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What's in the Ontario budget? Highlights from the 2022 fiscal plan

Ontario's Progressive Conservative government tabled a budget Thursday that effectively doubled as its platform for the spring election. Here are the highlights:

OFF THE PATH TO BALANCE
 The budget lays out \$198.6 billion in spending, with billions earmarked for infrastructure this year and over the next decade.

The document pledges \$158.8 billion over 10 years for highways, transit and hospitals. Infrastructure spending for this year alone is \$20 billion.

The fiscal blueprint shows the province managed to bring down its deficit to \$13.5 billion in 2021-22 from \$16.4 billion in the first year of the pandemic.

However, the deficit is expected to jump to \$19 billion this fiscal year and the government isn't planning to balance the books until 2027-28.

A report by Ontario's Financial Accountability Office released last month had said the province was on track to balance the budget by next year.

FUNDING FOR HOSPITALS
 Hospital infrastructure projects are slated to receive more than \$40 billion over the next decade, including about \$23 billion in capital funding.

The province says the money will help support hospital projects already underway or currently in the planning stage, as well as going toward new facilities.

Some of the projects listed in the budget, such as a new inpatient tower and expanded emergency department at the Scarborough Health Network's Birchmount location, were part of the government's recent slew of hospital spending announcements.

HOMECARE FOR SENIORS
 A new personal income tax credit will help offset the cost of some medical expenses for seniors.

The budget says the new Ontario Seniors Care at Home credit will refund up to 25 per cent of eligible expenses up to \$6,000, for a maximum credit of \$1,500.

The program would kick in this year and be available to those who turned 70 or older in the tax year, or have a spouse that age, and are Ontario residents at the end of the tax year.

LOW-INCOME TAX RELIEF
 The province is promising to boost tax relief for lower-income workers and families and increase the number of people who qualify for the benefit.

The budget says 1.1 million Ontario taxpayers stand to save an additional \$300 this year, on average, as a result of changes to the Low-Income Individuals and Families Tax Credit program.

It says the maximum amount will go up to \$875 from \$850, and more workers will be eligible, for a total of about 1.7 million beneficiaries.

The province says the expanded credit will provide \$320 million in

Since early April, health officials around the world have been on alert for healthy, young children suddenly developing severe cases of hepatitis with no known cause.

According to the latest estimates by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO), there are at least 194 probable and confirmed cases reported around the world, excluding an unknown number of potential cases in Canada.

Here is what we know so far about these cases.

WHAT IS HEPATITIS?

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver. The organ can become damaged or inflamed as a result of a virus, heavy alcohol consumption, toxins, some medications or another health condition. The liver serves numerous essential functions and acts like a filter for the blood that leaves the stomach and intestines. It regulates chemical levels in the blood, creates nutrients, carries away waste, helps fight infections and more.

Acute hepatitis is when the liver functions is impaired for less than six months. Chronic hepatitis is when the inflammation lasts longer. Some cases of hepatitis can be severe - even fatal - if left untreated. Other cases can be mild and require no treatment.

What makes these cases of acute hepatitis unusual is that doctors have not determined their cause.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Medical officials have said that a number of cases began with gastrointestinal symptoms such as stomach pain, diarrhea and vomiting. The children later exhibited signs of jaundice, where the skin and whites around the eyes turn yellow. Jaundice is an indication that something is wrong with the liver, and medical advice should be sought immediately.

Other common symptoms of

Liver disease outbreak: What we know so far in Canada and globally

hepatitis include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, dark urine, light-coloured stools and joint pain.

Dr. Deirdre Kelly, professor of paediatric hepatology at the University of Birmingham, told CTV News on Tuesday that the majority of children have spontaneously recovered.

"While this is a serious disease if their child develops it, the chances are they will recover on their own," she said.

HOW MANY GLOBAL CASES AND HOW SERIOUS ARE THEY?

Based on numbers compiled by the ECDC in an report on April 28 and the WHO on April 23, there are at least 194 cases so far of hepatitis with no known cause in countries including the U.K., Spain, Israel, the U.S., Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Italy, Norway and France.

As of April 21, 114 cases were from the U.K., according to the WHO. As of April 27, there were "approximately 55 probable and confirmed cases" from a dozen countries within the European Union and European Economic Area, 12 cases from the U.S., and another 12 out of Israel," the ECDC said. Japan has reported one case.

"The severe hepatitis for which there is no cause, we rarely see more than about 20, 25 max in the whole year. And we've seen 14 in the first three to four months of this year," Kelly said.

"These are perfectly normal children. They've got no comorbidities and no other infections



and they're developing severe hepatitis, of which 10 per cent have required liver transplantation."

The 10 per cent figure is based on an unusually fast pace from the WHO on April 23 that found 17 children required a liver transplant. One child in Britain reportedly died.

The hepatitis cases involve children between the ages of one month and 16 years, health agencies have said, with the majority occurring in young children between the ages of two and five.

Scotland's public health agency was the first to raise the alarm about these unusual hepatitis cases in early April, after one child became sick in January and nine others in March. All were severely ill and had to be taken to the hospital where they were diagnosed with hepatitis.

The majority of similar U.S. cases were found in nine previously healthy children between the ages of one and six from Alabama. Two of the children reportedly required liver transplants. Five children with significant liver injury of unknown origin, including some experiencing acute liver failure, were admitted at a children's hospital in Alabama as

hepatitis cases. So far, the WHO has ruled out the viruses that cause hepatitis A, B, C, D and E, based on laboratory testing.

While toxin exposure is another consideration, experts believe this is less likely due to the cases being documented in different countries. Health authorities have also not found any links to international travel among the cases either.

Currently, investigations suggest a link to an adenovirus, according to the WHO and ECDC. Adenoviruses make up a large family of viruses that can spread from person to person, causing a range of illnesses including colds, pinkeye and gastroenteritis. Officials say there has been a recent rise in adenovirus infections, particularly in the U.K.

Close to half of the hepatitis cases, including those in Alabama, have been tied to an adenovirus, with lab tests indicating some children were infected with type 41, which is associated with gastroenteritis, causing diarrhea and vomiting. At least 19 cases also involved a SARS-CoV-2 infection.

"While adenovirus is currently one hypothesis as the underlying cause, it does not fully explain the severity of the clinical picture," the WHO said in its April 23 report. The health agency noted this particular virus has not previously been tied to hepatitis, adding that it is a common pathogen that usually causes self-limited infections.

COVID-19 is also being considered, although a number of the cases did not involve a previously known infection.

"We don't really know the causes yet and COVID may be implicated in some cases," Dr. Simon Taylor-Robinson, a professor and liver researcher at London's Imperial College, previously told CTV's Your Morning.

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Canada bumping up fees for permanent residency. Here's what to know

It will become a tad more expensive to move to Canada with permanent residency come May.

On April 5, the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) updated on their website that Canada was increasing fees for all permanent residence (PR) applications, including economic, permit holder, family and humanitarian classes.

The change will come into effect on April 30, meaning that those hoping to make the move to this country after that date will have to shell out extra for the process.

What is PR and who can apply? A permanent resident (PR) is someone who is not a Canadian citizen but has the right to live and work in this country without a deadline to their stay.

Such a person holds most of the same rights as a Canadian citizen - they receive many of the same social benefits, including becoming

contributing members of the Canada Pension Plan and receiving coverage by their province or territory's universal health care system.

Immigration process slowed amid COVID-19 leaving would-be residents stranded - Oct 8, 2020

What they do not enjoy, however, is the right to vote in Canadian elections. They cannot run for elected office at any level of government, either. Nor can they hold jobs in the public or private sector that require high-level security clearance - for matters related to national security. They are also not eligible to join the Canadian Armed Forces or the police.

To become a permanent resident of Canada, one needs to apply to IRCC under one of their several programs available for foreign nationals. The programs include Express Entry, Provincial Nominee Program and Quebec Skilled Workers, Atlantic Immigration Class, Economic Pilots, Live-In Caregiver Program and Caregivers Pilots, Business (Federal

and Quebec), Family Reunification, Protected Persons, Humanitarian and Compassionate, among others.

Why is Canada upping the fees? The move to increase fees is not new. These cost hikes are meant to make sure that Canada remains at par and well-aligned with the fees charged by other immigrant-receiving countries with somewhat similar immigration systems, such as Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, among others.

It also contributes greatly to Canada's economy, according to the Canadian government.

Canada's successive governments have relied on immigration to drive economic growth in the face of a declining fertility rate, which hit a record low in 2020. With the pandemic triggering early retirements among young Canadians, attracting immigrants has grown more important. Also, the country targets high-skilled immigrants who tend to

bring in money and earn enough to compete for desirable housing.

"Canada needs immigration to create jobs and drive our economic recovery," Canada's Immigration Minister Sean Fraser said in December, last year. "It's not just that one in three Canadian businesses are owned by an immigrant, but also that newcomers are helping to tackle labor shortages."

"Keeping families together is important." Feels take immigration plan in House of Commons - Oct 30, 2020

63% of Canadian non-owners have 'given up' on ever buying a home: Ipsos

The dream of ever owning a home is looking bleak for a majority of Canadians shut out of the housing market, according to new polling from Ipsos.

The new survey conducted exclusively for Global News shows six in 10 (63 per cent) non-home owners have "given up" on ever owning a home.

"As housing prices rise, inflation continues and interest rates go up, we can see that there's a bunch of Canadians who have kind of given up on the idea of home ownership," says Gregory Jack, vice-president of public affairs at Ipsos.

Those sentiments are highest in British Columbia (74 per cent), Quebec (72 per cent) and Ontario (62 per cent), but lowest in the Prairies and Atlantic Canada, the polling shows.

In addition to regional divides, Ipsos' survey shows owning a home feels more viable for those with the means. More than two-thirds of Canadians (67 per cent) agree with the idea that owning a home is only for the rich, with those sentiments rising to 76 per cent among non-owners.

The Ipsos poll, which surveyed more than 1,000 Canadians between April 14 and 19, showed those who do own a home were also more inclined to be optimistic about their long-term future (74 per cent) compared with those who don't (67 per cent).

Generational divide in attitudes toward housing

While 57 per cent of Canadians disagree with the statement that owning a home is less important now than 25 years ago, those aged 18-34 are more likely to agree with that sentiment (49 per cent) than those older than 55 (38 per cent).

University of British Columbia professor Paul Kershaw studies eroding housing affordability in Canada and founded Generation Squared to shine light on the stark economic realities dividing generations.

He tells Global News that when the Baby Boomers entered young adulthood in the 1970s, it would've taken them five years of full-time work to save up for a 20-per cent down payment on a home. Today's young adults would have to work for

17 years to hit that same bar. O Priced Out: A look at why the hot housing market is out of reach for young Canadians - May 28, 2021

"We have tolerated, as a country, the massive growing gap between spiraling home prices and what's happening with local, full time earnings," he says.

"That is a double-edged sword. It cuts against affordability for younger Canadians and newcomers of any age trying to get into our housing market."

Kershaw says Canadians have embraced this growing divide because for those who have already broken into the housing market, an amazing escalation in home prices grows their wealth. Culturally and politically, we have become accustomed to the idea that home prices will only grow, he says.

The Ipsos poll bears this out: while 77 per cent of respondents agreed it's possible to be financially secure without having a stake in the housing market, the same proportion said home ownership is "the best investment a person can make."

Canadians getting realistic about affordability

Jack says that there's a sense of "realism" descending on young Canadians as they look to break into the hot housing market.

"I think that the younger generations are thinking about where they put their money, and they're not buying into this idea that they have to own a home as much as they used to," he tells Global News.

Robert Hogue, assistant chief economist at Royal Bank of Canada, agrees that the current cohort of



17 years to hit that same bar. O Priced Out: A look at why the hot housing market is out of reach for young Canadians - May 28, 2021

buyers might have to change their expectations of what's affordable as rising interest rates reduce Canadians' buying power.

CMHC forecasts continued housing price increases - Apr 21, 2022

Fixed and variable mortgage rates have gone up "quite considerably" since last fall, he notes, pushing up monthly mortgage costs for prospective buyers by hundreds of dollars.

Hogue wrote in an RBC forecast last week that housing affordability could hit "worst-ever" levels by the third quarter of the year as rising prices combine with the higher costs of borrowing.

Though RBC projects the aggregate home prices to dip a modest 2.2 per cent in 2023, rising interest rates will continue to box many prospective buyers out of the market, he says.

"Even if prices were to correct starting tomorrow, it would need to be a major correction, a major decline in prices to really offset the impact of higher interest rate on mortgages," Hogue says.

Gen Z interested in co-ownership

Even if the dream of a white picket fence is quickly fading, young Canadians could embrace "clever" solutions to get around the market and find a way to get what they want," Jack says.

"At the end of the day, people are feeling the pressures of the market and they're perhaps looking at things that they wouldn't have considered previously," he says.

Polling from Ipsos shows that 74 per cent of Gen Z respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the idea of

buying a home with family or friends

Some 74 per cent of Gen Z respondents said they'd consider co-owning a home with a family member or friend, compared to 58 per cent of Millennials and 43 per cent from Gen X.

"Maybe the ideal home may not be realistic, but there might be some plan Bs here or maybe even plan Cs here," Hogue says.

How 2 millennial couples share ownership of \$2-million house in Toronto - Mar 30, 2022

House hunters not wooed by federal budget items

Canadians looking for support from the government were largely underwhelmed by the recent federal budget, the Ipsos polling suggests.

Asked about the proposed tax-free first home savings account, 40 per cent of non-owners feel it will help them afford a home, the poll shows. That figure rises to 47 per cent among those aged under 35.

Overall, however, most Canadians (75 per cent) disagree with the idea that the feds are doing enough to address housing affordability in the country. Even two-thirds of Liberal voters don't feel the Trudeau government is doing enough.

Hogue says that while measures announced in the federal budget, including the new savings account and efforts to increase housing supply, are steps in the "right direction," they will not have much "near term" impact on today's home hunters.

Whether the feds' housing-focused budget affords affordability or not, it's clear from the polling that the government is not getting "credit" for any improvement in the situation, Jack says.

"The bottom line is the federal government put a lot of emphasis on this, but Canadians are not feeling like they've done enough."

Kershaw says that at this point, solutions to the housing affordability issue are not solely in the government's hands.

"This isn't a policy problem any longer. It's a cultural problem," he says.

Without a clear goal to stall the rapid ascent of housing prices - not just slow their climb - wages for younger generations will never catch up to a point where they can bridge the gap of affordability, he argues. Until Canadians abandon their long-held savings plans based on rising real estate prices, those shut out of the market will remain on the sidelines.

"The market we bank on high and rising home prices for down the road, we are committed to eroding affordability for those who follow our footsteps," Kershaw says.

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Shark Tank India Season 2 TEASER OUT

Following the stupendous success of "Shark Tank India", the makers are all set to come up with the second season of the show. Recently, the makers announced the second season by giving the registration details for the budding entrepreneurs. Shark Tank India's official social media page shared a video while announcing the same. In this video, they showed all the successful deals from the season and then announced the registrations for season 2.



Well, not just the announcement, the makers also presented the teaser of the show. In the teaser, we could see an employee asking his boss to get some investors for his project but the boss always ignores his conversation about the project. Meanwhile, a voiceover comes "Stop knocking on the wrong door for investors. The new season of Shark Tank India is coming back after the big success of the first season."

Kangana Ranaut On Rift Between Bollywood-South Films

During the trailer launch event of Dhaakad, Kangana Ranaut was asked about the ongoing rift between Bollywood and South films. Addressing the question, the Queen star announced her upcoming film Dhaakad as a pan India film. She said, "This is that pan India film. It'll also be released in Tamil, Telugu, and other languages. We'll be taking it to all markets all over India and see that it gets a wide release everywhere."



Further, explaining how the South films are dominating Bollywood films, the actress said "I don't know why this is a debate in the first place or why these points are being raised. This is as much their market (the South's) it belongs to Bollywood. This is the entire Indian film industry's market and everyone should thrive and prosper everywhere."

Akshay Kumar And Jacqueline Fernandez Get TROLLED Over Ram Setu's New Poster

Recently, during the 5th Anniversary celebration of Amazon Prime Video, the makers of Akshay Kumar, and Jacqueline Fernandez starrer Ram Setu announced the film on the OTT platform. Well, on this note the makers also released the new poster of the film. In this poster, the cast of the film including Akshay, Jacqueline Fernandez, and Satyadev can be seen lost in the adventurous world where Akshay can be seen holding a fire-lighting torch in his hand and Jacqueline, on the other hand, holds an electric torch.

Buttler hits half-ton, but MI keep Royals in check

Jos Buttler continued his golden run in this IPL season with another innings of substance when he made 67 for Rajasthan Royals against Mumbai Indians at the DY Patil Stadium in Mumbai on Saturday. At the time of going to press, MI were 41-2 after six overs. MI bowlers, however, managed to keep things well in check by restricting Royals to 58 for 6. They had conceded 193 runs to the same rivals at this ground in their earlier clash on April 2, Buttler striking his first of three 100s first season then, with just 23 runs. Royals were first in Powerplay and then 73 for 2 in 10 overs with only Buttler able to play with some freedom on the slowpitch.



David to give Karthikeya his maiden wicket. The bowler later finished with splendid figures of 1-19 in four overs. The newcomer replaced injured Mohd Anshad Khan in the MI squad just before this game and was straightaway inducted into the XI. It proved to be a masterstroke as Royals could add just 38 runs in seven overs when he bowled from one end. Daryl Mitchell, struggling to get going, was out in the over just after Karthikeya's quota got over as he missed Daniel Sene to give an easy catch to MI captain Rohit Sharma which terminated his third-wicket stand of 37 runs in 41 balls with Buttler.

Virat Kohli's 58 in vain as Titans thrash RCB by six wickets

Virat Kohli (53-ball, 58, 64, 146) was finally among the runs with a half-century against Gujarat Titans (GT) at the Brabourne Stadium on Saturday. However, the former Royal Challengers Bangalore captain's effort went in vain as two left-handers Rahul Tewatia (25-ball 43 not out) and David Miller (24-ball 39 not out) gave Titans a six-wicket win with three balls to spare, chasing RCB's 170-6.



Tewatia, who survived a DRS call when he was on one, played a matured knock in which he hit five fours and two sixes. Miller too proved good support with four fours and a six in an unbeaten 79-run match-winning stand. Earlier, GT pacer Mohammed Shami (1-39) beat opener Kohli, but the India speedster twice faltered in his run-up before being dispatched for two boundaries by Kohli. Sungevishan GT's Delhi-based left-arm pacer Pradeep Sangwan (4-0-19-2), who was playing his first game of the season, bowled a superb over to dismiss RCB captain Farfak Plesis (0), caught behind by Saha. Kohli's batting partner Rajat Patidar played aggressively, taking just 32 balls for his 52 in which he smashed five fours and two sixes. Patidar slammed his maiden PLI fifty and shared a 99-run, second-wicket stand with Kohli. Briefcases RCB 170-6 in 20 overs (V Kohli 58, R Patidar 52; Sangwan 2-19, R Khan 1-25) lost to GT 174-4 in 19.3 overs (R Tewatia 43*, D Miller 39*, S Ahmed 2-26, W Hasrangra 2-36) six wickets

Inaugural Pakistan Junior League set for October launch in Lahore

LAHORE: The inaugural Pakistan Junior League will be held at the Gaddafi Stadium here from October 1-15, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said Friday. The 19-match competition will feature six city-based franchise teams, which will pick players through a draft system. Each team will be monthly an "innocent" player. In a "soft launch" of the PLI earlier this month, the PCB said it had released a "Request for Expressions of Interest" in its sponsorships, streaming rights and the teams' ownership. On Friday, the board claimed it had received "an overwhelming and encouraging response from potential sponsors, partners and investors". "As a next step, the PCB will now initiate a bidding process after Eid Al-Fitr for live-streaming rights," the PCB statement said. "This will be one of the several rights that will be up for grabs as the PCB remains committed to working closely with all stakeholders in an effort to take Pakistan cricket forward."

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Why Ottawa's plan to ramp up construction might not bring down soaring home prices

The federal government's enormous bet on new construction is unlikely to have much of an effect on soaring home prices, some economists and housing experts are warning.

The strategy to massively ramp up construction of new homes across Canada is the centrepiece of the Liberal government's updated housing strategy, which itself was the focus of the 2022 budget.

The spending plan sets aside \$4 billion to create a Housing Accelerator Fund, a program still in development meant to help municipal governments spend on new housing projects.

Ottawa says that fund will contribute to building the 3.5 million new homes it argues Canada needs over the next 10 years.

"The solution to housing affordability is housing supply," Housing Minister Ahmed Hassan told the House of Commons earlier this week.

But some observers say that



approach is based on misinterpreted data and the tendency of politicians to oversimplify complex problems.

No evidence that more homes means lower prices expert

"The government seems to have brought into the proposition that any supply is good, and if we flood the market with supply that will bring down prices," said Steve Pomroy, a researcher at the Canadian Housing Evidence Collaborative at McMaster University.

"I don't think there's any evidence that will actually happen," said Pomroy, who has described the under-supply argument as "myth."

Christine Whitehead, an emerita professor at the London School of Economics, said the identification of under-supply as a cause for high prices has been "absolutely consistent" among governments across the world.

Whitehead - who said she has studied the economics of housing for "many decades" - said a narrow focus on speeding up new construction makes for an appealing political pitch but rarely makes a dent in prices.

"Most normal people would think that a lot more housing would make things better," she told CBC News.

"Just building 100,000 homes a year or 200,000 homes a year is not

going to make that much difference, of itself, to house prices."

Pierre Follioeur has made housing affordability a central theme of his Conservative leadership campaign. He also has identified a lack of supply as the prime culprit driving up prices.

The NDP has been calling for new housing construction, with the caveat that newly built homes should be earmarked for low-income families.

How many homes does Canada need?

The federal government, opposition parties and numerous economists have in recent years argued that Canada doesn't have enough homes for its population.

A 2021 paper by Scotiabank reported that Canada has the fewest homes per 1,000 residents of any G7 nation, something the bank described as a "structural housing shortage."

The 2022 budget includes a similar analysis which shows that Canada is below the OECD average for homes per 1,000 residents - behind France, Japan and Germany, but ahead of Australia and New Zealand.

Pomroy said statistics like those don't adequately support the government's under-supply argument since other important factors are left out - such as the fact that Canada has the second-largest average household size in the G7.

what they're discussing. However, throughout the trades, a major issue in negotiations has been wages, particularly with the cost of living skyrocketing in recent months, says Robert Williams, a lawyer who specializes in construction labour law.

"One thing that is fueling the requests coming from the union side is some sort of recognition of the role they played over the last couple of years in keeping the construction industry moving," said Williams.

"These people showed up and put their health at risk; they think that their compensation should reflect that."

A December report by the Centre for Future Work shows wages in the industry have largely been stagnating despite construction being one of the few sectors that were productive throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report, commissioned by the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario, shows the value of permits for residential projects grew 19 per cent in 2020 - reaching an all-time record of over \$30 billion.

But the report, citing Statistics Canada data, notes construction wages in Ontario grew overall by only 1.9 per cent over the past five years, compared to 3.9 per cent for the overall Ontario economy.

"We are advocating for our members and working to get the best deal possible for them and their families," Ottey said in an email statement.

Since bargaining is ongoing, unions and management can't elaborate on

Canada's working-age population is older than ever, StatsCan says



Canada's working-age population is older than it has ever been, according to new census figures released Wednesday.

More than one in five working adults is now nearing retirement, says Statistics Canada - a demographic shift that will create significant challenges for the Canadian workforce in the coming decade.

Laurent Martel, director for the centre of demography at Statistics Canada, called it a "date with demographic destiny."

"Canada is at a very special place right now," he said. "There are very large implications of this situation and it is certainly one factor explaining the current labour shortages that Canada is experiencing."

The Canadian population now has a larger share of people aged 55 to 64 than it does of those aged 15 to 24, the age at which people enter the workforce.

In 1966, there were 200 people aged 15 to 24 for every 100 Canadians aged 55 to 64, but that has now been flipped on its head. In 2021, there were only 81 people aged 15 to 24 for every 100 Canadians in the 55 to 64 age group.

"There are challenges associated with an older workforce, including knowledge transfer, retaining experienced employees and workforce renewal," the agency said in its report.

Statistics Canada says that this trend can be slowed through

immigration but "an increase in immigration - even a large one - would not significantly curb this projected trend."

The 2021 census says that while declining fertility rates and increased life expectancy are important factors, the single most significant driver of Canada's aging population trend is the ongoing retirement of baby boomers (Canadians born between 1946 and 1965), which began in 2011.

Despite this news, Statistics Canada says Canada still has one of the youngest working-age populations in the G7 after the U.S. and the United Kingdom, with 15- to 64-year-olds making up 64.8 per cent of the population; in Japan, that demographic makes up less than 60 per cent of the population.

In the U.S., the slightly younger workforce is a result of a slightly higher fertility rate, while in the U.K., it is a combination of a higher fertility rate and a relatively smaller number of baby boomers, Statistics Canada said.

An aging population isn't just Canada's workforce that is aging significantly - it's the population as a whole, Statistics Canada said.

From 2016 to 2021, the number of Canadians aged 65 and older rose 18.3 per cent to seven million - the second-largest increase in 75 years, after the increase recorded from 2011 to 2016, which was a rise of more than 20 per cent.

The seven million Canadians 65 and older make up 19 per cent of the population, up from 16.9 per cent at the time of the last census.

A closer look shows that the number of Canadians aged 85 and older rose almost 12 per cent from the time of the last census, while Canadians aged over 100 rose by more than 15 per cent.

"Over the next 30 years, the number of persons aged 85 and older could triple from 861,000 to 2.7 million," the agency said.

Statistics Canada population projections indicate that by 2051, almost one-quarter of the population could be aged 65 and older, adding up to almost 12 million people.

The young-and-olderly in Canada The age of Canada's population is not just about the growing cohort of seniors. It's also the declining growth rate among younger Canadians as the country's fertility rate hits an all-time low of 1.4 children per woman, Statistics Canada said.

Between 2016 and 2021, the number of Canadian children under 15 grew six times slower than the number of people 65 and older. The number of children under the age of 15 at the time of the 2021 census stood at six million, compared to seven million Canadians 65 and older.

The number of children under the age of five also fell from almost 1.9 million in 2016 to 1.83 million in 2021, a decline of more than 3.6 per cent.

The decline continues a trend first noted in the 2016 census when, for the first time, there were more Canadians over 65 than children under 15. The demographic gap has grown substantially, from just 96,000 then to just over a million by 2021.

Statistics Canada says that if current trends continue, by 2051 that gap will widen to 4.6 million, with 12 million Canadians over the age of 65 and only 7.4 million children under 15.

Regional differences The demographic differ between regions - the Prairie provinces and the territories have younger populations while Quebec and the Atlantic provinces have older populations on average.

In Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, children under 15 continue to outnumber Canadians aged 65 and older, largely due to a higher fertility rate.

Population projections for Manitoba and Alberta indicate that Canadians aged 65 and older will outnumber children under 15 until 2031. In Saskatchewan, which has the highest proportion of children under the age of 15, older Canadians will not outnumber children until 2036.

In the territories, Nunavut has the highest percentage of children under 15 in the country at more than 32 per cent, followed by the Northwest Territories at almost 21 per cent. The Yukon is slightly lower at 17 per cent.

Newfoundland and Labrador has the lowest share of children in Canada at 13.4 per cent, followed by Nova Scotia at 14.1 per cent and New Brunswick and B.C., which are tied at 14.3 per cent.

Questions on gender For the first time, this census included questions on gender that allowed cisgender, transgender and non-binary individuals to report their gender.

Statistics Canada says that Canada is the first country to collect and publish data on gender diversity in a national census.

Of the almost 30.5 million people in Canada aged 15 and older living in private households in May 2021, Statistics Canada says 59,460 identified as transgender and 41,355 identified as non-binary, accounting for 0.33 per cent of the population in this age group.

Strikes could delay much-needed housing projects next month, Ontario homebuilders' group warns

A wave of strikes could delay the construction of much-needed housing in Ontario starting as early as next week, an organization that represents the province's home builders has warned.

The Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RCCO) says it has advised its members that it's expecting more than one work stoppage to take place starting on Monday in the low, medium and high-rise residential sectors.

"We hope that there's deals reached over the weekend and that labour disruptions can be avoided, but we're not optimistic that all outstanding collective agreements will be resolved," Andrew Parisier, the vice president of RCCO, said Friday.

The warning comes as the province, and especially the Greater Toronto Area, faces an affordable housing crisis and rising real estate prices due to tight supply and high demand. Collective agreements for unionized construction

workers generally last three years and many of them expire on April 30. Parisier says this time there's added pressure to reach agreements partly due to problems brought on by COVID-19.

"We have inflation pressures, we have supply-chain issues - the pandemic, it's still going on," he said CBC News.

"This round probably has more challenges than we've seen in the past." As many as 30 residential trades work in residential construction. Some have new agreements in place but others could walk off the job or strikes by other trades could delay their work, Parisier says.

He says other parts of the construction industry could also see strikes as many of their collective agreements also expire at the end of this month, and he warns that could affect timelines for housing projects, as well.

"What is pretty clear is construction is interconnected," says Parisier. "The

impact depends on who goes on strike and how many people go on strike."

"We're advocating for our members" The Labourers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) Local 183, one of the biggest construction unions in the province, represents about 58,000 workers in the GTA.

As of Thursday, Local 183 was negotiating more than 15 collective agreements in the residential construction sector alone, according to Jason Ottey, its director of government relations and communications.

As of Friday, the local stated on its website that while some agreements have been reached and others are to go through arbitration, at least one trade will be in a legal strike position effective May 1.

"We are advocating for our members and working to get the best deal possible for them and their families," Ottey said in an email statement.

Since bargaining is ongoing, unions and management can't elaborate on

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