Quality of Life and Community Capacity Population Survey: Baseline Results

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REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Rural Alberta's Development Fund (RADF) was created in 2006 to fulfill a commitment by the Government of Alberta to support community-building projects that would contribute to the growth and prosperity of rural Alberta. Between March and June 2009, a survey on quality of life (sense of personal well-being), community capacity, access to health services, and availability of education and training opportunities within the province was conducted on behalf of RADF. The survey results highlight areas of relative strength and need within rural Alberta and have the potential to inform targeted intervention and strategic planning on the part of stakeholders in rural development.[1]

Selected key survey results indicate that[2]:

- Individuals' experience of **quality of life** (sense of personal well-being) is largely similar across Alberta. The only notable difference is in Edmonton. In seven of the eight domains of quality of life which were explored, respondents from Edmonton scored lower than one or more other regions.
- Particular sub-populations in rural and small urban Alberta (such as those who are separated, divorced, or unemployed) may experience a lower **quality of life** (sense of personal well-being) than others.
- Rural Alberta scored lower in **community capacity** than small urban or large urban Alberta.
- Respondents in small urban Alberta rated their communities as more attractive as **places to live and work** than respondents in rural or large urban Alberta rated theirs.
- Respondents in northern Alberta rated their communities as less attractive as **places to live and visit** than respondents in Calgary, central Alberta, and southern Alberta rated theirs.
- Respondents in northern Alberta reported less satisfaction with **access to quality health services** in their communities than respondents in Edmonton, central Alberta, and southern Alberta.
- Respondents in rural Alberta reported less satisfaction with the **availability of education and training opportunities** in their communities than respondents in small urban or large urban Alberta.
- Respondents in southern, central, and northern Alberta reported less satisfaction with the **availability of education and training opportunities** in their communities than respondents in Calgary.

[1] Analyses of 1600 completed surveys were conducted by rural/urban status (rural areas, small urban centres, and large urban centres) and by region (Calgary, Edmonton, southern Alberta (rural/small urban), central Alberta (rural/small urban), and northern Alberta (rural/small urban)).
[2] Note: All results denoting differences are statistically significant.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rural Alberta's Development Fund (RADF) was created in 2006 to fulfill a commitment by the Government of Alberta to support community-building projects that would contribute to the growth and prosperity of rural Alberta. Between March and June 2009, a survey on quality of life (sense of personal well-being), community capacity, access to health services, and availability of education and training opportunities within the province was conducted on behalf of RADF. The survey results highlight areas of relative strength and need within rural Alberta and have the potential to inform targeted intervention and strategic planning on the part of stakeholders in rural development.[3]

Below, summaries of the survey results are presented in four sections: quality of life, community capacity, access to health services, and availability of learning and skill development opportunities. Note that all results reported below denoting differences and associations are statistically significant.

Quality of Life: Survey Instrument and Summary of Results

The survey used the HRMC Quality of Life and Personal Well-Being Index to look at quality of life (sense of personal well-being) in terms of an individual's *experience* of his or her own life. The survey's approach to measuring quality of life in Alberta is based on a framework of eight domains of quality of life (considered core domains).[4] These include emotional well-being, interpersonal relations, material well-being, personal development, physical well-being, rights, self-determination, and social inclusion. This approach is in contrast to looking at quality of life in terms of an individual's standard of living and environment, informed by economic indicators (e.g., household income, cost of living), environmental indicators (e.g., air quality), health indicators (e.g., life expectancy), and social indicators (e.g., crime rates).

Quality of life (sense of personal well-being) results indicate that:

- ✓ Individuals' experience of ***quality of life is largely similar*** across rural, small urban, and large urban settings. The average scores of respondents were not found to be significantly different in any of the eight quality of life domains.

[3] Analyses of 1600 completed surveys were conducted by rural/urban status (rural areas, small urban centres, and large urban centres) and by region (Calgary, Edmonton, southern Alberta (rural/small urban), central Alberta (rural/small urban), and northern Alberta (rural/small urban)).

[4] This instrument was developed by Howard Research based on seminal international work in quality of life for persons with developmental disabilities and has been adapted, validated, and tested for reliability with the Alberta general population. See Schalock, R.L. and Verdugo, M.A. (2002). A Synthesis of Core Quality of Life Domains and Indicators. In D.L. Braddock (Ed.), *Handbook on Quality of Life for Human Service Practitioners* (181-188). Washington, DC: American Association on Mental Retardation.

- ✓ In comparing average scores by region, it also appears that individuals' experience of ***quality of life is largely similar*** across southern, central, and northern Alberta. However, differences in average scores were found in regional comparison with Calgary and Edmonton. Notably, respondents from Edmonton scored lower than one or more other regions in seven of the eight domains (all except self-determination), while respondents from Calgary scored higher than one or more other regions in five domains (emotional well-being, material well-being, personal development, rights, and social inclusion).

- ✓ While no differences were found in average scores between southern, central, and northern Alberta in all eight quality of life domains, analysis revealed that certain sub-populations in these regions may be worse off than others in terms of quality of life.[5] For example, being separated or divorced was associated with having a ***lower quality of life*** domain score in three domains (as compared to being single and never married), and being unemployed was associated with having a ***lower quality of life*** domain score in six domains (as compared to having a full-time job).

Community Capacity: Survey Instrument and Summary of Results

Community capacity can be defined as "the combined influence of a community's commitment, resources and skills that can be deployed to build on community strengths and address community problems and opportunities."[6] The foundation for measuring community capacity in the current survey is based on a framework developed by RADF[7] which outlines eight outcomes associated with community capacity. These outcomes relate to a community's citizen participation, leadership base, skills development opportunities, shared vision, strategic agenda, progress monitoring, organizations/institutions, and resource utilization. The RADF Community Capacity Scale was specifically designed to address each of these eight outcomes.

Results from the RADF Community Capacity Scale show that:

- ✓ Rural Alberta scored ***lower in community capacity*** than small urban or large urban Alberta.

- ✓ In terms of the different regions of the province, northern and southern Alberta scored ***lower in community capacity*** than Edmonton, and central Alberta scored ***higher in community capacity*** than northern Alberta. No significant differences were found between community capacity in Calgary and other regions of the province.

[5] Regression analysis was conducted to look at relationships between demographic variables and quality of life scores of rural and small urban respondents. While regression results such as these are commonly reported in the social sciences, they may be subject to endogeneity bias (there may be spurious relationships between variables which may affect results).
[6] Introduction, p.1. The Aspen Institute. (1996). *Measuring Community Capacity Building: A Workbook-in-Progress for Rural Communities*, Version 3-96. Rural Economic Policy Program.
[7] Rural Alberta's Development Fund. (2008). *A Framework for Defining Community Capacity Building*. (Draws on: The Aspen Institute. (1996). *Measuring Community Capacity Building: A Workbook-in-Progress for Rural Communities*, Version 3-96. Rural Economic Policy Program.)

Information was also collected on respondents' perceptions of the attractiveness of their communities in terms of being a place to live, a place to work, and a place to visit. Survey results indicated the following statistically significant differences:

- ✓ Respondents in small urban Alberta rated their communities as ***more attractive as places to live and work*** than respondents in rural or large urban Alberta rated theirs.

- ✓ Rural respondents rated their communities as ***less attractive as places to work*** than respondents in large urban Alberta rated theirs.

- ✓ Respondents in northern Alberta rated their communities as ***less attractive as places to live and visit*** than respondents in Calgary, central Alberta, and southern Alberta rated theirs.

- ✓ Respondents in Edmonton rated their communities as ***less attractive as places to live*** than respondents in central Alberta and southern Alberta rated theirs.

- ✓ Respondents in Edmonton rated their communities as ***less attractive as places to visit*** than respondents in Calgary rated theirs.

Access to Health Services: Summary of Results

Respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with their access to quality health services in their community. The following statistically significant differences were identified:

- ✓ Respondents in northern Alberta reported ***less satisfaction with access to quality health services*** than respondents in Edmonton, central Alberta, and southern Alberta.

- ✓ Respondents in Calgary reported ***less satisfaction with access to quality health services*** than respondents in Edmonton or central Alberta.

Availability of Education and Training Opportunities: Summary of Results

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities in their community which provide them with the skills they need to compete and succeed. The following statistically significant differences were identified:

- ✓ Respondents in rural Alberta reported ***less satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities*** than respondents in small urban or large urban Alberta.

- ✓ Respondents in southern, central, and northern Alberta reported ***less satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities*** than respondents in Calgary (but not Edmonton).

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

In October 2008, Rural Alberta's Development Fund (RADF) contracted Howard Research & Management Consulting Inc. to conduct an ongoing evaluation of the Fund and report on performance measures and outcomes concerning the projects it funds. Regarding long-term performance measures, RADF has set out three anticipated key outcomes, "designed to demonstrate the lasting benefit of the $100 million invested in rural Alberta" (p.4)[8]:

- An improvement to the quality of life for 90-95% of the communities impacted by RADF approved projects
- An increase in community capacity for 90-95% of all projects approved by the RADF
- A positive economic impact in excess of the direct contribution of the RADF and fund recipient for 95-100% of all projects approved by the RADF

The current report presents a picture of quality of life and community capacity in Alberta. In particular, this report presents the results of a baseline population survey, measuring Albertans' current experiences of quality and life and community capacity in both rural and urban Alberta. Apart from being valuable unto itself as a general overview of the experience of quality of life and community capacity in both urban and rural Alberta (and therefore useful in informing strategic decision-making by RADF and other stakeholders in rural development), the population survey will contribute to a larger evaluation effort aimed at uncovering evidence of RADF impact on quality of life and community capacity. Data pertaining to economic impact (relevant to the third key outcome listed above) will be gathered through proponent data submissions over the course of the evaluation, and is not included in the current report.

In order to provide an overview of the experience of quality of life and community capacity in Alberta, the survey includes two particular tools: a quality of life measurement tool as well as another tool which was created to measure community capacity in Alberta. The quality of life tool was based on a rigorously tested survey instrument which has been successfully applied to a variety of populations within Alberta. The community capacity tool, a comprehensive questionnaire, was specially designed to reflect RADF priorities and to incorporate previous work conducted by RADF with respect to defining community capacity and its various dimensions.[9]

While the primary purpose of the survey was to collect information on quality of life and community capacity, information on the related concepts of rural health delivery and learning and skill development was also collected as these are topics of particular interest to RADF: In addition to gauging each project's potential impact on economic growth, quality of life, and community capacity, the Fund has placed emphasis on rural health delivery and learning and skill development in its selection of projects. Brief sections relating to these topics are presented in the latter part of this report.

[8] Rural Alberta's Development Fund. (March 14, 2008). Updated Business Plan 2008/09-2012/13.
[9] The tool consists of items adapted from established surveys and items created solely for the purposes of the current survey.

The baseline population survey of the general Alberta population (with particular emphasis on the rural and small urban population) was conducted by telephone in Spring 2009 and was intended to establish a baseline measure of quality of life and community capacity in the general Alberta population. The survey sample consisted of 1600 respondents from across Alberta and provides sufficient data to allow analyses to be conducted by various sub-populations (such as individuals living in northern, central, or southern rural/small urban Alberta) and to allow for psychometric testing of the tool itself.

A second survey, using the same tools applied in the baseline survey, is planned for Spring 2011. Each population survey will provide a comprehensive picture of the general rural Alberta population's experience of quality of life and community capacity. Therefore, each survey is useful unto itself as a barometer of the general rural population. Given that the information contained therein is valuable to RADF and other stakeholders in rural policy (e.g., by providing evidence of areas of particular need), a comprehensive analysis of each population survey will be conducted. In addition, conducting two surveys will allow a comparison of the 2009 and 2011 data in order to assess change or growth in the areas of quality of life and community capacity.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a randomized telephone survey of Alberta adults 18 years of age or older between March 17 and June 1, 2009. A total of 1600 respondents completed the survey. The overall response rate from the survey was 12%, with a cooperation rate of 22%.[10]
In order to gather a robust measure of quality of life and community capacity in rural and small urban Alberta, the survey was designed to gather proportionally larger samples from respondents located in rural and small urban Alberta. This emphasis on gathering more information from those in rural and small urban areas allows for analyses which will better identify the experience of quality of life and community capacity in these areas and thus enhance the ability to isolate RADF's impact on quality of life and community capacity. Smaller samples from large urban Alberta (Calgary and Edmonton) were contacted in order to provide a large urban benchmark against which to compare the rural and small urban data.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Discussion of survey results is divided into four main sections: quality of life, community capacity, rural health delivery, and learning and skill development. In each section, a thorough exploration of survey data is presented.

[10]Response rate refers to the number of completed interviews divided by the total number of eligible households where contact was attempted. The cooperation rate refers to the number of completed interviews divided by the number of eligible households where contact was made (thereby excluding non-contacts – busy, answering machine, no answer – from the calculation). A much lower response rate when compared to cooperation rate suggests that individuals within the sample were difficult to contact. Note that if a household was reached where a quota was full (e.g., there had already been the maximum number of females or individuals over 65 years of age surveyed) and no other individuals were available in the household, that household would be considered to have no eligible respondents.

The presentation of survey results permits two types of comparisons:

- Responses are presented by ***rural/urban status***: rural areas, small urban centres, and large urban centres. In particular, areas were categorized according to population as follows[11]:

Status	Criteria
Large Urban Centres	Those cities with a population greater than or equal to 100,000. Using this definition, the cities of Calgary and Edmonton were categorized as large urban centres.
Small Urban Centres	Those towns/cities (or urban service areas) with a population less than 100,000 and greater than or equal to 20,000. Using this definition, the cities of Airdrie, Grande Prairie, Leduc, Lethbridge, Lloydminster[12], Medicine Hat, Okotoks[13], Red Deer, Spruce Grove[14], and St. Albert as well as the urban service areas of Fort McMurray and Sherwood Park were categorized as small urban centres.
Rural Areas	All areas of the province not categorized as large urban centres or small urban centres.

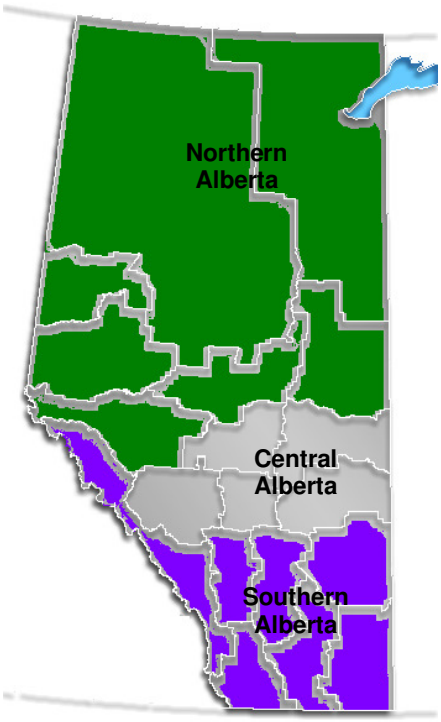
- Responses are presented by ***region***: Calgary, Edmonton, southern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, and northern rural/small urban Alberta. The boundaries of each region are outlined below:

Region	Boundaries
Calgary	The area within Calgary city limits.
Edmonton	The area within Edmonton city limits.
Southern rural/small urban	Census Divisions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 15, excluding anything inside Calgary city limits.
Central rural/small urban	Census Divisions 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, excluding anything inside Edmonton city limits.
Northern rural/small urban	Census Divisions 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, and 19.

[11] For most cities/towns/urban service areas, population numbers were collected from the Government of Alberta's 2008 Official Population List (Alberta Municipal Affairs (2008). *2008 Official Population List*. Municipal Services Branch, Government of Alberta). For those cities/towns/urban service areas that were reported to have populations above 18,000 and below 20,000 in the above document (Spruce Grove and Okotoks), more current information was collected from documents published by each city in order to determine whether their population had since grown to 20,000 or greater.
[12] While the population on the Alberta side of Lloydminster may be under 20,000, the total population of Lloydminster is greater than 20,000.
[13] Population figure from: Town of Okotoks. (n.d.). *Okotoks Fact File*. Retrieved October 5, 2009 from http://www.okotoks.ca/data/1/rec_docs/583_Okotoks_Fact_File_2009.pdf.
[14] Population figure from: The City of Spruce Grove (n.d.). *Basic Stats Summary as of April 6, 2009 Census*. Retrieved October 5, 2009 from http://www.sprucegrove.org/Assets/reports/spruce_grove_census_2009.pdf.

A map showing the division of the province into northern, central, and southern regions is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1



In some cases, weights were applied to the data to ensure better representativeness of results for the Alberta population. Weights were applied to ensure that the results were representative of the Alberta population in 2006, the most recent year for which consistent data was available on the Alberta population at the level of detail required.[15,16] In particular, data were weighted in order to better represent the age, gender, rural/urban, and regional distribution of the Alberta population. The report clearly notes where these weights were applied.

[15] Data on the age, gender, rural/urban, and regional distribution of the Alberta population in 2006 were retrieved from Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 510052, and from Statistics Canada, 2006 Community Profiles. This data was supplemented with information pertaining to the age and gender distribution of Fort McMurray in 2006 (Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (2006). *Municipal Census 2006*. Planning and Development Department.) and the age and gender distribution of Sherwood Park in 2005 (data provided directly through the Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs Department, Strathcona County), the closest years for which data was available.

[16] A comparison of the 2006 data with available 2008 data (CANSIM, Table 510052) showed that the age distribution of the Alberta population in 2006 (using the age categories herein) is a reasonable approximation of the age distribution of the Alberta population in 2008.

In order to increase the depth and comprehensiveness of the picture of Alberta presented herein, the survey results in each section are also supplemented with data pertaining to Alberta collected from sources such as Statistics Canada and the Government of Alberta.

Limitations

It is common in general population surveys to have a high degree of item non-response to survey questions pertaining to personal or household income, as this may be perceived as a sensitive and private topic by many. In the current survey, 10% of respondents opted not to provide a response to the household income question. However, controlling for the missing income data allowed data analysis to proceed without further challenges.[17]

As mentioned, the overall response rate for the survey was 12%. Note that in the current survey climate it is not uncommon for response rates to Random Digit Dialed general population surveys to be in the range of 15% to 17%. In the case of a longer survey (such as the present survey), even lower response rates are not unexpected. In addition, the response rate reported may under-represent the true rate, as it is possible that in a number of households where contact was not made (i.e., busy, no answer), there were no eligible respondents.[18] Such under-representation of the true response rate may be especially significant in the current sample since there was a relatively large number of non-contacts (i.e., answering machine and no answer), which may have included a large proportion of households without eligible respondents. However, in general, a sample with a lower response rate has a higher potential for non-response bias to enter into results. As such, the representativeness of the data should be considered with some caution.

For each respondent in the data set, the respondent's postal code was used to identify the respondent's location of residence. For some respondents in the data set the full postal code was available, while for others only the first three digits were available (the first three digits are also referred to as the Forward Sortation Area, or FSA). For those responses that were only associated with the first three digits of a postal code (the FSA), there may be instances where this code refers to an area both partially inside and partially outside a city/town/urban service area boundary.

[17] In particular, the categorical nature of the income data easily permitted the use of a control variable (a dummy variable for non-response to the household income question) which prevented bias in the results by ensuring that a systematic relationship between non-response to the household income question and variables of interest did not affect the identification of other relationships.
[18] However, all non-contacts should be included when calculating response rate to ensure responsible reporting.

For the cities of Calgary and Edmonton, those respondents for whom there was only an FSA were classified as being inside or outside the city limits depending on whether the respondent's phone exchange indicated that they were most likely located inside or outside the city limits. For small urban centres, respondents were classified as being located in particular centres based on Canada Post's classification of FSAs by city/town/urban service area. However, it is possible that one or more FSAs extend beyond city/town/urban service area boundaries. As such, it is possible that some respondents living near but outside of the boundaries of a small urban centre were classified incorrectly as living within the boundaries of a small urban centre.

Finally, the survey was conducted while Alberta was experiencing a recession. To the extent that (a) the recession affected incomes, employment status, and levels of stress, and (b) the effects of the recession influenced the manner in which individuals responded to one or more questions, the results presented herein may not be as representative a picture of general life in Alberta as the results of the same survey conducted in the absence of such a significant external influence. However, the primary purpose of this report is to compare differences between rural and urban Alberta, and this type of analysis is much less likely to be biased by a global influence such as a recession. If all regions of Alberta experienced the recession in the same general manner, it is unlikely that any *difference* between one or more regions is dependent on fluctuations in the economic climate.

Structure of the Report

The report is organized into six sections. The sections are presented as follows:

A. Information on the demographics of the sample
B. Presentation of the survey results relating to quality of life
C. Presentation of the survey results relating to community capacity
D. Presentation of the survey results relating to rural health delivery
E. Presentation of the survey results relating to learning and skill development
F. Appendix (containing a more detailed presentation of the survey results)

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The baseline survey consisted of 1600 completions: 400 completions from each of northern, central, and southern rural/small urban Alberta, and 200 completions from each of Calgary and Edmonton (Table 1, Appendix A). The summaries below present the general characterization of respondents by region, age, gender, the presence of dependents, educational background, marital status, employment status, residency status, and household income. The percentages discussed in this section are weighted percentages.[19]

[Note: Tables 1 through 12, located in Appendix A, provide a detailed presentation of the number and percentage of respondents falling into each demographic category.]

Region

The largest proportion of respondents from rural areas were located in central Alberta (41%), followed by southern Alberta (35%), and northern Alberta (24%) (Table 2, Appendix A). The largest proportion of respondents from small urban centres were also located in central Alberta (46%), followed by southern Alberta (34%), and northern Alberta (20%). Respondents from large urban centres were divided between Calgary (57%) and Edmonton (43%).

Age and Gender

The age and gender distributions of respondents were balanced in rural, small urban, and large urban categories, with 47-51% of respondents being female and 49-53% of respondents being male (Table 3, Appendix A). Rural, small urban, and large urban categories also had similar age distributions: 23-25% of respondents were between 18 and 29 years of age, 19-20% of respondents were between the ages of 30 and 39, 21-22% of respondents were between the ages of 40 and 49, 16-17% of respondents were between the ages of 50 and 59, and 18-20% of respondents were 60 years of age and older (Table 4, Appendix A). In most age cohorts, the proportion of males to females differed by four percentage points or fewer, with the exception of the rural 18 to 29 age group (which exhibited a gender distribution of 56% males and 44% females), the rural 30 to 39 age group (54% males and 46% females), the rural 40 to 49 age group (53% males and 47% females), the small urban 65 years and older age group (43% males and 57% females), and the large urban 65 years and older age group (43% males and 57% females) (Table 5, Appendix A).

Presence of Dependents

There was a notable difference between the proportion of rural, small urban, and large urban respondents reporting that they had dependants living at home. Small urban respondents were most likely to report having children under the age of 18 or other dependents living with them (49%), followed by 47% of rural respondents and 41% of large urban respondents (Table 6, Appendix A).

[19] Note that some percentages do not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Educational Background

There were also noticeable differences in educational background between large urban, small urban, and rural respondents, where large urban respondents typically reported a higher level of education. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of rural respondents reported that their highest level of education was high school or less, compared to 35% of small urban respondents and 23% of large urban respondents (Table 7, Appendix A). Those who reported having at least some university education made up 25% of the rural sample, 28% of the small urban sample, and 48% of the large urban sample.

Marital Status

The majority of rural, small urban, and large urban respondents reported to be married or living together. However, respondents in rural areas or small urban centres were more likely to be married or living together (73%, compared to 68% of large urban respondents), and respondents in large urban centres were more likely to be single or never married (20%, compared to 15% of small urban respondents and 14% of rural respondents) (Table 8, Appendix A). The proportions of respondents who were widowed, separated or divorced were very similar across the rural, small urban, and large urban samples (5-6% of each sample were widowed, 2-4% were separated, and 5% were divorced).

Employment Status

The distribution of rural respondents by employment status was very similar to that of small urban and large urban residents. Nearly half of the overall sample reported being employed full-time: 45% of rural respondents, 47% of small urban respondents, and 48% of large urban respondents (Table 9, Appendix A). The small urban category exhibited the largest proportion of retired respondents (18%), compared to 16% of large urban respondents and 14% of rural respondents. Other small differences include the proportion of respondents who reported being employed part-time (13% of rural and small urban respondents, compared to 9% of large urban respondents), homemakers (10% of rural respondents, compared to 8% of small urban and large urban respondents), or students (2% of rural respondents, 3% of small urban respondents, and 5% of large urban respondents).

Residency Status

Rural and small urban respondents were more likely to have lived in Canada for all of their life (92% and 88%, respectively) compared to 76% of large urban respondents (Table 10, Appendix A). Only 2% of rural respondents reported living in Canada for less than 10 years, compared to 3% of small urban respondents and 8% of large urban respondents. Amongst rural and small urban respondents, 33% had lived in rural or small urban Alberta for all of their life, and 43% had lived there for 10 years or more (but less than all of their life) (Table 11, Appendix A).

Household Income

Small urban and large urban respondents tended to report higher household incomes than rural respondents, with 34-35% reporting a total household income last year (before taxes) of over $100,000, as compared to 27% of their rural counterparts (Table 12, Appendix A). Those who reported a household income of $51,000 to $100,000 made up 34% of the rural sample, 35% of the small urban sample, and 34% of the large urban sample. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of rural respondents, 31% of small urban respondents, and 31% of large urban respondents reported a household income of $50,000 or lower.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life (QoL) is a complex, multidimensional concept. Unsurprisingly, there has been little agreement on the meaning of the term and wide variation in the approaches suggested for its measurement.[20]

Typically, individual quality of life has been studied in one of two ways. The first approach looks at quality of life in terms of an individual's material wealth and environment, informed by economic indicators (e.g., household income, cost of living), environmental indicators (e.g., air quality), health indicators (e.g., life expectancy), and social indicators (e.g., crime rates). This view of quality of life is closely related to the concept of *standard of living*.

The second approach looks at quality of life in terms of an individual's experience of his or her own life. This conception of quality of life requires information about individual perception, gathered through questions such as: How would you rate your personal health? How safe do you feel walking in your neighbourhood? Do you feel you have enough resources to meet your basic needs? Do you trust your neighbours? Do you have enough friends? Do you experience enough personal privacy?

Looking at quality of life using the first approach has merit in terms of measuring the material and environmental foundation of well-being. However, it has been argued that this information is only able to tell part of the story of individual well-being. For example, the ability to use one's income to one's advantage depends on a number of personal and social factors.[21] These include personal physical characteristics (e.g., disabilities), environmental variation (e.g., climate and weather conditions), social climate (e.g., the strength and types of community relationships), relational perspectives (e.g., class and gender), and intrafamily distribution (e.g., the distribution of power within a family). While income has a large amount of influence on well-being, these factors suggest that it may be an imperfect measure of individual quality of life.

[20] Gill, T.M., and Feinstein, A.R. (1994). A Critical Appraisal of the Quality of Quality-of-Life Measurements. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 272(8), 619-626.
[21] Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. New York: Oxford University Press.

In addition, there is much evidence that the relationship between income and individual well-being is weak and not as straightforward as once thought[22]; for example, there is evidence that (a) well-being increases with income for those with incomes below a country's average, and (b) well-being is not significantly affected by income for those with incomes higher than a country's average.[23] Relatedly, people living in less economically advantaged environments do not necessarily see themselves as experiencing a poor quality of life.[24] Cross-country studies of quality of life and well-being have also consistently found that variables most associated with quality of life include physical health, whether one is married, whether one is employed, regular church attendance, and whether one believes others can be trusted.[25]

The second approach to looking at quality of life (based on an individual's understanding of his or her personal experiences), and the approach used herein, takes many of the above factors into account by looking at an individual's personal *outcomes* and aims to measure an individual's actual experience of quality of life. Thus, this approach is better positioned to capture the utility an individual receives from life than an approach focusing on standard of living.

Measuring Quality of Life

The current approach to measuring quality of life (or personal outcomes) in Alberta is based on a framework that suggests there are eight domains of quality of life.[26] These include:

- Emotional Well-Being
- Interpersonal Relations
- Material Well-Being
- Personal Development
- Physical Well-Being
- Rights
- Self-Determination
- Social Inclusion

[22] Myers, D.G. (2000). The Funds, Friends, and Faith of Happy People. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 56-67.
[23] Helliwell, J.F. (2002). Globalization and Well-Being. Vancouver: UBC Press.
[24] For example, a recent study of Canadian cities indicates that people living in richer cities (Toronto, Calgary, Ottawa) are less satisfied with their lives than people living in smaller, poorer ones (Charlottetown, Quebec City, St. John's). Barrington-Leigh, Christopher Paul. (2009*). Geography, reference groups, and the determinants of life satisfaction*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of British Columbia, British Columbia. See also: Hadely, Terry. (2006, March 14). *Community engagement more important to happiness and productivity than material* wealth. Presentation made for the Vancouver Board of Trade. Retrieved January 19, 2009 from http://www.boardoftrade.com/vbot_speech.asp?pageID=174&speechID=896&offset=&speechfind=.
[25] Helliwell, J.F. (2002). *Globalization and Well-Being*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
[26] See Schalock, R.L., Gardner, J.F., and Bradley, V.J. (2007) *Quality of Life for People with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities: Applications Across Individuals, Organizations, Communities, and Systems.* Washington, D.C.: American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

The rationale for concentrating on these eight domains is built on a large international literature which indicates that these are the core dimensions of quality of life.[27] Taken together, these eight domains account for the multi-dimensional nature of individual experience and endeavour to provide a complete picture of personal well-being. A more detailed exposition of how each domain is conceptualized is presented in Table 13, which provides a sample of indicators (i.e., specific measures) that are reflective of each domain.

Table 13. Conceptualization of the eight domains of quality of life

Domain	Domain Indicators
Emotional Well-Being	Contentment Self-concept Being appreciated
Interpersonal Relations	Relationships Supports Trust
Material Well-Being	Income adequacy Housing Disposable income
Personal Development	Opportunity to grow Personal competence Enjoyment of daily activities
Physical Well-Being	Health and health care Lifestyle choices Leisure
Rights	Legal rights Human rights (respect, dignity, equality)
Self-Determination	Autonomy/personal control Choices Freedom to express views
Social Inclusion	Community integration Community participation Support networks

[27] See Verdugo, M.A., Schalock, R.L., Keith, K.D., and Stancliffe, R.J. (2005) Quality of Life and its Measurement: Important Principles and Guidelines. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 49(10), 707-717 and Schalock, R.L. and Verdugo, M.A. (2002). A Synthesis of Core Quality of Life Domains and Indicators. In D.L. Braddock (Ed.), *Handbook on Quality of Life for Human Service Practitioners* (181-188). Washington, DC: American Association on Mental Retardation.

The tool used to measure quality of life based on these eight domains (The HRMC Quality of Life and Personal Well-Being Index) consists of 40 items (i.e., questions). Responses to each question are measured on an 11-point scale (i.e., a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 represents low quality of life and 10 represents high quality of life in a particular dimension). Quality of life along each domain is measured through a domain-specific set of five items within the questionnaire. Responses to these five items are then averaged to provide an overall domain score for each respondent.[28]

Survey Results: Quality of Life

In order to assess the quality of a survey instrument, it is important to gather information on how closely the items in any one scale (or, in this case, domain) measure the same phenomenon. In other words, it is important to estimate the scale's *reliability* in terms of measuring a particular phenomenon.

One method of measuring scale reliability[29] is to calculate a statistic known as Cronbach's Alpha. This statistic may range anywhere from zero to one, with higher values reflecting higher scale reliability. Amongst social scientists, it is commonly accepted that Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency reliability scores can be interpreted as follows[30]:

0.00 - 0.59 = poor
0.60 - 0.69 = acceptable
0.70 - 0.79 = good
0.80 and higher = very good

The reliability scores for each of the eight quality of life domains, calculated using the baseline population survey data, are reported in Table 14. All domains exhibit reliability scores which are acceptable or better, and six of the eight domains exhibit reliability scores which are good or better. These results imply that the survey is reliable in terms of its ability to consistently measure these eight particular concepts.

[28] Note that domain scores are only calculated for those respondents with a complete set of responses to the items within a particular domain. If a respondent provided a non-response to one or more items within a domain, a domain score for that respondent was not calculated.
[29] Specifically, internal consistency reliability: a gauge of the extent to which each item in a particular group of items measures the same phenomenon.
[30] See Moss, S., Prosser, H., Costello, H., Simpson, N., Patel, P., Rowe, S., Turner, S., and Hatton, C.(1998). Reliability and validity of the PAS–ADD Checklist for detecting psychiatric disorders in adults with intellectual disability. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 42(2), 173 –183.

Table 14. Reliability scores of the eight dimensions of quality of life

Domain	Reliability Score (Cronbach's Alpha)[31]	Implied Scale (Domain) Reliability
Emotional Well-Being	0.77	Good Reliability
Interpersonal Relations	0.74	Good Reliability
Material Well-Being	0.85	Very Good Reliability
Personal Development	0.78	Good Reliability
Physical Well-Being	0.71	Good Reliability
Rights	0.66	Acceptable Reliability
Self-Determination	0.67	Acceptable Reliability
Social Inclusion	0.72	Good Reliability

The Experience of Quality of Life in Alberta by Domain and Region

This section presents the results of the baseline population survey of Albertans as it pertains to quality of life. Results are organized by domain, and average scores for each domain are presented by rural/urban status (rural, small urban, and large urban) and region (northern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, southern rural/small urban Alberta, Edmonton, and Calgary). In order to ensure better representativeness of the Alberta population, average scores were calculated using the weights described in the introduction.

In order to test for statistically significant differences in average domain scores between groups, statistical tests of differences in means were conducted.[32] In order to ensure better representativeness of the Alberta population, these tests were applied using the weights described in the introduction. Where statistically significant differences[33] in average scores were found, these differences are noted after the presentation of the scores themselves.

Domain 1: Emotional Well-Being

The emotional well-being domain focuses on an individual's experience of self-esteem, being acknowledged, and being appreciated. More generally, this dimension relates to the presence of positive experiences in an individual's life and life satisfaction.

Average scores in the emotional well-being domain (by rural/urban status and by region) are reported in Figures 2 and 3 below. The region with the lowest score in emotional well-being was Edmonton (7.79) while the region with the highest score in emotional well-being was Calgary (8.19).

[31] Reliability scores were also calculated for each domain using the rural and urban subgroups. In all cases, reliability scores were well above the 0.60 "acceptable" cut-off.
[32] In particular, the survey analysis equivalent of a t-test was used to test for statistically significant differences in means.
[33] At the $p \leq 0.05$ level.

Figure 2

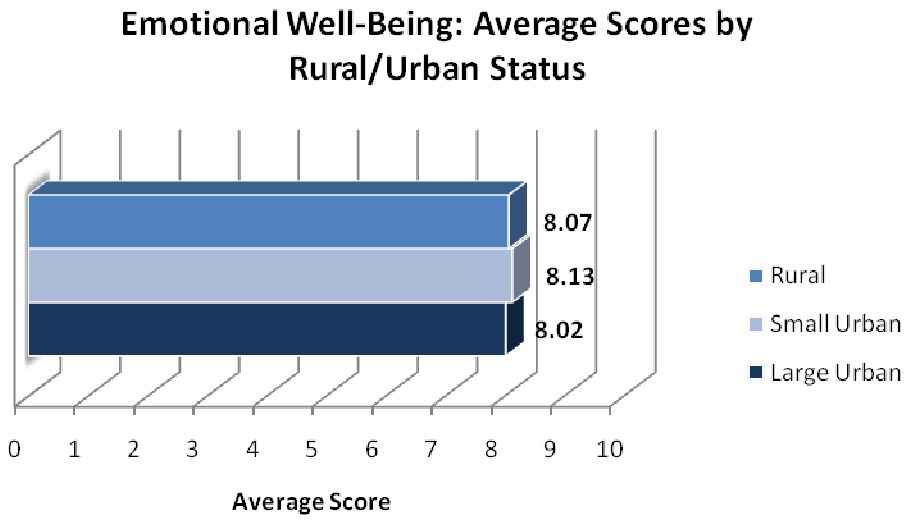
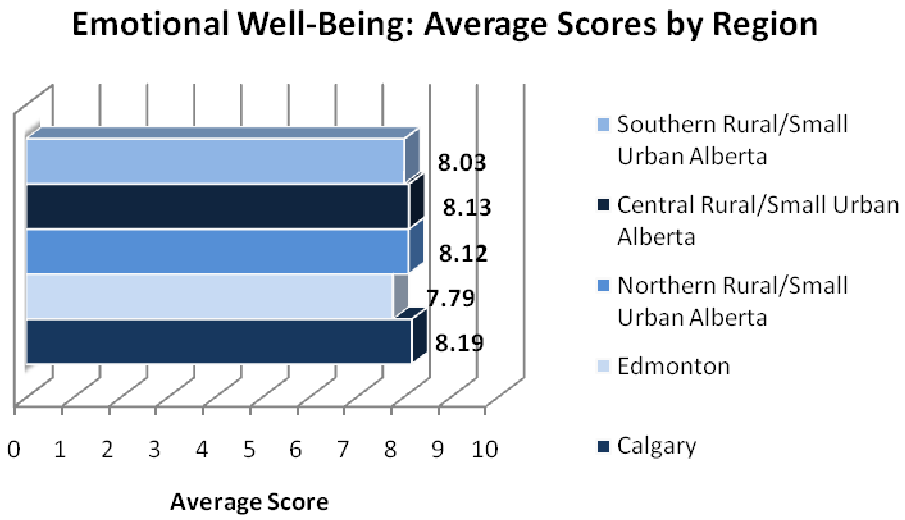


Figure 3



Statistical tests applied to respondent groups' average scores in the domain of emotional well-being identified the following statistically significant differences:

- Residents of Calgary, northern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, and southern rural/small urban Alberta scored significantly higher in emotional well-being than residents of Edmonton.

Domain 2: Interpersonal Relations

The interpersonal relations domain relates to an individual's experience of the quality and strength of relationships in one's life. This includes the experience of trust, satisfaction with family relations, being valued by others, and the availability of help and support from others.

Average scores in the interpersonal relations domain (by rural/urban status and by region) are reported in Figures 4 and 5 below. Looking at the data by region, respondents from Edmonton had the lowest average score in interpersonal relations (8.12) and respondents from southern rural/small urban Alberta the highest average score (8.39). Note that respondents from northern and central rural/small urban Alberta had average scores which were very close to southern rural/small urban Alberta (scoring 8.37 and 8.38, respectively).

Figure 4

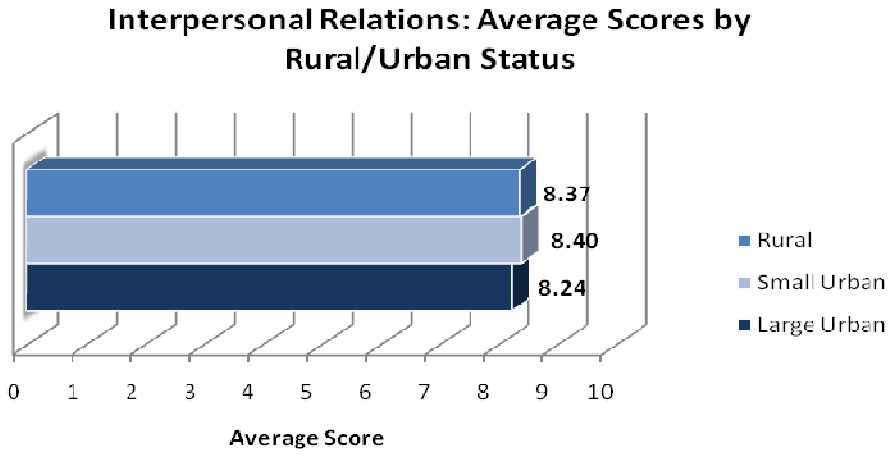
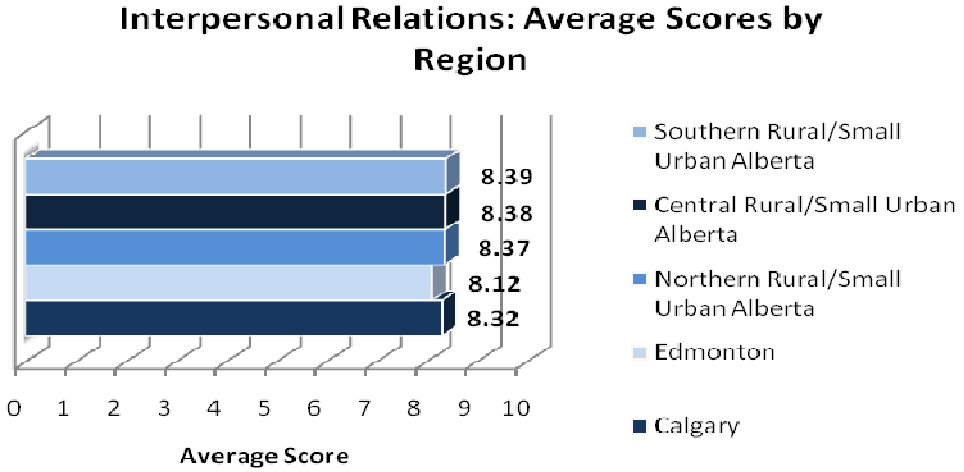


Figure 5



Applying statistical tests to the differences in average scores in the interpersonal relations domain across groups, the following statistically significant differences were isolated:

- Residents of northern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, and southern rural/small urban Alberta scored significantly higher in interpersonal relations than residents of Edmonton.

Domain 3: Material Well-Being

The domain of material well-being is based on an individual's experience of his or her ability to meet basic needs as well as make extra purchases as desired. This domain also relates to an individual's satisfaction with his or her household income and housing situation.

Average scores in the material well-being domain (by rural/urban status and by region) are reported in Figures 6 and 7 below. Edmonton was the region with the lowest average score in material well-being (6.73) while Calgary had the highest average score (7.44).

Figure 6

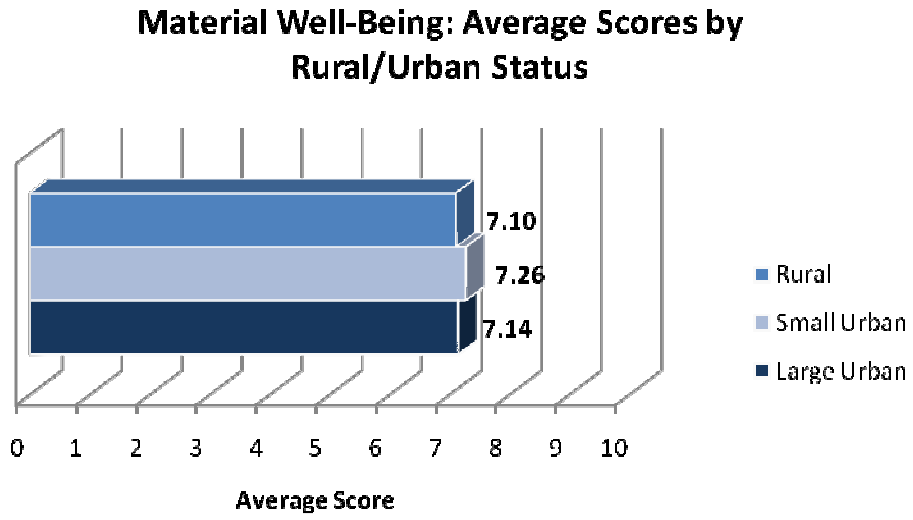
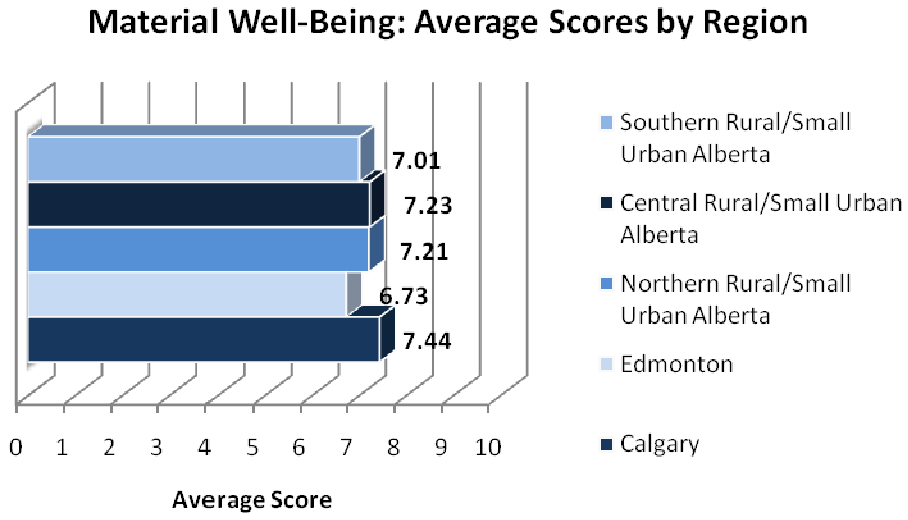


Figure 7



Statistically significant differences in average scores in the material well-being domain were found between the following groups:

- Residents of Calgary scored significantly higher in material well-being than residents of southern rural/small urban Alberta.

- Residents of Edmonton scored significantly lower than residents of Calgary, central rural/small urban Alberta, and northern rural/small urban Alberta in terms of material well-being.

Domain 4: Personal Development

Personal development, in the context of the current scale, is associated with the availability of opportunities for an individual to acquire skills, reach goals, and feel successful in activities. This domain is also concerned with the extent to which an individual is able to experience enjoyment of daily activities.

Average scores in the personal development domain (by rural/urban status and by region) are reported in Figures 8 and 9 below. Edmonton exhibited the lowest average score amongst the regions in personal development (7.28), while Calgary exhibited the highest (7.73).

Figure 8

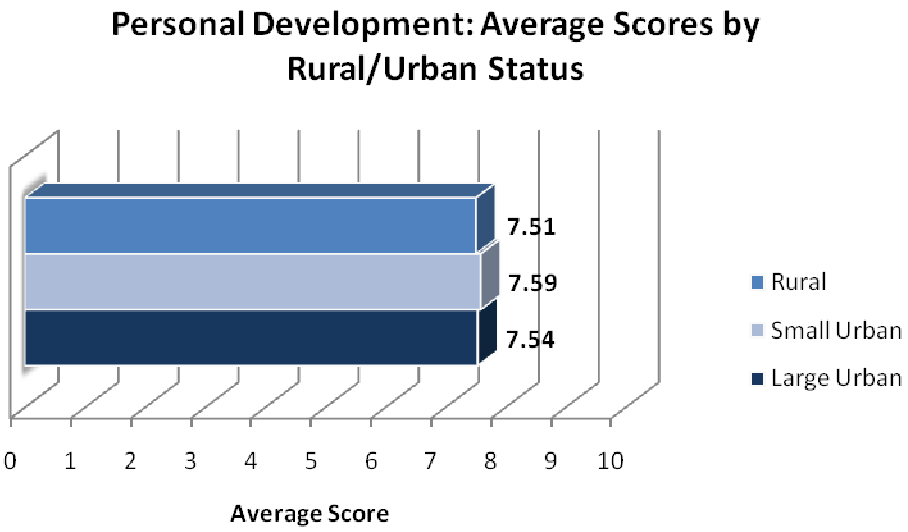
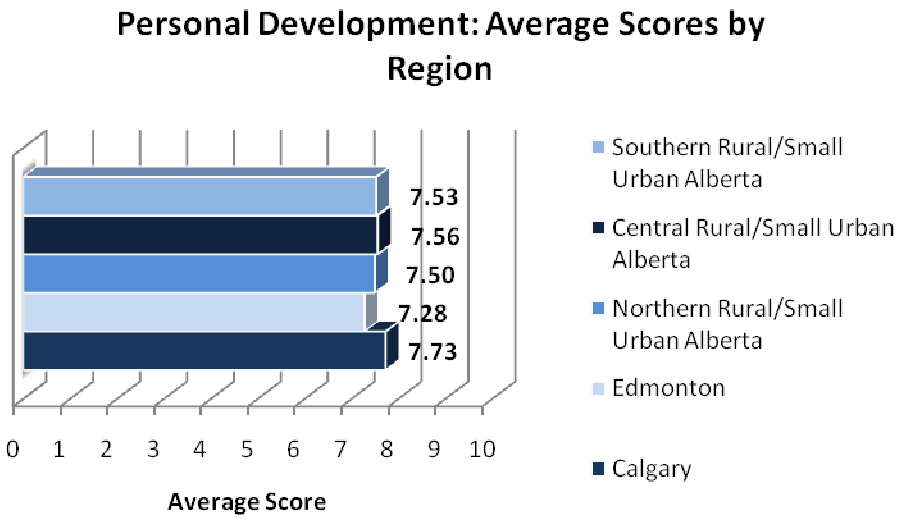


Figure 9



Statistical tests revealed one statistically significant difference between average personal development domain scores:

- Residents of Calgary scored significantly higher in personal development than residents of Edmonton.

Domain 5: Physical Well-Being

The physical well-being domain relates to an individual's experience of overall physical health, satisfaction with one's food choices, satisfaction with the amount of exercise one gets, and having enough rest and relaxation in one's life.

Average scores in the physical well-being domain (by rural/urban status and by region) are reported in Figures 10 and 11 below. Of the five regions, respondents from Edmonton realized the lowest average physical well-being scores (6.83) and respondents from southern rural/small urban Alberta realized the highest (7.13). Southern rural/small urban Alberta's average score was closely followed by northern rural/small urban Alberta's score at 7.12.

Figure 10

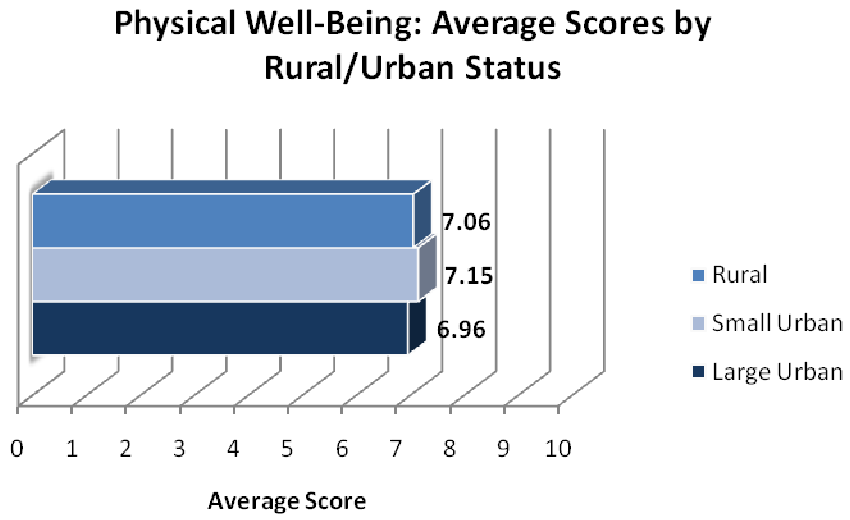
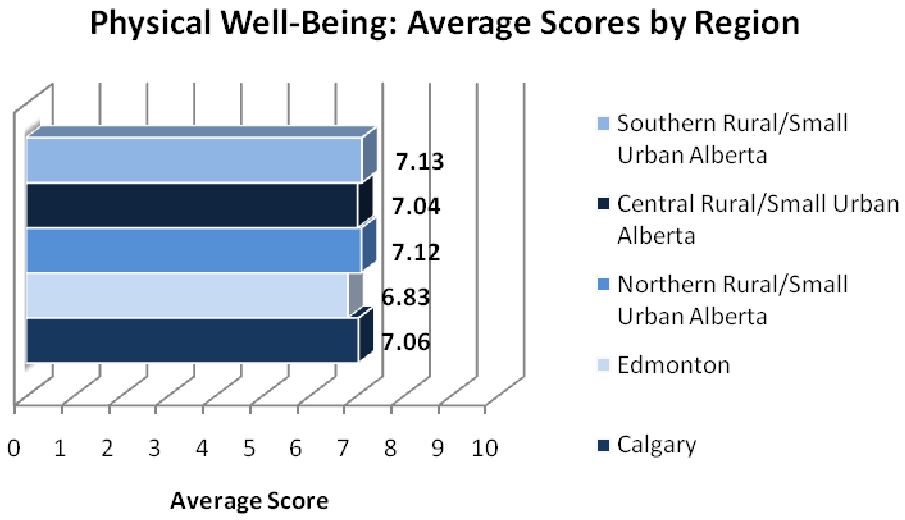


Figure 11



The results of the mean comparison tests show that the following differences in average scores across groups were statistically significant:

- Residents of northern rural/small urban Alberta and southern rural/small urban Alberta scored significantly higher in physical well-being than residents of Edmonton.

Domain 6: Rights

The rights domain concerns an individual's experience with being respected by others, having one's voice heard in the community, the freedom to exercise one's rights as a citizen, and the ability to provide input into local government decisions.

Average scores in the rights domain (by rural/urban status and by region) are reported in Figures 12 and 13 below. The lowest average rights score amongst the regions came from Edmonton's respondents (6.71), and the highest score came from southern rural/small urban Alberta's respondents (7.25). Notably, Calgary's average score was only 0.01 lower than southern rural/small urban Alberta's.

Figure 12

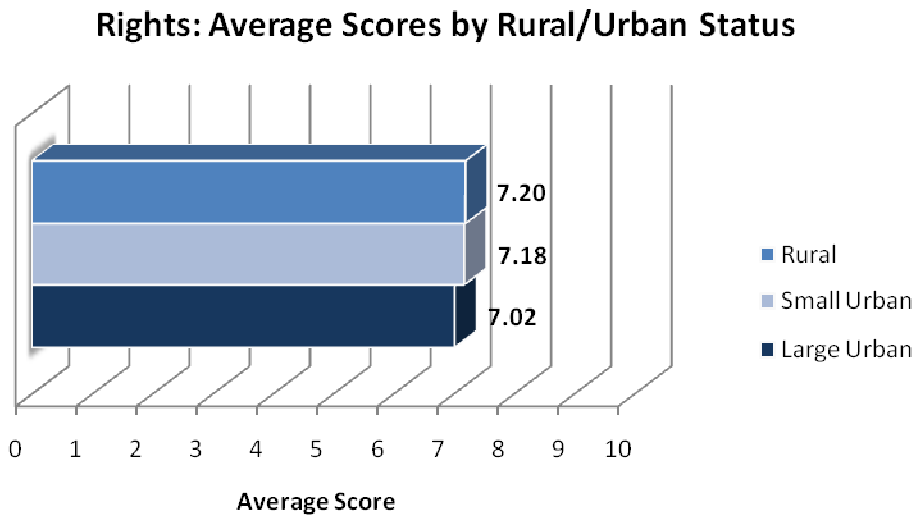
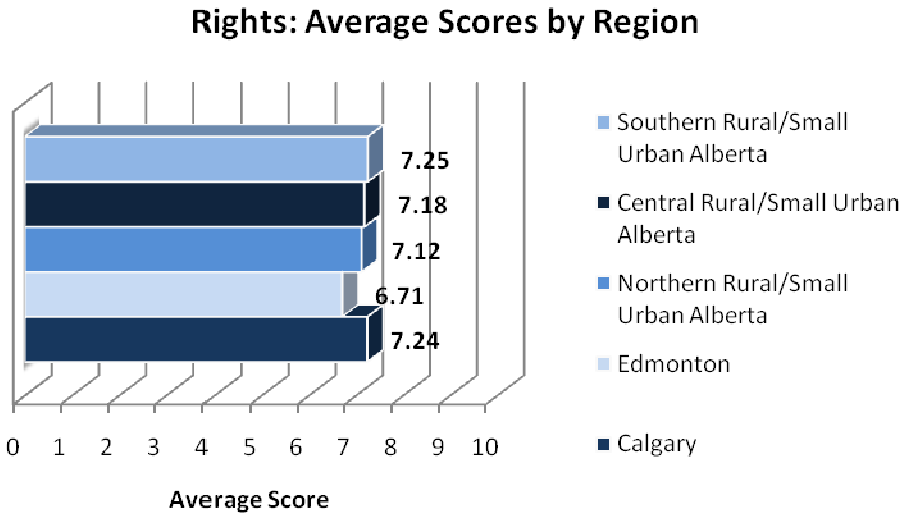


Figure 13



Statistically significant differences in average scores in the rights domain were found for the following groups:

- Residents of Edmonton scored significantly lower in rights than residents of Calgary, northern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, and southern rural/small urban Alberta.

Domain 7: Self-Determination

The aspects of quality of life which are connected to the domain of self-determination include the individual's ability to control his or her own life and freedom to make his or her own choices. This domain also touches on an individual's ability to express his or her views and have those views valued.

Average scores in the self-determination domain (by rural/urban status and by region) are reported in Figures 14 and 15 below. Relatively small differences were found between regions: the lowest average score was 8.29 (Edmonton), while the highest was 8.53 (Calgary).

Figure 14

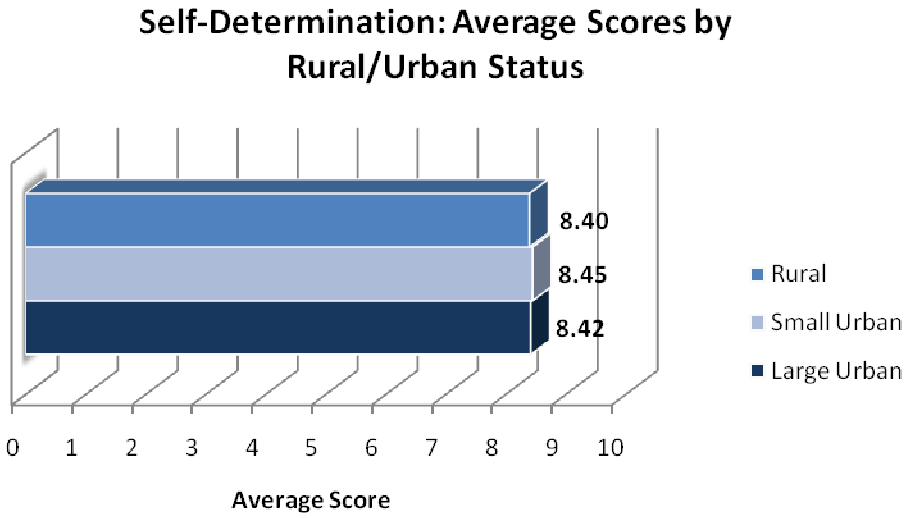
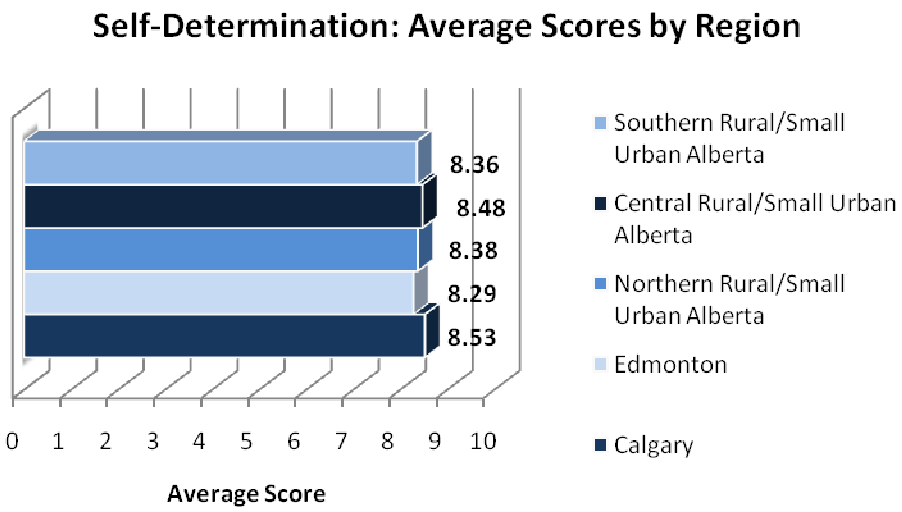


Figure 15



Statistical tests revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in average scores in self-determination between groups.

Domain 8: Social Inclusion

The final quality of life domain, social inclusion, concerns an individual's experience of being able to draw on networks, identified with a community, and able to participate in one's community and other social activities if so desired.

Average scores in the social inclusion domain (by rural/urban status and by region) are reported in Figures 16 and 17 below. Edmonton's average social inclusion score appears to be an outlier at 6.85 compared to the remainder of regions with average scores between 7.15 and 7.33.

Figure 16

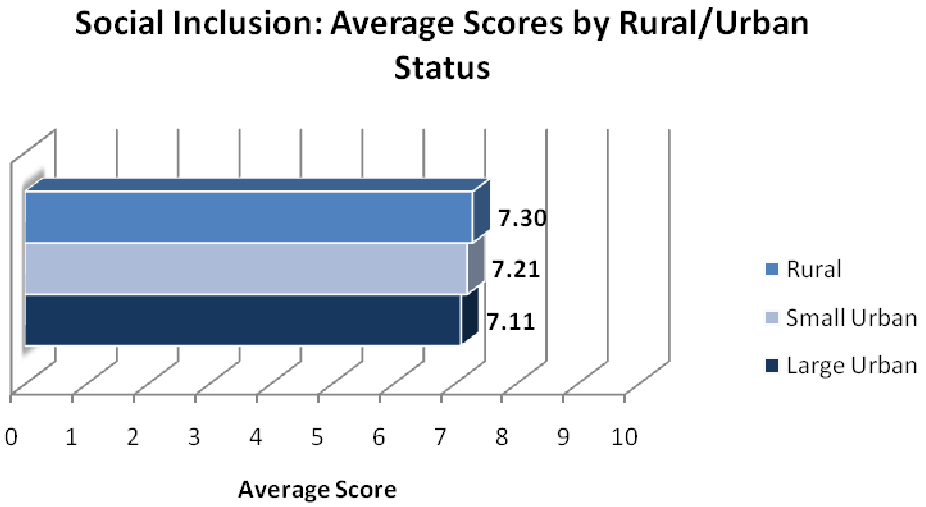
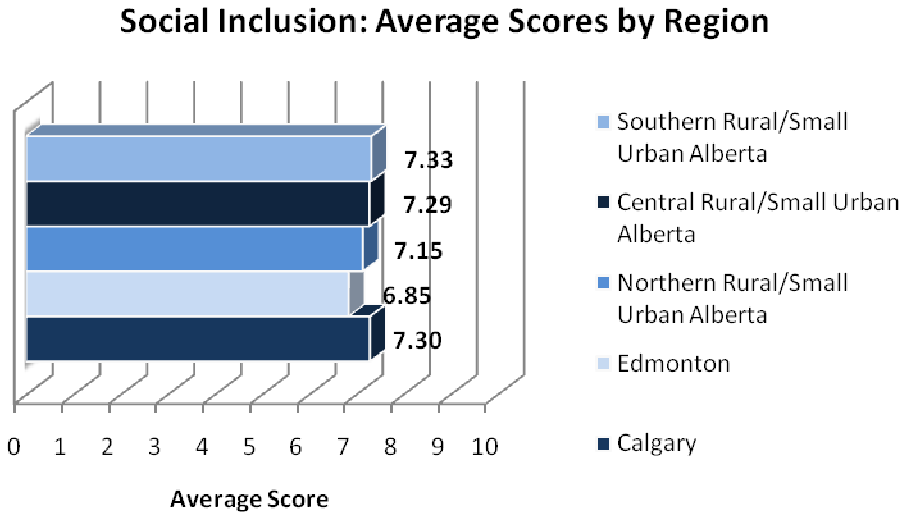


Figure 17



Statistically significant differences in average scores in the social inclusion domain were found for the following groups:

- Residents of Edmonton scored significantly lower in terms of social inclusion than residents of Calgary, central rural/small urban Alberta, and southern rural/small urban Alberta.

Relationships between Respondent Demographics and Quality of Life Scores: Rural and Small Urban Alberta

In order to identify any systematic relationships that may exist between quality of life scores of *rural and small urban* respondents and demographic variables, a regression analysis was conducted. This rural and small urban subsample was chosen (as opposed to using all large urban, small urban, and rural responses) in order to better identify the factors associated with quality of life in rural and small urban Alberta.

Regression analysis is a preferred method for looking at the relationships between variables because it is able to identify relationships while controlling for the effects of a number of other variables of interest. In other words, we are able to identify the relationship between any one demographic variable and a quality of life domain score *holding all other variables constant*. This is in contrast to the simple comparison of means reported above, which looks at the relationship between a single variable (i.e., rural/urban status) and quality of life domain score: a regression is able to provide more control and better isolate the relationships of interest.

While regression analysis can be very useful in this respect, the credibility of regression results is dependent upon the degree to which practical application aligns with the theoretical assumptions on which the regression is based. One concern with a regression analysis of the current data set is whether the household income variable may be *endogenous* (i.e., that there would be spurious relationships between household income and domain scores which would jeopardize analysis).[34] Durbin-Wu-Hausman tests provided evidence that the presence of this type of endogeneity in the current regressions, if any, was not a significant concern.[35] However, it is recommended that the following regression results should be interpreted with caution given that the testing itself was subject to assumptions and does not guarantee consistent, reliable results.[36,37]

[34] To the extent that there are variables not included in the analysis which affect a demographic variable at the same time as affecting responses to the quality of life items, the results of the regression may be unreliable. For example, it may be that one's attitude toward life affects their household income and, at the same time, affects their response to the items relating to social inclusion. If the regression does not control for this attitude (e.g., by including some sort of attitude measure), the regression's ability to accurately measure relationships between the social inclusion score and demographic variables will be undermined.
[35] As the endogeneity of the income variable was of most concern, the focus of testing was household income.
[36] In particular, the test is dependent on the quality of the instrument used. However, the instrument used in this case (number of attempts made to contact the respondent) was determined to not be weak.
[37] In addition, the tests do not rule out the endogeneity of other independent variables.

Table 15 in Appendix B details the statistically significant relationships found from the regressions[38] of the quality of life domain scores on a selection of demographic variables (region, age group, gender, presence of dependents, education level, marital status, employment status, immigrant status[39], and household income). Each regression was run using information from all of the rural and small urban respondents that had provided complete responses[40], and all data were weighted to be more representative of the Alberta population (weighting described in the introduction).[41]

As with the simple mean comparison tests, the regressions indicate that when controlling for other demographic variables there were no significant differences in quality of life domain scores between respondents from central rural/small urban Alberta and either northern or southern rural/small urban Alberta. In contrast, age group, gender, highest education level achieved, marital status, employment status, immigrant status, and household income are statistically significantly associated with domain scores for more than one domain:

- Being aged 50 or 60 and older is associated with a higher domain score in emotional well-being, material well-being, physical well-being[42], rights, and social inclusion (as compared to being aged 18-29).

- Being female is associated with a higher domain score in interpersonal relations, rights, and self-determination.

- Having graduated from college, technical school, or vocational school is associated with a higher domain score in interpersonal relations and material well-being (as compared to having less than a high school education).

- Having graduated from university is associated with a higher domain score in material well-being, physical well-being, self-determination, and social inclusion (as compared to having less than a high school education).

- Being separated or divorced is associated with having a lower domain score in material well-being, physical well-being, and social inclusion (as compared to being single and never married).

[38] Linear regressions were conducted.
[39] Due to small counts, the “one to five years” and “less than one year” categories of respondents’ duration of residency in Canada were collapsed into a single category.
[40] Those responses which were only missing income information were not excluded from the analysis; Instead, a control variable was used in order to control for missing income information.
[41] Further, the regression was conducted so as to be robust to heteroskedasticity.
[42] While this may seem counterintuitive, a result such as this is not surprising in light of some past research which has shown an individual’s experience of well-being in particular dimensions of their life to increase with age (see Fry, C.L. (2000). Culture, Age, and Subjective Well-Being. *Journal of Family Issues*, 21(6), 751-776). This relationship may be at least partly due to changes in the reference points individuals use when forming opinions about their personal outcomes.

- Being unemployed is associated with having a lower domain score in emotional well-being, interpersonal relations, material well-being, personal development, self-determination, and social inclusion (as compared to having a full-time job).

- Having an employment status that is "other"[43] is associated with having a lower domain score in material well-being, personal development, and physical well-being (as compared to having a full-time job).

- Being in Canada for five to 10 years is associated with having a higher domain score in emotional well-being, personal development, and physical well-being (as compared to living in Canada all of one's life).[44]

- Having a household income of $31,000 or more is associated with having a higher domain score in interpersonal relations, material well-being, and rights (as compared to a household income less than $20,000).

- Having a household income of $51,000 or more is associated with having a higher domain score in personal development and social inclusion (as compared to a household income less than $20,000).

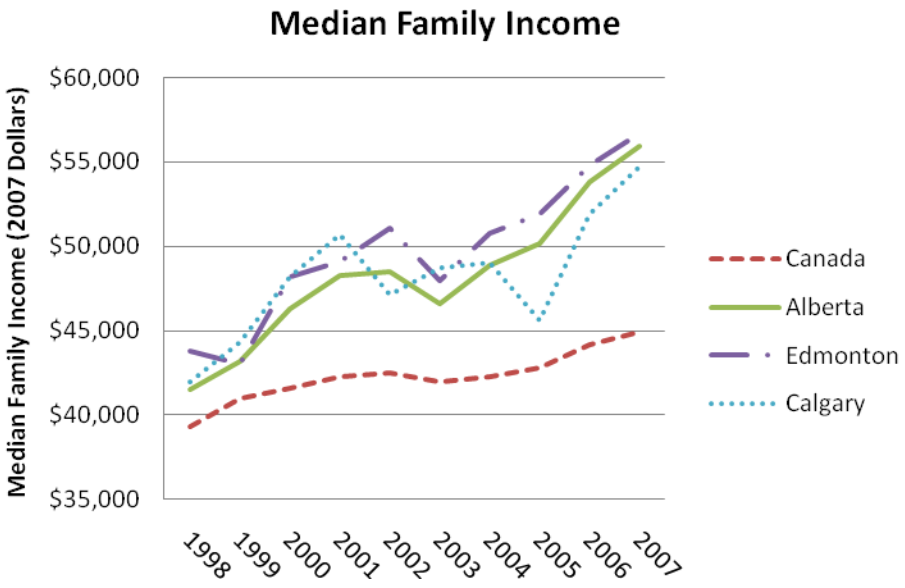
- Having a household income of over $100,000 is associated with having a higher domain score in emotional well-being and self-determination (as compared to a household income less than $20,000).

Other Indicators: Quality of Life

As mentioned above, quality of life is often looked at in terms of standard of living. Figure 18 presents median family[45] income in Canada, Alberta, Edmonton, and Calgary between 1998 and 2007 (controlling for inflation).[46] The graph shows that the median family income in Alberta has been consistently higher than the median family income in Canada over these years, and the gap between median incomes in Alberta and Canada as a whole has been generally increasing.

[43] An employment status classified as "other" would include anything not classified as full-time employed, part-time employed, homemaker, unemployed, retired, and student.
[44] The result that being in Canada for five to 10 years (as opposed to living in Canada all of one's life) is associated with having several higher domain scores could be explained in a number of ways. For example, immigration laws favour greater physical well-being. In addition, close-knit immigrant communities may foster greater emotional well-being.
[45] Families are defined as all family units of one or more persons.
[46] Note that "Calgary" and "Edmonton" here refer to the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) of Calgary and Edmonton.

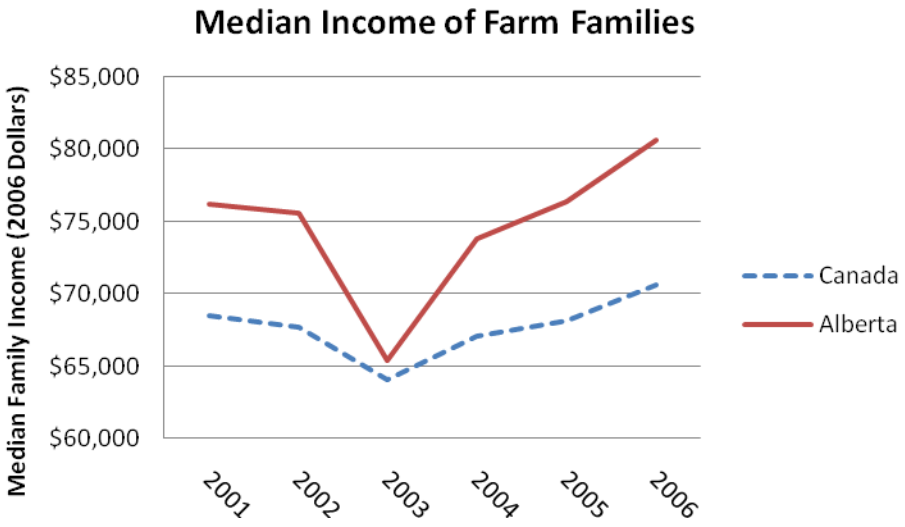
Figure 18. Median total family income, by region



Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 2020410

The median income of farm families in Alberta has been generally increasing as well in recent years, as shown in Figure 19. In fact, the median income of farm families in Alberta was consistently higher and grew at a higher rate than the median income of farm families in Canada between 2003 and 2006.

Figure 19. Median total income of farm families, in Alberta and Canada



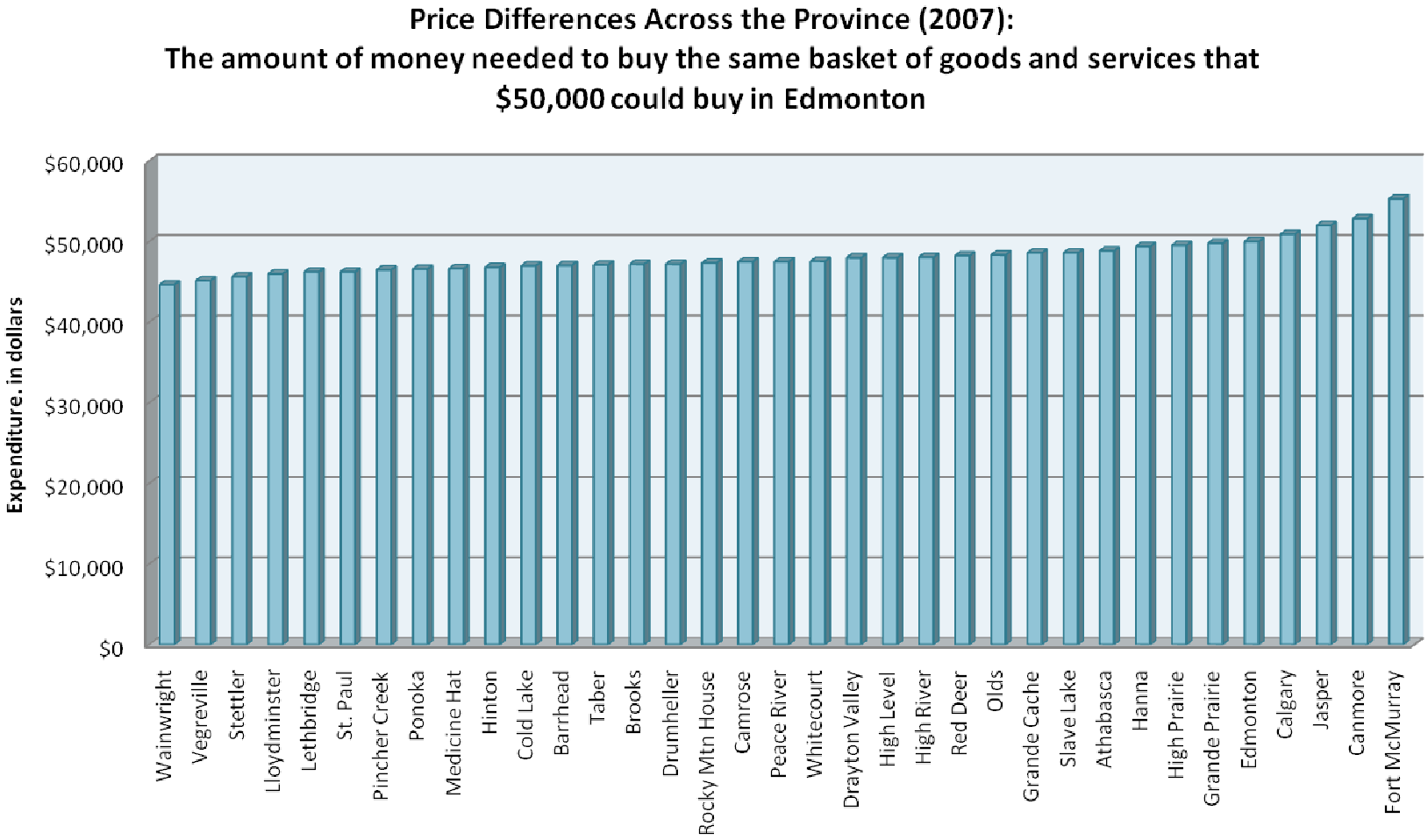
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Tables 20031 and 3260021

One major determinant of the amount of utility an individual is able to obtain from their income is the degree to which the individual is able to turn their income into buying power. Depending on where an individual lives in Alberta, the price of goods and services (and, as such, the ability of an individual to purchase goods and services) varies. The 2007 Alberta Spatial Price Survey provides a means of comparing the price of a typical "basket" of goods and services in different locations around the province.[47] This basket, or weighted average of the prices of different goods and services, is designed to reflect the types of expenditures a typical individual would have in their everyday life.

Using Edmonton as a reference point, the index allows for an exploration of differences in buying power across communities (using prices collected in 2007). Figure 20 presents the amount of money an individual would have to spend to buy the same basket of goods and services that $50,000 could buy in Edmonton (the basket contains the types of goods and services a typical Albertan is perceived to buy). The figure shows that the amount of money required to buy the same basket of goods and services that $50,000 could buy in Edmonton ranges from a low of approximately $45,000 in Wainwright to a high of approximately $55,000 in Fort McMurray. Interestingly, the basket of goods and services is only priced higher than $50,000 in Calgary, Jasper, Canmore, and Fort McMurray.[48]

[47] See Alberta Government, Alberta Finance and Statistics. (2008). 2007 Alberta Spatial Price Survey. Retrieved July 13, 2009, from http://www.albertacanada.com/documents/SP-CS_priceCompSurv2007.pdf.
[48] Of those cities and towns included in the 2007 Alberta Spatial Price Survey.

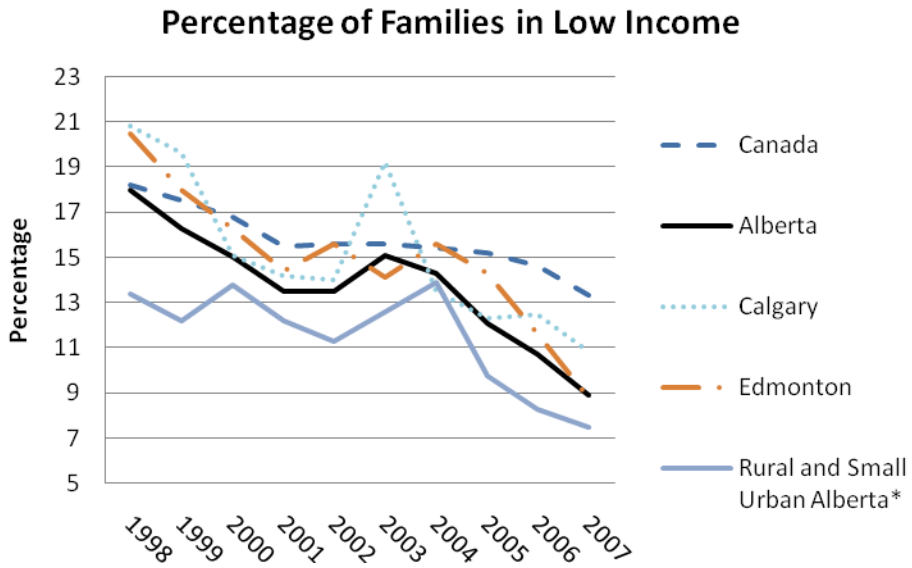
Figure 20. Price differences across the province



Price index source: Alberta Government, Alberta Finance and Statistics. (2008). 2007 Alberta Spatial Price Survey.

If looking at quality of life in terms of income, those who are worst off in a society are those with the lowest incomes. Figure 21 presents the percentage of families[49] who were classified as lying below the low income cut-off[50] as specified by Statistics Canada. Notably, the percentage of rural/small urban Albertan families who are classified as low income generally lies below the percentage of Canadian, Edmontonian and Calgarian families who are considered to be low income.[51]

Figure 21

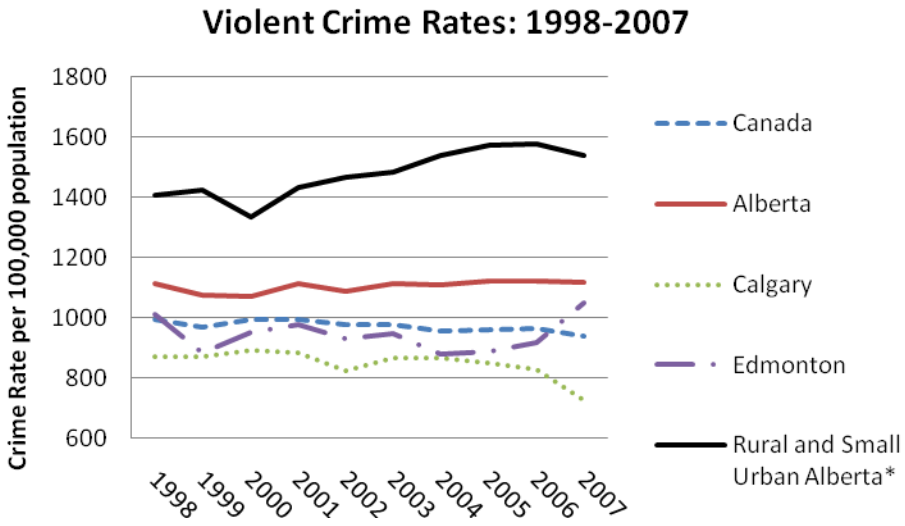


**Statistics for rural and small urban Alberta were derived*
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 2020804

Personal safety is another dimension along which social indicators are used to gauge quality of life. Figures 22 and 23 present a comparison of crime rates between the years of 1998 and 2007 for Canada (overall), Alberta (overall), Calgary, Edmonton, and rural/small urban Alberta.[52] One striking trend is that the violent crime[53] rate in rural/small urban Alberta is consistently higher than violent crime rates in Calgary, Edmonton, and Canada overall. In terms of property crime[54] rates, rural/small urban Alberta seems to have rates akin to Calgary and lower than Edmonton.

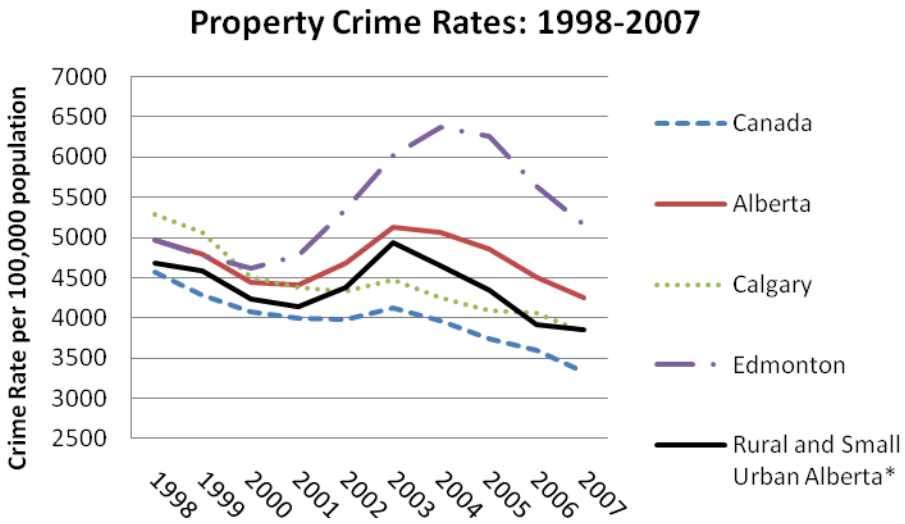
[49] Families are defined as all family units of one or more persons.
[50] Low income cut-offs vary with factors such as community size and number of individuals in a family. Those below the low income cut-off are expected to spend more than 63.6% of their income on basic necessities.
[51] Note that "Calgary" and "Edmonton" here refer to the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) of Calgary and Edmonton, and that "Rural and Small Urban Alberta" refers to the areas outside the CMAs of Calgary and Edmonton.
[52] Note that "Calgary" and "Edmonton" here refer to the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) of Calgary and Edmonton, and that "Rural and Small Urban Alberta" refers to the areas outside the CMAs of Calgary and Edmonton.
[53] Violent crimes include crimes such as homicides and robberies.
[54] Property crimes include crimes such as break-ins and motor vehicle theft.

Figure 22



**Statistics for rural and small urban Alberta were derived*
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 2520013

Figure 23



**Statistics for rural and small urban Alberta were derived*
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 2520013

Summary: Quality of Life

When comparing respondents by rural/urban status overall, it appears that individuals' experience of quality of life is largely similar. In all of the eight quality of life domains, the average scores of rural, small urban, and large urban respondents were not found to be significantly different.

However, a number of significant differences were found when comparing average scores by region. Table 16 summarizes the significant differences that were found between regions in average quality of life domain scores.

Table 16. Significant regional differences in quality of life domain scores

Region	Significant Relationships
Southern Rural Alberta	✓ Respondents in southern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in emotional well-being*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in southern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in interpersonal relations*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in southern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly lower in material well-being*** than residents of Calgary. ✓ Respondents in southern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in physical well-being*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in southern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in rights*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in southern rural/small urban Alberta scored **significantly higher in social inclusion** than residents of Edmonton.
Central Rural Alberta	✓ Respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in emotional well-being*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in interpersonal relations*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in material well-being*** than residents of Edmonton.

	✓ Respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in rights*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in social inclusion*** than residents of Edmonton.
Northern Rural Alberta	✓ Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in emotional well-being*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in interpersonal relations*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in material well-being*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in physical well-being*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta scored ***significantly higher in rights*** than residents of Edmonton.
Edmonton	✓ Respondents in Edmonton scored ***significantly lower in emotional well-being*** than residents of southern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, northern rural/small urban Alberta, and Calgary. ✓ Respondents in Edmonton scored ***significantly lower in interpersonal relations*** than residents of southern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, and northern rural/small urban Alberta. ✓ Respondents in Edmonton scored ***significantly lower in material well-being*** than residents of central rural/small urban Alberta, northern rural/small urban Alberta, and Calgary. ✓ Respondents in Edmonton scored ***significantly lower in personal development*** than residents of Calgary. ✓ Respondents in Edmonton scored ***significantly lower in physical well-being*** than residents of southern rural/small urban Alberta and northern rural/small urban Alberta.

	✓ Respondents in Edmonton scored ***significantly lower in rights*** than residents of southern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, northern rural/small urban Alberta, and Calgary. ✓ Respondents in Edmonton scored ***significantly lower in social inclusion*** than residents of southern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, and Calgary.
Calgary	✓ Respondents in Calgary scored ***significantly higher in emotional well-being*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in Calgary scored ***significantly higher in material well-being*** than residents of southern rural/small urban Alberta and Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in Calgary scored ***significantly higher in personal development*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in Calgary scored ***significantly higher in rights*** than residents of Edmonton. ✓ Respondents in Calgary scored ***significantly higher in social inclusion*** than residents of Edmonton.

Notably, respondents from Edmonton scored significantly lower than one or more other regions in seven of the eight domains, while respondents from Calgary scored significantly higher than one or more other regions in five domains. Apart from the significant differences with Edmonton, southern rural/small urban Alberta exhibited one statistically significant difference in domain score with another region (material well-being, relative to Calgary), and both northern rural/small urban Alberta and central rural/small urban Alberta exhibited zero statistically significant differences in scores with other regions.

This lack of a difference in domain scores across the rural/small urban regions follows through into the regression analysis looking at relationships between quality of life scores of *rural and small urban* respondents and demographic variables: no significant relationships were found between domain scores from respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta and either northern or southern rural/small urban Alberta. The opposite was found in terms of relationships between quality of life domain scores and the other demographic variables.

The regressions identified several statistically significant associations, including:

- Being aged 50 or 60 and older is associated with a higher domain score in emotional well-being, material well-being, physical well-being[55], rights, and social inclusion (as compared to being aged 18-29).

- Being female is associated with a higher domain score in interpersonal relations, rights, and self-determination.

- Having graduated from college, technical school, or vocational school is associated with a higher domain score in interpersonal relations and material well-being (as compared to having less than a high school education).

- Having graduated from university is associated with a higher domain score in material well-being, physical well-being, self-determination, and social inclusion (as compared to having less than a high school education).

- Being separated or divorced is associated with having a lower domain score in material well-being, physical well-being, and social inclusion (as compared to being single and never married).

- Being unemployed is associated with having a lower domain score in emotional well-being, interpersonal relations, material well-being, personal development, self-determination, and social inclusion (as compared to having a full-time job).

- Having an employment status that is "other"[56] is associated with having a lower domain score in material well-being, personal development, and physical well-being (as compared to having a full-time job).

- Being in Canada for five to 10 years is associated with having a higher domain score in emotional well-being, personal development, and physical well-being (as compared to living in Canada all of one's life).[57]

[55] While this may seem counterintuitive, a result such as this is not surprising in light of some past research which has shown an individual's experience of well-being in particular dimensions of their life to increase with age (see Fry, C.L. (2000). Culture, Age, and Subjective Well-Being. *Journal of Family Issues*, 21(6), 751-776). This relationship may be at least partly due to changes in the reference points individuals use when forming opinions about their personal outcomes.

[56] An employment status classified as "other" would include anything not classified as full-time employed, part-time employed, homemaker, unemployed, retired, and student.

[57] The result that being in Canada for five to 10 years (as opposed to living in Canada all of one's life) is associated with having several higher domain scores could be explained in a number of ways. For example, immigration laws favour greater physical well-being. In addition, close-knit immigrant communities may foster greater emotional well-being.

- Having a household income of $31,000 or more is associated with having a higher domain score in interpersonal relations, material well-being, and rights (as compared to a household income less than $20,000).

- Having a household income of $51,000 or more is associated with having a higher domain score in personal development and social inclusion (as compared to a household income less than $20,000).

- Having a household income of over $100,000 is associated with having a higher domain score in emotional well-being and self-determination (as compared to a household income less than $20,000).

Though the association between standard of living measures such as those described above and quality of life may be weak, the measures of standard of living reported above show generally positive upward trends and may have a corresponding positive impact on quality of life. Median family income in Alberta and median family income of farm families in Alberta have shown upward trends in recent years. Further, the percentage of families living in low income in the province has been trending downwards, and the percentage of rural and small urban Albertan families living in low income is comparatively low. There is also evidence that the real value of income in rural Alberta is higher than in urban Alberta: the value of a dollar in many rural areas of the province seems to be greater than in urban centres. Finally, while violent crime rates do not show notable trends (perhaps given that they are relatively low to begin with), property crime rates across the province have been declining in recent years.

Community Capacity

RADF developed a *Framework for Defining Community Capacity Building* which draws on the definition, outcomes, and indicators outlined in a document from The Aspen Institute, titled "Measuring Community Capacity Building".[58] This document provides the foundation for the concept of community capacity used in the baseline population survey and the current report.

The definition of community capacity adopted by RADF is as follows[59]:

> "Community capacity building is the process of increasing the combined influence of a community's commitment, resources and skills that can be deployed to build on community strengths and address community problems and opportunities.
>
> - Commitment: refers to the communitywide will to act, based on a shared awareness of problems, opportunities and workable solutions. It refers also to heightened support in key sectors of the community to address opportunities, solve problems and strengthen community responses.
>
> - Resources: refers to financial, natural and human assets and the means to deploy them intelligently and fairly. It also includes having the information or guidelines that will ensure the best use of these resources.
>
> - Skills: includes all the talents and expertise of individuals and organizations that can be marshaled to address problems, seize opportunities, and to add strength to existing and emerging institutions."
>
> (Introduction, p.1-2)

The Aspen Institute describes eight outcomes associated with community capacity, as outlined below.[60] Note that because the Aspen Institute emphasizes *building* community capacity, their outcome themes reflect *active* improvement.

- ***Outcome 1: Expanding, diverse, inclusive citizen participation***
  - *In a community where capacity is being built, an ever-increasing number of people participate in all types of activities and decisions. These folks include all the different parts of the community and also represent its diversity.*

[58] Rural Alberta's Development Fund. (2008, July). A Framework for Defining Community Capacity Building.
[59] The Aspen Institute. (1996). Measuring Community Capacity Building: A Workbook-in-Progress for Rural Communities, Version 3-96. Rural Economic Policy Program.
[60] Ibid.

- ***Outcome 2: Expanding leadership base***
  - *Community leaders that bring new people into decision-making are building community capacity. But the chance to get skills, to practice and learn leadership are also important parts of the leadership base.*

- ***Outcome 3: Strengthened individual skills***
  - *A community that uses all kinds of resources to create opportunities for individual skill development is building community capacity in an important way. As individuals develop new skills and expertise, the level of volunteer service is raised.*

- ***Outcome 4: Widely shared understanding and vision***
  - *Creating a vision of the best community future is an important part of planning. But in community capacity building, the emphasis is on how widely that vision is shared. Getting to agreement on that vision is a process that builds community capacity.*

- ***Outcome 5: Strategic community agenda***
  - *When clubs and organizations consider changes that might come in the future and plan together, the result is a strategic community agenda. Having a response to the future already thought through communitywide is one way to understand and manage change.*

- ***Outcome 6: Consistent, tangible progress toward goals***
  - *A community with capacity turns plans into results. Whether it's using benchmarks to gauge progress or setting milestones to mark accomplishments, the momentum and bias for action come through as a community gets things done.*

- ***Outcome 7: More effective community organizations and institutions***
  - *All types of civic clubs and traditional institutions— such as churches, schools and newspapers—are the mainstay of community capacity building. If clubs and institutions are run well and efficiently, the community will be stronger.*

- ***Outcome 8: Better resource utilization by the community***
  - *Ideally, the community should select and use resources in the same way a smart consumer will make a purchase. Communities that balance local self-reliance with the use of outside resources can face the future with confidence.*

(Introduction, p.11)

Measuring Community Capacity

The baseline population survey included a tool, the Rural Alberta's Development Fund (RADF) Community Capacity Scale, which was created in order to measure community capacity in rural Alberta. The tool, a set of 15 questions, was specifically designed to reflect RADF priorities and to ensure coverage of each of the eight outcomes laid out by the Aspen Institute.

Each question elicited a response on an 11-point scale (a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 represents low capacity in a particular aspect of community capacity and 10 represents high capacity in a particular dimension). The average response to the questions on the scale gauges an individual's perception of community capacity in his or her community.[61]

Survey Results: Community Capacity

As stated above (see Survey Results: Quality of Life), the quality of a survey instrument is dependent on how closely the items in any one scale measure the same phenomenon. In order to test the degree to which a scale is reliable in terms of measuring a particular phenomenon, Cronbach's Alpha can be calculated. Recall that a higher Cronbach's Alpha statistic (i.e., the closer the statistic is to one) implies that a particular scale exhibits higher reliability. It is commonly accepted that Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency reliability scores of 0.80 and higher can be interpreted as being very good.[62]

The reliability score for the RADF Community Capacity Scale, calculated using the baseline population survey data, is reported in Table 17. The resulting score implies that the Community Capacity Scale has very good reliability: the scale is reliable in terms of its ability to consistently measure the same concept.

Table 17. Reliability score of the RADF Community Capacity Scale

	Reliability Score (Cronbach's Alpha)[63]	Implied Scale Reliability
RADF Community Capacity Scale	0.91	Very Good Reliability

[61] Note that community capacity scores are only calculated for those respondents with complete responses to at least 11 of the 15 items within the Community Capacity Scale. If a respondent provided a non-response to 5 or more items within the scale, a community capacity score for that respondent was not calculated.
[62] See Moss, S., Prosser, H., Costello, H., Simpson, N., Patel, P., Rowe, S., Turner, S., and Hatton, C.(1998). Reliability and validity of the PAS–ADD Checklist for detecting psychiatric disorders in adults with intellectual disability. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 42(2), 173 –183.
[63] Reliability scores were also calculated for each domain for rural and urban subgroups. In all cases, reliability scores were well above the 0.60 "acceptable" cut-off.

The Experience of Community Capacity in Alberta

This section presents the results of the baseline population survey of Albertans which relate to community capacity. Average scores or responses as they pertain to the RADF Community Capacity Scale and stand-alone questions are presented by rural/urban status (rural, small urban, and large urban) and region (northern rural/small urban Alberta, central rural/small urban Alberta, southern rural/small urban Alberta, Edmonton, and Calgary). In order to ensure better representativeness of the Alberta population, average scores were calculated using the weights described in the introduction.

In order to test for statistically significant differences in average scores or responses between groups, statistical tests of differences in means were conducted.[64] In order to ensure better representativeness of the Alberta population, these tests were applied using the sampling weights described above. Where statistically significant differences[65] in average scores or responses were found, these differences are noted after the presentation of the results themselves.

Four questions presented near the end of this section required "yes" or "no" answers. Because the nature of these questions required a particular testing strategy, the statistical testing performed on these data consisted of chi-square tests. This methodology is described in more detail in Appendix C.

The RADF Community Capacity Scale

As mentioned above, the RADF Community Capacity Scale was designed to cover the eight outcomes identified by the Aspen Institute:

1. Diverse, inclusive citizen participation
2. Expansive leadership base
3. Strong individual skills
4. Widely shared understanding and vision
5. Strategic community agenda
6. Consistent, tangible progress toward goals
7. Effective community organizations and institutions
8. Effective resource utilization by the community

Average scores on the RADF Community Capacity Scale (by rural/urban status and by region) are reported in Figures 24 and 25 below. The region with the lowest community capacity score was northern rural/small urban Alberta (6.29), while the region with the highest community capacity score was Edmonton (6.74).

[64] In particular, the survey analysis equivalent of a t-test was used to test for statistically significant differences in means.
[65] At the $p \leq 0.05$ level.

Figure 24

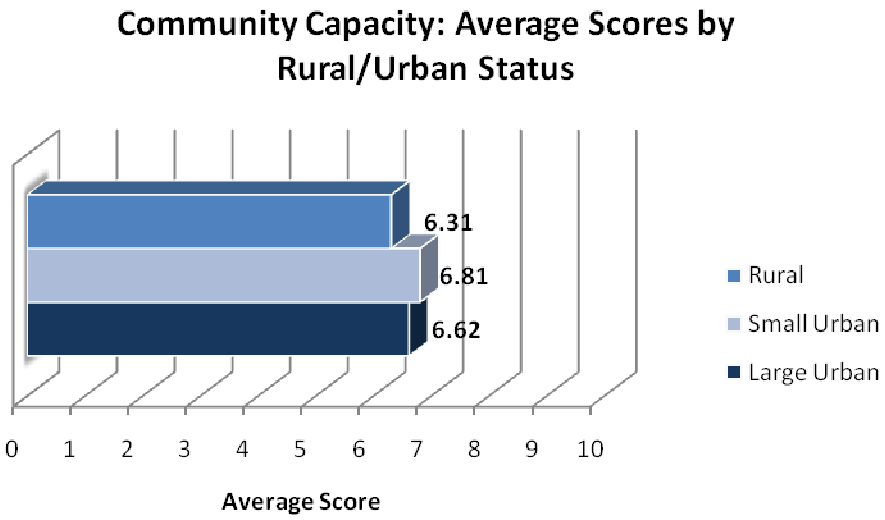
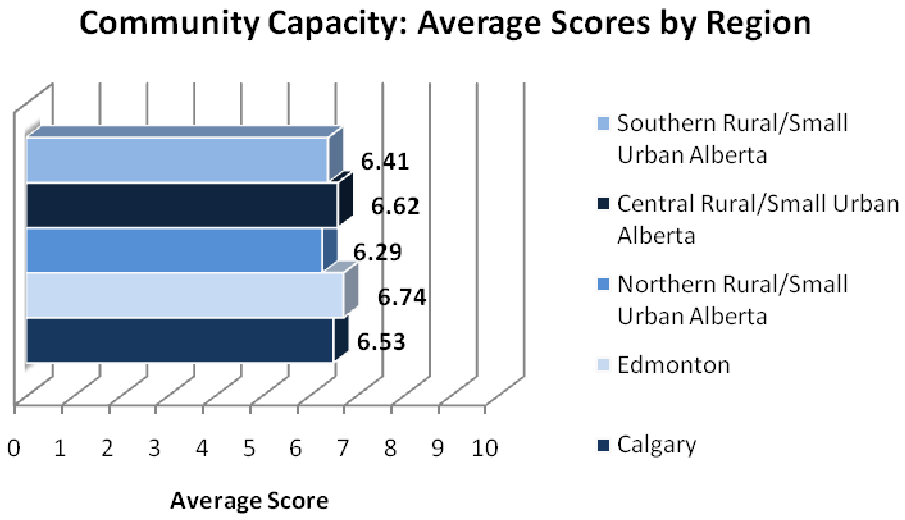


Figure 25



Statistical testing uncovered the following relationships:

- Rural Alberta scored significantly lower in community capacity than small urban Alberta and large urban Alberta.
- Northern rural/small urban Alberta and southern rural/small urban Alberta scored significantly lower in community capacity than Edmonton.
- Central rural/small urban Alberta scored significantly higher in community capacity than northern rural/small urban Alberta.

Community Attractiveness

In addition to collecting information on community capacity through the RADF Community Capacity Scale, information was collected on respondents' perceptions of the attractiveness of their communities (in terms of being a place to live, a place to work, and a place to visit).

Each question regarding perception of attractiveness elicited a response on an 11-point scale (a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 represents low attractiveness in a particular dimension and 10 represents high attractiveness).

Average perceptions of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to live (by rural/urban status and by region) are presented in Figures 26 and 27. Perceptions of the attractiveness of home communities as places to live vary relatively widely between regions: perceived attractiveness ranges from a low average score of 7.17 (northern rural/small urban Alberta) to a high average score of 7.99 (central rural/small urban Alberta).

Figure 26. Average perception of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to live, by rural/urban status

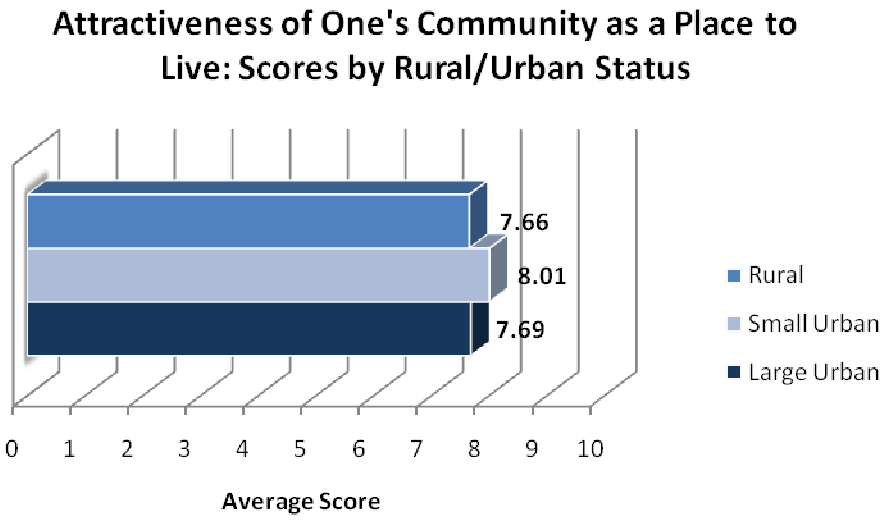
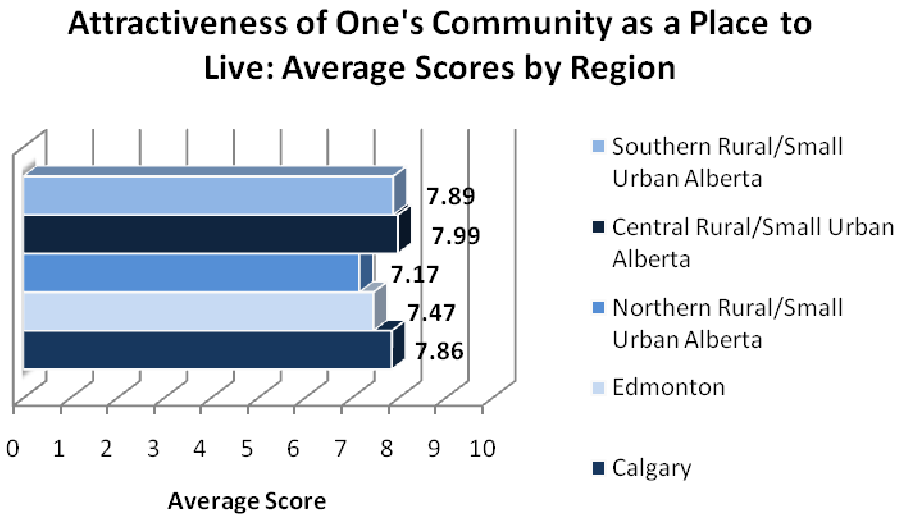


Figure 27. Average perception of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to live, by region



Tests of the differences in perceived attractiveness of one's community as a place to live identified the following significant differences:

- Respondents in small urban Alberta rated their communities as significantly more attractive as places to live than respondents in rural or large urban Alberta rated their communities.

- Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities as significantly less attractive as places to live than respondents in Calgary rated their communities.

- Respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta and southern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities as significantly more attractive as places to live than respondents in Edmonton or northern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities.

Average perceptions of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to work (by rural/urban status and by region) are presented in Figures 28 and 29. Across regions, there is little variation in the perceptions of the attractiveness of home communities as places to work: scores range from 6.73 (central rural/small urban Alberta) to 7.03 (Calgary).

Figure 28. Average perception of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to work, by rural/urban status

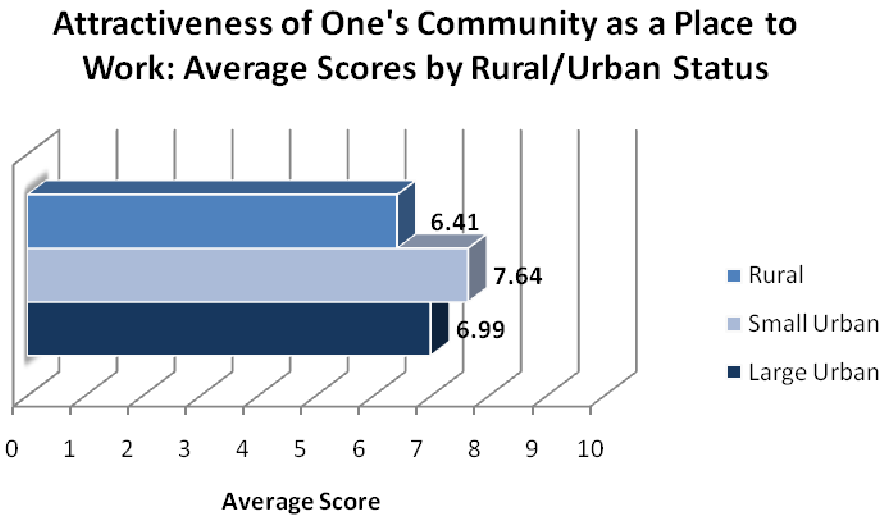
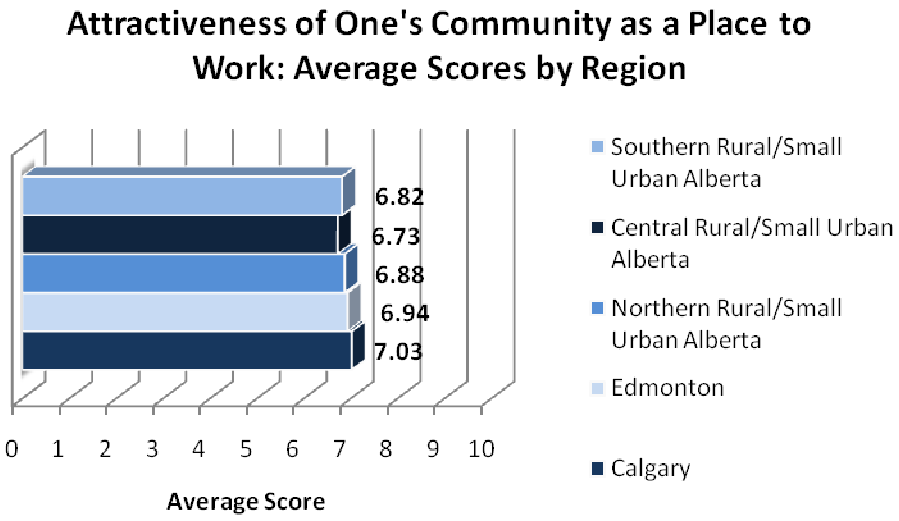


Figure 29. Average perception of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to work, by region



Statistical testing showed the following significant differences between groups in the perceptions of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to work:

- Respondents in small urban Alberta rated their communities as significantly more attractive as places to work than respondents in rural or large urban Alberta rated their communities.

- Respondents in rural Alberta rated their communities as significantly less attractive as places to work than respondents in large urban Alberta rated their communities.

Average perceptions of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to live (by rural/urban status and by region) are presented in Figures 30 and 31. Among respondents in the five regions, northern rural/small urban Albertans provided their home communities with the lowest average rating in terms of being attractive places to visit (6.66) and Calgarians provided their home communities with the highest average score (7.56).

Figure 30. Average perception of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to visit, by rural/urban status

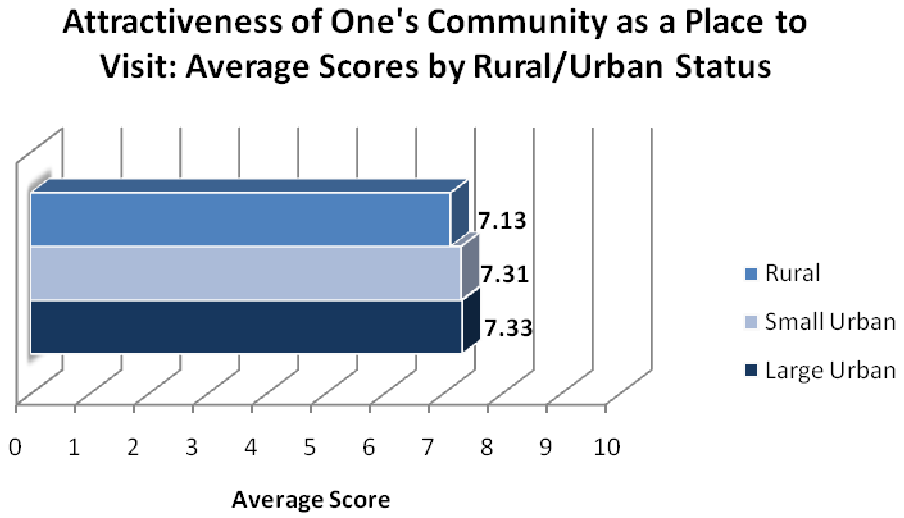
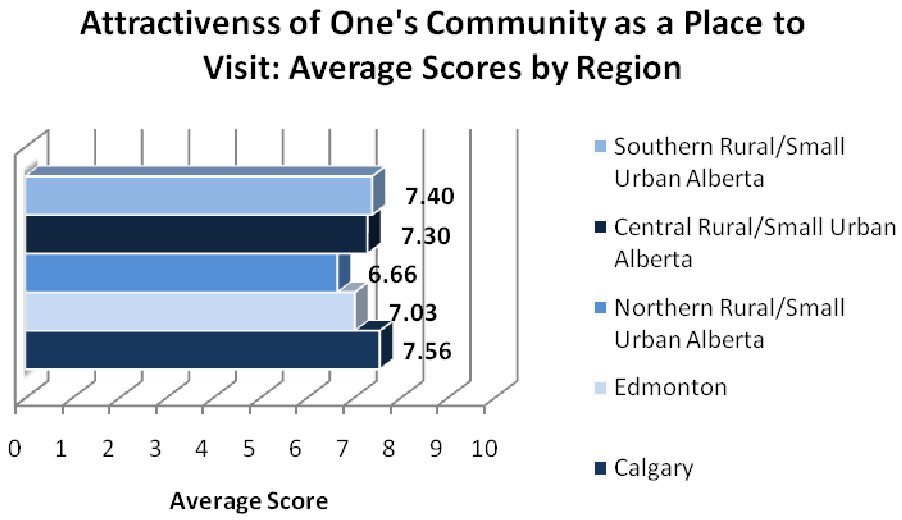


Figure 31. Average perception of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to visit, by region



Statistical tests of the differences between groups regarding the perception of the attractiveness of one's community as a place to visit showed the following relationships:

- Respondents in Calgary rated their communities' attractiveness as a place to visit significantly higher than respondents in Edmonton or northern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities.

- Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities' attractiveness as places to visit significantly lower than respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta or southern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities.

Community Participation

Another portion of the survey aimed at uncovering information relating to community participation (an important aspect of community capacity), and consisted of four questions. Each of these four questions required a "yes" or "no" response:

- In the past 12 months I have volunteered my time to a local community activity.
- In the past 12 months I have helped out a neighbor.
- I voted in the last municipal election.
- In the past 30 days I have participated in a community event or activity.

The responses to each question are presented in detail in the Appendix, along with the results of chi-square tests for systematic differences between groups (Tables 18 through 25, Appendix C).[66,67] All percentages presented below are weighted for better representation of the Alberta population, and all statistical tests were conducted using the weights described in the introduction.

For three of the above four community participation questions, a significant difference was found between groups in the pattern of response from rural, small urban, and large urban respondents:

- Rural respondents were more likely than small urban or large urban respondents to respond "yes" to the statement "In the past 12 months I have volunteered my time to a local community activity" (67%, compared to 54-59%).

- Rural and small urban respondents were more likely than large urban respondents to respond "yes" to the statement "In the past 12 months I have helped out a neighbor" (94-95%, compared to 91%).

[66] Statistical significance was considered at the $p \leq 0.05$ level.
[67] The chi square test is able to identify significant differences in responses between groups but does not allow us to pinpoint the source of the statistical difference between groups. However, it is often the case that looking at the data itself provides a clue as to where the systematic difference may lie. As such, throughout this section we will discuss the presence of statistically significant differences in responses between groups in conjunction with a discussion of differences in patterns of response between groups.

- Rural respondents were more likely than small urban or large urban respondents to respond "yes" to the statement "In the past 30 days I have participated in a community event or activity" (57%, compared to 43-47%).

A significant difference was also found for three of the four community participation questions between responses from the different regions of the province:

- In terms of the statement "In the past 12 months I have volunteered my time to a local community activity", those in northern, central and southern rural/small urban Alberta had a greater propensity to respond "yes" than respondents from Calgary or Edmonton (63-66%, compared to 52-56%).

- Regarding the statement "I voted in the last municipal government election", those in northern rural/small urban Alberta in particular were less likely to have responded "yes" (65%, compared to 75-78% in the other regions).

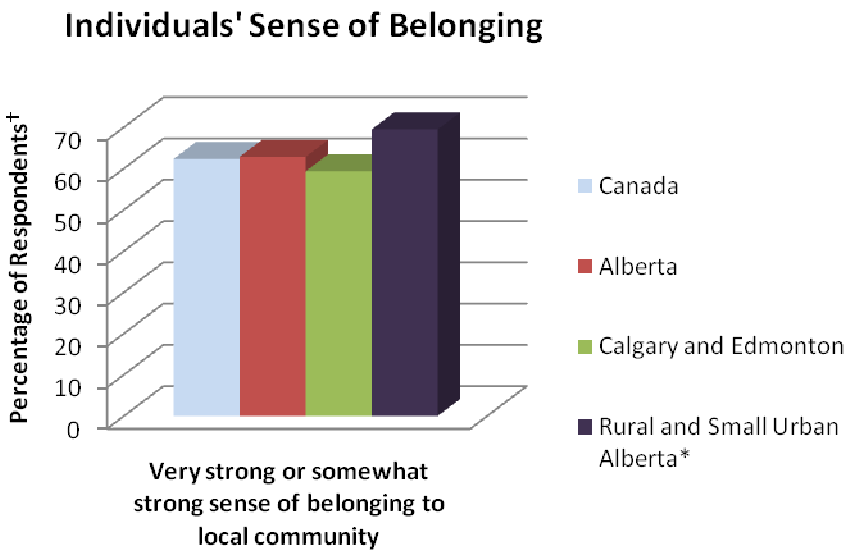
- In response to the statement "In the past 30 days I have participated in a community event or activity", those in northern, central and southern rural/small urban Alberta were more likely to respond "yes" than respondents from Calgary or Edmonton (52-56%, versus 41-47%).

Other Indicators: Community Capacity

Figure 32 presents another indicator that may provide information on one aspect of community capacity: the percentage of respondents 12 years and older who self-reported to have a very strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging to their local community. Compared to Canada overall and large urban areas of Alberta, rural and small urban Alberta had the highest percentage of individuals who reported feeling a very strong or somewhat strong sense belonging.[68]

[68] Note that "Calgary and Edmonton" here refers to the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) of Calgary and Edmonton, and that "Rural and Small Urban Alberta" refers to the areas outside the CMAs of Calgary and Edmonton.

Figure 32. Individuals' sense of belonging from the 2005 Canadian Community Health Survey



† Percentage of respondents 12 years of age or older
**Data for rural and small urban Alberta were derived*
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 1050492

Summary: Community Capacity

Results from the RADF Community Capacity Scale show that that community capacity in rural Alberta is significantly lower than community capacity in small urban or large urban Alberta. In terms of community capacity in the different regions of the province, northern rural/small urban Alberta scored the lowest (6.29), followed by southern rural/small urban Alberta (6.41), Calgary (6.53), central rural/small urban Alberta (6.62), and Edmonton (6.74). Northern and southern rural/small urban Alberta scored significantly lower in community capacity than Edmonton, and central rural/small urban Alberta scored significantly higher in community capacity than northern rural/small urban Alberta.

Significant differences were also found between respondents' ratings of their communities' attractiveness as places to live, work and visit. Respondents from small urban Alberta rated their communities as being significantly more attractive as places to live and work than respondents in rural or large urban Alberta rated their communities. Further, rural respondents rated their communities as being significantly less attractive as places to work than respondents in large urban Alberta rated their communities. In terms of regions, Table 26 summarizes which regions of Alberta received the highest and lowest scores from respondents' ratings of their communities' attractiveness. Northern rural/small urban Alberta scored the lowest in two dimensions – the attractiveness of one's community as a place to live and visit, and Calgary scored the highest in two dimensions – the attractiveness of one's community as a place to work and visit.

Table 26. Summary of respondents' ratings of their communities' attractiveness

Dimension	Lowest rating	Highest Rating
The attractiveness of one's community as a **place to live**	Northern Rural/Small Urban Alberta	Central Rural/Small Urban Alberta
The attractiveness of one's community as a **place to work**	Central Rural/Small Urban Alberta	Calgary
The attractiveness of one's community as a **place to visit**	Northern Rural/Small Urban Alberta	Calgary

While no significant differences were found across regions in terms of respondents' ratings of their communities' attractiveness as places to work, significant differences were found between respondents' ratings of their communities' attractiveness as places to live and visit. These significant differences in perceived attractiveness are summarized in Table 27.

Table 27. Significant regional differences in the perceived attractiveness of communities

Region	Significant Relationships
Southern Rural Alberta	✓ Respondents in southern rural/small urban Alberta rated their home communities as ***significantly more attractive as places to live*** than respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta and Edmonton rated their communities. ✓ Respondents in southern rural/small urban Alberta rated their home communities as ***significantly more attractive as places to visit*** than respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities.
Central Rural Alberta	✓ Respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta rated their home communities as ***significantly more attractive as places to live*** than respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta and Edmonton rated their communities. ✓ Respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta rated their home communities as ***significantly more attractive as places to visit*** than respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities.

Region	Significant Relationships
Northern Rural Alberta	✓ Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta rated their home communities as ***significantly less attractive as places to live*** than respondents in Calgary, central rural/small urban Alberta, and southern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities. ✓ Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta rated their home communities as ***significantly less attractive as places to visit*** than respondents in Calgary, central rural/small urban Alberta, and southern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities.
Edmonton	✓ Respondents in Edmonton rated their home communities as ***significantly less attractive as places to live*** than respondents in central rural/small urban Alberta and southern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities. ✓ Respondents in Edmonton rated their home communities as ***significantly less attractive as places to visit*** than respondents in Calgary rated their communities.
Calgary	✓ Respondents in Calgary rated their home communities as ***significantly more attractive as places to live*** than respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta rated their communities. ✓ Respondents in Calgary rated their home communities as ***significantly more attractive as places to visit*** than respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta and Edmonton rated their communities.

Community participation is an important contributor to community capacity. The survey questions probing community participation identified areas where a significant difference was found between groups in the pattern of response from rural, small urban, and large urban respondents:

- Rural respondents were more likely than small urban or large urban respondents to respond “yes” to the statement “In the past 12 months I have volunteered my time to a local community activity” (67%, compared to 54-59%).

- Rural and small urban respondents were more likely than large urban respondents to respond “yes” to the statement “In the past 12 months I have helped out a neighbor” (94-95%, compared to 91%).

- Rural respondents were more likely than small urban or large urban respondents to respond “yes” to the statement “In the past 30 days I have participated in a community event or activity” (57%, compared to 43-47%).

Other research has also identified stronger community ties in rural and small urban Alberta (as compared to urban areas of the province): The 2005 Canadian Community Health Survey found that respondents in rural and small urban Alberta were more likely to report a very strong or somewhat strong sense belonging to local community than respondents in Calgary and Edmonton, or Canada as a whole.

RURAL HEALTH DELIVERY

In the long term, access to primary health care (including non-traditional medical services, promotion of healthier life styles, and education interventions) is expected to lead to a healthier population and a more efficient health system. An accessible health system makes health services available to all who need them without barriers or long delays. The effects of various obstacles to effective health services (e.g., language, culture, distance, lack of common standards, regional boundaries, etc.) are minimized.

According to Alberta's Rural Development Strategy, the major concern in rural Alberta is *timely access* to health services.[69] The factors that affect timely access to quality health services in rural Alberta include the ability to attract and retain health providers and the manner in which health care is delivered (e.g., some communities are making use of technology to improve access to services).

Improving rural health delivery may be especially important in light of the health needs of those in rural areas: There is a variety of Canadian evidence that shows health status in rural and remote areas to be worse than in urban areas.[70] For example, rural residents such as farmers and miners have higher rates of particular cancers, Aboriginals have higher rates of diabetes and infectious diseases, and the rural population overall has higher rates of chronic illness.

Measuring the Perception of Access to Quality Health Care

In an effort to uncover information about health delivery across Alberta, the current population survey collected information about the perception of access to quality health services. In particular, respondents were asked to rank their satisfaction with their access to quality health services in their community. This question required a response on an 11-point scale (a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 represents being "not at all satisfied" and 10 represents being "very satisfied").

The following section presents average responses to the above question (weighted to ensure representativeness of the Alberta population) and the results of statistical tests of differences between average scores (conducted using the aforementioned weights).[71]

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[69] Government of Alberta. (2005, February). A Place to Grow: Alberta's Rural Development Strategy. Retrieved March 10, 2009, from http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/csi12104/$FILE/grow-feb2005.pdf.
[70] Pong, R.W. (2000). Rural Health Research in Canada: At the Crossroads. *Australian Journal of Rural Health*, 8, 261-265.
[71] Statistical significance was considered at the $p \leq 0.05$ level.

Survey Results: Rural Health Delivery

Average satisfaction with access to quality health services in one's community (by rural/urban status and by region) is presented in Figures 33 and 34. Across regions, the respondents who were, on average, least satisfied with access to quality health care in their communities were from northern rural/small urban Alberta (an average satisfaction rating of 6.47), while the respondents who were most satisfied were from Edmonton (an average satisfaction rating of 7.38).

Figure 33. Average satisfaction with the availability of quality health services in one's community, by rural/urban status

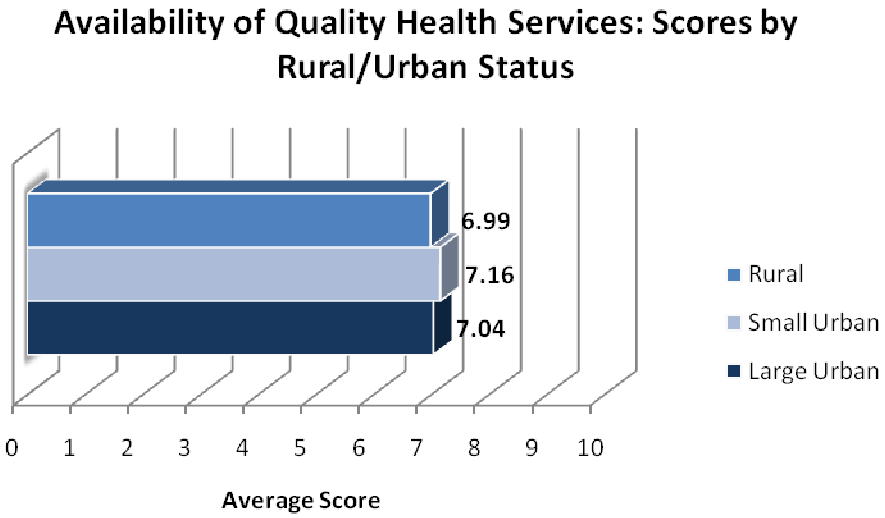
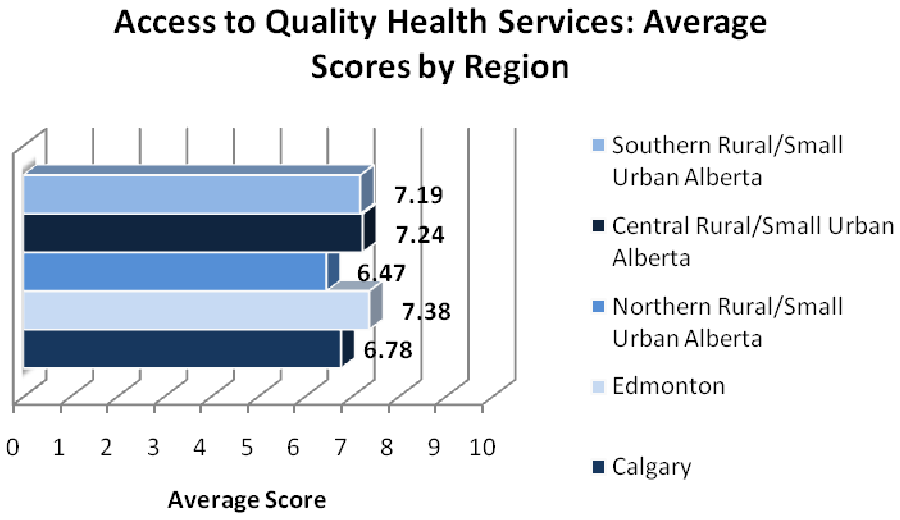


Figure 34. Average satisfaction with the availability of quality health services in one's community, by region



Significant differences found between groups in the responses to the above question were as follows:

- Respondents in Calgary reported significantly less satisfaction with access to quality health services than respondents in Edmonton or central rural/small urban Alberta.

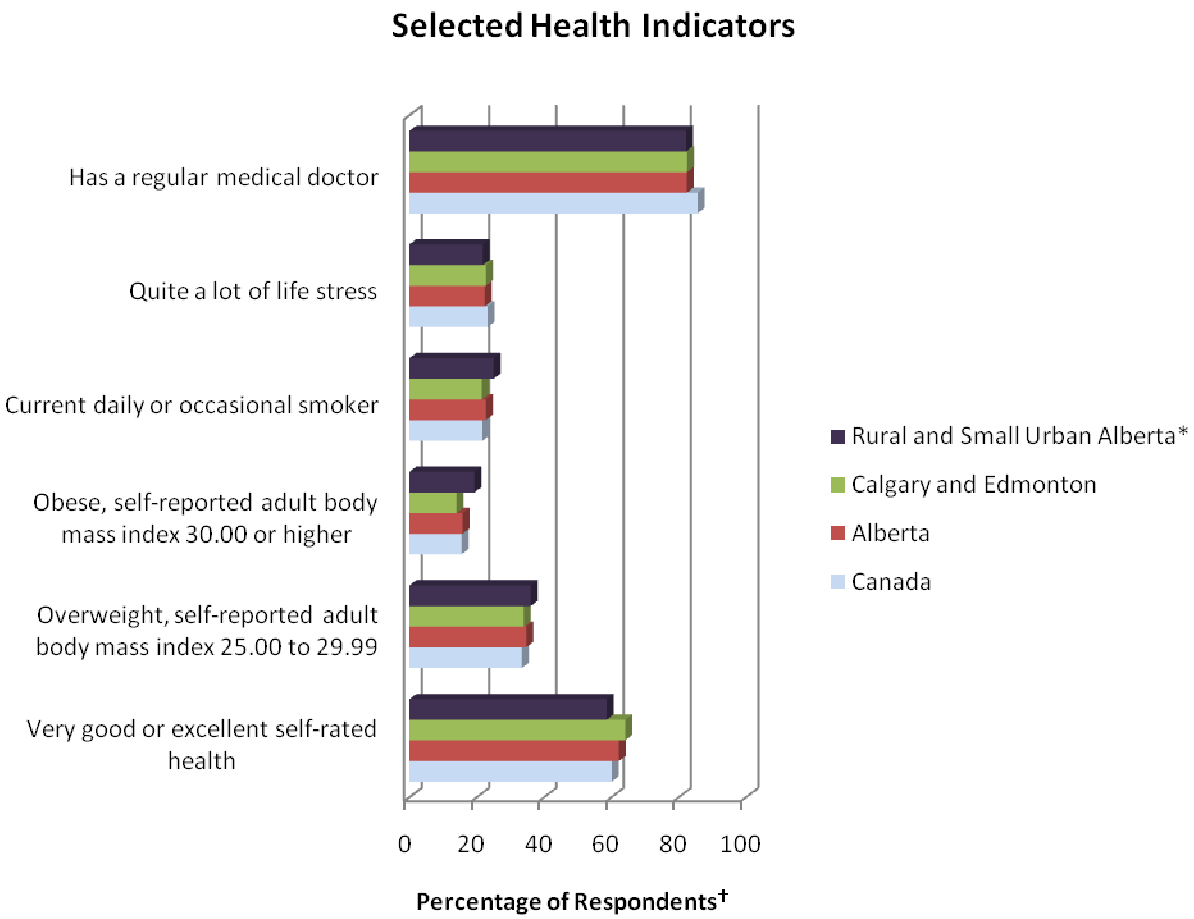
- Respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta reported significantly less satisfaction with access to quality health services than respondents in Edmonton, central rural/small urban Alberta, and southern rural/small urban Alberta.

Other Indicators: Health in Alberta

Figure 35 presents information about different aspects of health in Alberta and Canada which was collected through the 2005 Canadian Community Health Survey. The data show that respondents from areas of the province outside of Calgary and Edmonton were more likely to report being a daily or occasional smoker and a body mass index classified as obese or overweight than respondents from Calgary and Edmonton.[72] Further, respondents from areas of the province outside of Calgary and Edmonton were less likely to self-report very good or excellent health than respondents from Calgary and Edmonton.

[72] Note that "Calgary and Edmonton" here refers to the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) of Calgary and Edmonton, and that "Rural and Small Urban Alberta" refers to the areas outside the CMAs of Calgary and Edmonton.

Figure 35. Health indicators from the 2005 Canadian Community Health Survey



**Data for rural and small urban Alberta were derived*
†All questions were asked of individuals 12 years of age or older, with the exception of the questions pertaining to body mass and stress (which were asked of individuals 18 years of age or older)
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 1050492

Summary: Rural Health Delivery

Data from the 2005 Canadian Community Health Survey align with previous Canadian evidence that health status in rural areas is generally poorer than health status in urban areas. In particular, a higher percentage of respondents in rural and small urban Alberta report being a daily or occasional smoker, overweight, or obese than respondents in Calgary and Edmonton. Further, a lower percentage of respondents in rural and small urban Alberta report being in very good or excellent health than respondents in Calgary and Edmonton.

Given a greater incidence of risk factors and poorer reported health, rural and small urban residents' access to health services is especially vital to their well-being. According to the current survey, respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta may be facing the greatest challenges in this respect: respondents in northern rural/small urban Alberta report significantly lower levels of satisfaction with the availability of quality health services in their communities (as compared to respondents in Edmonton, central rural/small urban Alberta, and southern rural/small urban Alberta). Conversely, residents of central rural/small urban Alberta seem to be faring particularly well, even as compared to urban areas: reported satisfaction with access to quality health services in this region is significantly higher than reported satisfaction in Calgary.

LEARNING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Research from the Canadian Council on Learning shows that higher education and training are strongly linked to safe communities, a healthy population, and a sustainable environment.[73] Another benefit of an educated population is a greater respect for diversity, resulting in stronger social cohesion.

According to Alberta's Rural Development Strategy, "more needs to be done to encourage young people from rural Alberta to go to college, to technical institutes, to university, or to enter an apprenticeship" (p.17).[74] Around the world, there is a recognition that education is the cornerstone of higher standards of living and quality of life.[75] In Alberta, education is especially relevant: A large proportion of the province's economy is knowledge-based,[76,77] requiring people with knowledge and skills to drive economic development. Even aside from knowledge-intensive sectors (e.g., primary industries), cutting-edge, relevant skills make a significant contribution to remaining competitive.

[73] Canadian Council on Learning. (2006). Canadian Post-Secondary Education: A Positive Record – An Uncertain Future. Report on Learning in Canada 06. Ottawa, Canada.
[74] Government of Alberta. (2005, February). A Place to Grow: Alberta's Rural Development Strategy.
[75] See, for example, Prosperity for All in the Global Economy: Final Report. (December 2006). Leitch Review of Skills, Norwich: The Stationary Office.
[76] Reitz, J.G. (2005). Tapping Immigrants' Skills: New Directions for Canadian Immigration Policy. *Law and Business Review of the Americas*, 11, 409-432.
[77] Dupuis, D., Macaluso, J., and Smith, K. (1999). Canada's Regions and the Knowledge-Based Economy. Industry Canada.

In order to ensure that rural post-secondary institutions are better able to provide relevant, high quality education and training opportunities and rural residents are better able to take up these opportunities, the Alberta Government has been focused on a number of areas which are thought to be particular barriers to success in these areas. In particular, the 2005 report, "Advanced Education in Rural Alberta: Challenges and Opportunities" outlines strategies in the 2005-08 Business Plan for Alberta Advanced Education related to improving educational opportunities in rural Alberta and their uptake.[78] Strategies include increasing awareness of educational opportunities and planning, fostering partnerships between institutions, increasing access to financial assistance, and promoting alternative delivery of programming.

Measuring the Perception of Access to Valuable Learning Opportunities

Information about the perception of access to valuable learning opportunities in Alberta was gathered through the current population survey. Respondents were asked:

- On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is "not at all satisfied" and 10 is "very satisfied", how satisfied are you with the availability of education and training opportunities in your community which provide you with the skills you need to compete and succeed?

The following section presents average responses to the above question (weighted to ensure representativeness of the Alberta population) and the results of statistical tests of differences between average scores (also conducted using these weights).[79]

Survey Results: Learning and Skill Development

Average satisfaction with availability of education and training opportunities in one's community (by rural/urban status and by region) is presented in Figures 36 and 37. Across regions, average satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities ranges from a low of 6.75 amongst respondents from southern rural/small urban Alberta to a high of 7.46 amongst respondents from Calgary.

[78] Alberta Advanced Education. (2005).Advanced Education in Alberta: Challenges and Opportunities. *A Learning Alberta.* Edmonton: Alberta Advanced Education.
[79] Statistical significance was considered at the $p \leq 0.05$ level.

Figure 36. Average satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities in one's community, by rural/urban status

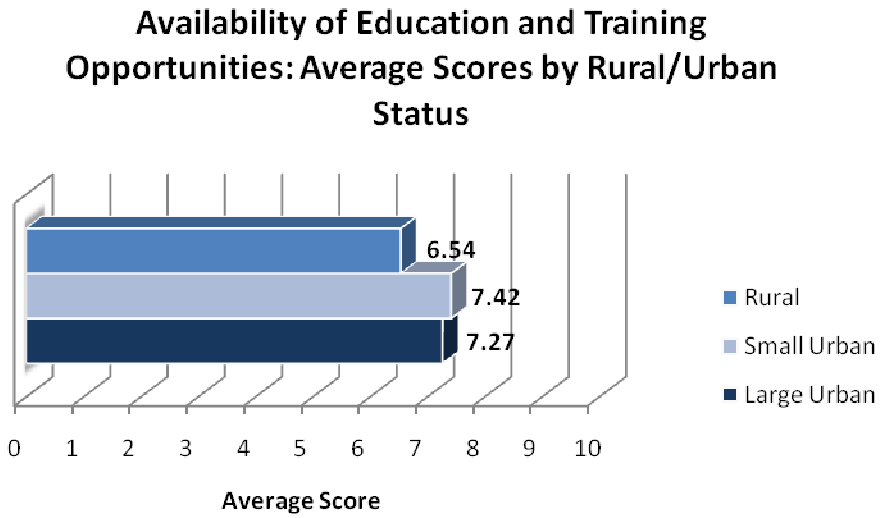
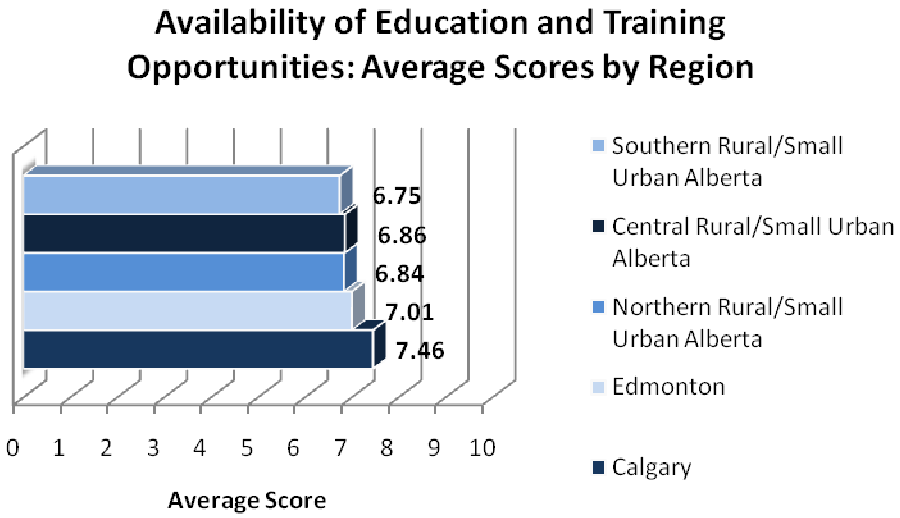


Figure 37. Average satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities in one's community, by region



An analysis of responses to the above question showed the following significant differences between groups:

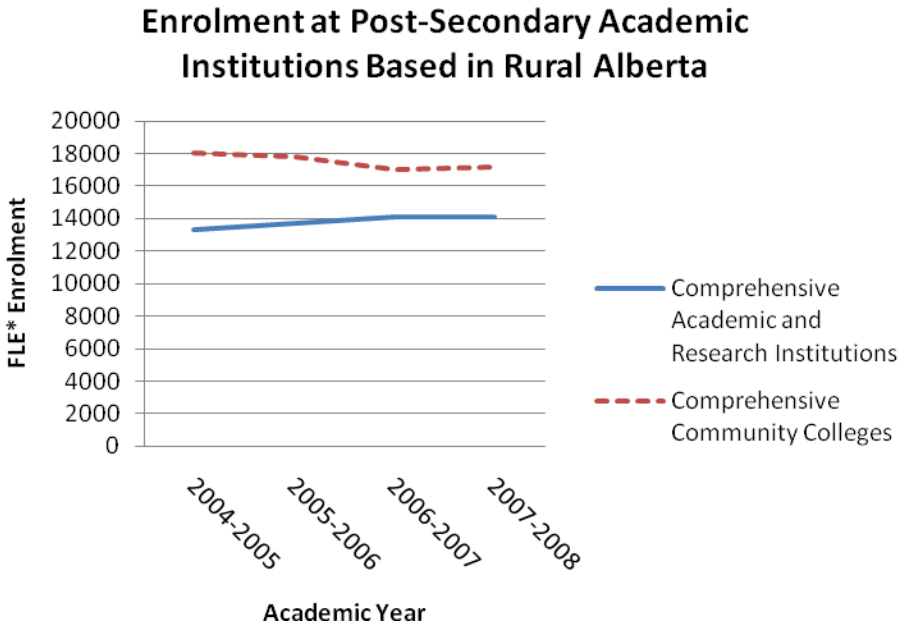
- Respondents in rural Alberta reported significantly less satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities than respondents in small urban or large urban Alberta.

- Respondents in southern, central, and northern rural/small urban Alberta reported significantly less satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities than respondents in Calgary.

Other Indicators: Education in Rural and Small Urban Alberta

Figure 38 presents an indicator of the *use* of educational opportunities offered in rural and small urban Alberta: full course load equivalent enrolment at post-secondary academic institutions based in rural and small urban Alberta. Note that between the 2004-2005 school year and the 2007-2008 school year, there has been a slight increase in enrolment at comprehensive academic and research institutions (the University of Lethbridge and Athabasca University being the only comprehensive academic and research institutions based in rural and small urban Alberta) and a slight decrease in enrolment at comprehensive community colleges throughout the province.

Figure 38. Enrolment at post-secondary institutions in rural Alberta



**FLE: full-load equivalent*
Source: Government of Alberta, Advanced Education and Technology. FLE Enrolment by Institution and Sector for 2004-05 Forward. Retrieved July 13, 2009, from http://www.advancededucation.gov.ab.ca/media/204716/fle%20enrolment%20by%20sector%20and%20institution.pdf

Summary: Learning and Skill Development

The ability of a region's economy to remain competitive or capitalize on new opportunities is largely dependent on the workforce's ability to access relevant, high-quality education and training opportunities. The baseline population survey shows that rural regions in Alberta may be at a disadvantage in this respect. Respondents in rural Alberta reported significantly less satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities than respondents in small urban or large urban Alberta. Further, respondents in southern, central, and northern rural/small urban Alberta reported significantly lower levels of satisfaction with the availability of education and training opportunities in their communities than residents of Calgary (but not Edmonton).

In recent years, enrolment at rural/small urban-Alberta-based academic institutions has changed little, with slight declines in enrolment at comprehensive community colleges and slight increases in enrolment at comprehensive academic and research institutions. The lack of significant growth in enrolment may partly be due to a decline in the population of Albertans aged 18-24.[80]

[80] Alberta Advanced Education. (2005). Advanced Education in Alberta: Challenges and Opportunities. *A Learning Alberta.* Edmonton: Alberta Advanced Education.

Appendices

Appendix A: Detailed Demographic Information

The tables below present the breakdown of respondents by region, age, gender, the presence of dependents, educational background, marital status, employment status, residency status, and household income.

In this section, the number of respondents in each category is an unweighted number, and the percentages presented are weighted percentages.[81,82] Except where otherwise stated, the percentages shown reflect the percentage of respondents that fall into a particular demographic category.

Region

Table 1. Breakdown of survey completions by region

Survey Completions by Region				
Calgary	Edmonton	Northern rural/small urban	Central rural/small urban	Southern rural/small urban
n	n	n	n	n
200	200	400	400	400

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by region

Distribution of respondents by region					
Rural					
Southern Alberta		Central Alberta		Northern Alberta	
n	%	n	%	n	%
256	35%	254	41%	310	24%
Small Urban					
Southern Alberta		Central Alberta		Northern Alberta	
n	%	n	%	n	%
144	34%	146	46%	90	20%
Large Urban					
Calgary			Edmonton		
n	%		n	%	
200	57%		200	43%	

[81] Unweighted numbers (n's) are reported along with weighted percentages in order to provide an accurate picture of the sample (unweighted n's) as well as a better representation of the Alberta population (weighted percentages). This approach is widely used in academic literature.
[82] Note that some percentages do not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Age and Gender

Table 3. Distribution of respondents by gender

Distribution of respondents by gender			
Rural			
Male		***Female***	
n	%	n	%
396	53%	424	47%
Small Urban			
Male		***Female***	
n	%	n	%
193	50%	187	50%
Large Urban			
Male		***Female***	
n	%	n	%
195	49%	205	51%

Table 4. Distribution of respondents by age

Distribution of respondents by age											
Rural											
18-29		**30-39**		**40-49**		**50-59**		**60-64**		**65+**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
144	23%	155	19%	168	22%	173	17%	71	6%	109	14%
Small Urban											
18-29		**30-39**		**40-49**		**50-59**		**60-64**		**65+**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
83	25%	85	19%	78	22%	67	17%	31	5%	36	13%
Large Urban											
18-29		**30-39**		**40-49**		**50-59**		**60-64**		**65+**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
73	25%	85	20%	79	21%	80	16%	36	5%	47	13%

Table 5. Distribution of respondents by age and gender

	Distribution of respondents by age and gender											
	Rural											
	18-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		60-64		65+	
	n	%[83]	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	69	56%	69	54%	84	53%	84	52%	36	51%	54	48%
Female	75	44%	86	46%	84	47%	89	48%	35	49%	55	52%
	Small Urban											
	18-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		60-64		65+	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	39	51%	46	51%	38	50%	36	51%	15	51%	19	43%
Female	44	49%	39	49%	40	50%	31	49%	16	50%	17	57%
	Large Urban											
	18-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		60-64		65+	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	32	50%	43	51%	39	50%	40	50%	18	49%	23	43%
Female	41	50%	42	49%	40	50%	40	50%	18	51%	24	57%

Presence of Dependents

Table 6. Distribution of respondents by the presence of dependents

Any Dependents Living with the Respondent[84]			
Rural			
Yes		*No*	
n	%	n	%
366	47%	452	53%
Small Urban			
Yes		*No*	
n	%	n	%
190	49%	189	51%
Large Urban			
Yes		*No*	
n	%	n	%
162	41%	238	59%

[83] The percentages presented in this table are column percentages. That is, they show the gender distribution for each age group.
[84] Refers to children under the age of 18 or any other dependents living with the respondent.

Educational Background

Table 7. Distribution of respondents by the highest level of education achieved

Distribution of respondents by the highest level of education achieved											
Rural											
Less than High School		**Graduated High School**		**Some College, Technical or Vocational School**		**Graduated College, Technical or Vocational School**		**Some University**		**Graduated University**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
124	14%	189	23%	103	12%	200	26%	47	6%	153	19%
Small Urban											
Less than High School		**Graduated High School**		**Some College, Technical or Vocational School**		**Graduated College, Technical or Vocational School**		**Some University**		**Graduated University**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
39	11%	89	24%	52	14%	90	22%	23	6%	86	22%
Large Urban											
Less than High School		**Graduated High School**		**Some College, Technical or Vocational School**		**Graduated College, Technical or Vocational School**		**Some University**		**Graduated University**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
23	6%	67	17%	46	12%	76	18%	34	9%	154	39%

Marital Status

Table 8. Distribution of respondents by marital status

Distribution of respondents by marital status									
Rural									
Single / Never Married		**Married or Living Together as a Couple**		**Widowed**		**Separated**		**Divorced**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
93	14%	603	73%	45	5%	31	4%	46	5%
Small Urban									
Single / Never Married		**Married or Living Together as a Couple**		**Widowed**		**Separated**		**Divorced**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
52	15%	279	73%	16	5%	11	3%	20	5%
Large Urban									
Single / Never Married		**Married or Living Together as a Couple**		**Widowed**		**Separated**		**Divorced**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
71	20%	274	68%	22	6%	11	2%	21	5%

Employment Status

Table 9. Distribution of respondents by employment status

Duration of Respondents by Employment Status													
Rural													
Full-Time Employment		**Part-Time Employment**		**Homemaker**		**Unemployed**		**Retired**		**Student**		**Other**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
352	45%	112	13%	82	10%	54	6%	123	14%	10	2%	86	10%
Small Urban													
Full-Time Employment		**Part-Time Employment**		**Homemaker**		**Unemployed**		**Retired**		**Student**		**Other**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
183	47%	47	13%	33	8%	25	6%	62	18%	10	3%	19	5%
Large Urban													
Full-Time Employment		**Part-Time Employment**		**Homemaker**		**Unemployed**		**Retired**		**Student**		**Other**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
192	48%	38	9%	32	8%	30	7%	68	16%	16	5%	24	6%

Residency Status

Table 10. Respondents' duration of residency in Canada

Duration of Residency in Canada									
Rural									
All of My Life		**10 Years or More**		**5 to 10 Years**		**1 to 5 Years**		**Less Than One Year**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
747	92%	60	6%	4	1%	6	1%	1	0%
Small Urban									
All of My Life		**10 Years or More**		**5 to 10 Years**		**1 to 5 Years**		**Less Than One Year**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
333	88%	33	9%	7	2%	4	1%	2	0%
Large Urban									
All of My Life		**10 Years or More**		**5 to 10 Years**		**1 to 5 Years**		**Less Than One Year**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
304	76%	70	17%	17	5%	7	2%	2	1%

Table 11. Rural and small urban respondents' duration of residency in rural and small urban Alberta

Duration of Residency in Rural and Small Urban Alberta									
All of My Life		**10 Years or More**		**5 to 10 Years**		**1 to 5 Years**		**Less Than One Year**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
384	33%	491	41%	131	12%	120	11%	22	2%

Household Income

Table 12. Distribution of respondents by household income

Distribution of respondents by household income											
Rural											
Less than $20,000		**$20,000 to $30,000**		**$31,000 to $50,000**		**$51,000 to $80,000**		**$81,000 to $100,000**		**Over $100,000**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
69	10%	86	12%	134	17%	129	17%	125	17%	189	27%
Small Urban											
Less than $20,000		**$20,000 to $30,000**		**$31,000 to $50,000**		**$51,000 to $80,000**		**$81,000 to $100,000**		**Over $100,000**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
26	7%	24	8%	53	16%	60	17%	62	18%	122	34%
Large Urban											
Less than $20,000		**$20,000 to $30,000**		**$31,000 to $50,000**		**$51,000 to $80,000**		**$81,000 to $100,000**		**Over $100,000**	
n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
23	7%	39	11%	50	13%	72	20%	49	14%	125	35%

Appendix B: Detailed Results of the Quality of Life Domain Regression Analyses

Table 15 presents the results of the regressions of domain scores on a selection of demographic variables. Where a statistically significant relationship was found between a domain score and a demographic variable, the table reports the nature of the relationship.

Table 15. Statistically significant relationships between rural and small urban respondent demographics and quality of life scores (p ≤ .05)

Domain	Region	Age Group	Gender	Dependents at Home	Highest Level of Education	Marital Status	Employment Status	Immigrant Status	Household Income
Emotional Well-Being		✓ Being aged 60 and up is associated with having a higher emotional well-being score (as compared to being aged 18-29)					✓ Being unemployed is associated with having a lower emotional well-being score (as compared to having a full-time job)	✓ Being in Canada for five to 10 years is associated with having a higher emotional well-being score (as compared to living in Canada all of one's life)	✓ Having a household income of over $100,000 is associated with having a higher emotional well-being score (as compared to a household income less than $20,000)

Domain	Region	Age Group	Gender	Dependents at Home	Highest Level of Education	Marital Status	Employment Status	Immigrant Status	Household Income
Interpersonal Relations			✓ Being female is associated with having a higher interpersonal relations score		✓ Having graduated from college, technical school, or vocational school is associated with having a higher interpersonal relations score (as compared to having less than a high school education)		✓ Being unemployed is associated with having a lower interpersonal relations score (as compared to having a full-time job)		✓ Having a household income of $31,000 or more is associated with having a higher interpersonal relations score (as compared to a household income less than $20,000)

Domain	Region	Age Group	Gender	Dependents at Home	Highest Level of Education	Marital Status	Employment Status	Immigrant Status	Household Income
Material Well-Being		✓ Being aged 50 and up is associated with having a higher material well-being score (as compared to being aged 18-29)		✓ The absence of dependents is associated with having a higher material well-being score	✓ Having graduated from college, technical school, vocational school, or university is associated with having a higher material well-being score (as compared to having less than a high school education)	✓ Being separated or divorced is associated with having a lower material well-being score (as compared to being single and never married)	✓ Being unemployed or having an employment status that is "other" is associated with having a lower material well-being score (as compared to having a full-time job)[85]	✓ Being in Canada for less than one's entire life but more than 10 years is associated with having a higher material well-being score (as compared to living in Canada all of one's life)	✓ Having a household income of $31,000 or more is associated with having a higher material well-being score (as compared to a household income less than $20,000)

[85] An employment status classified as "other" would include anything not classified as full-time employed, part-time employed, homemaker, unemployed, retired, and student.

Domain	Region	Age Group	Gender	Dependents at Home	Highest Level of Education	Marital Status	Employment Status	Immigrant Status	Household Income
Personal Development		✓ Being aged 60 to 64 is associated with having a higher personal development score (as compared to being aged 18-29)					✓ Being unemployed or having an employment status that is "other" is associated with having a lower personal development score (as compared to having a full-time job)[86]	✓ Being in Canada for five to 10 years is associated with having a higher personal development score (as compared to living in Canada all of one's life)	✓ Having a household income of $51,000 or more is associated with having a higher personal development score (as compared to a household income less than $20,000)

[86] An employment status classified as "other" would include anything not classified as full-time employed, part-time employed, homemaker, unemployed, retired, and student.

Domain	Region	Age Group	Gender	Dependents at Home	Highest Level of Education	Marital Status	Employment Status	Immigrant Status	Household Income
Physical Well-Being		✓ Being aged 60 and up is associated with having a higher physical well-being score (as compared to being aged 18-29)			✓ Having graduated from university is associated with having a higher physical well-being score (as compared to having less than a high school education)	✓ Being married, living together, separated or divorced is associated with having a lower physical well-being score (as compared to being single and never married)	✓ Having an employment status that is "other" is associated with having a lower physical well-being score (as compared to having a full-time job)[87]	✓ Being in Canada for five to 10 years is associated with having a higher physical well-being score (as compared to living in Canada all of one's life)	✓ Having a household income of $31,000 to $50,000 or $81,000 or more is associated with having a higher physical well-being score (as compared to a household income less than $20,000)

[87] An employment status classified as "other" would include anything not classified as full-time employed, part-time employed, homemaker, unemployed, retired, and student.

Domain	Region	Age Group	Gender	Dependents at Home	Highest Level of Education	Marital Status	Employment Status	Immigrant Status	Household Income
Rights		✓ Being aged 50 and up is associated with having a higher rights score (as compared to being aged 18-29)	✓ Being female is associated with having a higher rights score					✓ Being in Canada for five or fewer years is associated with having a lower rights score (as compared to living in Canada all of one's life)	✓ Having a household income of $31,000 or more is associated with having a higher rights score (as compared to a household income less than $20,000)
Self-Determination		✓ Being aged 65 and up is associated with having a higher self-determination score (as compared to being aged 18-29)	✓ Being female is associated with having a higher self-determination score		✓ Having graduated from university is associated with having a higher self-determination score (as compared to having less than a high school education)		✓ Being unemployed is associated with having a lower self-determination score (as compared to having a full-time job)		✓ Having a household income of over $100,000 is associated with having a higher self-determination score (as compared to a household income less than $20,000)

Domain	Region	Age Group	Gender	Dependents at Home	Highest Level of Education	Marital Status	Employment Status	Immigrant Status	Household Income
Social Inclusion		✓ Being aged 30 to 39 or 50 and up is associated with having a higher social inclusion score (as compared to being aged 18-29)			✓ Having graduated from university is associated with having a higher social inclusion score (as compared to having less than a high school education)	✓ Being separated or divorced is associated with having a lower social inclusion score (as compared to being single and never married)	✓ Being unemployed is associated with having a lower social inclusion score (as compared to having a full-time job) ✓ Being a student is associated with having a higher social inclusion score (as compared to having a full-time job)		✓ Having a household income of $51,000 or more is associated with having a higher social inclusion score (as compared to a household income less than $20,000)
Number of Domains with Significant Relationships Between the Demographic Variable and the Domain Score	*0*	*7*	*3*	*1*	*5*	*3*	*7*	*5*	*8*

Appendix C: Detailed Community Participation Data

The community participation portion of the survey consisted of four questions which required a "yes" or "no" response:

- In the past 12 months I have volunteered my time to a local community activity.
- In the past 12 months I have helped out a neighbor.
- I voted in the last municipal election.
- In the past 30 days I have participated in a community event or activity.

Below, the responses to each question are presented by rural/urban status and region (Tables 18, 20, 22, and 24). In each cross-tabulation, the number of responses reported (n) is an unweighted number, and the column percentage (%) is a weighted percentage (weighted to better represent the population of Alberta).[88]

Below each cross-tabulation of responses, the results of chi-square tests for systematic differences between groups is presented (Tables 19, 21, 23, and 25). These tests were conducted using the weights described in the introduction. A check mark (✓) is used to indicate instances where between-group differences (that is, differences between demographic groups, such as differences between responses by rural/urban status) are found to be statistically significant (i.e., $p \leq 0.05$).

Table 18. Distribution of responses to "In the past 12 months I have volunteered my time to a local community activity."

	Rural/Urban						*Region*									
	Rural		Small Urban		Large Urban		Calgary		Edmonton		Northern Rural/ Small Urban Alberta		Central Rural/ Small Urban Alberta		Southern Rural/ Small Urban Alberta	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	546	67%	227	59%	220	54%	117	56%	103	52%	261	66%	254	63%	258	65%
No	271	33%	152	41%	180	46%	83	44%	97	48%	138	34%	145	37%	140	35%

Table 19. Significant differences between groups in responses to "In the past 12 months I have volunteered my time to a local community activity."

Significant Differences Between Groups?	*Dimension*	
	Rural/Urban Status	Region
	✓	✓

[88] Unweighted numbers (n's) are reported along with weighted percentages in order to provide an accurate picture of the sample (unweighted n's) as well as a better representation of the Alberta population (weighted percentages). This approach is widely used in academic literature.

Table 20. Distribution of responses to "In the past 12 months I have helped out a neighbour."

	Rural/Urban						*Region*									
	Rural		Small Urban		Large Urban		Calgary		Edmonton		Northern Rural/ Small Urban Alberta		Central Rural/ Small Urban Alberta		Southern Rural/ Small Urban Alberta	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	775	94%	358	95%	368	91%	187	92%	181	90%	376	94%	378	95%	379	94%
No	44	6%	21	5%	32	9%	13	8%	19	10%	23	6%	22	5%	20	6%

Table 21. Significant differences between groups in responses to "In the past 12 months I have helped out a neighbour."

Significant Differences Between Groups?	*Dimension*	
	Rural/Urban Status	Region
	✓	

Table 22. Distribution of responses to "I voted in the last municipal government election."

	Rural/Urban						*Region*									
	Rural		Small Urban		Large Urban		Calgary		Edmonton		Northern Rural/ Small Urban Alberta		Central Rural/ Small Urban Alberta		Southern Rural/ Small Urban Alberta	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	603	73%	277	73%	314	78%	159	78%	155	77%	269	65%	303	75%	308	77%
No	216	27%	102	27%	85	22%	40	22%	45	23%	130	35%	97	25%	91	23%

Table 23. Significant differences between groups in responses to "I voted in the last municipal government election."

Significant Differences Between Groups?	*Dimension*	
	Rural/Urban Status	Region
		✓

Table 24. Distribution of responses to "In the past 30 days I have participated in a community event or activity."

	Rural/Urban						*Region*									
	Rural		Small Urban		Large Urban		Calgary		Edmonton		Northern Rural/ Small Urban Alberta		Central Rural/ Small Urban Alberta		Southern Rural/ Small Urban Alberta	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	470	57%	187	47%	179	43%	84	41%	95	47%	223	55%	210	52%	224	56%
No	349	43%	192	53%	221	57%	116	59%	105	53%	176	45%	190	49%	175	44%

Table 25. Significant differences between groups in responses to "In the past 12 months I have volunteered my time to a local community activity."

Significant Differences Between Groups?	*Dimension*	
	Rural/Urban Status	Region
	✓	✓