

# Is Trump Speaking for America on Trade?



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International trade has emerged as one of this election cycle's biggest flash points. While President Obama tries to move the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal across the finish line, both presumptive nominees have come out against it. Donald Trump has taken his policy positions and rhetoric far further than that, however, and has called for increased tariffs on China and Mexico as well as a dismantling of free trade agreements.

We know the American public is concerned with widespread economic change. But are Donald Trump's views on globalization representative of a majority of our country?

We fielded a nationwide poll of 1,000 registered voters from June 22 to 28, 2016. From this, it is apparent that voters have a more mature view of trade than many politicians. There is concern about the negative effects of global trade, especially with China and Mexico, but **there is an overwhelming feeling that we live in a global world and that we need expanded trade instead of trade barriers**. But then who are these people at Trump rallies, waving their red hats? Based on our data, this is a small but vocal group that simply doesn't

represent the majority of America. Here's what our data found:

## **On the one hand...yes, globalization is a concern, and 1/3 of the country is really concerned.**

Voters are worried that the forces of global trade will result in job losses in their communities. Among a list of personal worries, 61% expressed some concern that "trade with countries like China and Mexico will cost jobs in my community", with nearly a third (31%) saying it worried them a "great deal." This concern ranked slightly below worries about paying too much in taxes (35% great deal) and not having enough money for a comfortable retirement (34% great deal).

Concern about international trade resulting in job losses in voters' backyards are broadly shared with a majority expressing concern across most demographic, geographic, and partisan lines. Interestingly, Millennial voters (ages 18-34) broke from other voting groups—as a majority of Millennials said job losses from globalization was not much of a concern (51%).



## **On the other hand... there is a strong feeling that we need trade to succeed.**

Even amid this concern, though, voters believe that engaging in global trade is a necessity in a global world. A majority of voters (56%) agree with the statement "The U.S. economy cannot succeed if we limit trade with other countries."

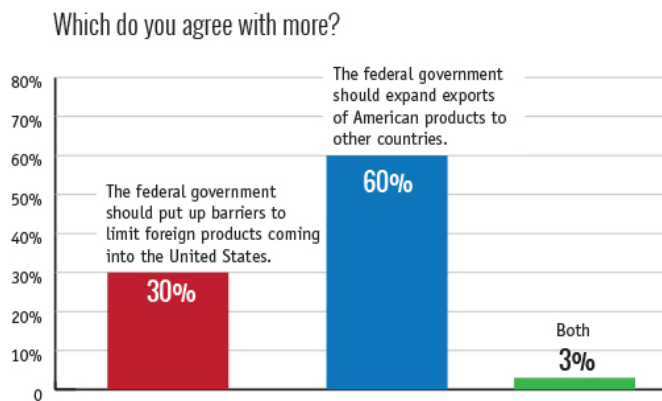
The strength of this belief is broadly held with majority support across demographic groups but it is especially strong

among Democrats (61%), liberals (62%), Clinton voters (62%), and Millennials (67%). Even among Trump voters, a majority believe we cannot succeed if we limit trade by a 50% to 45% margin.



## And there is an overwhelming feeling that government should expand trade, not put up barriers.

In addition to believing in the necessity of international trade, voters by a 2 to 1 margin favor "expanding exports of American products to other countries" (60%) to policies that would protect domestic industry by "limiting foreign products coming into the United States" (30%).



Voters' preference to expand exports over limiting import competition is strong across voting groups but, particularly among moderates (66%), Democrats (67%), Millennials (70%), liberals (72%), and Clinton supporters (70%). And notably, a majority of Trump voters also favor expanding exports versus putting up trade barriers by a 47% to 42% margin.

## Conclusion

Global trade is a complicated issue for voters. Public sentiment reinforces the sense that, while voters fear the negative consequences of global trade, they believe strongly that there's no turning back. The portion of voters that hold extreme anti-trade views (those that fear trade and favor protectionist policies) make up only 6.7% of the voting universe. Overall, there is a strong belief that trade is a vital element of economic prosperity, and voters overwhelmingly support efforts to boost American exports rather than erect trade barriers to protect domestic industry, as Donald Trump has suggested during this cycle.

#### TOPICS

**TRADE** 86