

Chapter 8

Opening Doors to Europe

For Canada, the EU is a key partner in science and technology (S&T) and our second most important source of new technologies—helping to further Canada’s goal of becoming a world-leading knowledge-based economy. The EU produces over a third of the world’s scientific publications and some 20% of its patents. It is the top producer of technology in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).⁸ S&T cooperation is enabled by government-level agreements as well as agreements between Canadian and European S&T-oriented institutions and businesses.

Although the large EU market offers important commercial opportunities for Canada, it also presents certain challenges. Among these are restrictions by some member states on mergers and acquisitions, market distortions in agriculture, uneven harmonization of regulations among member states, and a number of EU-imposed bans and restrictions related to health, environmental and consumer protection concerns.

At the 2007 Canada-EU Summit, leaders agreed to cooperate on a study to assess the benefits of a closer economic partnership and committed to reviewing its results at the 2008 Summit, with a view to pursuing closer future economic integration. Canada and the EU also committed to concluding a regulatory cooperation agreement as soon as possible, and agreed to open negotiations toward a Canada-EU comprehensive air services agreement to improve links between their respective aviation markets.

Canada and the EU have in place a Framework on Regulatory Cooperation and Transparency (signed in December 2004). The Framework is implemented by the Canada-EU Roadmap for Regulatory Cooperation, adopted by leaders at the June 2007 Canada-EU Summit in Berlin. The Roadmap advances new and existing sector-specific, agreed-upon areas of regulatory cooperation.

The Canada-EU commercial relationship is formally managed through several long-standing mechanisms, including the Trade and Investment Subcommittee. Here, Canada can raise Canadian companies’ concerns directly with the European Commission and work toward resolving them.

⁸ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *OECD Science, Technology, and Industry Scoreboard, 2007* [online], October 2007, <http://caliban.sourceoecd.org/vl=7342151/cl=20/nw=1/rpsv/sti2007/>.