



FACTUM

Strong Majority (82%) Believe Canada Should Rely Less on Trade with China: Moderate Support for Trudeau Government Approach to China

Majority Want Canada to Support Hong Kong, but Split on Whether to Risk Further Economic and Political Sanctions

Toronto, ON, July 21, 2020 – Canadian public opinion on relations with China is subtle and doesn't align easily with the views of either the hawks or doves. We are uncomfortable with our level of reliance on trade with China and with the Chinese position on rule in Hong Kong. We also want Canada to stand up against Chinese government policies we disagree with but are concerned about the potential consequences to Canada of doing so.

A new Ipsos poll for Global News finds that eight in ten Canadians (82%) agree (35% strongly/47% somewhat) Canada should reduce its reliance on trade with China and diversify to other countries. At the same time, only a minority believes Canada can afford to suspend trade with the Chinese altogether: only 38% think (12% strongly/26% somewhat) Canada should completely sever economic ties with China.

Moderate Support for Trudeau Approach to China

Overall, a majority of Canadians think we are making the best of a complex and highly charged political situation: six in ten (62%) agree (9% strongly/53% somewhat) Canada is striking the right balance between cooperating with China and defending Canada's interests, leaving 38% who disagree.

Slightly fewer feel as optimistic about the Trudeau Government's handling of our relations with China. While a majority (58%) agree (9% strongly/49% somewhat) the Prime Minister is managing relations with China well, many (42%) disagree (15% strongly/27% somewhat). Trudeau's approach is seen most favourably in Atlantic Canada (68%), Quebec (61%), Ontario (60%), and British Columbia (59%), and least so in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (50%) and Alberta (41%).

Standing with Hong Kong

Canadians favour our country taking a hard line on the new security law and standing with Hong Kong: three in four Canadians (75%) agree (24% strongly/50% somewhat) that Canada should do more to stand up against the Chinese government and defend the residents of Hong Kong against recent curtailment of its citizens' liberties. Support for this stance rises to 81% among Canadians aged 35-54.

Taking a firm stand against China on Hong Kong isn't seen to be without political risk. Canadians are split right down the middle on how to best to approach bilateral relations, given the potential repercussions. Half (49%) think Canada should be careful not to offend the Chinese government and risk further economic sanctions or other political reactions, while the other half (51%) disagree.



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between July 8 and 10, 2020, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,000 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed online. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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