

Climate Change: Attitudes Towards Actions

Health indicator report

Background

- The purpose of this health indicator report is to assess the public's general attitudes towards climate change action.
- Attitudes towards action on climate change have evolved over time. Recent global studies indicate an increasing number of individuals acknowledging the urgency of addressing climate change.¹
- Understanding how motivated, hopeless or overwhelmed residents are to protect themselves from the effects of climate change may aid our understanding of what climate change action efforts residents are willing to undertake.
- The results from this report will be used inform Halton's Public Health Unit Climate Change and Health vulnerability assessment and/or adaptation planning, as required in the Ontario Public Health Standards *Healthy Environments and Climate Change Guideline, 2018*
- This health indicator report uses data from the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS)

Key findings

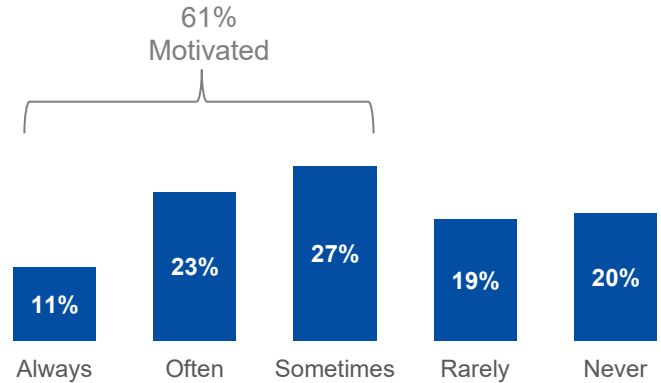
- In 2020/21, when respondents were asked about protecting themselves from the impacts of climate change:
- 61% of Halton residents felt motivated in the past year
 - 42% of Halton residents felt overwhelmed in the past year
 - 46% of Halton residents felt hopeless in the past year
 - Females were more likely to feel motivated, overwhelmed or hopeless to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change compared to males
 - Younger adults were more likely to feel overwhelmed or hopeless to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change compared to older adults



Motivated to protect oneself from climate change

Overview

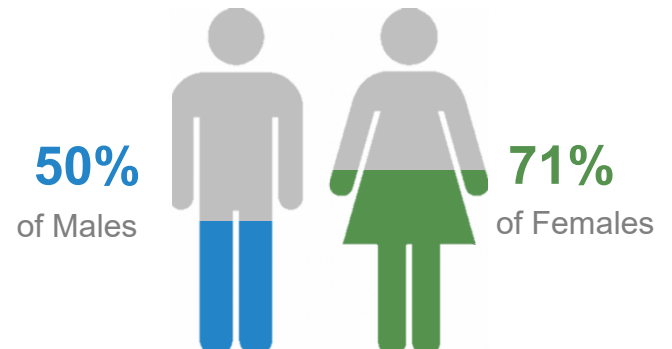
- In 2020/21, 61% of Halton adult respondents felt motivated to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change always (11%), often (23%), or sometimes (27%). Additionally, 19% rarely and 20% never felt motivated to protect themselves from the impact of climate change.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel motivated about protecting themselves from the impacts of climate change, Halton Region, 2020/21

Sex

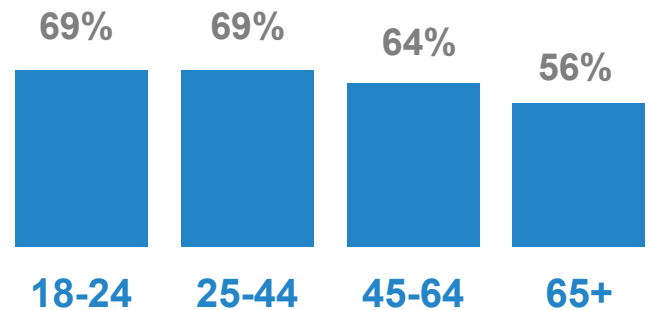
- Females were more likely to feel motivated to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change compared to males and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel motivated to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, by sex, Halton Region, 2020/21

Age

- Adults ages 18-24 and 25-44 were more likely to feel motivated to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change compared to adults 65+. However, these results were not statistically significant.



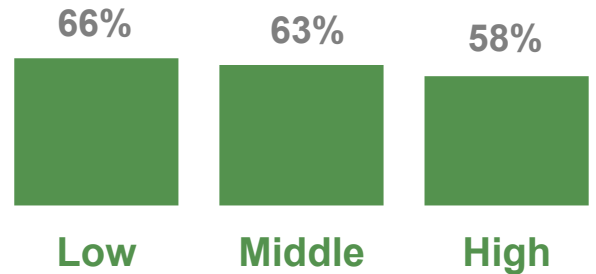
Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel motivated to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, by age group, Halton Region, 2020/21



Motivated to protect oneself from climate change

Income

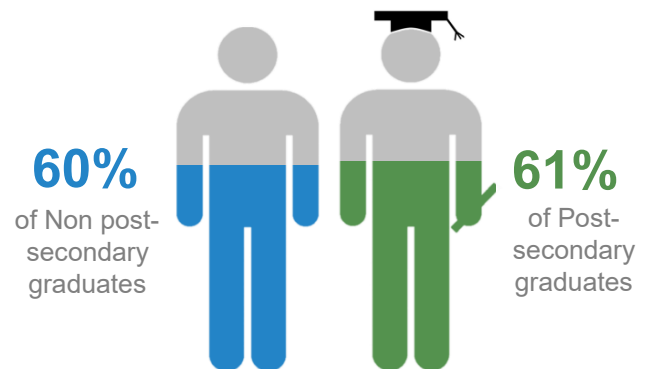
- There were no statistically significant differences by income in the percentage of Halton adult respondents who felt motivated to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel motivated to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, by income, Halton Region, 2020/21

Education

- There were no statistically significant differences by education in the percentage of Halton adult respondents aged 25 and over who felt motivated to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change



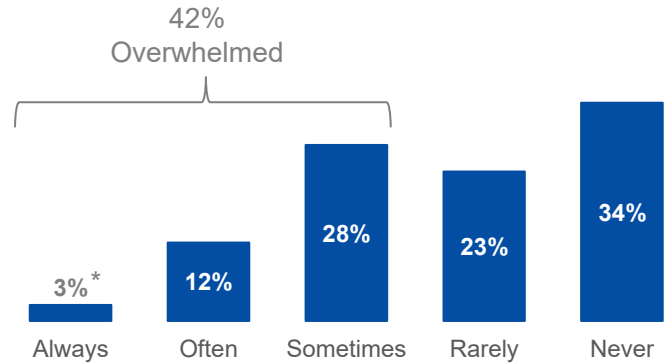
Percentage of adults aged 25 and over by how often they feel motivated about protect themselves from the impact of climate change, by education, Halton Region, 2020/21



Overwhelmed about protecting oneself from climate change

Overview

- In 2020-21, 42% of Halton adult respondents felt overwhelmed about protecting themselves from the impact of climate change always (3%), often (12%), or sometimes (28%). Additionally, 23% rarely and 34% never felt overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impact of climate change.

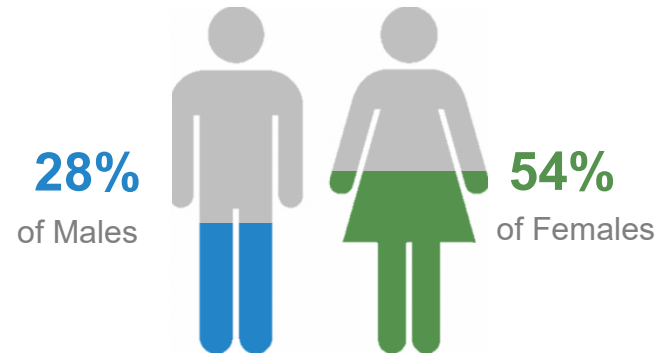


Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, Halton Region, 2020/21

Estimates marked with an asterisk (*) should be interpreted with caution due to high variability.

Sex

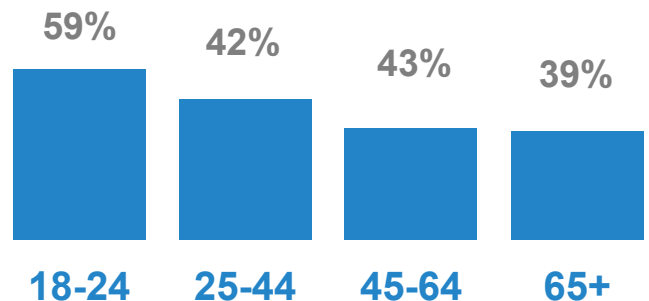
- Females were more likely to feel overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, by sex, Halton Region, 2020/21

Age

- Adults aged 18-24 were more likely to feel overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impact of climate change compared to adults 65+, and this difference was **statistically significant**.



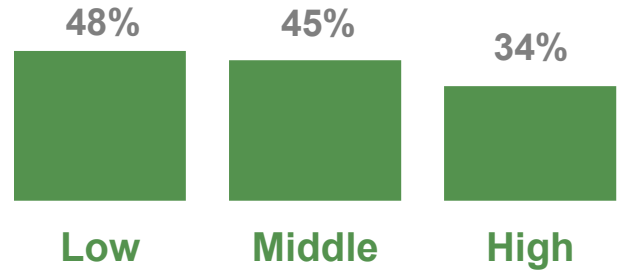
Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel overwhelmed about protecting themselves from the impact of climate change, by age group, Halton Region, 2020/21



Overwhelmed about protecting oneself from climate change

Income

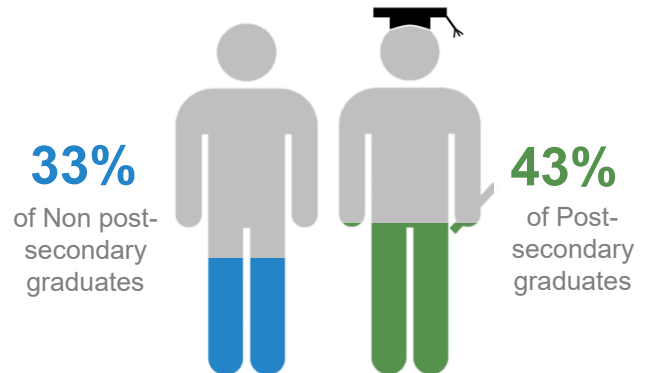
- Adults in the lowest income group were more likely to feel overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change compared to adults with a higher income. However, these results are not significant.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, by income, Halton Region, 2020/21

Education

- There were no statistically significant differences by education in the percentage of Halton adults 25 and over felt overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change



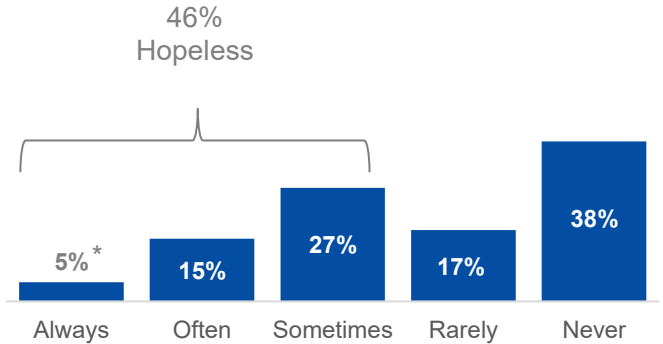
Percentage of adults aged 25 and over by how often they feel overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, by education, Halton Region, 2020-21



Feeling hopeless about protecting oneself from climate change

Overall

- In 2020/21, 46% of Halton residents felt hopeless about protecting themselves from the impact of climate change always (5%), often (15%), or sometimes (27%). Additionally, 17% rarely and 38% never felt hopeless about protecting themselves from the impact of climate change.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel hopeless to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, Halton Region, 2020/21.

Sex

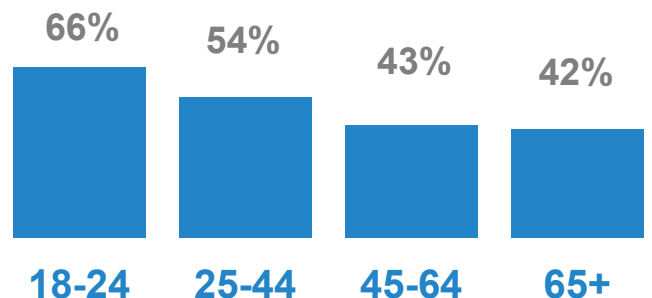
- Females were more likely to feel hopeless about protecting themselves from the impact of climate change and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel hopeless to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, by sex, Halton Region, 2020/21.

Age

- Adults aged 18-24 were more likely to feel hopeless to protect themselves from the impact of climate change compared to adults in 45-64 and 65+, and these differences were **statistically significant**.



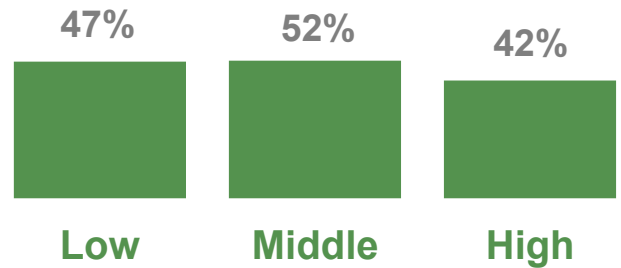
Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel hopeless to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change, by age group, Halton Region, 2020/21.



Feeling hopeless about protecting oneself from climate change

Income

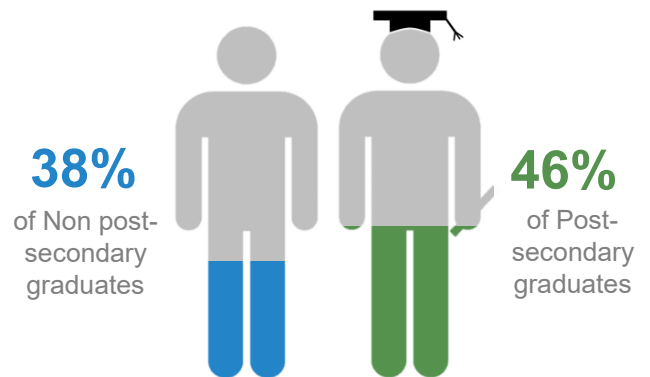
- There were no statistically significant differences by income municipality in the percentage of Halton adult respondents who felt hopeless to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over by how often they feel hopeless to protect themselves from the impact of climate change, by income, Halton Region, 2020/21

Education

- There were no statistically significant differences by education in the percentage of Halton adults 25 and over felt hopeless about protecting themselves from the impacts of climate change.



Percentage of adults aged 25 and over by how often they feel hopeless about protecting themselves from the impact of climate change, by education, Halton Region, 2020/21

About RRFSS

- The Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS) is an on-going telephone survey (land line and cell phone) used to collect information on attitudes, behaviours, knowledge and awareness of issues related to health in Halton. RRFSS is conducted by the Institute of Social Research and York University.
- Halton Region purchased an additional 800 responses to specifically focus on climate change attitudes, behaviours, knowledge and awareness among Halton residents aged 18 and over. Responses were collected from January to March 2020. Data collection was then paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and resumed from April to December 2021.
- For more information on RRFSS methodology, limitations and statistical terms see the Data Notes and Data Interpretation Guide at www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Public-Health/Health-Statistics.

Data notes

Definitions:

Motivated included respondents who always, often or sometimes felt motivated to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change in the past year

Overwhelmed included respondents who always, often or sometimes felt overwhelmed to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change in the past year

Hopeless included respondents who always, often or sometimes felt hopeless to protect themselves from the impacts of climate change in the past year

Data Source: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System [2020-2021], Halton Region Public Health and Institute for Social Research, York University.

Please note that numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Estimates marked with an asterisk (*) should be interpreted with caution due to high variability. Estimates marked with a double asterisk (**) are not reportable.

References

1. Carlsson, F., Kataria, M., Krupnick, A., Lampi, E., Löfgren, Å., Qin, P., Sterner, T. & Yang, X. (2021). The climate decade: Changing attitudes on three continents. *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, 107, 102426.

For more health indicator and health status reports, visit the Halton Health Statistics webpage at halton.ca.