

## THE DECADE

# Canadians Had a Good Decade, but Americans More Optimistic About 2010s

*Two-in-five Britons expect life in their country and the world to be worse ten years from now.*

[VANCOUVER – Dec. 28, 2009] – A new three-country Angus Reid Public Opinion poll finds that people in Canada provide a positive review to the decade that is about to end, while those in the United States are more optimistic about the next ten years.

The online survey of representative national samples also finds that Britons are more concerned about religious extremism becoming an important challenge for the world than their counterparts in the other two countries.

### The Past Decade

More than a third of Canadians say their own standard of living is better now than it was ten years ago, a view shared by 29 per cent of Britons and 23 per cent of Americans. In fact, 44 per cent of Americans say their standard of living decreased in the past decade.

While a majority of Canadians (55%) claim that life in their country is about the same as it was a decade ago, sizeable majorities of Americans (65%) and Britons (61%) report a decline.

A similar situation ensues when assessing each country's position in the world. While two thirds of Americans (66%) and Britons (68%) say this particular indicator has worsened, just 37 per cent of Canadians concur. All three countries agreed (61% in the U.S., 64% in Britain and 66% in Canada) that the world is worse now than ten years ago.

## KEY FINDINGS

### ➤ **Biggest Issue Facing the World in the Next Decade:**

**For Canadians: Global Warming (29%),  
Religious Extremism (18%)**

**For Americans: The Economy (34%),  
Global Warming (17%)**

**For Britons: Global Warming (26%),  
Religious Extremism (25%)**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

*From December 15 to December 17, 2009, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,017 Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panellists, 1,006 American adults who are Springboard America panellists, and 2,010 British adults who are Springboard UK panellists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1% for Canada and the United States, and 2.2 per cent for Great Britain. 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, the US and Great Britain. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

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## **The Next Decade**

Americans (45%) are more optimistic about their own standard of living improving in the next decade than Canadians (42%) and Britons (35%). When it comes to life in each country, Britons are more pessimistic (39%) than Americans (28%) and Canadians (21%).

People in the United States are also more likely to expect their country to gain prominence in the world over the next ten years (29%) than Canadians (23%) and Britons (16%). And while one-in-four Americans (24%) foresee the world becoming a better place in the next decade, considerably fewer Canadians (16%) and Britons (15%) concur.

## **Challenges for the Next Decade**

Respondents in the three countries gave very different answers when they pondered the biggest issue facing the world over the next ten years.

Three-in-ten Canadians (29%) cited global warming, followed by religious extremism (18%), the economy (16%), and health care and disease (14%)

For Americans, the economy is clearly the biggest challenge (34%), with global warming a distant second (17%).

Britons are almost evenly divided between global warming (26%) and religious extremism (25%), with the economy a close third (22%).

## **Event of the Decade**

At least two-in-five respondents in the three countries (47% in Canada, 46% in Britain and 40% in the U.S.) say that the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks were the most newsworthy event in the world in the past decade.

While Canadians (19%) and Britons (13%) pick the election of Barack Obama as president, only 10 per cent of Americans concur. In fact, 22 per cent of Americans cite the global financial crisis of 2008 as the most newsworthy event, a considerably higher proportion than Canadians (16%) and Britons (11%).

## **The Future**

While one third of Britons (33%) predict space tourism becoming a reality in the next 10 years, Canadians (27%) and Americans (25%) are slightly more skeptical. Almost half of Americans (46%) foresee retina scans being used instead of credit cards or identity cards in the next decade, a view shared by majorities in Canada (58%) and Britain (59%).

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On international affairs, less than one-in-five respondents in all three countries believe Israel and the Palestinians will reach a definite peace agreement in the next ten years, and a similar proportion foresees China having free and fair elections. One-in-four Britons and Americans, and one-in-three Canadians, predict that Cuba will abandon communism in the next decade.

Most respondents in the three countries (54% in the U.S., 56% in Canada and 58% in Britain) think a U.S.-backed military intervention in Iran is likely to happen over the next ten years, while less than two-in-five foresee a similar scenario in North Korea.

At least half of respondents in the three countries believe Vladimir Putin will be directly involved in the Government of Russia ten years from now.

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### The Decade

We'd like to ask you some questions about the past decade. Thinking about each of the following, would you say each of these is better, worse or about the same as they were 10 years ago? –




#### Your own standard of living

	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Better</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>About the same</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Worse</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

### The Decade

We'd like to ask you some questions about the past decade. Thinking about each of the following, would you say each of these is better, worse or about the same as they were 10 years ago? –

#### Life in your country

	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Better</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>About the same</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Worse</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>




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**The Decade**

We'd like to ask you some questions about the past decade. Thinking about each of the following, would you say each of these is better, worse or about the same as they were 10 years ago? –




**Your country's position in the world**

	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Better</b>	15%	7%	4%
<b>About the same</b>	42%	21%	24%
<b>Worse</b>	37%	66%	68%
<b>Not sure</b>	5%	6%	4%

**The Decade**

We'd like to ask you some questions about the past decade. Thinking about each of the following, would you say each of these is better, worse or about the same as they were 10 years ago? –

**The world**




	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Better</b>	4%	5%	5%
<b>About the same</b>	26%	27%	26%
<b>Worse</b>	66%	61%	64%
<b>Not sure</b>	4%	7%	5%

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**The Decade**

And do you expect each one of these to be better, worse or about the same 10 years from now? –  
**Your own standard of living**

	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Better</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>About the same</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Worse</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>

**The Decade**

And do you expect each one of these to be better, worse or about the same 10 years from now? –  
**Life in your country**




	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Better</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>About the same</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Worse</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>

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**The Decade**

And do you expect each one of these to be better, worse or about the same 10 years from now? –  
**Your country's position in the world**

	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Better</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>About the same</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Worse</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>8%</b>

**The Decade**

And do you expect each one of these to be better, worse or about the same 10 years from now? –  
**The world**




	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Better</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>About the same</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Worse</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>11%</b>

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**The Decade**

Which of these do you think is the biggest issue facing the world over the next 10 years?

	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Global warming</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Religious extremism</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Economy</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Health Care/Disease</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>War</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Pollution</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>None of these</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>5%</b>

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<b>The Decade</b>			
What do you think was the most newsworthy event in the world in the past decade?			
	<b>CANADA</b> 	<b>UNITED STATES</b> 	<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b> 
<b>Sept. 11, 2001 Terrorist Attacks</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Barack Obama elected President of the U.S.</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>The global financial crisis of 2008</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>The Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>War in Iraq</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>War in Afghanistan</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>The Beijing Olympics</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>

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### The Decade

Do you think each of these is likely or unlikely to happen in the next 10 years? –  
“Very likely” and “Moderately likely” listed

	CANADA 	UNITED STATES 	GREAT BRITAIN 
People being able to spend their holidays in space	27%	25%	33%
Retina scans being used instead of credit cards or identity cards	58%	46%	59%
Israel and the Palestinians reaching a definite peace agreement	17%	18%	15%
A U.S.-backed military intervention in North Korea	39%	36%	35%
A U.S.-backed military intervention in Iran	56%	54%	58%
Vladimir Putin will be directly involved in the Government of Russia	50%	49%	56%
China will have free and fair elections	17%	20%	18%
Cuba will abandon communism	32%	26%	24%

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*Angus Reid Public Opinion is the public affairs 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](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), Springboard America ([www.springboardamerica.com](http://www.springboardamerica.com)) and Springboard UK ([www.springboarduk.com](http://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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