

## COVID-19: Half of Canadians confident their community would lock down again if second wave arrives

*Half fear a second wave would do worse economic damage than first*

**July 20, 2020** – Temperatures are rising across the country and public health officials are intensifying their messaging in attempts to keep Canadians, especially those under the age of 40, committed to their social distancing practices amid the COVID-19 outbreak. This, after cases have ticked upward in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Vigilance is likely to continue to be a challenge and many Canadians are worried about how a second wave of the virus would hit their already fatigued communities. A new study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds just half of Canadians voicing confidence that their community would go back into the same style of lockdown employed for the first wave, if a second wave were to emerge later this year.

Residents in British Columbia and Manitoba are most confident in how their communities would respond, but fewer than half in all other regions of the country hold this faith.

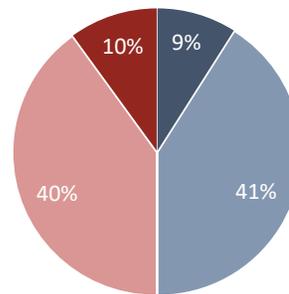
Two aspects of a potential second wave appear most concerning to Canadians. The first is that half (51%) feel the economic damage from an autumn or winter second wave would be worse than the first. This anxiety is most pronounced in Alberta and Atlantic Canada.

Additionally, the overwhelming majority say that a second wave would be difficult for them from a mental health standpoint. Three-in-ten (28%) say it would have a very negative impact on their mental wellbeing, while 43 per cent say it would be negative to a lesser extent.

### More Key Findings:

- Young women are most likely to say that a second lockdown would have a very negative effect on their mental health — 42 per cent say this would be the case. One-in-five Canadians (22%) say it would not affect them

**How confident are you that others in your community would follow the same protocols with social distancing, handwashing, and avoiding public spaces, if they were asked to do it again later this year?**



■ Very confident    ■ Confident  
■ Not that confident    ■ Not confident at all

### METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from July 10-11, 2020 among a representative randomized sample of 1,503 Canadian adults who are members of Angus Reid Forum. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release

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- One-in-five Canadians (20%) say they think Canada would fare better with respect to deaths and illness in the event of a second wave. Two-in-five (39%) anticipate that it would be about the same, while one-in-three (33%) feel it would be worse
- One-in-three (34%) say a second lockdown would have no effect on their personal finances, while the majority – 57 per cent – say it would have a negative impact

### **About ARI**

*The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.*

### **INDEX:**

#### **Part One: Canadians divided over their neighbours' willingness lockdown again**

#### **Part Two: Would a second wave be worse?**

- **Half fear a second wave would do worse economic damage than first**
- **Personal economic anxiety**
- **More optimism on health outlook**

#### **Part Three: An immense mental health challenge**

#### **Part One: Canadians divided over their neighbours' willingness lockdown again**

Canada's provinces are in [various phases](#) of reopening after a nationwide shutdown in the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak. Residents are, in most cases, trying to balance summer fun with social distancing.

While controlling this initial outbreak remains the top concern of public health officials, many Canadians are wary of what the response of their neighbours could be if a second wave of the virus were to take hold later this year.

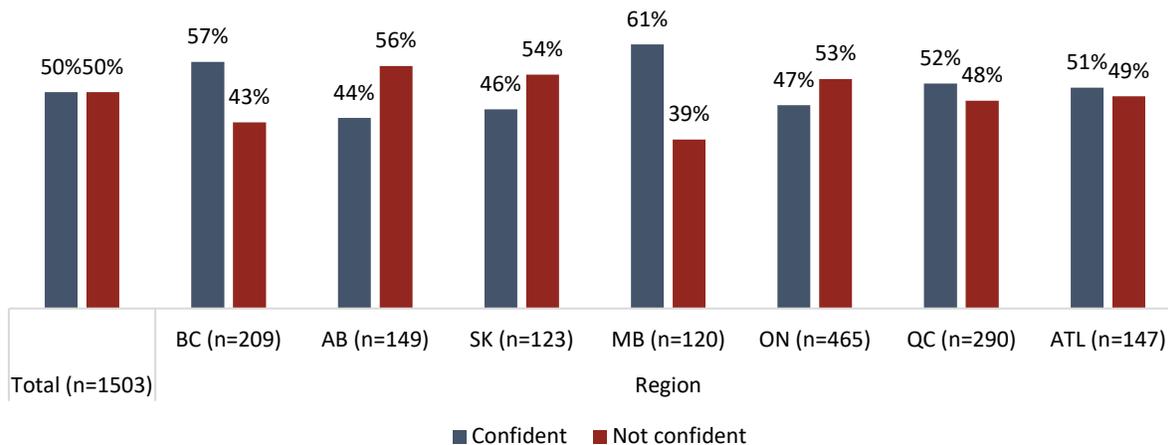
Half of Canadians say they're confident that their own community would lock down again, avoiding public spaces and returning to their best practices for social distancing. Half of Canadians are not confident. This confidence is highest in British Columbia and Manitoba, though most of the nation is divided close to evenly:

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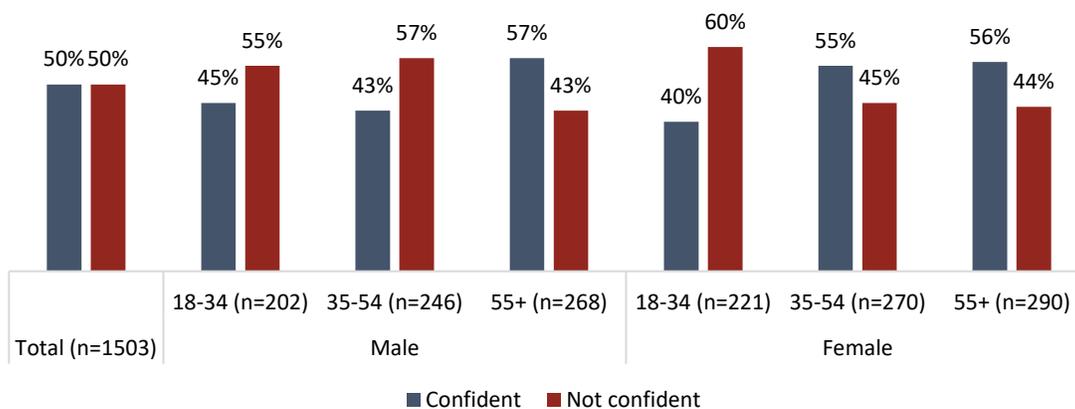
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**How confident are you that others in your community would follow the same protocols with social distancing, handwashing, and avoiding public spaces, if they were asked to do it again later this year?**



Confidence levels differ across age and gender. Men over 55 years of age and women over 34 are most likely to say they have faith that their community would respond well to another lockdown, while young women are least likely to voice confidence:

**How confident are you that others in your community would follow the same protocols with social distancing, handwashing, and avoiding public spaces, if they were asked to do it again later this year?**



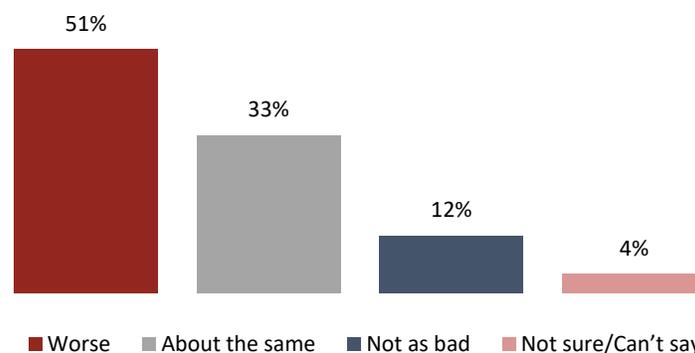
Interestingly, there is no real political element to these data. Recent voters for each of the major federal parties are equally divided among themselves about willingness to lock down ([see detailed tables for more information](#)).

**Part Two: Would a second wave be worse?**

**Half fear a second wave would do worse economic damage than first**

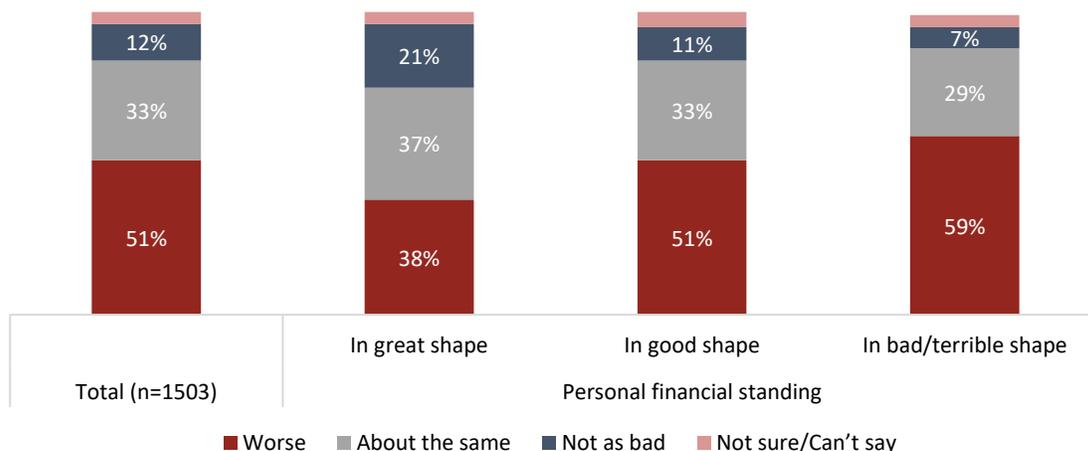
When it comes to the economy, only eight per cent of Canadians feel the damage of a second wave would not be as bad as the first, while fully half (51%) say it will be worse. Canada's unemployment rate rose to 13.7 per cent in May and the deficit has risen to more than \$360 billion. This has left more than eight million Canadians relying on federal government assistance and many wondering what to do when that program ends on October 3:

**Thinking about this potential second wave, if this does indeed happen, do you think the economic damage will be:**



Responses to this question are coloured to some extent by one's own personal financial standing. Those who are in self-described 'great shape' financially right now are three times more likely than those in bad or terrible shape to say that they feel a second wave will not be as bad economically:

**Thinking about this potential second wave, if this does indeed happen, do you think the economic damage will be:**

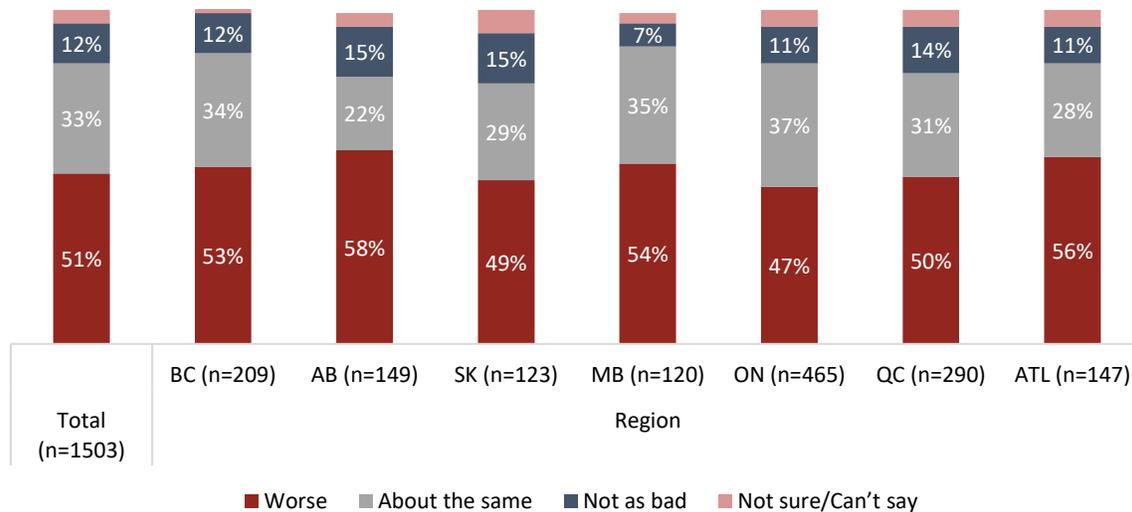


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Pessimism, or maybe better put, helplessness, is evident across the country. Close to half of Canadians in every region say a second wave would be worse economically than the first and few say it wouldn't be as bad:

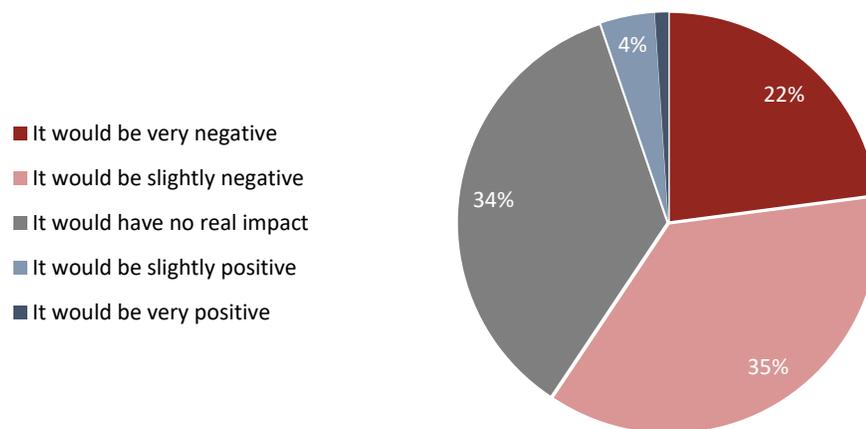
**Thinking about this potential second wave, if this does indeed happen, do you think the economic damage will be:**



**Personal economic anxiety**

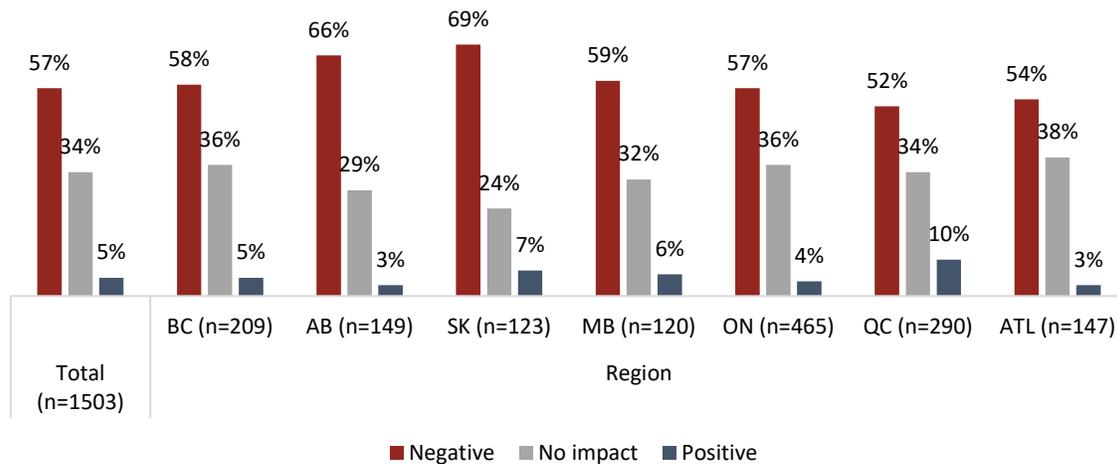
Examining this from a more personal perspective, a strong majority of Canadians say that another lockdown would hurt their own finances. For one-in-five (22%), the situation would be very difficult, while another 35 per cent would be negatively affected to a lesser extent:

**Effect of another lockdown on you personal financial situation**



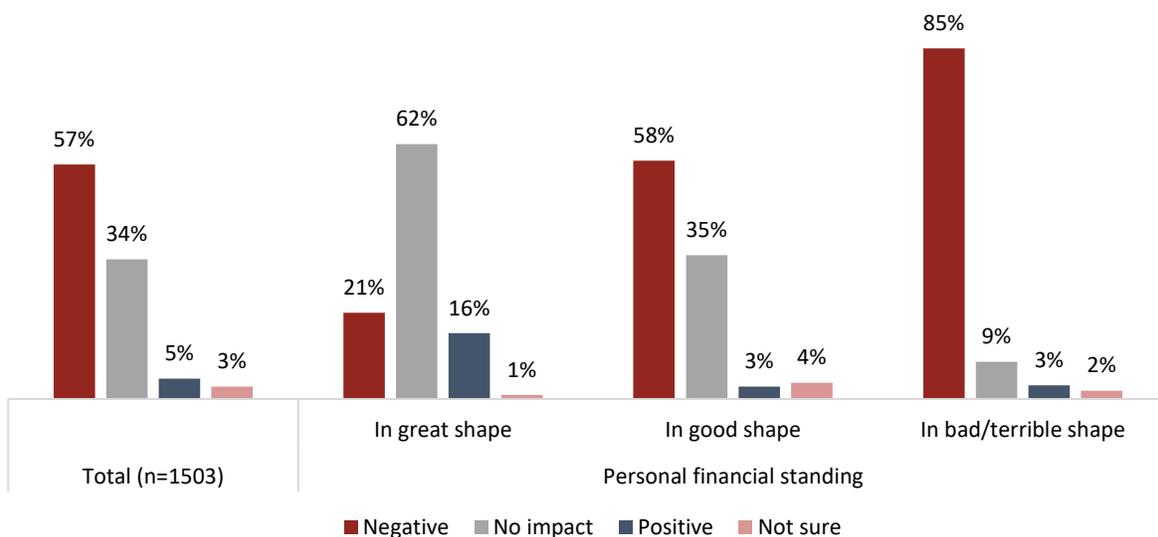
A majority of residents in every part of the country are worried about the personal financial damage that would be done in the event of a second wave, but this proportion is highest in Alberta and Saskatchewan:

### Effect of another lockdown on you personal financial situation



It is those who are suffering most already that are likely to bear the brunt of another economic downturn. Two-thirds of those who are in great shape right now (62%) say they will be unaffected by a second lockdown. Those who are in bad or terrible shape are overwhelmingly likely to say that they would be hit hard again:

### Effect of another lockdown based on current financial standing



### More optimism on health outlook

While Canada's deficit has ballooned, the number of cases of coronavirus and the deaths associated with it have been steadily dropping. To date more than 110,000 Canadians have tested positive for COVID-19,

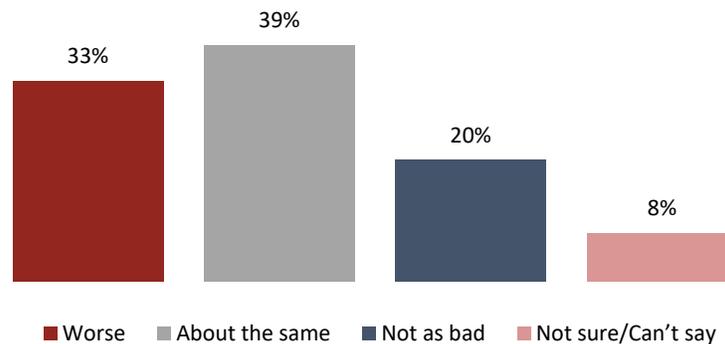
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while nearly 9,000 have died.

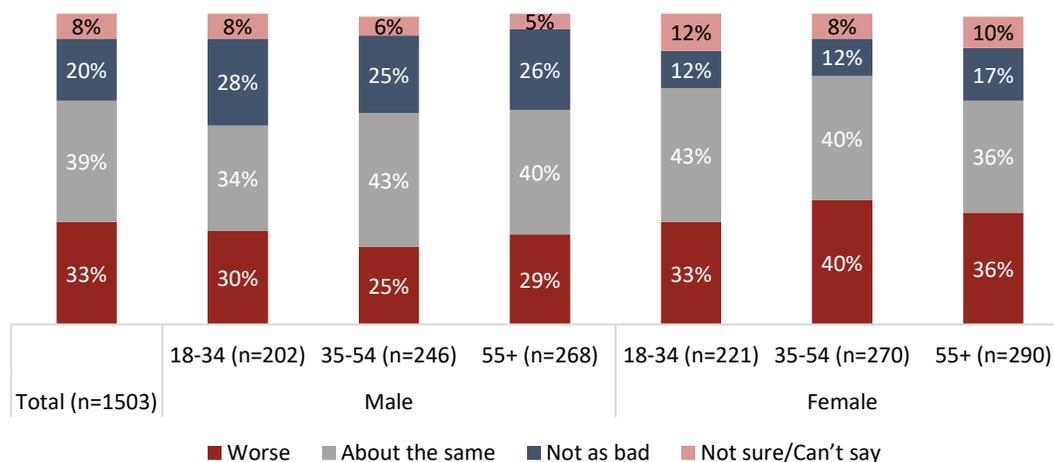
Canadians are divided when asked whether they think a second wave of the virus would be worse than the first from a health standpoint. One-in-three (33%) say that they fear Canada would face more sickness and deaths than it has seen thus far. The largest group, two-in-five (39%), say they anticipate a similar outcome, while one-in-five (20%) do not feel that the second wave would be as bad.

**Thinking about this potential second wave, if this does indeed happen, do you think the number of Canadians who become sick or die will be:**



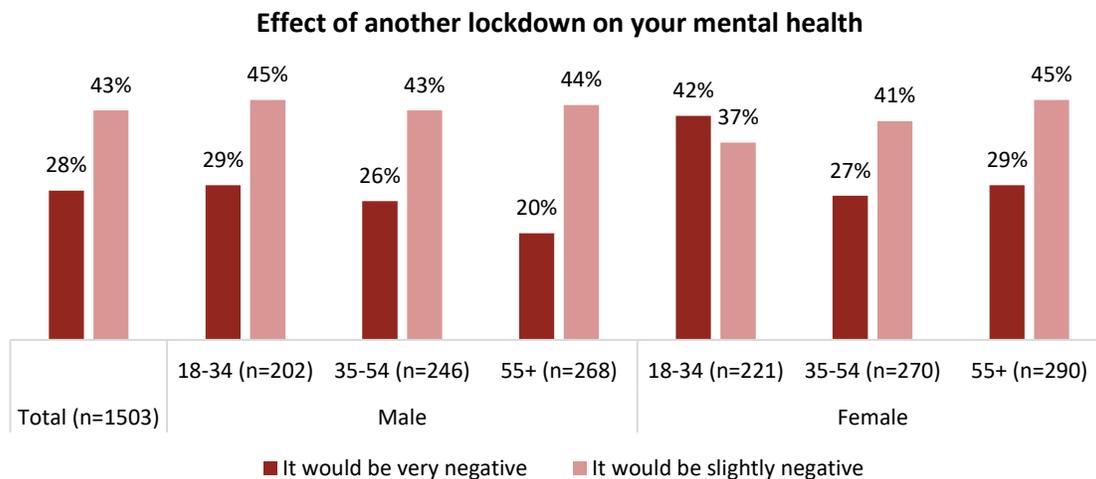
While opinions are relatively consistent across Canada's regions (see detailed tables), gender is the biggest factor in differences of opinion on this question. Men are significantly more likely than women to say that the health impacts of a second wave would not be as bad:

**Thinking about this potential second wave, if this does indeed happen, do you think the number of Canadians who become sick or die will be:**

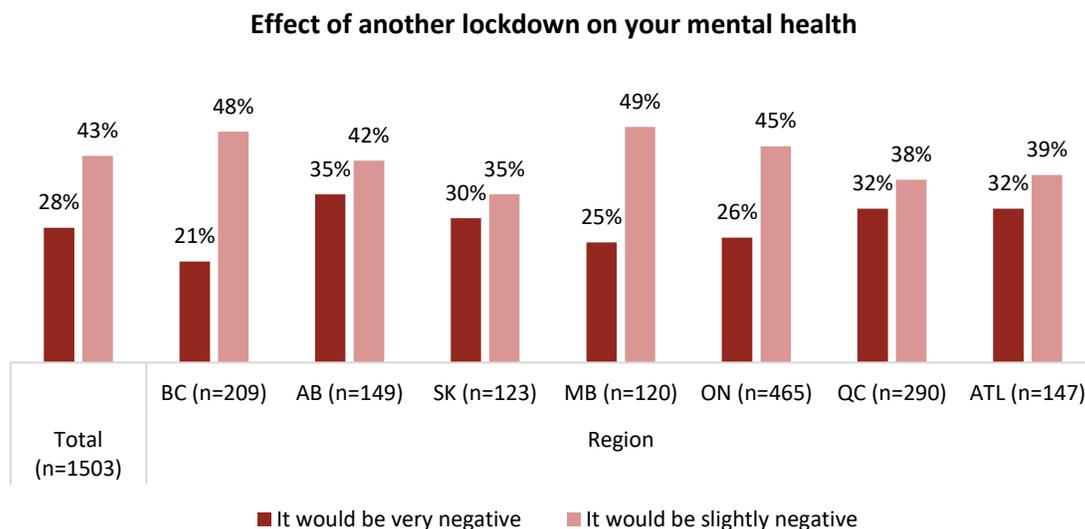


### Part Three: An immense mental health challenge

When Canadians consider what a second wave of COVID-19 would be like, one of the main challenges they anticipate is the additional emotional and mental strain. Three-in-ten (28%) say another lockdown would have a very negative effect on their mental wellbeing. The group most likely to say they would be significantly affected are young women, the same group that said it was feeling negative mental health impacts already in an [earlier](#) Angus Reid Institute study:



At least 65 per cent of Canadians in each region of the country say their mental health would suffer if they were asked to lockdown again:



**For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here.](#)**

**For detailed results by impact on personal finances, [click here.](#)**

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