TABLE 1
Export Establishments by Employee Size

Number of Employees	Number of Exporters	% of Exporter Population	Value of Exports (millions)	% of Export Value
Less than 50	33,062	72.3	121,910	30.4
50-99	6,029	13.2	60,786	15.1
100-199	3,741	8.2	42,837	10.7
200 and over	2,905	6.4	175,972	43.8
Grand total	45,737	100.0	401,504	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada Exporter registry, for 2005

While the number of exporting firms has fallen, the total value of Canadian exports has increased. Thus, the average value of exports per firm has climbed to $9.4 million in 2005 from $8.7 million in 2000. However, there were wide variations in the average value of exports to various regions. As one would expect, the average value of exports is much higher for firms that export to both U.S. and non-U.S. destinations, but this average value has been falling. The increasing number of small firms exporting globally has contributed to this decline.

The drop in the number of firms exporting solely to the U.S. was largely due to a decline in smaller sized exporters[2]. Many small firms stopped exporting altogether, but some small firms have apparently diversified into the "both U.S. and non-U.S." group, as it was the smaller exporters that increased in number the most in this group[3].

While these trends have been concentrated in the smaller firms, it is important to note that because these firms are small, changes in their export activity have a relatively small impact on overall exports. Larger firms (those with over 200 employees) accounted for only 6.4 percent of all Canadian exporters in 2005 but made up almost half of total export value (Table 1)[4].

2 Firms which export less than $1 million annually accounted for 85% of the decline in firms exporting to the U.S. only from 2000 to 2005.

3 Firms which export less than $1 million annually accounted for 81% of the increase in firms exporting to both the U.S. and a non-U.S. destination from 2000 to 2005.

4 Note that data on exporters by employee size are at the establishment level. This is a different statistical measure than used in previously cited data, which are at the enterprise level. The enterprise is the top hierarchical level associated with a complete (consolidated) set of financial statements. An establishment is a unit of production, such as a factory or a plant, for which the accounting data required to measure production are available. An enterprise may consist of many establishments.