

Canada and the European Union

The European Union

- The European Union currently has 15 members: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.
- The European Union today rivals the United States as the world's largest economy. With its current population of 380 million, its vast market, and its varied output of goods and services, the EU held a 27.6 per cent share of the world's aggregate gross domestic product in 2002, compared with a 33.4 per cent share for the United States and 2.4 per cent for Canada.
- On May 1, 2004, after adding 10 countries — Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia — the 25-member European Union will have a population of 452 million and a GDP of over \$15.7 trillion (11.4 times Canada's GDP). By comparison, the U.S. population is 288 million and its GDP is \$16.4 trillion.

Canada-EU relations

- The 1976 Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Co-operation between Canada and the European Community was the EU's first co-operation agreement with an industrialized country. It is the principal legal basis for the formal relationship between Canada and the European Union.
- After the United States, the European Union is Canada's second most important trading partner and source of foreign investment. These transactions are worth more than \$97 billion a year.
- Canada and the EU share common values that underpin the fundamental nature of their societies. They work closely to find multilateral responses to global issues, and they share an interest in promoting a liberalized global trading regime. The EU is a major partner for Canada in international political, security, and socio-economic issues.
- At the political and expert levels, Canada and the European Union regularly discuss issues of common concern. These include human rights, nuclear non-proliferation, and regional issues in the Middle East, Africa, the Balkans, and Asia-Pacific. As well, they consult each year on commerce, investment, other economic matters, and higher education and training.