ANGUS REID INSTITUTE
Canada's Non-Profit Foundation Committed to Independent Research

Centre for Strategic Statecraft

Green Light? Canadians open to Chinese EV manufacturing domestically, but concerns persist over jobs and security

Majority uninterested in purchasing a Chinese vehicle, but one-third would if it was considerably cheaper

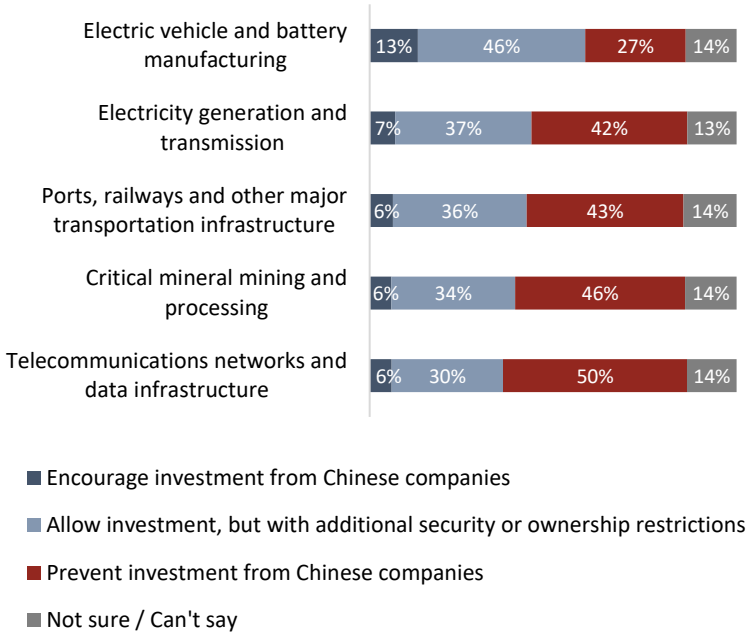
November 17, 2026 – Prime Minister Mark Carney has opened the door to more investment from Chinese automakers as he meets with President Xi Jinping at the Asia-Pacific summit being held in Shenzhen, China.

New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute in partnership with the Centre for Strategic Statecraft finds three-in-five (59%) Canadians would allow Chinese investment in Canada in electric vehicle and battery manufacturing, but many (46%) would want some additional security or ownership restrictions. Fewer than three-in-ten (27%) say Canada should prevent investment in electric vehicle manufacturing entirely.

Electric vehicles are also the sector where Canadians are most open to Chinese investment. Within various industries - electricity generation, transportation infrastructure, critical minerals, and telecommunications - the vast majority say that additional security or ownership restrictions are needed, or that investment should not be allowed at all.

If Canada does allow Chinese automotive investment in its country, Canadians say the government should prioritize Canadian jobs (66%), requiring commitments to purchase Canadian parts (44%) and protection of data generated in Canada (42%).

Do you believe the Canadian government should encourage, allow with restrictions, or prevent Chinese companies from investing in each of the following sectors in Canada?
(All respondents, n=1,604)



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute and the Centre for Strategic Statecraft conducted an online survey from November 13-15, 2026, among a randomized sample of 1,604 Canadian adults. Respondents are drawn from the Angus Reid Forum, a large-scale online panel developed to include Canadian residents in each of the 343 federal ridings in Canada and representative of the Canadian population by age, gender, family income, ethnic status and education. 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 jointly paid for by ARI and CSS. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

For more information on our polling methods, click here.

Canadians' openness to Chinese investment in electric vehicle manufacturing in Canada is paired with some reluctance to purchase Chinese-made vehicles. Half (52%) of Canadians say they would not consider a car made in China if they were in the market to buy a new

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vehicle. However, that is similar to the proportion who say they wouldn't consider an American one (56%) as U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs continue to punish the Canadian auto sector.

Asked if they're confident that the federal government has the policies and tools in place to handle China, if future negotiations involve threats of tariffs and other restrictions designed to pressure Canada, confidence is slight. Half say they have little to no confidence, while one-in-three say they have at least some level of confidence, and one-in-five are unsure (20%).

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.*

About the Centre for Strategic Statecraft

The Centre for Strategic Statecraft (CSS) is an independent, non-partisan institution established to help Canada think strategically and build the capability to act in a more competitive and fragmented world. CSS works at the intersection of foreign policy, economic security, technology, and national security and defence. Through research, policy engagement and partnerships with government, business and the expert community, CSS seeks to translate Canada's strengths into greater resilience and international influence.

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China, U.S. lag behind other countries in Canadians' vehicle-buying preferences

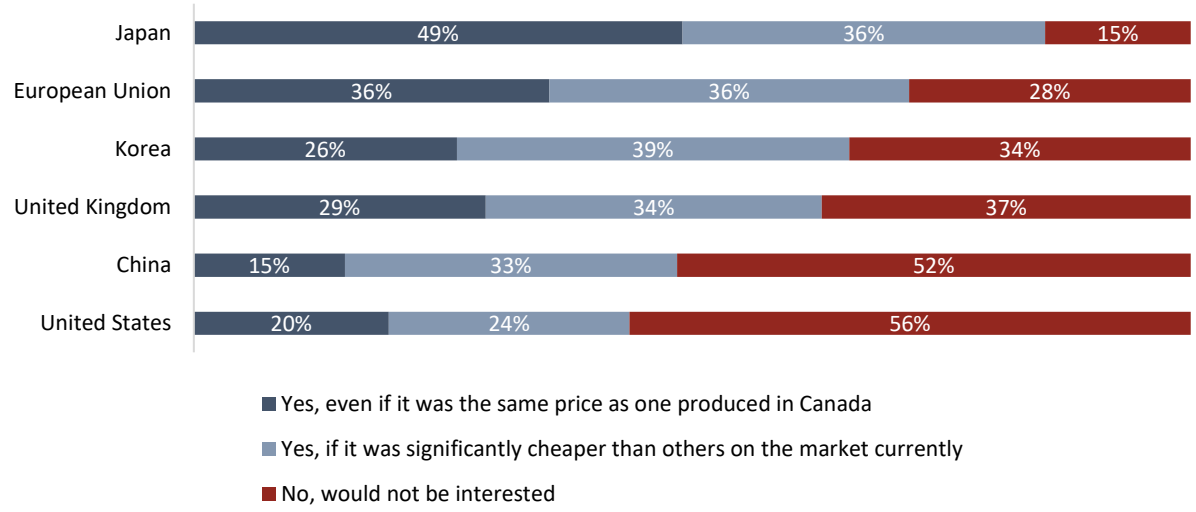
The future of the Canadian auto industry is becoming increasingly murky the longer Canada and the United States remain mired in a trade dispute which features punishing American tariffs on Canadian cars. The federal government is trying to package incentives for Stellantis to reopen a plant it idled in 2023 and was planning to sell to a Canadian armoured vehicle manufacturer, which would not nearly replicate the volume the plant was previously producing.

At the same time, Prime Minister Mark Carney is travelling to Southeast Asia and China looking to further bolster trade relationships and diversify the country's economic partnerships away from the United States. Under Carney, Canada reduced tariffs on Chinese-made electric vehicles, and signalled openness to investment from China in automaking in Canada should negotiations between Canada and the U.S. fail.

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As things stand, Canadians are more open to purchasing cars made in Japan (85%), the European Union (72%), Korea (65%) and the U.K. (63%) than China (48%). But, given the deterioration of the Canada-U.S. relationship since the start of Trump's second term in 2025, Canadians are more open to buying a car made in China (48%) than one from the U.S. (44%).

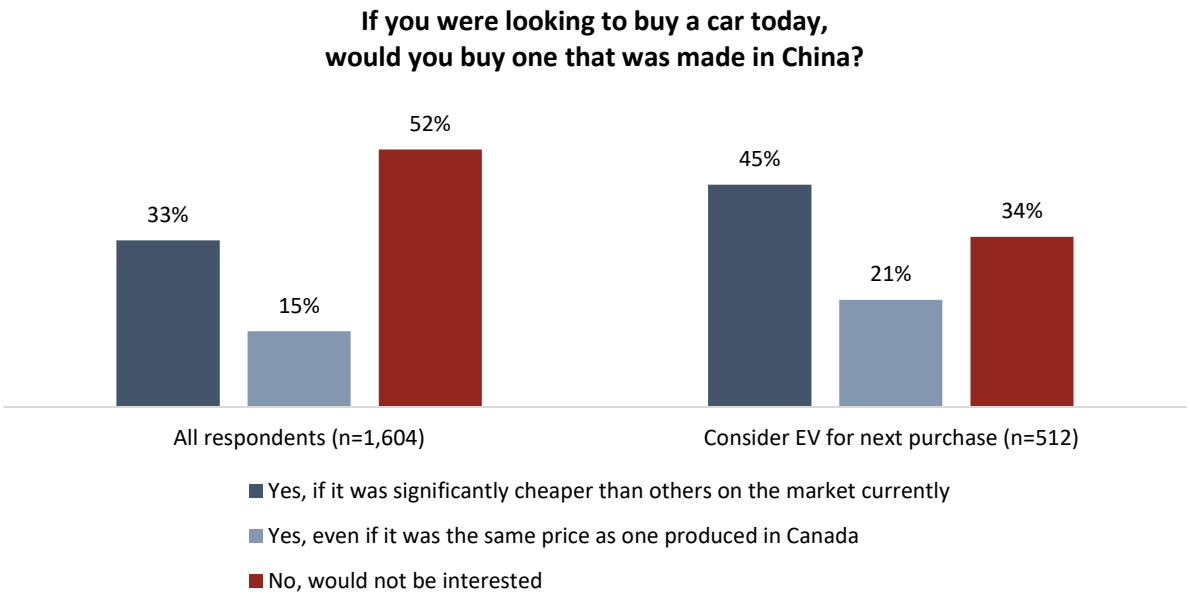
If you were looking to buy a car today, would you buy one that was made in the following countries/regions?
(All respondents, n=1,604)



But EV-interested buyers are keener on Chinese options

Those who are interested in EV's, however, tell another story. Among those who say they are considering an electric vehicle for their next purchase or lease, a comfortable majority say they would buy a Chinese vehicle:

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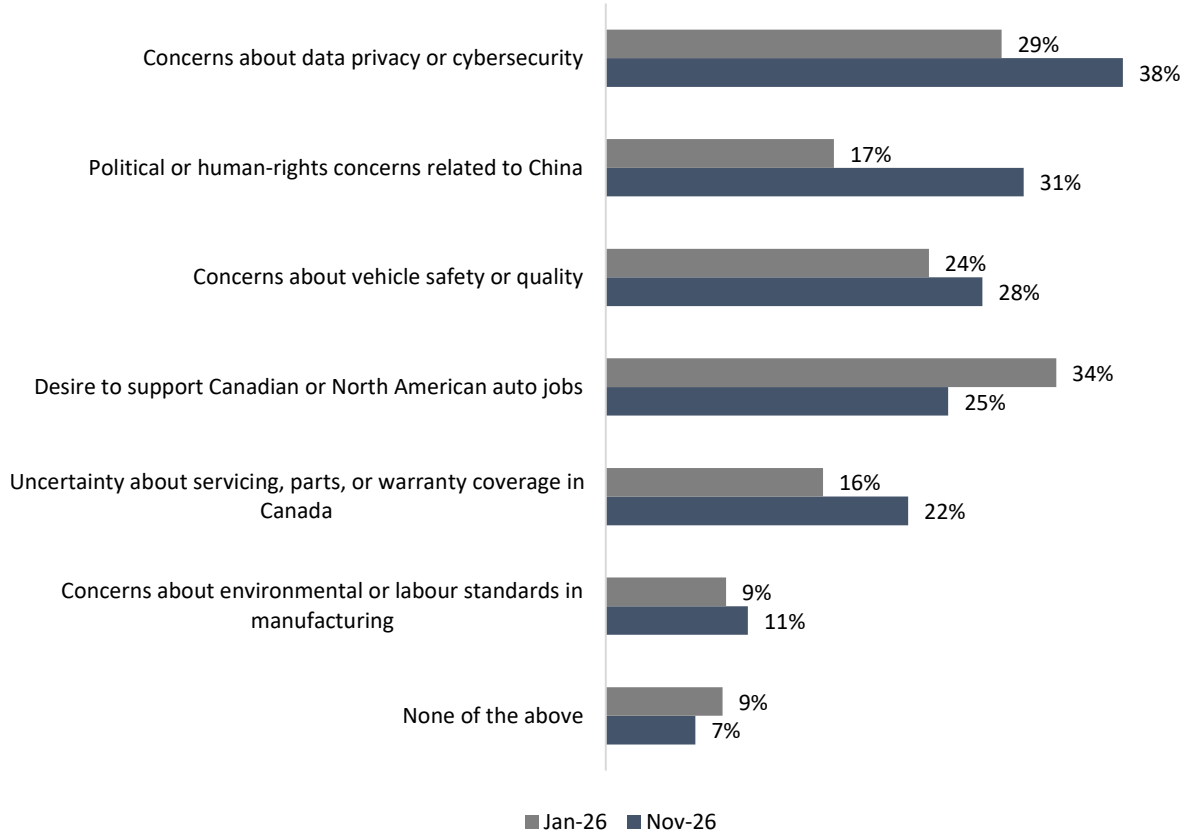


Cybersecurity remains top concern for those who wouldn't buy a Chinese EV

Those hesitant to buy Chinese cars are most likely to cite concerns over data security (38%) as a main reason for their hesitance. Human rights (31%), concerns over vehicle quality (28%) and a desire to support Canadian jobs (25%) are other reasons selected by more than one-quarter of those who say they would not buy a car made in China:

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What are the main reasons you would not buy a Chinese EV?



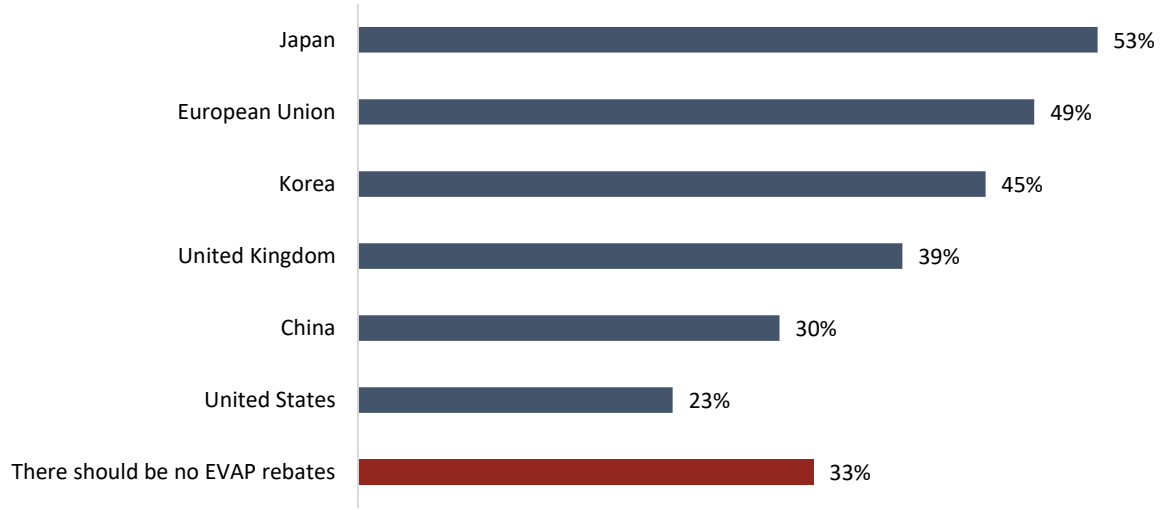
Less support for government rebates on Chinese cars than other major producers

The federal government launched the Electric Vehicle Affordability Program (EVAP) in February this year, which offers rebates on Canadian-made electric vehicles. There is a desire among would-be consumers, or at least those interested in increasing the number of emission-free vehicles on the road, to expand the eligibility beyond those made in Canada. Half of Canadians say Japanese- (53%) and European Union-made (49%) cars should also be eligible for rebates. Two-in-five would also open the program to electric vehicles made in Korea (45%) and the United Kingdom (39%).

There is less support for government rebates on Chinese-made EVs (30%) or those made in the United States (23%):

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Currently, EVAP rebates are only available on cars built in Canada or built in countries that have an active free trade agreement with Canada. In your opinion, should cars from each of the following countries or regions be included in this rebate program?

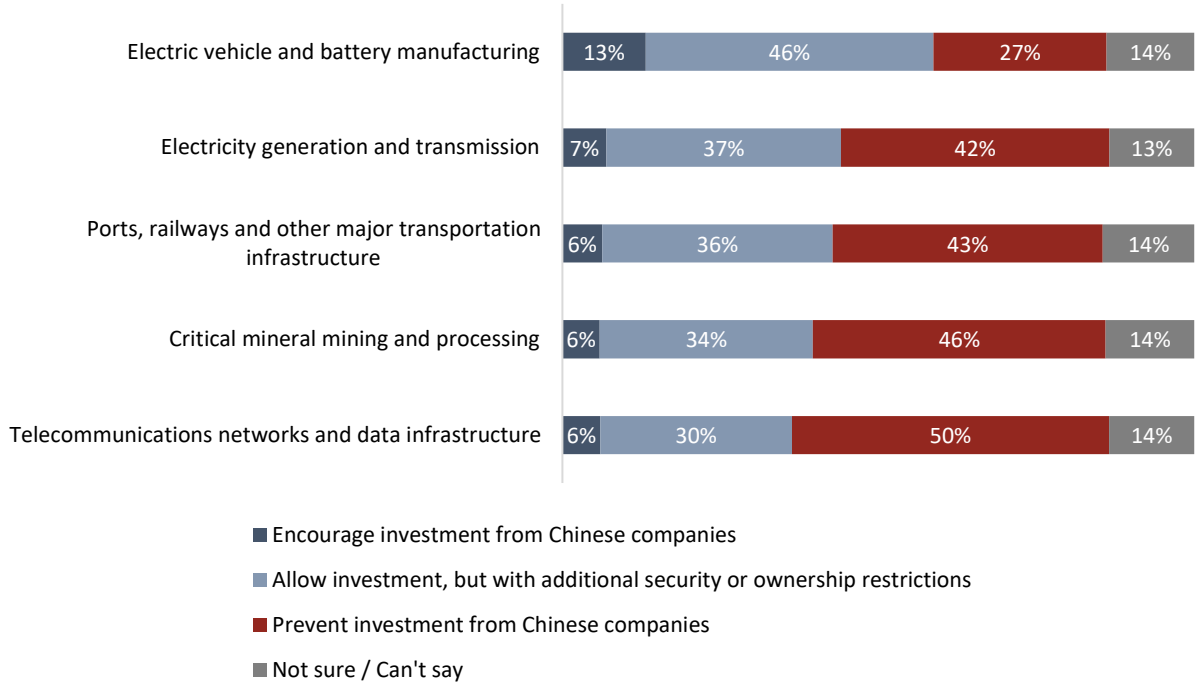


More support for Chinese investment in EV manufacturing than other sectors

Still, despite some reservations from Canadians about purchasing Chinese-made cars, and allowing them to be eligible for government rebates, Canadians are more open to Chinese investment in Canada's electric vehicle manufacturing sector than elsewhere in the economy. Three-in-five (59%) say they believe the Canadian government should at least allow (46%) if not encourage (13%) Chinese companies investing in electric vehicle and battery manufacturing in Canada. Fewer say the same for electricity generation (44%), major transportation infrastructure (42%), critical minerals (40%), and telecommunications (36%):

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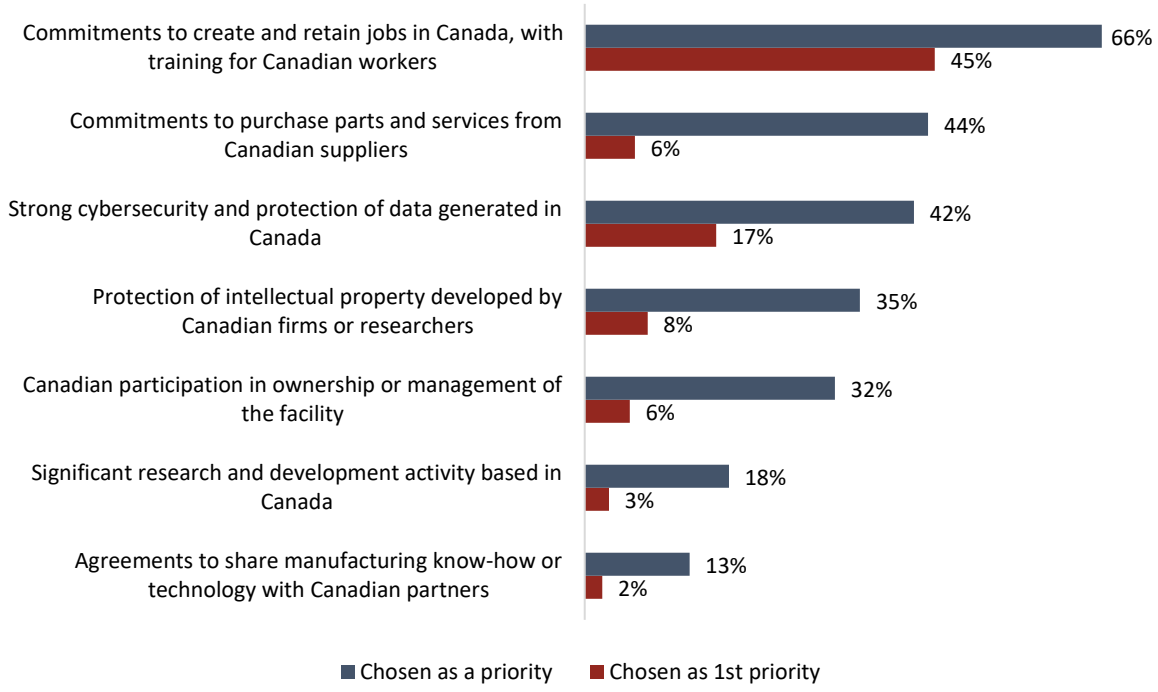


Canadians say potential Chinese investment should prioritize local workers

If Canada were to allow investment from China into its automotive industry, Canadians are most likely to want the government to prioritize creating Canadian jobs (66%). More than two-in-five say Canada should also prioritize commitments by Chinese companies to purchase Canadian parts and services (44%) and strong cybersecurity (42%). Notably, cybersecurity (17%) is the second most likely to be selected as a top priority, behind prioritizing Canadian workers (45%):

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Suppose a Chinese company proposed to establish or expand an automotive or battery-manufacturing facility in Canada, which conditions – if any - should the Canadian government prioritize? (All respondents, n=1,604; up to three chosen)



Half say Canada doesn't have the tools to respond to trade restrictions from major powers

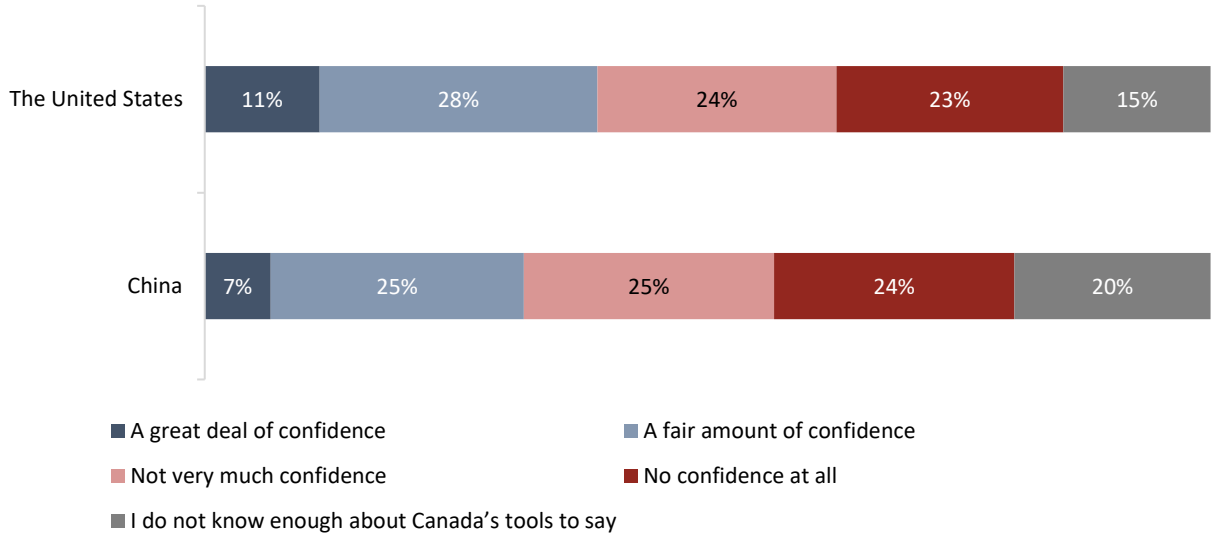
Canada's economic resiliency has been challenged by American tariffs since 2025. Although closer trade with China offers a path to diversify away from the United States, it does tie Canada to another powerful country which could use the same trade pressures to coerce Canada in the event of disagreements. This survey asked Canadians if they believed Canada has the policies to fight back against tariffs, export controls or other trade restrictions. The full question is below:

"Some countries have used trade restrictions, tariffs, export controls or limits on access to essential goods to pressure other countries during disputes. How much confidence do you have that Canadian government currently has the policies and tools needed to respond effectively if the following countries use such measures against Canada?"

Canadians are more likely to say they have little or no confidence that Canada has the tools in place to fight back against trade restrictions from the United States (47%) or China (49%) than to express confidence.

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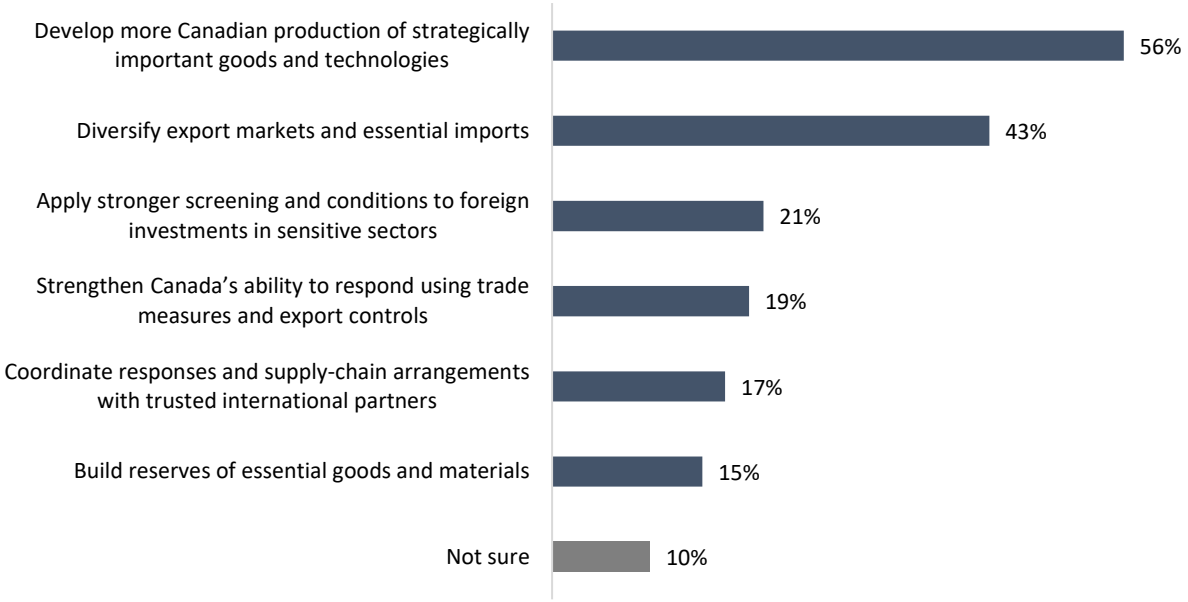
How much confidence do you have that Canadian government currently has the policies and tools needed to respond effectively if the following countries use such measures against Canada?
(All respondents, n=1,604)



A majority (56%) say Canada needs to develop its own production of strategically important goods and technologies to better insulate itself from economic pressure from major powers such as China and the United States. Two-in-five (43%) say Canada needs to diversifCy its export and import streams for essential goods:

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Which of the following should Canada prioritize to better withstand economic pressure from major economic powers?
(All respondents, n=1,604; up to two chosen)



For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, click here.

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