

With U.S. out, Canadian support for 'TPP 11' nearly doubles

Continuing a 2017 trend, majority prefer to focus trade efforts on Pacific Rim nations over U.S.

November 3, 2017 – When President Donald Trump [pulled the U.S. out](#) of the Trans-Pacific Partnership in the days following his inauguration, many thought it would signal the death of, what was at the time, the globe's [largest](#) trade pact.

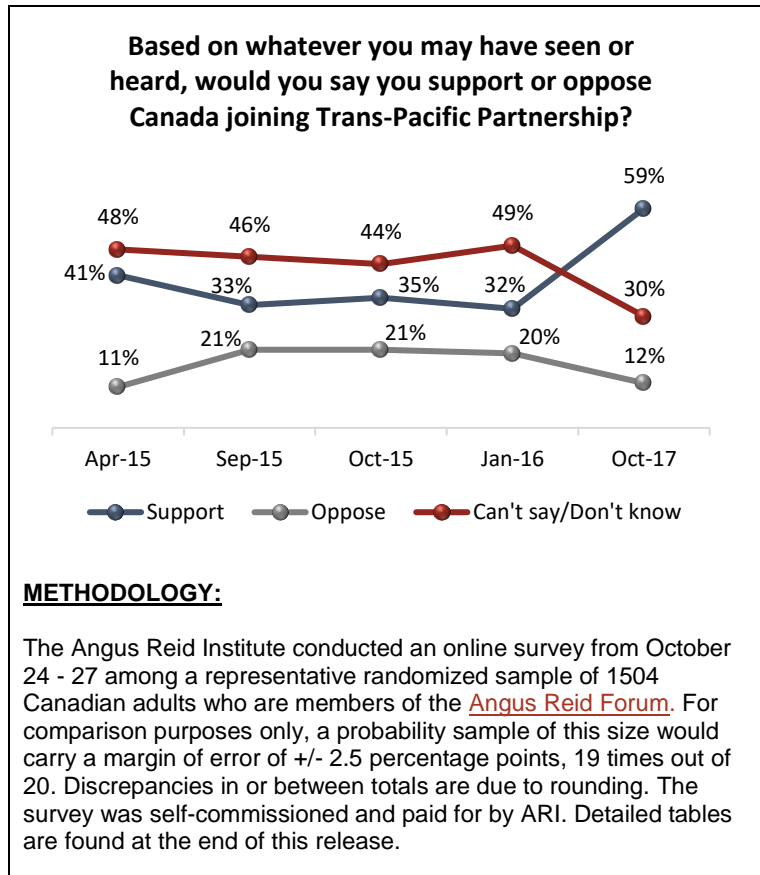
But as TPP negotiations approach the ten-year mark, the agreement appears to be taking on new life. The remaining 11 nations met in May to revive the deal, and subsequent discussions have the signatories reportedly [close to an agreement](#) – without the U.S. Trade ministers from participating nations hope to have a deal in place ahead of their November 10 meeting in Vietnam for the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum.

A new Angus Reid Institute report finds Canadians largely on board with the 'TPP 11', and in fact, significantly more supportive of the TPP than in previous waves of reporting.

An emerging trend appears to be solidifying in these findings. As the Institute previously found, Canadians are increasingly interested in securing markets for trade outside of the United States. More than half say that Canada should focus on developing closer trade ties with the Pacific Rim nations, rather than emphasising the traditional relationship this country holds with the United States.

More Key Findings:

- Six-in-ten Canadians (59%) now say they support the TPP 11. In four previous waves of reporting, support peaked at 41 per cent, with just 32 per cent saying they supported the deal when asked at the beginning of 2016.



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- Half of Canadians (51%) say the benefits of pursuing the TPP outweigh the risks of angering the United States, with which Canada is currently negotiating NAFTA. 15 per cent of Canadians disagree and would not take this chance.
- 55 per cent of Canadians now say that the TPP 11 would have a positive impact on the Canadian economy overall. This represents a 13-point increase since the question was asked previously.

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Canadians look to TPP as NAFTA talks get tough

There appears to be a [growing uncertainty](#) about the future of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Former Prime Minister Stephen Harper [added to this unease](#) after a recent trip to Washington, stating that he does not believe President Trump's threat to pull out of the deal is a bluff, and that the government needs to think about concessions to move the process forward. Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland responded that "capitulation is not a negotiating strategy" and stated that they did not agree with the former PM's assessment.

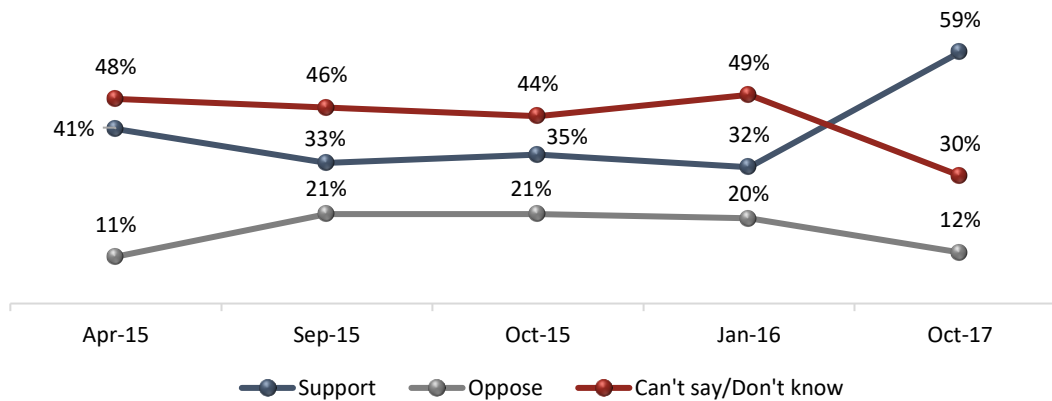
With Canadians and Canadian companies looking for stability, more eyes may be turning to another ongoing trade negotiation – the Trans-Pacific Partnership. While the U.S. left the deal early in 2017, the remaining nations have continued discussions. And while details are yet to [be ironed out](#), the prospect of an agreement looks imminent.

This will be welcome news for about six-in-ten Canadians, who now say they support the TPP. This sentiment represents a sea change in public opinion. The last four times the Angus Reid Institute canvassed public opinion about the deal, no more than four-in-ten Canadians were in favour of it. Just one-in-three supported it when asked last year:

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Based on whatever you may have seen or heard about this, would you say you support or oppose Canada joining Trans-Pacific Partnership?



While economic gains from a prospective TPP 11 deal are certainly smaller on aggregate than those forecasted for the TPP 12, one sectoral economic analysis suggests that the new pact may be more beneficial for Canada specifically than the previous iteration.

This is due to the removal of U.S. competition and preferential access for Canadian goods in many sectors, particularly agriculture and food production. A [report](#) from the Canada West Foundation suggests greater growth in real GDP and welfare gains for Canada under TPP 11.

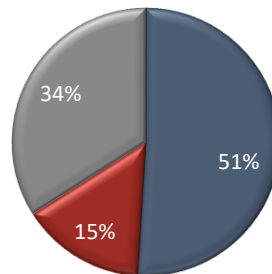
Critics of the trade pact, including many [labour unions](#) voice concern over a number of issues, including the potential loss of manufacturing jobs and foreign takeovers of Canadian companies.

With respect to the United States, half of Canadians (51%) hold the opinion that the gains from securing a trade pact with Japan, Mexico, Singapore, Australia and the other TPP nations, outweigh the retaliatory risks that may come from the U.S., if they are upset by new agreement:

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If the TPP 11 deal goes forward, Canada's participation could anger the United States. Which would you say is closer to your opinion:



- The benefits of joining the TPP 11 would be worth the risk of angering the United States
- The benefits of joining the TPP 11 would not be worth the risk of angering the United States
- Not Sure/Can't say

Trade gaze continues to shift beyond U.S.

Earlier this year the Angus Reid Institute noted that the number of Canadians saying their country should focus its trade efforts on the European Union had surpassed the number saying the United States should be priority one. This represented an 11-point rise for the EU and an eight-point drop for the U.S. from February to August 2017.

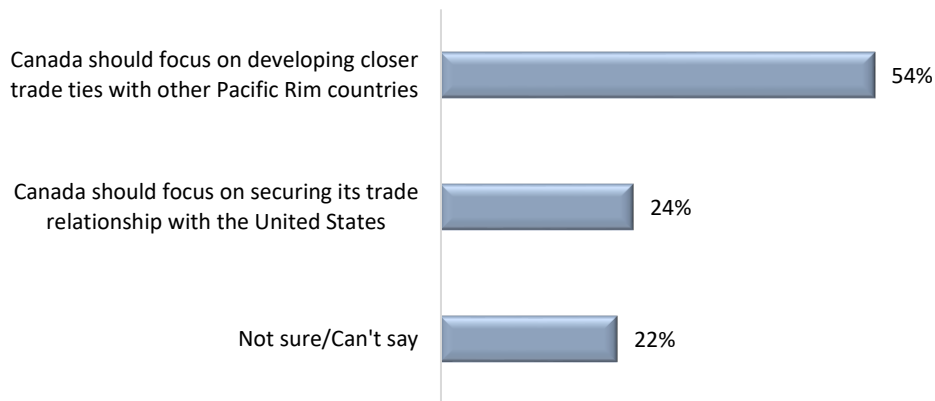
There is no replacing Canada's largest trade partner. With **more than \$600B in goods** and services exchanged in 2016, gains elsewhere would be hard pressed to compensate for losses from a damaged U.S. relationship. But that doesn't mean Canadians aren't keen to secure access in other markets.

More than half of Canadians (54%) say that the best path forward for Canada economically is to focus on developing closer trade ties with other Pacific Rim countries. Just one-in-four (24%) express a preference for the United States when choosing between the two:

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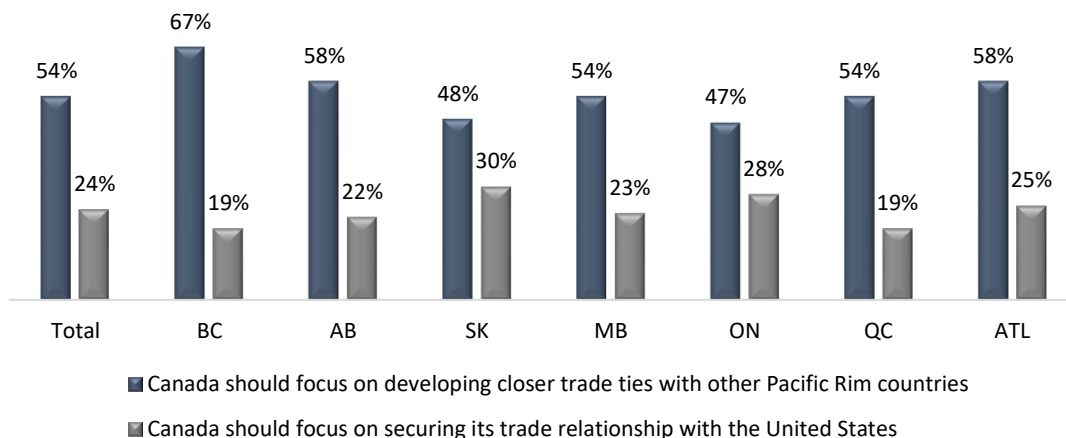
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Which of the following would you say is closer to your opinion of the best path forward for Canada economically:



This finding is relatively uniform across the country, though two-thirds of British Columbians say they would prefer to focus on the TPP countries, while Saskatchewan residents are the most supportive of the U.S. as top priority:

Which of the following would you say is closer to your opinion of the best path forward for Canada economically:



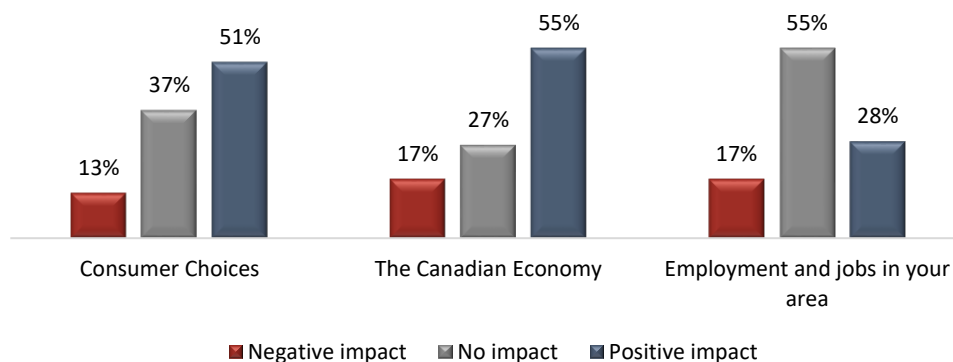
This likely does not reflect a willingness to 'cut ties' with the United States, but more so a desire to negotiate for growth opportunities with other nations in good faith. President Trump is **deeply unpopular** in Canada and his threats of departure from NAFTA likely resonate with Canadians more than the more nuanced and quieted negotiations between the three NAFTA nations. [Previous research](#) suggests that

Canadians are not necessarily worried about the personal impacts of a failure to reach an agreement on NAFTA, but overwhelmingly more concerned about how it will affect the country on a whole.

How will the TPP affect Canadians?

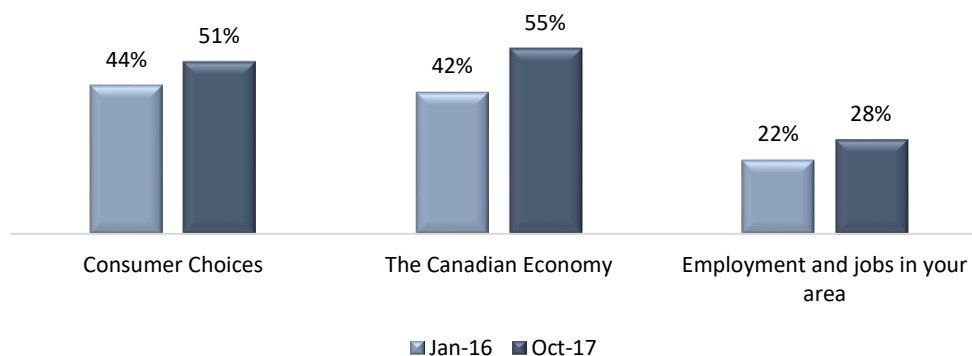
Much like the opinions of NAFTA, Canadians' primary motivation for support of the TPP appears to be the impact it would have on the Canadian economy overall, rather than at the personal level. The deal would create a free-trade agreement with seven new nations - Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Vietnam – as Canada already has bilateral deals with Peru and Chile, and a deal in place with Mexico through NAFTA. Half of Canadians also anticipate a positive impact on consumer choice, if greater access to the Asian market is achieved.

If Canada does join the TPP 11, do you think it will have a positive impact, a negative impact or no impact on the following:



The positive sentiment surrounding each of the three distinct areas has risen since Canadians were previously asked. The biggest jump is seen with respect to the economy, where a 13-point jump is noted from January 2016.

Percentage of Canadians saying the Trans-Pacific Partnership will have a positive effect on:



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The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.

For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).

Do you support or oppose the idea of Canada joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership?					
	Opinion of TPP over time				
	April 2015 (1,475)	September 2015 (1487)	October 2015 (1083)	January 2016 (1503)	October 2017 (1504)
Support	41%	33%	35%	32%	59%
Oppose	11%	21%	21%	20%	12%
Don't know/Can't say	48%	46%	44%	49%	30%

Do you think the TPP will have a positive, negative or no impact on each of the following?						
	Opinion over time					
	January 2016 (1503)			October 2017 (1504)		
	Positive	Negative	No impact	Positive	Negative	No impact

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The Canadian Economy	42%	28%	31%	55%	17%	27%
Consumer Choices	44%	16%	40%	51%	13%	37%
Employment and jobs in your own area	22%	46%	31%	28%	17%	55%

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