

1. INTRODUCTION

This survey was undertaken to ascertain the Quebec business community's perception of the new competitive situation resulting from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and their opinions about various aspects of trade with Mexico.

It was conducted by *Projet d'études internationales Mexique* (PEI Mexique), a group of final-year students from the *École des sciences de la gestion* of l'Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), in conjunction with the strategic marketing consultants firm, Legault, Grysole & Associés Inc.

This survey is the first phase of a project that was completed during a May 1993 trip to Mexico. The second phase determined the accuracy of the views held by the Quebec business community and identified what measures will be needed for the Quebec firms to benefit from the new business opportunities.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Sampling

The small Quebec exporting firms listed in the 1992 *Quebec International Trade Directory*, published by CRIQ, and directories of software producers in Quebec were used as a basis for this survey. Export firms were chosen on the theory that a firm that was not already in the international marketplace would not choose Mexico to begin export activities.

Random sampling was done in order to obtain a representative number of firms in each of the following industrial sectors: agri-food, paper products, vehicle parts and engines, aeronautics, communications equipment, software, pharmaceutical products, clothing and wood products. The firms were screened based on the number of employees and export activity. A total of 179 firms were contacted.

The firm respondent was a senior manager responsible for general management or exporting.

Before the survey was begun, a pre-test was conducted in French with about a dozen firms.

2.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire, which contained 14 closed-ended and partially closed-ended questions, was administered in French and English.

The questions were arranged in such a way as to distinguish between those firms that exported to Mexico and those that did not, and were grouped under three headings:

- Interest in Mexico;
- Problems and sources of assistance; and
- Impact of NAFTA.

2.3 Data Collection

The PEI Mexique team was provided with training before they conducted the survey. They collected data from March 15 to 26, 1993, using the offices of Legault, Grysole & Associés Inc. and of the UQAM Foundation.

All the questionnaires were pre-coded, and the data was computerized and processed using Excel software.

The telephone interviews were each about 10 to 15 minutes long.

2.4 Response Rate

In all, 101 respondents took part in the survey, a response rate of 56.4 percent.

2.5 Non-respondents

Of the 179 firms selected during sampling, 78 were eliminated for various reasons (see Table 1).

Table 1: Analysis of Non-respondents

Category	Number
Discontinued telephone numbers	9
Refusal to answer	17
Unqualified firms	33
Respondents not reached	19
Questionnaires completed	101
Total	179
Response rate	56.4%
<i>No. = 179</i>	