
New survey shows wide support for lifting Cuban embargo

17/06/2015



Last December, President Obama made history with his efforts to normalization relations with Cuba. Since then, the island nation has been opened to limited travel by Americans.

A recent survey conducted by USF Sarasota-Manatee shows the majority of Americans want all travel restrictions to Cuba lifted.

[According to the poll](#), 91 percent of respondents support lifting travel restrictions to Cuba and a slightly higher margin say the Cuban embargo should end. Additionally, nearly half indicated they might visit the island as tourists if restrictions are ever removed.

"Our study results show Americans are ready for Cuba," says Cihan Cobanoglu, a University of South Florida professor in the hospitality and tourism department. Each year, his students research trends in the industry -- and this year they set their eyes on Cuba.

"Under the light of President Obama's recent remarks about Cuba, and maybe normalizing the relationships between Cuba and America, we wanted to find out if Americans are ready to go to Cuba," Cobanoglu explains.

U.S. and Cuba severed ties in 1961 and a full economic embargo was implemented. That included the travel restrictions placed on Americans wanting to visit Cuba.

"More than 90 percent of Americans support the lifting of the embargo," Cobanoglu says. "47 percent of Americans are ready to go to Cuba tomorrow, if it were to happen that Cuba is opened up for travel, they are ready to go there and explore."

For those of Cuban decent the study has a bigger meaning.

New survey shows wide support for lifting Cuban embargo

Published on Cuba Si (<http://cubasi.cu>)

"I had parents that sacrificed everything to come here to look for freedom," says Adrianna Ramirez, "and now here they are, it's not exactly what they wanted."

Remirez is not only a Cuban native; she's also a USF MBA student who took part in the research project. She says for many Cuban-Americans the survey is not only a reminder of the past, but a door to the future.

"From the academic perspective, from the economic perspective, we are in a different world," she says. "We have made friends with communist countries. We deal with China, we deal with Brazil."
