

Thailand's exports of cars to Chrysler Canada rank fifth among Thai shipments to Canada. More detailed information regarding Canadian imports from Thailand over the last decade can be found in Table VII. Approximately 1.5 percent of Thailand's total world exports in 1990 went to Canada.

Priority Sectors:

Canada's trade priorities in Thailand flow naturally from Thailand's increased infrastructure requirements, expenditures and industrial diversification, as follows:

1. Information technology and electronics products:

The economic boom in Thailand has perhaps its greatest impact on the telecommunications sector, where facilities now in place are strained. Ambitious expansion plans have been introduced and will offer Canadian companies opportunities in products and services such as records management, software, videotex, digital switching equipment, rural telecommunications equipment, fax services, and mobile telephone services.

2. Power and energy equipment and services:

It is anticipated that Thailand's continued economic growth will result in an annual growth in demand of 10 percent for electricity over the next decade. Several projects are on the drawing board. These include the expansion of the Mae Moh thermal project, the Ao Phai coal-fired thermal project, and smaller hydro projects throughout the country. There is also talk of building a nuclear power station. Accompanying these projects will be a growing demand for substations and transmission line products, control equipment and instrumentation.

On the other side, Thailand's current domestic production of oil and gas accounts for only 30 percent of the country's requirements. Therefore Thailand decided to expand its oil exploration program, negotiated improved concession rights, approved additional refineries and is planning new gas pipelines. Opportunities for Canadian firms exist in geological and geophysical surveying, contract drilling and the supply of oil field equipment and services. Thailand is also looking for new technologies in the distribution and utilization of LNG, corrosion control, management information systems and energy conservation technologies.

3. Transport systems and services:

Increased economic activity has placed severe strains on the country's transportation system. Canada hopes to be involved in the major Bangkok urban transport improvements which are urgently required. In addition, opportunities exist for providing equipment and services for airport expansion, aircraft, avionics, as well as renovation and extension of port and railway facilities.

4. Agriculture and food products and services:

Although Thailand is one of the world's largest net food exporters, it remains an import market estimated in the range of \$1.7 billion. With rising income and tourist trade, consumer demand for food products will grow. Key agri-food opportunities include: animal genetics, animal feeds, meat products, processed foods, agricultural technology (in the production, processing and storage areas) and biotechnology (including genetic engineering, animal health, and aquacultural applications).

5. Environment:

The economic boom in Thailand has had a negative impact on the country's environment. Protection of the environment is now one of Thailand's prime objectives. Opportunities have been identified in the following areas: waste water treatment, chemical and toxic waste treatment, hazardous waste handling equipment, air treatment systems, pollution measurement and control systems, and forest and watershed management. There is also an increasing demand for new "clean technologies".

Thailand's rapid economic growth and diversification in recent years has attracted tremendous Canadian business activity. The high profile and strong program of the 300-member Thai-Canadian Chamber of Commerce reflects the growth in bilateral commerce.

Thailand offers numerous commercial advantages to Canadian companies: a strong economy, a country rich in natural resources and a favourable investment climate. Joint-ventures and other long-term commercial possibilities are numerous, providing Canadian firms with the opportunity to establish themselves in the Thai market or strengthen their share of the market. CIDA/ Industrial Co-operation support for Canadian firms investigating such opportunities