
CONVERSATION: AFTER ONE YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC, TO WHAT EXTENT IS COVID-19 THE DOMINANT THEME AT THE DINNER TABLE?

JACK JEDWAB,

PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR CANADIAN STUDIES

MAY 6, 2021

INTRODUCTION: MORE THAN ONE IN FIVE CANADIANS ENGAGE IN COVID-19 SMALL TALK AT THE TABLE

Among the many topics that are the subject of dinner table conversations, one has undoubtedly been dominant over the past year: COVID-19. Thursday, March 11 marked one year since the World Health Organization declared the contagion a pandemic. When asked, more than one in five Quebecers and other Canadians say that COVID-19 is the dominant topic of lunchtime conversation, far behind the question "what did you do during the day". Among people over 65, 'COVID19' is the topic of conversation for three in ten Canadians, second only to 'what did you do during the day'. Among non-French-speaking Quebecers, however, the topic of COVID-19 receives as much interest as "what did you do during the day". Interestingly, those who talk about it the most are those who are most concerned about contracting the contagion. The survey was conducted by Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies. The Leger-ACS survey was conducted among 1,535 Canadians aged 18 and over. While there is no margin of error associated with a non-probability sample, for comparison purposes, the national sample of 1535 Canadians would have a margin of error of $\pm 2.5\%$, 19 times out of 20.

The survey was conducted by Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies. The Leger-ACS survey was conducted among 1,535 Canadians aged 18 and over and while there is no margin of error associated with a non-probability sample, for comparison purposes, the national sample of 1,535 Canadians would have a margin of error of $\pm 2.5\%$, 19 times out of 20.

OVER ONE IN FIVE CANADIANS TALK MOSTLY ABOUT COVID-19 OVER DINNER

Rank in order which of the following topics you talk about most when having dinners at your home		
25 - 27 February, 2021	Canada	Québec
What you did during the day?	44%	53%
COVID-19	22%	22%
Culture (sports, music, movies, books, etc.)	9%	6%
Money	6%	5%
The weather	5%	4%
Health (other than COVID-19)	4%	3%

QUEBEC FRANCOPHONES FAR LESS LIKELY THAN NON-FRANCOPHONES TO TALK ABOUT COVID-19 AT THE DINNER TABLE

Rank in order which of the following topics you talk about most when having dinners at your home.... Quebec

February 25-27, 2021	Francophones	Non-francophones
What you did during the day	63%	39%
COVID-19	23%	38%

PERSONS OVER THE AGE OF 65 NEARLY AS LIKELY TO DISCUSS COVID-19 AS WHAT THEY DID DURING THE DAY

COVID-19 - Rank in order which of the following topics you talk about most when having dinners at your home:

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 +
What you did during the day	50%	47%	48%	46%	45%	34%
COVID-19	13%	23%	22%	18%	21%	30%
Culture	13%	11%	8%	6%	8%	9%
Money	11%	9%	9%	7%	3%	2%
The Weather	4%	5%	3%	6%	4%	7%
Health	3%	3%	2%	5%	2%	5%

IN AN OPEN QUESTION ON WHAT SPECIFICALLY ABOUT COVID-19 IS DISCUSSED MOST CANADIANS SAY IT IS WHEN THE CRISIS WILL END

You ranked COVID-19 as the #1 topic of conversation at dinner, what specifically do you typically discuss? (February 25-27, 2021)	
When the crisis will end	69%
Vaccines	62%
Safety measures / other people not following safety measures	55%
Lockdowns / Curfews	49%
How Canada has fared relative to other countries	26%
The origins of the virus	11%
Other, please specify:	4%

© 2021 Association for Canadian Studies
All Rights Reserved.

Created May 6, 2021



www.acs-aec.ca