



## ALMOST HALF OF ATLANTIC CANADA BEING IMPACTED BY RISING GAS, FOOD PRICES: RBC CANADIAN CONSUMER OUTLOOK INDEX

**TORONTO, April 12, 2011** — Rising gas and food prices are hitting Atlantic Canadian consumers in a big way, with almost half (49 per cent) reporting that these increased costs are having a significant impact on their budgets, according to the March 2011 [RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index](#) (RBC CCO).

Canada's east coast residents are also among the most likely (43 per cent) to focus on paying off as much debt as they can over the next year, while 30 per cent plan to spend less, 16 per cent intend to save or invest more and 25 per cent plan to do all three of these things.

"We're seeing that Atlantic Canadians are strongly focused on managing debt, while also setting money aside for future needs," said Kim Mason, regional president, Atlantic Provinces. "The goal is to achieve a good balance between paying day-to-day expenses, saving and investing."

The RBC CCO also found that 61 per cent of Atlantic Canadians believe the current state of the national economy is good – on a par with the national average – and that only 21 per cent are concerned about job losses or layoffs in the upcoming year.

Meanwhile, the most recent [Economic Outlook](#) from RBC Economics is projecting continued growth throughout the east coast, although at varying rates.

"Increasing global demand for commodities and strong capital investment will fuel Atlantic Canada's economy for the rest of this year," said Craig Wright, senior vice-president and chief economist, RBC. "We're projecting that Newfoundland and Labrador will once again lead the way, with 4.5 per cent growth in real GDP, followed by Prince Edward Island, with real GDP growth of 2.2 per cent. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia will see weaker growth, at 1.9 per cent and 1.5 per cent respectively, but we expect that 2012 will be a stronger year for both these provinces."

The RBC CCO is Canada's [most comprehensive consumer assessment](#) of the economy, personal financial situation and economic and purchasing expectations. [Other provincial highlights](#) from the March 2011 RBC CCO include:

- **Personal Financial Situation Outlook:** Close to one-third (31 per cent) of Atlantic Canada residents expect their personal finances to improve over the next year, compared to the national average of 39 per cent.

- **Spending Outlook on Major Purchases:** Over half (54 per cent) of Atlantic Canadians say they have delayed major purchases due to the state of the current economy. In addition, 23 per cent expect to increase spending over the next year.

The national RBC CCO release, full set of regional releases and related comparative data charts can be accessed via [www.rbc.com/newsroom/2011/0412-cdn-consumer.html](http://www.rbc.com/newsroom/2011/0412-cdn-consumer.html).

### **About RBC's debt management and other financial advice and interactive tools**

RBC's [myFinanceTracker](#), a new online financial management tool, offers all personal RBC [online banking](#) clients the ability, at no cost, to create a set budget and track their spending habits. Whether Canadians want to get more from their [day to day banking](#), protect what's important, save and invest, borrow with confidence or take care of their businesses, the [RBC Advice Centre](#) can help answer their questions ([www.rbcadvicecentre.com](http://www.rbcadvicecentre.com)). Interactive tools and calculators provide customized information covering many facets of personal finance. In addition, online advice videos are updated regularly to reflect current trends and to answer the questions that are top of mind with Canadians. With the guidance of RBC advisors who are available to chat live, Canadians have access to free, no-obligation professional advice about RBC products and services and personalized one-on-one [banking](#) service.

### **About the RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index**

The [RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index](#) (RBC CCO) is Canada's most comprehensive consumer assessment of the economy, personal financial situation and economic and purchasing expectations. Benchmarked as of November 2009, the RBC CCO is conducted online via [Ipsos Reid's](#) national I-Say Consumer Panel to 3,520 Canadians (534 British Columbia, 502 Alberta, 482 Saskatchewan/Manitoba, 901 Ontario, 582 Quebec, 519 Atlantic Canada). Weighting is then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. Data collection was March 11 to 15, 2011. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100 per cent response rate would have an estimated margin of error of  $\pm 1.65$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled.

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