

CANADIAN OPINION ON THE CORONAVIRUS – N°17:  
OUR ABILITY TO SOCIAL DISTANCE WILL BE TESTED IN THE COMING WEEKS:  
QUEBECERS FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT TO SOCIAL DISTANCE THAN DO  
OTHER CANADIANS; WESTERN CANADIANS FIND IT EASIER; CANADIANS 18-  
34 FIND IT MOST DIFFICULT

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## INTRODUCTION: WILL WE PASS THE TEST OF SOCIAL DISTANCING?

Public Health experts agree that social distancing is one of the few things left to contain the spread. The Quebec government strategy for de-confinement that will be released on Monday will surely making social distancing a key element of the plan (and that has been true for other Canadian provinces and towns that have been lifting restrictions).

In dense cities social distancing is no easy task. While people want to maintain six feet from others, the recommended distance to prevent the spread of Covid 19 the rules that govern how people interact in public space have been drastically modified as we've become very aware about the space on our sidewalks and our capacity to maintain social distance. Calculating the social distance is very challenging in enclosed spaces like the public transit systems that people use to get to work. As well in the workplace the ability to respect social distancing will be an enormous challenge.

# ARE QUEBECERS REALLY THE CHAMPIONS OF SOCIAL DISTANCING?

At the beginning of April, Google described Quebecers as the champions of social distancing based on the extent to which they frequented commercial establishments, visited parks and used public transit.

Since then, surveys reveal that almost all Canadians (98% according to the latest Leger-ACS survey-Apr 17-19) say that they're social distancing. But many Canadians acknowledge that it is not easy to do so. Quebecers are the most likely to say that it is not easy to social distance and this is especially the case for Montrealers as well as people that live in the national capital region (Ottawa-Gatineau).

# 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/>

# JUST OVER ONE IN FIVE CANADIANS SAY IT IS DIFFICULT TO SOCIAL DISTANCE; SOME 31% OF QUEBECERS SAY IT IS

How easy or difficult do you consider it to perform social distancing?	Canada	British Columbia	Alberta	Prairies	Ontario	Quebec	Maritimes
Very easy	23.4%	19.1%	22.6%	24.7%	27.2%	16.7%	34.3%
Quite easy	54.7%	58.8%	63.1%	60.8%	51.6%	52.4%	52.9%
Quite difficult	18.8%	21.1%	10.7%	14.4%	18.3%	25.5%	10.8%
Very difficult	3.1%	1.0%	3.6%		2.9%	5.4%	2.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Total Difficult</b>	<b>21.9%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>21.2%</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>12.8%</b>

# MONTREALERS AND RESIDENTS OF OTTAWA SAY IT IS MOST DIFFICULT TO SOCIAL DISTANCE

How easy or difficult do you consider it to perform social distancing?	Greater Ottawa area	Greater Toronto area	Montréal	Greater Vancouver (Metro)	Calgary	Edmonton
Very easy	24.6%	22.0%	14.6%	15.6%	22.4%	7.4%
Quite easy	43.9%	57.9%	52.4%	61.5%	65.5%	77.8%
Quite difficult	31.6%	17.7%	28.2%	22.9%	12.1%	14.8%
Very difficult		2.4%	4.9%			
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Total Difficult</b>	<b>31.6%</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	<b>33.1%</b>	<b>22.9%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>14.8%</b>

# CANADIANS 18 -34 REPORT THE MOST DIFFICULT SOCIAL DISTANCING AND SOME 43% OF QUEBECERS AGED 18-34 REPORT DIFFICULT SOCIAL DISTANCING

How easy or difficult do you consider it to perform social distancing? Canada	Between 18 and 34	35 plus	Total
Very easy	23.7%	23.4%	23.5%
Quite easy	45.9%	58.0%	54.7%
Quite difficult	26.3%	16.0%	18.8%
Very difficult	4.1%	2.7%	3.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Total Difficult Canada</b>	<b>30.4%</b>	<b>18.7%</b>	<b>21.9%</b>

How easy or difficult do you consider it to perform social distancing? Quebec	Between 18 and 34	35 plus	Total
Very easy	15.4%	17.1%	16.7%
Quite easy	41.8%	55.9%	52.3%
Quite difficult	34.1%	22.8%	25.7%
Very difficult	8.8%	4.2%	5.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Total Difficult Quebec</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>27.0%</b>	<b>31.1%</b>

# NEARLY THREE IN TEN CANADIANS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 34 THAT VISITED FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO SOCIAL DISTANCE

How easy or difficult do you consider it to perform social distancing?	Went to Visit your friends and family - In the past week	
	18-34	35 plus
Very easy	29.6%	24.6%
Quite easy	41.7%	55.3%
Quite difficult	23.1%	17.5%
Very difficult	5.6%	2.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Total difficult</b>	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>20.1%</b>



# FRANCOPHONES FIND IT MOST DIFFICULT TO SOCIAL DISTANCE

How easy or difficult do you consider it to perform social distancing?	French	English	Other
Very easy	14.4%	27.2%	22.9%
Quite easy	54.8%	54.6%	54.3%
Quite difficult	25.6%	15.5%	21.4%
Very difficult	5.1%	2.7%	1.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Total Difficult</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>18.2%</b>	<b>22.8%</b>

# METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted by Leger in partnership with the Association for Canadian Studies with 2015 Canadians, 18 years of age or older, were collected via an online panel between April 17 to 19, 2020

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 1500 respondents would have a margin of error of  $\pm 2.52\%$ , 19 times out of 20. That 'margin' rises for survey sub groups

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# NETWORK EXPERT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

\*Observers include Statistics Canada and 5 government departments

- **Senator Donna Dasko**
- **David Schimpky**, Special Advisor, Strategic Initiatives and External Relations, Canadian Commission for UNESCO
- **Nora Spinks**, Chief Executive Officer, Vanier Institute
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