
Macroeconomic Impacts of the Agreement

The Agreement will provide significant economic benefits to Canadians:

- Canadian consumers will pay lower prices for both imported and domestic goods;
- investment will be undertaken in response to opportunities provided by the new trade environment;
- industries will reap the benefits of larger scale production and will become more efficient and more competitive;
- the productivity of Canadian workers will increase and so will their real incomes;
- the economy will grow more strongly and more jobs will be created; and
- the economy will become more flexible, more innovative, and more dynamic.

A comprehensive analysis of the macroeconomic impacts of the Agreement has been undertaken by the Department of Finance, and is reported in the document *The Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement: An Economic Assessment*. It indicates that the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement will raise the real incomes of Canadians by at least 2.5 per cent. This represents a permanent increase in real income of \$12 billion in today's dollars, or about \$450 for every Canadian. This estimate quite likely understates the size of the economic benefits flowing from the Agreement because some important aspects of the Agreement are not captured in the analysis. For example, aspects of the Agreement such as free trade in services, liberalization of conditions for cross-border investment, more certainty about security of access to the large U.S. market and the dynamic effects of free trade in the form of a more flexible and more innovative economy will provide additional net benefits that are real, positive and potentially very large, but cannot be precisely measured.

The Department of Finance analysis suggests that most Canadian industries — those that are more highly protected now as well as those currently receiving little trade protection — will benefit from the Agreement and that all regions will share in the benefits. Central Canada with its large manufacturing base will benefit from a stronger and larger manufacturing sector. Other regions will benefit from lower prices of manufactured products and greater scope for upgrading of their resources. Resource-based regions will also benefit directly as the Agreement reduces the risk of a further increase in U.S. protectionism.

The economic benefits from the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement will begin to be realized shortly after implementation of the Agreement, on January 1, 1989. Prices for a wide range of consumer goods will be lower, expanding the purchasing power of Canadian households. Investment in plant and equipment will expand as Canadian firms move to take advantage of their enhanced access to the huge U.S. marketplace. Increased consumer and investment spending will lead to stronger economic growth and more job creation. Department of Finance estimates of the impacts of the Agreement on employment over the medium term fiscal planning horizon indicate a net increase of 120,000 jobs by 1993, only five years into the phasing-in of the Agreement. Moreover, the number of net new jobs created will continue to grow as the Agreement is fully implemented.