



The Daily

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Study: Body mass index in urban Canada 2001

Consistent evidence suggests that the prevalence of obese and overweight people is increasing rapidly around the world in both developing and developed countries, including Canada.

The speed at which this change is occurring suggests our everyday environments and routine modern behaviours might underlie the rise in obesity, rather than a change in the genetic profile of the population.

Between 1981 and 1996, the prevalence of combined obese and overweight people in Canada rose from 48% to 57% among men and from 30% to 35% among women. Rates rose in all provinces.

This study, published recently in the *American Journal of Public Health*, explored links between body mass index for adults and certain individual characteristics, such as income level, diet patterns and stress, as well as immigrant status and the impact of characteristics of the neighbourhoods and cities in which people live.

Its findings suggest that urban environments in Canada play a small but significant role in shaping the distribution of body mass index.

The study, which used data from the 2001 Census and Statistics Canada's 2000/2001 Canadian Community Health Survey, found that body mass index was strongly related to social position (for example, income and education levels).

The overwhelming amount of variation in body mass index occurred at the individual level for both men and women. However, the study found that neighbourhood and metropolitan area environments registered small incremental effects on body mass index for both genders.

For both men and women, living in a neighbourhood with residents of low educational attainment meant that they had a significantly higher body mass index, regardless of their own educational attainment. This finding may reflect norms and practices around diet and exercise in those neighborhoods, but might also be related to issues of neighborhood safety, availability and quality of recreational opportunities.

For men, living in a sprawling metropolitan area had an incremental influence on body mass, over and above individual and neighbourhood characteristics. The finding linking urban sprawl to overweight and obesity has been shown in the United States by other researchers. However, this was the first time such a connection has been made in Canadian cities.

Note: Body mass index (BMI) is calculated by dividing weight in kilograms by height in metres squared. For adults, a BMI of 25 or more indicates the person is overweight; 30 or more indicates obesity. An adult male who is 1.8 metres tall (five-foot-10) and weighs 95 kg (210 pounds) would have a BMI of 30 and be considered obese.

The study "Body mass index in urban Canada: Neighbourhood and metropolitan area effects" was published in the March 2007 edition of the *American Journal of Public Health*. It was prepared by a team of analysts from the Department of Geography at McGill University, Montréal, and analysts in the Health Analysis and Measurement Group at Statistics Canada. An abstract of the article is available online for free (<http://www.ajph.org/>) in English only. The full text of the article is also available online.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Nancy Ross (514-398-4307; nancy.ross@mcgill.ca), McGill University. ■

Business Conditions Survey: Traveller accommodation industries

Second quarter 2007

According to the recent results from the Business Conditions Survey for the traveller accommodation industries, the outlook of Canadian hotels operators' is much better than in the first quarter. Compared to the previous three quarters, expectations for the anticipated number of room nights booked, occupancy rates, number of business travellers, average daily room rates and number of hours worked are very positive.

The percentage of hoteliers that anticipated average daily room rates to increase is the highest it has been in the last eight quarters. For the second quarter of 2007, almost half of the respondents (49%) indicated higher room rates, while only 7% anticipated a decline.

The number of room nights and the occupancy rates are expected to grow. Almost one in three hotel operators expect an increase in their room nights booked (31%) and in their occupancy rates (32%). Only 19% of the respondents anticipate a decrease in their room nights booked while 17% expect their occupancy rates to decline.

More hotel managers (25%) also expect an increase in the number of corporate travellers than a decrease (18%). Similarly, 26% of hotel operators anticipate that the number of hours worked by their employees will increase. In contrast, 15% foresee that their employees will work fewer hours.

Labour shortages in the hospitality business are a major impediment. A shortage of unskilled labour was cited by 36% of the hoteliers and 33% noted a shortage of skilled labour. For the first time, hoteliers were asked if exchange rate fluctuations impeded their business. Just over one in five (22%) reported exchange rates had a negative impact on business. Respondents were also asked if economic conditions in their region had affected their business and whether security concerns or public health were issues. About 1 in 10 hotel operators (11%) indicated that regional economic conditions were an impediment, as did those who cited security concerns (9%). Only 2% felt that public health was an impediment.

The survey of around 1,500 businesses, mostly hotels, was conducted in April to assess their outlook about key indicators compared to the same period last year. Some of these key indicators include bookings, occupancy rates, room rates and hours worked by employees.

Note: The Business Conditions Survey for the Traveller Accommodation Industries is made possible with the

support of industry partners, the Canadian Tourism Commission and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism. Results are based on survey questionnaires sent to traveller accommodation providers and are weighted by their operating revenues. Consequently, the larger businesses have a correspondingly larger impact on the results than smaller businesses.

Available on CANSIM: tables 351-0004 and 351-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5050.

For more information, to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, or to obtain the survey background paper, contact Konstantine Anastasopoulos (613-951-8354; fax: 613-951-6696; konstantine.anastasopoulos@a.statcan.ca) and Irene Ross (613-951-6305; 951-6696; irene.pucci@statcan.ca), Service Industries Division. □

Traveller accommodation industries

	Second quarter 2005	Third quarter 2005	Fourth quarter 2005	First quarter 2006	Second quarter 2006	Third quarter 2006	Fourth quarter 2006	First quarter 2007	Second quarter 2007
Number of room nights booked will be:									
About the same (%)	49	47	48	48	48	46	50	45	50
Higher (%)	31	31	27	30	32	26	18	26	31
Lower (%)	20	23	25	22	20	28	32	29	19
Balance of opinion	10	8	3	8	12	-2	-14	-3	13
Occupancy rate will be:									
About the same (%)	51	46	50	48	46	44	51	45	51
Higher (%)	30	32	25	31	35	29	20	28	32
Lower (%)	20	23	25	22	20	27	29	27	17
Balance of opinion	10	9	0	9	15	2	-8	1	14
Number of corporate/commercial travellers will be:									
About the same (%)	59	57	57	55	56	55	56	60	57
Higher (%)	23	22	22	24	27	17	15	17	25
Lower (%)	18	21	21	21	18	27	28	22	18
Balance of opinion	4	2	1	3	9	-10	-13	-5	8
Average daily room rate will be:									
About the same (%)	46	44	46	53	44	43	40	44	44
Higher (%)	39	39	35	34	45	40	40	41	49
Lower (%)	15	18	19	13	12	18	21	16	7
Balance of opinion	24	21	16	21	34	22	19	25	42
Total number of hours worked by employees:									
About the same (%)	63	62	56	59	54	58	59	61	59
Higher (%)	19	20	20	19	31	25	16	18	26
Lower (%)	17	18	24	22	15	17	26	21	15
Balance of opinion	2	2	-4	-3	16	8	-10	-3	11
	First quarter 2005	Second quarter 2005	Third quarter 2005	Fourth quarter 2005	First quarter 2006	Second quarter 2006	Third quarter 2006	Fourth quarter 2006	First quarter 2007
	%								
Business impediments									
Shortage of unskilled labour	15	21	22	24	32	34	36	28	36
Shortage of skilled labour	21	23	23	21	24	31	29	25	33
Excess room supply	25	26	21	23	22	22	19	26	24
Exchange rate fluctuations	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	22
Lack of attractions or complementary facilities in the vicinity	19	16	13	16	12	22	23	25	19
Canada's reputation as a desired tourist destination	9	11	8	11	11	12	15	19	16
Regional economic conditions	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Abnormal weather and/or natural disasters	12	11	4	9	4	4	3	14	11
Security concerns	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Public health	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
No difficulties at this time	30	32	38	31	30	26	23	26	24

.. not applicable for a specific reference period

Note: Due to rounding, components may not add to total.



Follow-up Survey of Graduates 2005

Two out of five graduates from the class of 2000 who had left school owing money to government student loans had completely repaid their debt five years after graduation.

Of all graduates from a Canadian college or university in 2000, 56% had no debt from government student loan programs while 44% owed money to such programs. It is among this latter group that two out

of five graduates had completely paid off their debt in 2005.

The proportion of graduates who have paid off their student loans varies according to the level of study. Graduates from master's and doctoral programs were most likely to have repaid their loans, with 46% having done so, compared to 42% for those from bachelor programs and 36% from college programs.

The average debt remaining in 2005 amounted to \$8,900 for college graduates, and was practically the same for graduates with bachelor degrees (\$14,400) and master's or doctoral degrees (\$14,300).

Debt load, income and having a debt from a non-government source were some of the factors that could affect a graduate's ability to repay a student loan.

Graduates who still owed in 2005 were twice as likely to have an outstanding debt from non-government sources (60%) than those who had repaid their student loans (30%).

Moreover, the average debt from government student loans at graduation for those graduates who had paid off their loans by 2005, was approximately \$6,000 less than that of graduates who still owed money: \$12,800 compared to \$19,400. The greatest difference was among university graduates. The difference in the average debt for those graduates who still owed money versus those who were debt free was slightly more than \$8,000 for bachelor graduates and almost \$10,000 for master's and doctoral graduates, and \$4,000 for college graduates.

Overall, 9 out of 10 graduates were employed in 2005 whether they had paid off their loans or not. On the other hand, the total personal income in 2004 for graduates who had paid off their loans was 20% higher than that of their fellow graduates who still owed money. This relative difference was the same for bachelor graduates and for those with master's degrees or doctorates, but much lower (13%) for college graduates.

In addition, slightly less than half of the graduates who still owed money on their student loans reported having difficulty repaying these loans, compared to one out of five among graduates who had paid off their loans by 2005.

College graduates were more likely than bachelor graduates to experience difficulty in repaying their student loans, with the proportion reporting difficulty repaying being 10 percentage points higher than that of bachelor graduates.

Note: Data are from the Follow-up Survey of Graduates (Class of 2000) conducted in 2005. This survey is a follow-up to the National Graduates Survey. The analysis of student loans essentially covers government student loans and only includes graduates who did not pursue further education after they graduated in 2000.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5012.

For more information, to order data, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-307-3382 613-951-7608; fax: 613-951-4441; educationstats@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics. □

Graduates owing money to government student loans at graduation, according to whether or not they had repaid their student loan in 2005

	All levels of study	College	Bachelor	Master and Doctorate
Graduates who had paid off their student loans in 2005				
Estimated number of graduates	24,882	9,592	11,618	3,673
Average debt owed at graduation (\$)	12,800	10,400	14,900	12,700
Average debt owed in 2005 (\$)	...	...	...	...
Employed in 2005 (%)	93.9	93.3	94.8	92.7
With personal income in 2004 (%)	96.4	96.6	95.9	97.7
Average income in 2004 (\$)	49,900	38,400	53,100	68,200
Married or living common law (%)	60.3	58.8	58.0	71.6
With dependents (%)	37.1	37.7	34.6	43.3
Still owe money to non-government sources (%)	29.6	28.1 ^E	30.2 ^E	31.1 ^E
Average remaining debt to non-government sources (\$)	11,700	6,200 ^E	13,300 ^E	17,900 ^E
Difficulty repaying their government student loan (%)	18.2	25.5	14.0	12.3
Graduates still owing in 2005				
Estimated number of graduates	32,207	13,723	14,487	3,998
Average debt owed at graduation (\$)	19,400	14,500	23,200	22,600
Average debt owed in 2005 (\$)	12,000	8,900	14,400	14,300
Employed in 2005 (%)	92.4	89.4	94.3	95.9
With personal income in 2004 (%)	96.9	96.4	97.3	97.3
Average income in 2004 (\$)	41,700	34,000	44,200	57,200
Married or living common law (%)	57.2	55.5	56.4	65.8
With dependents (%)	41.4	44.9	38.3	40.2
Still owe money to non-government sources (%)	59.5	60.4	55.1	71.7
Average remaining debt to non-government sources (\$)	10,700	6,600	12,800 ^E	11,500
Difficulty repaying government student loan (%)	45.5	51.3	41.0	42.1

... not applicable

^E use with caution

Note: Graduates who pursued further education after 2000, as well as those who did not provide the amount owed at the time of the 2002 or the 2005 interview, are excluded from this table.

Profile of debt to government student loan programs for graduates owing at graduation

	All levels of study	College	Bachelor	Master and Doctorate
Graduates with debts at graduation (%)	43.7	43.2	46.5	37.5
Average debt owed at graduation (\$)	16,500	12,700	19,600	17,900
Graduates who still owed two years after graduation (%)	33.2	33.2	35.7	25.7
Average remaining debt for those who still owed two years after graduation (\$)	13,700	10,300	16,200	16,200
Graduates who still owed five years after graduation (%)	22.6	22.5	24.2	18.7
Average remaining debt for those who still owed five years after graduation (\$)	12,000	8,900	14,400	14,300
Estimated number of graduates	62,271	26,422	27,847	8,002

Note: Graduates who pursued further education after 2000 are excluded from this table.

Coal mining 2005

Data on coal mining are now available for 2005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2177.

For more information, to order data, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (toll-free 1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; energy@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division.

New products

Capital Expenditure Price Statistics, October to December 2006, Vol. 22, no. 4
Catalogue number 62-007-XWE
(free).

All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.

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Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took the average of about 25 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- **Harbour Index: May 1997** 3
- **Short-term Expectations Survey** 3
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