

## Few Canadians support banning Uber; but most want it regulated the same as taxi industry

*Generation gap divides country on opinions about Uber and Airbnb*

**February 12, 2016** – Taxi drivers in Canada's largest city have called off [another round of anti-Uber protests](#) that would have coincided with the NBA's All-Star weekend festivities, but frustration with the ride-hailing service remains, and a new poll – self-commissioned and paid for by the Angus Reid Institute – finds Canadians deeply divided about it.

On one hand, given the choice to subject Uber to the same regulations as the taxi industry or allow it to operate without such rules, nearly two-thirds of Canadians say the company should be regulated.

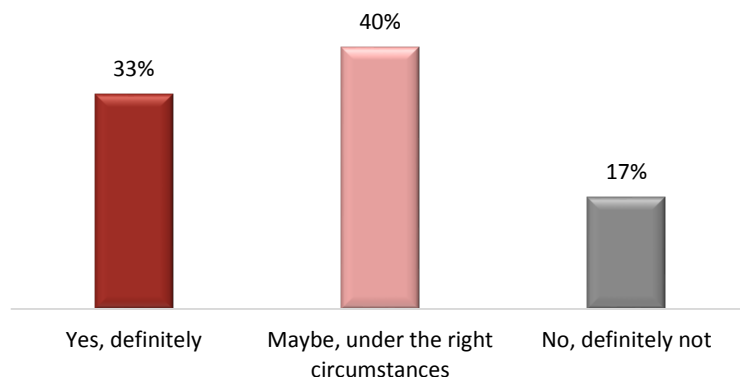
On the other hand, nearly three-quarters of Canadians are open to Uber operating in their communities, and just one-in-six would ban the company in their city.

And even though most Canadians are aware of Uber and its fellow 'sharing economy' giant Airbnb, only one-in-ten have actually used at least one of these companies.

### Key Findings:

- The majority (63%) say Uber should be regulated in the same way as the taxi industry is, while more than half (57%) favour government letting Airbnb continue to operate without the same regulations as the hotel industry

Regardless of whether or not Uber is currently in your community, do you think Uber should be allowed to operate in your city (or the city you live closest to)?



### **METHODOLOGY:**

The Angus Reid Institute conducted online surveys from January 27 – 31, and on February 10 – 11, 2016, among representative, randomized samples of 1,503 and 1,505 Canadian adults each, who are members of the [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, probability samples of these sizes would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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- Among those who have an opinion, the majority has a positive view of each company (70% of those with an opinion of Airbnb; 61% of those with an opinion of Uber)
- There is a generational divide in opinion about Uber and AirBnB, with younger respondents holding more favourable views toward each company

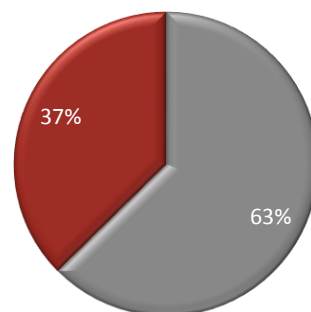
## Regulating Uber

Taxi drivers in Toronto, Montreal and other Canadian cities [argue that Uber is unfair competition](#) because it's not subject to the same regulations that govern the taxi industry.

For its part, Uber's [terms of service](#) describe the company as a technology platform that connects people who need rides with drivers willing to provide them. It explicitly states that "Uber does not provide transportation or logistics services or function as a transportation carrier," meaning it can't be subject to regulations that apply to such carriers.

Asked to choose between governments regulating Uber in exactly the same way as they do taxis or maintaining the status quo where Uber is not regulated, most Canadians choose the former:

### Would you say you'd like to see the government:



- Regulate Uber in the same way that it regulates taxis
- Allow Uber to continue operating without the same regulations as taxis

A majority in every region chooses this option, but the feeling that Uber should be regulated in the same manner as taxis is strongest in Quebec (72%, [see comprehensive tables for more detail](#)).

People who have used Uber are most likely to take the opposite position. Some 60 per cent of past Uber users say the company should be allowed to continue operating without the same regulations as taxis. Of course, this means that even a sizeable portion of Uber's Canadian user base (40%) would prefer to see the company subjected to the same regulations as taxis, rather than not.

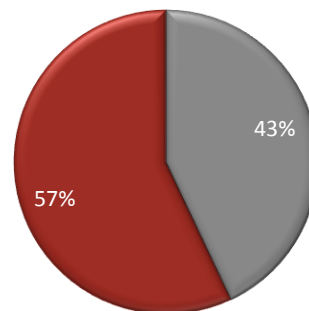
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However, when asked about regulating Airbnb – a service that allows people to rent out their properties on a short-term basis that is also frequently held up as an example of the sharing economy – Canadians are more hands-off than they are with Uber:

### Would you say you'd like to see the government:



- Regulate Airbnb in the same way it regulates hotels
- Allow Airbnb to continue operating without the same regulations as hotels

### Most would allow Uber – under the right circumstances

The data suggests that when it comes to allowing Uber, many Canadians would like to find a regulatory middle ground, as the Edmonton City Council attempted to do in its recently approved bylaw [legalizing Uber in the city](#).

Asked whether they think Uber should be allowed to operate in their city, one-in-six Canadians (17%) say “definitely not.” Twice as many (33%) say “yes, definitely,” but the largest group is somewhere in between.

Fully two-in-five Canadians (40%) say Uber should be allowed to operate in their cities “under the right circumstances.” ([see comprehensive tables](#)).

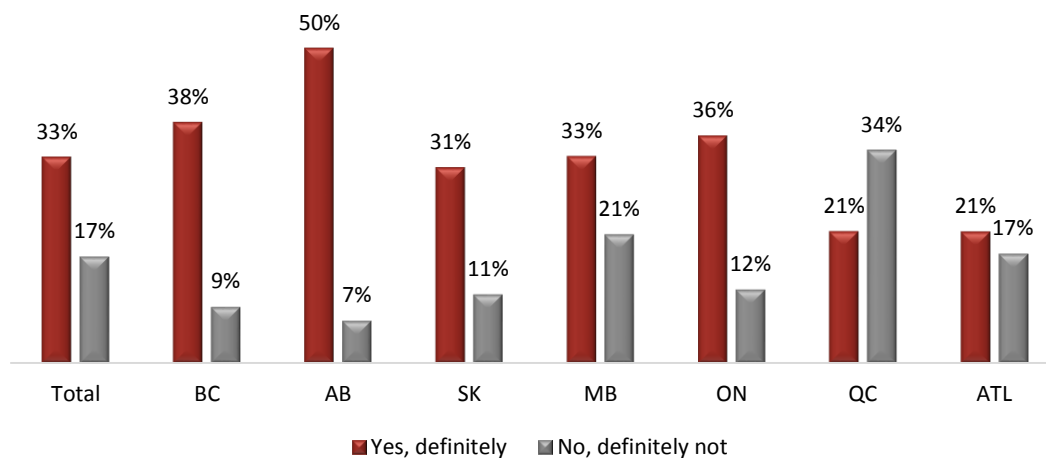
As the following graph shows, however, there are significant regional differences on the “definitely” options, with Albertans most supportive of Uber operating in their cities and Quebecers more likely to oppose Uber than to support it:

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**Regardless of whether or not Uber is currently in your community, do you think Uber should be allowed to operate in your city (or the city you live closest to)?**



The rate of agreement with a variety of statements about Uber helps shed some light on what Canadians may view as “the right circumstances” for allowing the company in their communities.

For example:

- 67 per cent of Canadians agree with the statement “Cab companies should step up their game to compete with Uber”
- 46 per cent agree that “Cities that don’t allow Uber are stifling competition” (28% disagree; 26% are unsure)

This indicates that there is an appetite for better taxi service and additional options in the marketplace.

Other findings highlight concern about Uber’s potential impact, however:

- Notably, most Canadians (57%) agree with the statement “I don’t feel comfortable with Uber raising prices during peak hours” – a practice traditional taxi companies are prohibited from engaging in
- Two-in-five Canadians (39%) worry that “Uber will make working conditions worse for their own drivers and for taxi drivers” (26% disagree with this statement; and 35% are unsure).

[See comprehensive tables for greater detail on these questions.](#)

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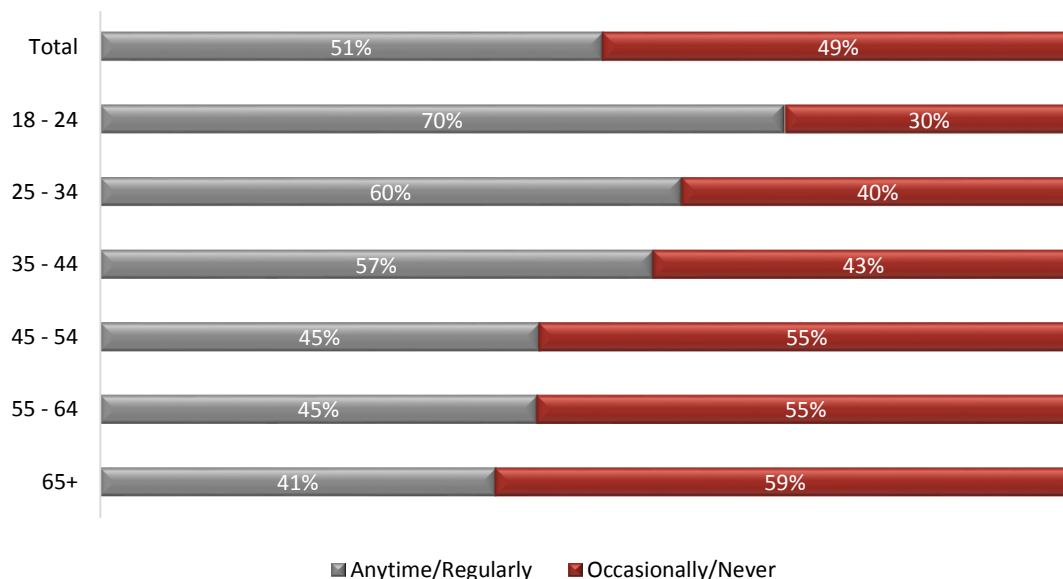
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## Generational differences underscore skepticism about ‘Sharing Economy’

On nearly every question in this survey, responses vary significantly by the age of respondents.

Younger Canadians tend to be more favourable toward both Uber and Airbnb. They’re more likely to say Uber should “definitely” operate in their cities and – as seen in the following graph – they’re more likely to say they’re comfortable with their neighbours renting space to Airbnb users “anytime” or “regularly.”

### Would you be comfortable with your immediate neighbours renting out their space on Airbnb...



Older Canadians, by contrast, are more likely to favour regulating each company in the same way as traditional industries are regulated.

This generational divide also extends to overall perceptions of Airbnb and Uber, with younger Canadians more likely to have a positive opinion of each, and older Canadians more likely to have a negative one ([see comprehensive tables](#)).

## Perceptions of Airbnb and Uber

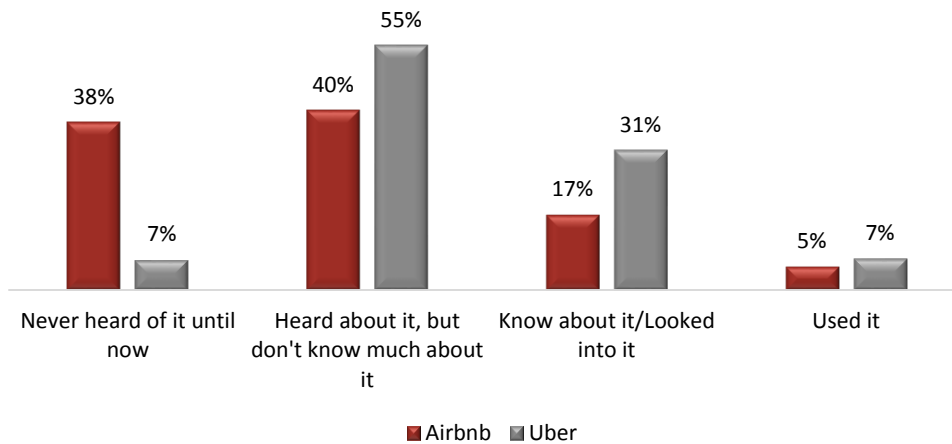
Most Canadians are aware of the sharing economy’s two largest companies, but don’t consider themselves particularly knowledgeable about them, as seen in the graph that follows.

As the graph indicates, Canadians are considerably more likely to be aware of Uber than Airbnb, but that hasn’t translated into a significantly higher rate of usage of the ride hailing app. Indeed, one-in-ten Canadians (11%) have used one or the other or both of these services.

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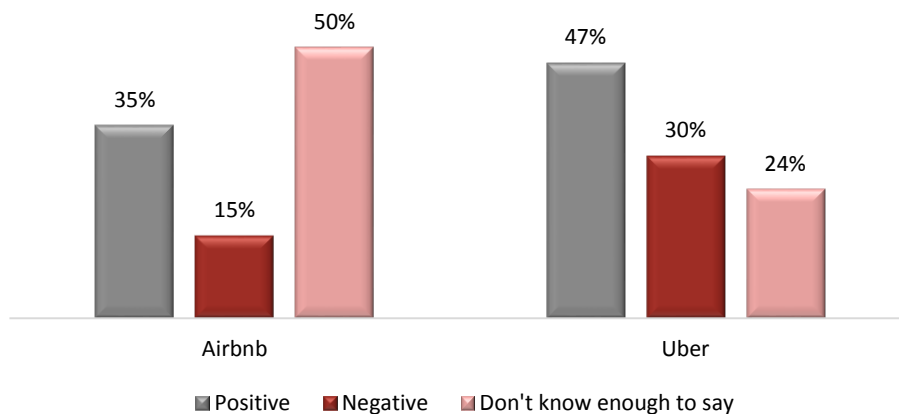
### How familiar would you say you are with each of these companies?



The high rate of awareness of Uber may reflect the company's divisiveness. Asked whether they have a positive or negative opinion about each company, fewer than one-in-four Canadians (24%) say they don't know enough to make up their minds about Uber.

Fully half are unsure about Airbnb, perhaps reflecting the relative lack of awareness of that company:

### Thinking generally, what is your overall view of each of these companies?



Looking at only those respondents who have an opinion, the positive-to-negative ratio for Airbnb is more than two-to-one (70 per cent versus 30 per cent) while for Uber it is closer to 1.5-to-one ([see “excluding don’t know” results in the comprehensive tables](#)).

Opinion on Uber is most negative in Quebec, where three-fifths (61%) of those with an opinion (48% overall) say they view the company negatively.

In contrast, residents of Alberta have especially positive views (63% positive overall; 73% excluding the “don’t know” responses).

The only group with significantly more positive opinions of Uber than Albertans is people who have used Uber in the past. As might be expected, 91 per cent of this group expresses a positive opinion about the company.

*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 organization 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.*

**Summary tables follow. For comprehensive results for the January 27 – 31 survey by region, age, gender, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).**

**For comprehensive results for the February 10 – 11 survey, [click here](#).**

**Some people say the taxi industry has regulations to protect consumers and if Uber is providing the same service they should follow the same regulations and pay the same taxes. Uber says they simply connect qualified drivers with individuals looking for a ride. Which is closer to your opinion?  
Would you say you’d like to see the government...**

(weighted sample sizes)	Total (1503)	Use of Uber			
		Never heard of it (102)	Heard of it, but don’t know much about it (823)	Know about it/looked into it (472)	Used Uber (107)
Regulate Uber in the same way that it regulates taxis	63%	63%	70%	56%	40%
Allow Uber to continue operating without the same regulations as taxis	37%	37%	30%	44%	60%

Thinking generally, what is your overall view of Uber?					
(weighted sample sizes)	Total (1503)	Use of Uber			
		Never heard of it (102)	Heard of it, but don't know much about it (823)	Know about it/looked into it (472)	Used Uber (107)
Very positive	9%	8%	3%	11%	43%
Mostly positive	38%	21%	33%	48%	48%
Mostly negative	20%	8%	22%	21%	6%
Very negative	10%	6%	10%	13%	2%
Don't know enough to say	24%	58%	32%	7%	1%