

PROJECT :

CANADA - LIGURIA

Background : Italy & Canada

In sharing similar strong principles on global and regional matters, Canada and Italy are partners in many multi-lateral institutions, such as The United Nations, G7 and NATO.

The Italian Government, together with leading companies and businesses, have given significantly strong backing not only to the "*Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement* (CETA), but also to the Commercial Agreement framework between Canada and the European Union.

In 2014, the Italian foreign investments in Canada came to 1.3 billion Canadian dollars, ranking Italy in the 21st position amongst the largest sources of investment in Canada whereas in 2013, the Canadian's direct foreign investments in Italia (CDIA) increased by 487 million Canadian dollars to \$796 million by the end of 2014. In fact, Italy has been ranked 37th amongst those countries which Canada invested in abroad. Moreover, in regard to the European countries of CDIA, Italy is, in fact, ranked 16th.

Indeed, both the Italian and Canadian Governments strongly recognise the importance of agreements and joint venture projects in the sectors of Science, Technology and Innovation as levers to reach levels of mutual wealth and prosperity. To this end, in January 2015 Canada and Italy signed the joint project entitled "*Piano d'azione Comune Canada-Italia*", a joint venture project of planning initiatives in these specific areas which then led to the extremely successful initiative entitled "*Tavolo Canada*" (from 2007 to 2014), thanks to which, more than 100 joint venture projects and bilateral initiatives have been created, opening the door to a new era of collaborative initiatives between Canada and Italy within the areas of Research and Innovation. The purpose of the resulting Plan of Action is to promote collaboration and networking of a Research & Development (R&D) nature between the most important Italian and Canadian institutions and universities and innovatory businesses and workshops in both Public and Private Sectors, with a regular form of monitoring and assessment. The main areas of interest are as follows:

- Aerospace
- The Arctic
- The Agricultural and Farming Industry
- Natural Sciences
- Marine Sciences

In particular, the CETA envisages the following specific initiatives: for the purpose of promoting free trade between the two countries, the liberalisation of nearly the total of the fixed price tables (100% of industrial assets); the liberalisation of the service sector (access to key sectors of the Financial Services Sector, Postal Services, Telecommunications, together with the Energy and the Maritime Transport Sectors); a reference guide framework for the reciprocal recognition and approval of professional qualifications (i.e. for architects, engineers, chartered accountants etc.); a

privileged service for European investments; increased ease of access for European companies to Canadian bids/invitation to tender and public tenders at all levels: namely, government, provincial, territorial and municipal - here it is also worth noting that this is an area of significant development since no precedent has existed before now within the area of free trade agreements - and finally, the acknowledgement of 145 European Geographical Standards and Recommendations (amongst which are several Standards of Excellence).

Bilateral Agreements

Currently, each country's governments are actively working towards the completion of bilateral agreements whose purpose is to promote networking, business travel and trade whilst also facilitating formal relationships between the two States. Such bilateral means will deal with, amongst other things, topics which regard Public Welfare and the development of work activities of the partners of the diplomatic staff. A new edition of the Extradition Treaty became law on 17th November 2010. The new Convention on the dual tax came into effect in November 2011 with a retroactive effect on 1st January 2011. Moreover, the two countries are also collaborating to develop a bilateral agreement for the reciprocal acknowledgement of driving licenses in consultation with the Canadian Provinces and Territories. Moreover, there are also two cultural agreements between the two countries: one for the co-production of films and the other for cultural exchanges and collaboration projects.

Most interesting is the novelty that the Ambassador of Canada has recently created the Canada-Italy Innovations Award which aims at strengthening the bond between the two countries in regards to the subject of Innovation. This award is oriented towards Italian researchers, scientists, inventors and entrepreneurs of *start-up* businesses who are interested in developing and enhancing the research side of their activities with their Canadian counterparts and colleagues within those particular areas and sectors that the Canadian Government retain most important and of priority. In particular, for the 2016 edition, the areas of action are numerous and vast, ranging, for example, from Oceanography to Advanced Technology Manufacturing, from Information and Communications Technology to Sustainable Technology, not to mention, this year with the launch of the *Internet of Things* (IoT) application.

On top of this, the following are also noteworthy:

- the first meeting organised between Canada and Italy on 23rd of June on the subject of *Smart Cities* in Rome which had as its objective, the strengthening of the working relationships between some of the top experts and professionals in the Innovation field from both countries and which focused on, in particular, those avant-garde cities which have adopted innovative strategies for the enhancement of the life quality of their citizens;

- the conference entitled "Canada and Italy in a free-trade context" which was held in Ottawa on 6th October 2015 at the Italian Ambassador Gian Lorenzo Cornadocon's residence where Mr. Jean Charest, the former Prime Minister of Quebec was guest of honour. The event was organised by the Italian Embassy in collaboration with two prestigious universities in Montreal, namely the

"Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales (HEC)" and the "Ecole Polytechnique", the main point of interest being the analysis of the various phases of CETA negotiations.

Lastly, I believe it is important to mention the following work, that of:

- the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Ontario (ICCO) which has existed since the 1930s, but received its formal recognition in 1961. This is a private, independent and non-profit making organization whose objective is to enhance, boost and promote investments, trade, business and cultural relationships between Canada and Italy; and

- the Italian Chamber of Commerce in West Canada (ICCC) which was established in 1964 and formally approved in 1967. Also this operates as a non-profit making association with the mandate of promoting and taking advantage of trade exchanges and bilateral investments between Italy and West Canada, being well-acknowledged in the Italian Chamber of Commerce circles.