

FREE TRADE

Majority of Canadians Would Support Free Trade Agreement with India

Many people regard this deal as an opportunity to grow the national economy through increased exports.

[MONTREAL – Nov. 30, 2009] – Canadians would welcome a bi-lateral commercial pact between Ottawa and New Delhi, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,000 Canadian adults, a majority of respondents (55%) endorse plans to establish a Canada-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement—essentially a free trade pact.

A fifth of Canadians (19%) strongly agree with this proposal.

While 45 per cent of respondents think a trade agreement with India would strengthen the Canadian economy by increasing export activity, three-in-ten Canadians (30%) fear that the national economy would suffer from increased foreign exports.

In general, 41 per cent of Canadians say Ottawa should strengthen its diplomatic and commercial ties with India.

The opinions of Canadians regarding the South Asian country are split—36 per cent of respondents hold a positive view of India, whereas 36 per cent hold a negative opinion.

KEY FINDINGS

- **55% of Canadians would support establishing a free trade agreement with India**
- **45% say a bi-lateral deal between Canada and India would be good for Canadian exports**
- **But 30% say the agreement would threaten the Canadian economy with a flood of imports**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From November 25 to November 26, 2009, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,000 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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India vs. Other Nations

India's favourable ranking in Canada is slightly higher than that of Mexico (34%), Russia (29%), and China (25%), and decidedly better than that of Pakistan (7%).

However, compared to the United Kingdom (80%), France (69%), and the United States (65%), fewer Canadians regard India in a favourable light.

A majority of Canadians want Ottawa to seek greater diplomatic and commercial ties with the European Union (EU) (61%), and the United States (54%). A significant proportion of Canadians also want better relations with China (49%), India (41%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (36%).

Canadians are not so enthusiastic about furthering commercial ties with Russia (28%) or Africa (22%).

Regional Breakdowns

Support for a free trade agreement between Canada and India is strongest in Manitoba and Saskatchewan (71%), followed by Atlantic Canada (60%), British Columbia (58%), and Ontario and Quebec (both at 53%). Alberta holds the smallest proportion of respondents expressing support for a bi-lateral trade pact with India (48%).

Respondents in Quebec (36%) and Ontario (34%) are more inclined than others to say that Canada's economy could suffer from a trade pact with India because it would see a flood of foreign imports. Such concerns are also expressed by just over a quarter of respondents in Alberta, and Manitoba and Saskatchewan (both at 27%).

British Columbia (47%), Alberta (45%) and Atlantic Canada (41%) are home to the largest proportion of respondents who have an overall positive opinion of India. Conversely, 46 per cent of respondents in Manitoba and Saskatchewan have a mostly negative opinion of the South Asian country—more than anywhere else in Canada.

British Columbians (70%) are the keenest respondents in wanting Canada to strengthen its relations with India.

Analysis

While the negotiations towards a free trade agreement linking Canada and India are still in the early stages, the idea is attractive to a majority of Canadians. It is important to note that, while India is definitely not as highly regarded as some traditional allies and partners, it is currently outpacing Mexico—a nation that has well-established commerce ties with Canada—by a few points.

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Free Trade with India

Do you have a positive or negative opinion of these countries? – “Mostly positive” responses

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
United Kingdom	80%	79%	82%	91%	86%	65%	90%
France	69%	62%	66%	66%	65%	80%	66%
United States	65%	58%	61%	72%	66%	64%	67%
India	36%	47%	45%	36%	33%	33%	41%
Mexico	34%	40%	49%	36%	28%	37%	28%
Russia	29%	29%	31%	28%	31%	26%	25%
China	25%	28%	21%	27%	22%	25%	39%
Pakistan	7%	6%	10%	4%	8%	3%	18%

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Free Trade with India

Do you have a positive or negative opinion of these countries? – “Mostly negative” responses

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Pakistan	67%	64%	53%	73%	67%	74%	58%
China	52%	52%	39%	46%	59%	50%	42%
Mexico	40%	32%	25%	38%	50%	31%	47%
Russia	37%	36%	28%	26%	40%	39%	34%
India	36%	26%	33%	46%	38%	39%	30%
United States	25%	28%	27%	16%	28%	22%	24%
France	12%	15%	16%	10%	15%	6%	14%
United Kingdom	6%	8%	5%	1%	6%	9%	5%

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Free Trade with India

Which of these countries or regions do you think Canada should strengthen its diplomatic and commercial ties with? – *Multiple choices allowed*

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
European Union	61%	66%	57%	57%	63%	60%	63%
United States	54%	46%	57%	66%	53%	56%	53%
China	49%	60%	45%	57%	47%	42%	63%
India	41%	70%	36%	36%	45%	25%	53%
Latin America and the Caribbean	36%	50%	38%	29%	39%	28%	33%
Russia	28%	35%	39%	38%	28%	18%	26%
Africa	22%	37%	22%	32%	21%	14%	26%
None of these	7%	5%	7%	0%	7%	10%	10%

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Free Trade with India

As you may know, Canada and India are planning to establish a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, which is essentially a free-trade deal. Do you agree or disagree with Canada establishing a free trade deal with India?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Strongly agree	19%	23%	19%	24%	15%	18%	27%
Moderately agree	36%	35%	29%	46%	38%	35%	33%
Moderately disagree	13%	7%	8%	9%	17%	14%	9%
Strongly disagree	11%	9%	13%	13%	12%	11%	6%
Not sure	21%	26%	31%	7%	17%	22%	25%
Agree – Net	55%	58%	48%	71%	53%	53%	60%
Disagree – Net	24%	16%	21%	22%	29%	25%	15%

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Free Trade with India							
Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?							
	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Free trade with India represents an opportunity for economic growth through increased Canadian exports	45%	52%	47%	57%	46%	37%	46%
Free trade with India represents a threat to the Canadian economy from foreign imports	30%	18%	27%	27%	34%	36%	17%
Not sure	25%	30%	25%	17%	19%	27%	38%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election.

<http://bit.ly/4zxf1S>

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at

<http://bit.ly/3z0u11>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

Copies of this poll are available on our website:

<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>

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