

Other major factors affecting support for free trade (in order of importance) are whether:

- More jobs will be lost than gained,
- Canadians will have higher incomes than they do now,
- Canada will continue to have an independent foreign policy,
- We can maintain social programs like unemployment and health insurance,
- The Canadian automobile industry will lose jobs,
- Women will lose relatively more jobs than men, and
- American companies will buy control of more Canadian companies.

In reviewing each of these potential outcomes, there appear to be two major underlying concerns about the effect of free trade: those relating to perceived economic effects, and the question of free trade's impact on Canada's independence or sovereignty. The Canadian public are clearly concerned about our country's overall economic prospects, as well as about their own individual economic well-being. They are also concerned about the ability of Canada to retain control over its own economic and political affairs. These are, at present, the two main bases upon which the public are forming opinions on Canada-U.S. free trade.

On the question of whether an agreement in any way threatens Canada's identity, half the respondents (compared to 47% in June) believe we should not enter into a free trade arrangement with the Americans because "It could mean the end of some government measures which protect Canada's identity and make us different from the United States." The other half of the sample (48%) think "We should be confident enough to enter into a free trade agreement because our identity is already strong enough and no longer needs protection through government measures," a view which is slightly less prevalent than was the case in June (52%).

Regional variations on the identity issue are again evident in this most recent survey. A majority of residents in the Prairies (55%) and Ontario (55%) believe we should not enter into a free trade agreement with the Americans because of the potentially negative implications concerning Canada's identity. Residents of Quebec, whose views are much the same as in June, are the most positive in this regard, as 55% feel we should be confident that Canada's identity is strong enough that it no longer needs government protection. British Columbians have grown more pessimistic over the summer as 49% (up from 34% in June) feel free trade could endanger Canada's identity.