



Introduction

Singapore in the ASEAN Region

Singapore, situated at the tip of the Malay peninsula, encompasses a land area of just 636 square kilometres. Its population of 2.7 million people, is predominantly Chinese, with Malay, Indian and a variety of other ethnic groups making up the balance.

Singapore has been an independent Republic since its separation from Malaysia in 1965. The People's Action Party (PAP) has consistently led the parliamentary democratic government from the time of independence. As a result of the PAP's economic and social policies, Singapore has emerged as a dynamic trading, financial, manufacturing and distribution centre for South East Asia.

As a state which is heavily dependent on foreign trade, Singapore has established important economic links around the world. It is a member of many international organizations including the Commonwealth, the Colombo Plan, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the Non-Aligned Movement, the United Nations and the World Health Organization.

Japanese investment in Singapore surpassed that of the U.S. in 1986.

Canada and Singapore

Canada enjoys sound relations with Singapore as a result of Commonwealth ties, a similar outlook on international problems, and Canada's support for and active dialogue with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Singapore is an important interlocutor to Canada on regional and global trade, economic and political issues. As firm opponents of the growing demands for protectionist policies, both countries co-operate closely on international economic issues. Trade is by far the most important feature of Canada-Singapore relations.

Ties between Canada and Singapore have been strengthened through strong educational links. It is estimated that there are between 1,500 and 1,800 Singaporeans studying in Canada at any one time. Singaporean graduates of Canadian universities have attained local prominence in government, business and education and are important "unofficial" representatives of Canada.

Survey Overview

This survey examines the nature and scope of trade and economic relations between Canada and Singapore over the last decade. It focuses on bilateral relations, agreements and initiatives and touches only briefly on some of the international and multilateral fora in which Canada and Singapore are both active participants.

Section 2 highlights the current economic situation in Singapore and provides some insights into Singapore's success as a dynamic Asian economy.

Section 3 provides an overview of Singapore's global trading relations, the commercial relations between Canada and Singapore and outlines the evolution of bilateral trade in terms of its volume and composition. This section also summarizes Canada's export marketing efforts in Singapore and the priorities defined as part of Canada's trade strategy.

Section 4 focuses on Singapore's role as a regional base for Canadian development assistance programs in ASEAN, as Singapore itself is not a recipient of Canadian bilateral aid.

The agreements and arrangements currently in place between Canada and Singapore are summarized in Section 5. These provide the basic infrastructure for the continued expansion of economic and commercial relations between Canada and Singapore. A summary of other areas of co-operation between the two countries is also provided in this section.