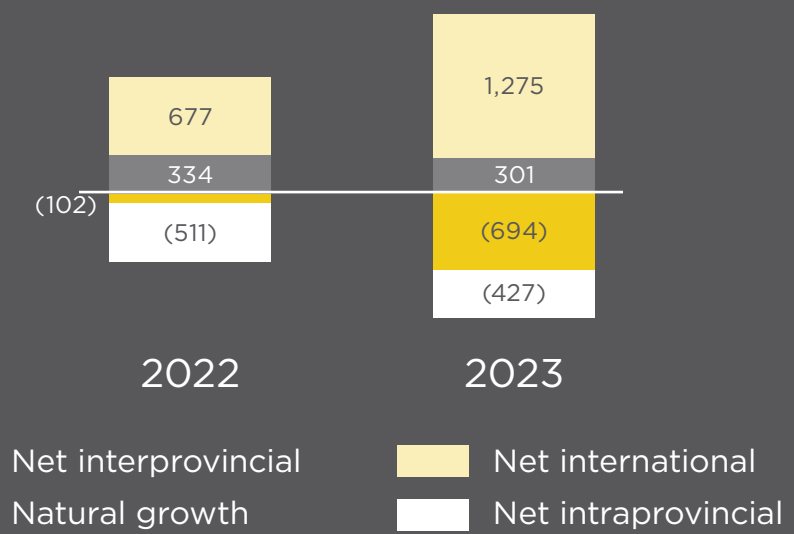
- Average price: \$306,847 (↑7.9%)



POPULATION CHANGE

Northeast BC lost a combined 1,100 residents to other regions and other provinces, more than the average of 701 recorded between 2018 and 2022. The loss was more than offset by a record number of international migrants in 2023, and positive natural growth.

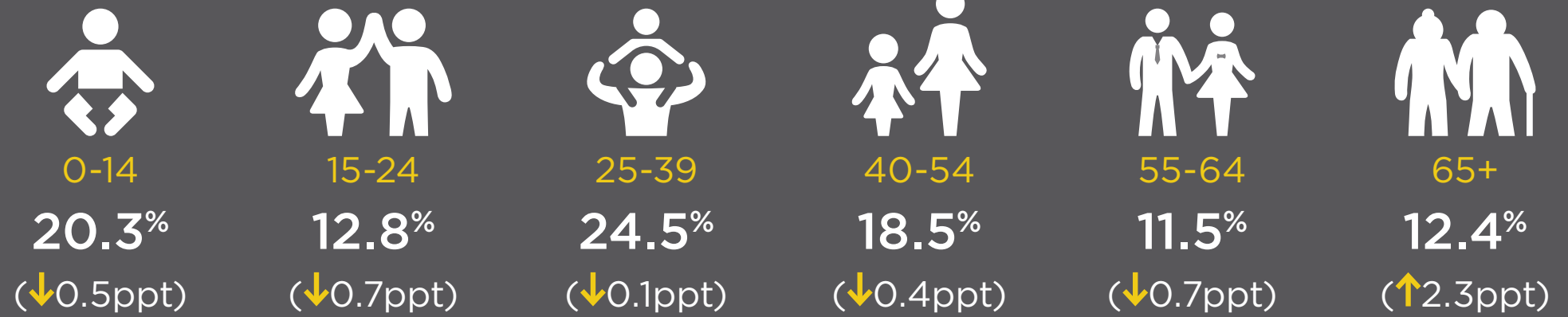
Population Growth by Type



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Northeast BC remained the youngest population in the province, with an average age of 36.8 in 2023. The region is not immune to population aging however, as the age 65+ cohort is the only group to grow in size since 2018.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2023 (vs 2018)



*Housing starts data for the region is only available for Fort St. John and Dawson Creek. Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.
**Changes compared to the same period of previous year.



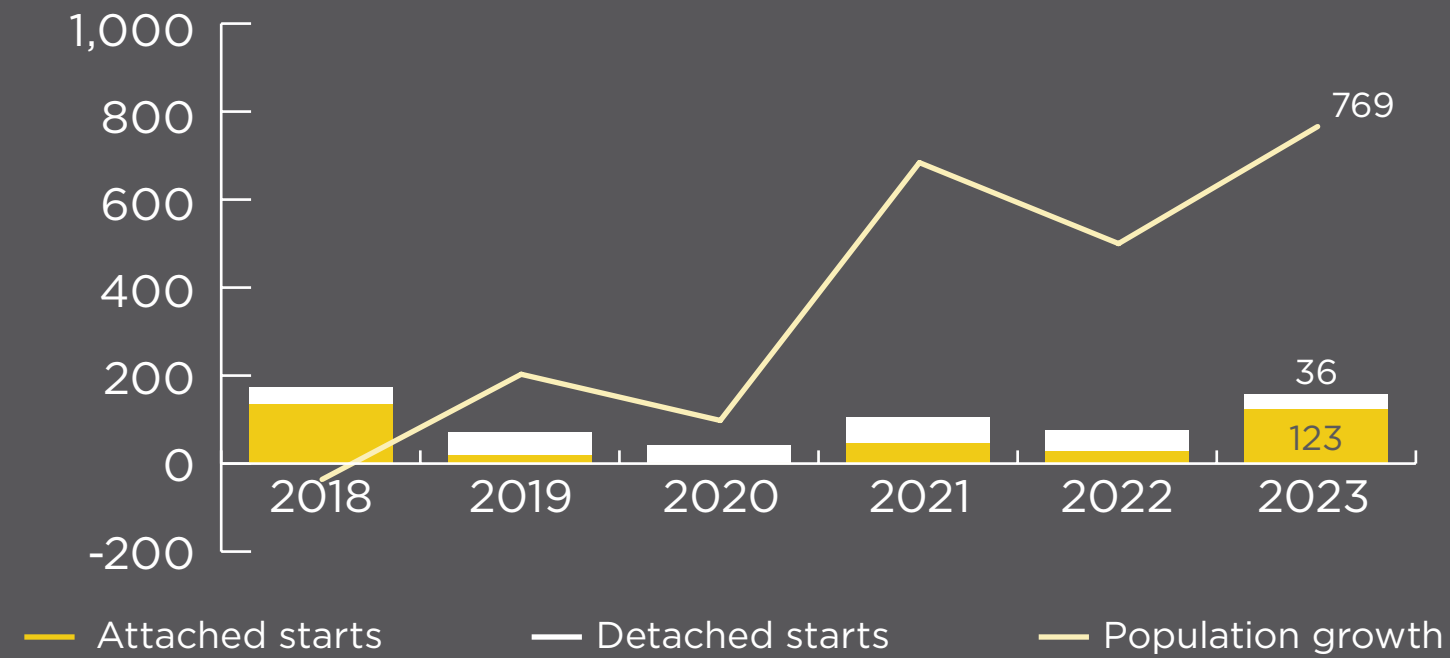
NORTHWEST BC (POPULATION: 99,840)



HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION*

Northwest BC's population grew by 0.8%, adding 769 net new residents in 2023. Construction began on 159 housing units in Terrace and Prince Rupert in 2023* over twice the number started in 2022.

Population Growth vs Housing Starts, 2018-2023



HOUSING PRICES

Housing prices increased in each of Northwest BC's four largest municipalities between July 2022 and July 2023. Property values in Prince Rupert have risen a cumulative 48.7% in two years.

Average Property Value - July 2023**

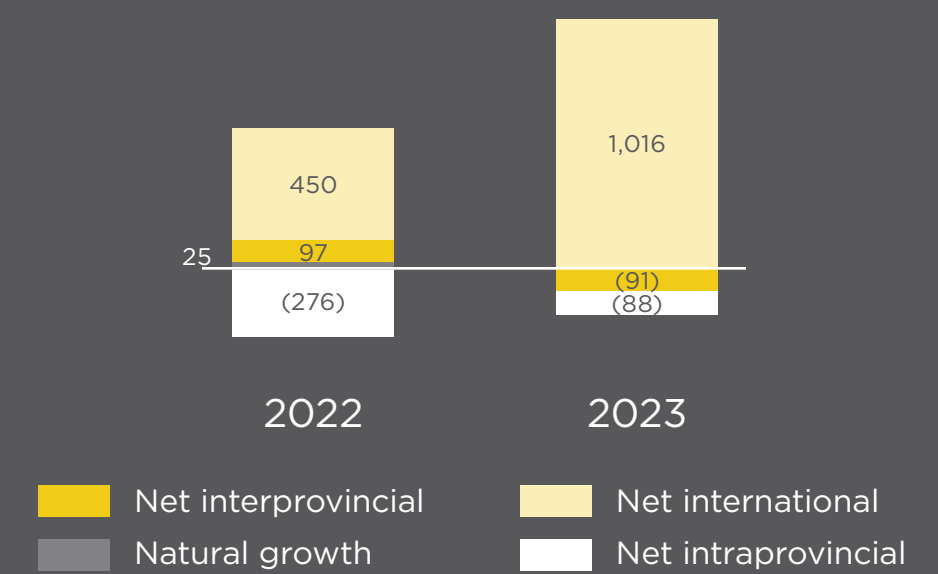
- Prince Rupert: \$460,995 (↑13.2%)
- Terrace: \$468,655 (↑6.4%)
- Smithers: \$482,760 (↑14.7%)
- Kitimat: \$362,196 (↑5.0%)



POPULATION CHANGE

Northwest BC welcomed 1,184 residents from other countries in 2023, the majority of whom were non-permanent residents. Meanwhile, migration to other regions and provinces, and natural birth detracted from population growth.

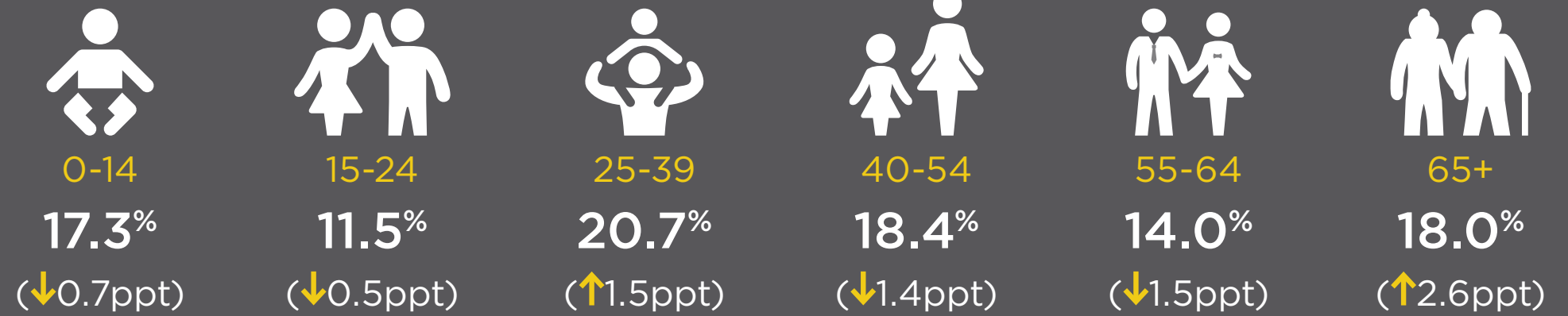
Population Growth by Type



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Over the last five years, population growth in Northwest BC has come entirely from 25-to-39 year-olds (+10.4%) and seniors aged 65+ (+19.5%). The average age in the region was 40.9, the second lowest in the province.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2023 (vs 2018)



Northwest BC encompasses the North Coast & Nechako regions.

*Housing starts data for the region is only available for Terrace and Prince Rupert and excludes municipalities such as Smithers and Kitimat. 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 2023 property value as the Canadian Real Estate Association does not provide recent housing sale information for this development region.

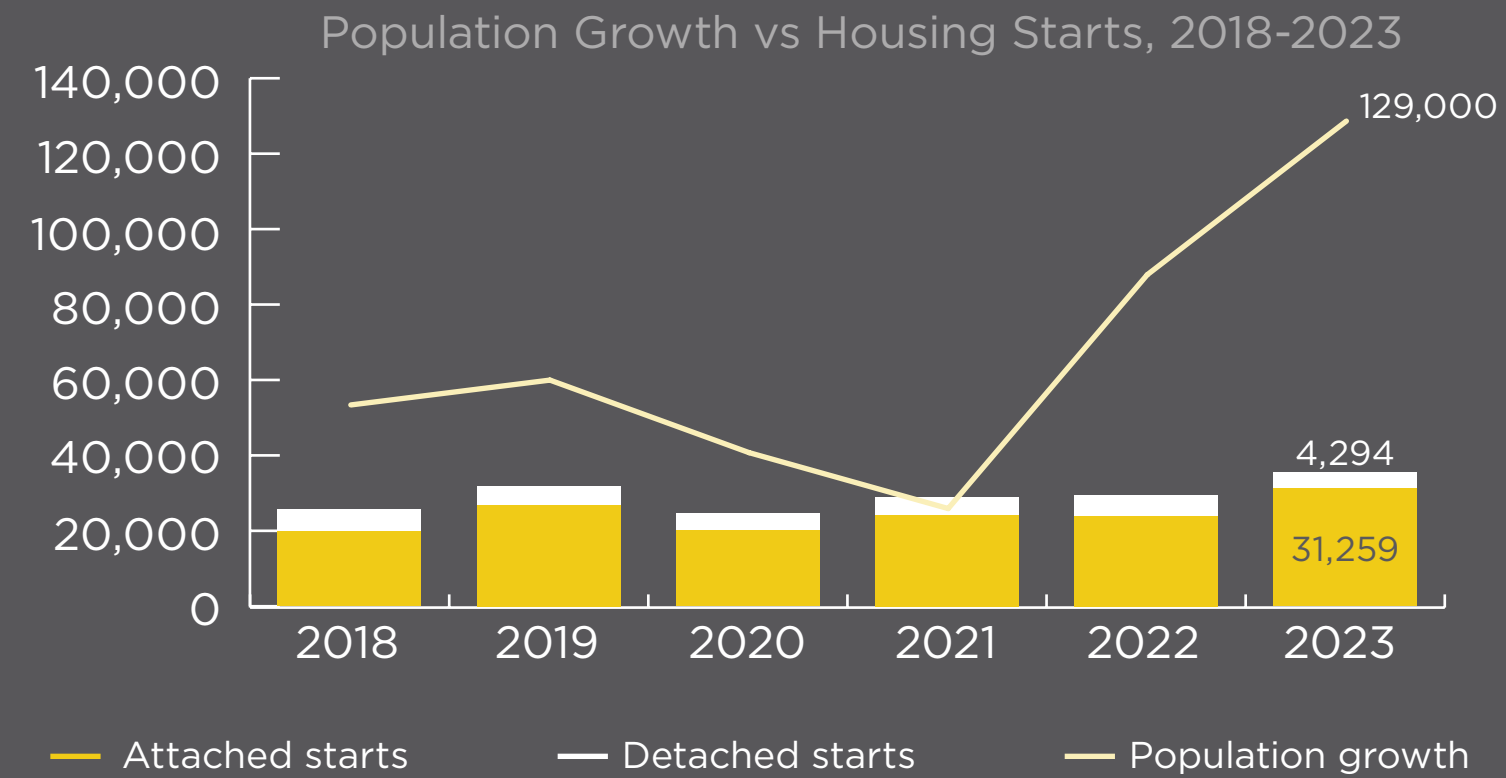


SOUTHWEST BC (POPULATION: 3.41 MILLION)



HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION*

Southwest BC, which includes the Lower Mainland, saw its population grow by 129,000 in 2023, eclipsing the previous record recorded in 2022. Housing starts in the region also reached a record high in 2023, but the road to affordable housing remains long.



HOUSING PRICES

Shelter costs were up across the board, as the influx of new migrants put pressure on an already tight housing market. The average rent for a one-bedroom apartment shot up nearly 10% between 2022 and 2023, while benchmark home prices also increased.

Greater Vancouver Rental Rates - 2023**

- One bedroom: \$1,696 (↑9.9%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$2,547 (↑1.4%)

Lower Mainland Benchmark Home Price - May 2024**

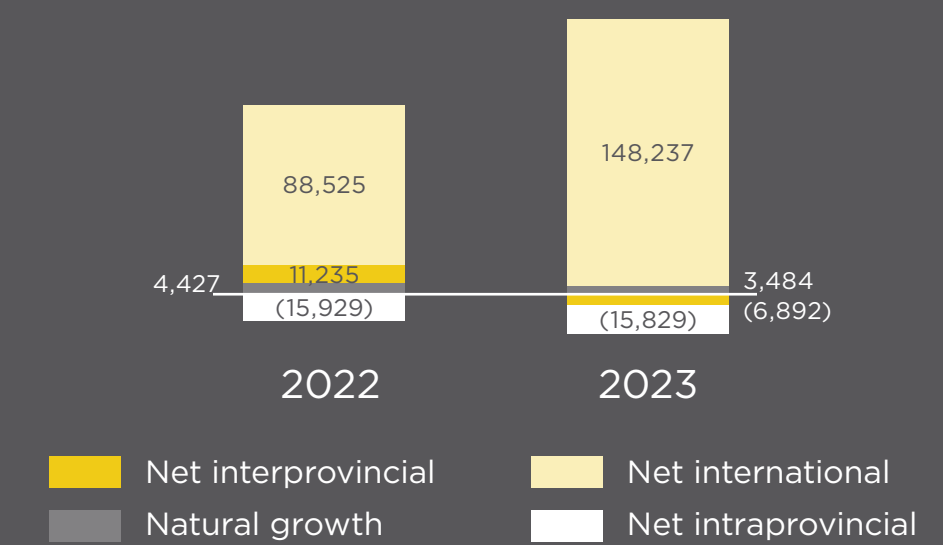
- Single family home: \$1,797,700 (↑5.4%)
- Apartment: \$707,500 (↑2.3%)



POPULATION CHANGE

The vast majority (84.7%) of new international migrants to BC settled in Southwest BC, which includes the Lower Mainland. The region lost nearly 16,000 residents to other parts of the province, and experienced a net outflow to other provinces amid a worsening housing crisis.

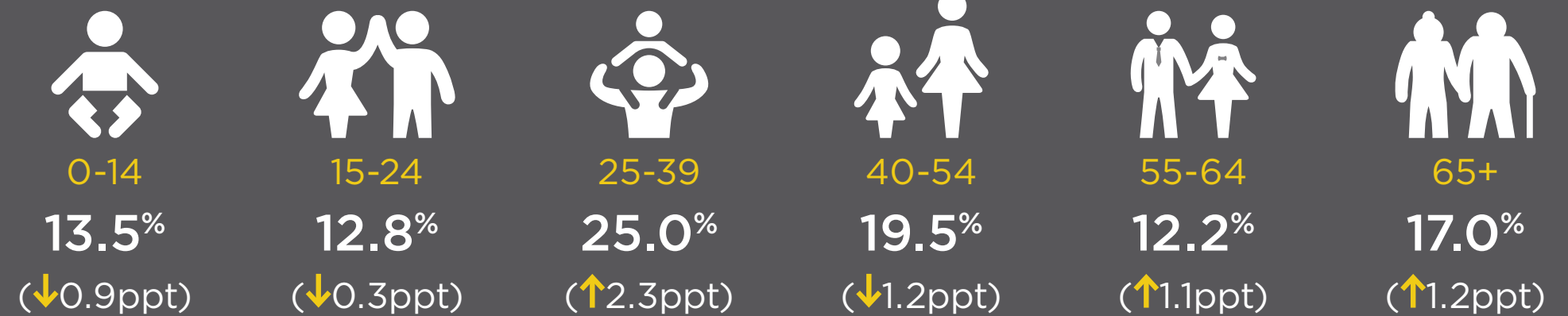
Population Growth by Type



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

International migration helped push the region's average age lower in 2023, with more than 85% of new arrivals being younger than 40 years old. Residents aged 25 to 39 have been the fastest growing demographic over the past five years, and made up a quarter of Southwest BC's population.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2023 (vs 2018)



*Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.

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

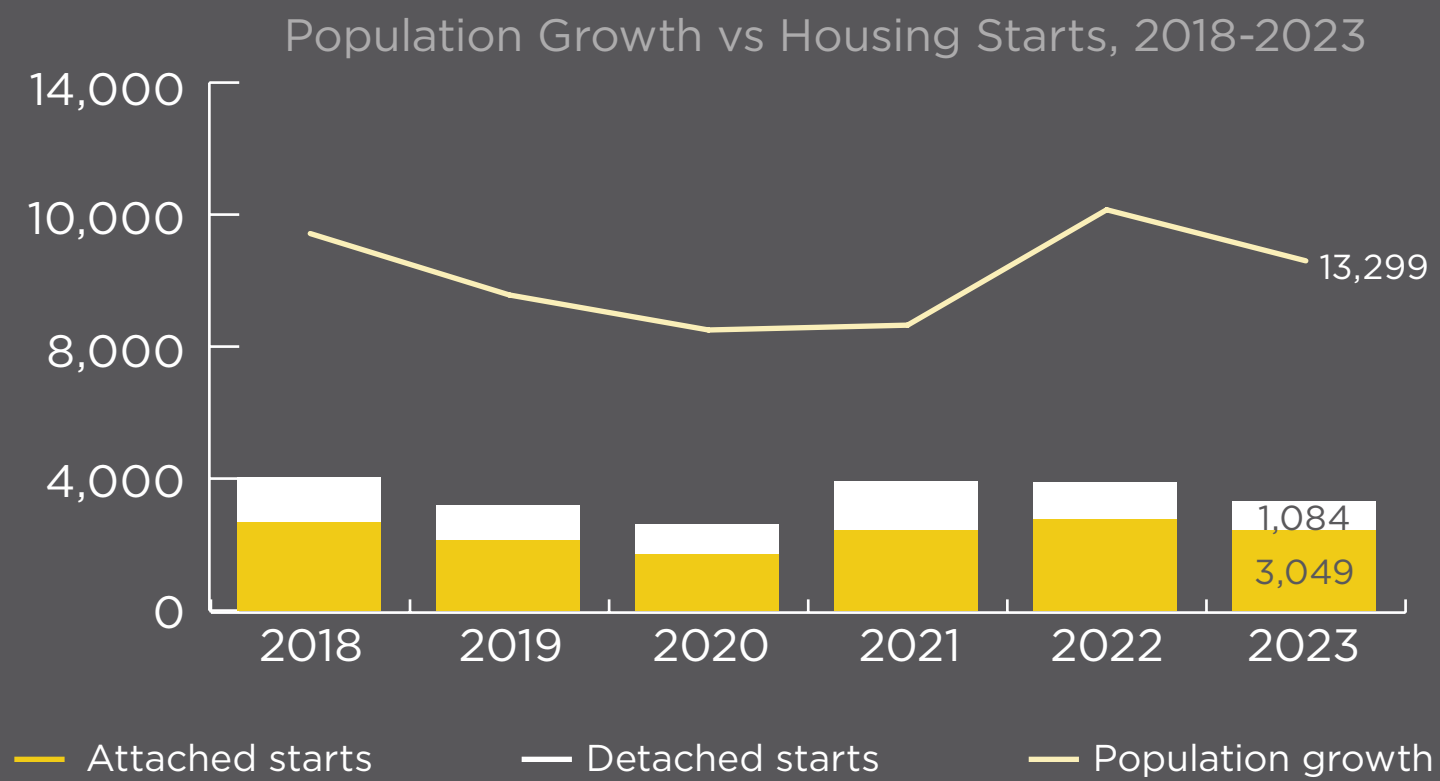


THOMPSON-OKANAGAN (POPULATION: 657,450)



HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION*

The region added over 13,299 residents in 2023 and had the second highest growth rate in the province over the past five years (10.4%). The 4,133 housing units started was below the nearly 4,900 units that began construction in 2021 and 2022.



HOUSING PRICES

Rent prices in Kelowna increased most for one-bedroom apartments, as the vacancy rate fell from 1.6% in 2022 to 1.0% in 2023, but moderated for larger units. The average price of a house sold in the Okanagan fell compared to last year, as high interest rates continued to impact the resale market.

Kelowna Rental Rates - 2023**

- One bedroom: \$1,477 (↑13.1%)
- Three+ bedroom: \$2,113 (↓3.4%)

Okanagan Home Sales Price - May 2024**

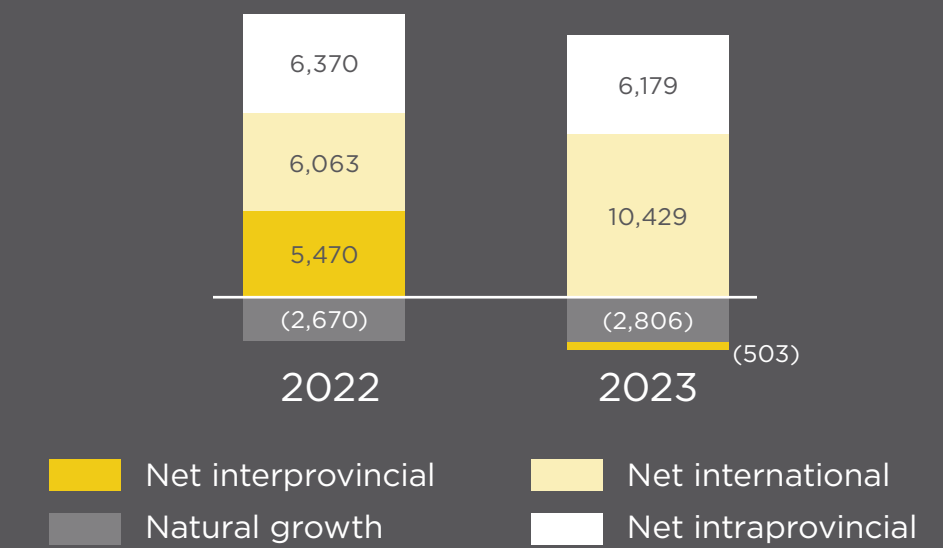
- Average price: \$749,878 (↓4.8%)



POPULATION CHANGE

Despite losing residents to other provinces for the first time since 2002, population growth remained strong due to a larger than usual influx of international arrivals. Migration to the Thompson-Okanagan from other parts of BC also remained elevated after reaching a record high in 2022.

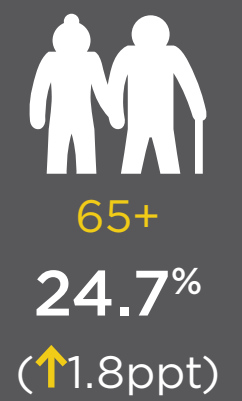
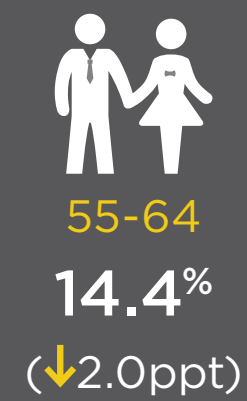
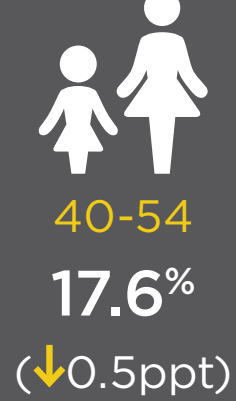
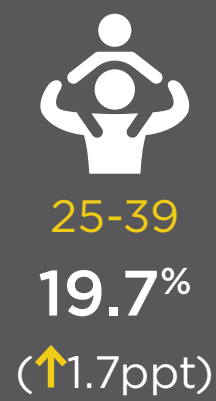
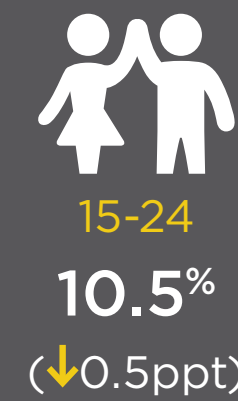
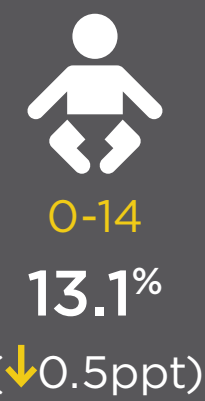
Population Growth by Type



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Population growth among 25-to-39 year-olds narrowly outpaced growth in the age 65+ cohort since 2018. Still, seniors made up nearly a quarter of the region's population in 2023, the third largest proportion in the province.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2023 (vs 2018)



* Housing starts data for the region is only available population centres of 10,000+. Population estimate as of July 1 of each year.
**Changes compared to the same period of previous year.

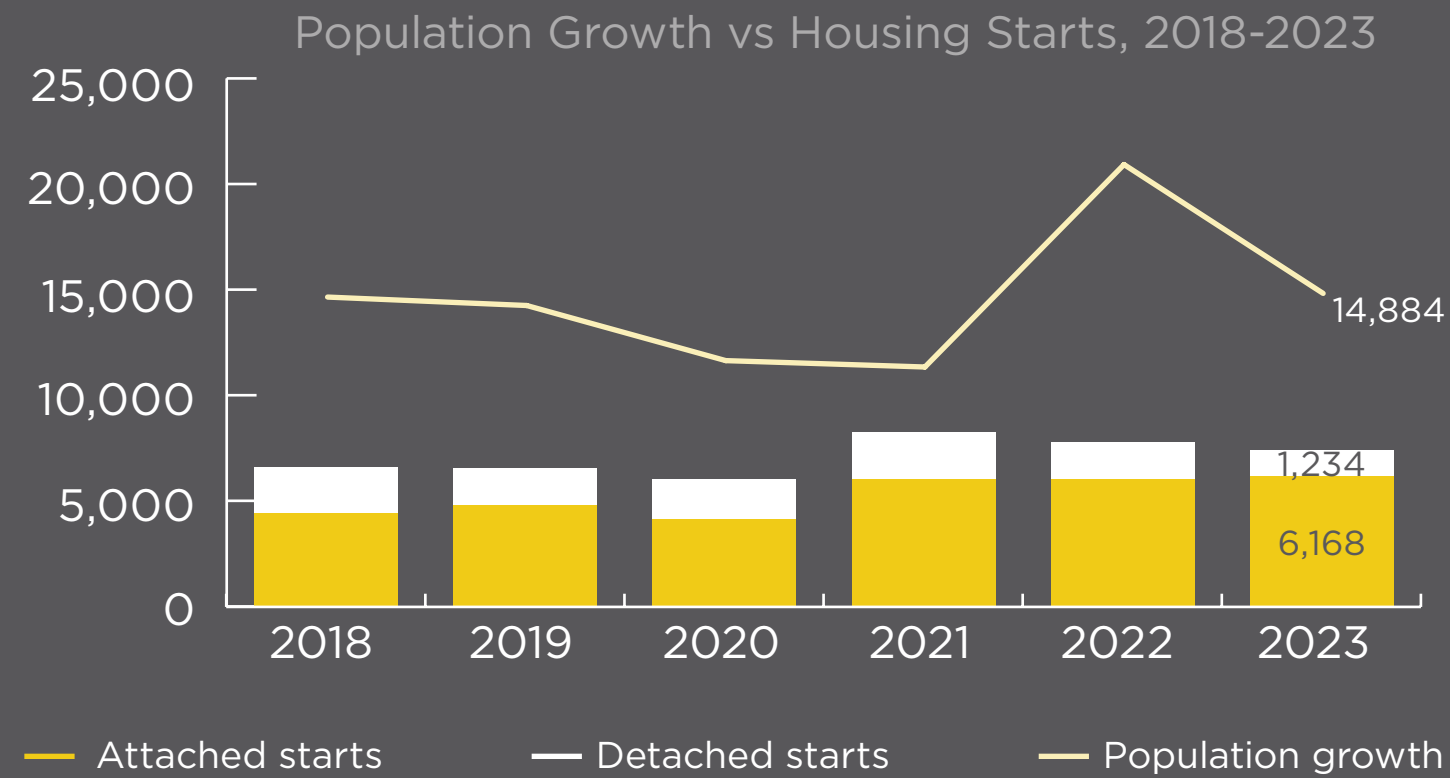


VANCOUVER ISLAND/COAST (POPULATION: 934,721)



HOUSING SUPPLY AND POPULATION*

The region added 14,884 residents in 2023, similar to the average population growth of 14,599 recorded between 2019 and 2022. New housing construction lost momentum for the second straight year.



HOUSING PRICES

Rental Rates - 2023**

- Greater Victoria**
- One bedroom: \$1,427 (↑6.4%)
 - Three+ bedroom: \$2,089 (↓4.0%)
- Nanaimo**
- One bedroom: \$1,319 (↑7.2%)
 - Three+ bedroom: \$1,737 (↑7.3%)

Benchmark Home Price - May 2024**

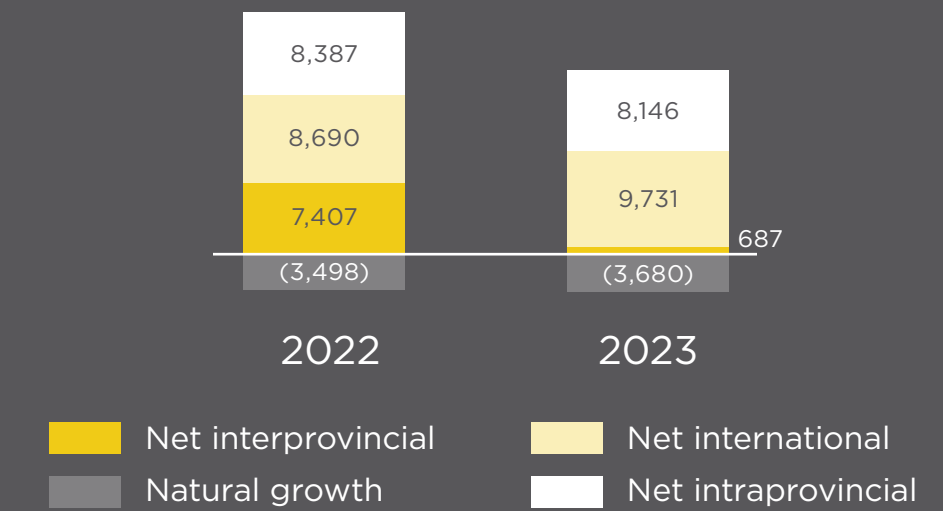
- Vancouver Island**
- Single family home: \$767,300 (↑4.1%)
 - Apartment: \$404,500 (↑2.5%)
- Greater Victoria**
- Single family home: \$1,139,400 (↑0.5%)
 - Apartment: \$560,100 (↑1.0%)



POPULATION CHANGE

The number of residents arriving from other provinces slowed significantly in 2023, but the region continued to attract people from other parts of BC and other countries. The gap between births and deaths widened, as natural growth continued to hamper population growth.

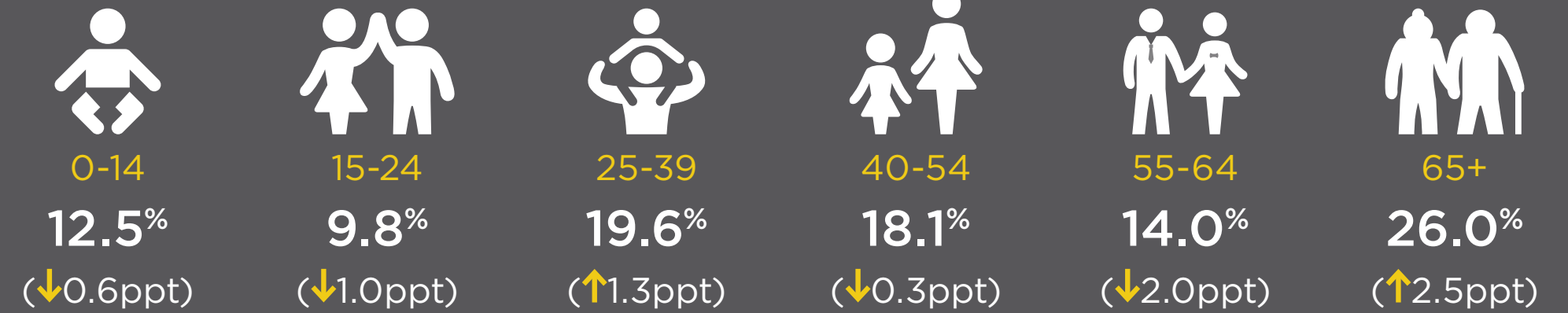
Population Growth by Type



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The region's average age of 45.9 was the highest in the province in 2023, as Vancouver Island remains a popular destination for retirees. Residents aged 65+ made up 26.0% of the population, compared to 19.7% province wide.

BC Population Distribution by Age, 2023 (vs 2018)



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

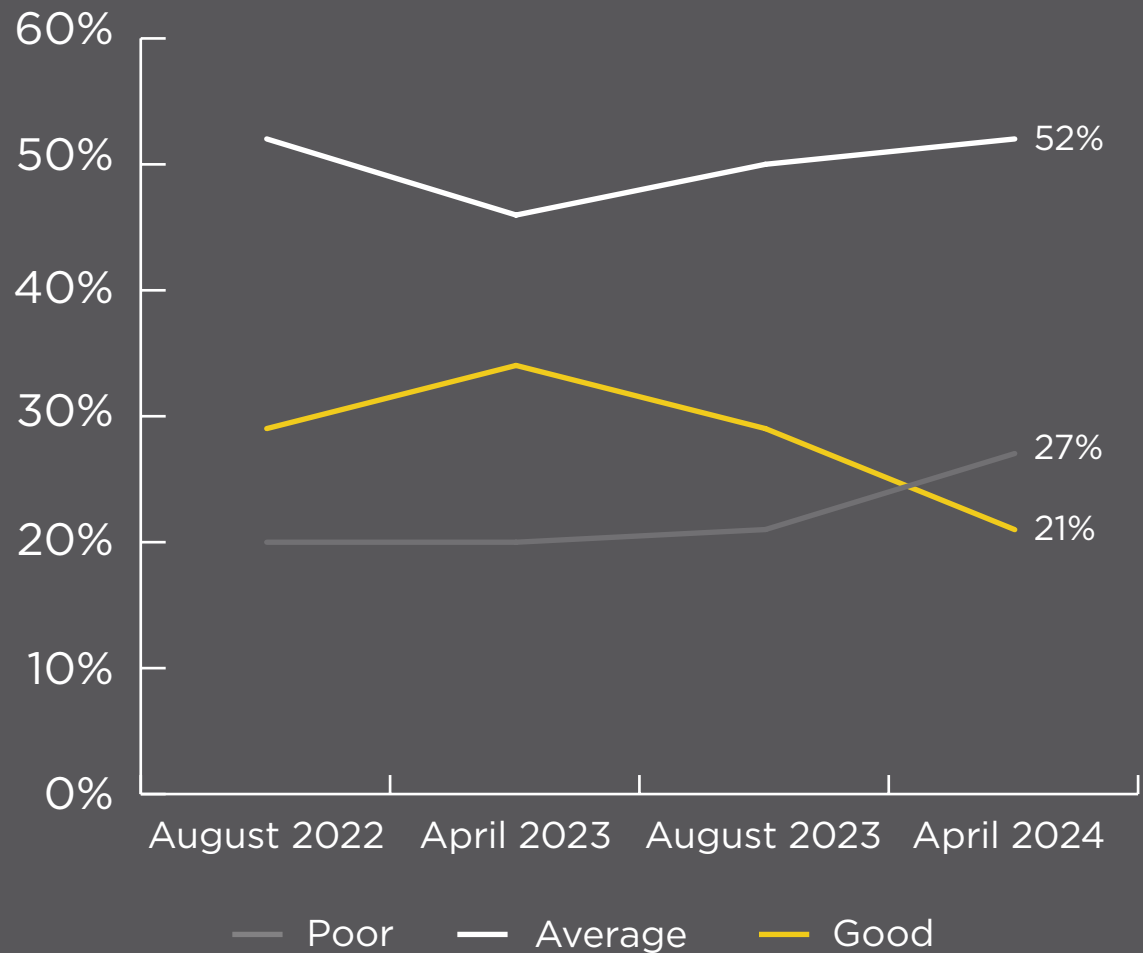
SURVEY RESULTS

Outlook on the Economy

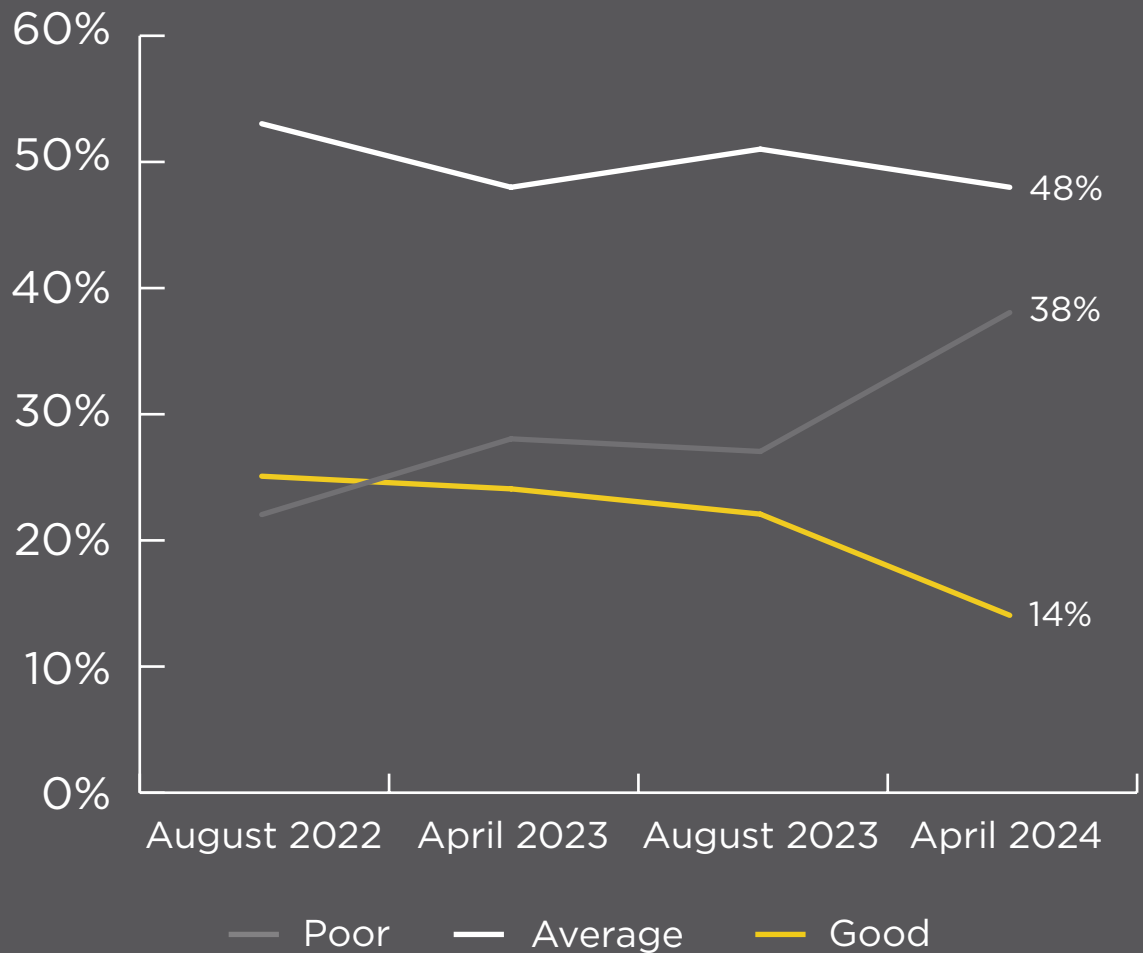
Based on results from the *BC Check-Up: Live* survey*, BC CPAs indicate that...



73% graded the provincial economy as average or good in April 2024. CPAs became increasingly pessimistic about the state of the economy over the past year, as respondents who thought the economy was performing poorly outnumbered those who believed it was performing well for the first time since April 2021.



The sentiment about the state of Canadian economy has worsened, with 38% of respondents indicating the economy was poor in April 2024, up from 28% in April 2022. Just 14% graded the economy as good, a 10 ppt drop from last year.



Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65%) have the same or greater confidence in their organization's prospects compared to last year. The other third (35%) believe they've worsened over the past year, similar to the proportion recorded last year.



INCREASE
20%



STAY THE SAME
46%



DECREASE
35%

*April 2024 results, n=611, August 2023 results, n=598; April 2023 results, n=714; August 2022 results, n = 655. 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...



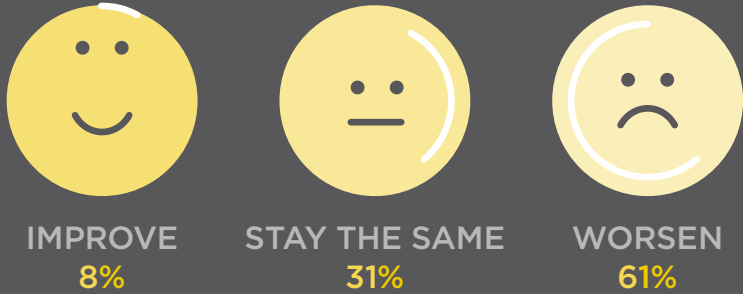
Housing prices, labour shortages, and higher wages were identified as the three biggest challenges for business success in BC in 2024.

Largest challenges for business success (% selected)*:

	April 2023	April 2024
1	Ability to attract and retain skilled labour (83%)	Housing prices (86%)
2	Housing prices (82%)	Ability to attract and retain skilled labour (79%)
3	Labour compensation (79%)	Labour compensation (75%)

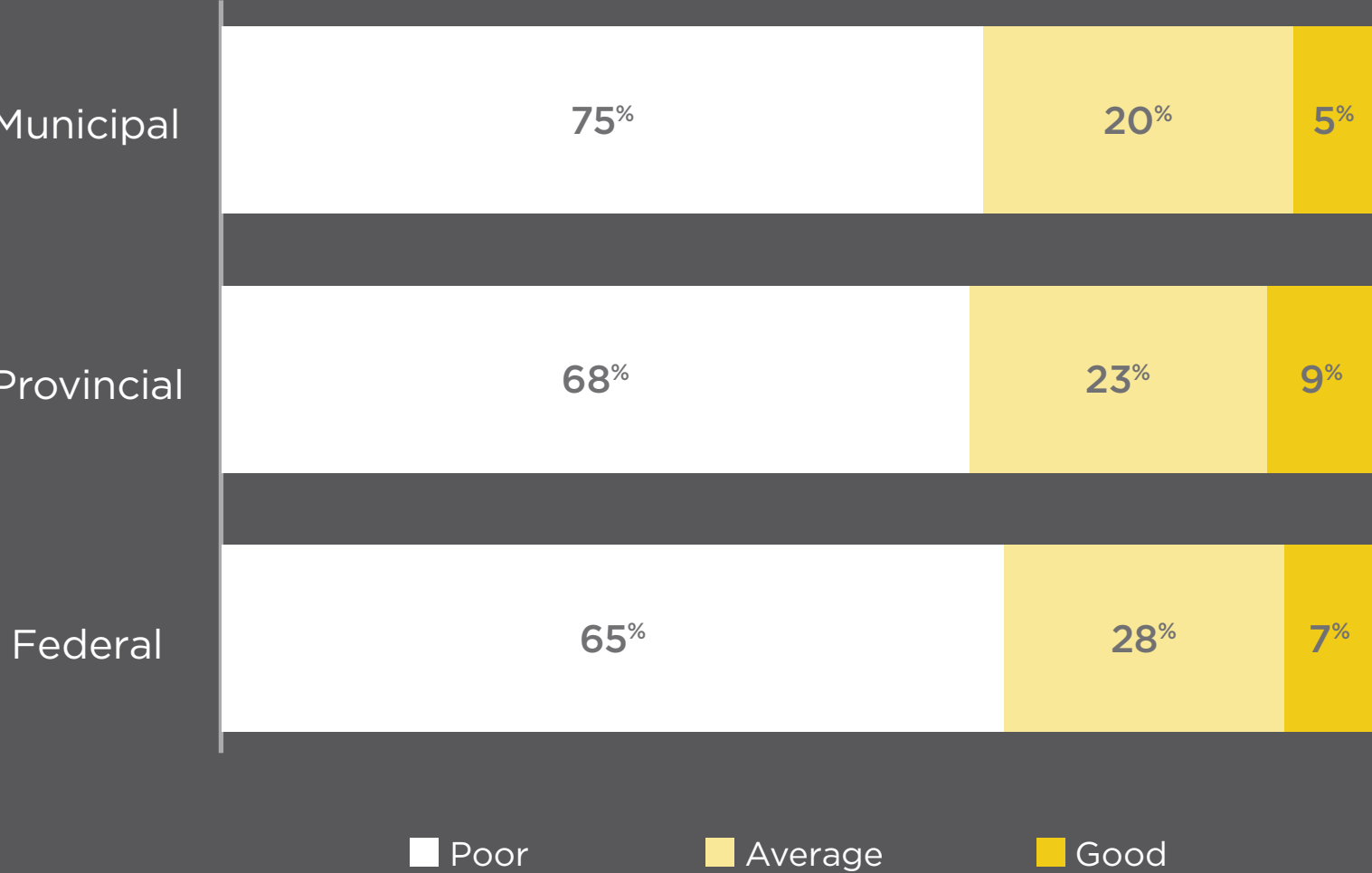


With interest rate cuts expected imminently (at the time of the survey), **61% believed housing affordability in their region will worsen this year, up from 53% in April 2023**. That proportion was still lower than the 67% recorded in April 2022.



With households struggling to get ahead, a large proportion of CPAs overwhelmingly believe **governments at all levels need to take more decisive action to improve affordability****.

Rating on government performance to improve affordability:



*April 2024 results, n=611, August 2023 results, n=598; April 2023 results, n=714; August 2022 results, n = 655. 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.

MEDIA CONTACT

Jack Blackwell

Economist

604-259-1143 | 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.

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

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS Who are they? 611 CPABC members **Where are they from?** Mainland/Southwest BC 62%, Vancouver Island/Coast 20%, Thompson-Okanagan 8%, Rest of BC 9%.

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 611 surveys were completed between March 27 to April 16, which presents an overall response rate of 10%.