

THE NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Canadians Feel U.S. Has Benefited the Most from NAFTA; Two-in-five Would Renegotiate

Majority of respondents want to stay in the trade agreement, whether under current terms or after a renegotiation

[VANCOUVER – Mar. 10, 2008] – Fourteen years after Canada, the United States and Mexico formed the world's largest free trade area, the majority of Canadians think their country has not greatly benefited from the pact, a new Angus Reid Strategies poll has found.

In the online survey of a national representative sample, 51 per cent of respondents think the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has mostly benefited the United States, while 22 per cent think the accord has been better for Mexico.

Only eight per cent of respondents think Canada has secured the most positive results out of the three countries from being a NAFTA partner.

When asked about the effect of NAFTA in specific sectors, 60 per cent of respondents think Canadian employers have greatly or moderately benefited from the commerce pact, and 58 per cent feel the same way about Canadian manufacturers.

However, two-in-five respondents (40%) think Canadian workers have not benefited at all from NAFTA, and one-in-three (33%) feel the same way about Canadian tourists.

Still, 63 per cent of respondents believe NAFTA has been greatly or moderately beneficial to the Canadian economy, while 21 per cent say this has not been the case.

KEY FINDINGS

- » **51% think the U.S. has benefited more from NAFTA than the other North American countries**
- » **Only 8% think Canada has benefited the most**
- » **69% want Canada to stay in NAFTA, either under current terms (24%) or after renegotiating the pact (45%)**
- » **Canadians think employers, manufactures have gained the most from NAFTA, while workers have benefited the least**
- » **British Columbians most skeptical of NAFTA benefits for Canada**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From March 5 to March 6, 2008, Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of 1,006 adult Canadians. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 3.1 %, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

Despite the lukewarm reviews for its benefits, the majority of Canadians want to continue to belong to NAFTA. About one-in-four respondents (24%) think Canada should maintain its NAFTA membership under the current terms, while two-in-five (45%) think Ottawa should do whatever is necessary to renegotiate the terms of the commerce pact. Only eight per cent of respondents think Canada should do whatever it can to leave NAFTA altogether.

Views on the trade agreement and its effectiveness were split along party lines. Conservative Party voters are more likely to want to stay in NAFTA without making any amendments to the accord (40%) than Liberal Party voters (22%), New Democratic Party voters (12%), Bloc Québécois voters (19%), and Green Party voters (26%). Still, 41 per cent of Tory supporters believe it might be time to renegotiate the terms of NAFTA.

Regionally, British Columbia holds the highest number of respondents who question the benefits of NAFTA. At least 30 per cent of respondents in BC feel that employers and manufacturers have not gained anything from the accord, and the number is much higher when assessing the negative impact on tourists (44%) and workers (50%). Over a quarter of respondents in BC (26%) claim the Canadian economy has not benefited from NAFTA, compared to 21 per cent nationally. In addition, only 13 per cent of BC respondents want Canada to continue to be a member of NAFTA under the current terms, compared to 24 per cent nationally.

The North American Free Trade Agreement

As you may know, Canada, the United States and Mexico have been partners in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) since 1994. Overall, which one of the three countries do you think has benefited the most from the agreement?

	Will vote for or intends to vote for in next federal ballot						
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green	Other
Canada	8%	14%	7%	0%	7%	18%	5%
United States	51%	47%	55%	63%	54%	47%	57%
Mexico	22%	28%	25%	16%	19%	19%	13%
Not sure	18%	11%	13%	20%	20%	17%	25%

The North American Free Trade Agreement

As you may know, Canada, the United States and Mexico have been partners in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) since 1994. Overall, which one of the three countries do you think has benefited the most from the agreement?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
Canada	8%	6%	12%	8%	7%	10%	6%
United States	51%	68%	48%	56%	48%	50%	47%
Mexico	22%	11%	20%	5%	29%	21%	30%
Not sure	18%	16%	20%	31%	16%	19%	17%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
a. Canadian employers							
	Will vote for or intends to vote for in next federal ballot						
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green	Other
Greatly benefited	13%	16%	9%	5%	27%	21%	6%
Moderately benefited	47%	52%	54%	46%	34%	35%	35%
Not benefited at all	22%	21%	22%	30%	13%	31%	34%
Not sure	18%	11%	15%	19%	25%	13%	24%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
a. Canadian employers							
	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
Greatly benefited	13%	7%	16%	10%	7%	23%	10%
Moderately benefited	47%	46%	42%	42%	51%	42%	59%
Not benefited at all	22%	30%	22%	15%	27%	15%	21%
Not sure	18%	17%	20%	34%	15%	20%	11%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
b. Canadian manufacturers							
	Will vote for or intends to vote for in next federal ballot						
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green	Other
Greatly benefited	15%	20%	17%	5%	21%	11%	9%
Moderately benefited	43%	44%	44%	42%	41%	50%	12%
Not benefited at all	27%	27%	28%	38%	15%	28%	55%
Not sure	15%	9%	11%	14%	24%	11%	24%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
b. Canadian manufacturers							
	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
Greatly benefited	15%	13%	19%	12%	13%	14%	28%
Moderately benefited	43%	41%	37%	39%	44%	46%	42%
Not benefited at all	27%	32%	28%	21%	31%	21%	24%
Not sure	15%	14%	16%	28%	13%	19%	6%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
c. Canadian tourists							
	Will vote for or intends to vote for in next federal ballot						
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green	Other
Greatly benefited	9%	13%	5%	8%	8%	16%	0%
Moderately benefited	38%	45%	33%	39%	37%	34%	31%
Not benefited at all	33%	29%	45%	31%	24%	33%	45%
Not sure	21%	13%	17%	22%	31%	17%	24%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
c. Canadian tourists							
	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
Greatly benefited	9%	5%	14%	7%	8%	11%	6%
Moderately benefited	38%	31%	27%	41%	35%	44%	46%
Not benefited at all	33%	44%	33%	22%	38%	22%	35%
Not sure	21%	20%	27%	31%	19%	23%	12%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
d. Canadian workers							
		Will vote for or intends to vote for in next federal ballot					
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green	Other
Greatly benefited	4%	10%	3%	1%	1%	3%	0%
Moderately benefited	40%	48%	43%	26%	48%	36%	31%
Not benefited at all	40%	33%	44%	59%	26%	49%	37%
Not sure	15%	9%	10%	14%	25%	12%	33%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
d. Canadian workers							
		Region					
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
Greatly benefited	4%	4%	8%	6%	3%	3%	7%
Moderately benefited	40%	32%	40%	42%	38%	44%	44%
Not benefited at all	40%	50%	35%	24%	46%	34%	43%
Not sure	15%	15%	16%	27%	13%	19%	6%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
e. The Canadian economy in general							
	Will vote for or intends to vote for in next federal ballot						
	Total	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green	Other
Greatly benefited	11%	21%	8%	2%	14%	12%	5%
Moderately benefited	53%	55%	56%	53%	55%	52%	32%
Not benefited at all	21%	17%	24%	32%	8%	27%	39%
Not sure	15%	7%	12%	14%	23%	8%	24%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
How much do you think each of the following has benefited from NAFTA?							
e. The Canadian economy in general							
	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
Greatly benefited	11%	7%	22%	10%	9%	13%	12%
Moderately benefited	53%	55%	41%	51%	54%	51%	60%
Not benefited at all	21%	26%	20%	17%	24%	18%	21%
Not sure	15%	12%	17%	23%	13%	18%	7%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?							
	Total	Will vote for or intends to vote for in next federal ballot					
		Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green	Other
Canada should continue to be a member of NAFTA under the current terms	24%	40%	22%	12%	19%	26%	8%
Canada should do whatever is necessary to renegotiate the terms of NAFTA	45%	41%	49%	54%	46%	51%	62%
Canada should do whatever is necessary to leave NAFTA	8%	7%	10%	17%	3%	8%	12%
Not sure	22%	12%	19%	17%	33%	16%	18%

The North American Free Trade Agreement							
Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?							
	Total	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
Canada should continue to be a member of NAFTA under the current terms	24%	13%	36%	32%	27%	19%	21%
Canada should do whatever is necessary to renegotiate the terms of NAFTA	45%	56%	40%	36%	45%	47%	43%
Canada should do whatever is necessary to leave NAFTA	8%	15%	8%	3%	8%	5%	15%
Not sure	22%	16%	17%	29%	20%	29%	20%

Angus Reid Strategies is a North American full-service polling and market research firm which 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 Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995. Located in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal, our team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research.

Angus Reid Strategies polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel (www.angusreidforum.com), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. This premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.

Angus Reid Strategies has been successful in predicting the outcome of the 2007 provincial elections in:

Quebec: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=37>

Manitoba: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=56>

Ontario: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=129>

Saskatchewan: <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=138>

More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/ARS.ARF%20WHITE%20PAPER.pdf>

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

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
www.angusreidstrategies.com**