

Dispassionate Supporters

Dispassionate Supporters comprise 26 percent of the Canadian public, making this the largest of the five attitudinal groups identified in this study. This segment of Canadian society, while solidly behind free trade, takes a somewhat softer stance on the issue compared to Enthusiastic Advocates.

Members of this psychographic segment are evenly split along gender lines, display average education and income characteristics, and are only slightly younger than the Canadian population as a whole. Regionally, a disproportionate number of Dispassionate Supporters reside in the province of Quebec (33% versus its 26% share of Canada's population).

In terms of a psychographic profile, one of the most identifying features of Dispassionate Supporters is their anxiety over their personal economic circumstances: fully three in four report that financial security is a major concern for them at this time, even though a clear majority say they have come as far as they have due to hard work. This being said, it is perhaps not too surprising that this group is the least inclined to live by the motto that life should be lived to the fullest today without being preoccupied about the future. These Canadians are also relatively less keen on keeping abreast of international news. Most Dispassionate Supporters, like their counterparts in the other segments, harbour a sense of responsibility to make the world a better place at the same time as they subscribe to the view that competition is beneficial for the individual. As well, a clear majority believe that government red tape is pervasive these days.

Canadians designated as Dispassionate Supporters voice solid support for the FTA and are fairly optimistic about its long-term impact on this country. The existing free trade pact between Canada and the U.S. is applauded by fully three-quarters of this segment and an even larger number endorse the concept of free trade between these two nations. Moreover, half envision positive effects on Canada over the long haul and a net gain of jobs under the FTA. Nonetheless, half of Dispassionate Supporters hold the perception that, thus far, Canada has suffered under the deal, and a large majority believe that this country