



PRESS RELEASE | Canada

Methodology:

Results are based on an online study conducted from March 30 to April 1, 2020, among 1,000 adults in Canada. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.1 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

Over the past two months, have you sought information on the COVID-19 outbreak in each of the following ways?

National news outlets (radio, television, print, websites) – 69%
Briefings and Press Conferences by the Prime Minister – 67%
Local news outlets (radio, television, print, websites) – 62%
Briefings and Press Conferences by your Premier / Provincial Ministers / Health authorities – 59%
Health Canada website (Canada.ca) – 46%
Provincial government health websites – 40%
None of these – 4%

COVID-19 Fosters Interest in National and Local News in Canada

More than two-in-five Canadians have received or seen messages featuring unproven claims about COVID-19.

Vancouver, BC [April 10, 2020] – Most Canadians are paying attention to accurately sourced news related to the COVID-19 outbreak, but more than two-in-five have been exposed to messages featuring unverified assertions about the virus, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample, more than three-in-five Canadians have sought information on the COVID-19 outbreak through national news outlets (69%), briefings and press conferences by the Prime Minister (67%) and local news outlets (62%).

Almost three-in-five Canadians (59%) have watched briefings and press conferences by their Premier, provincial ministers and health authorities, while fewer have visited the Health Canada website (46%) and provincial government health websites (40%).

Practically four-in-five Canadians aged 55 and over (79%) have watched the prime minister's briefings and press conferences, compared to 67% among Canadians aged 35-to-54 and 60% among Canadians aged 18-to-34.

"There is a noticeable gender gap when it comes to seeking information about COVID-19 online," says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. "More than half of Canadian women (53%) have visited the Health Canada website, compared to only 44% of men."

Almost two thirds of residents of Atlantic Canada (65%) and Quebec (also 65%) have watched the press briefings from provincial public servants, compared to 58% in both Ontario and British Columbia, 53% in Alberta and 50% in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Across the country, 56% of Canadians did not recall receiving or seeing any of five messages—by email, text, WhatsApp or in social media—featuring unproven claims about COVID-19.

More than one-in-four Canadians were exposed to messages claiming that COVID-19 is an artificially created biological weapon (27%) and that COVID-19 was created in a laboratory (26%).



Smaller proportions of Canadians recalled claims about COVID-19 originating in the United States (14%) and that getting more sunlight can protect against the virus (10%).

More than four-in-five Canadians who saw the message related to COVID-19's hypothetical creation in a laboratory believe it is "definitely" or "probably" true (43%). Similar proportions feel the same way about sunlight providing protection against the virus (39%) and the virus being an artificially created biological weapon (38%).

Fewer Canadians who recalled an assertion about COVID-19's supposed American origin find the claim believable (28%).

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About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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