

What is significant in these results, as well, is signs of increasing pessimism among Ontario and British Columbia residents regarding the relative benefits of a free trade deal for Canada. While on a national level expectations have remained much the same as they were in June, more British Columbians (43% versus 35%) and Ontarians (49% versus 42%) think Canada stands to lose from a free trade agreement with the United States. In contrast, more Quebecers expect Canada will benefit from such a deal (54% versus 46% in June).

Regardless of whether Canadians expect Canada would benefit or lose from the reduction of trade barriers with the U.S., perceptions of the number of Canadian jobs which depend on trade with the United States are reasonably accurate, with reference to the Department of External Affairs' own estimates. A total of 48% of Canadians indicate in the August survey that "one job in six" depends on Canada-U.S. trade. Another 30% say "one job in three" and 20% "one job in ten." The data also suggest a fair degree of guess work on the part of respondents and a sense that trade with the U.S. is important for Canadian jobs, though respondents are not sure how important.

Item	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Whether Canadian companies will reduce wages to compete with U.S. companies	33	33	33	33	33
Whether our economy will become so closely tied to the American economy that we will lose our ability to make our own decisions	32	32	32	32	32
Whether prices for consumer goods will be lower	47	47	47	47	47
Whether Canadian oil and gas producers will increase sales in the U.S.	—	—	—	—	—
Whether American companies will buy control of more Canadian companies	—	—	—	—	—
Whether differences between regions will increase	30	30	30	30	30
Whether many American companies will close their plants	75	75	75	75	75