Using research to improve Ontario's auto insurance system
FSRA releases 2023 study on auto insurance

FSRA undertook research in early 2023 to better understand consumers' behaviors, knowledge, and preferences when it comes to purchasing or renewing auto insurance and making an auto insurance claim or complaint. The research builds on previous findings from FSRA's 2020 research to track trends within the sector. It also introduces new findings specifically related to the experiences of vulnerable auto insurance consumers.

Findings from this research will inform FSRA's supervisory work, policy-decision making and regulatory efforts in the auto insurance sector. As a principles-based, outcomes-focused and consumer-centered regulator, these insights will assist FSRA in identifying key opportunities to respond to the needs of and risks to Ontario consumers, for example, through its work to reform the regulation of auto insurance rates and underwriting in Ontario.

Key takeaways

Almost half of respondents shop for auto insurance less than once a year.

Overall, 45% of people shop for auto insurance less often than once a year. Those with low/no vulnerability are significantly more likely to shop for auto insurance less than once a year compared to highly vulnerable groups.

Of respondents that have changed auto insurance providers in the past, 64% said that they got a better rate when they changed their provider.

In 2023, fewer respondents said they switched car insurance providers (30% in 2023, compared to 48% in 2020).

More respondents have made an auto insurance claim compared to those that have not.	Half of the respondents made a claim to repair or replace their car. In contrast, about a third have never made a claim because they have never been involved in an accident. When comparing 2020 to 2023 results, the same proportion of respondents said they have never made a claim because they have never been involved in an accident. However, the proportion of respondents who said they made a claim to repair/replace their car or because they were injured decreased from 60% in 2020 to 53% in 2023.
Low price is one of the most important factors when purchasing or renewing auto insurance.	The top five most important factors when purchasing or renewing auto insurance are: lower price (68%), clear pricing with no surprises (66%), trustworthy insurance companies (59%), easy-to-understand policy information (54%), and high-quality customer services (49%). Eight in 10 respondents think that their auto insurance price should be based on driving history, followed by two thirds saying claims history. Marital status and gender were least commonly selected as factors that auto insurance price should be based on.
Most respondents have never made or considered making a complaint against an auto insurance provider.	Highly vulnerable consumers are more likely to make a complaint against their auto insurance provider – 18% of highly vulnerable consumers stated that they made one or more complaints in the past, compared to only 3% of consumers with low/no vulnerability. For those who have made a complaint or considered making a complaint, the most common reason is about the claim process, followed by delay in settlement.

The full report 2023 Consumer Research: Auto Insurance outlines the results of the survey.

Putting our research to work

Consumer research is one of several inputs to FSRA's strategy to reform the regulation of auto insurance rates and underwriting in Ontario, a key commitment made in [FSRA's 2023-2026 Annual Business Plan](#).

Research findings on pricing and shopping for auto insurance contribute to ongoing policy development and informed decision-making, including encouraging consumers to shop around for the right coverage at the right price.

In alignment with ongoing work aimed at improving the legal and supervisory framework for auto insurance rates and underwriting, the research also suggests that consumers perceive opportunities for improved fairness in auto insurance rating, risk classification and underwriting.