

X. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This final segment of the report presents a summary of the main findings of the survey. The sections below correspond with the manner in which the report was structured.

Attentiveness and Understanding

- o The number of Canadians who are able to say that they understand the free trade deal as well as they would like to or who indicate that they are following the discussions on the Free Trade Agreement closely remains low. For a topic that has dominated public debate and media coverage over the past year, these low understanding and attentiveness ratings are on the surface surprising.
- o Less than half of the population say they are following the discussions on free trade closely and only 28% say they understand the issue of free trade as well as they would like to.

Familiarity and Support/Opposition

- o Representative of the low percentage of Canadians who say they understand the issue of free trade as well as they would like to and the low percentage who say they are following the free trade discussions closely, is the 70% of Canadians who say they are unfamiliar with what is contained in the Agreement.
- o While the levels of support and opposition to the FTA have on the national level remained fairly stable -- 50% support and 39% oppose -- there has been an increase in the number of Canadians who say they have "no opinion" on the FTA. This may indicate that a number of Canadians are even less certain of their feelings toward free trade than they were six months ago.
- o Regionally, the main differences in support and opposition continue to exist in Quebec and Ontario. Residents of Quebec continue to be the most supportive (64%) of the deal, while Ontarians continue to be the least supportive (39%). In the Prairie provinces, support for the deal has faltered among residents of both Manitoba and Saskatchewan.