

## Who pays the tariffs? Majority believe Americans, not foreign countries, bearing the cost

*With future of USMCA in doubt, Americans more likely to want no tariffs on Canada than Mexico*

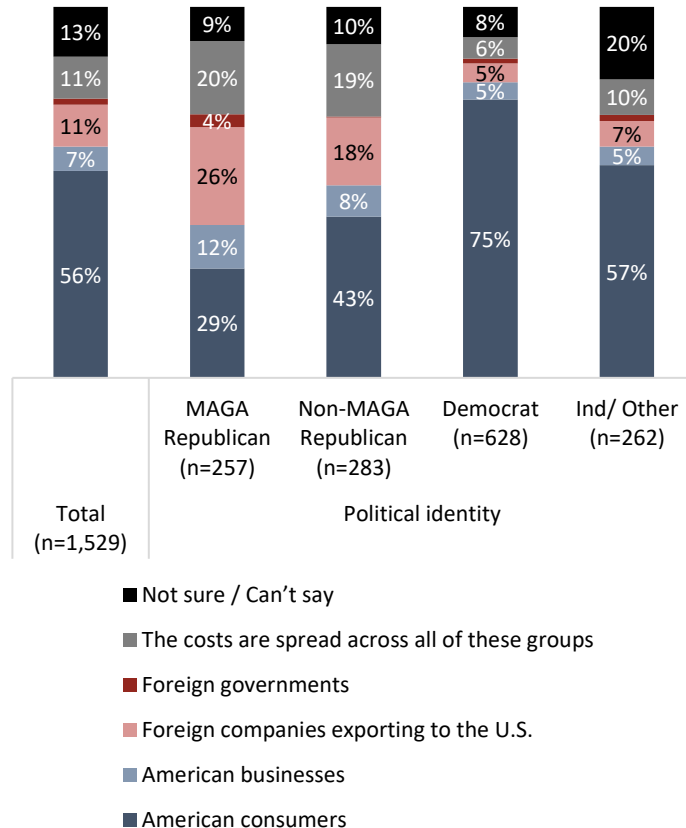
**March 11, 2026** – Most Americans disagree that President Donald Trump’s tariffs are being paid for by foreign countries, according to new public opinion research by Angus Reid USA.

Americans are overall more likely to say that either domestic consumers or businesses (63%) are bearing the cost of Trump’s tariffs than foreign companies or governments (13%). Among Republicans who identify as part of the MAGA movement, there is a more split opinion, with 41 per cent saying the tariffs are paid domestically and 30 per cent outside of U.S. borders.

This comes as Americans choose inflation and the high cost of living as the top issue facing the country (42%) above other concerns such as corruption in politics (30%), health care (30%) and the recent wave of ICE enforcement across the country (21%). Trump touted his administration’s success on combatting inflation during last month’s State of the Union address, but [it remains above the two-per-cent target set by the Federal Reserve](#).

Meanwhile, the tariffs have turned previously friendly international relationships acrimonious, including with some of the U.S.’s largest trading partners, such as neighbouring Canada and Mexico. Trump’s economic hostility is not reflected in the general views of Americans. Favorable views of Canada (73%), the U.K. (68%) and E.U. (60%) are held by a majority; half (50%) say they view Mexico positively.

**Thinking about tariffs imposed by the United States on goods from other countries, who do you think mostly pays the cost of those tariffs?**



### **METHODOLOGY:**

Angus Reid USA conducted an online survey from March 2-5, 2026 among a representative randomized sample of 1,529 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 +/- 3 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.

Further, with the future of North America free trade in doubt, half of Americans (51%) say there should be no tariff on Canadian goods entering the U.S. while two-in-five (38%) say the same of Mexican trade.

### **CONTACT:**

Angus Reid, Chairman: [angus@angus.org](mailto:angus@angus.org) @AngusReid

Shachi Kurl, President: 1.604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl

**More Key Findings:**

- Four-in-five (82%) MAGA Republicans, and two-thirds of non-MAGA Republican (65%), approve of Trump administration's performance on reducing their household's cost of living. Similar numbers (82%, 57% respectively) approve of Trump's tariffs. On both files, Democrats and Independents are more likely to disapprove than approve.
- Half (48%) of Americans say they would keep the USCMA in place; one-quarter, including half (50%) of MAGA Republicans, want separate deals with Canada and Mexico.
- Despite the rocky relationship over the past year, half of Americans (52%) describe Canada as either the most important or a very important trading partner. Two-in-five (40%) say the same of Mexico.

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- **Three-quarters view Canada, half view Mexico positively**
- **China, Canada viewed as important trading partners, Mexico less so**
- **Few want 'major' tariff on Canada**
- **Half say keep USCMA; one-quarter want separate deals**

**Part One: Top issues****Cost of living, corruption and health care**

Inflation may have eased compared to a few years ago, but it is selected as the top issue by 46 per cent of Americans, followed by corruption and money in politics (30%) and health care (30%).

Notably these domestic concerns are far above international conflicts and foreign policy (9%) and global trade and tariffs (5%).

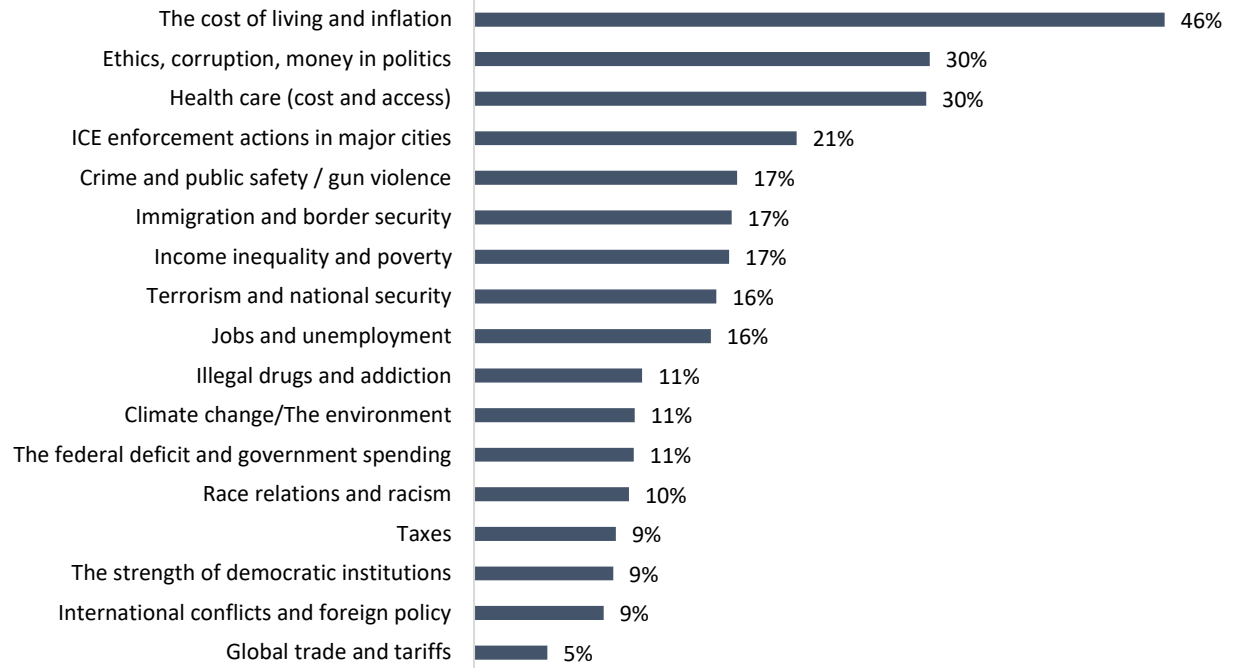
**Related: [Red line on Iran? Majority of Americans say 'no' to boots on ground; few expect the war to end within a month](#)**

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Shachi Kurl, President: 1.604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl

**Thinking of the various issues facing the United States, which ones do you personally care about the most?  
(All respondents, n=1,529)**



**Variations based on political identity**

Political identity appears to heavily influence which of these issues are prioritized. The high cost of living ranks high across the political spectrum. Political ethics is also a top issue for both Republicans and Democrats, but there is likely disagreement on whose ethics are under question.

Republicans who align themselves with the MAGA movement are more concerned about border security (44%) and public safety (22%) than others. There is a divide between MAGA and non-MAGA Republicans on the importance of the issue of health care. And Democrats are more concerned with the ICE enforcement and its fallout than Republicans:

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Top five issues by political Identity			
MAGA Republican (n=257)	Non-MAGA Republican (n=283)	Democrat (n=628)	Ind/ Other (n=262)
The cost of living and inflation 46%	The cost of living and inflation 48%	The cost of living and inflation 43%	The cost of living and inflation 51%
Immigration and border security 44%	Immigration and border security 32%	Ethics, corruption, money in politics 35%	Health care (cost and access) 30%
Terrorism and national security 32%	Health care (cost and access) 31%	Health care (cost and access) 33%	Ethics, corruption, money in politics 29%
Ethics, corruption, money in politics 27%	Terrorism and national security 27%	ICE enforcement actions in major cities 33%	ICE enforcement actions in major cities 24%
Crime and public safety/ Gun violence 22%	Ethics, corruption, money in politics 26%	Income inequality and poverty 23%	Jobs and unemployment 22%

**Part Two: Perceptions of Trump’s case for tariffs**

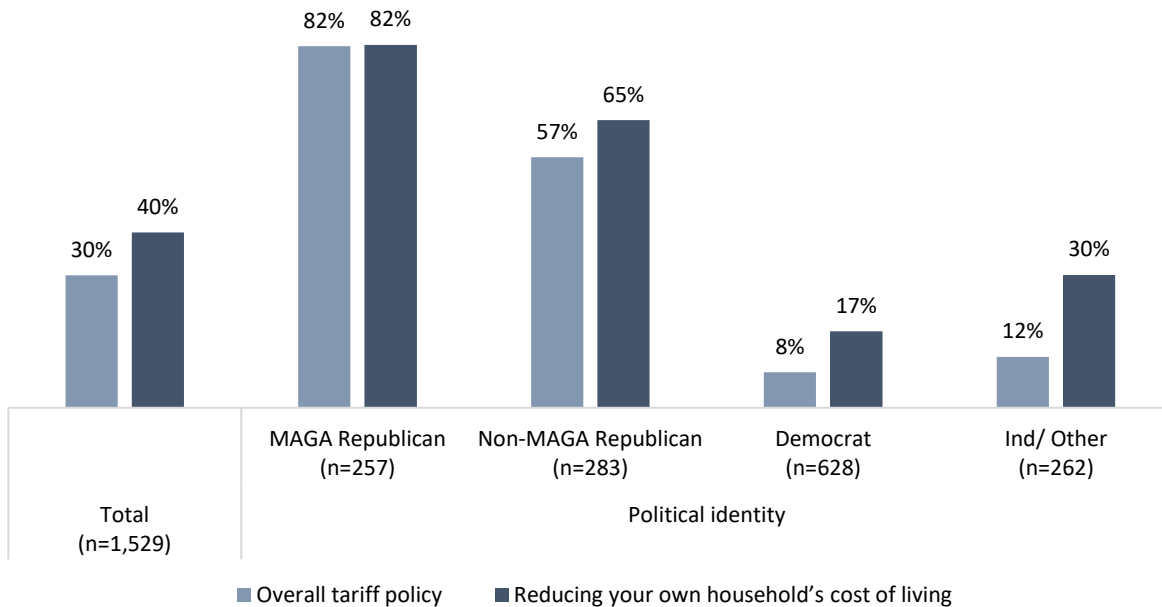
In February, Trump’s State of the Union address provided an opportunity for the president to celebrate the accomplishments of his second term so far. He claimed that “inflation is plummeting” over the past year as he’s instituted a broad swath of policies affecting the U.S. economy. A PBS fact check has found that inflation “[has dipped modestly](#)” compared to the previous year under Trump’s predecessor Joe Biden.

**Most Republicans approve of Trump’s performance on cost of living, tariffs**

Overall, Americans are split on Trump’s handling of inflation: two-in-five (40%) approve and slightly more disapprove (45%). Approval is highest among MAGA Republicans (82%). Non-MAGA Republicans also offer a thumbs up at a majority level (65%).

Americans are more critical of Trump’s tariff policies. Approaching three-in-five (57%) say they disapprove, nearly double the rate of approval (30%). Again, Republicans offer the most approval on this file:

**Percentage who approve of the Trump administration with respect to the following**



**But who bears the costs of tariffs?**

Although inflation has cooled under Trump, his administration’s tariffs have had an inflationary effect. Research by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve system has shown that tariffs gradually raised retail prices in 2025. The New York Federal Reserve President claimed that the tariffs are keeping the Federal Reserve from keeping inflation under its two-per-cent goal. A research paper by the New York Federal Reserve found that 90 per cent of the added cost of tariffs has been passed on to American producers and consumers.

Two-thirds (63%) of Americans believe that tariffs are mostly paid for either by American consumers (56%) or businesses (7%). One-in-ten (11%) say that it is more foreign companies who are paying for tariffs, while a similar number (11%) believe the costs are spread evenly among domestic consumers, businesses and foreign companies and governments.

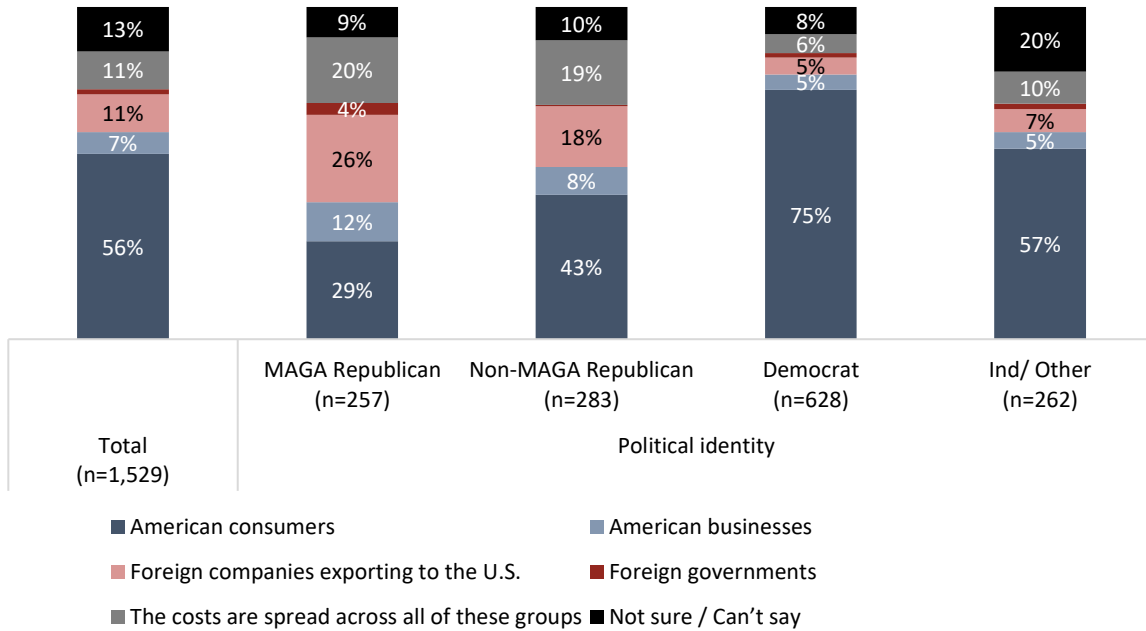
This perception is influenced by politics. A plurality (41%) of MAGA Republicans believe tariffs are born by American consumers and businesses, but a significant minority (30%) believe foreign companies or governments are paying Trump’s tariffs. The belief that Americans are largely the ones paying for the tariffs rises among non-MAGA Republicans (51%) and even more so among Democrats (80%):

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Shachi Kurl, President: 1.604.908.1693 [shachi.kurl@angusreid.org](mailto:shachi.kurl@angusreid.org) @shachikurl

**Thinking about tariffs imposed by the United States on goods from other countries, who do you think mostly pays the cost of those tariffs?**



**Part Three: Views of the USCMA**

**Three-quarters view Canada, half view Mexico positively**

Trump’s administration has been much more economically hostile to countries previously considered by past administrations as allies and key trading partners. The administration’s perspective towards these countries is not reflected among the views of Americans. As Trump has restructured trade with Canada, the U.K., the European Union and Mexico, Americans hold more positive views than not of those countries and regions. Canada and the U.K. also earn high favorable ratings among Trump’s MAGA base:

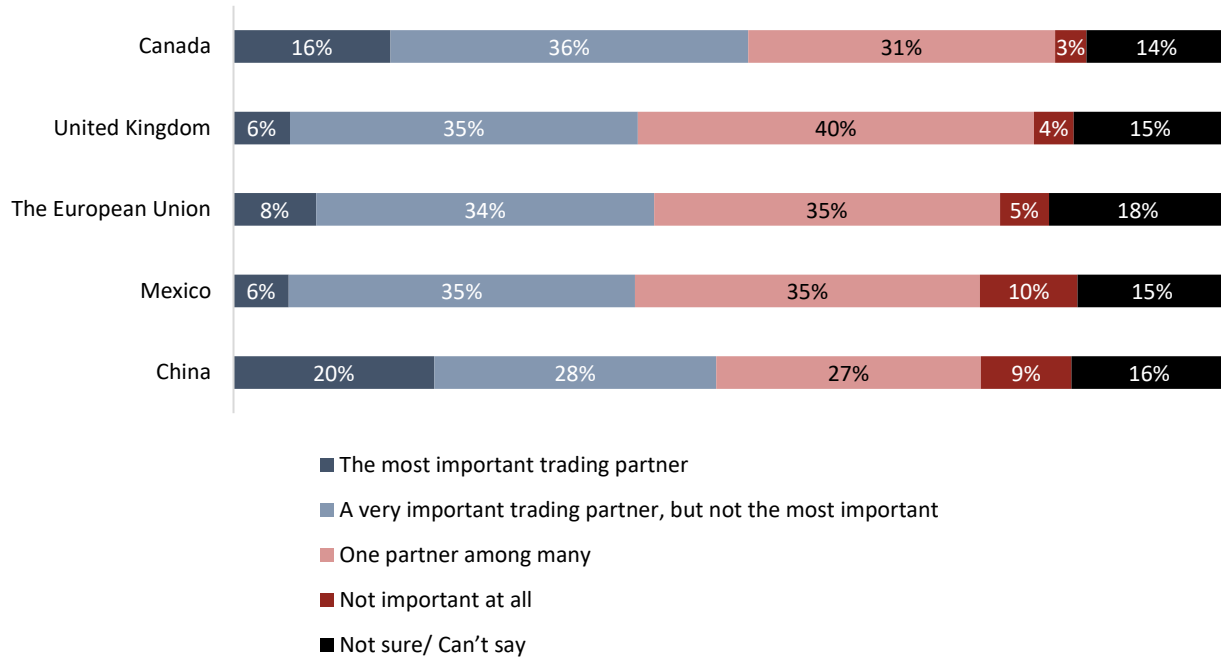
Percentage who have a favourable view of the following countries or regions					
	Total (n=1,529)	Political identity			
		MAGA Republican (n=257)	Non-MAGA Republican (n=283)	Democrat (n=628)	Ind/ Other (n=262)
Canada	73%	60%	66%	87%	72%
United Kingdom	68%	57%	65%	79%	65%
European Union	60%	45%	50%	77%	53%
Mexico	50%	24%	40%	67%	52%
China	28%	15%	17%	37%	31%

**China, Canada viewed as important trading partners, Mexico less so**

Canada and Mexico typically rank **first or second** among the U.S.’s top trading partner countries. Although the U.S.’s trade diversity means that Canada as a percentage of total U.S. trade is lower than vice versa, Canada is a top source of key goods including **potash** and **oil**.

Trump has claimed that the U.S. **doesn’t need Canadian goods**, but Americans are more likely to describe Canada as an “important” trading partner than not. China (48% important) is also viewed as a key country economically for the U.S. More American describe Mexico as one partner among many (35%) or not important at all (10%) than believe it is the U.S.’s most important trading partner (6%) or a very important one (35%):

**When it comes to America’s trading partners, in your opinion, how important are each of the following:  
(All respondents, n=1,529)**



**Half want no tariffs on Canada**

Half (51%) of Americans would prefer there to be no tariff on Canadian goods, and those who want a tariff prefer a minor one (24%) to a major one (8%). Among key American trade partners, Americans are the least likely to want a tariff on Canadian goods.

More Americans want major (15%) or minor (29%) tariffs on Mexico than no tariffs (38%).

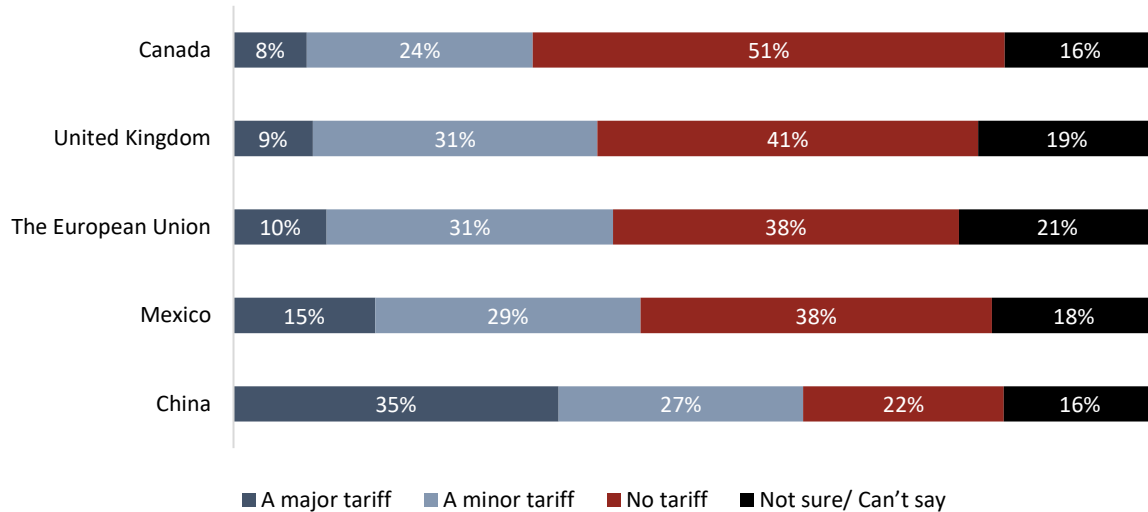
Despite the perception of China being an important trading partner among Americans, one-third (35%) want a major tariff on the import of Chinese goods:

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**Do you believe the United States should place a major, minor, or no tariff on goods imported from...  
(All respondents, n=1,529)**



**Half say keep USCMA; one-quarter want separate deals**

The future of U.S.-Canada trade hangs on what happens during this year’s review of the USCMA trade deal. Trump is considering pulling the U.S. out of the deal and looking for [separate agreements with Canada and Mexico](#). The deal does not expire until 2036.

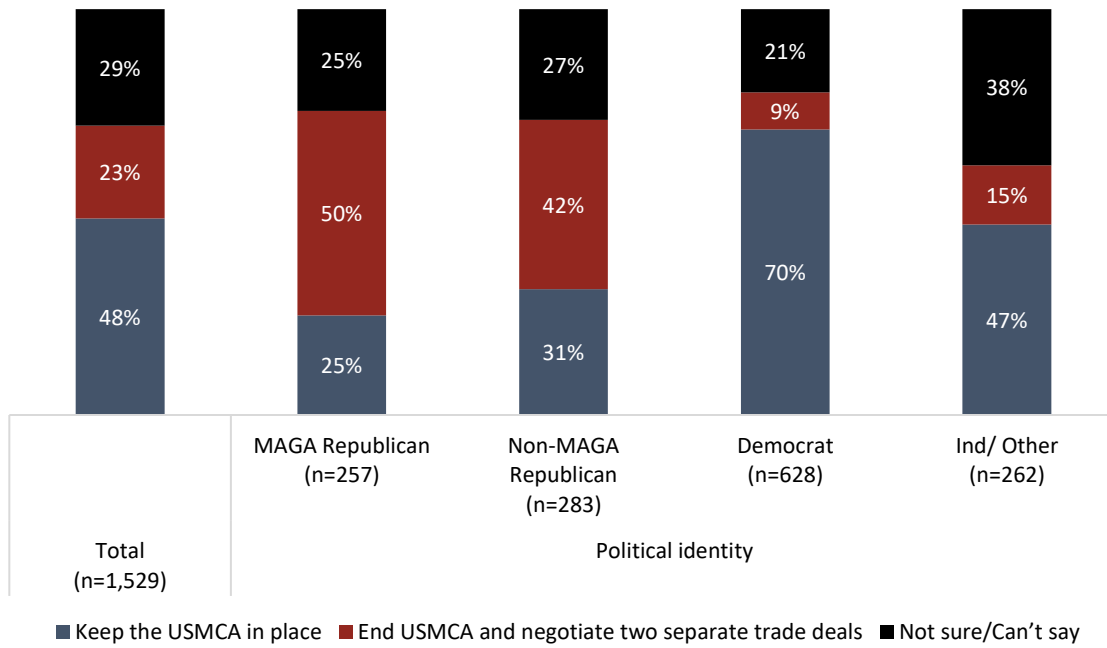
Americans, by a two-to-one margin, prefer keeping the existing USCMA (48%) over separate deals with Canada and Mexico (23%). But the preferences of Trump’s base are inverted: half of MAGA Republicans prefer individual deals (50%):

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**Which view is closer to your own?**



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