

## 1.2 General Economy, Competitiveness and International Trade

### *Assessments of the Government's Performance*

Nearly one quarter of respondents felt the government is doing a good job managing the economy, an increase of six percent since March 1992. Thirty seven percent of respondents agreed that the federal government has an overall plan for international trade. Those who believed that government is doing a good job managing the economy were more likely to state that the federal government has an overall plan for trade. A plurality of respondents (45%) placed the responsibility on government, over business (28%), provincial governments (9%) or labour unions (5%), to help Canadians adjust to changes in the global economy. Three in ten respondents felt the federal government was doing a good job in this respect.

With respect to trade policy, a majority of respondents (56%) agreed with the protectionist proposition that Canada should take action to protect Canadian business and industry by limiting the amount of foreign goods sold, even if this results in higher prices for consumers.

### *Canada's Trade Balance is Widely Perceived to be Unfavourable*

Overall, there was a general misconception that Canada's trade balance is negative: that we import more than we export (56%). With respect to individual trading partners, respondents tend to believe that the trade balance is negative with Japan, Western Europe, Mexico and the United States.

## 1.3 The Canada U.S. Free Trade Agreement

### *Support for the Canada - U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

Forty five percent of respondents support the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, an increase from the 37 percent support in March 1992, approximately the same as in August 1991 (46%) and 50 percent in September 1990.