

# Two in Three (68%) Believe Canada Will Compromise Too Much to Get a Perimeter Security Agreement with the U.S.

*Country Split On Whether They Trust Stephen Harper to Negotiate a Deal That Improves Border Access But Doesn't Sacrifice Independence*

Public Release Date: Saturday, February 19, 2011, 6:00 AM EST



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# **Two in Three (68%) Believe Canada Will Compromise Too Much to Get a Perimeter Security Agreement with the U.S.**

## ***Country Split On Whether They Trust Stephen Harper to Negotiate a Deal That Improves Border Access But Doesn't Sacrifice Independence***

**Toronto, ON** – Last week Prime Minister Stephen Harper met with U.S President Barack Obama to announce that the two countries would be negotiating a new perimeter security agreement for the purpose of heightening security and easing the flow of goods and people across the Canada-U.S. Border. But on the heels of this announcement, a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted exclusively for Postmedia News and Global National reveals that two in three (68%) Canadians 'agree' (22% strongly/46% somewhat) that 'Canada will compromise too much power over decisions about immigration, privacy and security to get a perimeter security agreement' with the United States. One in three (32%) 'disagree' (7% strongly/25% somewhat) with this sentiment.

Furthermore, the country is split on whether they trust Stephen Harper to get a good deal for Canada that balances maintaining its sovereignty with enhancing security and easing cross-border travel. One half (49%) 'agrees' (16% strongly/33% somewhat) that they 'trust Stephen Harper to negotiate a deal that improves border access but doesn't give up powers that are important to Canada's independence', while the other half (51%) of Canadians 'disagree' (23% strongly/29% somewhat) that they trust Stephen Harper to strike this right balance.

There has been some criticism levied on the bi-lateral talks because they are to take place behind closed doors. Many argue that these talks should be made public so that Canadians can hear what is being discussed and the implications for Canada. To this point, nine in ten (91%) 'agree' (59% strongly/31% somewhat) that 'these negotiations should take place in public so that Canadians can see exactly what is being proposed'. Just one in ten (9%) 'disagree', and believe that the talks should remain private.

One of the proposals being negotiated is an "entry-exit" system which tracks cross-border traffic. Under this system, it is possible that when a Canadian enters the U.S., the Canadian government would be informed of that movement across the border. Similarly, when someone crosses the border into Canadian territory, the U.S. government would be made aware of this movement. Thinking about this proposal, nearly two in three (63%) are closer to the opinion that this proposal is an 'acceptable measure to enhance border security'. Conversely, one in three (37%) maintain that this would be an 'unacceptable invasion of privacy'.

On the broader topic of North American integration, some commentators say that Canada should push for creating an integrated North American Community where there would be an assembly of elected representatives from Canada, the United States and Mexico. This community of representatives would enhance trade and cooperation in areas such as military, health threats, the environment and poverty reduction. Reflecting on this idea, six in ten (60%) Canadians 'approve' (10% strongly/50% somewhat) of Canada negotiating an agreement like this with Canada and Mexico, while four in ten (40%) would 'disapprove' (18% strongly/23% somewhat) of these negotiations if they were to take place.



*These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between February 15 to 17, 2011, on behalf of Postmedia News and Global National. For this survey, a sample of 1,097 adults from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults who drive and have a car in Canada been polled. 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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