



# Statistics Canada – Responding to the Pandemic

June 12, 2020

Delivering insight through data, for a better Canada




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# COVID-19



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- Preparation and Prioritization
- Subject Matter Considerations
- Staying Relevant
- The HR Element
- Lessons Learned

# COVID – Preparation and prioritization

## BCP Testing Offsite

March 11, employees responsible for mission critical programs were whisked on a bus and taken offsite. Once there they had to work through a production cycle with different scenarios. This allowed us to work out the kinks, determine communication, priorities, fix systems that would not work offsite and plan for work under different HR availability scenarios.

## Clear prioritization

Senior management quickly identified 22 mission critical programs and made those the priority. This was clearly communicated to the staff and guided decision making. All data shedding light on the pandemic was also prioritized.

## Strong decision making

Early on a decision was made to access SSI, to make working from home effective. Daily meetings with top officials helped with timely decision making. Social distancing made logistical issues surrounding retrieving equipment a challenge. Prioritization was necessary.

## Technology

At the beginning Bandwidth and VPN licenses were insufficient. Access was limited to employees working on mission critical programs. Usage was closely monitored and access was progressively expanded. New tools were added to enhance collaboration.

# COVID - Impacts on Ongoing Programs

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## Conceptual Challenges

- Negative seasonally adjusted values, oil prices
- Projectors made for stable economy
- Treatment of government subsidies
- Reconciling output when employees getting paid but not working

## Impacts on priorities

- Potential delays for non-mission critical programs
- Expansions for COVID data, custom tabulations
- Interdependencies, complexities in macroeconomic accounts

## Data Gaps

Challenges for accessing administrative data and delays receiving the data from banks, governments

## Data quality

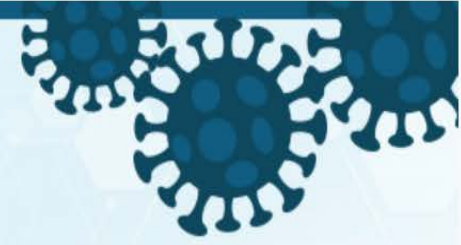
Minor challenges persist that could impact our data quality; response rates are slightly lower for some surveys. Modelled data needed extra review

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Shifting Priorities to answer the questions of the day

# COVID-19 A data perspective

Developing new products to provide timely insights on impacts of COVID



Flash estimates, Crowdsourcing, horizontal analysis

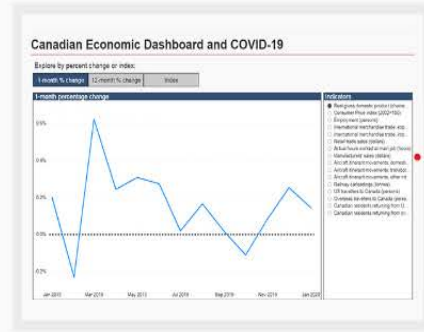
## Highlights



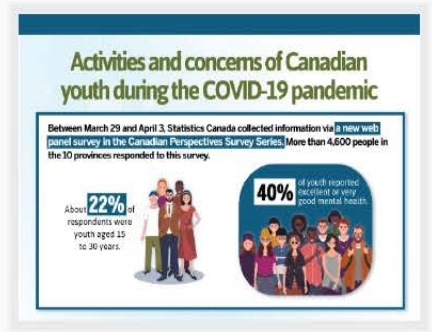
Data tables related to COVID-19



Canadian Statistical Geospatial Explorer Hub



Canadian Economic Dashboard and COVID-19



Activities and concerns of Canadian youth during the COVID-19 pandemic

Increasing role of data steward,

Providing expertise in areas such as modelling

All COVID-19 rel

# 1. Recording COVID-19 measures in the national accounts

Articles and reports: 13-605-X202000100001

Description: Since March, Canadian governments, federal, provincial and local, along with their associated government business enterprises, have been implementing a wide range of policy...

[More](#)



## StatCan COVID-19: Data to Insights for a Better Canada

A series of articles on various subjects which explore the impact of COVID-19 on the socio-economic landscape. New articles will be released periodically.

### Impact of economic consequences of COVID-19 on Canadians' social concerns

This article examines the extent to which Canadians' personal financial concerns are associated with greater concerns about family life and social cohesion (family stress from confinement, violence in the home, maintaining social ties, the ability to cooperate and support one another, and the risk of civil disorder).

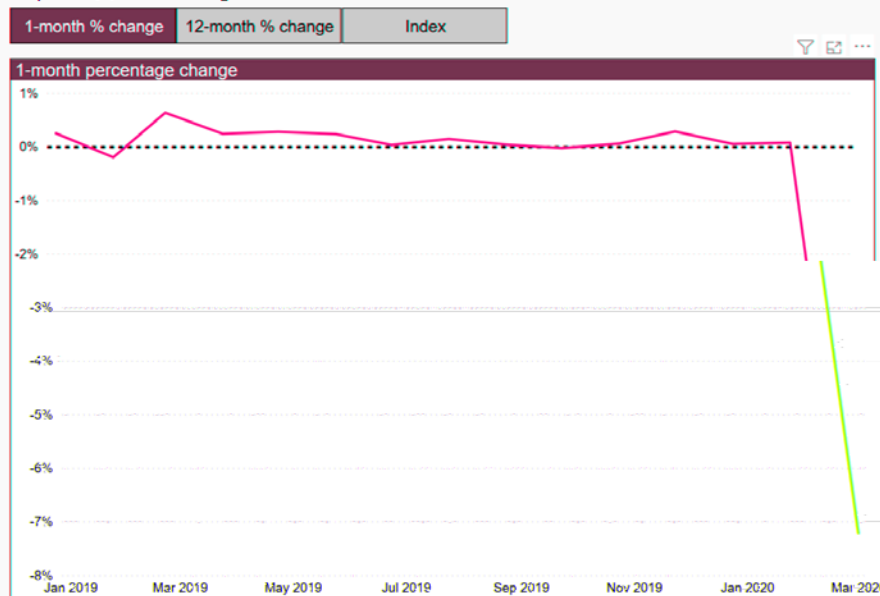
### Running the economy remotely: Potential for working from home during and after COVID-19

Physical distancing measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 have resulted in a large number of Canadians working from home, many for the first time. This sudden transition in how the economy is operating raises questions about how many jobs can reasonably be performed from home.

### Indigenous people in urban areas: Vulnerabilities to the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19

Using the 2016 Census and the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, the article highlights key measures of economic well being (low income, food security, ability to deal with unexpected expenses) for First Nations people, Métis and Inuit living in medium population centres (30,000 to 99,999 residents) and large urban population centres (100,000 or more residents).

[All articles](#)



- ### Indicators
- Real gross domestic product
  - Consumer Price Index (2002=100)
  - Employment (persons)
  - International merchandise exports
  - International merchandise imports
  - Retail trade sales (dollars)
  - Actual hours worked at non-manufacturing establishments, domestic
  - Manufacturers' sales (domestic)
  - Aircraft itinerant movements
  - Railway carloadings (total)
  - US travellers to Canada
  - Overseas travellers to Canada
  - Canadian residents returning from overseas
  - Canadian residents returning from overseas

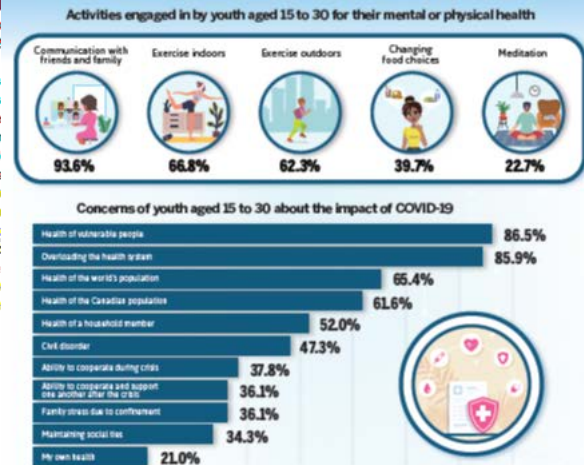
## Activities and concerns of Canadian youth during the COVID-19 pandemic

Between March 29 and April 3, Statistics Canada collected information via a new web panel survey in the Canadian Perspectives Survey Series. More than 4,600 people in the 10 provinces responded to this survey.

About **22%** of respondents were youth aged 15 to 30 years.

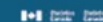


**40%** of youth reported excellent or very good mental health.



Source: Canadian Perspectives Survey Series, March/April 2020. ISBN: 978-0-603-94725-5 | Catalogue number: 13-627-X

Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Industry, 2020



www.statcan.gc.ca



## New Products related to COVID 19

### Transactions

Statistics Canada published a count of import transactions for April just days after the month. This can be interpreted as a bellweather indication for the value of imports and exports.

### PPE

A separate trade release was produced for trade in medical and protective goods which are of particular importance during the pandemic

### Flash Estimates

A flash IIP was produced days after the quarter. A monthly GDP flash estimate was also produced to meet user requirements for timely estimates.

### Monthly TEC

Production of monthly insights into who is trading during the COVID crisis and their characteristics – the only monthly indicator of this kind in the world.

As part of Statistics Canada's prioritization on providing COVID 19 insights, several new products have been created related to the Macroeconomic Accounts. These innovative products provide timely context on the impact of COVID 19. There are longer term possibilities for some of these products if there is user demand.

# HR Element

The message was clear and consistent:  
Employee Health and Safety comes first

Government of Canada Employees – Special  
Paid leave COVID 19, Caring for Small Children

Emphasis on Mental Health Resources  
Available

Employees offline, feeling isolated, like work is  
less valued

## Our values



TRUSTWORTHY



PURPOSEFUL



CARING AND  
INCLUSIVE



CURIOUS AND  
ALWAYS LEARNING



## Lessons learned



Working from home can work – clear communication is paramount  
We will never go back to how things were



People want to be productive, contributing members of a team  
Staff can be determined to succeed no matter the obstacles



Partners should have a shared understanding of priorities for success  
Our priorities will change as a result of this experience



Keep processes simple and consistent  
Trust your employees and managers



Technology is a great enabler  
Invest in technology to facilitate telework