

- French investment in Canada increased 3.5 times during the same period, and France is now the fifth largest foreign investor in Canada, with a \$5.3 billion portfolio representing 3 per cent of foreign investment and over 340 companies. That investment is spread throughout the country, generating 40 000 jobs, of which 23 000 are in manufacturing. The French presence in Canada is concentrated in the following sectors: electronics (GEC-Alsthom, Jeumont-Schneider), information technologies (Thomson-CSF, Alcatel, Bull), aerospace (Aérospatiale), pharmaceutical products (Rhône-Polenc, Institut Mérieux), mining (Cogema, BRGM), semi-finished products (Pechiney, Lafarge, AirLiquide), banking (BNP, Société Générale, Crédit Lyonnais), and insurance (AGF, GAN, Axa, Mutuelles du Mans).
- Although it is difficult to quantify, there is a solid, albeit recent, tradition of strategic partnerships and technology exchanges between France and Canada, especially in the high technology field, which have generated substantial investment. The first such example was the Montreal subway project, which brought Canada technology transfer from France that was so successful that it spawned a local industry which quickly gained international stature. Other valuable experiences have followed, notably co-operation projects in the air and rail transport sector, and an expanded partnership is developing in cutting-edge sectors (biotechnology, space, computers), communication industries (information highway) and the agri-food sector.
- Canada and France enjoy a profitable and productive relationship with respect to science and technology. Canada has signed 23 co-operation agreements with France, which is the fourth largest R&D investor in the world. Following the recent signing of the Agreement for Scientific Co-operation between Canada and the European Union, co-operation with France is becoming vitally important in the European context. France is thus becoming one of Canada's favoured partners, giving our researchers access to European projects.
- France and Canada, which are both major global exporters, are aware of how important their respective regional integration areas — namely, the European Union and NAFTA — are becoming to their trade. Far from being a handicap, this phenomenon is an asset on which to build, with businesses in each country giving one another access to and knowledge of their respective regional markets.
- Economic globalization and global trade have given rise to a new phenomenon. Bilateral economic relations were long limited to trade in goods, with investment following, rather than preceding, that trade. Today, with the gradual liberalization of the global economy, it is investment, strategic partnerships and technology transfer that are starting to fuel economic relations among industrialized countries belonging to regional economic entities. The recent evolution of France-Canada economic relations is an excellent illustration of that phenomenon.