

April 16, 2008

Canadians want to keep politics out of the Olympic Games

A new survey by Phoenix SPI finds that most Canadians would like to keep politics out of the Olympic Games, and do not want Canada to boycott the Beijing Olympics. Opinion is divided, however, over whether Tibet should be considered a part of China or an independent country.

Key Findings

- A significant majority of Canadians (59%) agree that politics should not be linked to the Olympic Games, no matter what the issue might be. Moreover, 46% *strongly* agree with this statement.
- However, it appears that education has an effect on how the issue is perceived: 51% of Canadians with a university degree agreed that politics and the Olympic Games should be kept separate, compared to 63% of Canadians without a university degree.
- A similar number of Canadians (57%) also do not think that Canada should boycott the Games to protest China's human rights record and the situation in Tibet, and only 21% think otherwise.
- Moreover, only 27% believe that a significant number of countries will boycott the summer Olympics in Beijing because of Tibet and China's human rights record. Forty-six percent do not believe this will be the case, while an additional 18% are unsure.
- Notably, Canadians with a university degree are even more likely than those with less formal education to be skeptical that a significant number of countries will boycott the Olympics (22% vs. 30%).
- However, Canadians' desire to keep politics and the Olympic Games separate is not necessarily indicative of Canadians' indifference when it comes to the status of Tibet. Almost half (49%) disagree that Tibet is a part of China, and think it should be considered an independent country, while only 18% think otherwise. It is worth noting that a significant proportion of Canadians reserve their judgment on the issue: 34% neither agree nor disagree or were uncertain that Tibet should be considered an independent country.
- Perhaps surprisingly, residents of Quebec had the biggest proportion of those who disagreed that Tibet should be considered an independent country (23%). Moreover, Canadians between 18 and 24 years of age (31%) as well as those with no post-secondary education (23%) were also less likely to favour an independent Tibet.

Phoenix SPI is an Ottawa-based, non-partisan public opinion research firm. Established in 2003, we are one of the top suppliers of public opinion research to the Government of Canada.

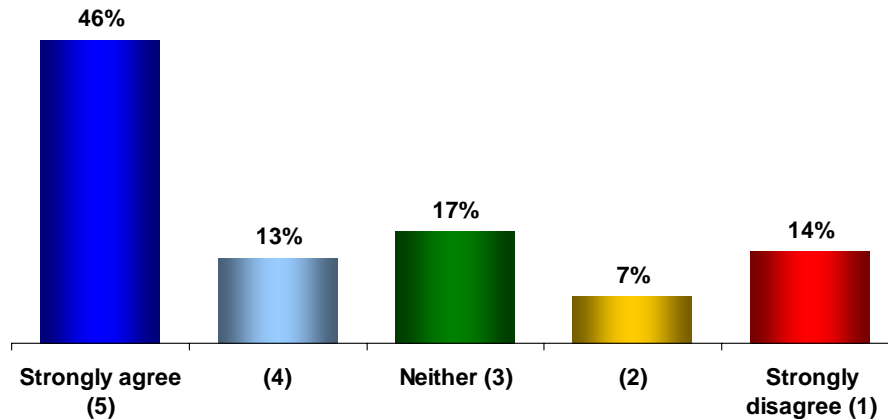
Methodology

- The findings presented above are based on a telephone survey conducted April 8-12, 2008, with a random sample of 1039 Canadians, 18 years of age and older. Fieldwork was undertaken by Elemental Data Collection.
- Given the size of the sample, the findings can be considered representative of the general population of Canada within $\pm 3.0\%$, 19 times out of 20.
- The margin of error increases as the results are sub-divided.
- The final data were weighted by region, age, and gender using Statistics Canada Census data to reflect the actual demographic and regional distribution of the Canadian population.
- Please note that due to rounding, some of the category totals presented in the text may differ by 1% from the percentages presented in the graphs.

If you would like more information on the findings of this survey, please contact Sergey Vershinin by phone at (613) 260-1700 x225 or via email at svershinin@phoenixspi.ca.

Politics Should NOT Be Linked to Olympic Games

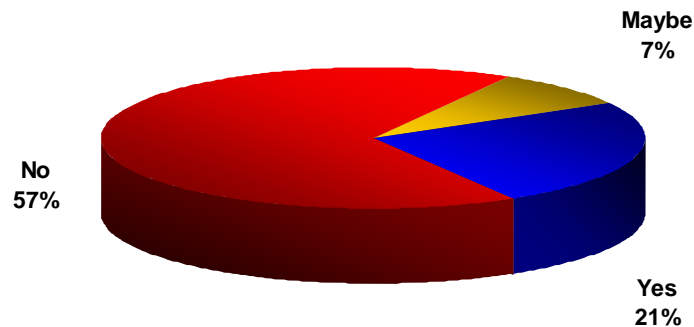
Q: Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:
Politics should not be linked to the Olympic Games, no matter what the issue or reason.



Base: All Canadians (n=1039; DK/NA=3%)
Phoenix SPI, Canadians' views on Beijing Olympics (April 15, 2008)

Few Support a Boycott of Beijing Olympics

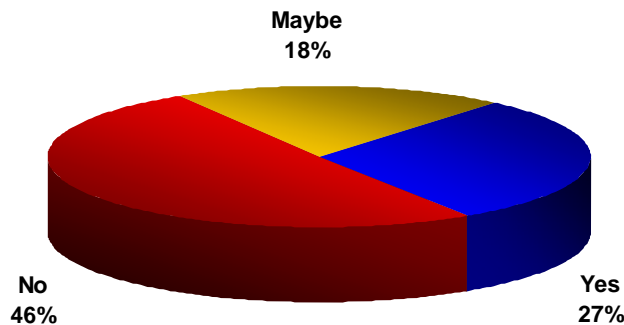
Q: Do you think that Canada should boycott the summer Olympics in Beijing to protest China's human rights record and the situation in Tibet?



Base: All Canadians (n=1039; DK/NA=14%)
Phoenix SPI, Canadians' views on Beijing Olympics (April 15, 2008)

Few Expect Boycott by Many Other Countries

Q: Do you think a significant number of countries will boycott the summer Olympics in Beijing because of Tibet and China's human rights record?



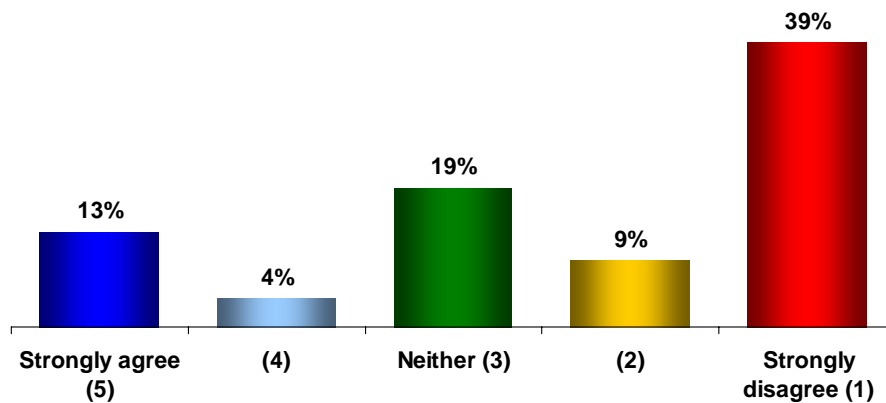
Base: All Canadians (n=1039; DK/NA=9%)

Phoenix SPI, Canadians' views on Beijing Olympics (April 15, 2008)

Canadians Favour an Independent Tibet

Q: Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Tibet should be considered a part of China, not an independent country.



Base: All Canadians (n=1039; DK/NA=15%)

Phoenix SPI, Canadians' views on Beijing Olympics (April 15, 2008)