

Facts on Food Insecurity in Durham Region

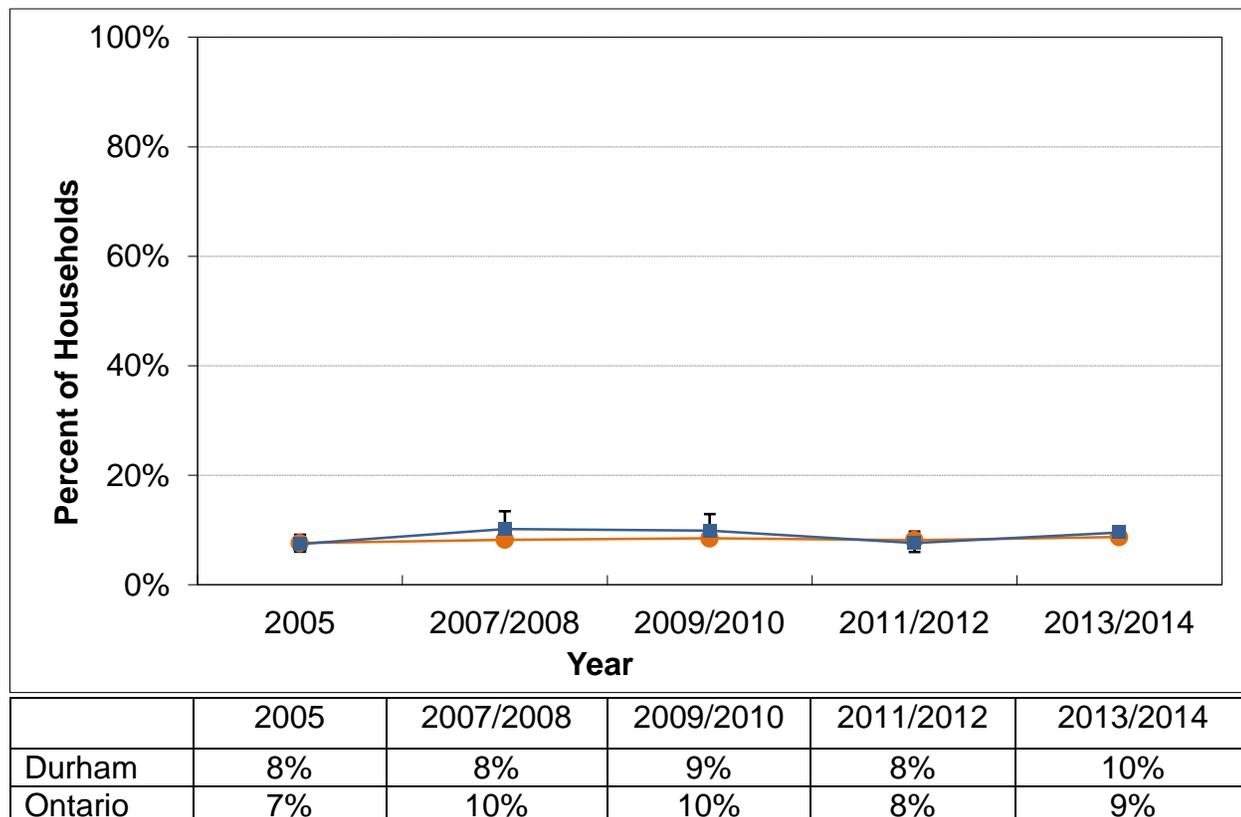


Highlights

- In 2013/2014, 10% of the Durham Region households experienced food insecurity. Rates for both Durham and Ontario remained stable since 2005.
- Rates of household food insecurity in 2013/2014 ranged from 3% to 13% among the 36 Ontario health units. Durham's rate was similar to the provincial rate; it was significantly different from both the upper (13%) and lower bounds (3%).
- Single-parent households and households with low income had the highest rates of food insecurity. About one fifth to one third of these households have experienced food insecurity in the past 12 months.

Trend over Time

Figure 1: Household Food Insecurity, Durham Region and Ontario, 2005 to 2014



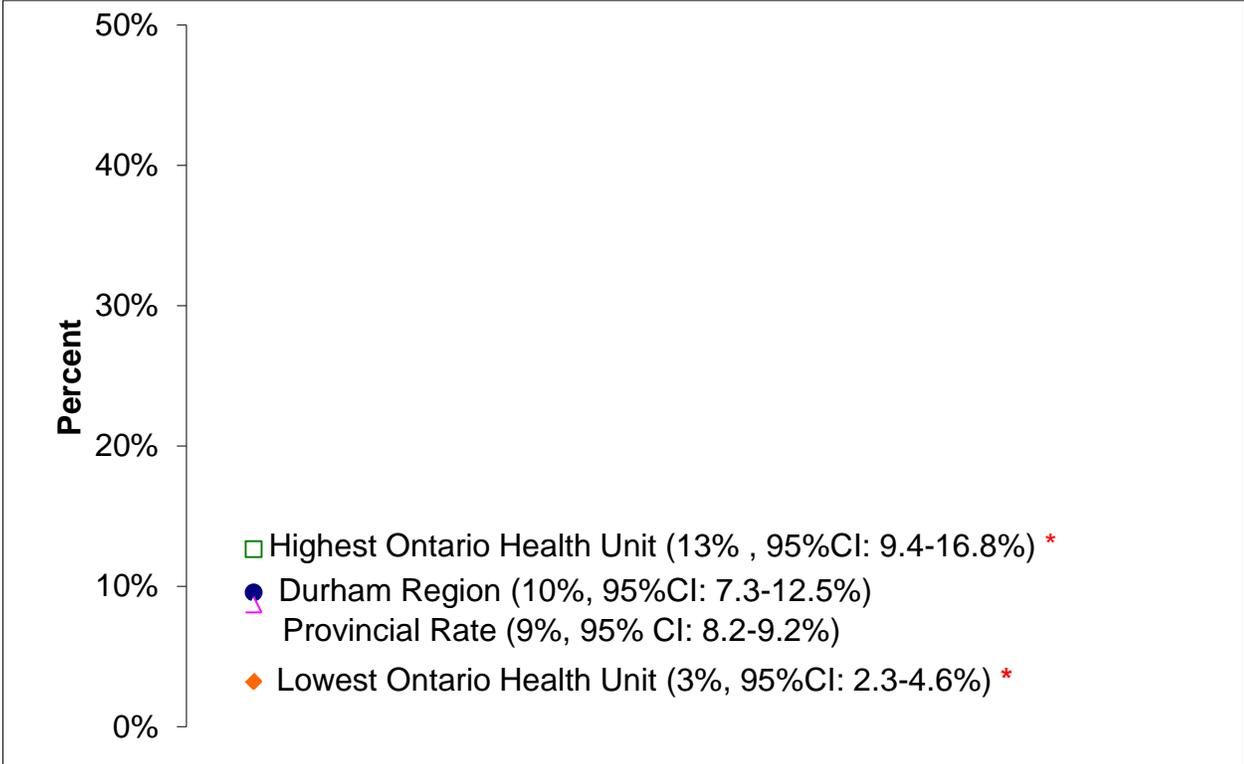
Source: Canadian Community Health Survey [2005, 2007/08, 2009/10, 2011/12, 2013/14]. Statistics Canada, Share File, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Food insecurity occurs when household members have no or limited access to enough and/or nutritious food for an active and healthy life. It is largely the result of low income and financial insecurity.

In 2013/2014, 10% (95% CI: 7.3-12.5%) of Durham Region households were food insecure. Rates for both Durham and Ontario remained stable since 2005 (Figure 1).

Provincial Comparisons

Figure 2: Household Food Insecurity, Provincial Comparisons, 2013-2014



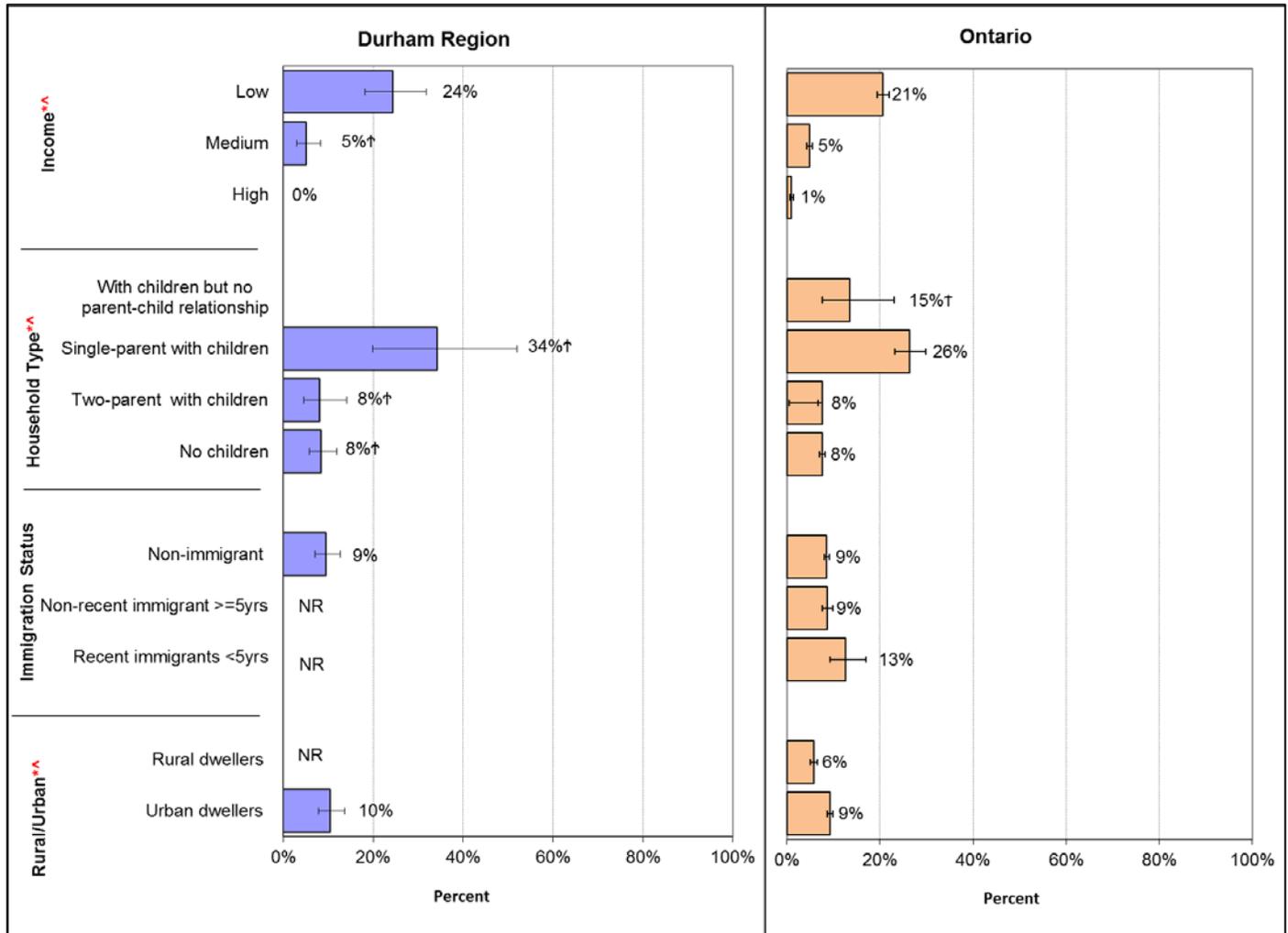
Source: Canadian Community Health Survey [2013/14], Statistics Canada, Share File, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

*: Statistically significant compared to Durham Region based on $p < 0.05$

In 2013/2014, percentage of food insecure households ranged from 3% to 13% among the 36 Ontario health units. Durham’s rate was similar to the provincial rate while it was significantly different from both the lowest and the highest Ontario health units’ rates (Figure 2).

Household Food Insecurity and the Determinants of Health

Figure 3: Household Food Insecurity by Selected Socio-demographics, Durham Region and Ontario, 2013-2014



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey [2013/14], Statistics Canada, Share File, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

*: Association between selected socio-demographics and household food insecurity is significant based on $p < 0.05$ for Durham Region

^: Association between selected socio-demographics and household food insecurity is significant based on $p < 0.05$ for Ontario

†: Results need to be interpreted with caution as coefficients of variation (CV) are between 16.6 and 33.3%, inclusive. The CV is a measure of variability. Higher CV usually indicates that the estimates are less precise and reliable.

NR: Results are not reportable as CVs are greater than 33.3%.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of food insecure households by selected socio-demographic characteristics. Durham's rates are not reportable among many socio-demographic subgroups due to the small sample size.

All these socio-demographic factors except immigration status were found to be statistically significantly associated with household food insecurity at the provincial level. Single-parent households had the highest rate of food insecurity; one in four in these households in Ontario have experienced food insecurity in the past 12 months. Household income also had a big impact on food security. People living urban areas were also more likely to experience food insecurity.

Data Notes

Date Source: The Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) is a cross-sectional survey that collects information related to health status, health care utilization and health determinants for the Canadian population. It surveys a large sample of respondents and is designed to provide reliable estimates at the health region level. Since 2007, data are collected on an ongoing basis with annual releases, rather than every two years as was the case prior to 2007. The CCHS data are collected from persons aged 12 and over living in private dwellings, excluding individuals living on Indian Reserves and on Crown Lands, institutional residents, full-time members of the Canadian Forces, and residents of certain remote regions. Interviews are conducted using computer assisted interviewing, either in person or over the telephone.

Definitions and Survey Questions: The food security module from the CCHS consists of a series of 18 questions that are derived into a variable to indicate whether household members were able to afford the food they needed in the previous 12 months. The questions range in severity from worrying about running out of food to children not eating for a whole day. Ten of the 18 questions are specific to the experiences of adults in the household or the household in general, while eight are specific to the experiences of children in the household.

Do you Know?

The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”.

Household food security is recognized as an important public health issue in Canada. In 2011-2012, 8.3% of households, or almost 1.1 million households in Canada, experienced some level of food insecurity. People living in these households have worried about running out of food, made compromises in the quality of their diets, ate less than they felt they should, and possibly gone without eating, all because they did not have the money to buy more food.

Food insecurity has been associated with a range of poor physical and mental health outcomes, for example, self-assessed poor/fair health, multiple chronic conditions, distress, and depression.

Data Analysis: The CCHS share file obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care was used for analysis. Data were analyzed using PASW Statistics 20.0 Complex Samples. Estimates are weighted using the final CCHS sampling weight. Error bars (I) in the graphs represent the 95% confidence intervals (CI) around the percentage. The true or actual percentage falls within the range of values, 95 out of 100 times. For all variables, response options of 'Refusal', 'Don't Know', 'Not Stated' and 'Not Applicable' were excluded from the analysis.

The CCHS 2013 and 2014 dataset was used for the 'Household Food Insecurity and the Determinants of Health' analysis. Statistical significance was based on a Chi-square test with a p -value less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). A statistically significant difference between groups means that the difference is not likely due to the chance.

The income categories of low, medium and high were based on a CCHS derived variable which distributed residents according to the adjusted ratio of their total household income to the low income cut-off corresponding to their household and community size. The ten categories in this variable were grouped with “low” income corresponding to the lowest 30%, “medium” including the fourth 10% to seventh 10%, and “high” corresponding to 80% or higher.

For more information on the CCHS, visit <http://www.statcan.gc.ca>.



durham.ca

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 905-666-6241 or 1-800-841-2729

