

# Climate Change: Perceived Risk to Health

## Health indicator report

### Background

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- The purpose of this health indicator report is to assess the local population's risk perception of climate change, overall.
- Globally, climate change risk perceptions are considered an essential part for climate change attitudes and adaptation.<sup>1</sup>
- Understanding the health risks of climate change helps individuals understand the importance of taking protective action.<sup>2</sup>
- The results from this report will be used to inform Halton Public Health's 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

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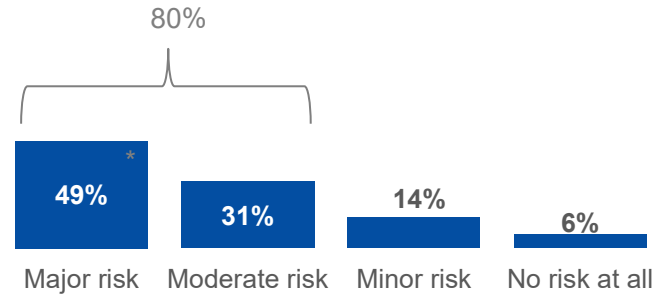
- In 2020/2021, 80% of Halton residents (N= 631 of 784 respondents) reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in the region
- 85% of females reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region, compared to 74% of males
- There were no statistically significant differences by age, income or education in the percentage of Halton adult respondents that reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people in Halton Region



# Climate change and perceived risk to health

## Overview

- In 2020/2021, 80% of Halton adult respondents reported that climate change poses a major (49%) or moderate (31%) risk to the health of people living in the region. Additionally, 14% and 6% said climate change poses a minor risk or no risk to the health of people in Halton Region.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region, 2020/21

## Sex

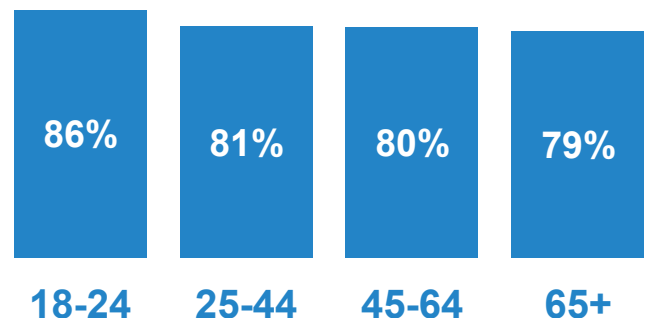
- Females were more likely to report that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region compared to males, and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region, by sex, 2020/21

## Age

- There were no statistically significant differences by age group in the percentage of Halton adult respondents who reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region.



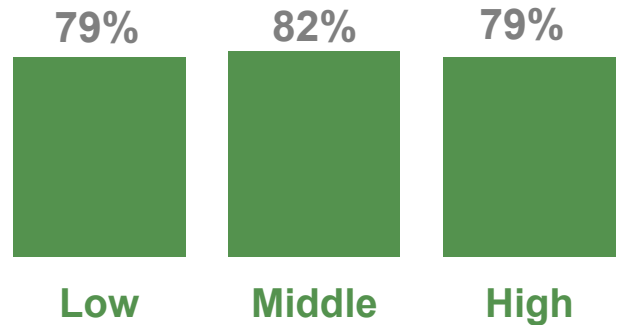
Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region, by age group, 2020/21



# Climate change and perceived risk to health

## Income

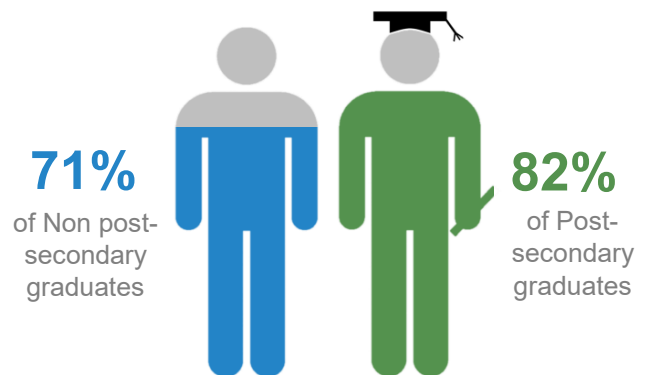
- There were no statistically significant differences by income in the percentage of Halton adult respondents who reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region, by income, 2020/21

## Education

- There were no statistically significant differences by education in the percentage of Halton adult respondents who reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region.



Percentage of adults aged 25 and over who reported that climate change poses a risk to the health of people living in Halton Region, by education, 2020/21

## About RRFSS

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- 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](http://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Public-Health/Health-Statistics).

## Data notes

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### Definitions:

**Risk:** major risk or moderate risk posed by climate change to the health of people living in Halton Region

**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. Gilbert, C., & Lachlan, K. (2023). The climate change risk perception model in the United States: A replication study. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 86, 101969.
2. Lachlan, K. A., & Spence, P. R. (2007). Hazard and outrage: Developing a psychometric instrument in the aftermath of Katrina. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 35(1), 109-123.

For more health indicator and health status reports, visit the Halton Health Statistics webpage at [halton.ca](http://halton.ca).