

# Impact of COVID-19 on Newcomers to Canada: A Survey Study

## Short Study Report

---

Dr. Setareh Ghahari  
Associate Professor  
School of Rehabilitation Therapy  
Faculty of Health Sciences  
Queen's University



# Finances

---

Survey respondents (n=1040) reported challenges in keeping up with financial obligations since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis. Finances were among the top concerns of respondents, with 22% indicating they experienced financial concerns related to the pandemic.



**59%**

Borrowed or considered borrowing money from friends, family, or the bank due to COVID-19.

**65%**

Had difficulty paying bills since the outbreak of COVID-19.

**27%**

Could not afford to pay their rent.

**48%**

Had to send smaller amounts or no money to their family living in country of origin.

# Food Behaviours

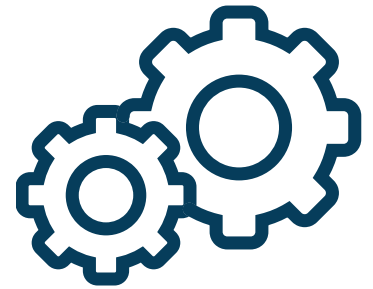


Survey respondents were asked to report on their ability to access affordable food and whether their financial circumstances impacted their nutrition options.

Question	Yes	No
Have you ever used a Food Bank, association, or faith based group to access food?	63%	37%
Have you ever been worried about not having enough to eat?	65%	35%
Have you ever had to buy cheaper or poorer quality food because you lacked the financial resources?	60%	40%
Have you ever been hungry but decided not to eat because you could not afford food?	79%	21%
Have you ever had to go a whole day without eating?	73.5%	26.5%

# Work

---



---

## Employment Status Prior to COVID-19



Before the outbreak of COVID-19, 88% of respondents were employed. 60% of individuals reported working full-time hours. 6% of individuals were unemployed and actively seeking employment.

---

## Changes to Working Hours



Following the outbreak of COVID-19, 68% of respondents reported a decrease in work hours as a result of public health measures. 28% indicated that the pandemic did not affect their working hours. An increase in hours was reported by 4% of study respondents.

---

# About This Study

---

Study participants were recruited online via social media. Of the 2942 individuals who clicked on the survey, 2,473 were eligible for the study. This report is based on 1,040 newcomers to Canada who were born in a country other than the US.



58% women; 39% men; 2% did not identify within the gender binary; 1% preferred not to say



Mean Age: 32



68% Immigrants; 10% Refugees; 16% International Students; 3% Undocumented Migrants; 3% Preferred not to report their immigration status.



42% felt upset or sad a lot of the time, and 50% felt more sad or worried compared to the situation before the COVID-19 crisis.

---

**Citation:** Ghahari, Setareh (2021). Impact of COVID-19 on Newcomers to Canada: A Survey Study. Short Study Report. Queen's University.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact us using this email: [setareh.ghahari@queensu.ca](mailto:setareh.ghahari@queensu.ca)

---