



**Atlantic Canada  
Opportunities  
Agency**

**Agence de  
promotion économique  
du Canada atlantique**



## **2018 Atlantic Canadian Trends in Automation**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **Prepared for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency**

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**Canada** 

# 2018 Atlantic Canadian Trends in Automation

## Executive Summary

### Prepared for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Supplier name: CRA Research Associates Inc.

September 2018

The public opinion research report presents the results on a telephone survey conducted by CRA Research Associates Inc. on behalf of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. The research study was conducted with 1,500 Atlantic Canadians between August 1<sup>st</sup> to August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Tendances en automatisation au Canada Atlantique en 2018

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## **Background**

Adding questions to an omnibus study is a cost-effective means of obtaining information relevant to the Government of Canada. In a continuing effort to be aware of trends in economic, political and social issues affecting Atlantic Canadians, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) has included questions in the Atlantic Quarterly to help gauge trends in automation among regional business owners.

Experts agree that advanced manufacturing and automation are the way forward in terms of economic growth and long-term prosperity. Dubbed the fourth industrial revolution, advanced manufacturing and related technologies will represent worldwide investments of over \$900 Billion USD per year until 2020.

As fueling innovation is a priority for ACOA, it is important to get a sense of how many businesses in Atlantic Canada are already planning to automate. By getting an idea of the prevalence of automation in the region, ACOA will be able to adapt its outreach efforts to promote policies and programs that support innovation and automation.

## **Research Objectives**

The objective of asking questions about automation in the Atlantic Quarterly's omnibus survey was to gather insight into business owners' intentions to automate in the next year, as well as their plans to seek government funding to do so. This method represents a cost-effective way to gather baseline information on the subject.

The data made available by asking questions on automation will benefit Canadians by ensuring ACOA has a better understanding of regional trends. This initiative also supports the government's efforts to listen to the views of Canadians in developing relevant policies and programs. It provides insight on opportunities for further improvements and help the Agency focus its efforts on high-priority areas.

## **Summary of Findings**

The results reveal that 10% of Atlantic respondents identified as business owners. Of those surveyed, 12% overall said they "probably would" or "definitely would" be investing in advanced manufacturing or automation this year – NL (19%) and PEI (18%) having the highest percentages. The largest percentage of respondents in the definitely/probably category were between the ages of 18-34 (20%). Conversely, 87% of respondents said they "probably would not" or "definitely would not" invest, and NS was the most sure of this at 93%, followed by NB at 87%.

In terms of approaching ACOA or other federal government departments for help to invest in advanced manufacturing or automation, the most likely was NL at 18%, followed by PEI at 15%, NB at 10% and NS at 2%. The age groups most willing to apply for such programs is the 35-54 cohort (9%) and the 55-plus cohort (11%).

## **Methodology**

To fulfill these objectives, ACOA used the *Atlantic Quarterly*® omnibus product. The Atlantic Quarterly survey was comprised of telephone interviews (French or English in New Brunswick, English in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador) with a representative sample of 1,500 Atlantic Canadians (18 years and older), stratified across the four provinces to minimize the sampling error of provincial sub-samples. The survey was conducted using probability sampling, with quotas for age, gender and region within each

province. Both landline and cellular numbers were included in the sampling frame. The data was subsequently weighted to ensure results reflect the true population distribution.

The survey was conducted by telephone from August 1<sup>st</sup> to August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018, with response rates calculated as five percent across Atlantic Canada. The survey was based on a probability telephone survey, with both telephone and cell phones included.

### **Possible Extrapolation Of Results**

The overall results, based on 1,500 interviews with individuals 18 years or older from the Atlantic Canadian population, are based on a probability sample and thus can be generalized to the overall population. More specifically, the results can be extrapolated to the population of Atlantic Canadian residents 18 years or older, with results accurate to within plus or minus 2.5 percentage points in 95 out of 100 samples.

### **Research Usage**

The survey data was collected to gauge the incidence of business owners in the Atlantic Canadian general population. Among the business owners identified in the region, the surveys explored the likelihood of investing in advanced manufacturing or automation in the next year. Furthermore, Atlantic Canadian business owners were asked to assess the likelihood of approaching the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, or any other federal government department, to help invest in advanced manufacturing or automation in the next year.

Similar to questions ACOA has previously asked about business owners as part of CRA's Atlantic Quarterly, results indicate that incidence is approximately 10%, meaning that the follow-up questions on automation have 159 respondents. These results provide a baseline of information to help the Agency determine if they need to pursue additional survey activities in coming years.

### **Expenditure**

The survey entailed the expenditure of \$3,898.50, including HST.

### **Consent**

Corporate Research Associates offers this written consent allowing the Librarian and Archivist of Canada to post, in both official languages, this Executive Summary.

### **Political Neutrality Statement and Contact Information**

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