

# SOCIAL DISTANCING DECLINES WITH DECONFINEMENT: WILL CANADA BE ONE OF THE LAST PLACES TO MAINTAIN THE TWO METER RULE?

COVID-19 SOCIAL IMPACTS NETWORK

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# INTRODUCTION: WILL CANADA BE ONE OF THE LAST PLACES TO IMPOSE A TWO METER RULE?

- Public Health experts agree that social distancing is one of the few things left to contain the spread. This week's ACS-Leger poll suggests that, with the announced deconfinement measures, there has been an immediate erosion in Canadians' reported ability to maintain the two meters. In effect, the rule may be two meters, but the facts, as they relate to distancing, seem increasingly less than the rule prescribes.
- There has been growing debate as to whether it is essential for the distance to be two meters as recommended by Canadian health authorities. The World Health Organization says that one meter is safe. Along with the UK and Spain, Canada have imposed the most [generous social distancing space of two meters](#), the US 1.8 meters and most other countries have gone for either 1.5 meters – Australia, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands and Portugal – or one meter – China, Denmark, France, Hong Kong, Lithuania and Singapore.
- More than half of the UK cabinet support the idea of reducing social distance requirements from two meters to one, and the hospitality industry has warned that three quarters of pubs, restaurants and hotels could go out of business unless the Government's two-meter rule is scrapped. However, a YouGov poll reveals that the majority of the UK population (58%) still favor the two meter rule. The conversation about the required distance for social distancing is underway in Canada, and will undoubtedly intensify as the summer fast approaches.

**SIGNIFICANT WEEK TO WEEK INCREASE IN OTHERS GETTING WITHIN TWO METERS DESPITE EFFORTS TO SOCIAL DISTANCE; ONTARIO SAW BIGGEST EROSION IN SOCIAL DISTANCE ALONG WITH QUEBEC AND ALBERTA, WHILE BC SAW INVERSE TREND**

Despite the fact that you are making considerable efforts to respect social distancing, have people outside your family gotten within two meters of you over the past week ?

Yes	Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
June 5-7	63%	58%	64%	62%	72%	64%	63%
May 29 -31	57%	53%	57%	53%	69%	57%	70%

# MAJORITY OF CANADIANS AGREE THAT SOCIAL DISTANCING HELPS PREVENT COVID-19 INFECTIONS, BUT ONE IN SIX CANADIANS ARE NOT CONVINCED

Do you agree or disagree with the following : social distancing will prevent someone from getting infected with COVID-19?	
TOTAL AGREE	79%
Strongly agree	36%
Somewhat agree	43%
TOTAL DISAGREE	15%
Somewhat disagree	8%
Strongly disagree	7%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	6%

# SOCIAL DISTANCE ENJOYS LEAST SUCCESS AMONGST 18-24 COHORT

	Despite the fact that you are making considerable efforts to respect social distancing, have people outside your family gotten within two meters of you over the past week ?							
June 5-7, 2020	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	>= 75	Total
Yes	75.0%	61.2%	65.4%	63.4%	68.2%	52.8%	51.9%	63.1%
No	21.9%	32.9%	31.3%	32.2%	31.1%	46.7%	46.8%	34.0%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	3.1%	5.9%	3.3%	4.4%	0.7%	0.4%	1.3%	2.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

# LEAST ANXIOUS ABOUT COVID-19 SAW MOST PEOPLE GET WITHIN TWO METERS

Despite the fact that you are making considerable efforts to respect social distancing, have people outside your family gotten within two meters of you over the past week ? June 5-7	Are you personally afraid of contracting the COVID-19 (Coronavirus)?			
	Very afraid	Somewhat afraid	Not very afraid	Not afraid at all
Yes	58.6%	61.4%	66.3%	66.1%
No	39.7%	36.0%	31.0%	31.7%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	1.7%	2.6%	2.8%	2.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**GROCERY SHOPPING IS WHERE CANADIANS FIND IT MOST DIFFICULT TO SOCIAL DISTANCE; FOR 18-24-YEAR OLDS, WALKING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD CAN BE A SOCIAL DISTANCING CHALLENGE, AND FOR 25-34, IT'S WORK AT THE OFFICE**

Please tell us in which of the following situations social distancing was difficult...

Up to two choices June 5-7	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 +
When Grocery shopping	75%	79%	76%	79%	73%	70%	73%
At the pharmacy	20%	16%	21%	16%	20%	18%	25%
Work in your office / workplace	24%	23%	36%	27%	29%	23%	2%
Use public transit (buses, subways, tramways, etc.)	14%	17%	26%	15%	12%	7%	5%
Go for a walk in your neighbourhood	22%	41%	27%	19%	15%	13%	21%
None of the above	13%	9%	8%	9%	13%	17%	20%
I prefer not to answer	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

## ABOUT THE COVID-19 SOCIAL IMPACTS NETWORK

- The COVID-19 Social Impacts Network is a multidisciplinary group of some of the country's leading experts to help identify key issues, indicators and socio-demographics to generate evidence-based responses that address the social and economic dimensions of the COVID-19 crisis in Canada.
- Visit <https://acs-aec.ca/en/covid-19-social-impacts-network/>
- For more information on the network please contact [gillian.aitken@acs-aec.ca](mailto:gillian.aitken@acs-aec.ca)



# METHODOLOGY

Web survey using computer-assisted Web interviewing (CAWI) technology.

From June 5th to June 7th , 2020

1510 Canadians 18 years of age or older, randomly recruited from LEO's online panel.

Using data from the 2016 Census, results were weighted according to gender, age, mother tongue, region, education level and presence of children in the household in order to ensure a representative sample of the population.

No margin of error can be associated with a non-probability sample (Web panel in this case). However for comparative purposes, a probability sample of 2,009 respondents would have a margin of error of  $\pm 2.52\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

The research results presented here are in full compliance with the CRIC Public Opinion Research Standards and Disclosure Requirements.

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