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Analysis in Brief

Analysis on interprovincial trade in Canada, 2023 and 2024

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by **Jessica Bossé, Robert Fair** and **Chris Johnston**

Introduction

The elimination of interprovincial trade barriers has long been a subject of interest for all levels of government in Canada. While the Canadian Free Trade Agreement's main objective was to alleviate such obstacles and facilitate the movement of goods and services within Canada, some challenges remain for businesses across the country since the agreement was launched in 2017.[1] While $527 billion worth of goods and services move across provincial and territorial borders every year, representing 17% of Canada's gross domestic product,[2] it is estimated that the elimination of all interprovincial trade barriers could increase the GDP anywhere from $92 to $200 billion over time.[3]

As part of the Federal Action Plan to Strengthen Internal Trade, Statistics Canada conducted the Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade (CSIT) in partnership with the Privy Council Office from June 18, 2024, to October 15, 2024, to better understand the interprovincial trade activities of businesses. Businesses in sectors more likely to trade across provincial and territorial borders were surveyed. The CSIT collected information on businesses engaged in purchasing, selling, and transporting across provincial and territorial borders and the obstacles they faced when engaging in interprovincial trade activities. Information on barriers faced by businesses that conducted international trade activities was also collected. The survey did not collect information about interprovincial trade volumes. The data collected was utilized in the Canadian Internal Trade Data and Information Hub, along with other related interprovincial trade data.

This article provides an overview of the results and depicts the state of interprovincial trade in Canada in the 12 months preceding the survey. It highlights the characteristics of businesses involved in interprovincial trade, including their industrial make-up and the location of their suppliers and customers; examines the obstacles businesses experienced while purchasing or selling interprovincially in comparison to those cited while trading internationally, and provides information on the proportion of businesses engaged in both interprovincial and international trade.

Businesses in wholesale trade and manufacturing most likely to purchase and sell across provincial and territorial borders

In the 12 months preceding the survey, more than two in five businesses (41.0%) in Canada purchased goods or services from suppliers in another province or territory while more than one in four businesses (26.9%) sold goods or services to customers located in another province or territory. Businesses in wholesale trade were the most likely to purchase (63.9%) and sell (61.9%) goods or services interprovincially, followed by businesses in manufacturing (56.4% and 50.8% respectively).

1. Government of Canada (2023). Canadian Free Trade Agreement.
2. Statistics Canada. 2025. Gross domestic product, expenditure-based, provincial and territorial, annual.
3. Manucha, Ryan, and Trevor Tombe. 2022. Liberalizing Internal Trade Through Mutual Recognition: A Legal and Economic Analysis. Macdonald-Laurier Institute.

Table 1
Proportion of businesses that purchased goods or services from interprovincial suppliers over the last 12 months, by sector

	Business purchased goods or services from suppliers in another province or territory	Business sold goods or services to customers in another province or territory
	percent	
All sectors	**41.0**	**26.9**
Wholesale Trade	63.9	61.9
Manufacturing	56.4	50.8
Information and Cultural Industries	52.9	46.1
Retail Trade	50.7	25.7
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	46.9	27.6
Professional, scientific, and technical services	41.7	44.8
Other services: Repair and Maintenance, and Personal and laundry services	38.4	13.2
Transportation and Warehousing	32.4	22.3
Finance and Insurance	29.2	35.1
Construction	28.7	12.1
Health care and social assistance	27.2	3.3
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	25.0	18.6

Note: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the interprovincial trade activities the business conducted over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded. Respondents could choose multiple response categories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023 (Table 33-10-0941-01).

Businesses in the territories and Prince Edward Island most likely to purchase interprovincially

Businesses in the territories (Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut) were the most likely to have purchased from suppliers in another province or territory in the 12 months preceding the survey. More than three quarters of businesses in Nunavut (77.0%) purchased from interprovincial suppliers, followed by 67.3% in the Yukon and 65.8% in the Northwest Territories.

After the territories, businesses in Prince Edward Island (64.3%) were the most likely to purchase from interprovincial suppliers. In fact, businesses in this province were more likely to purchase interprovincially compared to the national average in nearly all sectors. For instance, 86.4% of manufacturing businesses in Prince Edward Island bought goods or services from suppliers in another province or territory, compared to 56.4% at the national level. A similar trend can be observed in all Atlantic provinces, therefore illustrating the importance of interprovincial trade in that region.

Table 2
Proportion of businesses in the Atlantic provinces that purchased goods or services from interprovincial suppliers over the last 12 months, by sector

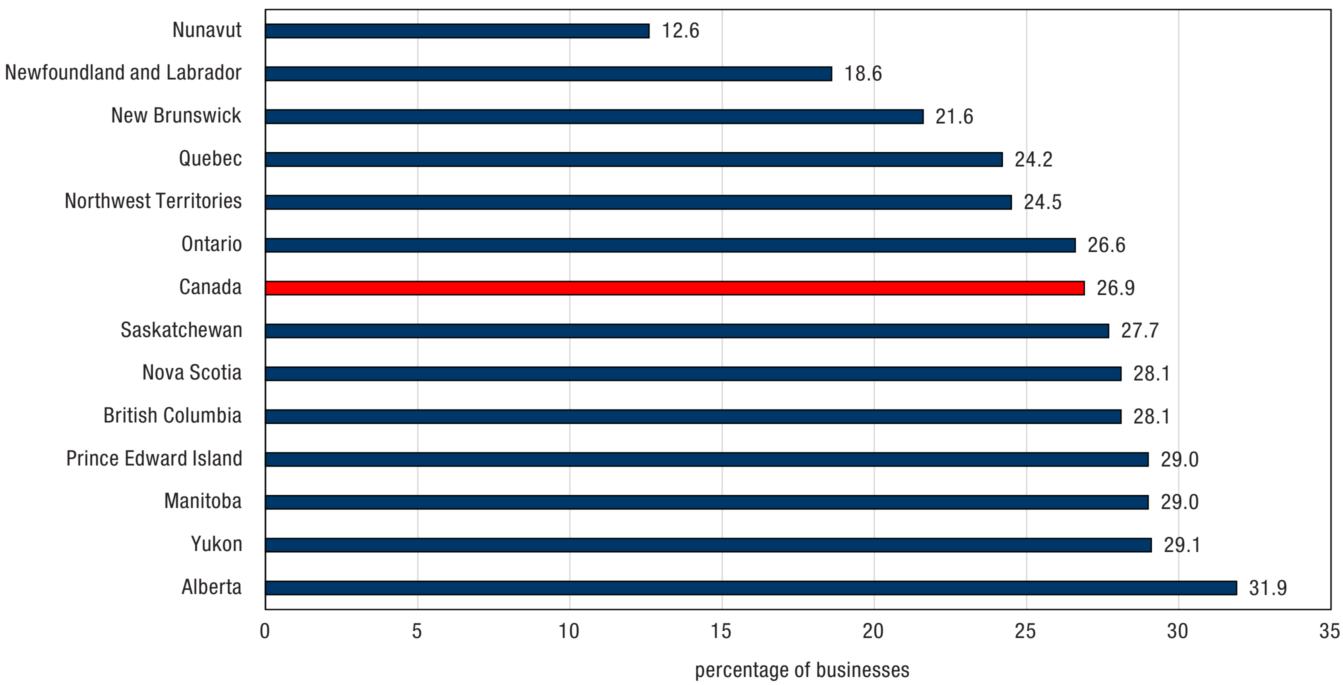
	Business purchased goods or services from interprovincial suppliers				
	Canada	Prince Edward Island	Newfoundland and Labrador	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick
	percent				
All sectors	**41.0**	**64.3**	**56.5**	**53.8**	**50.6**
Wholesale Trade	63.9	79.5	77.8	78.8	62.7
Manufacturing	56.4	86.4	60.6	72.5	86.2
Information and Cultural Industries	52.9	55.0	83.2	64.4	65.6
Retail Trade	50.7	81.6	67.9	56.9	65.6
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	46.9	..	72.9	67.7	16.9
Professional, scientific, and technical services	41.7	69.8	54.0	53.9	52.4
Other services: Repair and Maintenance,and Personal and laundry services	38.4	72.8	60.2	58.9	55.9
Transportation and Warehousing	32.4	60.1	36.1	41.5	38.8
Finance and Insurance	29.2	38.9	29.0	34.1	32.2
Construction	28.7	49.9	38.1	47.5	46.9
Health care and social assistance	27.2	38.8	50.2	44.8	31.1
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	25.0	56.0	57.4	36.2	33.9

.. not available for a specific reference period
Note: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the interprovincial trade activities the business conducted over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded. Respondents could choose multiple response categories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023 (Table 33-10-0941-01).

Less than one in three businesses in each province and territory sold interprovincially

Over the same period, most provinces and territories showed little variation in the share of businesses that sold goods or services interprovincially. Nearly one in three businesses in Alberta (31.9%) sold to interprovincial customers followed closely by businesses in the Yukon (29.1%), Manitoba (29.0%), and Prince Edward Island (29.0%). However, less than one in five businesses in Nunavut (12.6%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (18.6%) sold goods or services to customers across provincial or territorial borders.

Chart 1
Proportion of businesses that sold goods or services to interprovincial customers over the last 12 months, by province and territory



Note: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the interprovincial trade activities the business conducted over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded. Respondents could choose multiple response categories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023 (Table 33-10-0941-01).

Businesses that transported goods from one province to another

The CSIT also collected information on businesses that directly transported goods from one province or territory to another in the 12 months that preceded the survey. These include businesses in the transportation and warehousing sector as well as businesses in other sectors that had their own fleet of trucks, trains, ships or planes to transport goods from one province or territory to another. However, it excludes businesses that contracted a third-party company to transport their goods.

Less than one in ten businesses (7.1%) transported goods across provincial or territorial borders, with the vast majority (92.4%) using road transportation as their main mode of transportation. Businesses in Manitoba (12.5%) and the Northwest Territories (12.1%) were the most likely to transport interprovincially compared to businesses in other provinces or territories. Nationally, goods were most commonly transported to Quebec (41.1%) followed by Ontario (38.0%), Alberta (37.5%) and British Columbia (36.0%).

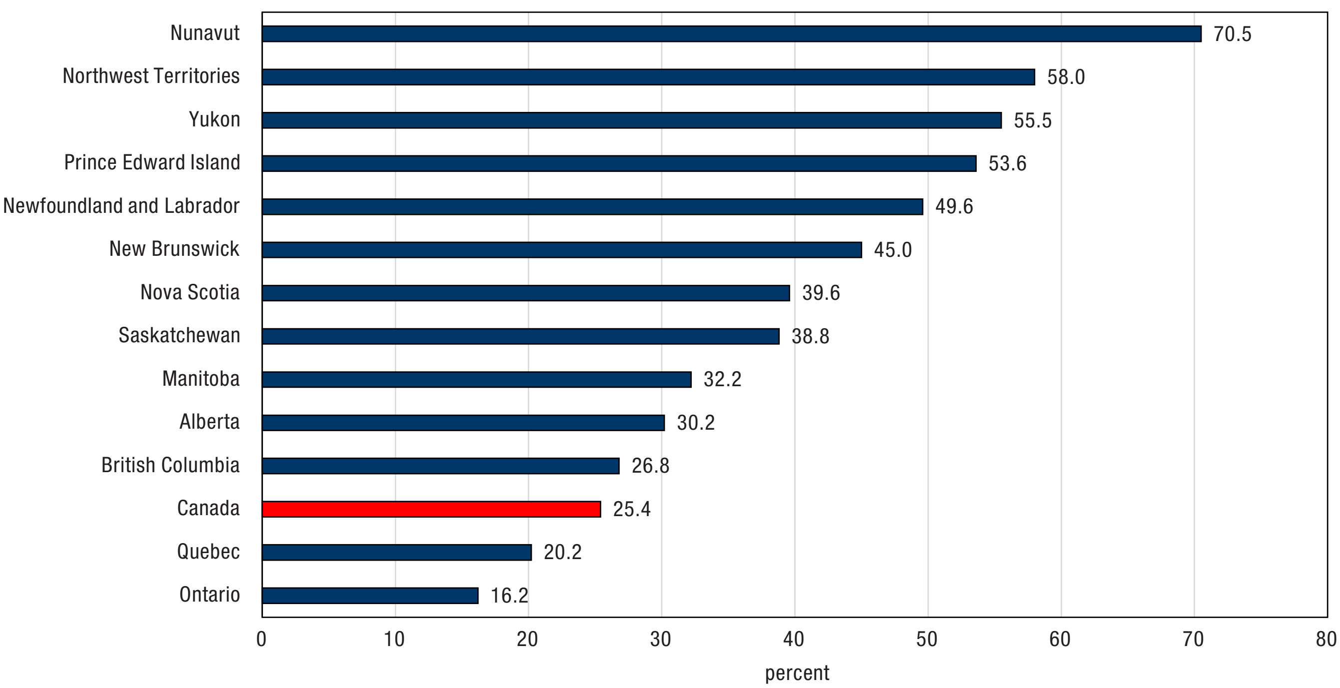
While nearly one in three businesses in transportation and warehousing (32.4%) transported goods from one province or territory to another, businesses in wholesale trade (20.1%) were also among the most likely to transport interprovincially.

Businesses in the territories were more likely to purchase from neighbouring provinces while businesses in the Atlantic provinces were more likely to purchase from Ontario

Businesses that reported that they had bought from another province or territory in the 12 months preceding the survey were then asked about the proportion of goods or services purchased interprovincially and their suppliers' location. The analysis presented in this section is applicable to the 41.0% of businesses that purchased across provincial or territorial borders over that period.

On average, businesses purchased one-quarter (25.4%) of their goods or services from another province or territory. Over half of businesses purchased goods or services from suppliers located in Ontario (53.7%), making it one of the most popular locations that businesses bought from across all provinces and territory. Businesses also often purchased from Quebec (37.3%), British Columbia (31.3%) and Alberta (29.0%).

Chart 2
Average proportion of goods or services purchased from interprovincial suppliers over the last 12 months, by province and territory



Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the business' total purchases of goods or services from suppliers within another province or territory over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded.
Respondents were asked if the business purchased goods or services from suppliers in another province or territory in Canada over the last 12 months. If they indicated that they did, they were asked the percentage of total purchases of goods or services that were purchased from suppliers operating within another province or territory in Canada. Respondents were asked to report their percentage of purchases but may have reported in terms of dollar value of purchases, quantities purchased or volume purchased.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023 (Table 33-10-0942-01).

Businesses in the territories had the highest average proportion of goods and services purchased from interprovincial suppliers, led by businesses in Nunavut (70.5%). The most common locations for these suppliers were in Manitoba (62.9%) and Ontario (62.3%), with over three in five purchasing goods or services from them.

Moreover, businesses in the Northwest Territories (58.0%) and the Yukon (55.5%) bought more than half of their goods and services from suppliers located in another province or territory. Nearly all businesses in the Northwest Territories purchased from suppliers in Alberta (90.9%). Over three in four businesses in the Yukon bought goods or services from Alberta (79.7%) and British Columbia (77.4%).

Businesses in the Atlantic provinces also relied on purchasing from suppliers in another province or territory. The average proportion of total goods and services purchased interprovincially ranged from 53.6% in Prince Edward Island to 39.6% in Nova Scotia. In general, businesses in Atlantic provinces most commonly purchased from suppliers in Ontario followed by suppliers in Quebec. However, a different trend was observed for businesses in Prince Edward Island that purchased interprovincially. These businesses most commonly bought from suppliers in New Brunswick (65.2%), followed by suppliers in Ontario (63.7%) and Nova Scotia (55.1%).

Table 3
Location of interprovincial suppliers where businesses purchased goods or services from over the last 12 months, by province and territory

	Location of suppliers						
	Newfoundland and Labrador	Prince Edward Island	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	Quebec	Ontario	Manitoba
Location of purchasing business	percent of businesses						
Canada	**3.5**	**3.3**	**9.2**	**9.5**	**37.3**	**53.7**	**14.4**
Newfoundland and Labrador	...	6.4	38.9	26.2	46.8	82.9	4.3
Prince Edward Island	8.0	...	55.1	65.2	41.5	63.7	4.8
Nova Scotia	8.8	13.3	...	48.0	49.0	77.3	6.4
New Brunswick	4.0	16.4	46.9	...	53.5	68.8	4.9
Quebec	2.9	2.3	6.8	11.4	...	98.1	6.2
Ontario	5.4	3.9	10.2	11.0	71.8	...	20.3
Manitoba	2.0	1.5	5.0	3.3	25.4	75.2	...
Saskatchewan	1.2	1.1	2.7	1.8	25.2	56.1	35.7
Alberta	2.9	2.5	7.6	4.7	26.4	67.0	19.2
British Columbia	1.5	1.4	5.5	3.1	27.6	70.9	11.1
Yukon	3.7	0.9	5.4	3.1	13.3	44.7	13.8
Northwest Territories	2.7	0.0	2.7	0.7	10.5	28.8	16.9
Nunavut	8.1	1.3	2.7	7.1	40.6	62.3	62.9

	Location of suppliers					
	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia	Yukon	Northwest Territories	Nunavut
Location of purchasing business	percent of businesses					
Canada	**12.4**	**29.0**	**31.3**	**0.6**	**0.8**	**0.6**
Newfoundland and Labrador	6.1	19.7	25.0	0.2	0.2	0.4
Prince Edward Island	3.5	14.2	14.6	0.7	0.1	0.2
Nova Scotia	3.2	12.9	20.5	0.8	0.6	0.6
New Brunswick	2.6	12.8	16.9	0.2	0.1	0.1
Quebec	2.9	13.3	21.0	0.3	0.8	1.2
Ontario	11.9	32.6	40.7	0.3	0.4	0.6
Manitoba	36.5	45.6	36.6	1.1	1.2	0.8
Saskatchewan	...	68.1	37.9	1.2	1.5	1.2
Alberta	30.2	...	64.7	0.4	1.5	0.0
British Columbia	9.7	55.3	...	1.2	0.8	0.5
Yukon	12.5	79.7	77.4	...	5.3	2.9
Northwest Territories	6.4	90.9	37.9	10.1	...	2.7
Nunavut	2.6	22.4	12.0	2.2	7.9	...

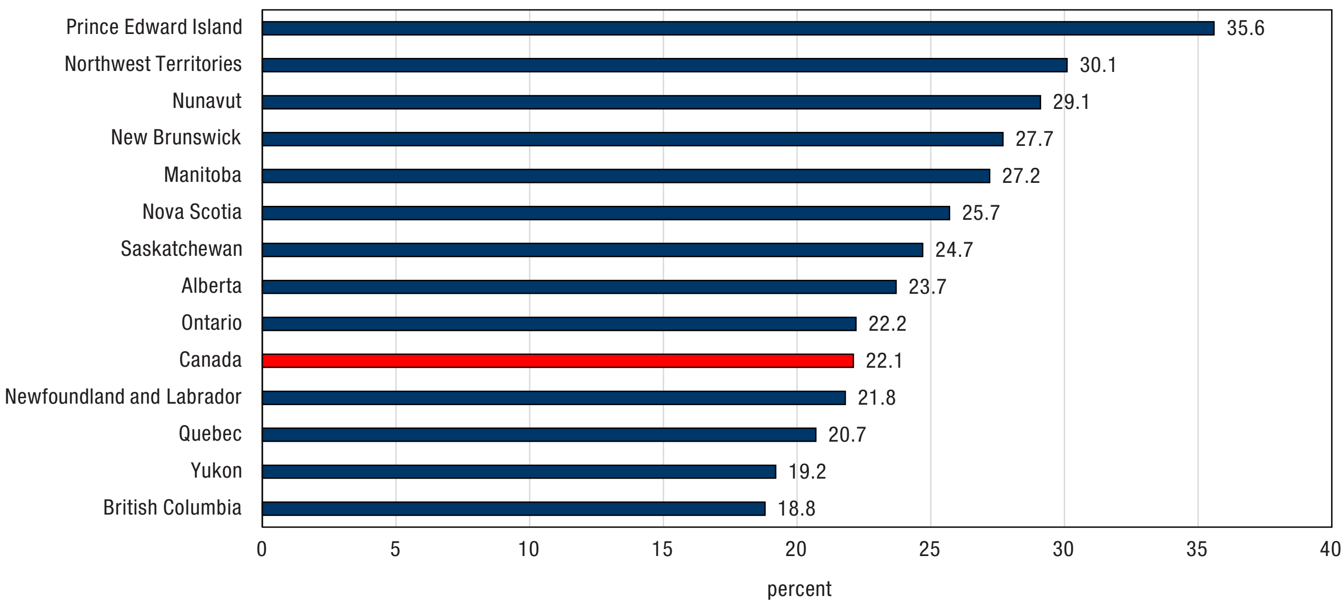
... not applicable
Notes: The data in this table describes the percentage of businesses in each province and territory that purchased goods or services from suppliers located in other provinces and territories. The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the provinces or territories in which the business purchased goods or services from suppliers outside of its province or territory over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded.
Respondents were asked if the business purchased goods or services from suppliers in another province or territory in Canada over the last 12 months. If they indicated that they did, they were asked to indicate the provinces and territories where the business purchased goods or services from suppliers. Respondents could choose multiple response categories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023 (Table 33-10-0943-01).

Businesses more likely to sell goods or services to customers in neighbouring provinces

Businesses that reported that they had sold to another province or territory in the 12 months preceding the survey were then asked about the proportion of goods or services sold interprovincially as well as their customers' location. Similar to the previous section, the analysis presented here applies to the 26.9% of businesses that sold across provincial or territorial borders over that period.

Over the same period, businesses sold on average 22.1% of their goods or services to customers located in another province or territory. These customers include both individuals as well as other businesses. More than two in five businesses sold goods and services to Alberta (45.7%), British Columbia (45.1%) and Ontario (42.8%) customers.

Chart 3
Average proportion of goods or services sold to interprovincial customers over the last 12 months, by province and territory



Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the business' total sales of goods or services to customers located within another province or territory over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded.
Respondents were asked if the business sold goods or services to customers located in another province or territory in Canada over the last 12 months. If they indicated that they did, they were asked the percentage of total sales of goods or services that were sold to customers located within another province or territory in Canada. Respondents were asked to report their percentage of sales but may have reported in terms of dollar value of sales, quantities sold or volume sold.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023 (Table 33-10-0946-01).

In general, businesses sold goods or services to customers located in nearby provinces and territories. For instance, businesses in most of the Atlantic provinces were more likely to sell to each other with nearly three in four businesses in Nova Scotia (74.5%) selling goods or services to customers in New Brunswick, followed by 72.8% of businesses in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick selling to customers in Nova Scotia. On the other hand, businesses in Newfoundland and Labrador were more likely to sell to customers in Ontario (65.5%).

Table 4
Location of interprovincial customers where businesses sold goods or services to over the last 12 months, by province and territory

	Location of customers						
	Newfoundland and Labrador	Prince Edward Island	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	Quebec	Ontario	Manitoba
Location of selling business	percent of businesses						
Canada	**20.9**	**18.5**	**30.4**	**29.3**	**37.8**	**42.8**	**34.4**
Newfoundland and Labrador	...	21.1	59.0	44.6	46.8	65.5	22.5
Prince Edward Island	30.8	...	72.8	70.3	43.2	53.5	15.0
Nova Scotia	48.9	52.4	...	74.5	38.6	50.1	17.5
New Brunswick	32.8	51.3	72.8	...	47.7	49.6	12.4
Quebec	17.6	16.4	28.8	39.3	...	89.5	24.3
Ontario	27.9	20.9	41.1	32.5	67.0	...	42.3
Manitoba	15.4	12.1	20.3	20.6	27.6	74.1	...
Saskatchewan	11.4	12.6	14.8	15.0	25.0	39.0	63.8
Alberta	11.0	8.4	16.1	14.7	23.0	47.3	35.3
British Columbia	17.4	18.7	25.7	22.2	38.2	63.6	37.4
Yukon	15.5	17.3	20.5	20.5	29.5	28.7	18.6
Northwest Territories	8.6	6.6	8.6	8.6	11.8	35.5	13.2
Nunavut	13.7	8.2	8.2	8.2	29.8	78.4	51.2

	Location of customers					
	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia	Yukon	Northwest Territories	Nunavut
Location of selling business	percent of businesses					
Canada	**35.3**	**45.7**	**45.1**	**10.6**	**10.2**	**8.8**
Newfoundland and Labrador	17.6	37.2	29.4	11.6	17.0	19.2
Prince Edward Island	14.4	24.1	27.1	6.4	5.8	3.4
Nova Scotia	17.6	27.0	27.6	6.2	6.5	5.2
New Brunswick	14.7	18.9	20.4	4.6	4.2	4.5
Quebec	22.1	32.3	38.6	6.3	6.3	8.0
Ontario	30.7	51.7	57.9	9.7	9.5	10.4
Manitoba	70.9	55.6	45.6	9.5	9.1	8.9
Saskatchewan	...	80.7	44.5	10.0	12.8	7.2
Alberta	64.8	...	80.8	9.8	11.5	5.6
British Columbia	41.2	87.7	...	20.2	16.3	9.9
Yukon	18.4	49.6	79.0	...	29.9	9.1
Northwest Territories	17.7	64.0	35.2	25.3	...	55.0
Nunavut	34.0	37.2	37.2	5.6	27.6	...

... not applicable
Notes: The data in this table describes the percentage of businesses in each province and territory that sold goods or services to customers located in other provinces and territories.
The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the provinces or territories in which the business sold goods or services to customers outside of its province or territory over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded.
Respondents were asked if the business sold goods or services to customers located in another province or territory in Canada over the last 12 months. If they indicated that they did, they were asked to indicate the provinces and territories where the business sold goods or services to customers. Respondents could choose multiple response categories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023 (Table 33-10-0947-01).

Nearly one in three businesses experienced an obstacle when purchasing or selling interprovincially

In the 12 months preceding the survey, nearly one-third of businesses in Canada (29.8%) experienced at least one obstacle when either purchasing or selling goods or services across provincial or territorial borders. Businesses in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (40.4%) and retail trade (39.3%) were more likely to have experienced at least one obstacle when purchasing or selling across interprovincial borders.

Table 5
Proportion of businesses that experienced at least one obstacle when purchasing or selling goods or services interprovincially over the last 12 months, by sector

	Business experienced at least one obstacle when purchasing or selling interprovincially	Business experienced at least one obstacle when purchasing interprovincially	Business experienced at least one obstacle when selling interprovincially
	percent		
All sectors	**29.8**	**35.7**	**33.8**
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	40.4	45.3	45.6
Retail Trade	39.3	43.5	45.5
Wholesale Trade	34.6	40.2	41.2
Manufacturing	31.8	40.7	38.8
Other services: Repair and Maintenance, and Personal and laundry services	31.4	36.5	30.7
Transportation and Warehousing	28.3	35.9	32.6
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	27.6	32.6	33.1
Construction	24.9	31.4	21.9
Health care and social assistance	23.6	26.6	26.3
Professional, scientific, and technical services	17.7	23.2	19.4
Information and Cultural Industries	17.0	24.6	20.0
Finance and Insurance	12.9	18.4	19.5

Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the obstacles experienced by the business when purchasing or selling goods or services within another province or territory over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded.
Respondents were asked if the business purchased or sold goods or services within another province or territory in Canada over the last 12 months. If they indicated that they did, they were asked to report obstacles the business experienced when purchasing or selling goods or services within another province or territory in Canada. Respondents could choose multiple response categories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023.

Nearly two in three businesses in the Yukon (64.4%) experienced at least one obstacle when purchasing from interprovincial suppliers, followed by over half of businesses in Newfoundland and Labrador (53.8%), the Northwest Territories (53.2%) and Nunavut (52.5%).

Meanwhile, among businesses who sold goods or services to interprovincial customers, businesses in Nunavut (62.2%) were more likely to experience at least one obstacle, followed by businesses in Newfoundland and Labrador (42.8%) and Prince Edward Island (42.7%).

Transportation cost top obstacle for both businesses conducting interprovincial trade and those involved in international trade

Among businesses who experienced obstacles when conducting interprovincial trade, the most commonly reported by far was transportation cost, cited by 29.2% of businesses that purchased or sold goods or services interprovincially.

Businesses in provinces and territories that are more remote were more likely to report transportation cost as an obstacle when purchasing or selling interprovincially. Nearly three in five businesses in the Yukon (58.1%) found the cost of transportation to be a challenge, followed by businesses in Newfoundland and Labrador (45.8%), the Northwest Territories (45.7%) and Nunavut (42.6%).

Table 6
Proportion of businesses that experienced transportation cost as an obstacle when purchasing or selling goods or services interprovincially over the last 12 months, by province and territory

	Business experienced transportation cost as an obstacle		
	When purchasing or selling interprovincially	When purchasing interprovincially	When selling interprovincially
	percent		
Canada	**29.2**	**27.4**	**23.2**
Yukon	58.1	60.5	20.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	45.8	45.8	31.9
Northwest Territories	45.7	45.7	27.7
Nunavut	42.6	43.2	33.8
Prince Edward Island	34.2	33.2	32.6
British Columbia	33.9	32.7	28.7
Nova Scotia	33.0	30.1	26.4
Alberta	32.9	31.5	21.8
Saskatchewan	32.8	32.9	21.3
Manitoba	31.9	31.3	24.5
Ontario	27.0	23.5	24.0
New Brunswick	25.6	24.2	22.6
Quebec	21.7	20.0	17.4

Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the obstacles experienced by the business when purchasing or selling goods or services within another province or territory over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded.
Respondents were asked if the business purchased or sold goods or services within another province or territory in Canada over the last 12 months. If they indicated that they did, they were asked to report obstacles the business experienced when purchasing or selling goods or services within another province or territory in Canada. Respondents could choose multiple response categories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023.

Moreover, of the 47.9% of businesses that experienced at least one obstacle when purchasing or selling at the international level, transportation cost was also the most commonly cited (36.8%). Other commonly selected obstacles by businesses that purchased or sold internationally include currency exchange (20.6%) and high taxes or duties (18.0%).

Table 7
Top 5 obstacles experienced by businesses when purchasing or selling goods or services in another country over the last 12 months

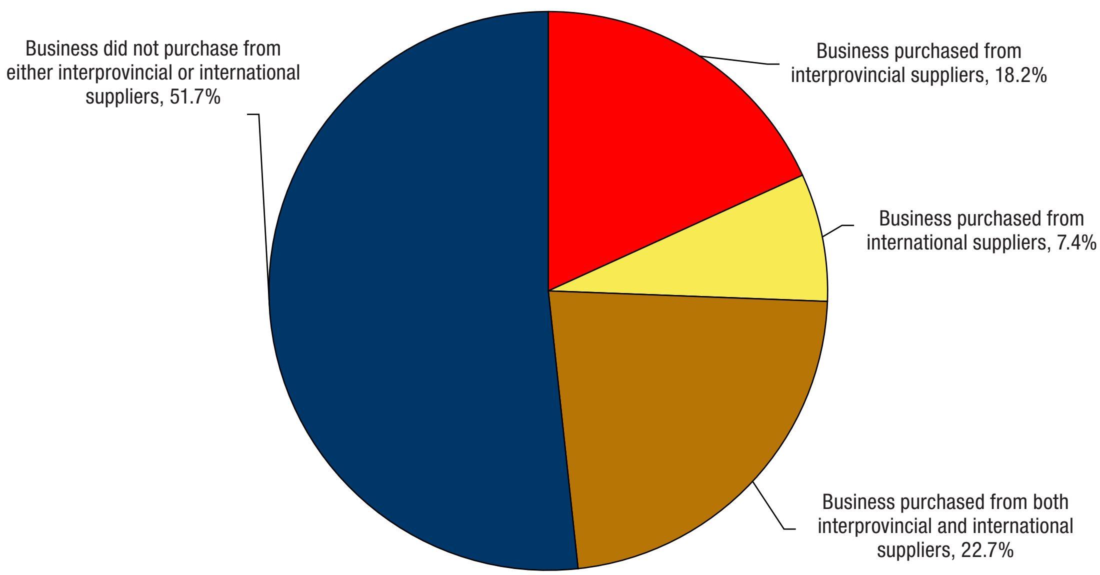
Obstacle	Business experienced obstacle when purchasing from international suppliers or selling to international customers	Business experienced obstacle when purchasing from international suppliers	Business experienced obstacle when selling to international customers
	percent of businesses		
1	Transportation cost (36.8%)	Transportation cost (37.6%)	Transportation cost (28.4%)
2	Currency exchanges (20.6%)	Currency exchanges (20.7%)	Currency exchanges (11.1%)
3	Taxes or duties are too high (18.0%)	Taxes or duties are too high (18.2%)	Too much paperwork to fill out (10.6%)
4	Distance between point of origin and destination (14.3%)	Distance between point of origin and destination (14.1%)	Distance between point of origin and destination (10.0%)
5	Delay between placing and receiving orders (12.3%)	Delay between placing and receiving orders (12.5%)	Taxes or duties are too high (8.6%)

Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the obstacles experienced by the business when purchasing or selling goods or services outside of Canada over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded.
Respondents were asked if the business purchased or sold goods or services in another country over the last 12 months. If they indicated that they did, they were asked to report obstacles the business experienced when purchasing or selling goods or services in another country. Respondents could choose multiple response categories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023.

Businesses in Canada involved in international trade are also involved in interprovincial trade

In the 12 months preceding the survey, more than one in five businesses (22.7%) purchased from both interprovincial and international suppliers, followed by 18.2% that purchased interprovincially but not internationally, leaving relatively few that bought internationally but not interprovincially (7.4%). On the other hand, more than half of businesses (51.7%) in Canada did not purchase goods or services from suppliers located in another province, territory or country.

Chart 4
Distribution of suppliers where businesses purchased goods or services from over the last 12 months



Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the interprovincial and international trade activities the business conducted over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023.

Businesses in the territories more reliant on interprovincial suppliers

In the 12 months preceding the survey, 48.3% of businesses purchased goods or services from suppliers located outside of the province or territory in which they operate, whether interprovincial or international.

Businesses in the territories were the most likely to purchase outside of their respective jurisdiction, likely due to their geographical location. They were more likely to buy from interprovincial but not international suppliers and were the most likely to do so than all provinces (62.0% in Nunavut; 46.9% in the Northwest Territories; 42.5% in the Yukon).

Meanwhile, among businesses that bought from both interprovincial and international suppliers those located in British Columbia (29.4%) and Alberta (29.0%) were the most likely to do so.

Additionally, businesses in Quebec (60.9%) and Ontario (55.0%) were the most likely to purchase goods or services from local suppliers.

Table 8
Proportion of businesses that purchased goods or services from interprovincial or international suppliers over the last 12 months, by province and territory

	Business did not purchase from either interprovincial or international suppliers	Business purchased from both interprovincial and international suppliers	Business purchased from interprovincial but not international suppliers	Business purchased from international but not interprovincial suppliers
	percent			
Canada	**51.7**	**22.7**	**18.2**	**7.4**
Quebec	60.9	17.1	16.2	5.8
Ontario	55.0	20.9	13.5	10.6
Manitoba	46.6	26.5	22.4	4.5
New Brunswick	46.3	20.1	30.5	3.1
British Columbia	44.9	29.4	18.7	7.0
Nova Scotia	43.6	22.4	31.4	2.6
Alberta	42.2	29.0	22.0	6.8
Saskatchewan	41.4	24.3	31.6	2.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	41.3	20.8	35.7	2.2
Prince Edward Island	33.2	25.0	39.3	2.5
Northwest Territories	32.9	19.0	46.9	1.2
Yukon	32.1	24.8	42.5	0.6
Nunavut	22.2	15.1	62.0	0.7

Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the interprovincial and international trade activities the business conducted over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023.

Businesses in wholesale trade and manufacturing are more likely to purchase from both interprovincial and international suppliers

In the 12 months preceding the survey, the majority of sectors were more likely to purchase goods or services from interprovincial suppliers than they were to buy abroad. Businesses in retail trade were the most likely to purchase interprovincially, with more than one in four (26.1%) doing so compared to 7.3% that purchased internationally. This was followed by 24.0% of businesses in mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction that purchased interprovincially, compared to 11.1% that bought outside of Canada.

Businesses in wholesale trade were the only ones more likely to purchase internationally (16.8%) than they were to purchase interprovincially (14.6%), led by wholesale trade businesses in Ontario (27.4%). However, these businesses were three times more likely to purchase from both interprovincial and international suppliers (49.2%).

Table 9
Proportion of businesses that purchased goods or services from interprovincial or international suppliers over the last 12 months, by sector

	Business did not purchase from either interprovincial or international suppliers	Business purchased from both interprovincial and international suppliers	Business purchased from interprovincial but not international suppliers	Business purchased from international but not interprovincial suppliers
	percent			
All sectors	**51.7**	**22.7**	**18.2**	**7.4**
Health care and social assistance	70.0	11.5	15.7	2.8
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	69.5	10.5	14.5	5.5
Finance and Insurance	69.0	9.7	19.5	1.8
Construction	65.2	12.3	16.4	6.1
Transportation and Warehousing	63.7	17.4	15.0	3.9
Other services: Repair and Maintenance, and Personal and laundry services	54.3	21.8	16.6	7.3
Professional, scientific, and technical services	49.8	24.0	17.6	8.6
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	42.1	22.8	24.0	11.1
Retail Trade	42.0	24.6	26.1	7.3
Information and Cultural Industries	39.6	38.1	14.8	7.5
Manufacturing	30.0	42.6	13.8	13.6
Wholesale Trade	19.4	49.2	14.6	16.8

Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the interprovincial and international trade activities the business conducted over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023.

Similarly, businesses in manufacturing were significantly more likely to purchase from both interprovincial and international suppliers (42.6%) than they were to purchase from one type of supplier or the other. At the national level, a comparable proportion of manufacturing businesses purchased interprovincially (13.8%) and internationally (13.6%). At the provincial level, manufacturing businesses in Manitoba (70.7%) were by far the most likely to purchase from both interprovincial and international suppliers, followed by businesses in Prince Edward Island (57.0%) and in New Brunswick (51.7%).

Table 10
Proportion of businesses in manufacturing that purchased goods or services from interprovincial or international suppliers over the last 12 months, by province

	Business purchased from both interprovincial and international suppliers	Business did not purchase from either interprovincial or international suppliers	Business purchased from interprovincial but not international suppliers	Business purchased from international but not interprovincial suppliers
	percent			
Canada	**42.6**	**30.0**	**13.8**	**13.6**
Manitoba	70.7	18.2	9.0	2.1
Prince Edward Island	57.0	7.6	29.4	6.0
New Brunswick	51.7	13.8	34.5	0.0
Saskatchewan	47.1	22.4	29.2	1.3
Alberta	46.5	15.7	26.3	11.5
Ontario	44.0	30.2	8.7	17.1
Nova Scotia	40.6	21.8	31.9	5.7
British Columbia	39.4	33.4	11.9	15.3
Quebec	37.0	36.9	13.6	12.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	31.7	36.3	28.9	3.1

Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the interprovincial and international trade activities the business conducted over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded. The industry breakdown is not available for the territories.
Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023.

Businesses are more likely to sell interprovincially but not internationally

In the 12 months preceding the survey, businesses were more likely to sell goods or services interprovincially but not internationally, with 15.4% doing so compared to 11.5% that sold both interprovincially and internationally and 2.9% that sold to international but not interprovincial customers. This trend could be observed in all provinces and territories, with 23.2% of businesses in the Yukon selling goods or services to interprovincial but not international customers, followed by 20.3% of businesses in the Northwest Territories and 20.3% of businesses in Alberta. On the other hand, 70.2% of businesses in Canada did not sell to either interprovincial or international customers.

Table 11
Proportion of businesses that sold goods or services to interprovincial or international customers over the last 12 months, by province and territory

	Business did not sell to either interprovincial or international customers	Business sold to interprovincial but not international customers	Business sold to both interprovincial and international customers	Business sold to international but not interprovincial customers
	percent			
Canada	**70.2**	**15.4**	**11.5**	**2.9**
Nunavut	85.2	10.4	2.2	2.2
Newfoundland and Labrador	79.5	12.4	6.2	1.9
New Brunswick	75.4	15.5	6.1	3.0
Northwest Territories	74.7	20.3	4.2	0.8
Quebec	73.7	13.5	10.7	2.1
Saskatchewan	71.8	19.1	8.5	0.6
Prince Edward Island	69.6	17.7	11.3	1.4
Manitoba	69.5	19.0	10.0	1.5
Nova Scotia	69.1	18.9	9.1	2.9
Ontario	69.1	14.3	12.4	4.2
British Columbia	68.5	14.6	13.5	3.4
Yukon	67.3	23.2	5.8	3.7
Alberta	66.5	20.3	11.6	1.6

Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the interprovincial and international trade activities the business conducted over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023, to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded.
Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023.

Businesses in 8 of the 12 sectors captured by the survey were more likely to sell only to interprovincial customers than to sell both interprovincially and internationally. This was led by businesses in wholesale trade (31.3%) and finance and insurance (29.1%).

Table 12
Proportion of businesses that sold goods or services to interprovincial or international customers over the last 12 months, by sector

	Business did not sell to either interprovincial or international customers	Business sold to interprovincial but not international customers	Business sold to both interprovincial and international customers	Business sold to international but not interprovincial customers
	percent			
All sectors	**70.2**	**15.4**	**11.5**	**2.9**
Health care and social assistance	96.7	2.5	0.8	0.0
Construction	86.9	9.8	2.2	1.1
Other services: Repair and Maintenance, and Personal and laundry services	85.6	9.6	3.6	1.2
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	78.8	12.8	5.8	2.6
Transportation and Warehousing	75.1	11.0	11.3	2.6
Retail Trade	73.3	17.8	7.9	1.0
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	65.1	18.2	9.5	7.2
Finance and Insurance	63.8	29.1	6.0	1.1
Professional, scientific, and technical services	45.9	20.6	24.1	9.4
Information and Cultural Industries	44.6	22.1	24.0	9.3
Manufacturing	39.6	18.5	32.3	9.6
Wholesale Trade	35.5	31.3	30.6	2.6

Notes: The results in this table are based on the survey that was in collection from June 18 to October 15, 2024, and respondents were asked about the interprovincial and international trade activities the business conducted over the last 12-month period. As a result, those 12 months could range from June 18, 2023 to October 15, 2024, depending on when the business responded. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023.

Conclusion

While Canada's trade relationships have significantly changed since the data for the Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade were collected in 2024, this analysis provides a clear picture of the type of businesses more likely to be involved in interprovincial trade as well as the challenges they faced while doing so.

In the 12 months preceding the survey, businesses in wholesale trade and manufacturing were more likely to purchase and sell goods or services interprovincially than those in other sectors. Furthermore, businesses in the territories and Prince Edward Island were the most likely to purchase from interprovincial suppliers while a similar proportion of businesses in all provinces and territories sold to interprovincial customers. While businesses in some locations had common interprovincial suppliers, businesses tended to trade with other businesses in neighbouring provinces or territories. Additionally, the majority of businesses did not experience any challenges when conducting interprovincial trade but those that did reported transportation cost as their main obstacle. This was also the main barrier for businesses that conducted international trade. Lastly, among businesses that traded outside of their operating province or territory, most of them conducted either interprovincial trade to the exclusion of international trade or traded both interprovincially and internationally, leaving very few solely involved in international trade.

Methodology

From June 18 to October 15, 2024, representatives from businesses across Canada were invited to complete an online questionnaire about the trade of goods and services across provincial and territorial borders and labour mobility in Canada. The Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade uses a stratified random sample of business establishments with five employees or more in select sectors with $50,000 or more in revenue. The survey covered sectors that were more likely to trade across provincial and territorial borders. Data is available at the national, provincial, territorial level by industrial sector and employment size and can be accessed on the Canadian Internal Trade Data and Information Hub. An estimate of proportions is conducted using calibrated weights to calculate the population totals in the domains of interest. The total sample size for this survey is 29,989 and the results are based on responses from a total of 19,371 businesses.

References

Statistics Canada. 2025. Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023. Released on February 14, 2025.

Statistics Canada. 2025. Canadian Survey on Interprovincial Trade, 2023. Released on March 3, 2025.