

Implicit in the Team Canada approach is the recognition that it is the private sector — not the government — that is the ultimate generator of wealth. Individual Canadians and firms are the innovators, the inventors, the investors and the creators of new jobs. This is the true spirit of Team Canada — Canadians helping each other to succeed in international markets. The government, however, has a clear responsibility to establish a fiscal, economic and policy framework that is conducive to wealth and job creation, and that will support Canadian industry and Canadian entrepreneurs as they operate in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

Canada's International Business Strategy (CIBS) has become the vehicle for articulating and co-ordinating a national strategy for international business development, effectively guiding the allocation of federal international business development resources. By encouraging direct and active consultation between governments and the private sector, CIBS provides Canadian industry with a real opportunity to influence the government's international business strategies and priorities.

This strategic overview is intended to complement the 27 sector strategies, jointly developed by government and industry, that constitute the main component of CIBS. Its purpose is to lay out Canada's broad international business priorities as identified under two main headings: International Business Development, and Trade Policy.

International Business Development Priorities

The Jobs Strategy

The overriding purpose of the government's international business development plans is to provide employment for Canadians.

The government has been working to establish an economic climate that promotes job creation and helps Canadian companies to take advantage of emerging international business opportunities. The Jobs Strategy, an action plan involving the resources and energy of every government department, is a partnership among federal, provincial and municipal governments, business and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Its aim is to

co-ordinate efforts to create more and better jobs for Canadians. In particular, it focusses on youth, trade, technology and infrastructure — four key areas in which government involvement with the private sector can make a difference.

With one in three Canadian jobs dependent on exports, a critical component of the Jobs Strategy is to encourage more Canadian firms to export, and in particular, to actively support SMEs in their international business efforts.

The Prime Minister's Team Canada trade missions abroad provide an example of the positive results that can be achieved through co-ordinated effort. These missions are particularly important in the delivery of the trade and investment elements of the government's Jobs Strategy.

Moreover, the government will maintain its policy of encouraging and helping Canadian businesses to obtain leading-edge technologies. Such technologies are conducive to significant product innovation, and allow Canadian firms to capitalize on opportunities in the global marketplace.

International Business Promotion

The Government of Canada is meeting the challenge of rapid global change by developing new strategies in support of international business development. Building on extensive consultations with the private sector, the government is striving to focus available resources where they can have the greatest impact. Accordingly, international business development efforts are being concentrated in the following areas:

- building strong partnerships between government and the private sector to derive the maximum benefit from available resources and to eliminate overlap and duplication;
- using the combined private- and public-sector expertise to be found in the National Sector Teams (NSTs);
- encouraging more Canadian firms, and particularly SMEs, to become active exporters; and
- diversifying Canadian trade, technology and investment relations to help Canadians capitalize on opportunities around the globe.

Building Team Canada Partnerships

The federal government is continuing with a number of its Team Canada initiatives, which were announced in October 1995:

• Canada's International Business Strategy

As noted in the introduction, CIBS is central to the Team Canada approach. Team Canada departments and agencies will be operating under Cabinet directive to allocate their international business development resources through CIBS, and budgets for international business development will be linked to the lists of CIBS-approved initiatives. In addition, NSTs have been charged with monitoring the implementation of CIBS year-round, in order to ensure that the allocation of international business development program resources is consistent with the sector strategies.

• International Business Development Agreements

To date, agreements have been reached with nine provinces and the two territories. These agreements focus on ways to eliminate overlap and duplication among service providers, while ensuring better service for clients. The ultimate aim is to provide end users with "seamless" delivery of all the government's international business-related programs and services.

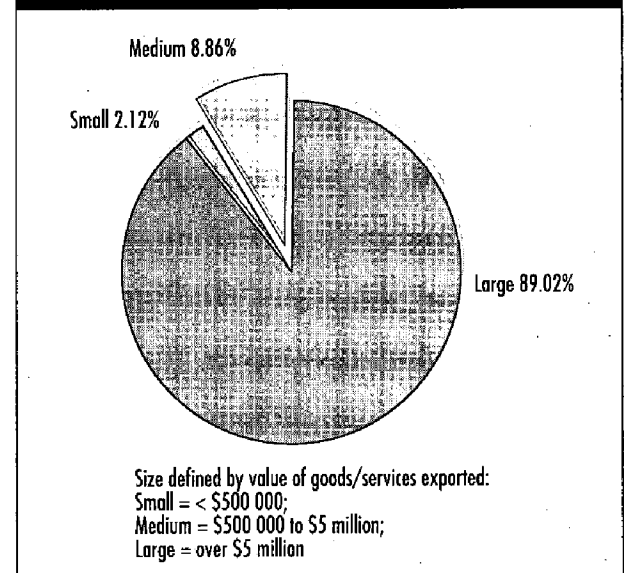
• National Sector Teams

National Sector Teams have been established to guide the development and implementation of trade strategies in 27 sectors. They build upon the knowledge and capabilities of all stakeholders at the industry-sector level to develop and implement international business development plans, and to deliver services to private-sector clients.

• Regional Trade Networks

The government is committed to improving service to business clients at the local level by linking federal and provincial government departments and agencies and the private sector through a series of Regional Trade Networks (RTNs). These networks build on various federal-provincial trade and investment agreements, and provide services to both active and potential exporters. Key services include exporter-preparation services, market information and intelligence, export counselling, and information on international financing.

Figure 2
Export Participation Rate
Canada, by Firm Size, 1994



Source: Estimates prepared by Entrepreneurship and Small Business Office, Industry Canada, based on data provided by Statistics Canada.

Under the leadership of senior federal trade commissioners, RTNs recently prepared three-year regional trade plans laying out how government and the private sector intend to work together at the regional level to generate new international opportunities for Canadian business. Each plan sets out national objectives and regional targets to the year 2000, along with key commitments and deliverables in a number of important areas.

• Mechanisms for Active Industry Consultation and Participation

In addition to membership renewal of the existing International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) and Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs), both of which include senior representatives of the private sector, the government will continue to increase industry involvement in the setting of international business development priorities through the direct participation of private-sector members of the NSTs.