

Canada as 51st State? Four-in-five Americans say a merger should be up to Canadians; 90% of us say 'no'

Americans oppose a merger 2:1; just 52% say if Canada does join the U.S., it should get 'full statehood'

January 14, 2025 – Comments once dismissed as “trolling”, “musing” or “Trump just being Trump” have taken on more serious overtones as the U.S. president-elect persists in talking about having Canada join the United States.

After a month of what was initially waved off as “silly talk”, the narrative is creating significant anxiety among Canadians, and bemusement among the few Americans actually aware of the situation.

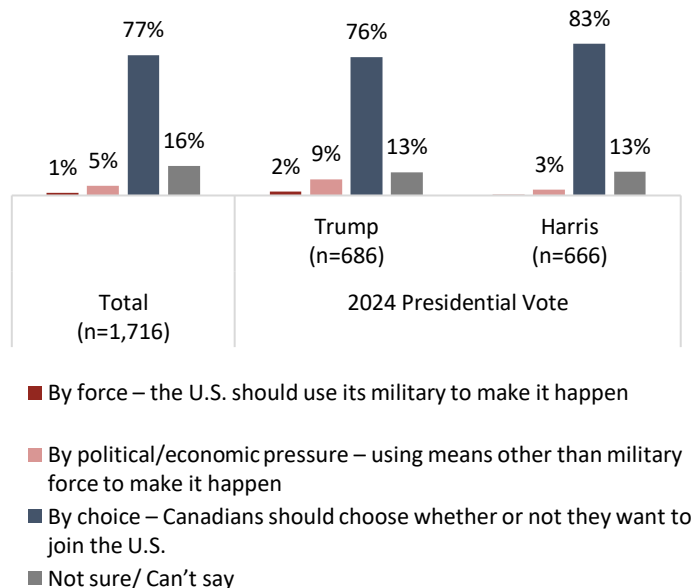
A cross-border study conducted by the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds that while one-in-three Canadians (32%) believe Donald Trump is serious in his professed goal of making Canada the 51st state, most Americans – two-thirds – have paid little attention to the incoming president's comments.

When it comes to appetite for such a “merger” – Americans are twice as likely to oppose (49%) Canada joining their nation than support it (25%). The idea has little to no traction at home – except among Conservatives.

While one-in-10 Canadians overall say they would vote to join the U.S. in a referendum, that proportion rises to 20 per cent among 2021 Conservative voters and drops to three per cent among Liberals and one per cent among New Democrats.

If Canada does join, three-quarters (77%) of Americans say it should only be by our own choice, as opposed to the result of pressure (5%) or military force (1%). Even if Canada *did* choose to join the U.S., only half of their southern neighbours favour (yes, *neighbour* and *favour* with a ‘u’) giving Canada full statehood, with

Suppose Trump is serious about Canada joining the United States. Do you believe this should happen... (American respondents)



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from Jan. 10-13, 2025 among a representative randomized sample of 1,653 Canadian adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

ARI conducted a second online survey from Jan. 10-13, 2025 among a representative randomized sample of 1,716 American adults who are members of Angus Reid Forum USA. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. Both surveys were self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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citizenship and voting rights. One-quarter instead say Canada should be relegated to a reduced status like that of Puerto Rico, which does not have congressional representation and whose residents are not able to vote in presidential elections.

While Americans are not overly fond of the idea of Canada joining their union, politics plays a significant factor. Consider that Trump voters are more in support (42%) than in opposition (32%), were it up to them. Those who voted for Democratic nominee Kamala Harris provide significantly more pushback, with just nine per cent supporting the idea.

More Key Findings:

- Trump has said he wouldn't use military force to bring Canada into the fold, but three-in-five Canadians (62%) say they don't trust him to hold to his word.
- This discourse is having an impact on views of the U.S. from north of the border. Favourability is down 15 points from June of this year. Further, Canadians are now three-times as likely to view the U.S. as an enemy or a potential threat compared with two years ago.
- ARI asked those Canadians who oppose joining the U.S. if any number of factors would change their view. Most said they would not change their stance if they personally lost their job (74%), lost half their income (69%) or if Canada entered a deep recession (76%) because of economic pressure levied by Trump.

About ARI

*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.*

INDEX

Part One: The view from America

- **Three-quarters view Canada favourably**
- **Most Americans not following the 51st state story**
- **Americans oppose Canada joining by a margin of 2:1**
- **Three-quarters say it should be up to Canada**
- **Should Canada have full state rights?**

Part Two: Canadian perspectives on the U.S.

- **Favourability toward America drops**
- **Proportion of Canadians who view U.S. as threat triples from 2023**

Part Three: Number 51?

- **One-third of Canadians believe Trump is serious about Canada joining U.S.**

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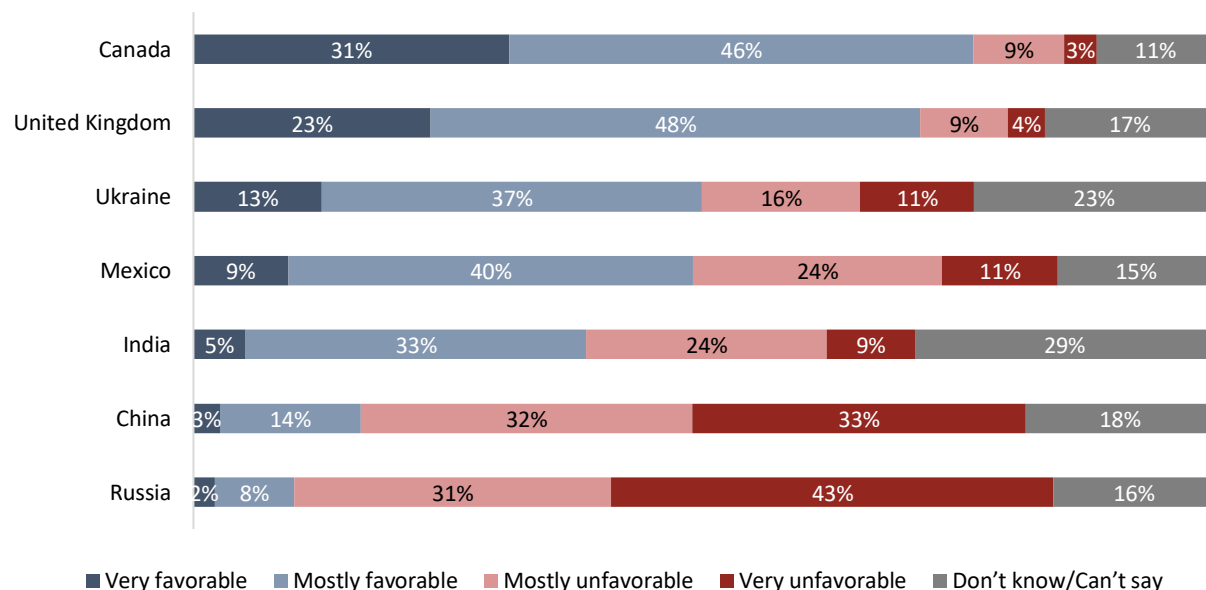
- 90% say ‘no’, but Albertans, Conservatives more onside
- Quebecers most concerned Trump will ramp up pressure
- Stick vs. carrot – the stick moves opinion more, but most still say ‘no’
- Widespread distrust that Trump won’t resort to military force

Part One: The view from America

Three-quarters view Canada favourably

President-elect Donald Trump’s musings about pressuring Canada to join the U.S. have put the spotlight on the U.S.’s northern neighbour and introduced American media to Canadian political figures such as [Ontario Premier Doug Ford](#), and [Alberta Premier Danielle Smith](#). Amid this latest Trump-driven discourse, Americans largely view Canada with a positive lens. Three-quarters (76%) say they have a favourable view of the country, putting it above the United Kingdom (71%), Ukraine (50%) and Mexico (49%) among countries included in this survey:

**Overall, would you say you have a favorable or unfavorable view of each of the following countries?
(American respondents, n=1,716)**

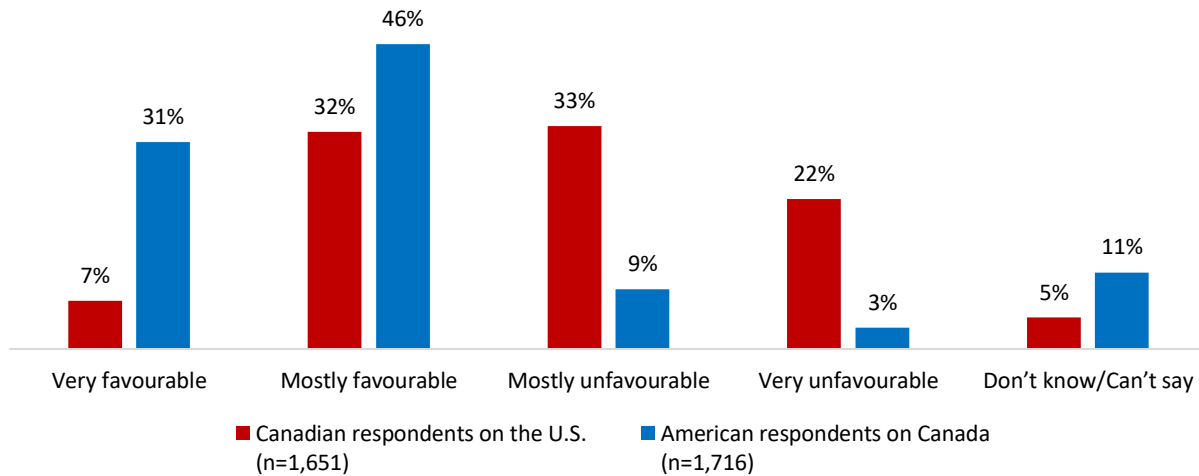


The positivity flowing north across the 49th parallel is contrasted by the negativity flowing south. Most Canadians (55%) say they view the U.S. unfavourably:

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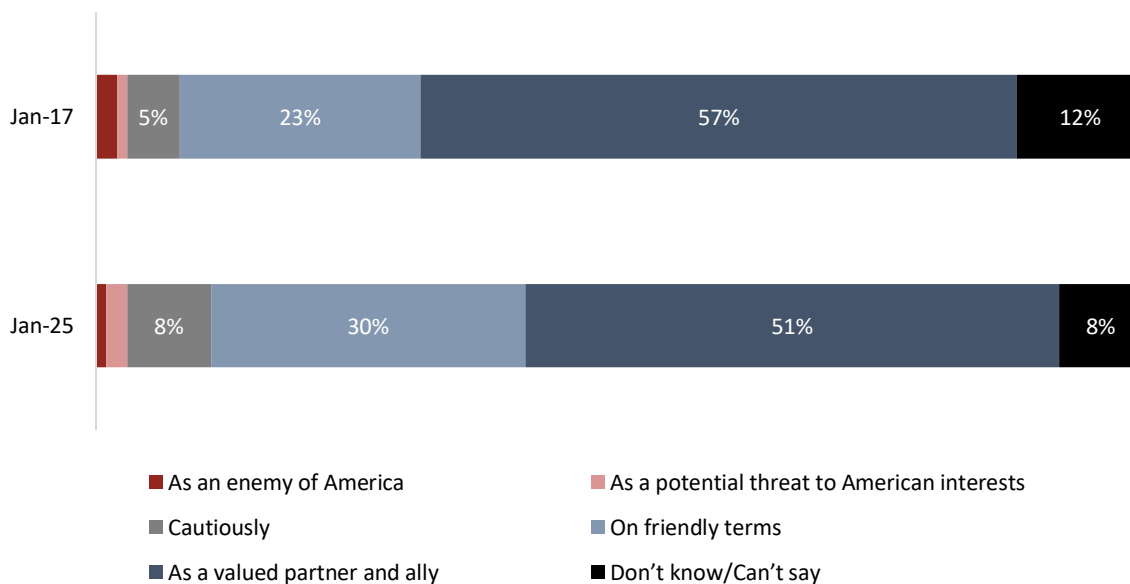
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Canadians' views of the U.S. vs. Americans' views of Canada



Trump's recent '[Donroe Doctrine](#)' approach to relations between the two countries marks a departure from his previous term in the Oval Office, but views of Americans have shifted little between his first inauguration in 2017 and now. Most Americans believe the U.S. should approach Canada as a 'valued partner and ally' (51%) or on friendly terms (30%), similar figures to those seen eight years ago:

From an overall point of view, how do you think the United States government should approach Canada?
(American respondents)

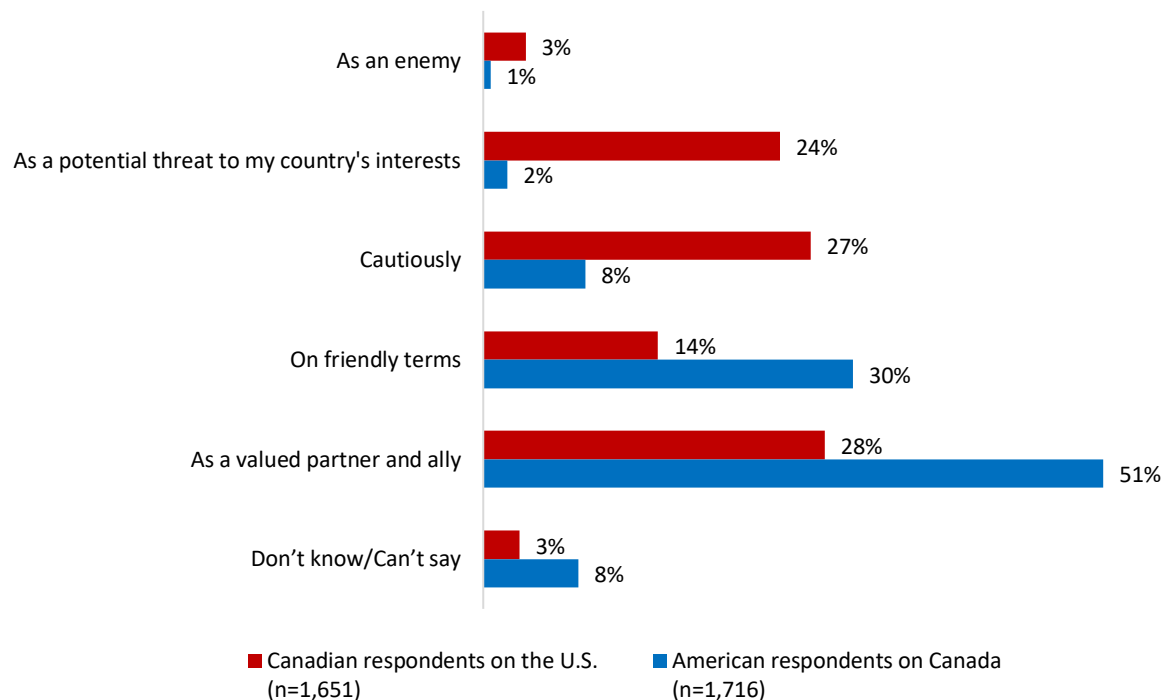


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There is a deep cross-border divide on this question as Trump challenges Canadian sovereignty. Canadians express more caution (27% vs. 8%), and are more likely to believe their neighbour is a threat to their interests (24% vs. 2%):

Canadians' views on how Canada should approach U.S. vs. Americans' views on how U.S. should approach Canada



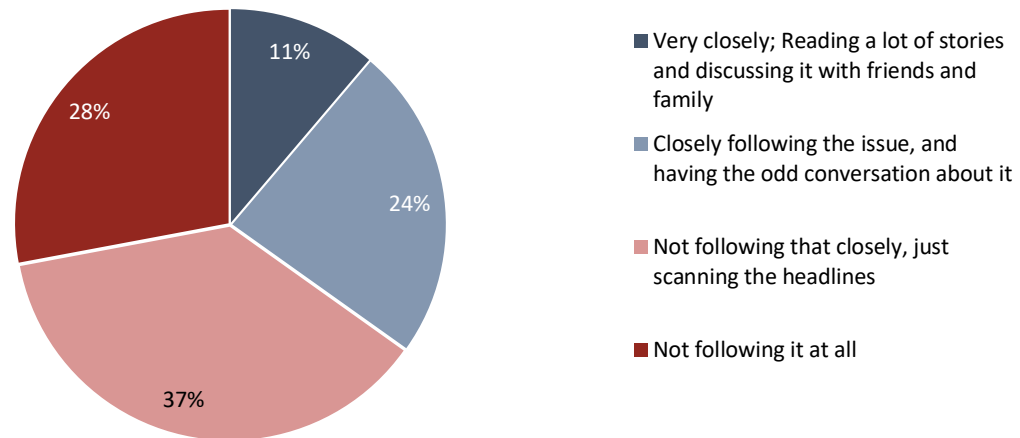
Most Americans not following the 51st state story

Trump's expansionist musings have not only [brought political turmoil](#) to Canada but also will likely [influence the forthcoming Liberal leadership race to replace outgoing Prime Minister Justin Trudeau](#). The fervour over this story has not spread to Americans, it appears. One-in-10 (11%) Americans say they have been following the story of Trump wanting Canada to join the U.S. 'very closely', while larger groups are following it less intently (24%), reading only the headlines (37%) or not following it at all (28%):

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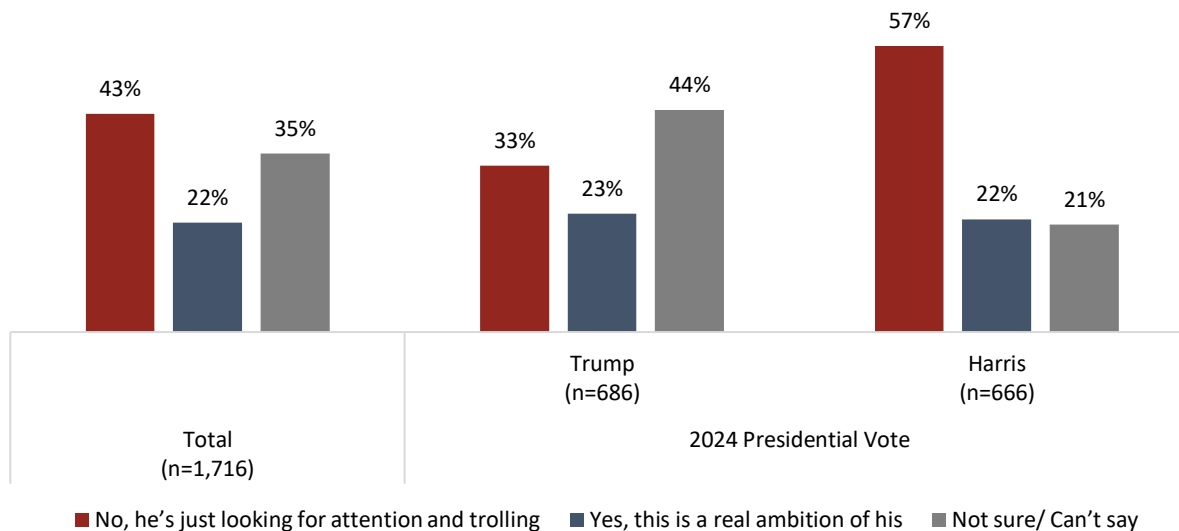
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**How closely – if at all - have you been following this issue of Trump wanting Canada to join the United States?
(American respondents, n=1,716)**



Perhaps Americans' lack of attention is due to the fact that many view it as a non-issue – two-in-five (43%) Americans say Trump does not seriously want Canada to join the U.S., doubling those (22%) who instead say this is a real ambition of his. Those who voted for Democratic Presidential candidate Kamala Harris in November are much more likely to believe Trump is just 'trolling' Canada (57%):

Do you think President-elect Donald Trump is serious when he's saying Canada should become the 51st State of the United States?

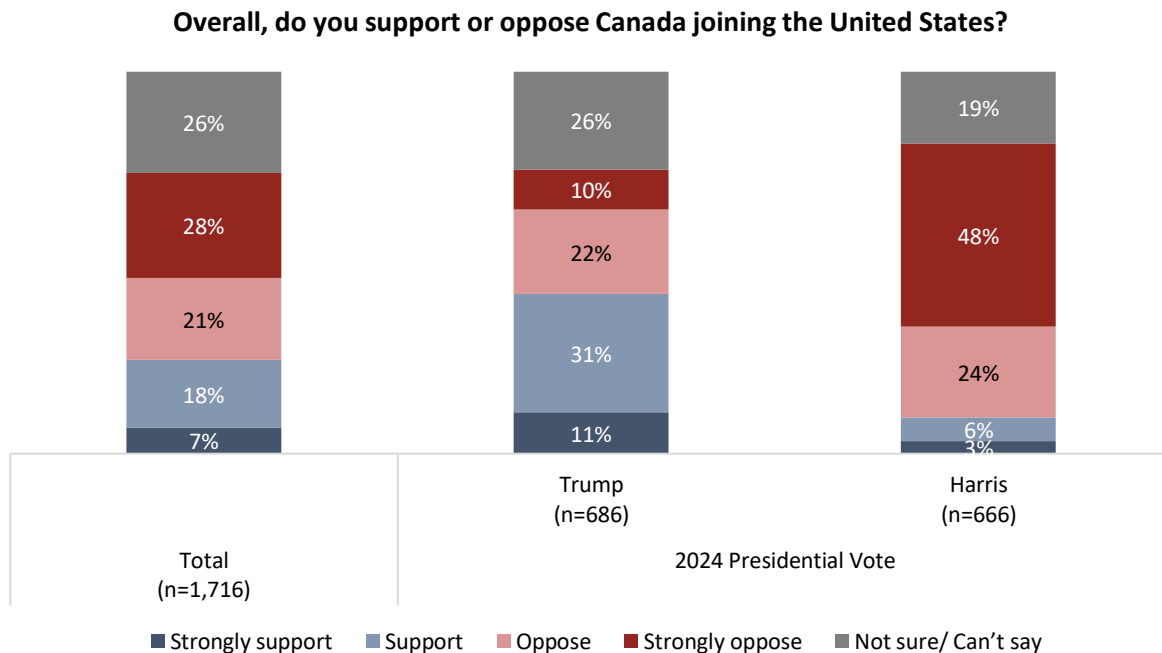


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Americans oppose Canada joining by a margin of 2:1

The idea of the “[great nation](#)” of the U.S. and Canada is met with little enthusiasm from Americans. One-quarter (25%) support Canada joining the U.S., while more (49%) do not. Support is higher among those who voted for Trump in last year’s presidential election, but tops out at a plurality level (42%), with a significant portion really not sure how they feel about this:



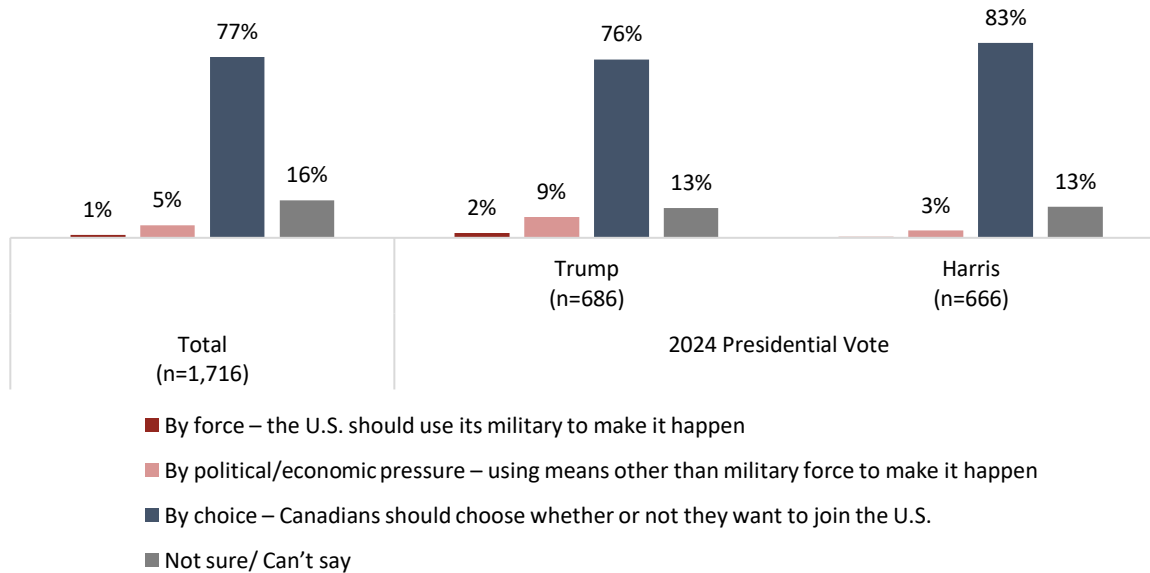
Three-quarters say it should be up to Canada

This tepid support for Canada as 51st state is matched by little interest from Americans in forcing it to happen. Few (5%) support Trump’s promised use of “[economic force](#)” to annex Canada, while even fewer (1%) believe the U.S. should use its military to make it happen – something Trump has ruled out. Instead, the overwhelming majority of Trump (76%) and Harris (83%) voters believe that if Canada were to join the United States, it should happen by Canadians’ choice:

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Suppose Trump is serious about Canada joining the United States. Do you believe this should happen...



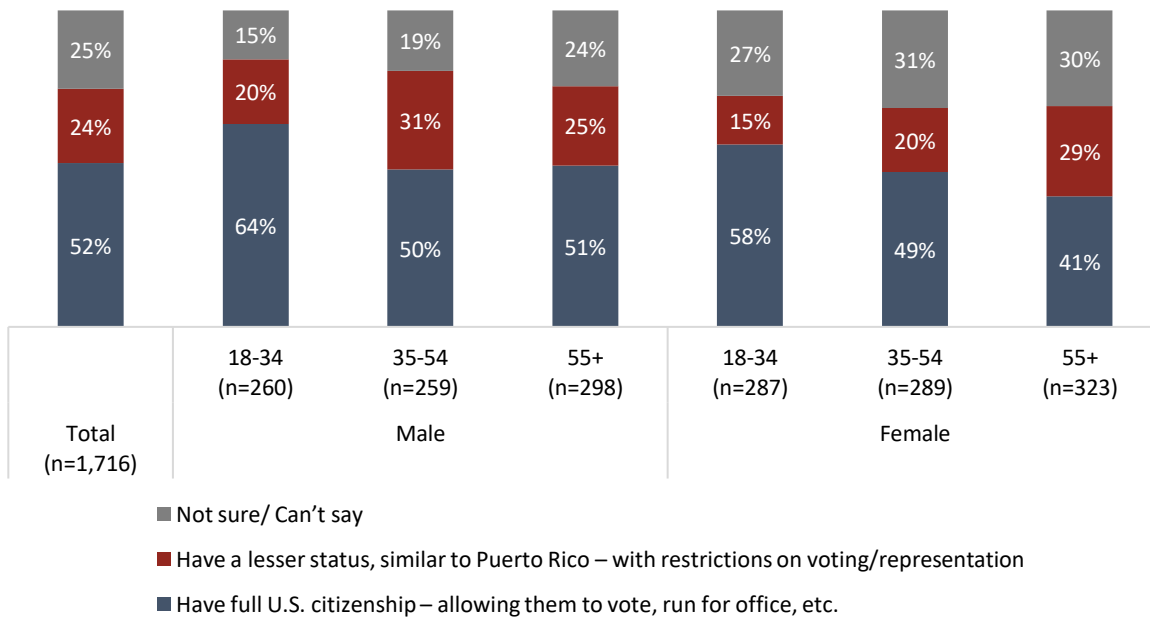
Should Canada have full state rights?

The mechanics of Canada joining the U.S. are complicated, were it to actually happen. Notably, there are territories of the American empire that enjoy less than full statehood, such as Puerto Rico, a status which comes with less political representation. However, only half of Americans (52%) say Canada should join as a full citizen:

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If Canada were to join the United States, do you think Canadians should...



Part Two: Canadian perspectives on the U.S.

Favourability toward America drops

Canadian negativity towards the United States is a somewhat new phenomenon. Dating back to the turn of the century, Canadians have been more likely to say they had a favourable view of the United States than an unfavourable one. The net positivity from Canadians even held through the height of the Iraq War. Canada decided against joining the U.S.-led military intervention in Iraq, creating a point of friction between the two countries, after Canada had previously joined the coalition which invaded Afghanistan.

Canadian views of the United States were altered after the election of Trump to his first term. The trading relationship between the two countries was a focus of [Trump's ire](#) during his first term as Canada, the United States and Mexico hashed out the replacement agreement for NAFTA with contentious negotiations.

Related: [USMCA: Canadians ambivalent about “New NAFTA”, feeling bruised by U.S.](#)

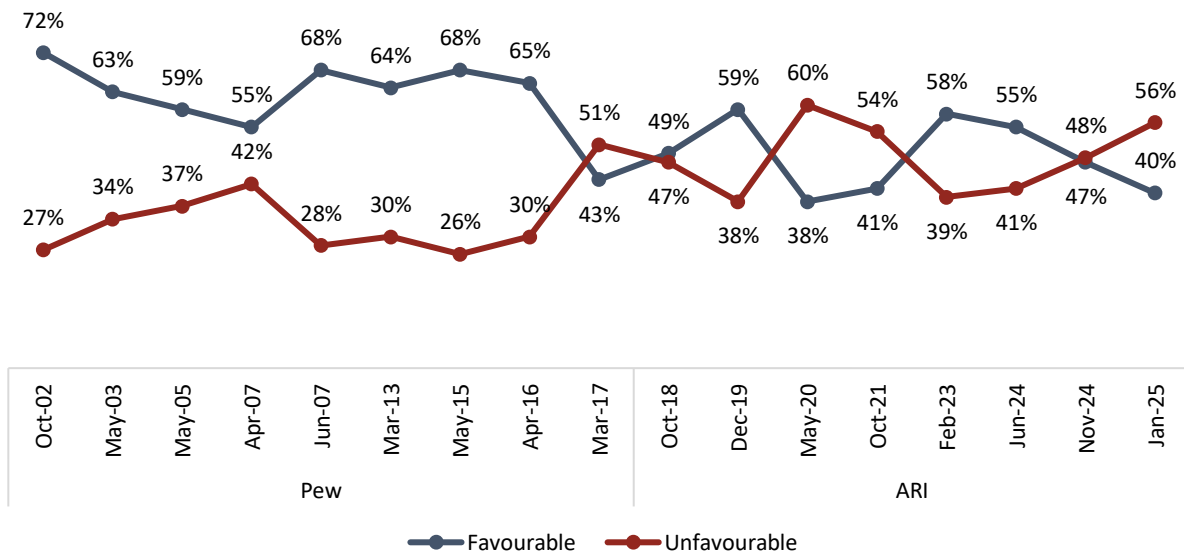
Negativity towards the U.S. grew among Canadians while positivity plummeted to new lows. Throughout much of Trump's first term, majorities of Canadians held negative views of the United States. Views recovered under Trump's successor, President Joe Biden, but have plummeted after the November presidential election.

Meanwhile, Canadians who have an unfavourable view of Trump (76%) outnumber those who view the incoming president positively (20%) by nearly four-to-one ([see detailed tables](#)).

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Canadians' views of the United States over time

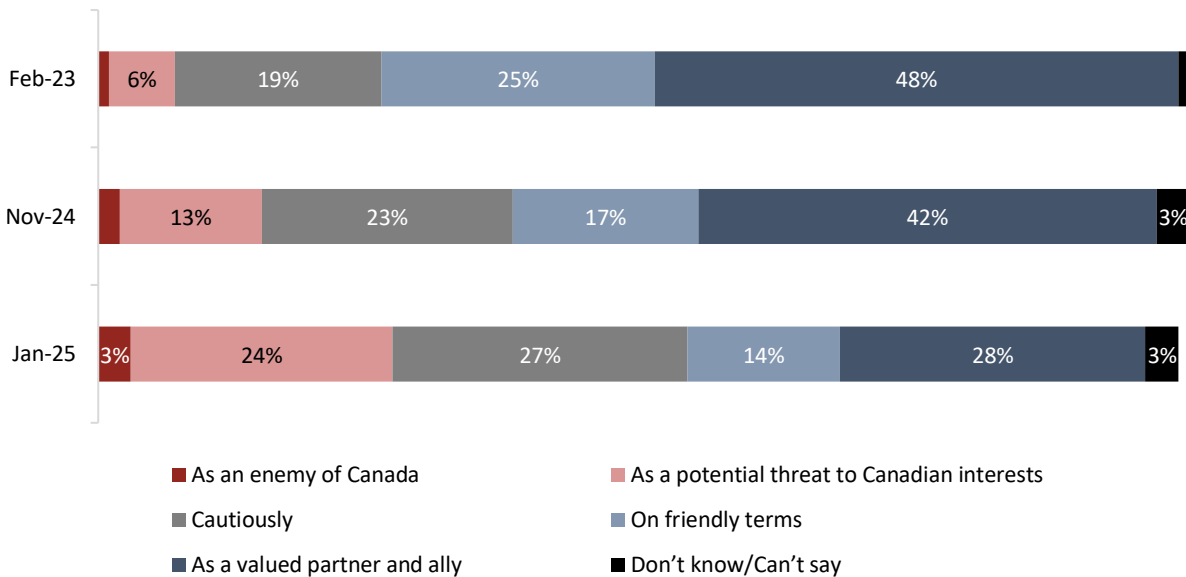


Proportion of Canadians who view U.S. as threat triples from 2023

Trump’s talk of tariffs and annexation has also changed Canadian public opinion on how to approach their southern neighbour. In February 2023, the prevailing view among Canadians was that Canada should approach the U.S. as a valued ally (48%) or at least on friendly terms (25%). Few at the time believed the Canadian government should consider the U.S. as an enemy (1%) or a threat (6%).

Fast-forward nearly two years and Canadians are much more likely to believe their government should view the U.S. as a threat (24%) or enemy (3%), as those who would adopt a friendly stance are much fewer in number:

**From an overall point of view, how do you think the Canadian government should approach the United States?
(Canadian respondents)**



Part Three: Number 51?

One-third of Canadians believe Trump is serious about Canada joining U.S.

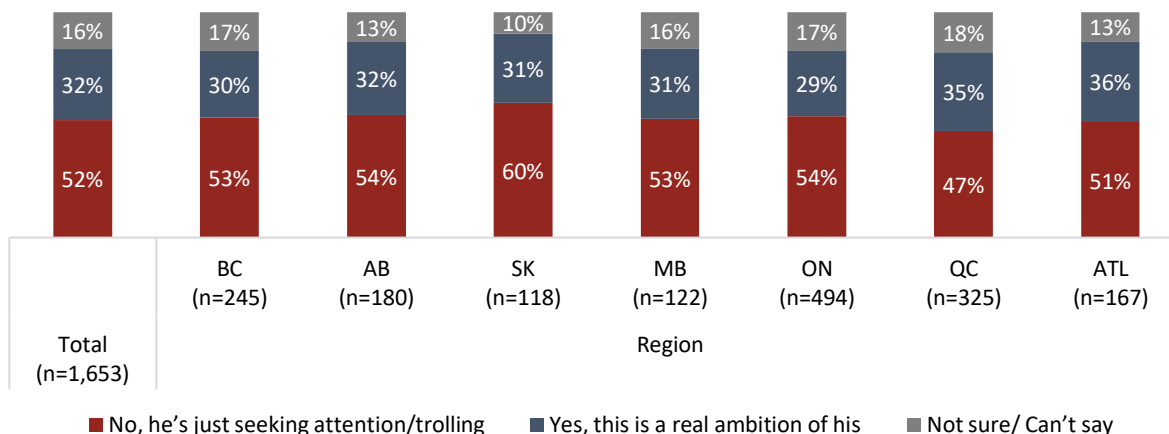
Trump’s musings on Canada becoming the 51st state were first dismissed as “silly talk” when it came up after Trudeau’s emergency sojourn to Mar-a-Lago in November to discuss the U.S. president-elect’s threats of 25 per cent tariffs on Canadian imports. It became harder to dismiss the comments as a joke after Trump’s January press conference in which he doubled down and said he would use “economic force” to annex Canada.

Still, half (52%) of Canadians believe Trump is trolling their country. One-third (32%) disagree and believe Trump is serious.

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Do you believe Trump is serious when he makes statements about Canada joining the U.S. as the 51st state?



90% say 'no', but Albertans, Conservatives more onside

Canadians are unequivocally against the concept: nearly all (90%) say if the matter of Canada joining the U.S. were to come to a referendum, they would vote no.

There is more support in Alberta (18%) than anywhere else. Some in that province have harboured separatist feelings. In 2019, 60 per cent of Albertans said they would be in favour of their province joining a separatist movement, while more recently, [in 2024](#), half (47%) of Albertans believed their province gets a “raw deal” when it comes to being part of Canada.

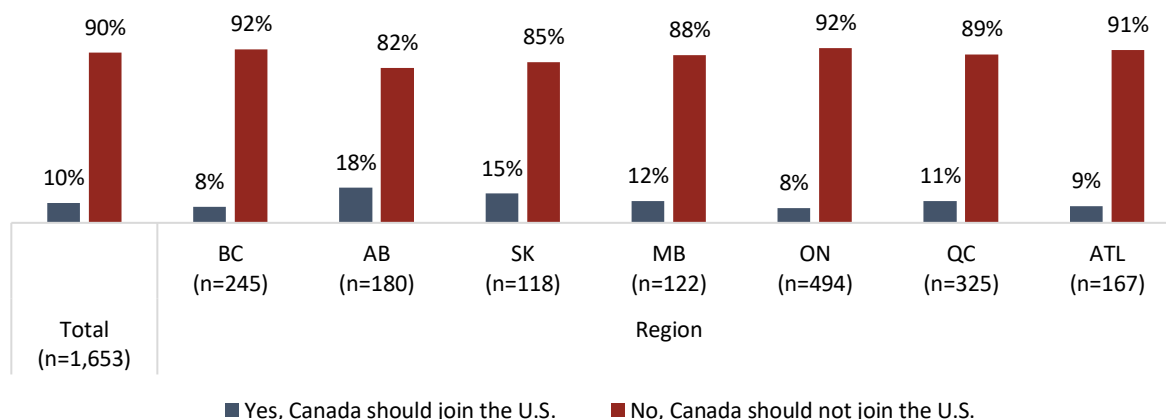
Related:

- [Decades after Reform's rise, voters open to a new 'Western Canada Party'](#)
- [Confederal Fairness: As premiers meet, which provinces say they get more, or less, out of federation?](#)

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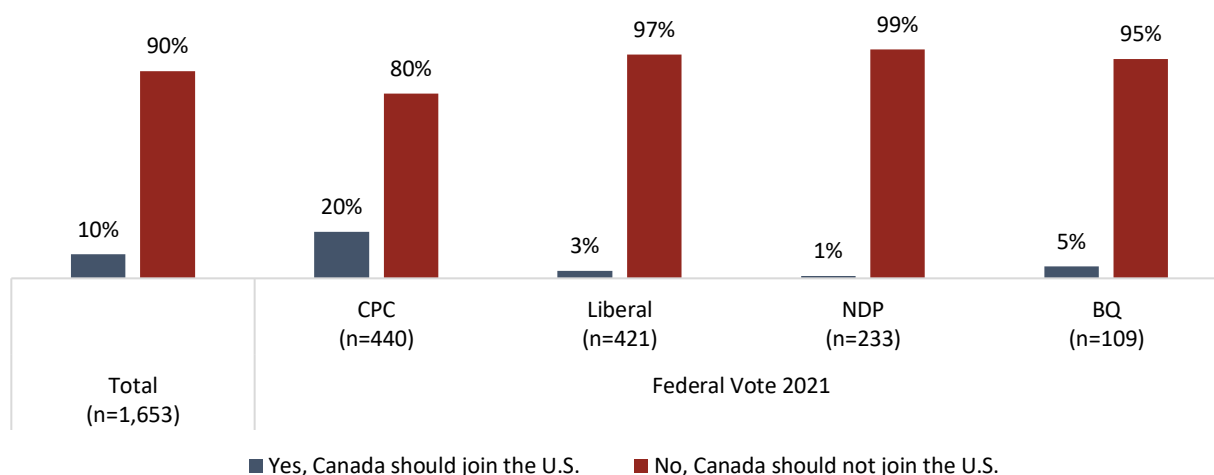
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Suppose there was a referendum in Canada, and Canadians were to vote on whether this country should become part of the United States, would you vote...



Politics also appears to play a role in openness to Canada joining the U.S. Those who voted Liberal (97%), NDP (99%) and Bloc Québécois (95%) in the 2021 election are near unanimous in their opposition to Canada becoming the 51st state. Four-in-five (80%) of those who voted Conservative agree, but a much more sizable minority (20%) say they would vote for Canada to join the U.S. if it came to a referendum:

Suppose there was a referendum in Canada, and Canadians were to vote on whether this country should become part of the United States, would you vote...



Quebecers most concerned Trump will ramp up pressure

“There isn’t a snowball’s chance in hell that Canada would become part of the United States,” Trudeau wrote on social media as Trump ramped up the rhetoric on his designs for new U.S. territory. The

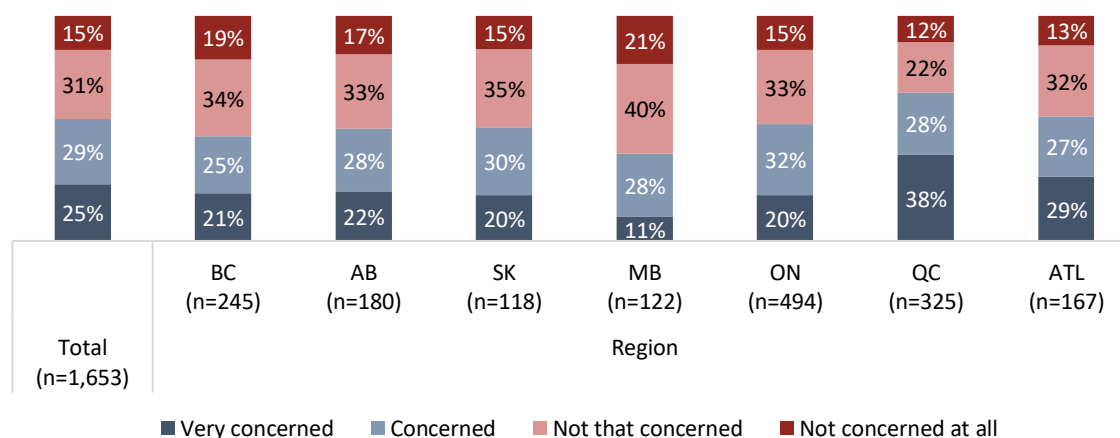
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response has yet to deter Trump and appears to have done little to quell Canadian concern as Trump's inauguration nears.

A majority (54%) say they are worried that Trump will apply more pressure on Canada once he takes the Oval Office. Concern is highest in Quebec (66%), where Premier François Legault [has called for "a cool head" and to ignore Trump's threats](#).

How concerned are you that once Trump takes office on January 20, he will apply more pressure on Canada to join the United States?



Stick vs. carrot – the stick moves opinion more, but most still say ‘no’

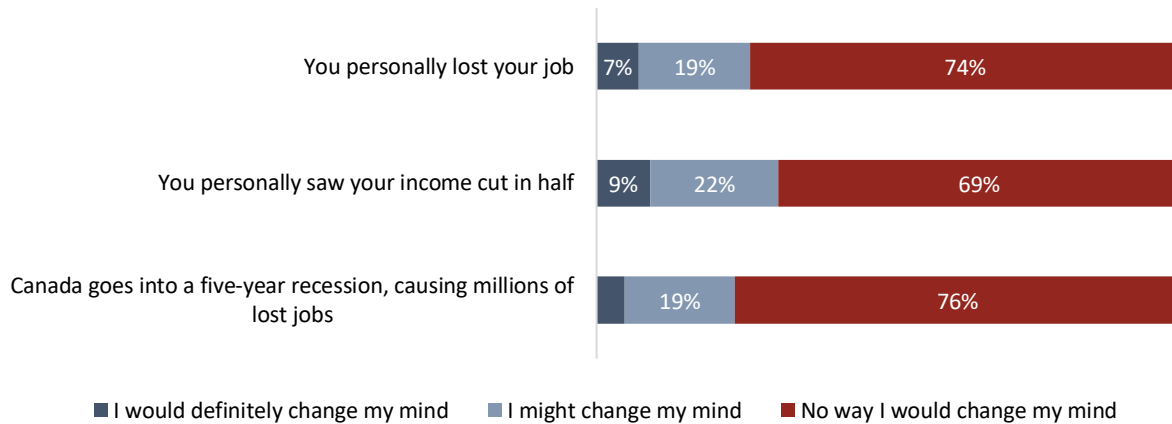
Canada faces the potential of great economic harm from Trump's threatened tariffs. The [Canadian Chamber of Commerce estimated](#) the blanket 25-per-cent tariff could shrink Canada's GDP 2.6 per cent. But that [could be just the beginning](#) of Trump's threatened "economic force".

The Angus Reid Institute proposed several hypothetical economic scenarios to Canadians who said they would vote no if there were a referendum on Canada joining the United States. Most said they would not change their stance if they personally lost their job (74%), lost half their income (69%) or if Canada entered a deep recession (76%) because of economic pressure levied by Trump. Few say they would "definitely" change their mind given those scenarios:

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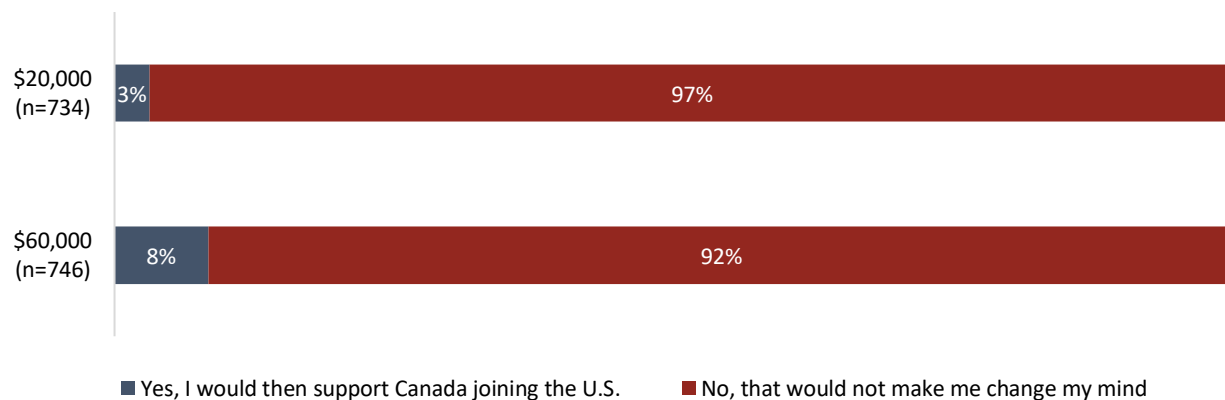
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**If (more severe economic pressure from the U.S.) happened, would any of the following hypothetical situations cause you to change your mind about Canada joining the U.S.?
(Among those who would vote no in a referendum)**



Canadians also appear unmoved if Trump were to change tact and instead offer financial incentives to buy their yes vote in a hypothetical referendum. Those who said they would vote no were then split into two groups – one was offered \$20,000 while the other was offered \$60,000. In both cases, fewer than one-in-10 said they would change their mind:

**Suppose Trump offered each Canadian household [\$20,000 or \$60,000] to vote yes in such a referendum. Would that change your mind?
(Split sample among those who would vote no in a referendum)**



Widespread distrust that Trump won't resort to military force

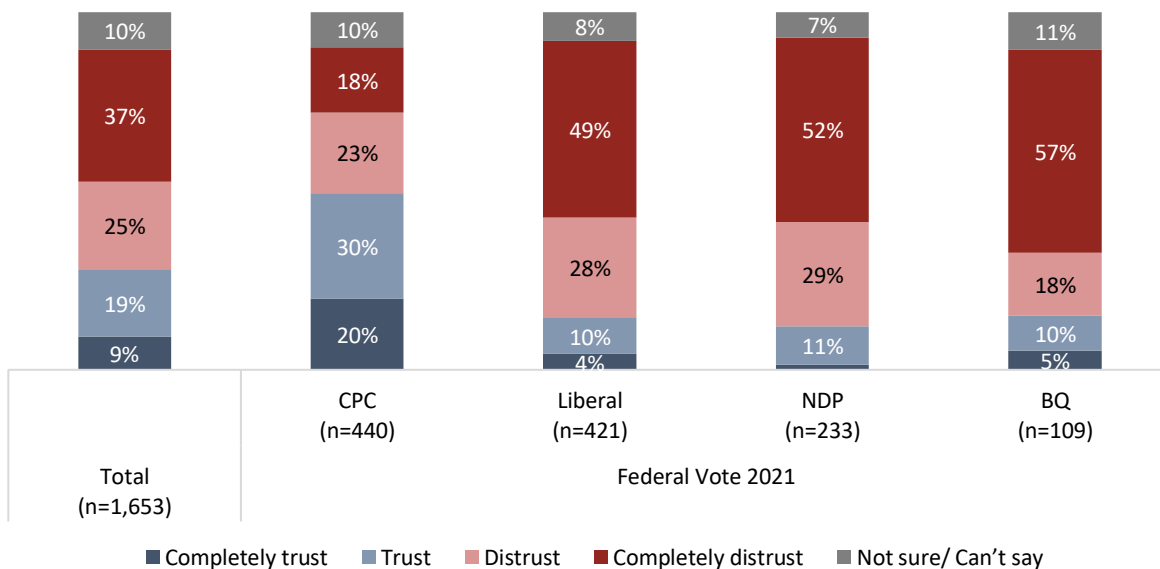
Trump explicitly ruled out the use of military force to annex Canada, but left it on the table in his pursuit of [Greenland and the Panama Canal](#). Perhaps that is why a majority of Canadians (62%) say they do not

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trust Trump to keep his word and not involve the military. Past Conservative voters (50%) are more likely to trust the president-elect:

Trump has said he would not use the U.S. military to force Canada to join the United States. Do you trust him or not to keep his word?

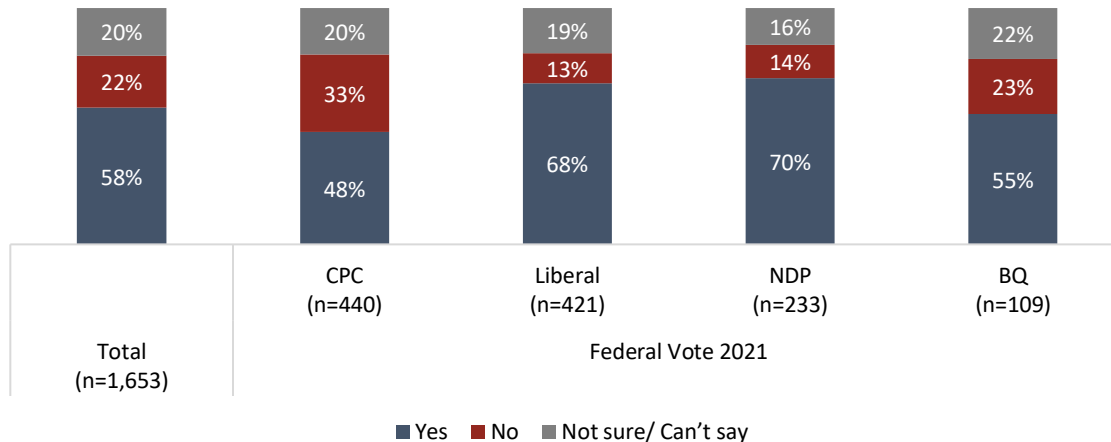


If it were to come to war, a majority (58%) of Canadians believe other NATO allies would help defend Canada from American aggression. In the case of Greenland, which is part of the Kingdom of Denmark, a founding NATO member, a former U.S. ambassador to Denmark believes NATO “would be compelled to respond” in the event of American aggression.

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Suppose Trump decided to use military force on Canada to force it to join the United States. Do you believe other NATO countries would come to Canada's aid, or not?



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

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

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