

Fear Factor: Anxiety over Canada-US relationship has four-in-five Canadians worried about the year ahead

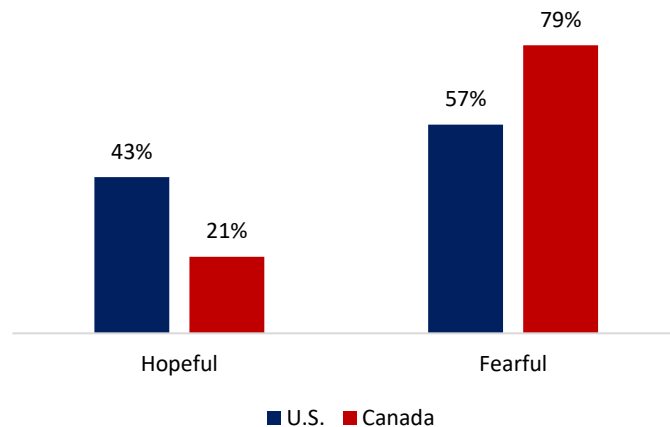
Two-thirds of Canadians give Trump an 'F' for his first year in office; half as many CPC voters agree

January 28, 2026 – Prime Minister Mark Carney changed the tone of the Canada-U.S. relationship with a pointed speech about the breakdown of the international rules-based order that was directed at U.S. President Donald Trump. Or maybe he didn't, after Trump officials claimed that Carney “walked back” much of what he said in Davos at the World Economic Forum. Or maybe he did, as Carney [claims he stood firm on his remarks](#).

Regardless of which direction the remarks are heading, in a survey completed after the Davos speech but before this recent Carney-said, Trump-said, Canadians offer their prime minister majority praise for his approach to Trump thus far, but voice significant fear about the enigmatic nature of the relationship and what's to come.

New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds four-in-five Canadians (79%) saying they are more fearful than hopeful (21%) about the year ahead, and most likely to describe the first year of Trump's current presidential term with the words “corrupt”, “chaotic”, and “incompetent”.

Thinking about the year ahead, would you say you are more hopeful or fearful?



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from Jan. 23 – 27, 2026, among a randomized sample of 1,612 Canadian adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). The sample was weighted to be representative of adults nationwide according to region, gender, age, household income, and education, based on the Canadian census. 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. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

For more information on our polling methods, [click here](#).

While Americans, too, have [voiced significant dissatisfaction](#) with Trump, they're twice as likely to be hopeful than Canadians (43% vs 21%) about what 2026 will bring.

Part of this elevated concern in Canada may rely on the ongoing and persistent jabs from Trump toward Carney, and the former's propensity for musing about absorbing Canada into the American union. Canadians were asked whether they felt Trump will pursue more regime-change operations such as the one carried out in Venezuela or if they felt that was an isolated incident. Three-quarters say they expect more is to come (74%).

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More Key Findings:

- Three-in-five (61%) say they have been following more U.S. news than usual in the past year; a similar number say they've also been more closely following international events (57%)
- Half of Canadians (47%), including three-in-five (58%) Albertans, believe the forced regime change in Venezuela is bad news for Canada's oil and gas industry.

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.*

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Part One: Trump's first year

Two-thirds of Canadians give Trump a failing grade

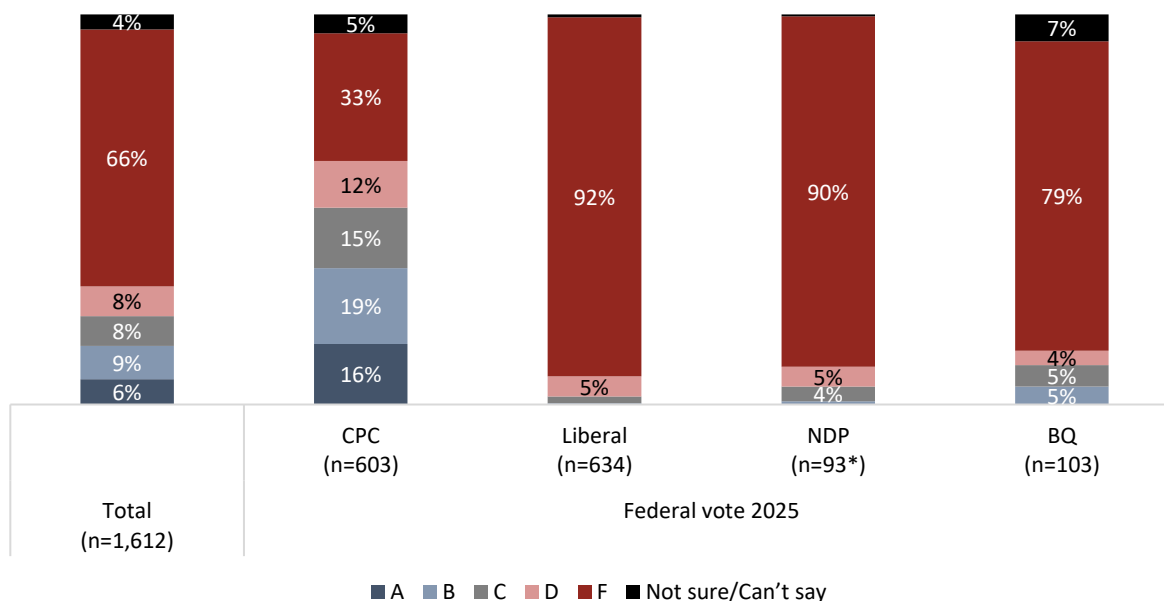
The first year of the second term of U.S. President Donald Trump has brought much anxiety to Canadians. He's threatened annexation and economic ruin to Canada specifically, while destabilizing much of the international order that had governed the world after the Second World War.

It is perhaps no surprise then that most Canadians are critical of Trump's performance in his return to the White House. Two-thirds (66%) say they would give Trump an 'F' for his first year of his second term, while one-in-six (15%) grade him either an 'A' or a 'B'. The latter group is mostly composed of those who voted Conservative in last year's federal election; half (50%) of CPC voters give Trump a 'C' grade or better. Nearly all of other groups of voters offer the U.S. president a failing grade:

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What grade would you give Trump for his first year, overall?



How to describe Trump's 2025?

The early anger Canadians directed towards Trump during the height of his 51st State rhetoric has endured. When asked how they would describe year one of Trump 2.0, most Canadians choose words like corrupt (36%), chaotic (24%), incompetent (24%), disruptive (16%), reckless (16%) or terrible (15%) rather than words like bold (6%), strong (5%), effective (5%), transformational (4%), hopeful (2%) or great (1%).

Again there is a clear political divide, with Conservative voters more likely than others to gravitate towards positive or neutral terms. One-quarter (26%) of those who voted CPC in 2025 describe the past year of Trump as "America-First", while one-in-six (13%) describe it as "Bold" or "Strong". Still, one-in-five CPC voters describe the past year as chaotic (21%) or disruptive (20%).

Liberal and NDP voters from 2025 are most likely to describe Trump's return as "corrupt":

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In a word or two, how would you describe this first year of Trump's second term?					
	Total (n=1,612)	Federal vote 2025			
		CPC (n=603)	Liberal (n=634)	NDP (n=93*)	BQ (n=103)
Corrupt	36%	14%	56%	48%	17%
Chaotic	24%	21%	24%	19%	33%
Incompetent	24%	12%	34%	32%	26%
Disruptive	16%	20%	11%	14%	33%
Reckless	16%	11%	21%	23%	3%
Terrible	15%	7%	19%	27%	24%
America-First	12%	26%	3%	1%	3%
Divisive	12%	12%	14%	9%	9%
Bold	6%	13%	0%	2%	3%
Hopeless	6%	4%	5%	11%	20%
Strong	5%	13%	0%		1%
Effective	5%	12%			1%
Transformational	4%	8%	1%	2%	5%
Hopeful	2%	3%	0%	1%	0%
Great	1%	2%	0%		
Unifying	0%	0%	0%		

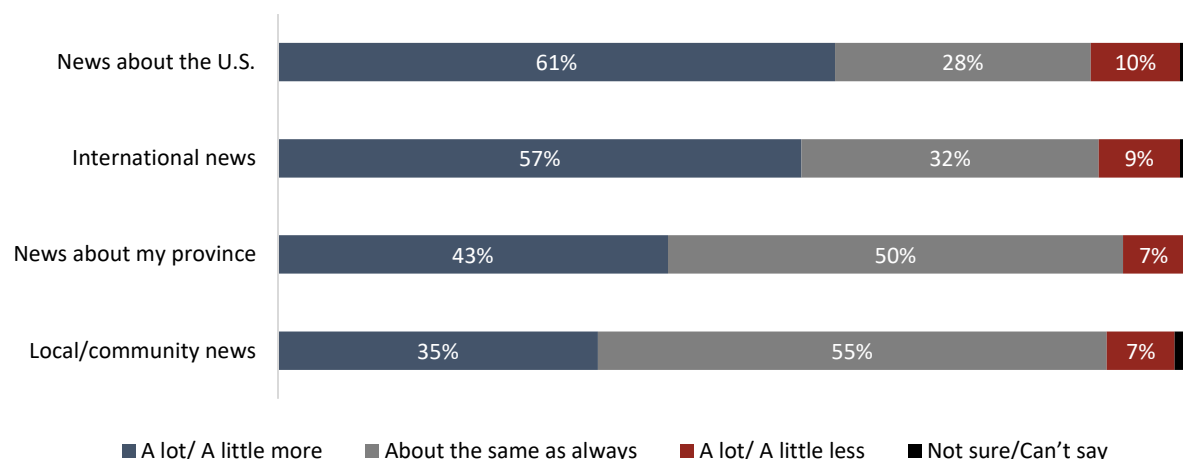
Three-in-five say they've been following more U.S. news

Most Canadians have done the opposite of turning a blind eye to the U.S. as Trump centred himself in the global discourse. Three-in-five (61%) say they've been following more U.S. news since Trump returned to the White House and a similar number (57%) say they've been paying attention more to international news. Canadians are more likely to say their consumption of community (55%) or provincial news (50%) has remained about the same:

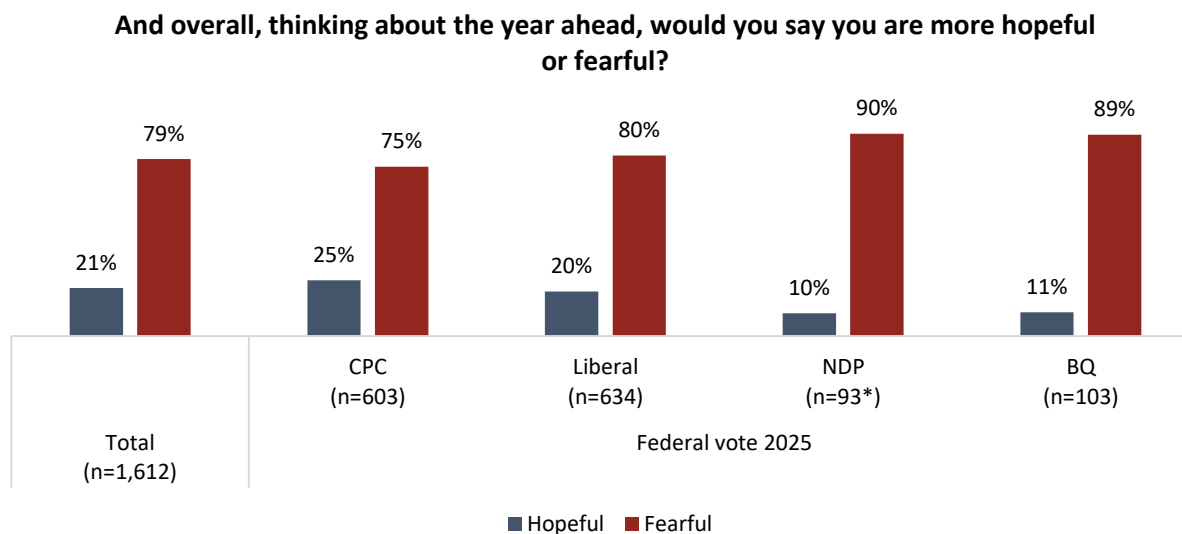
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Looking back over the past 12 months, would you say that you have paid more, less or about the same amount of attention to the following:
(All respondents, n=1,612)



There is more fear than optimism as Canadians look ahead to the next 365 days with Trump as U.S. president. By a four-to-one margin, Canadians are more fearful (79%) than hopeful (21%) about the year ahead:

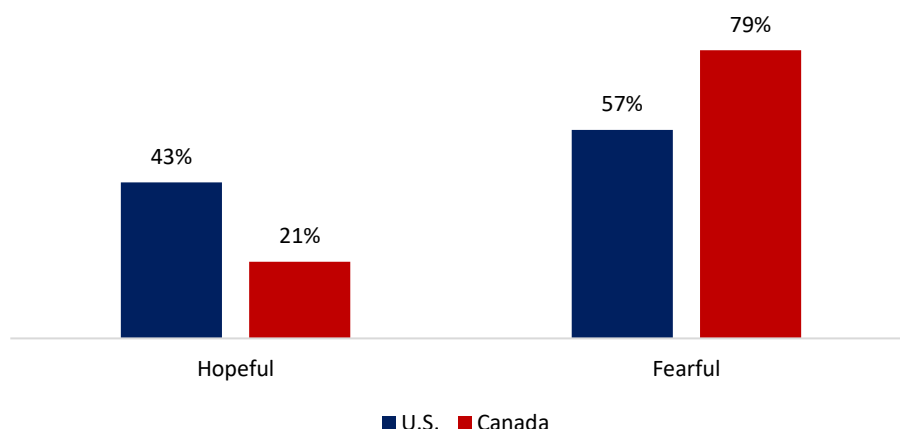


In a [recent study by Angus Reid USA](#), Americans were asked the same question. The balance tilts more towards fear (57%) than hope (43%) among Americans, but they are twice as likely to be hopeful than Canadians (43% to 21%):

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Thinking about the year ahead, would you say you are more hopeful or fearful?



Part Two: Carney's handling of relationship with Trump

Prime Minister Mark Carney sharpened his rhetoric towards Trump at a speech at the recent World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Trump officials said in a recent call that Carney “aggressively walked back” his comments from that speech, [an assertion that Carney denies](#). Recent ARI data found that Canadians offered Carney his highest approval rating since he took over as Liberal leader and Prime Minister last year with three-in-five (60%) approving of his performance in the wake of the Davos speech.

Related: [Federal Politics: Carney receives post-Davos bump in approval, though vote intention picture remains tight](#)

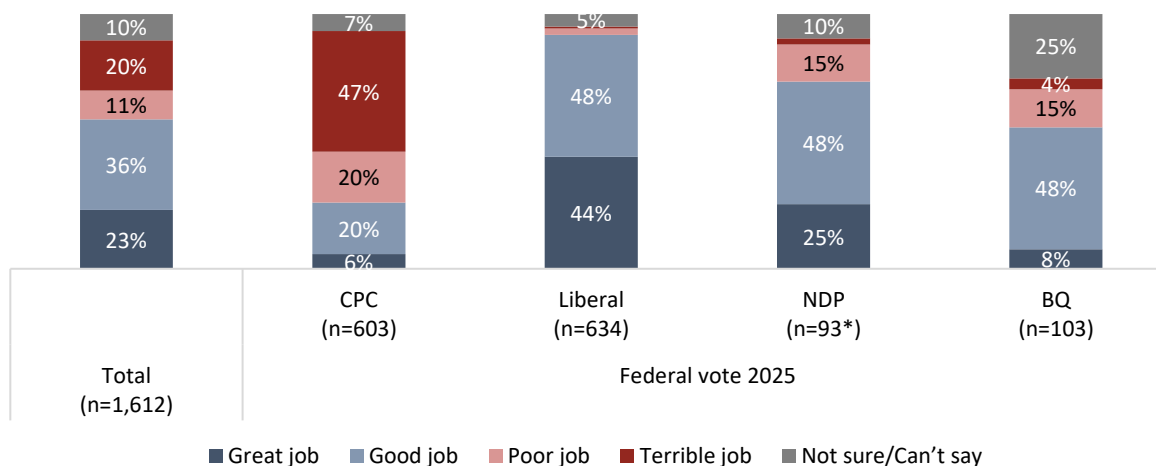
A proportion similar to the one that approve of Carney also believe he is handling Trump well (59%). Three-in-ten (31%) disagree and believe Carney is doing a poor or terrible job. That group is mainly those who voted CPC in last year's election, though a significant minority (26%) offer an elbows, or rather, thumbs-up.

Recent Liberal voters offer near universal praise (92%). Majorities of NDP (73%) and Bloc Québécois voters (56%) also believe Carney is doing a great or good job handling Trump:

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Considering Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and his handling of relations with Donald Trump, would you say Carney has done a good job or poor job?



Part Three: Regime change, more to come?

The so-called '[Trump Doctrine](#)' governing U.S. interactions in the Western Hemisphere has been more words than actions until Jan. 3 when the U.S. military captured Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and his wife and took them to the U.S. to face charges of drug trafficking. More than half (53%) of Canadians say they oppose this action by the U.S.; three-in-ten (31%) support the Trump administration's incursion into Venezuela, a group mostly comprised of those who voted Conservative in 2025 (62% support, [see detailed tables](#)).

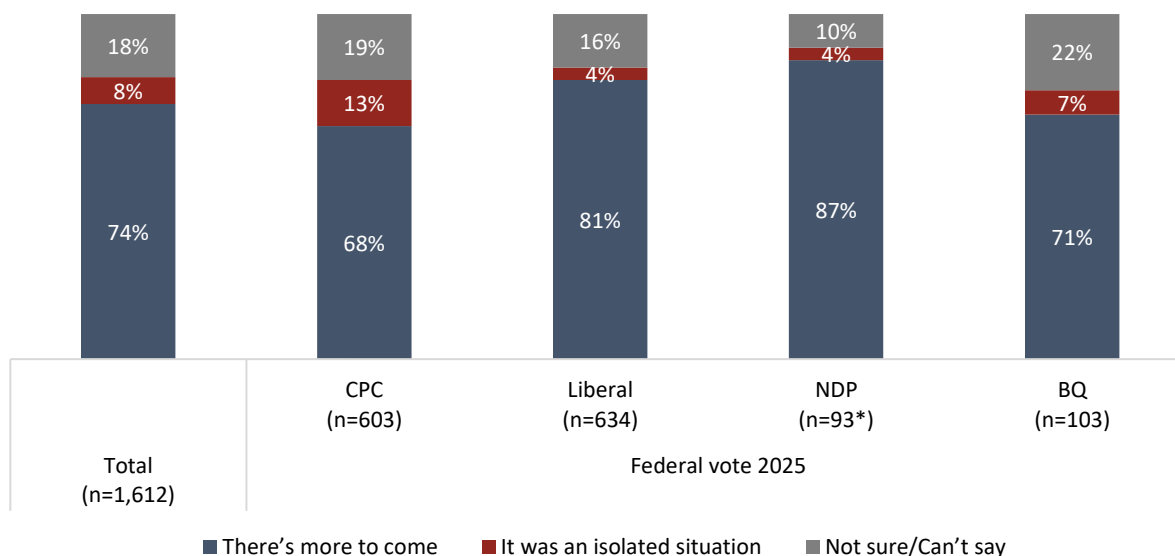
Canadians say they expect that Venezuela will not be the last country forced into a regime change in Trump's second term. Three-quarters (74%) believe there are more regime-change operations to come, far outnumbering the one-in-12 (8%) who believe Venezuela was an isolated incident.

Majorities across the political spectrum believe Trump and the U.S. will use military force to insert themselves in other country's politics again down the road:

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Based on what you have read, seen, or heard, do you think that the Trump administration is going to pursue more “regime change” operations in the coming year, or do you think Venezuela was an isolated situation?



One of the goals of the operation was to put a dent in drug trafficking in the Western Hemisphere. Maduro and his wife have plead not guilty to the charges laid by U.S. authorities. And most (68%) Canadians doubt it will negatively impact drug trafficking and consumption either in the U.S. or the Western Hemisphere ([see detailed tables](#)).

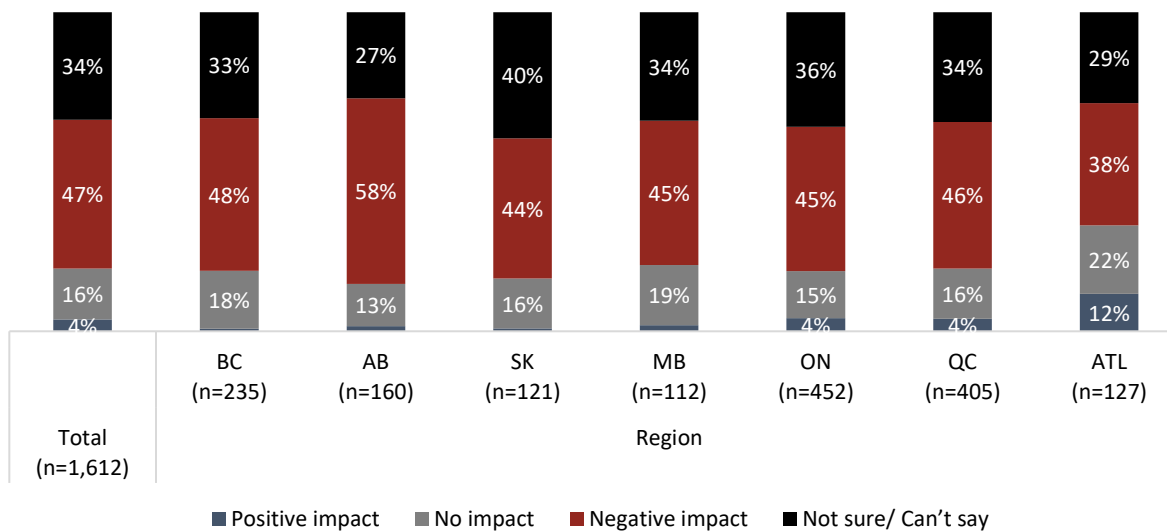
The U.S. is also looking [to develop the Venezuela oil industry](#) nationalized almost 20 years earlier under the regime of previous president Hugo Chavez. The expansion of oil production in Venezuela could have negative consequences for Canada's oil industry due to [the similarities in the chemical makeup of the two country's heavy oil](#). Both have been refined on the Gulf Coast, and some Canadian energy analysts worry that eventually the Venezuelan product could displace Canadian heavy oil from Alberta at those refineries.

Half (47%) of Canadians, including a majority (58%) in Alberta, believe the U.S. incursion into Venezuela will have a negative impact on Canada's oil and gas industry:

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What type of impact, if any, do you think recent U.S. actions involving Venezuela's government will have on Canada's oil and gas industry?



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

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