

Current support for free trade is greatest in Quebec and lowest in Ontario, particularly in areas outside Metropolitan Toronto.

Women, the poor, and union members are among those who are least likely to think free trade with the United States is a good idea.

When the overall support question was posed to respondents a second time at the completion of the interview, the results show higher levels of support -- 57% good idea and 41% bad idea -- than evident when the question was asked initially (Table 3). It is Decima's view that the difference in the two results may in large part be a function of questionnaire effect. The survey results provide evidence of some increased public anxiety over the prospect of Canada-U.S. free trade and the process of undergoing the interview may have had the effect of lowering this level of anxiety. This process also provides an opportunity for respondents to vent their concerns and frustrations, as well as to become more informed about the issues involved.

The difference in the two results is not likely to be of considerable significance. This is because it cannot be assumed that the increased level of support evident in the results from the questions posed at the end of the questionnaire, would in any way be replicated among the general public in response to the public debate over a Canada-U.S. free trade agreement. Rather, the public will be subject to multiple stimuli, both for and against free trade, which will not necessarily be presented to the public in a balanced fashion and each of which will have differing levels of success in terms of public penetration.