

# CALGARY FOUNDATION'S VITAL SIGNS



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## **Treaty 7 Land Acknowledgement**

In the spirit of respect, reciprocity and truth, we honour and acknowledge Moh'kinsstis, and the traditional Treaty 7 territory and oral practices of the Blackfoot confederacy: Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, as well as the Îyâxe Nakoda and Tsuut'ina Nations. We acknowledge that this territory is home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3 within the historical Northwest Métis homeland. Finally, we acknowledge all Nations – Indigenous and non – who live, work and play on this land, and who honour and celebrate this territory.

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## Reflections on a Year in Flux

Dear Calgary,

This year, many community foundations chose to press pause on their respective Vital Signs publications. We spent many weeks considering whether we too should be holding off. When we considered the powerful ramifications of not undertaking Calgary's Vital Signs, the answer was obvious; we had to proceed. And we are glad we did.

There are many interesting data points throughout these pages: the mental health issues faced by our youth, our renewed fondness for gardening, the financial struggles so many of us are facing, but amongst all that information, there is one data set we feel is especially relevant to 2020. This year, we segmented some of the survey results by race. As the data indicates, for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour, the experience of our city is often harder. By reflecting on the inequality, discrimination, and hardship many of us unfairly experience we can begin to change. Our hope is that the end of this report becomes the beginning of something new for our readers. Reflection is an important first step to lasting change, but our collective responsibility does not end there. We have seen, now it is time to act.

Sincerely,

**Eva Friesen**  
President & CEO  
Calgary Foundation



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## Taking Action

Our Community Knowledge Centre features hundreds of charitable organizations doing incredible work throughout our city. Visit [ckc.calgaryfoundation.org](http://ckc.calgaryfoundation.org) to find a cause that connects to you.

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## 2019-2020 Financials

# Calgary Foundation granted \$54.9 million to 996 charitable organizations.

**Total Assets:**  
**\$1 billion**

**New Funds:**  
**63**

**New Gifts:**  
**\$35.4 million**

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## 2020 – 2021 Board of Directors

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Narmin Ismail-Teja  
Hugh D. Williamson, Q.C.  
Eva Friesen, *President & CEO*

## Vital Signs Report

**Project Management**  
Calgary Foundation Communications Team  
**Concept + Design**  
Daughter Creative  
**Photography**  
Asim Overstands  
**Website**  
Freshwater Creative  
**Survey**  
Leger  
**Printer**  
Style-Craft Printing



Each year, Calgary Foundation flows millions of dollars to every corner of our city, supporting causes as myriad as our population. As those funds spread, our hope is that they bring something else with them - the knowledge that a city is a profound thing to share.

**[calgaryfoundation.org](http://calgaryfoundation.org)**



Vital Signs® is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life. Vital Signs is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

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**[communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/vital-signs](http://communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/vital-signs)**

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## CALGARY'S **Vital Signs**

Calgary's Vital Signs is an annual check-up that measures the vitality of our community and identifies significant trends. Published since 2007, the report presents the results of Calgary's Vital Signs survey, where Calgarians share their opinions on issue areas that are critical to quality of life in Calgary.

Survey data/sources available at: **[calgaryvitalsigns.ca](http://calgaryvitalsigns.ca)**



# MANY OF US CAN'T MAKE ENDS MEET.

Half of Calgarians' dollars don't go far enough.

33%

sometimes struggle to afford basics like rent, utilities, and groceries, and 17% often or always struggle.

73% of us stress about money.

**Life is more stressful if you can't work from home.**

45% of Calgarians who work outside the home feel financial stress vs. 25% who work remotely.

**And it's getting harder to find work.**

In 2019, 1/2 of us felt we could find suitable employment. This year it dropped to 27%.

80%

**of Calgarians believe poverty is a problem we need to address.**

**We're more pessimistic about our economy.**

67% vs. 42% in 2019.

**Higher education isn't always an option.**

1/4 of Calgarians struggle to afford post-secondary education. It's harder for Indigenous people, 54% of whom struggle.

**We're more optimistic about housing.**

43% rate affordable homeownership options as good/excellent vs. 31% in 2019.

41% rate affordable rental options as good/excellent vs. 26% in 2019.





# WHEN IT COMES TO THE OUTDOORS, WE'RE ALL IN.

**92%**

value our access to local, provincial, and national parks.

**79%**

rate Calgary's green space and parks as good/excellent.

**65%**

love our bike lanes and pathways.

**75%**

think our neighbourhoods are great for walking.

**45%**

are growing our own food, up from 37% in 2019.

**The pandemic affirmed our appreciation for nature.**

**We're a little more optimistic about the quality of our air and water.**

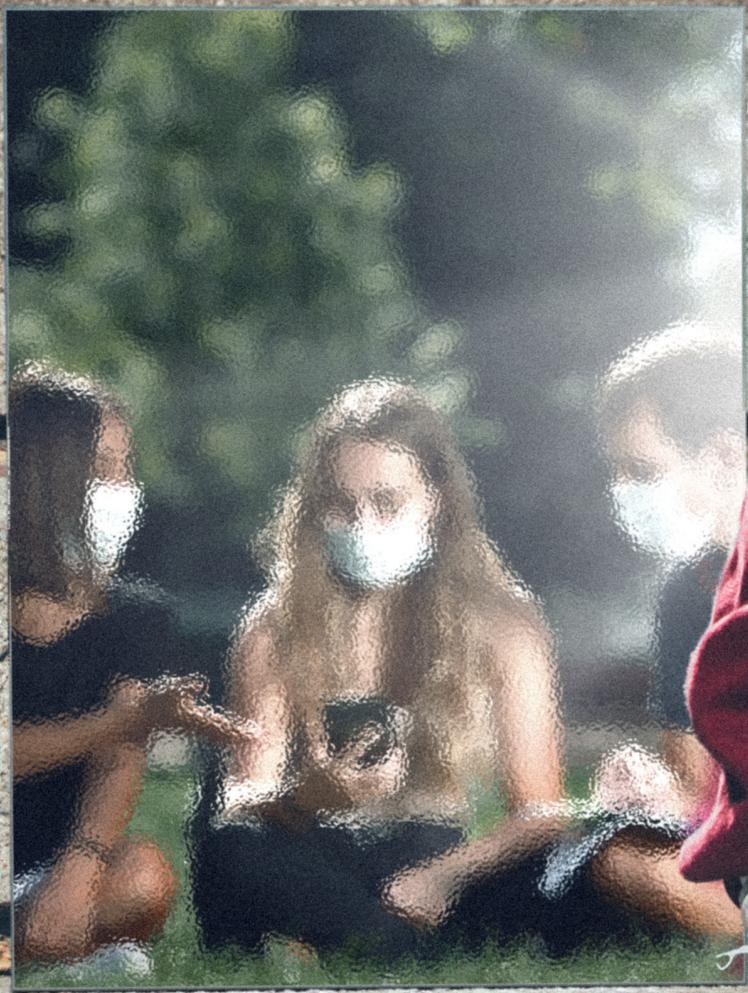
Environmental sustainability:  **62% vs. 56% in 2019**  
Rated as good or excellent.

Water quality:  **80% vs. 76% in 2019**  
Rated as good or excellent.

Air quality:  **74% vs. 62% in 2019**  
Rated as good or excellent.

**67%**

are concerned about climate change. The number jumps to 86% if you're under 25 years old.



# YOUNG PEOPLE VIEW IT DIFFERENTLY.

If you're under 25 you're more likely to:

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**Feel lonely and rate mental health as below average.**

**28%** rate their mental health as below average/poor vs. **12%** of people aged 25+.

Although half of us are never or rarely lonely, the younger we are, the lonelier.

**Often/always lonely, by age:**

|                    |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| <b>18-24 years</b> | <b>30%</b> |
| <b>25-64 years</b> | <b>15%</b> |
| <b>65+</b>         | <b>6%</b>  |

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**Believe the arts help us appreciate other perspectives.**

**81%** say the arts help them appreciate other perspectives and cultures vs. **66%** of people aged 25+.

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**Like to scoot around.**

**26%** of 18-34 year olds have used a scooter, but **88%** of Calgarians have never tried it once.

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**Believe it's important to understand an Indigenous perspective.**

**93%** believe it's important to learn about shared history from an Indigenous perspective, including the impacts of residential schools and intergenerational trauma vs. **73%** of people aged 25+.

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**Have participated in a human rights movement.**

**17%** participated in a human rights movement during the pandemic vs. **3%** of people aged 25+.





# WE VALUE OUR SHARED HUMANITY.

**During the pandemic, we've shown up for each other.**

**44%**

volunteered, donated to a charity, or contributed to community building.  
More than half of us stayed connected through social media and virtual meet-ups.

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## We also feel good showing up for our city.

**¾** of us feel comfortable exercising our rights and freedoms politically and religiously.

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## Only half of us think it makes a difference.

**50%** of Calgarians feel they have the ability to make a difference in our community. That number drops to **24%** for Indigenous people.

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## We believe the arts have an important role to play.

**74%** believe a strong arts and culture scene is key to creating a vibrant city.

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## We're more engaged when we've felt unsafe or threatened.

Calgarians who often feel threatened or unsafe due to differences in skin colour, gender, religion, ethnicity, language or sexual orientation, are nearly **20%** more civically engaged than people who generally don't feel unsafe.



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## The things we value most are:

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| <b>Relationships</b> | <b>72%</b> |
| <b>Health</b>        | <b>61%</b> |
| <b>Freedom</b>       | <b>34%</b> |
| <b>Money</b>         | <b>29%</b> |

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## What would make life better?

Diversity on all fronts – a more diversified economy and stronger cultural diversity.



# WE KNOW RACISM EXISTS IN OUR CITY.

**82% of us believe racism towards Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour exists.**



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**Half of us believe we're committed to doing something about it.**

56% believe Calgarians are committed to anti-racism, equity, and inclusion - but that belief drops to 53% for Indigenous people, and to 35% for Black Calgarians.

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**Many Indigenous and Black Calgarians don't feel we're accepting.**

½ of Calgary's Black and ½ of Calgary's Indigenous population believe Calgarians are not accepting of people from diverse backgrounds.

**67 % of Black Calgarians have felt unsafe or threatened.**

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**We believe there's a problem with our policing.**

61% think that Black and Indigenous people experience disproportionate levels of violence by the police and RCMP. That belief jumps to 72% if you're Black and/or Indigenous.

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**Let's put our views on view.**

Half of us believe there should be greater emphasis on creating public art that honours Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour's histories and cultures.



# THE PANDEMIC PUT THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE.

## We feel better about our quality of life.

↑ 75% vs. 69% in 2019  
**Rate quality of life in Calgary  
as good/excellent.**

↑ 79% vs. 68% in 2019  
**Think Calgary is a great  
place to raise kids.**

↑ 59% vs. 44% in 2019  
**People over 65 think Calgary is  
a great place for seniors to live.**

### **Seniors also feel good in general.**

Over half of Calgarians (**57%**) are happy with their mental health but it jumps to **78%** for seniors.

### **We don't feel as good about our senior care homes.**

**39%** of Calgarians wouldn't choose a senior care home for themselves or their loved ones.

**56%** of our seniors wouldn't choose to live in a senior care home or consider it for their loved ones.

### **Even physically distanced, we're doing okay.**

**68%** are happy with our social networks.  
(62% in 2019)

**45%** have a strong sense of belonging.  
(43% in 2019)

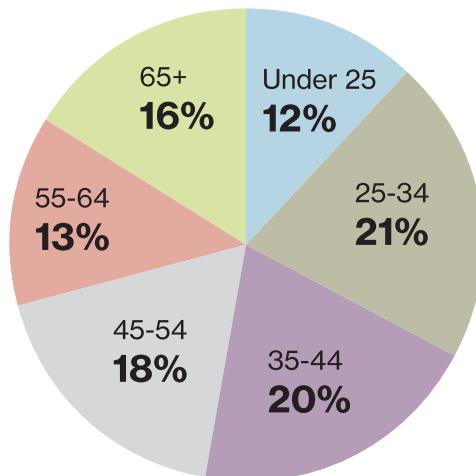
**71%** are able to cope with daily stress.  
(69% in 2019)

### **And interestingly, those of us that work remotely have a stronger sense of belonging.**

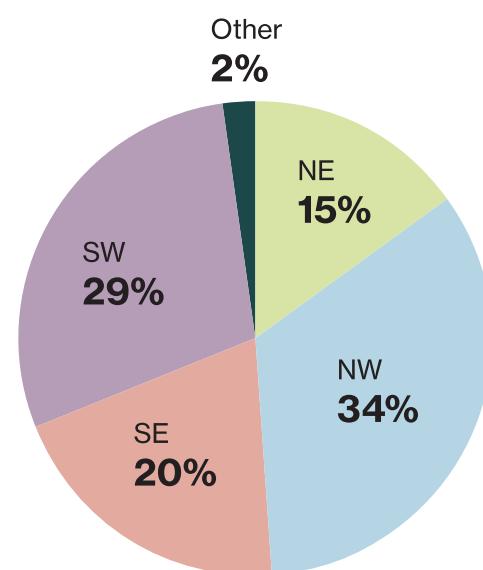
**55%** of Calgarians that work remotely have a strong sense of belonging vs. those who work outside the home (**35%**).

# DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

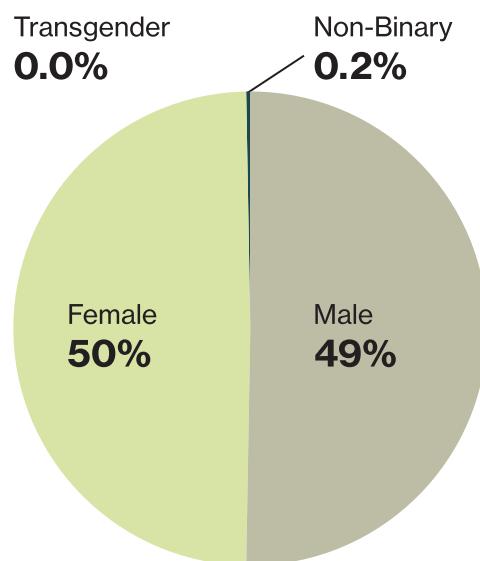
Age



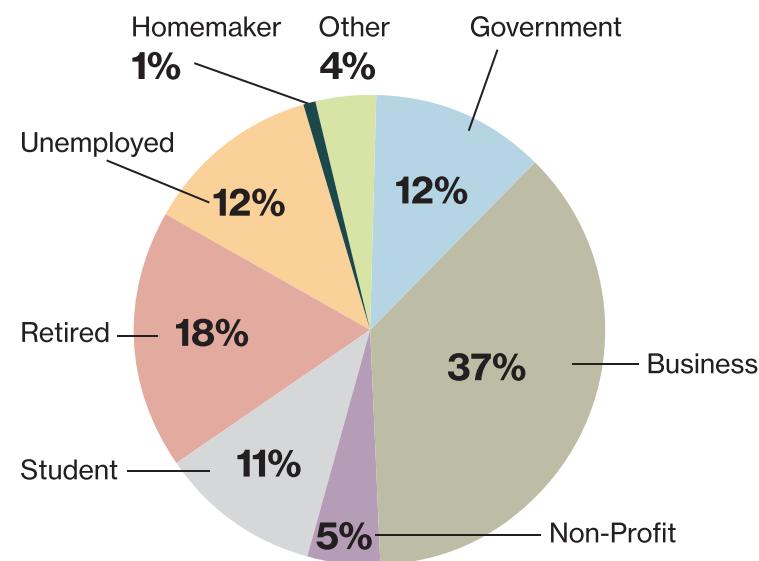
Quadrant



Gender



Employment



## Survey Methodology

The results presented in the 2020 Vital Signs report are based on the survey responses of 1,000 Calgarians. To ensure an accurate representation of the population in proportion to city census data, survey respondents were randomly selected based on demographic quotas (age, gender, ethnicity, and city quadrant) from a pool of 20,000. The survey questions are largely quantitative, and the responses reflect the views of the general Calgary population. **Margin of Error:** For comparative purposes, a probability sample of 1,000 results in a margin of error of +/- 3.10%, 19 times out of 20.

## Ethnicity

**68%**

Caucasian  
(White)

**10%**

Chinese

**8%**

South Asian  
(Indian, Bangladeshi,  
Pakistani, Sri Lanka, etc.)

**3%**

Black  
(African, African-American, etc.)

**2.4%**

Southeast Asian  
(Vietnamese, Cambodian,  
Malaysian, Laotian,  
Thai, etc.)

**2.3%**

Latin American  
(Mexican, Chilean,  
Costa Rican, etc.)

**2.1%**

Indigenous  
(First Nations,  
Inuit, Métis)

**2%**

Filipino

**1%**

Arabic  
(Middle East, North Africa)

**0.8%**

Japanese

**0.6%**

West Asian  
(Iranian, Afghan, etc.)

**0.4%**

Korean

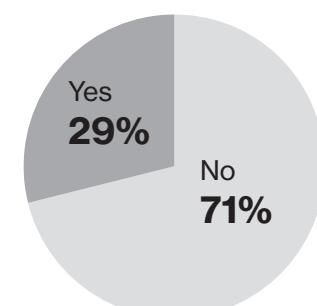
**2%**

Other

**1.5%**

I prefer not  
to answer

**Would you  
call yourself  
a visible  
minority?**





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