

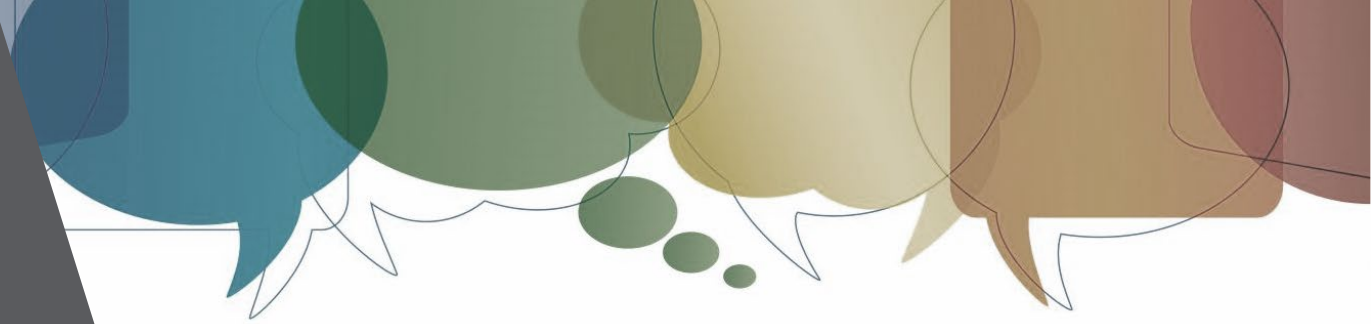


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APRIL 2020 RESEARCH

PULSE REPORT ON COVID-19 – REPORT #6

CABINET OFFICE

April 7th 2020



KEY FINDINGS

Key Findings

1 Ontario's 'right track' has increased to 83% in the April 4-6 wave. Women are now on par with men in believing the government is on the 'right track'. 'Wrong track' is now at 17%.

2 Mirroring the 'right/wrong track' scores, positive perceptions toward the government's handling of COVID-19 have increased to their highest level (+67).

Moreover, perceptions on all key health and economic/financial metrics have also improved in the latest waves.

Ontarians are strongly supportive of the government's actions.

3 The level of concern about Ontarians' health, financial and economic well-being remains high, but stable in the latest wave.

4 Reflecting the high levels of concern, there is strong - almost universal - support for tougher measures to stop spread of COVID-19.

5 There are two yellow flags in the latest wave:

- 1) 17% (up from 10%) think governments are over-reacting to the threat posed by COVID-19.
- 2) There is evidence of fatigue with social isolation, even though it is widely understood 'staying home save lives'.

6 On a positive front, Ontarians have a feeling that the province is winning the war against COVID-19. But, over one-third wonder if there is sufficient testing to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Key Findings

7 Some 40% say that the government did not move fast enough to stop the spread of COVID-19. This is a potential vulnerability.

8 On the surface, Ontarians believe the dire projections on the health impact of COVID-19. However, there is a segment (about 20%) which is skeptical about the estimates of 3,000 to 15,000 deaths in Ontario.

9 Overall, the provincial government clearly has the support of Ontarians. There is a strong commitment to physical distancing/social isolation.

There is strong, if not overwhelming, support for tough measures to stop the spread of the disease.

There is also hope that the province is winning the war against COVID-19.

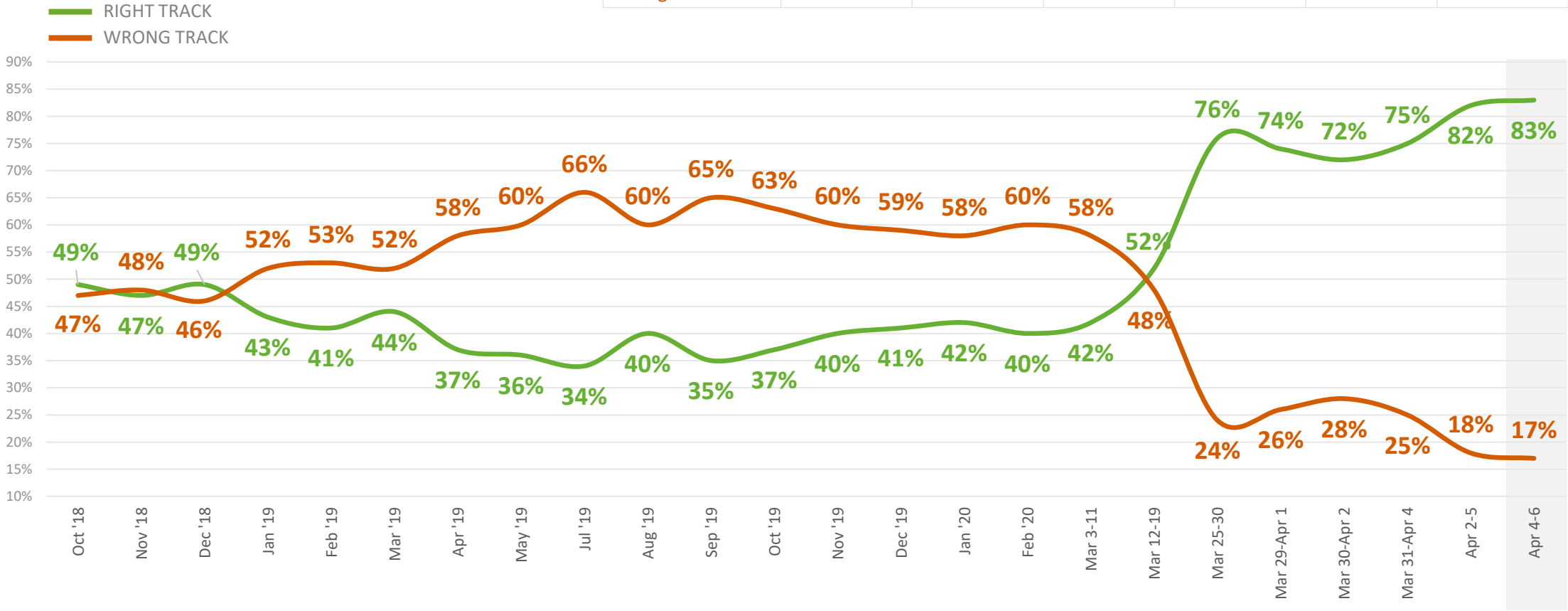
However, there is evidence of some fatigue with social isolation. Almost one-quarter say they don't feel they can stay home much longer. This needs to be monitored.

RIGHT TRACK
WRONG TRACK



Recent waves indicate that government’s ‘right track’ scores have increased to their highest level (83%). Women’s ‘right track’ scores are on par with men.

Women	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
Right Track	76%	71%	69%	73%	81%	84%
Wrong Track	24%	29%	31%	27%	19%	16%



↑↓ indicates a significant change since previous wave

Q2. Overall, do you feel that the Ontario provincial government is on the right track or the wrong track, in terms of how it is governing the province? Base: Total sample

The government’s rating on ‘keeping people safe during COVID-19’ appears has increased to its highest level (+67) in the latest wave. Government is also receiving its highest scores on ‘delivering quality healthcare’ and ‘reducing overcrowding in hospitals’.

- Perceptions toward government’s economic/financial performance have also improved – they are also at their highest levels.

	NET SCORE: Good (7-9) – Poor (1-3)									
	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 3-11	Mar 12-19	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
HEALTH METRICS										
Delivering quality healthcare to Ontarians	-7	-11	-5	+3	+21	+17	+21	+21	+29	+33
Reducing overcrowding in hospitals	-37	-42	-32	-32	-13	-13	-11	-2	+7	+7
Keeping people safe during the COVID-19 situation	-	-	-	+29	+53	+63	+57	+63	+60	+67
ECONOMIC/GOVERNMENT SPENDING METRICS										
Building the provincial economy	-9	-2	0	-3	+24	+22	+29	+31	+32	+35
Creating and protecting jobs	-15	-12	-7	-7	+21	+22	+28	+21	+24	+31
Improve Ontario’s finances	-5	-8	-5	-8	+14	+10	+18	+17	+21	+22

Q5. Using a scale where, where 1 means “poor” and nine is “excellent”, how would you rate the performance of Ontario government at managing each of the following? Bases vary

COVID-19



About six-in-ten continue to report that either themselves or a member of their immediate family has experienced loss of employment or reduced work hours.

	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	295	290	300	360	300	310
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	60	55	58	58	64	61
No	39	44	41	41	35	38
Don't know	<1	1	1	1	<1	<1

QCV-1A. Have you or an immediate family member been laid off, had reduced work hours or had to shut down a business as a direct result of the COVID-19 outbreak?
Base: Total sample

The level of concern about Ontarians’ health, financial and economic well being continue to be high, but stable.

% VERY/SOMEWHAT CONCERNED	Mar 16-19	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	317	295	290	300	360	300	310
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The health of an immediate family member	78	87 ↑	86	84	86	86	88
Employment of an immediate family member	64	77 ↑	72	74	76	80	76
Your own health	61	74 ↑	73	74	75	75	76
The financial security of your household	67	67	68	69	70	74	74
Your employment	39	53 ↑	50	52	52	61 ↑	62

↑↓ indicates a significant change since previous wave

QCV-1. How concerned are you that the coronavirus or COVID-19 will impact you personally in each of the following ways? (Wave 1 phrasing) How concerned are you that the coronavirus or COVID-19 will affect you personally in each of the following ways?

Base: Total sample

Now 91% report they have ‘definitely’ seen, read, or heard something from the Ontario government about measures they are taking to limit the spread of COVID-19. A further 7% say they may have.

	Mar 16-19	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	317	295	290	300	360	300	310
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, definitely	78	89 ↑	87	85	86	88	91
Yes, maybe	13	7 ↓	9	9	10	8	7
No	9	4 ↓	4	6	4	4	2

↑↓ indicates a significant change since previous wave

Ontarians are expressing high levels of approval (93%) for the way the provincial government is handling the situation. The intensity of the approval (‘strongly’ approve) has risen to 61% in Apr 4-6.

	Mar 16-19	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	317	295	290	300	360	300	310
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT APPROVE	84	88	91	92	92	91	93
Strongly approve	38	49 ↑	53	57	56	57	61
Somewhat approve	46	39	38	35	37	34	32
Somewhat disapprove	9	6	5	4	3	3	3
Strongly disapprove	6	4	3	2	3	3	3
STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT DISAPPROVE	14	9	8	6	6	7	6
Don’t know/Refuse	2	3	1	2	2	2	<1

↑↓ indicates a significant change since previous wave

The proportion of Ontarians who feel the government ‘is not doing as much as they should’ has stabilized in the recent waves. Those who think the government is on the ‘right track’ (76%) are more inclined to think the government is doing what is required.

	Mar 16-19	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	317	295	290	300	360	300	310
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Doing more than is necessary	8	7	6	5	5	7	7
Doing what is required	75	71	71	72	73	70	73
Not doing as much as they should	17	22	23	24	22	23	20



	Doing what is Required %			Not doing as much they should %		
	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
Right Track	77	74	76	18	20	17
Wrong Track	60	55	60	35	39	32

QCV-6. Thinking about the measures that the Government of Ontario has already taken to limit the spread of the virus, including issuing a Declaration of Emergency, ordering non-essential businesses to close, advising the public and businesses about prevention measures and closing publicly funded schools, at this time would you say they are ... (READ LIST. RANDOMIZE ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.) (Wave 1 phrasing) Thinking about the measures that the Government of Ontario has already taken to limit the spread of the virus, including advising the public and businesses about prevention measures and closing publicly funded schools, at this time would you say they are ...

Base: Total sample

‘More/better protective equipment’, ‘more testing of health workers’, ‘maintaining restrictions as long as necessary’, and ‘stringent stay-at-home measures’ engendered broad support among Ontarians.

% CRITICALLY/SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	Apr 4-6
n=	varies
	%
More and better protective equipment for health care workers	98
More COVID-19 testing among health workers, those... those who were in contact with someone who has been diagnosed as having COVID-19	98
The restrictions should be kept in place for as long as necessary	97
More stringent stay-at-home measures	94
Stronger enforcement of the stay-at-home measures that are currently in place, including fines and jail time	85
Fewer businesses should be listed as essential, and able to stay open	79
Everyone should be required to wear a mask when out in public	65

QCV-7a. How important, if at all, to you personally are each of the following potential actions that the provincial government could take in dealing with the COVID-19 situation?
Base: Total sample

Ontarians also view a variety of potential measures as important – requiring workplaces to practice physical distancing, increasing workplace cleaning, and protecting frontline workers such as in grocery stores.

% VERY/SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT		Apr 4-6
	n=	varies
		%
Require all workplaces considered essential to practice physical distancing		100
Force workplaces considered essential to clean more often		99
Provide more masks and protective equipment to workplaces considered essential		96
Require workplaces considered essential, such as grocery stores, to install plexiglass shields		92
Require all workers in workplaces considered essential to wear masks		87

QCV-13. How important, or not, to you is it that the provincial government undertake the following?
Base: Total sample

Ontarians continue to overwhelmingly believe the governments’ current measures are prudent and necessary even if some of them seem harsh or restrictive.

	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	295	290	300	360	300	310
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Governments are doing what is prudent and necessary under the circumstances, even if some of the measures seem harsh and restrictive.	91	94	95	95	94	94
Governments are making decisions too quickly without evidence that may cause more long-term harm than the pandemic itself.	9	6	5	5	6	6

There continues to be very strong support for the government’s actions – declaration of emergency, closing all non-essential stores, introducing a number of restrictions – to limit the spread of the virus.

	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	295	290	300	360	300	310
	%	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL SUPPORTIVE	96	96	97	98	98	98
Very supportive	79	82	80	82	84	89
Somewhat supportive	17	14	16	15	14	9
Somewhat opposed	4	3	2	1	1	2
Very opposed	1	1	1	1	<1	-
TOTAL OPPOSED	4	4	3	2	1	2
Don’t know	-	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1

QCV-8A. The Government of Ontario has declared a state of emergency, closed all non-essential stores, and introduced a number of restrictions to limit the spread of the virus. Would you say you are ... (READ LIST. ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.)
...of the government taking this step?

Base: Total sample

There continues to be underlying perceptions that the government could be doing more to stop the spread of COVID-19. The proportion of Ontarians who think the governments are over-reacting to the threat posed by COVID-19 has increased in recent waves – just under 1-in-5 (17%) now agree with this view.

HEALTH

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies
	%	%	%	%	%	%
The government could do more to stop the spread of COVID-19.	63	67	65	62	64	67
Our health care system lacks the ability to manage effectively through this crisis.	62	61	58	58	60	61
I think governments are over-reacting to the threat posed by COVID-19.	13	12	6	6	10	17

QCV-8B. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the effects of COVID-19. The first is ...

Base: Total sample

Most people continue to say they are willing to socially/physically isolate themselves as long as it takes to combat COVID-19. Over three-quarters say the government should take stronger action to enforce social/physical distancing.

SOCIAL/PHYSICAL DISTANCING

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies
	%	%	%	%	%	%
I am prepared to stay home or isolate myself and my family for as long as it takes to combat COVID-19.	95	96	94	94	93	96
The government should take stronger actions to enforce social/physical distancing.	78	76	76	78	84	83

QCV-8B. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the effects of COVID-19. The first is ...

Base: Total sample

One-in-two believe that the government’s actions may negatively affect their financial well-being more than the potential health issues.

ECONOMIC

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Given the measures governments are taking, I personally feel that my financial well-being will be harmed more than my health.	47	47	50	50	52	50

QCV-8B. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the effects of COVID-19. The first is ...
Base: Total sample

There continues to be worry about the potential of social and civil unrest resulting from COVID-19. The level of agreement has increased in recent waves.

WORRIES ABOUT UNREST, SAFETY AND CRIME

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE	Mar 25-30	Mar 29-Apr 1	Mar 30-Apr 2	Mar 31-Apr 4	Apr 2-5	Apr 4-6
n=	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Governments should be planning now to take steps to address major social and civil unrest as a result of COVID-19.	73	72	73	74	79	81

QCV-8B. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the effects of COVID-19. The first is ...

Base: Total sample

There is some evidence of fatigue with social isolation: 43% find the lack of social life extremely difficult, 40% say they are feeling frustrating being at home, and 23% say they don't feel they can home much longer.

SOCIAL ISOLATION BEHAVIOUR

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE	Apr 4-6
n=	varies
	%
I believe that I am saving lives by staying at home	96
I am only leaving my house to go to the grocery store and the pharmacy.	80
I find a lack of a social life extremely difficult	43
I am starting to feel very frustrated being at home	40
I don't feel I can stay at home much longer	23

QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about COVID-19:

Base: Total sample

Most Ontarians feel hopeful that the province is winning the war against COVID-19. However, some 35% believe that we are doing enough COVID-19 testing to mitigate the spread.

VIEWS ON THE WAR AGAINST COVID-19

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE		Apr 4-6
	n=	varies
		%
I feel hopeful that we are winning the war against COVID-19		73
Even if I did get COVID-19, I don't think I would be seriously ill		39
We are doing enough COVID-19 testing among those who feel sick to mitigate the spread of the virus		35
I don't think someone like me will get COVID-19		14

QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about COVID-19:

Base: Total sample

Some 40% say the provincial government did not move fast enough to stop the spread of COVID-19. This is a potential vulnerability. There is some scepticism about the government projections on the number of people becoming ill with the disease.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE	Apr 4-6
n=	varies
	%
The provincial government is doing all it can to ensure those working in essential industries and services remain free from COVID-19	66
The provincial government has not moved as quickly as it could to try to stop the spread of COVID-19	40
I don't believe as many people will become ill with COVID-19 as the government projections say	20

QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about COVID-19:

Base: Total sample

On the surface, Ontarians believe the dire projections on the health impact of the COVID-19. However, as noted on the previous slide, there is a segment which is skeptical.

% VERY/SOMEWHAT BELIEVABLE	Apr 4-6
n=	209
	%
Those over the age of 60 face are more likely to catch the virus and die.	93
Had Ontario taken no action, we would be facing an estimated 300,000 cases and 6,000 deaths.	92
By taking the actions it did, so far Ontario has avoided an estimated 220,000 cases and 4,400 deaths.	91
Over the course of the pandemic, it is estimated that there will be between 3,000 and 15,000 deaths in Ontario.	89

QCV-15. A number of leading health care experts has just released the latest modelling on the impact of COVID-19. How believable to you are the following statements?
Base: Total sample