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Canada

# Canada's Breastfeeding Progress Report 2022



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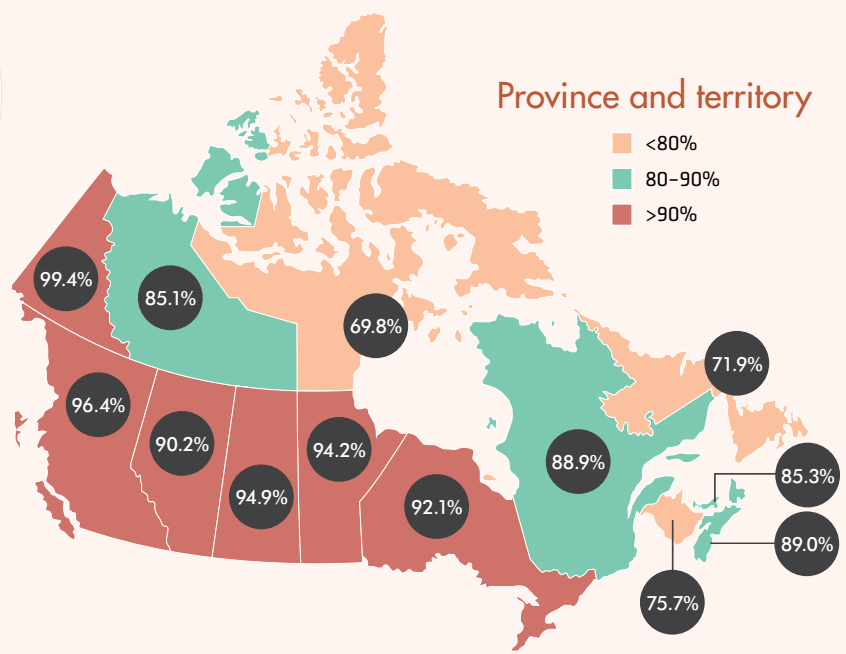
The importance of breastfeeding for the short- and long-term health of infants, young children and mothers is well established. Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended for the first six months, and continued for up to 2 years or longer along with age-appropriate complementary feeding.<sup>1</sup> Global targets set for breastfeeding include increasing the rate of exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months to at least 50% by 2025 and to 70% by 2030.<sup>2, 3</sup>

This report presents a snapshot of breastfeeding outcomes for Canada, based on data collected in the 2017-18 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS).<sup>4</sup> Outcomes presented are a selection of socio-demographic factors known to be associated with breastfeeding.

## BREASTFEEDING INITIATION

9 in 10  
MOTHERS INITIATED  
BREASTFEEDING  
91.1%

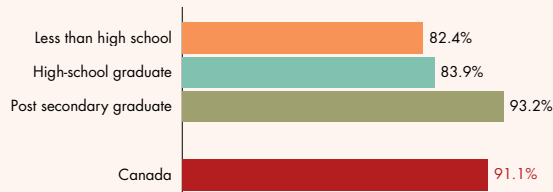
Most newborns in Canada start out breastfeeding.  
Rates of breastfeeding initiation varied by:



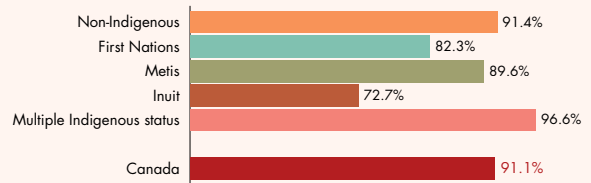
1. Nutrition for healthy term infants: Recommendations from birth to six months. Health Canada, Canadian Paediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada, and Breastfeeding Committee for Canada, 2012.
2. Global Nutrition Targets 2025: Breastfeeding policy brief. World Health Organization, UNICEF.
3. Global breastfeeding scorecard, 2019, (Technical Document), July 2019. Global Breastfeeding Collective.
4. This report presents data gathered from respondents aged 15-55 who identified as female and who gave birth in the five years preceding the survey.

### Rates of breastfeeding initiation varied by:

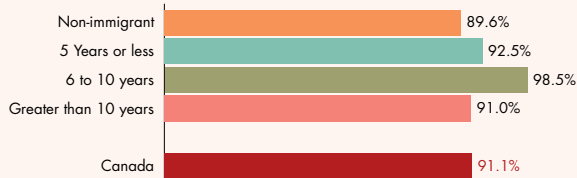
#### Level of education



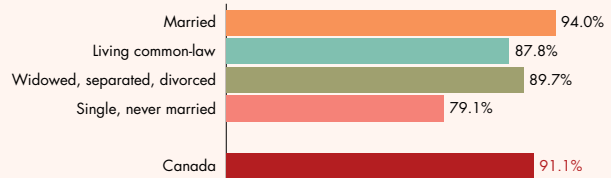
#### Indigenous status



#### Immigrant status



#### Marital status



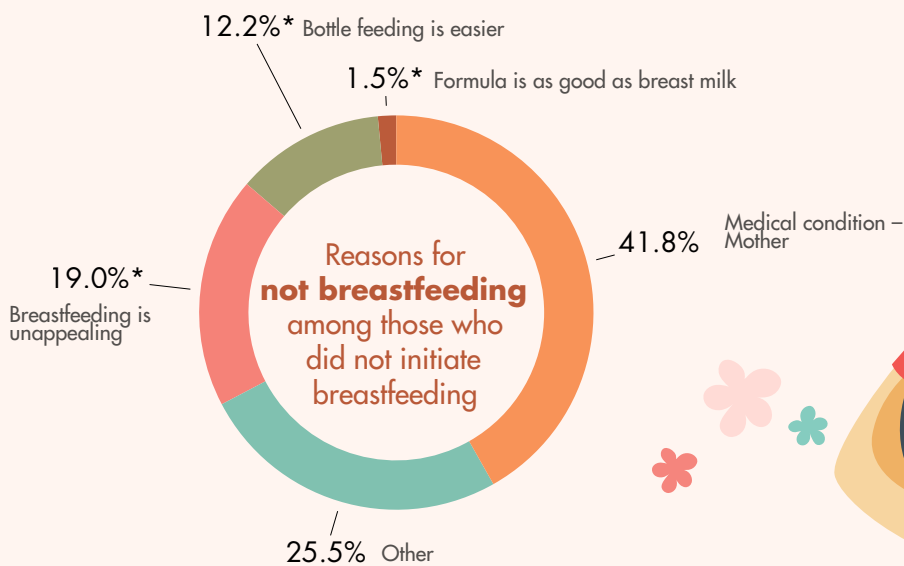
#### Age

Age group (5-year)	Rate
15-19	94.4%
20-24	89.6%
25-29	89.1%
30-34	91.9%
35-39	93.1%
40-44	89.2%
45-55	79.7%*
<b>Canada</b>	<b>91.1%</b>

#### Pre-pregnancy BMI<sup>1</sup>

Classification	Rate
Underweight	91.6%
Normal	92.7%
Overweight	90.8%
Obese	84.7%
Missing information	90.8%
<b>Canada</b>	<b>91.1%</b>

### For those who did not initiate breastfeeding, reasons included:



\*Interpret with caution as the estimate is less precise

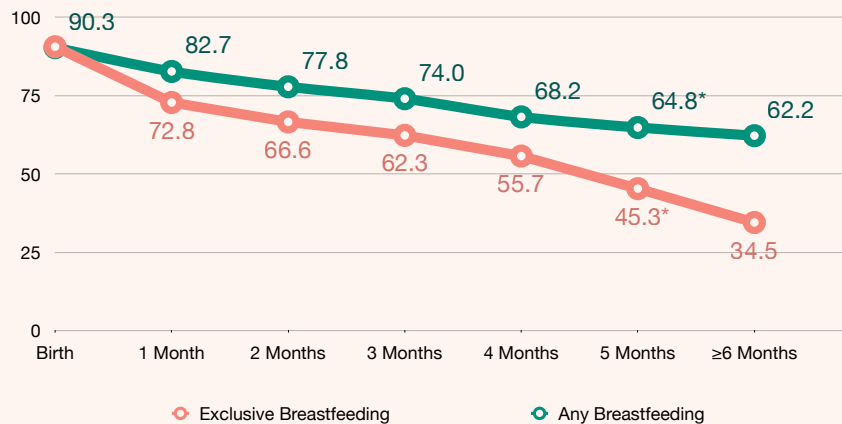
1. [Body Mass Index \(BMI\) Nomogram](#)

## BREASTFEEDING DURATION AND EXCLUSIVITY

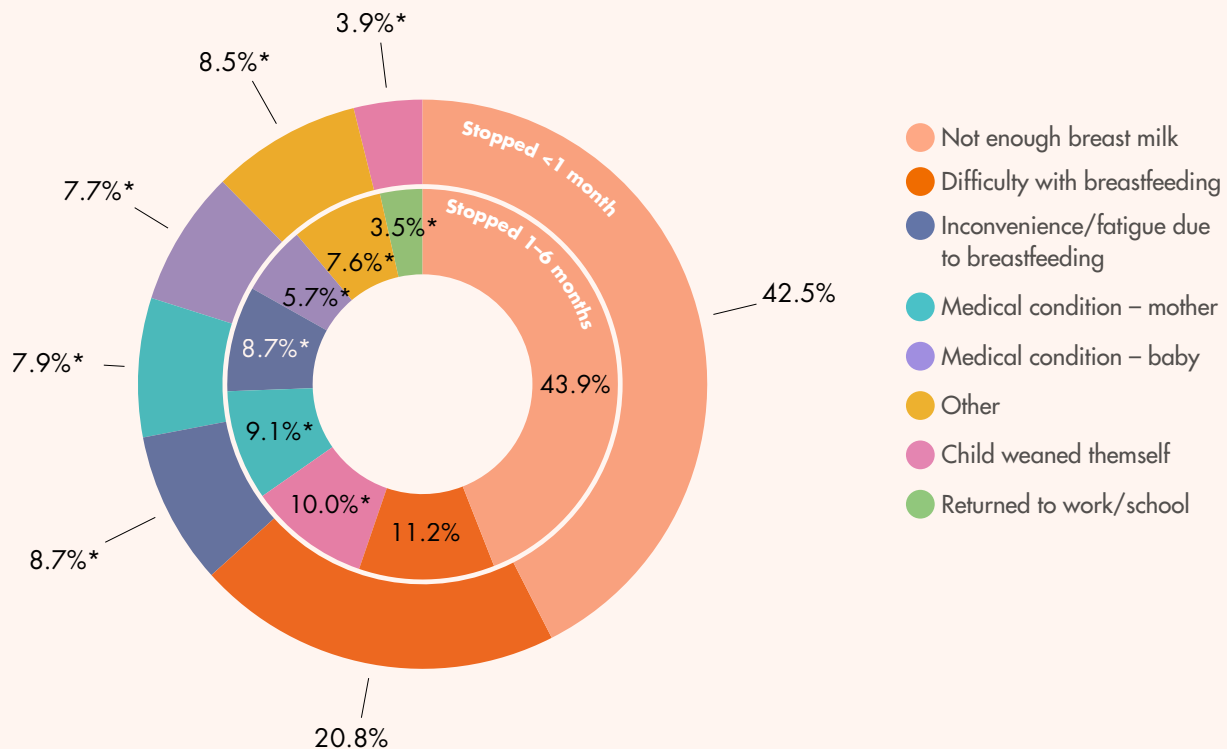
Among those who initiated breastfeeding:

- 1 in 7 stopped before 1 month (15.1%)
- 1 in 5 stopped between 1 and 6 months (22%)

The biggest decline in breastfeeding, both any or exclusive, occurred in the first month after birth.



For those who stopped breastfeeding before 6 months, reasons for stopping included:



\*Interpret with caution as the estimate is less precise

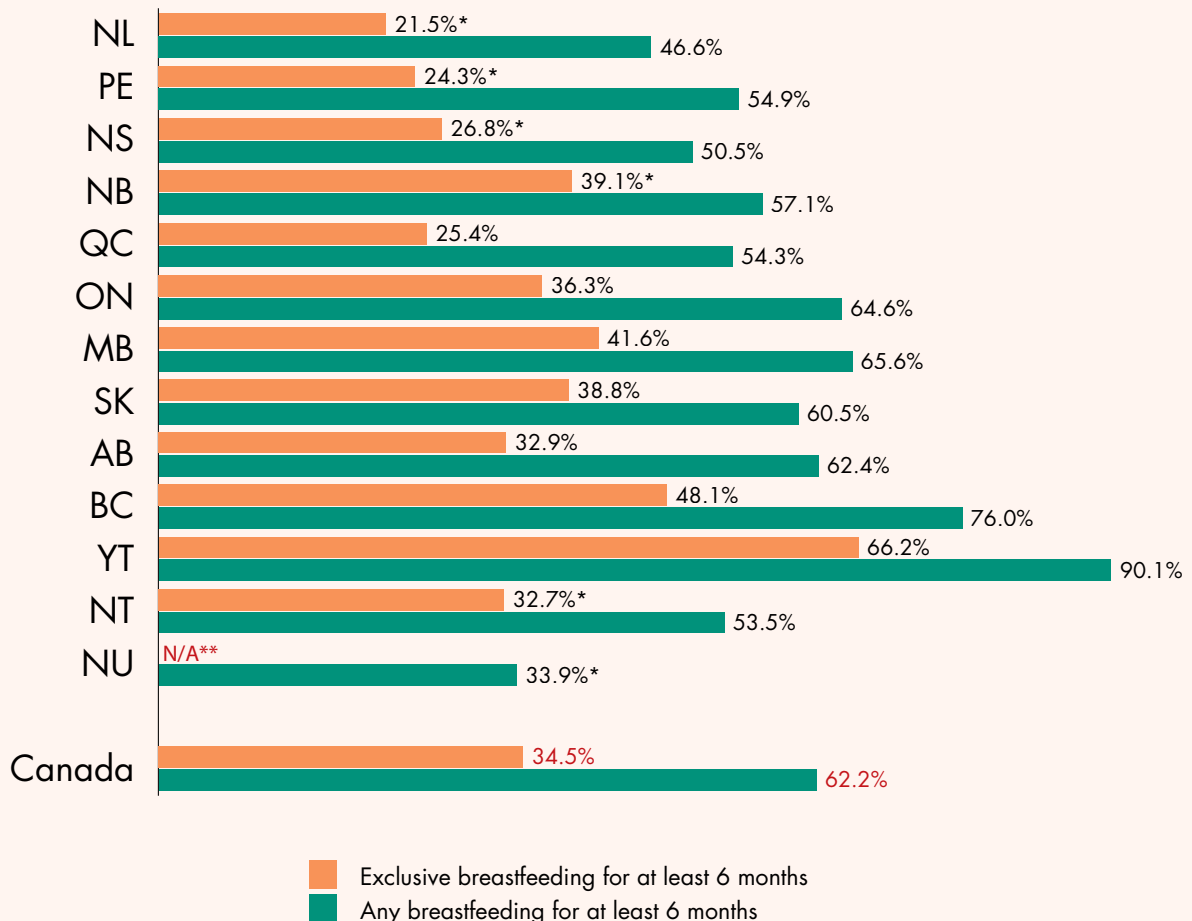


While the majority of infants were breastfed for at least 6 months, far fewer were breastfed exclusively.

- **3 in 5 infants** were breastfed (any amount) for at least 6 months (62.2%)
- **1 in 3 infants** were breastfed exclusively for at least 6 months (34.5%)

Breastfeeding duration and exclusivity rates varied according to:

### Province and territory



\*Interpret with caution as the estimate is less precise  
 \*\*Data unreleasable

**1 in 3**  
**INFANTS IN CANADA**  
**WERE EXCLUSIVELY BREASTFED**  
**FOR AT LEAST 6 MONTHS**

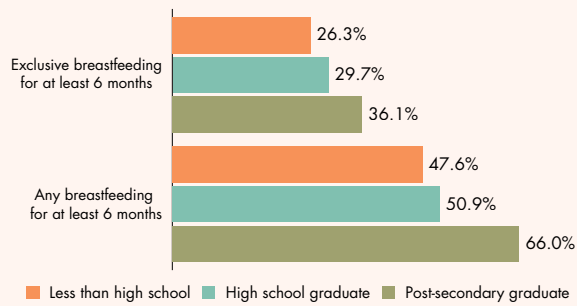
**34.5%**

**3 in 5**  
**INFANTS IN CANADA**  
**WERE BREASTFED (ANY**  
**AMOUNT) FOR AT**  
**LEAST 6 MONTHS**

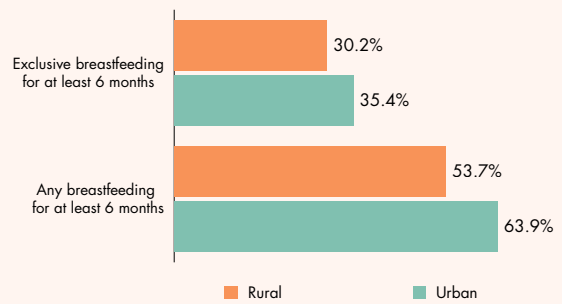
**62.2%**

Breastfeeding duration and exclusivity rates varied according to:

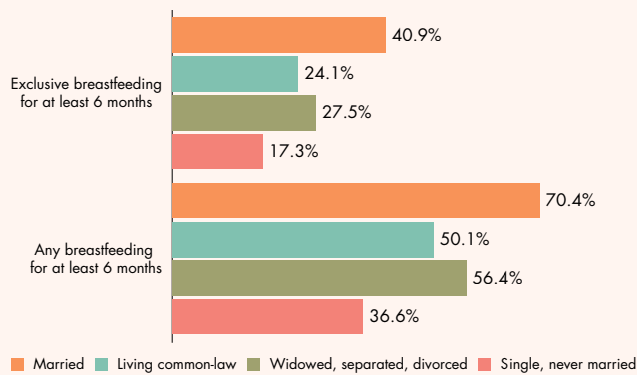
### Level of education



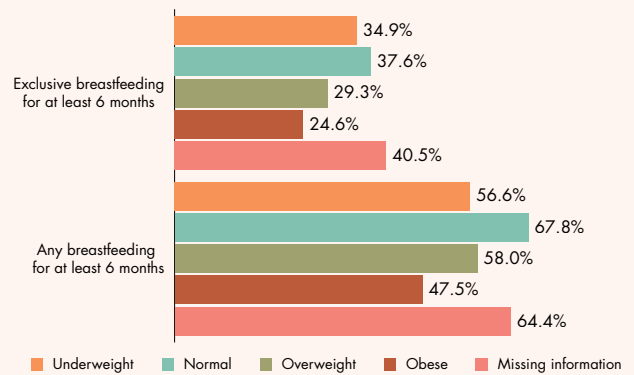
### Rural vs urban living



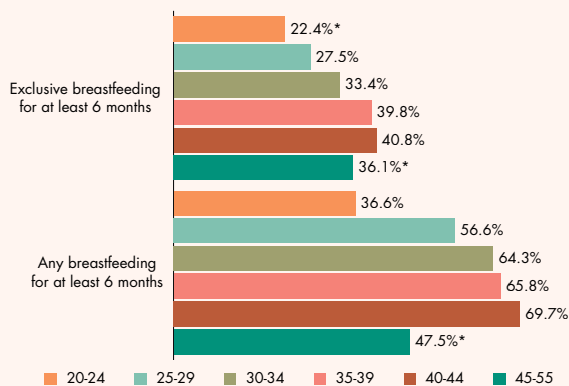
### Marital status



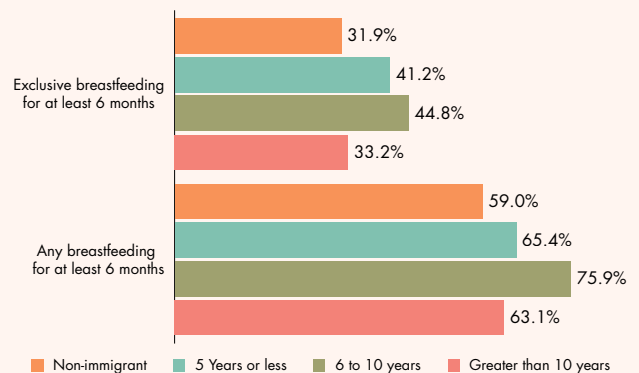
### Pre-pregnancy BMI<sup>1</sup>



### Age



### Immigrant status



\*Interpret with caution as the estimate is less precise

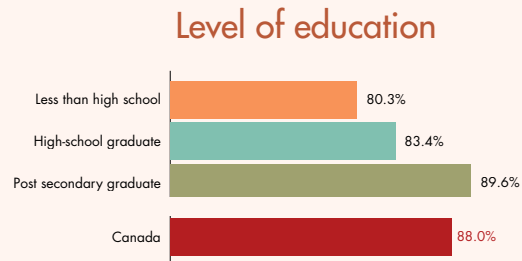
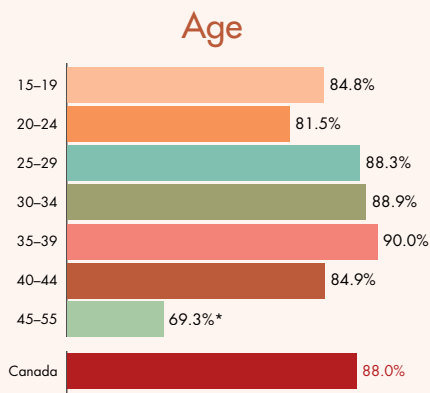
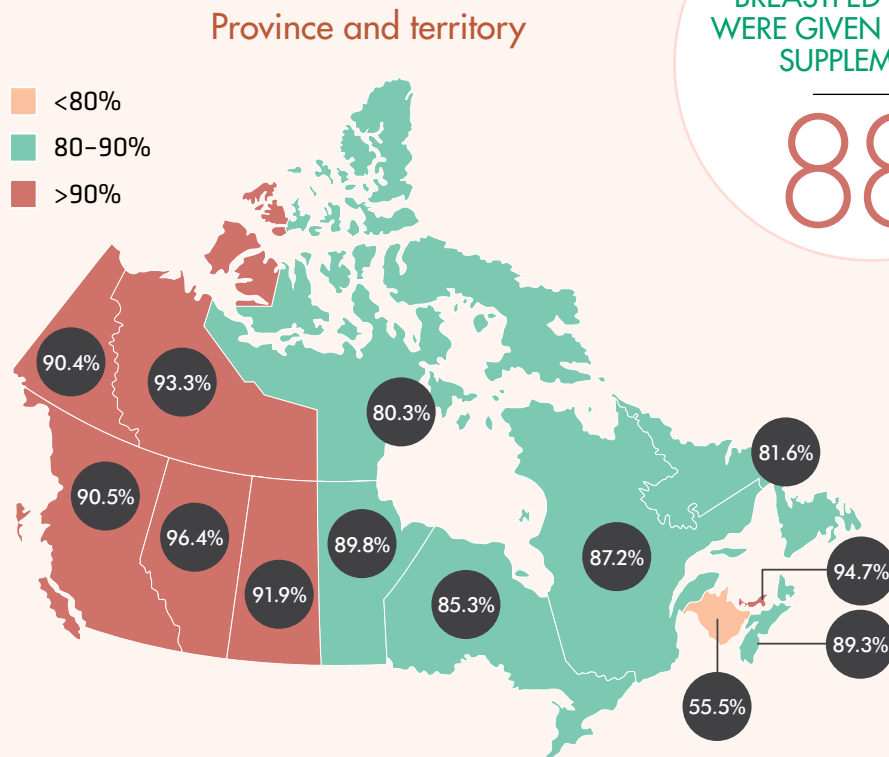
1. [Body Mass Index \(BMI\) Nomogram](#)

# VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENTATION

Supplemental vitamin D is recommended for exclusively and partially breastfed infants. Most breastfed babies in Canada are given supplemental vitamin D.

Rates of vitamin D supplementation varied by:

**9 in 10**  
BREASTFED INFANTS WERE GIVEN VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENTS  
**88%**



For the full data tool, visit [health-infobase.canada.ca/breastfeeding/](https://health-infobase.canada.ca/breastfeeding/)



\*Interpret with caution as the estimate is less precise