



Atlantic Canadians are unanimous in their belief that COVID-19 presents an extremely serious economic threat to the Country and the region, as well as to long-term care facilities.

HALIFAX, April 24, 2020: Last week, as Atlantic Canada completed its fifth week in a state of emergency and social distancing, Narrative Research reached out to its **East Coast Voice** online panel to assess public perceptions and behaviours related to COVID-19. More than **3,200 Atlantic Canadians** shared their point of view, and the following provides the second of four research summaries that will be provided over the next week.

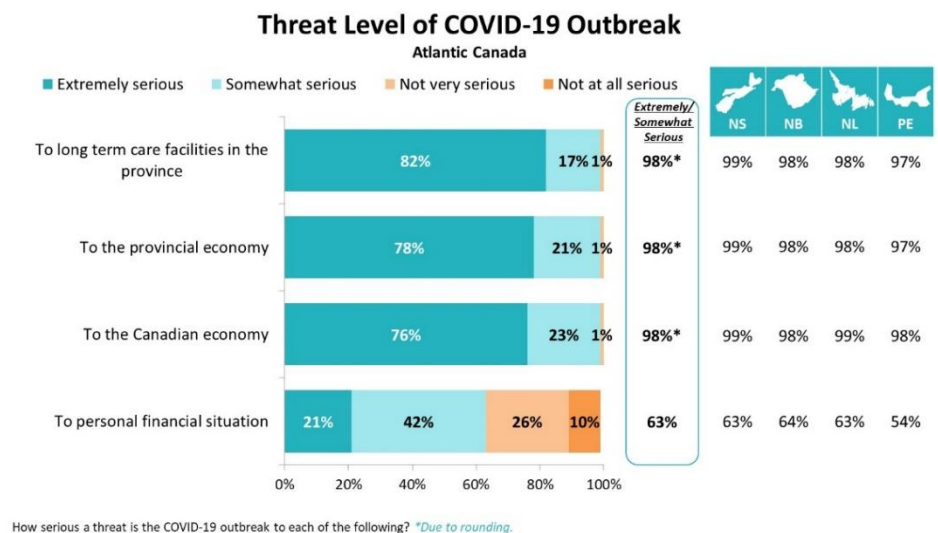
SERIOUSNESS OF THREAT

Across the region, Atlantic Canadians are of one mind about the grave impact of COVID-19. Virtually all panelists consider the Coronavirus to present a serious threat to **national and provincial economies**, and the vast majority deem it to pose an **extremely** serious economic threat.

Concern about the impact of COVID-19 on the provincial economy is most prevalent in NL, where nine in ten residents (90%) deem it to pose an **extremely** serious threat to the province's economy. Across provinces, the perceived severity of the threat of COVID-19 on the economy increases with age.

Across the region, and consistent across demographics, the COVID-19 outbreak is considered to present an extremely serious threat to **long term care facilities**, but this perception is most evident in Nova Scotia where nine in ten (90%) deem it to be an **extremely** serious threat. This is perhaps not surprising given the higher incidence of outbreaks in long term care facilities in Nova Scotia.

For most Atlantic Canadians (63%), COVID-19 poses a **serious threat to their personal financial situation**, with two in ten considering it to present an **extremely** serious threat. The level of perceived threat is less evident in PE. Overall, close to four in ten Atlantic Canadians do not believe the COVID-19 presents a serious threat to their personal financial situation. Those in lower income households are most likely to consider the outbreak an extremely serious threat to their personal financial situation.



“Atlantic Canadians uniformly recognize the gravity of the threat COVID-19 presents to our national and provincial economies, and most regard the virus as presenting a serious threat to their own personal financial situation,” said Margaret Brigley, CEO and Partner of Narrative Research.

PERSONAL CONCERN ABOUT CONTRACTING COVID-19

Following the fifth week of social distancing, the vast majority of Atlantic Canadians (81%) expressed some level of **concern about personally contracting the COVID-19 virus**, albeit to varying degrees of concern (35% extremely concerned and 47% somewhat concerned). Concern is most pronounced in NL and NS, and regardless of province, concern increases with age. Two in ten Atlantic Canadians (19%) are not concerned about contracting the virus, and PE residents, males and those between the ages of 18 and 34 years express the least level of concern.



Personally Concerned About Contracting COVID-19		
NL		85%
NS		82%
NB		79%
PE		75%

There is an elevated level of concern among Atlantic Canadians that someone in their immediate family will contract the COVID-19 virus, with half (49%) expressing **extreme** concern in this regard.



Concerned Immediate Family Will Contract COVID-19		
NL		91%
NS		91%
NB		86%
PE		83%

Concern about contracting COVID-19 either personally or by a family member is most prevalent among older residents (55yrs+) and females.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Despite the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our lives dramatically, and presents a serious concern to our economic and personal well-being, Atlantic Canadians have had limited contact with the virus itself.

Likely a direct result of social distancing, findings indicate that overall, less than one in ten (7%) have **experienced, or had someone in their household experience, COVID-19 symptoms** (such as cough, fever or difficulty breathing) within the past two weeks. Similarly, only five percent of survey respondents indicated that someone in their household **has been tested** for COVID-19 since February. Incidence of both these experiences is slightly higher in Nova Scotia, which is perhaps not surprising given its increased incidence of testing and the higher number of reported cases in that province.

COVID-19 Personal Experience					
	% Saying "Yes"				
	Atlantic Canada	NS	NB	NL	PE
Personally know someone who has been diagnosed	12%	14%	10%	12%	7%
Someone in household has experienced COVID-19 symptoms within the past two weeks	7%	8%	6%	5%	5%
Someone in household has been tested since February	5%	6%	4%	3%	4%

One in ten Atlantic Canadians (12%) personally know someone who has been diagnosed, and once again, this incidence is most prevalent in Nova Scotia, followed closely by Newfoundland & Labrador. Across the region, experiences are generally consistent across the population, although the likelihood of having experienced symptoms or having had someone in the household tested decreases with age.

“Residents’ level of concern clearly indicates that fear of the virus is influencing opinions more so than Atlantic Canadians’ personal experience, given that few have actually experienced symptoms and only one in ten actually know someone who has been diagnosed,” said Margaret Brigley.

This is the second of four research summaries that will be provided within the next week. Watch for further details on Atlantic Canadians’ perceptions and behaviours related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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This survey was conducted from April 16 to April 19, 2020, with **3,236 Atlantic Canadians**, 18 years of age or older, from Narrative Research’s online panel, **East Coast Voice**. This sample included responses from each Atlantic province (NB: 975; NS: 1,573; NL: 466; PE: 222). Using data from the 2016 Census, the results were weighted by gender, age, and region to reflect these population characteristics in each province.

As a non-probability sample (i.e. a panel sample where residents have joined a panel to share their opinions), and in accordance with CRIC Public Opinion Research Standards, a margin of error is not applied.

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