
Substantial programs are in place to assist Canadian workers and businesses to respond to the Agreement. The most important federal program directed at labour adjustment is the Canadian Jobs Strategy, which provides financial assistance for training, job development and relocation of workers. Employment and Immigration Canada also runs the Industrial Adjustment Service and provides counselling, referral and placement services. Unemployment Insurance is always available to help Canadians make the transition from one job to another. An equally extensive range of programs is available which will help Canadian businesses capitalize on the new opportunities created by the Agreement. They include: the Trade Commissioner service of the Department of External Affairs; the Program for Export Market Development; and the new approach to regional development embodied in the programs and services of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Western Diversification Office and the Federal Economic Development Initiative in Northern Ontario. The Prime Minister has recently announced the establishment of the Advisory Council on Adjustment, composed of representatives from business and labour organizations and academics, to advise the government on the effectiveness of these programs in the context of the Agreement.

Consumer Impacts of the Agreement

The costs of Canadian customs tariffs and other barriers to imports are ultimately borne by Canadian consumers in the form of higher prices. Such tariffs and barriers diminish the competitive influence of foreign products, with the result that there is also less variety and lower quality of consumer products generally. Thus, barriers to imported products impose direct costs on consumers and, conversely, consumers benefit directly from the removal of such barriers.

Since the United States is Canada's major trading partner, and given the importance of the United States in the global economy, the comprehensive elimination of tariffs and the reduction of other barriers to trade in U.S. products will lead to significant direct benefits for Canadian consumers:

- the removal of tariffs and other barriers to the importation of U.S. products will result in lower prices and greater choice for Canadian consumers;
- Canadian-made products will also be lower in price because of reduced manufacturing costs for Canadian industry, increased competition and larger scales of production, made possible by unimpeded access to the U.S. market.