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Young Canadians' Biggest Fears

Kristina Webb

The saying “Children are our future” exists in Canada as well as in Germany. But young Canadians increasingly see no future for themselves. The younger generation of Canadians are growing increasingly worried about national and international issues. With inflation hitting 4% as of August 2023, young Canadians are becoming more pessimistic about a secure future in this country. Financial uncertainty paired with environmental anxiety equals a bleak outlook on the world for the young citizens of this country.

Canada's affordable housing crisis rises to the top of the list of worries for young Canadians. Studies show that more Canadians do not believe that they will be able to afford to buy a home – at least not in the near future. *Global News* reported in the spring that the average income needed to buy a home is \$127,350 in Ottawa, Canada's capital, with the number skyrocketing to \$200,220 in Canada's most expensive city,

Vancouver. It is almost impossible for young Canadians to buy a home without dual income, many already struggling with the high prices of rent and groceries. Demand for home ownership remains steady with increasing population and rising numbers of immigrants.

Those who can consider themselves lucky to own a home are not out of the woods yet. *The Star*

reports that a survey done *for Mortgage Professionals Canada* finds that “Nearly half of all mortgage-holders in the survey — 47 per cent — said they will have difficulty making mortgage payments should interest rates rise another 20 per cent. According to the survey, 14 per cent of first-time buyers are already struggling with their payments.” Canada’s Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland acknowledged in September that Canada’s housing crisis will take years to solve.

Young Canadians are reporting feelings of sadness and anxiety surrounding not just national problems, but issues of global nature as well. Climate change is affecting us all, but Canadians are particularly worried about their future. A study from Lakehead University in Ontario this year asked 1,000 young Canadians aged 16-25 their thoughts on climate-change related anxiety. The results were mostly negative: “76 per cent of respondents find the future frightening, and nearly half think humanity is doomed. Nearly 80 per cent of those surveyed said that climate change affects their overall mental health, and four out of 10 said it takes a daily toll on their well-being.” (*CBC News*, 2023).

While young Canadians can hope for a change in the housing market, financial support and policy change from their government to aid in the purchase of their first home, the notion of climate change looms over them like a rain cloud that will not go away. With empty promises from governments, pleas from scientists, and tragic national environmental disasters, Canadian youth and young adults struggle to see a future where climate change will not affect them or their children. *CBC News* reports that there are not enough mental health professionals available to meet this growing trend of mental health distress over environmental and climate related issues.

Other national topics of interest that are on young Canadian’s minds include Indigenous rights and equality, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, cost and access to education, and other economic uncertainties like debt. To them, these are matters worth fighting for.

Canada continuously ranks as a top country to live in, but the struggle of young Canadians should not be taken lightly. Canada’s housing crisis is a complex and multifaceted problem that has been worsening over the decade. And if all levels of governments - nationally and internationally - do not intervene on the climate crisis, it will not just be the young people of today that suffers, it will continue across generations. Addressing these concerns requires a collective effort from society, governments, and institutions. The worries and concerns of young Canadians are a distressing reflection of the complex world they are inheriting.



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References:

[Right to Education - Inclusive Education](#)

[Is humanity doomed? Young Canadians share how climate change is affecting their outlook | CBC News](#)

[The kids are not all right: How young people are dealing with increasing climate anxiety | CBC News](#)

[Climate-change worries leave young people sad, anxious: survey \(thestar.com\)](#)

[Record number of Canadians say they'll never afford a home \(thestar.com\)](#)

['Never been a harder time': Here's the income you need to buy a home in Canada - National](#)

[| Globalnews.ca](#)

[Younger Canadians more likely to deal with financial stress: survey | CTV News](#)

[Canada's housing crisis will take years to solve: Freeland | CTV News](#)

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Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.

Kristina Webb

Project Assistant – KAS Canada

www.kas.de/kanada

kristina.webb@kas.de



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