The State of Internal Trade:
Canada's Interprovincial Cooperation Report Card

July 2026

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The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is Canada's largest association of small and medium-sized businesses with 103,000 members across every industry and region. CFIB is dedicated to increasing business owners' chances of success by driving policy change at all levels of government, providing expert advice and tools, and negotiating exclusive savings.

Learn more at cfib.ca/internaltrade.

Highlights

This year’s report card highlights major policy shifts across jurisdictions toward greater cooperation and mutual recognition, marking a turning point in reducing trade barriers and enabling freer movement of goods, services, and labour within Canada.

Small business perspective on internal trade

- More than six in 10 Canadian small businesses have operated in and/or purchased from any other Canadian jurisdiction in the last 12 months.
- Nearly seven in 10 Canadian small businesses noticed no significant change in the ease of doing business across different provinces/territories; 16% say it got harder.
- More than half of business owners (57%) are unaware of the internal trade reforms being made by Canadian governments.
- More than a quarter (26%) of businesses say the elimination of internal trade barriers would help them offer more competitive pricing; 25% say they could offer more choice of products and/or services.
- Only 35% of Canadian small businesses are confident that their provincial/territorial government is working to improve their business’s ability to operate across different provinces/territories.

Canada’s Interprovincial Cooperation Report Card 2026

- The federal government receives an A+ this year and ten jurisdictions now have A grades, compared to none in the first (2022) edition of the report card, reflecting the significant progress that has been made.
- Overall, the federal government leads with a score of 10.0 (A+), while Manitoba places second with a 9.8 (A), and Saskatchewan and New Brunswick follow closely behind, each tied with a score of 9.7 (A). Nunavut sits in last place with a score of 6.1 (C-).
- CFIB continues to deliver on its 2022 promise to award an automatic “A” to jurisdictions that implement mutual recognition through individual legislation or the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement (CMRA). While impact continues to be evaluated, these agreements and legislation mark a major step forward.
    - Many jurisdictions have now implemented the CMRA, facilitating the sale of goods between provinces and territories.
    - Individual legislation by Nova Scotia and Manitoba has addressed the use of goods and the exchange of services between reciprocating jurisdictions. Saskatchewan’s legislation goes a step further, as it is unilateral.
- The federal government has removed all its CFTA exceptions since last year’s report, resulting in a significant jump in Indicator I: from a C in 2025 to an A+ in 2026.
- CFIB continues to recommend remaining governments across Canada move quickly to expand the CMRA to encompass all federal, provincial, and territorial regulatory measures that impose requirements on the sale and use of goods, services, and labour.

Introduction

Starting in early 2025 amid shifting global trade relationships and geopolitical uncertainty, Canadian policymakers showed unprecedented interest and motivation in improving internal trade, putting forward strong commitments to reduce domestic barriers. This year's report card recognizes and celebrates their significant progress.

Not long ago, solutions such as mutual recognition were shrugged off and received limited political attention. Today, every jurisdiction in Canada has joined the conversation to recognize one another's policies and regulations through the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement, showing substantial progress in a relatively short period of time. Governments across the country deserve credit for elevating internal trade to a national economic priority and putting forward ambitious commitments aiming to make it easier to do business.

Despite this incredible progress, it is important to remember that good intentions do not get us to the finish line.

As of summer 2026, businesses and consumers alike are still waiting to see how these commitments translate into tangible improvements on the ground. The key question now is not whether governments have acted, but whether those actions are, in fact, making it easier to do business across provincial and territorial borders.

As of May 2026, nearly 7 in 10 businesses say they have not noticed significant change in doing business across different provinces/territories in the last 12 months.

The stakes are high. Recent research from the International Monetary Fund suggests that eliminating internal trade barriers could boost Canada's real GDP by nearly 7% (or $210 billion). Realizing these gains would deliver meaningful benefits for both businesses and consumers, including greater choice, improved affordability, stronger supply chains, new job opportunities, relief for labour shortages, and increased productivity. Ultimately, reducing these barriers is not just an economic exercise. It is essential to building a more resilient, competitive, and sustainable Canadian economy.

Internal trade & Canada's competitiveness

Canada is facing an entrepreneurial drought, with more businesses closing than opening. Earlier this year, CFIB raised concerns with all levels of government to draw attention to this alarming trend. Since 2020, business entry and exit rates have steadily converged toward zero, with more recent quarters slipping into net losses. Outside the pandemic, we are now seeing some of the most significant closure rates in over a decade.[1]

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are facing one of the most punishing business environments in decades. Escalating input costs, tax burdens, labour shortages, regulatory pressures, and global economic uncertainty are collectively constraining entrepreneurial activity nationwide. These pressures are also eroding confidence: one in two business owners say they would not recommend starting a business today, citing financial risk, regulatory barriers, and doubts about long-term viability.[2]

"We are Canadian. We should be able to acquire products from our own country first, supporting the local industry. Until I started my own business, I didn't realize the difficulties to support another province's industry. The red tape and number of crazy regulations. It never made sense to me why we wouldn't support our own country and businesses first and it still doesn't make sense why it is taking so long to open the borders."

- Retail Business Owner, Alberta

Reversing Canada's entrepreneurial drought must be treated as a national economic priority, and part of the solution must include eliminating internal trade barriers. As global trade challenges intensify, Canadian small businesses are increasingly turning to domestic markets for growth. According to CFIB data, 62% of business owners sought relief by shifting or considering a shift to domestic suppliers and markets in 2025.[3] Yet the burden of internal trade barriers (differing regulations, patchwork rules, inconsistent implementation of mutual recognition, etc.) persists, limiting small firms' ability to grow and strengthen Canada's economy.

CFIB has long advocated for mutual recognition—a simple but powerful rule: if goods, services, or labour are approved for sale and use in one jurisdiction, they should be automatically approved for sale and use in all jurisdictions.

While 2025 brought notable momentum, including the historic pan-Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement (CMRA) on the sale of goods and new legislation across the country, the practical impact of these reforms remains limited. Significant implementation gaps persist, such as broad sectoral exclusion (food, alcohol, labour, services), uneven provincial uptake of mutual recognition, and non-binding memoranda of understanding (MOU) that risk leaving businesses operating within a patchwork system that could create new layers of red tape.

"Open provincial borders, unify transportation regulations, and health and employment licences. Strengthen Canada within while the government and companies negotiate global contracts. Build Canada without settling to the US tariffs."

- Personal Services Business Owner, Ontario

As the new shift toward freer domestic trade begins, governments and policymakers must remember momentum is only meaningful if it translates into real improvements for the small businesses that drive Canada's economy.

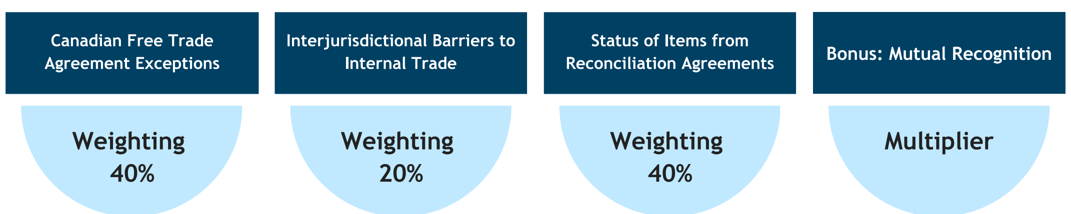
The 2026 edition of the report card continues to evaluate how far federal, provincial, and territorial governments have come over the past year in reducing internal trade barriers. It provides a clear overview of where each government stands, celebrates successes, and identifies areas for further improvement. By highlighting both the wins and the gaps, this report reinforces a simple but critical message: while CFIB recognizes that progress is underway, the real measure of success will be implementation and the extent to which it delivers meaningful results for Canadians.

Canada’s Interprovincial Cooperation Report Card 2026

As in previous years, this report card grades three major areas of interprovincial/territorial cooperation: CFTA exceptions, select barriers to trade, and the status of items from reconciliation agreements (Figure 1). Last year, a new indicator was introduced to reflect growing momentum for mutual recognition—rewarding jurisdictions that accept other regions’ regulations and standards as sufficient within their own jurisdiction. Governments with the highest overall scores are those making the most progress toward reducing domestic trade barriers.

Figure 1

Areas of Interprovincial Cooperation and Weighting Distribution



This year, the federal government receives the highest overall score of 10.0 (A+) in the report card, followed by Manitoba with a 9.8 (A), then by Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, each with a score of 9.7 (A) (see Figure 2 and Table 1). Many other jurisdictions also recorded improvements in their grades, reflecting a year of significant activity and renewed focus on internal trade. Despite this progress, freer internal trade across Canada remains a work in progress.

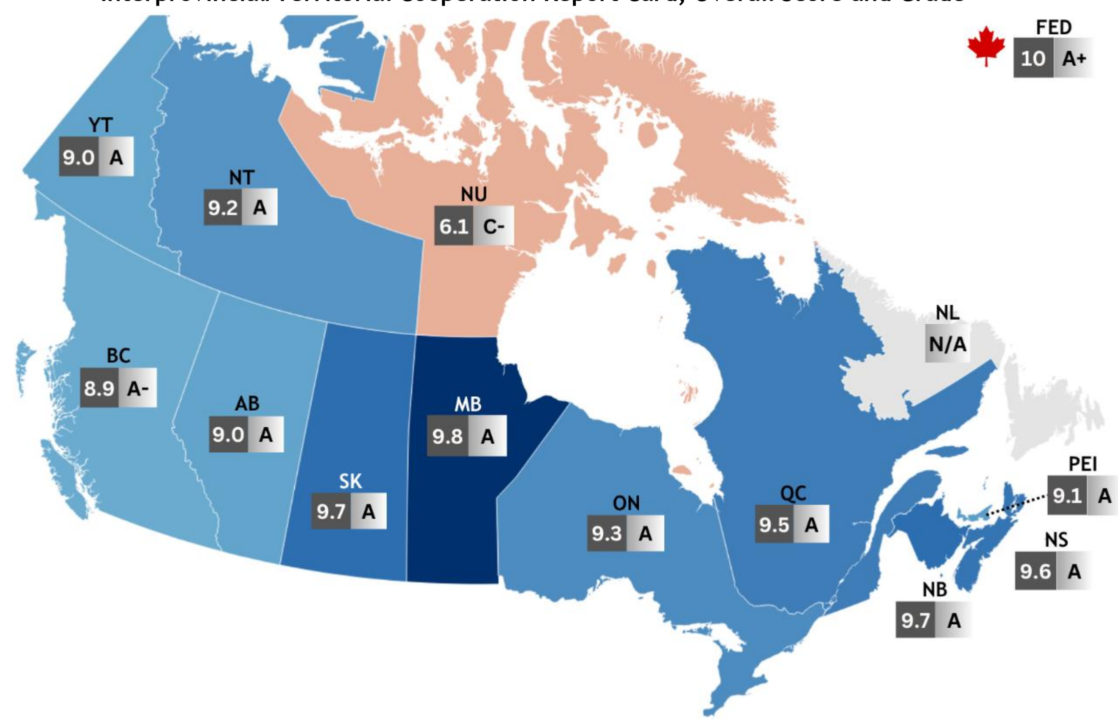
The past year has witnessed unprecedented momentum, with governments moving faster and further than anticipated. In several cases, this change has outpaced the indicators used in this report. As a result, while no changes have been made to the scoring framework this year, the methodology will be updated for next year’s report (see page 27). These updates will better capture the evolving internal trade landscape and ensure future evaluations reflect not just commitments, but real-life outcomes for businesses and individuals.

Jurisdictions that have implemented mutual recognition legislation continue to score higher than those without, due to the mutual recognition indicator acting as a multiplier. **For details on how scores were calculated, refer to the Methodology in Appendix F.**

Figure 2

Report card grades: FED leads with a score of 10.0 (A+), while MB follows closely with a score of 9.8 (A); NU trails behind with a score of 6.1 (C-)

Interprovincial/Territorial Cooperation Report Card, Overall Score and Grade[1]



1. Score: 0 is worst, 10 is best. The scores of the three areas of interprovincial/territorial cooperation are combined into a single score that allows for a ranking of governments from best (highest score) to worst (lowest score).

2. Grade: A+, A, A-: 8.7-10 (Excellent performance); B+, B, B-: 7.5-8.6 (Good performance); C+, C, C-: 6.0-7.4 (Satisfactory performance); D: 4-5.9 (Less than satisfactory performance); F: 0-3.9 (Unsatisfactory performance).

Table 1

Mutual recognition helps propel some provinces ahead, as select barriers and exceptions to the CFTA remain a challenge

Areas of Interprovincial/Territorial Cooperation, Score and Grade[1,2]

Jurisdiction	I. Canadian Free Trade Agreement Exceptions (40%)		II. Select Barriers to Internal Trade (20%)		III. Status of Items from Reconciliation Agreements (40%)		Mutual Recognition (Multiplier)	Overall Score and Grade	
FED[3]	10	A+			9.7	A	10	10.0	A+
MB	7.3	C+	5.4	D	9.6	A	9	9.8	A
SK	6.9	C	5.3	D	9.2	A	9	9.7	A
NB	5.9	D	6.4	C-	8.8	A-	9	9.7	A
NS	2.5	F	6.9	C	9.1	A	9	9.6	A
QC	0.0	F	5.0	D	9.6	A	9	9.5	A
ON[4]	10	A+	6.1	C-	8.4	B+	5	9.3	A
NT	4.9	D	2.0	F	8.8	A-	8	9.2	A
PEI	3.3	F	4.3	D	8.8	A-	8	9.1	A
AB	8.0	B	4.9	D	9.5	A	5	9.0	A
YT	2.7	F	3.0	F	8.8	A-	8	9.0	A
BC	7.6	B-	4.1	D	9.6	A	5	8.9	A-
NU	4.6	D	2.0	F	8.6	B+	1	6.1	C-
NL*	4.3	D	2.7	F	8.5	B+	1	NA	NA

Notes:

1. Score: 10 is best, 0 is worst. The scores of the three areas of interprovincial/territorial cooperation are combined into a single score that allows for a ranking of governments from best (highest score) to worst (lowest score).
2. Grade: A+, A, A-: 8.7-10 (Excellent performance); B+, B, B-: 7.5-8.6 (Good performance); C+, C, C-: 6.0-7.4 (Satisfactory performance); D: 4-5.9 (Less than satisfactory performance); F: 0-3.9 (Unsatisfactory performance).
3. The federal government is scored on two areas: an economic impact score based on the procurement exceptions it maintains from the CFTA in 2025, and the implementation status of reconciliation agreements. Both areas are weighted equally (50% each), as the select barriers area was not available for this analysis.
4. While "A+" is not currently included in the grading scale, Ontario and the federal government are awarded an A+ in the area of Canadian Free Trade Agreement Exceptions for having no exceptions.

*NL given an NA due to recent change in government.

Current context: 2025-26 internal trade movement in review

Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement (CMRA)

In November 2025, Canadian governments announced a landmark agreement establishing mutual recognition for the sale of goods across the country (CMRA), with implementation scheduled for June 2026. Once fully implemented, this agreement will allow participating jurisdictions to permit the sale of goods approved in another jurisdiction without additional requirements (paperwork, fees, etc.), unless requested. Building on this, the Committee on Internal Trade (CIT) announced in March 2026 that governments would seek to expand the CMRA to cover services by the end of the year—a significant step toward deeper economic unity across Canada.[4] While this conversation is exciting and CFIB looks forward to the expansion, governments must also address the remaining gaps in the current CMRA on the sale of goods, such as the exclusion of food and alcohol, the use of goods and services, and missed implementation deadlines from some provinces (see Appendix E).

Entry of new Financial Services Chapter under the CFTA

In March 2026, the Committee on Internal Trade announced the coming into force of a new Financial Services Chapter under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA).[5] This addition is intended to enhance transparency and expand market access for financial companies, such as banks, insurers, credit unions, investment firms, and other regulated financial businesses. While certain exceptions remain in place, CFIB welcomes this development and will be closely monitoring its implementation to assess how effectively the new Chapter will translate into tangible benefits.

Canadian Trucking Regulations Hub

In April 2026, the Alberta government launched the Canadian Trucking Regulations Hub.[6] This hub is designed to serve as a comprehensive platform for interjurisdictional trucking regulation compliance, route planning, and regulatory analysis across Canada, reducing the logistical burden for the sector.

Direct-to-consumer shipment of alcohol products

In early 2025, provincial governments across Canada and the Yukon committed to permitting the direct-to-consumer (DTC) shipment of alcohol products across borders, with a target deadline of May 2026. Since then, in August 2025, New Brunswick took bold leadership in joining Manitoba as the only provinces to implement DTC shipping without additional administrative requirements or price markups. Nova Scotia and Ontario also introduced a bilateral DTC agreement in early 2026.

Labour mobility

In June 2025, it was announced that the First Ministers agreed to a 30-day service standard for pan-Canadian credential recognition. Since then, in March 2026, the CIT ministers committed to completing the ongoing negotiations to the CFTA to strengthen labour mobility provisions by June 2026. Implementation of these changes will depend on each jurisdiction's legislative and regulatory processes.[7] Timely and broad follow-through will be critical to ensuring these commitments make a difference for workers and employers alike.

Memorandum of Understanding on Interprovincial Trucking

On June 12, 2026, federal, provincial, and territorial transportation and highway safety ministers announced the signing of a new memorandum on improving the movement of goods across Canada. This new commitment spans 14 measures to reduce trade barriers in the Canadian trucking sector through harmonization.[8] While this is a positive step forward, CFIB remains cautious and will monitor the time it will take for all governments to harmonize.

Small business perspective on internal trade

To better understand the impact of interprovincial trade barriers, CFIB surveyed small business owners across Canada. In the past 12 months, 62% of Canadian businesses operated in and/or purchased from other provinces/territories. Of those businesses, 82% purchased goods, 44% sold goods, and 23% provided services. Of the businesses that have not operated outside their home province or territory, one in five cited previous attempts as being too complicated or too costly. Only around a third of businesses are confident that the federal government and their provincial/territorial government are working to facilitate internal trade. Of note, most businesses are unaware of the recent internal trade reforms, signalling a lack of clear communication from governments.

Challenges in the trade of goods and services

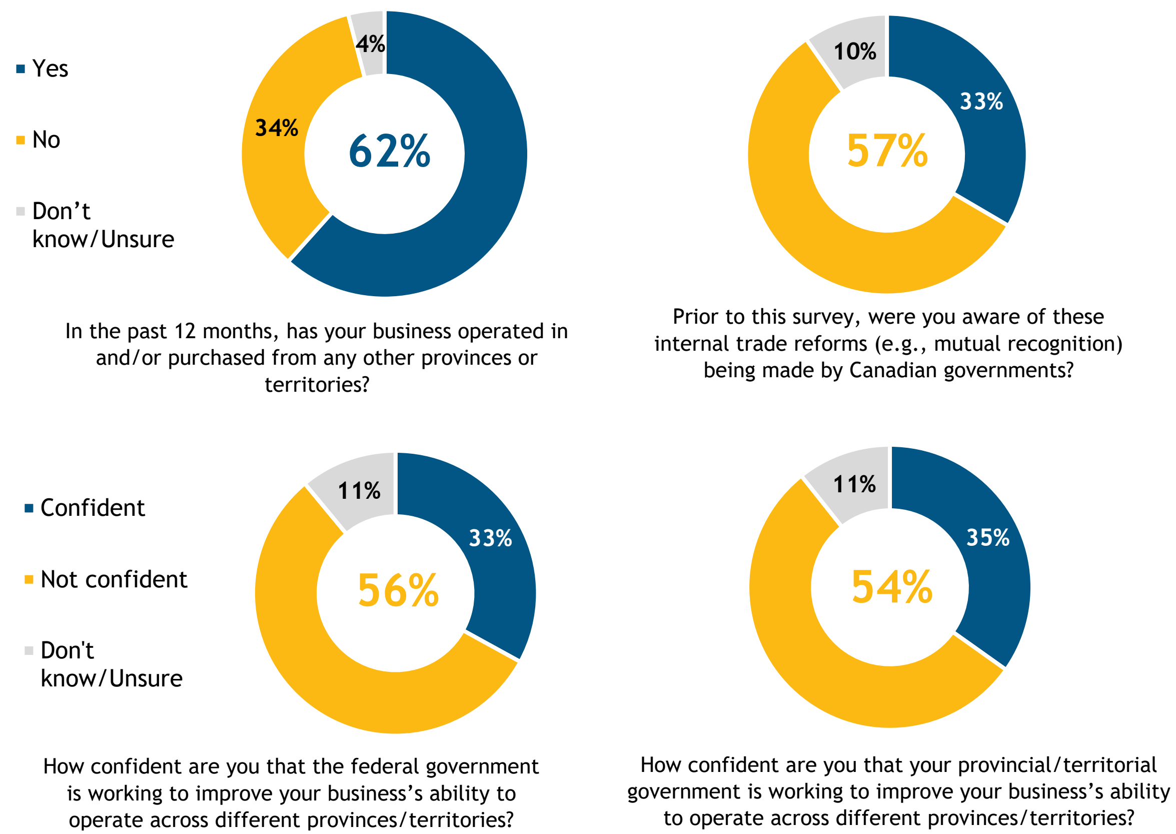
- Complexity of dealing with varying tax regimes, including the need to register separately for the Provincial Sales Tax in multiple provinces.
- Transportation and logistical barriers such as restricted carrier options, freight costs, and shipping constraints.
- Restrictions on selling food and alcohol products across borders.

Labour challenges

- Lack of recognition of licensing, permits, and certifications in a new jurisdiction.
- Cost, wait times, and paperwork involved in acquiring provincial licensing in a new jurisdiction.
- Complying with differing Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards across jurisdictions.
- Registering for workers’ compensation (WC) in multiple jurisdictions.

Figure 3

The majority of Canadian small businesses are operating in/purchasing from other provinces/territories but awareness of internal trade reforms and confidence in federal and provincial/territorial governments remains low



Source: CFIB, Internal Trade Survey, March 19-May 5, 2026, based on 1,084 responses. Final results.

In their own words: What Canadian SMEs say about interprovincial trade barriers

To ground the report card in lived experience, CFIB surveyed and collected comments from small business owners across a range of sectors and regions. Their message is clear: interprovincial trade barriers are costly roadblocks that stifle growth and limit opportunity.

Fragmentation creates real-world consequences

Across sectors, small businesses consistently point to the high cost, time burden, and confusion caused by fragmented regulations. Quebec is repeatedly cited as one of the more difficult provinces to operate in, largely due to language laws, complex licensing, and regulatory hurdles. An Ontario manufacturing company noted, “An RBQ license is required to do construction work in Quebec, even though we are subcontracting through Quebec-licensed constructors.” Another Ontario retail business owner described the practical consequences of this complexity, “We have brick-and-mortar stores in Ontario and Alberta. We bought a competitor who was based out of Quebec, and we had to close it because running a location in Quebec was too complicated. There is proven market demand for us to be there, but we don't have the time or expertise to figure out how.”

Tax compliance is another concern, especially between Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) and Goods and Services Tax (GST)/Provincial Sales Tax (PST) provinces. As one manufacturing firm described, “we operate in two provinces and have to register for, track, charge and pay additional provincial PST; it would be far simpler for us if all provinces used HST, even if the provincial portions are at different rates.” Another professional service business commented, “Varying sales tax levels, rules, registrations, submission dates, and economic nexus: this is one of the most major difficulties in inter-prov trade.”

Manufacturers working with pressure-regulated equipment highlighted the burden of getting a Canadian Registration Number (CRN) for each province—even when previously approved elsewhere. This burden can directly impact delivery timelines. “Just getting a CRN for a new province can delay a project by six months,” one Manitoban business owner noted.

Impact on businesses and consumers

Many entrepreneurs report that barriers impact not only businesses but consumers as well, “one small business that we purchase from in Quebec has decided to stop shipping to Ontario due to a large increase in paperwork and inspections which would require a lot of time for such a small business. They do not have a separate department for that type of thing. The number of customers they shipped to in Ontario was not enough to warrant the extra taxing work put on the owners of a very small business. We and our customers are losing out on great products,” said a retail shop owner.

Another wholesale business explained how barriers coerce consumers to shop on massive e-commerce sites, “If my business cannot buy at competitive prices in reasonable timelines, then I cannot sell to customers a product at a competitive price. Buying Canadian is expensive, and buying from the US has tariffs and duties. Therefore, my customer is 'forced' to buy a lower-quality product from Amazon.”

Credentialling confusion: Licensing blocks labour mobility

Small businesses repeatedly flag occupational licensing as a key barrier—forcing businesses to rehire or lose staff. In last year’s CFIB roundtable, one employer commented on losing a team member overnight due to licensing discrepancies between Ontario and Quebec.

One survey comment described the cost of requiring multiple licenses, “We offer Professional Engineering services and are licensed in a number of jurisdictions. Although the regulatory bodies in various jurisdictions do make it easy to obtain licenses once you are already certified in Ontario (in our case), there are significant costs to carrying multiple duplicate licenses in order to work in various jurisdictions.”

Despite recent commitments to improve labour mobility, small businesses across Canada continue to feel the burden. Two different healthcare businesses from Manitoba and Alberta commented: "The differences in licensing requirements for physiotherapists in different provinces are a total hassle—scopes and training/certification requirements for specialities, in different provinces. I urge governments to get rid of these remaining interprovincial differences in healthcare licensing," and "Our business is healthcare. Costs of temporary registration with another province's regulatory bodies make maintaining effective service while clients are travelling (visiting family, move for school, etc.) prohibitively expensive."

One business described the redundancy of red tape, "We're an insurance brokerage. [To work interprovincially] we need to apply and renew our insurance licenses, pay licensing and legal fees, and satisfy continuing education requirements in each province. The regulators in each province perform the same function and this represents massive redundancy in compliance requirements and fees to operate across Canada. There is NO legitimate reason for provincial licensing." This type of jurisdictional red tape was cited as especially frustrating and emblematic of a system that penalizes mobility rather than rewarding competence.

Companies must also juggle separate WCB systems with different rules and timelines. "To work in NL, we had to sign up with WorksafeNL and now have to keep track of the employees' earnings while there, even though they are paid and employed in Alberta and covered under WCB here. Also, we do not pay employee source deductions in NL, so what gives? It was easier for us to provide services this last year, in Georgia, Michigan, and Utah than in another province in Canada," one Alberta business said. Though manageable, the lack of standardization adds costs and complexity.

Logistics and freight: Small inefficiencies with big impacts

Freight and logistics emerged as another barrier. "One of our biggest internal trade barriers is shipping materials from Eastern Canada to British Columbia. At distances of over 2,500 km, freight costs often exceed the value of the products themselves, making Canadian sourcing economically unviable in many cases. Winter conditions further compound the issue. Shipments are frequently exposed to freezing temperatures in transit, which results in product loss, delays, and added replacement costs." As a result, this business must either source from more expensive local or international suppliers or accept higher risk when ordering domestically. The cost and unreliability of shipping across Canada act as a deterrent to small businesses seeking to trade interprovincially.

Food and alcohol exceptions are noticed by small businesses

Small businesses also point to how food and alcohol exceptions hinder interprovincial trade. As one participant put it, "CFIA regulations for producing and shipping food products from one province to another are extensive and costly. If this could fall under the provincial regulations for the province the food is being produced in, that would remove more of the red tape." Another owner commented it was easier to sell alcohol from other countries than it was to sell alcohol from other provinces.

A path forward: Eliminate barriers and build national trust

Participants urged governments to eliminate barriers and trust firms to meet national standards without needing redundant approval. As one business owner stated, "These barriers increase costs for producers and consumers alike, limit economic growth, and restrict consumer choice without providing any meaningful public safety benefit."

Others emphasized the need for clear communication, with one business owner citing confusion regarding the status of imminent policy changes, adding that "it's hard to make long-term decisions with short-term information."

Without meaningful reform, SMEs will continue to shy away from interprovincial expansion, limiting Canada's productivity, competitiveness, and innovation.

Indicator on mutual recognition

In CFIB's first edition of this report card (2022), we made a clear commitment:

> *"Any province/territory that accepts our bold recommendation to mutually recognize all provincial and territorial standards and regulations will automatically receive an 'A' grade in future iterations of this report card."*

This year, we continue to uphold that promise by **incentivizing and recognizing jurisdictions that make meaningful progress in implementing mutual recognition** through the indicator introduced last year.

Unilateral mutual recognition (MR) was previously recommended by CFIB and remains the most ideal way to approach internal trade due to its proactive and all-encompassing nature. This means goods, services, and labour being able to move freely between jurisdictions, without having to undergo additional requirements such as inspections, paperwork, or waiting periods. With mutual recognition, barriers are resolved and are a non-issue even before businesses encounter them, lowering compliance costs and uncertainty. By contrast, reactive systems require businesses or stakeholders to identify burdens themselves and assume they will engage in internal trade despite the existing barriers.

How the indicator works

Jurisdictions are awarded a score out of 10 based on the status and strength of their MR agreements. Only fully implemented agreements that cover all three areas of internal trade (goods, services, and labour) earn a perfect score. Partial or early-stage legislation and agreements earn lower scores (see scoring notes below and full details in Appendix E). This approach ensures that top grades reflect real progress, while recognizing steps in the right direction. Some jurisdictions address these components through multiple pieces of legislation, some of which are not themselves MR legislation. All such legislation was considered in totality for the purposes of this indicator.

Table 2

Existence of a Mutual Recognition Agreement, Score and Grade (10 is best, 0 is worst)

Jurisdiction	Current Status of a Mutual Recognition Agreement	Score (Multiplier)
FED	Implemented	10
NS	Implemented	9
SK	Implemented	9
QC	Implemented	9
MB	Implemented	9
NB	Implemented	9
NT	Implemented	8
YT	Implemented	8
PEI	Implemented	8
BC	Legislated	5
AB	Legislated	5
ON	Legislated	5
NL	Announced	1
NU	Announced	1

Notes:
This table reflects the current status of mutual recognition agreements by jurisdiction, based on available evidence. It does not assess the scope of implementation or real-world impact to date. Full details in Appendix E.

1. Score: (10) for a fully implemented mutual recognition agreement covering all three areas of internal trade (goods, services, and labour) in force with at least one other jurisdiction, (5) for a legislated mutual recognition agreement, (3) for a mutual recognition agreement that has been introduced but not passed and (1) for an announced mutual recognition agreement.
2. The score of (10) is contingent on all irritants being addressed. Points are subtracted if the agreement is limited in scope: (1) point for each of the main areas (labour, goods, and services) that is not included, (1) point if it requires reciprocation. Please see appendix E for more details.

Due to the encompassing nature of many MR agreements, some of which address barriers assessed in other areas of the report card, this indicator's grade is designed to override the grades for other affected indicators through its multiplier. See Appendix F for more details.

Results

The federal government receives the highest score of 10 for its *One Canadian Economy Act*, covering goods, services, and labour, and is national in scope. Several jurisdictions (the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Prince Edward Island) receive points for the implementation of the CMRA. Jurisdictions with their own implemented MR legislation that is more comprehensive than the CMRA receive points from that framework instead. This includes Nova Scotia, the first province to introduce and implement MR legislation. Its law, while not unilateral, goes beyond the CMRA by including services and some components of labour, resulting in a score of 9. Saskatchewan and New Brunswick receive a score of 9 for implementing its unilateral legislation covering goods and services, while Quebec receives a score of 9 for implementing its unilateral legislation covering goods and labour. Manitoba receives a score of 9 for designating all jurisdictions as reciprocal, covering goods and services.

British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario each earn 5 points for legislated MR bills that have not been implemented. Newfoundland and Labrador and Nunavut each receive a score of 1 for announcing their intention to implement mutual recognition through the CMRA.

"We are in the water treatment business. We have the only certified water treatment installer as designated by the CWQA in Manitoba. We are permitted to install water treatment equipment in the province. However, in Ontario, technically, one needs to be a licensed plumber to install water treatment equipment. What's funny is most plumbers don't know much about water treatment. So, we are limited in our ability to market into the large cottage market in and around Kenora, Ontario."

- Construction Business Owner, Manitoba

Going forward

Since 2025, Canada has observed unprecedented progress in advancing internal trade through mutual recognition. However, the potential for a patchwork of agreements and legislation that limit true mutual recognition remains a concern. While the objective of mutual recognition is to cut through red tape, wide variations in scope, exceptions, and application across jurisdictions dilute its effectiveness. The CMRA helps address some of these challenges by creating a more consistent national framework. However, jurisdictional-specific progress remains just as important. True mutual recognition is best achieved through broader, more comprehensive commitments that apply unilaterally with minimized carve-outs.

Moving forward, CFIB encourages all jurisdictions to expand the CMRA to include not only the sale of goods, but also the use of goods, as well as services and labour. Jurisdictions should also streamline their processes and implement MR legislation that is more comprehensive than the CMRA.

Currently, the mutual recognition indicator (and more broadly, a jurisdiction's score) assumes that a comprehensive MR agreement covering goods, services, and labour addresses all barriers to internal trade, including areas assessed elsewhere in the report card. This is not necessarily true. Looking ahead, CFIB will evolve the indicators and methodology used in this report card to better assess not just the existence, but the quality and impact of mutual recognition efforts once implemented. This focus may include exceptions taken by individual jurisdictions, as well as areas that could fall outside the scope of these agreements entirely, such as food and the use (not just the sale) of goods and services. The goal is to ensure governments are moving toward real, meaningful implementation that reduces red tape on the ground and boosts interprovincial trade for all.

Indicator I: CFTA exceptions

The Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) permits governments to exclude certain sectors, items, or workers from its provisions through exceptions. This section of the report measures the economic impact score associated with the exceptions each jurisdiction lists in the CFTA. Not all exceptions have an equal impact, as some cover narrow areas of the economy, while others are broader in scope. For instance, three exceptions that cover narrow areas of the economy that could limit the trade of rice, barley, and oats may have less of an impact than a single, broader exception, which could impact the entire agricultural sector. In this instance, the single exception is assumed to represent a larger economic impact.

The economic impact score is calculated based on the type of exception (i.e., current, future, procurement) and how broadly it impacts the overall economy (i.e., affected industry classifications listed in the CFTA). In this regard, higher scores are assumed to indicate broader and more significant economic impacts, while lower scores reflect more narrowly focused effects (see Appendix A for detailed methodology). It is important to acknowledge that the methodology used in this report has its limitations in that it does not measure the difference between the varying types of exceptions or their full economic impact. However, this systematic approach allows for a consistent evaluation and comparison of the economic implications of various exceptions.

Last year, Ontario and the federal government removed all their CFTA exceptions, earning each a perfect economic impact score of 0. This move demonstrates what is possible when there is strong political will to break down internal trade barriers. This leadership shows that eliminating exceptions is not only feasible, but also a powerful and concrete step toward fulfilling the promise of free trade within Canada.

This year, British Columbia, New Brunswick, and the Yukon improved significantly due to the removal of several exceptions. By contrast, Quebec added exceptions, moving in the opposite direction.

Table 3

Ontario and the federal government rank the best with no exceptions, while Quebec's exceptions still have the highest economic impact

Economic Impact of CFTA Exceptions 2026, Score and Grade (10 is best, 0 is worst)

Jurisdiction	Total Number of Exceptions (Not Graded)	Economic Impact Score (Graded - Lower is Better)	Score and Grade	
FED	None	0	10.0	A+
ON	None	0	10.0	A+
AB	8	17	8.0	B
BC	12	20	7.6	B-
MB	8	22	7.3	C+
SK	10	26	6.9	C
NB	18	34	5.9	D
NT	20	42	4.9	D
NU	22	45	4.6	D
NL	19	48	4.3	D
PEI	22	56	3.3	F
YT	25	61	2.7	F
NS	19	62	2.5	F
QC	29	83	0.0	F

Notes:
1. Provinces and territories are scored based on their exceptions for existing measures, future measures, and procurement.
2. Economic impact scores are rounded to the nearest whole number.

CFTA exceptions weaken the foundation of Canada's interjurisdictional trade agreements by carving out areas where the rules of free trade simply do not apply. For small businesses, this creates a patchwork of inconsistent regulations, paperwork, and delays, making it unnecessarily difficult and expensive to move goods, provide services, or hire across provincial and territorial lines. The burden of these barriers does not just fall on entrepreneurs; it is passed on to consumers in the form of higher costs and fewer choices.

Furthermore, as Canada seeks to attract global investment and expand its economic partnerships, it must send a clear signal that it is truly open for business. A domestic market riddled with internal trade barriers is a red flag for investors. If companies cannot scale across provinces without navigating a maze of regulatory hurdles, they may choose to invest elsewhere, or confine their operations to a single jurisdiction, stifling both growth and competition. A truly integrated Canadian market is not just good for business; it is essential for our global competitiveness.

As Canada's Premiers continue to publicly commit to breaking down internal trade barriers, they must follow through with action. In consultations with governments across the country, familiar rationales for preserving exceptions sometimes persist: obligations under international agreements, unacceptable regulatory frameworks, or fears that other provinces will not reciprocate.

"Every province has its own standards for electrical rebates, like working in 10 different countries. You have to get your products listed for each province. Extra cost and time with no guarantee of better sales or profits."

- Wholesale Business Owner, Ontario

Looking forward: Eliminate the impact of CFTA exceptions

While some concerns for exceptions are legitimate and warrant thoughtful considerations, Ontario and the federal government have proven that these barriers lean more political in nature. By fully eliminating their CFTA exceptions, both jurisdictions have shown that meaningful progress is not only possible, but within reach for every province and territory with the political will to act. Exceptions can also be addressed through MR legislation, as Nova Scotia has done. Under its MR model, the province's CFTA exceptions do not apply to jurisdictions deemed reciprocal under that framework. For that reason, Nova Scotia's grade in this section should be interpreted as reflecting the impact of its exceptions on jurisdictions not covered by the reciprocation designation.

To fully realize the CFTA's potential, governments must commit to systematically reducing, narrowing, or ideally eliminating the impact of their exceptions. Broad, sweeping exceptions should be designed to target only the precise sectors or activities they are meant to cover, rather than acting as a blanket barrier to trade. Doing so will help ensure that trade is not inadvertently hindered in unrelated areas of the economy.

Just as importantly, this action must also be followed by eliminating the underlying policies and regulations stemming from these exceptions. While we commend Ontario and the federal government for removing their exceptions, we encourage them to review and eliminate any policies that may continue to hinder internal trade.

If Canadian governments are truly committed to building a stronger, more integrated domestic market, the path forward is clear: eliminate or significantly narrow CFTA exceptions (and for other agreements such as the CMRA) and make internal trade as seamless as it was always intended to be.

Indicator II: Select barriers to internal trade

This indicator examines several high-visibility areas identified by small businesses that act as internal trade barriers: trade of alcoholic beverages, ease of doing business, and labour mobility. By focusing on these highly visible and practical barriers, we can better understand the real-world impact of internal trade restrictions and identify where targeted reforms are urgently needed. Provinces/territories that reduced or eliminated the identified barriers receive higher scores (see Table 4).

Table 4

Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Ontario have addressed the most select barriers; however, lower grades in this area of the report card suggest much work remains to be done

Select Barriers to Internal Trade, Score and Grade (10 is best, 0 is worst)

Jur.	Barriers to Trade in Alcoholic Beverages Indicators		Ease of Doing Business Indicators			Labour Mobility Indicators		Select Barriers to Internal Trade, Score and Grade	
	Unlimited Import of Alcohol for Personal Consumption	Direct-to-Consumer Interjurisdictional Shipment of Canadian Wine/Craft Beer and Spirits	Extra-Jurisdictional Business Corporation Registration Fees Waived Across All Prov./Terr.	Mutual Recognition of Registration for Workers’ Compensation	Mutual Recognition of Occupational Health and Safety Rules	Timeline for Professional Certification Approval of Workers Certified in Other Canadian Jurisdictions	Full Labour Mobility of Licensed Practical Nurses		
NS	10	5	10	0	5	10	8	6.9	C
NB	10	10	5	0	0	10	10	6.4	C-
ON	10	3	10	0	0	10	10	6.1	C-
MB	10	10	5	0	0	10	3	5.4	D
SK	10	2	5	0	0	10	10	5.3	D
BC	10	4	5	0	0	0	10	4.1	D
AB	10	1	5	0	0	10	3	4.1	D
PEI	10	0	0	0	0	10	10	4.3	D
NL	8	0	0	0	0	10	10	4.0	D
QC	10	0	5	0	0	10	10	5.0	D
YT	NA	0	0	0	0	5	10	3.0	F
NT	NA	NA	0	0	0	0	10	2.0	F
NU	NA	NA	0	0	0	0	10	2.0	F

Source: 2026 data.

Note: The Northwest Territories and Nunavut are not scored on the Barriers to Trade in Alcoholic Beverages indicators, as alcohol-related policies in these jurisdictions are often shaped at the community level to reflect public safety concerns and local needs. While some provinces also have communities that regulate the sale or importation of alcohol (e.g., dry communities), such practices are not as widespread or foundational to the provincial regulatory framework and, therefore, do not warrant exclusion from scoring. The Yukon is scored on DTC this year, as the territory signed onto the DTC agreement.

Barriers to trade in alcoholic beverages

The inability to transport alcoholic beverages across provincial borders—whether in person or via direct-to-consumer (DTC) shipping—remains a persistent and highly visible barrier in Canada's domestic market. While some progress has been made since the 2025 edition of CFIB's *Interprovincial Cooperation Report Card*, the overall pace of reform remains slow and uneven (see Table 5).

Table 5

Manitoba and New Brunswick are the only jurisdictions in Canada that have eliminated all barriers to direct-to-consumer alcohol shipments and personal importation limits

Barriers to Trade in Alcoholic Beverages, Score (10 is best, 0 is worst)

Jur.	Unlimited Import of Alcohol for Personal Consumption — Yes/No[1]	Score	Direct-to-Consumer Interjurisdictional Shipment of Canadian Wine/Craft Beer and Spirits[4]						Score[4]
			Canadian Wine — Yes/No		Canadian Craft Beer — Yes/No		Canadian Craft Spirits — Yes/No		
MB	Yes	10	Yes	3	Yes	3	Yes	3	10
NB	Yes	10	Yes	3	Yes	3	Yes	3	10
NS	Yes	10	Yes	3	Some	1[5]	Some	1[5]	5
BC	Yes	10	Yes	3	No	0	Some	1[6,7]	4
ON	Yes	10	Some	1[8]	Some	1[8]	Some	1[8]	3
SK	Yes	10	Some	1[6]	No	0	Some	1[6,7]	2
AB	Yes	10	Some	1[9]	No	0	No	0	1
QC	Yes	10	No	0	No	0	No	0	0
PEI	Yes	10	No	0	No	0	No	0	0[10]
NL[2]	Some	8	No	0	No	0	No	0	0
YT[3]	NA	NA	No	0	No	0	No	0	0
NT[3]	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
NU[3]	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Notes:
1. Scoring: Yes=10 points, No=0 points.
2. While NL will not receive a full score for unlimited allowances, it will be credited for its generous allowances.
3. The territories are not scored for this indicator due to concerns expressed related to public health and safety. Regulatory frameworks are in place to promote responsible consumption.
4. Three points are given for each type of alcohol (Canadian wine, craft beer, and spirits) for which direct-to-consumer shipment is allowed from all Canadian jurisdictions. If the shipment of all three types of alcohol is permitted, a score of 10 is given. When alcohol shipment is only allowed from select jurisdictions, a partial score (1 or 2, depending on the number of jurisdictions) is given for each type of alcohol.
5. Nova Scotia receives a partial score, as it has a bilateral direct-to-consumer shipment agreement with Ontario.
6. Saskatchewan receives a partial score, as only wines produced in British Columbia can be shipped directly to residents, although paperwork does have to be completed and approved prior to ordering.
7. As British Columbia and Saskatchewan have a deal where consumers can order craft spirits directly from producers in the other province and have them delivered, both provinces receive partial scores.
8. Ontario receives a partial score, as it has a bilateral direct-to-consumer shipment agreement with Nova Scotia.
9. Alberta receives a partial score, as it has signed a memorandum of understanding with British Columbia where wines can be shipped directly to residents.
10. While Prince Edward Island passed legislation to allow interprovincial direct-to-consumer shipments, it has yet to be enacted.

Key developments in 2025-26

Since the release of CFIB's 2025 *Interprovincial Cooperation Report Card*, only a few jurisdictions have made improvements:

- In the summer of 2025, New Brunswick amended its *Liquor Control Act*, opening its doors to the direct-to-consumer (DTC) shipment of all alcoholic beverages without additional markups and paperwork, and eliminating previously held import limits.[9]
- In early March 2026, Ontario and Nova Scotia signed a Direct-to-Consumer Alcohol Agreement, allowing authorized producers from one province to sell directly to consumers in the reciprocating jurisdiction.[10]

Despite signing the MOU committing to DTC shipment of alcohol by May 2026, all governments (aside from Manitoba and New Brunswick) missed the implementation deadline. Allowing DTC shipment is a critical test of whether governments are prepared to follow through on long-standing promises to reduce interprovincial trade barriers. The failure to meet the agreed-upon deadline for DTC implementation raises broader concerns about the delivery of other internal trade commitments, such as the CMRA.

We urge all governments to publicly clarify their timeline for the full implementation of DTC alcohol shipment and to take concrete steps in coordination with all other signing jurisdictions.

Alcohol importation limits

As of 2026, all provinces, except Newfoundland and Labrador, allow their residents to transport unlimited alcohol across provincial boundaries for personal consumption, without any restrictions. Consequently, these provinces earn a score of 10 (see Table 5). While Newfoundland and Labrador maintains limits, the province is credited with partial scoring for a generous import allowance.

Interjurisdictional shipment of Canadian wine, craft beer, and spirits

Jurisdictions that allow all DTC shipment of Canadian wine, craft beer, and spirits from any Canadian jurisdiction earn a score of 10 (see Table 5).

While Ontario, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia have all passed legislation allowing for direct-to-consumer shipment of alcohol, Manitoba and New Brunswick are currently the only provinces fully open to DTC for all alcohol products (earning a score of 10).

Several other jurisdictions receive partial scores based on more limited arrangements. Nova Scotia and British Columbia currently allow direct-to-consumer shipments of wine from any jurisdiction. BC and Saskatchewan have a deal allowing consumers to order craft spirits and wine directly from producers in the other province and have them delivered.[11] Alberta has an MOU with BC allowing for the shipment of wine.[12] Ontario and Nova Scotia allow for DTC shipment of all alcohol products from one another. However, both jurisdictions require additional registration requirements and markups, adding red tape for businesses intending to participate.[13]

> *"We are interested in hosting a whiskey tasting event featuring an award-winning Saskatchewan distillery. While there is strong alignment with our 5,000-client base and a clear opportunity to support a high-quality domestic product, Ontario's interprovincial distribution requirements mean we must place a special order through the provincial liquor authority, which will take a long time."*
>
> \- Hospitality Business Owner, Ontario

Ease of doing business

Businesses seeking to expand operations across jurisdictional borders within Canada experience several challenges. This portion of the select barriers indicator examines the existence of policies aimed at minimizing barriers to doing business, such as the existence of interjurisdictional business registration fees, mutual recognition of workers’ compensation registration, and occupational health and safety rules.

Table 6

Since the previous edition of this report, there has been little progress to remove barriers pertaining to the ease of doing business

Ease of Doing Business Indicators (10 is best, 0 is worst)

Jur.	Extra-Jurisdictional Business Corporation Registration Fees Waived Across All Prov./Terr. Yes/Some/No[1]	Score	Mutual Recognition of Registration for Workers’ Compensation Yes/Some/No[2]	Score	Mutual Recognition of Occupational Health and Safety Rules Yes/Some/No[3]	Score
BC	Some	5	No	0	No	0
AB	Some	5	No	0	No	0
SK	Some	5	No	0	No	0
MB	Some	5	No	0	No	0
ON	All	10	No	0	No	0
QC	Some	5	No	0	No	0
NB	Some	5	No	0	No	0
NS	All	10	No	0	Some	5
PEI	No	0	No	0	No	0
NL	No	0	No	0	No	0
YT	No	0	No	0	No	0
NT	No	0	No	0	No	0
NU	No	0	No	0	No	0

Notes:

1. The following point system was applied: Yes=10 points, Some=5 points, No=0 points. Nova Scotia and Ontario stopped the practice of charging extra-provincial business corporation registration fees. Some provinces have agreements between them which waive extra-jurisdictional registration requirements: (i) BC, AB, SK, MB (New West Partnership Trade Agreement); (ii) ON and QC; (iii) NS and NB.

2. The following point system was applied: Yes=10 points, Some=1-9 points, No=0 points.

3. The following point system was applied: Yes=10 points, Some=1-9 points, No=0 points.

Extra-jurisdictional business registration fees

Businesses seeking to expand into other Canadian provinces/territories typically must pay business registration fees in each jurisdiction despite already having paid these fees in their home jurisdiction. Only Ontario and Nova Scotia have eliminated this practice, earning a full score of 10 (see Table 6). Some provinces have streamlined their extra-provincial registration processes through agreements, resulting in no additional registration fees, earning them a score of 5. The remaining jurisdictions do not waive fees and, therefore, receive a score of 0.

"Different working regulations, licenses and health and safety programs become an extra expense that does not allow us to compete in the market."

- Construction Business Owner, Alberta

Mutual recognition of workers' compensation registration

Every workers' compensation board across the country has different rules governing when a business must register for coverage. For businesses operating in more than one jurisdiction, navigating these varied requirements creates additional administrative burdens and potentially higher costs (e.g., hiring an external firm to keep track of and handle paperwork, annual premium or assessment fee to keep account alive, etc.).[14]

One practical solution to reducing this barrier for businesses is for provinces and territories to mutually recognize one another's workers' compensation registration systems (with the possibility for exceptions). If a business and its workers are registered and compliant in one jurisdiction, that registration should be sufficient for conducting operations in other jurisdictions without the need to re-register or duplicate efforts. In fact, nearly a quarter (24%) of small businesses say mutual recognition of workers' compensation registration would help their business operate in another jurisdiction.[15]

At present, no jurisdiction in Canada mutually recognizes registration for workers' compensation from other jurisdictions. Consequently, all jurisdictions receive a score of 0 (see Table 6).

"To send techs across the border is not worth it. We require additional WCB as well as vehicle licensing and insurance. We have to run fuel logs and track all mileage. Just not worth the hassle."

- Personal Services Business Owner, Alberta

Mutual recognition of Occupational Health and Safety rules

OHS requirements and standards also vary across provinces and territories, creating challenges for businesses operating in multiple jurisdictions. A business with employees in different regions may find its equipment, training, education, or credentials non-transferable.

Progress across the country to adopt common standards (or harmonize) for items such as first aid kits, head protection, and hearing protection is an important step toward reducing barriers. However, harmonizing one item at a time has proven to be a slow process (as shown in the RCT Workplan). A more efficient approach would be for provinces and territories to mutually recognize each other's OHS rules (with the opportunity for exceptions), thereby simplifying regulatory requirements. This change would allow businesses to run more seamlessly across provincial borders while still protecting workers' health and safety.

CFIB acknowledges that some jurisdictions are beginning to make progress in this direction. However, at present, many of these encouraging efforts are either too limited in scope or too early in development to be reflected in this year's scoring.

This year, Nova Scotia is the only jurisdiction to receive points in this section. The province has indicated that OHS requirements are addressed through its mutual recognition legislation, allowing services and goods to be sold and used without additional approvals or requirements—provided they comply with Nova Scotia's OHS rules. In practice, this means that Nova Scotia-specific conditions continue to apply. For example, Nova Scotia will allow for the sale and use of a construction lift that has been approved in another jurisdiction. However, if the other jurisdiction permits the use of the lift up to four storeys, but Nova Scotia's OHS limits the use to three, Nova Scotia's requirement prevails. As such, Nova Scotia receives a partial mark of 5 (see Table 6).

"We teach safety courses, and each province & territory has their own OH&S regulations. Energy Safety Canada is working on creating a National Safety Standard for every Province & Territory in Canada, that way all safety courses would have to meet a National Safety Standard. What that would do is allow someone from one Province or Territory to work anywhere in Canada, as all safety standards would be the same, therefore saving time and money for all companies and workers. This would also increase productivity."

- Personal Services Business Owner, Saskatchewan

Barriers to labour mobility

Generally, the CFTA allows certified workers in regulated professions to work anywhere in Canada without requiring further training, testing, or assessments. However, governments can post exceptions to the movement of certified workers across jurisdictions when certification requirements or occupational standards differ, provided the exception is justified by a legitimate objective (e.g., public safety and security; consumer protection; protection of the health, safety, and well-being of workers).[16] For instance, in some jurisdictions, dental hygienists give injections for dental freezing, while in others, this task is outside the scope of their role. As such, a dental hygienist who wants to practice in a jurisdiction where dental freezing is required may need additional training.

Restricting skilled professionals with relevant experience from working in different provinces or territories can limit employment opportunities and exacerbate labour shortages. Recertification is a significant challenge for businesses looking to hire workers from outside their home province/territory. As such, it is unsurprising that nine in 10 businesses agree that a professional licence or certification obtained in one jurisdiction should be automatically recognized in all other jurisdictions.[17] Additionally, 68% of Canadians support a mutual recognition system where all provinces recognize one another's standards for goods, services, and professional licenses, with only 17% opposing such a system.[18]

"I am a financial advisor, and Canada is one of the only developed countries to not have a national securities regulator. Instead, there is a separate regulatory body in each province to enforce essentially the same rules across the country. I have clients across the country and have to pay a licensing fee for each province I have clients in. It would be like Toronto being split into 13 municipalities – it's ridiculous."

- Finance Business Owner, BC

Alberta currently has the highest number of labour mobility exceptions, standing at seven, while Manitoba, BC, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories have the fewest, with only one exception each. Given the potential impact of these exceptions, it is crucial for governments to actively work toward reducing or narrowing them whenever possible. Exceptions by jurisdiction and occupation are listed in Appendix C.

The complexity and variability of labour mobility exceptions across jurisdictions and occupations make it challenging to establish a standardized grading system that accurately reflects the overall landscape. Therefore, this report card does not grade jurisdictions on their overall number of exceptions. Instead, we have focused on two labour mobility indicators: the existence of timeframes for personal certification approval and the full labour mobility of licensed practical nurses (see Table 7). This targeted approach allows us to effectively highlight and advocate for improvements in high-visibility areas, which are crucial for facilitating smooth labour mobility across jurisdictions.

Professional certification approval timeline

Certain occupations in Canada are subject to provincial or territorial legislation that mandates workers to hold certification or licensing specific to the jurisdiction in which they practice. These requirements can create barriers for workers seeking to practice in different jurisdictions, resulting in lengthy administrative registration requirements, additional testing, and processing fees. Consequently, interprovincial certification recognition is a significant challenge for 44% of businesses operating in other Canadian jurisdictions, primarily due to the associated costs, wait times, and paperwork.[19]

This indicator examines the existence of timelines for registration decisions in different provinces and territories. In 2025, Canada's First Ministers directed the Committee on Internal Trade to work with the Forum of Labour Market Ministers to develop a service standard of 30 days or better and provide a plan for Canada-wide credential recognition. However, not all jurisdictions have implemented this.

Table 7

New Brunswick recently established timelines for regulatory bodies to respond to registration applications, and 10 jurisdictions allow for full labour mobility of licensed practical nurses

Barriers to Labour Mobility Indicators (10 is best, 0 is worst)

Jur.	Timeline for Professional Certification Approval of Workers Certified in Other Canadian Jurisdictions Yes/Some/No[1]	Score	Full Labour Mobility of Licensed Practical Nurses Yes/Some/No[2]	Score
BC	No	0	Yes	10
AB	Yes	10	Some	3
SK	Yes	10	Yes	10
MB	Yes	10	Some	3
ON	Yes	10	Yes	10
QC	Yes	10	Yes	10
NB	Yes	10	Yes	10
NS	Yes	10	Some	8
PEI	Yes	10	Yes	10
NL	Yes	10	Yes	10
YT	Some	5	Yes	10
NT	No	0	Yes	10
NU	No	0	Yes	10

Notes:

1. The following point system was applied: Yes=10 points, Some=1-9 points, No=0 points. AB — within 20 business days; SK — 20 business days after receiving all necessary information; MB — within 30 days of receiving an application from the domestic labour mobility applicant; ON — within 30 calendar days for all regulated professions, 10 business days to issue a notice of receipt of a complete "As of Right" application for non-health occupations, 2 business days for Canadian-registered physicians and nurses; QC — 30 days; NB — implemented regulatory changes to allow regulated professionals to begin working as soon as a notice of receipt is received by the labour mobility applicant; NS — 10 days; PEI — 10 days; NL — 20 days via regulations; YT — the department responsible for professional licensing has a service standard in place to process applications within 10 business days, even though there are no specific laws or rules regarding the processing time.

2. The following point system was applied: Yes=10 points, Some=1-9 points, No=0 points.
The higher the score, the fewer the number of jurisdictions whose workers are affected. For a listing of affected jurisdictions, see Appendix C.

A striking 89% of business owners are in favour of the automatic recognition of professional licences or certifications obtained in one jurisdiction across all jurisdictions. [21]

Still, many jurisdictions have (or have had) legislation and/or regulations that provide clarity and transparency regarding registration decisions, ensuring timely responses. Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia receive the highest scores, as they have timelines for registration decisions—10 business days in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick, 20 business days in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador, and 30 business days in Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec (see Table 7).

The Yukon receives a partial score for taking the commendable step of setting a service standard within its department for processing applications, ensuring a timeframe of 10 business days. However, because this standard is not required through legislation or regulation, it is awarded partial marks. Newfoundland and Labrador also offers timelines through regulation for some professions, resulting in partial marks.

Labour mobility exceptions in healthcare

The shortage of health care professionals remains a critical issue across Canada—one frequently flagged by small business owners, both as patients and as employers of affected workers. In the fourth quarter of 2025, health occupations continued to record the largest year-over-year decline in job vacancies. Specifically, registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses (-5,500; -23.6%), nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates (-2,700; -15.1%), and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) (-2,600; -24.3%) all saw declines, with concentration in Ontario, Quebec, and Manitoba.[20] Despite this ongoing challenge, select jurisdictions continue to impose restrictions on the mobility of nurses.

Improving labour mobility in the healthcare sector can help address these shortages and improve access to care. This indicator focuses on LPNs, who face significant barriers to labour mobility. It assesses the extent to which LPNs can move and work freely between provinces and territories. Jurisdictions with fewer restrictions receive higher scores.

Currently, 10 jurisdictions allow full labour mobility of licensed practical nurses and earn 10 points: BC, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, PEI, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut (see Table 7). The remaining jurisdictions receive partial scores.

"We work in healthcare and remain frustrated with the differences in licensing requirements for physiotherapists in different provinces. This past year, the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators simplified the licensing process so that it is the same across all provinces (there was a patchwork of different requirements 2020-2025). However, there remain differences in physiotherapists' scopes and training/certification requirements for specialities, in different provinces. This is a total hassle for getting physiotherapists to move provinces."

- Social Services Business Owner, Manitoba

"Our business is health care. Costs of temporary registration with another province's regulatory body make maintaining effective service while clients are travelling (visiting family, move for school, etc.) prohibitively expensive."

- Social Services Business Owner, Alberta

Innovative initiatives in multi-jurisdictional licensing

One approach to address the barriers is to allow workers to practice with task-specific restrictions (i.e., restricted licences). For example, a dental hygienist could work in any province but be restricted from administering local anesthesia until appropriately certified.

Additionally, several provinces have taken innovative steps toward the automatic or interim recognition of licences and certifications. In 2023, the Atlantic provinces launched the Atlantic Physician Registry, allowing physicians to opt into the registry and gain the flexibility to work in any of the four provinces for a single annual fee, without additional licensing requirements.[22] That same year, Ontario passed legislation allowing extra-provincial health care workers to practice there immediately, while waiting for registration approval with one of Ontario's health regulatory colleges.[23] This approach was later adapted for other regulated occupations. In addition, in 2026, Ontario introduced automatic recognition for Canadian-registered physicians and nurses within a two-day service standard. Following these developments, New Brunswick made amendments in 2025 to allow interprovincial applicants to submit their home jurisdiction's registration document to the New Brunswick regulatory body. The regulatory body must issue a notice of receipt within seven days, at which point applicants are deemed registered and may practice while submitting a complete application within 30 days.[24]

In recognition of their leadership, CFIB awarded the Atlantic provinces and the Ontario government CFIB's Golden Scissors Award in 2023.

However, labour mobility should not be confused with mutual recognition of labour. Current mobility legislation and frameworks often rely on shortening approval timelines and permitting interim approvals, still requiring additional paperwork and associated costs. Mutual recognition goes further by automatically accepting a licence or certification issued in another jurisdiction, eliminating duplicative processes altogether.

While "As-of-Right" and interim models are meaningful progress, they should not be viewed as the end goal. Achieving true labour mobility will require faster, more comprehensive mutual recognition frameworks that reduce or eliminate duplicative administrative and cost burdens.

An international case study demonstrates that mutual recognition of occupational credentials is safe and possible. A 2015 Australia-New Zealand review examining its Mutual Recognition Agreement and the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement found strong regulator and participant support, with 87% of occupational regulators rating the system as effective or somewhat effective. Evidence showed that mutual recognition improved workforce flexibility, reduced costs, and expanded consumer choice, with no compelling evidence that it led to lower standards or public harm.[25]

Higher levels of mutual recognition registrations in certain regions were found to reflect labour market realities. In some cases, where jurisdictions lacked local training capacity for specific occupations, they relied on qualified practitioners from other jurisdictions to fill critical gaps. Concerns about "shopping and hopping" were limited in scale and, in many cases, reflected healthy regulatory competition rather than systemic risk. Furthermore, the Commission was presented with no compelling evidence of standards being set at a level low enough to cause harm or to lead to unacceptable risks.

This experience reinforces the case for Canada to pursue broader, more confident mutual recognition of occupational credentials rather than allowing concerns about risks to stall meaningful progress on labour mobility.

Indicator III: Status of reconciliation agreements

This section centres on the work of the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT), a federal-provincial-territorial body that provides a forum for governments to resolve internal trade barriers created by existing rules and processes. These regulations exist outside the CFTA provisions and continue to impose significant burdens on businesses operating interprovincially.

Through the RCT, jurisdictions are working to reconcile differences in areas such as truck driver certifications, construction codes, and corporate registration and reporting requirements. These kinds of regulatory inconsistencies cost businesses and consumers time and money.

This section presents the progress made by each jurisdiction to implement its respective RCT items from endorsed agreements only. A score of 10 is given for each item that is implemented, a score of 7.5 is given if an item is partially implemented, while a score of 5 is given if implementation is underway.[26] The federal government, Manitoba, Quebec, and British Columbia score the highest, as they have implemented the most items from ratified agreements they are participating in (see Table 8, and Appendix D for a jurisdictional breakdown by items from ratified agreements). While the results may seem strong, they represent only a subset of the broader RCT agenda.

Overall progress on resolving such inconsistencies through the RCT has been slow. Since 2018, negotiations for only 19 of 38 reconciliation items on the RCT Work Plan have been completed, with just 10 items (approximately 26%) fully implemented by all jurisdictions. More concerning, 19 items are still being negotiated, have been deferred, or have been removed, including key files such as Workers' Compensation Board legislation and food and meat inspection rules.

This pace is not commensurate with the economic costs these barriers continue to impose.

Table 8

The federal government scores the highest, as it has implemented 14 of the 15 items from the ratified agreements it is participating in

Status of Items from Reconciliation Agreements, Score and Grade (10 is best, 0 is worst)[1,2,3]

Jur.	Number of Items from Ratified Agreements	Total Items Implemented	Total Items Underway	Score	Grade
FED	15	14	1	9.7	A
MB	14	13	1	9.6	A
QC	14	13	1	9.6	A
BC	13	12	1	9.6	A
AB	11	10	1	9.5	A
SK	12	10	2	9.2	A
NS	14	11	3	9.1	A
NB	13	10	3	8.8	A-
PEI	12	9	3	8.8	A-
YT	12	9	3	8.8	A-
NT	12	9	3	8.8	A-
NU	11	8	3	8.6	B+
NL	13	9	4	8.5	B+
ON	14	9	5	8.4	B+

Notes:

1. The implementation status of completed agreements is defined as: Implemented (IM) — government has met the requirements of the agreement; Underway (UW) — government is either in the process of signing the agreement or has signed the agreement, but the requirements of the agreement have yet to be met.

2. The following **point** system was applied: Implemented=10 points; Underway=5/7.5 points (higher points for partial implementation).

3. Item 25 of the RCT will be included in the 2027 edition of the Internal Trade Report Card.

As a result, only 3 jurisdictions—British Columbia, Quebec, and New Brunswick—made progress in their implementation of RCT items compared to last year, highlighting the limited movement.

Taken together, this suggests that momentum at the RCT has largely stalled. While CFIB recognizes that the governments have prioritized broader mutual recognition initiatives since last year, such as the CMRA, this shift in focus should not come at the expense of completing the work assigned to the RCT. Notably, the CMRA explicitly establishes that RCT items take precedence over the agreement and are expected to be harmonized, making their completion even more urgent. However, the proposed timelines for some items do not reflect this urgency. For example, the negotiation deadline for the harmonization of High-Visibility Safety Apparel requirements is December 31, 2026. Without streamlined and clearer timelines, there is a risk that RCT files will be sidelined indefinitely.

"We are an SQF certified facility but products with meat from our facility cannot cross provincial borders without federal inspections. Federal inspection is very costly. So, this results in the ridiculous situation that we can ship to Prince George but not Calgary which is closer to our facility."

- Wholesale Business Owner, BC

"We sell products that need to be inspected and approved (electrical and plumbing). Our cost doubles as we build in one province and sell in another because we have to repeat the process."

- Wholesale Business Owner, Alberta

"Being a federally regulated company, there probably aren't any 'direct' implications for us. But eliminating potential barriers to our many different work forces and being able to move freely between provinces would benefit everyone. I.e., licensed trades, driver's licences, healthcare insurance, workers' compensation, etc. When it comes to 'goods,' food inspection codes, packaging requirements, highway tractor/trailer codes, etc. In other words, any regulations presently controlled by the individual provinces/territories as opposed to the federal government need to be aligned."

- Wholesale Business Owner, Alberta

"CNESST - Safety Code for Construction Work prevents my clients from carrying out work that is permitted in all other regions of the world where we operate (15 countries). The standards governing construction prevent clients from Ontario and Quebec from working in the neighbouring province."

- Manufacturing Business Owner, Quebec

The federal government's role in advancing internal trade

Across all iterations of CFIB's Internal Trade Report Card, the federal government has been graded solely on its CFTA procurement exceptions and its work at the RCT, as the "Select Barriers to Internal Trade" indicator applies only to provinces and territories. However, the past year has made clear that the federal government has a more critical role in leading the country and fostering intergovernmental cooperation.

As of 2025, the federal government began taking a more active role in breaking down barriers. Ottawa removed all its party-specific exceptions under the CFTA, and implemented mutual recognition for goods, services, and labour under the *One Canadian Economy Act*. The government has co-chaired several working groups with provincial partners, including the Memorandum of Understanding on Interprovincial Trucking with Newfoundland and Labrador, and the labour mobility working group with Alberta and Saskatchewan. In recognition of this progress, CFIB awards the federal government a grade of A+ (10.0). However, while recent years' achievements merit acknowledgement, it is equally important to remember that the work is far from complete.

One long-standing CFIB priority is enabling the free movement of food products across Canada. At present, food products can only be sold across provincial and territorial borders if they are inspected and approved by federal authorities, even if they have already been inspected and approved for sale by provincial authorities. As a result, a restaurant in Gatineau cannot deliver food directly to a customer in Ottawa, despite being only 15 minutes away (and the same customer can place an order through a delivery platform). For small and medium-sized processors, accessing federally licensed facilities or achieving federal certification independently is often prohibitively expensive and complex. According to CFIB data, 87% of small businesses across the country support allowing provincially or territorially inspected food products to be sold nationwide.[27]

Despite this strong support, CFIB's consultations across the country revealed ongoing concerns among some government stakeholders regarding the potential health and safety implications of mutual recognition. These concerns include challenges related to traceability, which can complicate recalls, as well as the risk that products approved only for domestic sale could be exported internationally. Stakeholders also pointed out international trade agreements, which may limit Canada's ability to prioritize domestic products over imports.

While health and safety concerns warrant careful attention, they should not serve as a justification for inaction. If traceability is the core challenge, the federal government must work collaboratively with provincial and territorial authorities to develop filtering and tracking solutions that uphold standards across jurisdictions. With these solutions in place, it should not be difficult for authorities to distinguish between products destined for domestic distribution and those intended for international export. It is also important to recognize that many small businesses are seeking to trade primarily with their neighbouring jurisdictions, not global markets. Moreover, if existing international agreements constrain trade between Canada's own provinces and territories, that is a policy problem that deserves serious examination in its own right.

Change is possible. The Lloydminster program, which allows food businesses to operate across the provincial border within city limits, has operated successfully for years without safety issues preventing its continuation and has since become a permanent program.

Over the past year, the federal government has demonstrated what is possible when it uses its leadership to bring governments across the country together to collaborate and deliver results. That leadership now needs to be applied to the next frontier of internal trade reform. This will require provinces and territories to play their part as well; meaningful progress can only be achieved through continued cooperation. The barriers have been identified, the support from both small businesses and consumers is loud and clear, and there is no better time than now to support Canadian.

The future of CFIB's *State of Internal Trade Report Card*

As Canada's internal trade landscape evolves, so too must the way progress is measured. Over the past five years, CFIB's *State of Internal Trade Report Card* has played a critical role in tracking government action and holding jurisdictions accountable for reducing barriers. However, as reforms advance and new challenges emerge, it is increasingly clear that our indicators must evolve to reflect the reality of internal trade today.

To ensure the report card remains relevant, rigorous, and results-driven, CFIB will undertake a comprehensive update to its methodology ahead of the 2027 edition. This next iteration will introduce a refined set of indicators designed to better capture how internal trade functions in practice—not just through policy commitments, but through real-world outcomes.

A central feature of the updated framework will be a stronger emphasis on the lived experiences of small businesses. The new methodology will assess whether it is meaningfully easier for businesses to move goods, services, and labour across provincial and territorial boundaries. In doing so, it will shift the focus from commitments on paper to measurable improvements on the ground. The updated methodology is expected to include the following key indicators:

- **Quality of mutual recognition legislation:** Evaluating whether legislation is unilateral or reciprocal, the extent of coverage (sale and use of goods and services, labour mobility). The inclusion of food, alcohol, WCB, and OHS will also be evaluated.
- **Business mobility and labour mobility:** Tracking the number of regulated professions with seamless mobility, and evaluating credential recognition timelines.
- **Leadership:** Assessing governments' demonstrated commitment to internal trade reform, including prioritization, public statements, and concrete actions to advance meaningful change.
- **Transparency and public reporting:** Evaluating whether governments provide regular, public updates on internal trade progress.
- **Implementation of past commitments:** Tracking follow-through on key initiatives, including RCT items, direct-to-consumer alcohol shipment, CMRA implementation, and sector-specific agreements such as trucking.
- **Small business perceptions:** Incorporating feedback from CFIB members on whether it is becoming easier to operate across provincial and territorial borders.
- **Openness to Canadian alcohol markets:** Assessing barriers such as registration requirements and the availability of Canadian products across jurisdictions.
- **Taxes, levies, and fees:** Examining whether charges imposed on out-of-province businesses act as de facto trade barriers.
- **Procurement practices:** Evaluating whether procurement policies are open and non-discriminatory, ensuring Canadian businesses are not excluded in favour of local preferences.

By modernizing its methodology, the 2027 Report Card will provide a clearer, more accurate picture of progress and help ensure accountability where it matters most. Ultimately, this evolution will strengthen CFIB's ability to assess whether Canada is moving toward a truly open domestic market—one where businesses can grow and compete without unnecessary barriers.

Recommendations

Despite significant progress on internal trade over the last year, continued momentum is essential to eliminate the remaining barriers to the free movement of goods, services, and labour across Canada. CFIB recommends that federal, provincial, and territorial governments prioritize the following actions:

1. **Implement comprehensive mutual recognition.**
   Governments across Canada should adopt unilateral mutual recognition covering all federal, provincial, and territorial regulatory requirements affecting the sale and use of goods, services, and labour. Any good, service, or worker legally approved in one jurisdiction should be permitted in all others without additional requirements. This can be achieved through an expanded Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement (CMRA) or through individual jurisdictional mutual recognition legislation. Food, alcohol, OHS, and WCB requirements should be included in the agreement or legislation.

   CFIB also recommends publishing a consolidated, publicly accessible list of trade exceptions in plain language so businesses and consumers can easily identify remaining barriers.

2. **Facilitate the movement of food.**
   Currently, provincially or territorially licensed and inspected food products can generally only be sold within their home jurisdiction, while federally inspected products may move freely across Canada. For many small and medium-sized processors, obtaining federal certification is prohibitively expensive and complex, discouraging or fully preventing expansion.

   CFIB recommends governments work together to enable the free movement of food products across Canada through measures such as:

   a) Including food under the CMRA;
   b) Allowing provinces and territories to mutually recognize each other's food inspection systems;
   c) Expanding the Lloydminster program to additional jurisdictions;
   d) Reducing financial and administrative barriers for businesses seeking federal certification, including consideration of a streamlined small business certification model;
   e) Recognizing jurisdictions with standards substantially equivalent to CFIA requirements; and
   f) Collaboratively developing traceability solutions, such as standardized product identifiers.

3. **Facilitate the movement of alcohol.**
   Governments should fully implement the direct-to-consumer (DTC) alcohol agreement and include alcohol under the CMRA. The responsible working group should publicly communicate clear timelines and implementation plans to maintain transparency and stakeholder confidence.

   Governments should also simplify licensing and distribution requirements for producers selling into other jurisdictions and ensure liquor board listing requirements are publicly available.

4. **Prioritize Canadian businesses in government procurement.**
   Procurement remains a top concern for Canadian businesses, with 76% of SMEs supporting policies that prioritize Canadian suppliers. While governments have made progress removing procurement-related exceptions under the CFTA, it is equally important to ensure Canadian businesses can effectively compete for public contracts.

   CFIB encourages governments to collaboratively establish a consistent definition of "Canadian business" across jurisdictions to reduce confusion and improve procurement accessibility.

5. **Simplify sales tax administration between jurisdictions.**
   Sales tax complexity across jurisdictions creates unnecessary administrative burdens for businesses expanding beyond their home province or territory. CFIB recommends regional governments work toward simplifying jurisdictional sales

tax collection, remittance, and reporting requirements to support interprovincial growth.

6. **Streamline credential recognition for regulated professions**.
Delays in credential recognition continue to restrict labour mobility and business growth. More than two-thirds (68%) of SMEs support faster approval timelines for regulated professionals.

   CFIB recommends provincial and territorial governments work with professional colleges and associations to establish clear service standards and timelines for credential recognition, including refunding registration fees when timelines are not met.

   Governments should also pursue full mutual recognition of professional credentials through the CMRA, so workers licensed in one jurisdiction are not required to complete duplicative paperwork or pay additional fees to work in another.

   CFIB further urges the federal government to follow through on commitments made in the 2024 Fall Economic Statement, including publishing a national credential recognition performance framework and removing the tax-exempt status of regulatory bodies that fail to improve processing timelines.

7. **Mutually recognize OHS compliance across jurisdictions**.
While OHS systems across Canada share the same objective of protecting workers, differing rules and administrative requirements create unnecessary duplication for businesses operating in multiple jurisdictions.

   CFIB recommends provinces and territories mutually recognize each other's OHS requirements, with exceptions permitted only where justified by legitimate health and safety concerns

8. **Mutually recognize WCB registration across jurisdictions.**
Each province and territory maintains separate WCB registration systems, coverage requirements, and administrative processes. These differences create significant complexity for businesses operating across borders.

   CFIB recommends governments allow businesses and workers to remain covered under their home jurisdiction's WCB system for a defined period before requiring registration in another jurisdiction, similar to provincial health coverage rules. This would reduce administrative burdens for short-term and temporary work.

9. **Improve accessibility and affordability of trade dispute resolution.**
The current CFTA dispute resolution panel system is unaffordable for most small firms, with claims costing several hundreds of thousands of dollars.[28] While the panel provides "Tariff Costs," where parties can be reimbursed for costs incurred during the proceeding, there is a fixed cap that only partially covers legal fees.[29] These costs are unaffordable for most small businesses. With many recent interprovincial agreements and MOUs using different definitions and frameworks, CFIB remains cautious that such inconsistencies may lead to further disputes.

   CFIB recommends governments make dispute resolution processes more accessible, affordable, and transparent for SMEs. This should include clearer communication standards, simplified navigation processes, and enhanced cost recovery mechanisms for small businesses pursuing legitimate claims.

10. **Provide clarity and updated timelines on remaining RCT items.**
Given the recent focus on the CMRA, progress on RCT work plan items has slowed significantly. CFIB recommends the RCT provide updated timelines, clearer reporting, and greater transparency on the status of remaining work plan items, including how they align with newly implemented mutual recognition agreements and legislation.

    CFIB also recommends greater engagement with small businesses and business associations when selecting and prioritizing RCT initiatives, particularly those affecting SME operations and labour mobility. Tools such as the RCT portal, which allow businesses to submit proposals directly, are an important step toward making the process more accessible and responsive.

Where feasible, governments should also estimate the economic impact of unresolved trade barriers to help prioritize reforms, demonstrate the value of progress, and better communicate the real-world costs of inaction to Canadian businesses and consumers.

11. **Publish a multi-year internal trade action plan.**
    Governments should publish a coordinated multi-year internal trade action plan with clear priorities, timelines, and deliverables. Similar to the RCT work plan, this would improve transparency, accountability, and predictability for businesses planning to expand across Canada.

12. **Improve or expand infrastructure to reduce freight and transportation barriers.**
    The lack of or poor infrastructure is a persistent barrier to interjurisdictional trade, especially in rural communities and the northern regions, where limited funding hampers development.

    We encourage governments to partner on strategic infrastructure investments in roads, ports, and transportation networks to improve connectivity and reduce geographic barriers to trade.

Appendix A: Breakdown of economic impact score from CFTA exceptions

The economic impact score is derived using a formula that incorporates weighting values for affected industry classifications associated with current and future exceptions, as well as weighting values for procurement exceptions themselves (see Table 9). While some current and future exceptions affect entire sectors of the economy, others only affect specific segments within those sectors. Within the CFTA, each exception sets out the number of industry classifications it covers using the Central Product Classification (CPC) system. The CPC categorizes all products in the economy into five mutually exclusive industry classifications, each identified by a numeric code: Sections (1 digit), Divisions (2 digits), Groups (3 digits), Classes (4 digits) and Subclasses (5 digits).[30] The CPC industry classifications are used to evaluate the impact of an exception on the overall economy by assessing how broad each classification is.

Therefore, broader industry classifications are given a higher weighting value. While exceptions for existing measures pose a current direct cost, exceptions for future measures pose no immediate cost but impose uncertainty for businesses, limiting investment and trade.[31] Given this, industry classifications for future measures are weighted half as much as industry classifications for current measures. It is difficult to differentiate the broadness of the impact between procurement exceptions due to the lack of any clear industry classification associated with them. Therefore, they are weighted identically. Note for the federal government: only procurement-related exceptions are considered.[32] Many industry classifications in any one jurisdiction may be set out multiple times by different exceptions. To signify the impact of the exceptions themselves, they are counted each time they are affected so certain heavily affected industry classifications can be counted multiple times.

Table 9

Economic Impact Score Value Breakdown

<table>
<tr><th>Type of CPC Classification Impacted by Exception (T)</th><th>Current Measures: Weighting Value for CPC Classification (C)</th><th>Future Measures: Weighting Value for CPC Classification (F)</th><th>Weighting Value for Procurement Exceptions - No Industry Classification Given (P)</th></tr>
<tr><td>All sectors</td><td>10</td><td>5</td><td rowspan="5">2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Divisions</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Groups</td><td>1</td><td>0.5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Classes</td><td>0.5</td><td>0.25</td></tr>
<tr><td>Subclasses</td><td>0.25</td><td>0.125</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Economic impact score: (Current exceptions) + (Future exceptions) + (Procurement exceptions)
= (Number of T x C) + (Number of T x F) + (Number of procurement exceptions x P)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Notes:
1. The CPC also includes sections (1 digit) which are not included in the weighting, as no exception from the assessed jurisdictions affects them.
2. No industry classifications are provided for procurement exceptions and are assigned a weighted value of 2.</td></tr>
</table>

Table 10

Count of Categories Assigned a Weighted Value for Economic Impact Score by Jurisdiction[1]

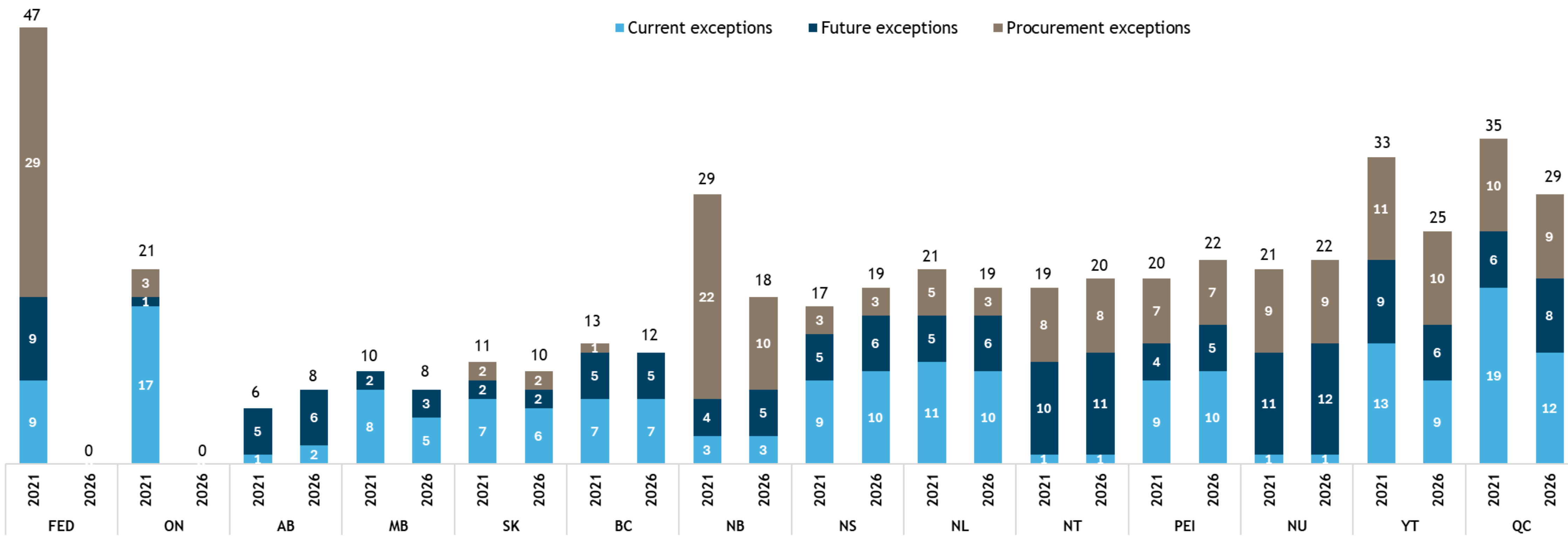
Jurisdiction	Number of Affected Industry Classifications from Current Exceptions (Impact Score)					Number of Affected Industry Classifications from Future Exceptions (Impact Score)					Number of Procurement Exceptions (Impact Score)	Total Economic Impact Score[4]
	All sectors	Divisions	Groups[2]	Classes	Subclasses[3]	All sectors	Divisions	Groups[2]	Classes	Subclasses[3]		
FED												0
ON												0
AB		1 (2)	1 (1)		8 (2)		8 (8)	4 (2)	2 (0.5)	11 (1.375)		17
BC		4 (8)	3 (3)	1 (0.5)	7 (1.75)		3 (3)	5 (2.5)	1 (0.25)	3 (0.375)		20
MB		6 (12)	3 (3)	6 (3)	2 (0.5)		1 (1)	3 (1.5)		9 (1.125)		22
SK	1 (10)	1 (2)	2 (2)	6 (3)	4 (1)		2 (2)	3 (1.5)	1 (0.25)	3 (0.375)	1 (2)	26
NB		1 (2)	4 (4)		7 (1.75)		2 (2)	7 (3.5)		7 (0.875)	10 (20)	34
NT			2 (2)			3 (15)	3 (3)	8 (4)	2 (0.5)	12 (1.5)	8 (16)	42
NU			1 (1)	3 (1.5)	1 (0.25)	3 (15)	2 (2)	9 (4.5)	4 (1)	11 (1.375)	9 (18)	45
NL		6 (12)	17 (17)	3 (1.5)	11 (2.75)			12 (6)	4 (1)	10 (1.25)	3 (6)	48
PEI	1 (10)	8 (16)	5 (5)	2 (1)	9 (2.25)		4 (4)	5 (2.5)		10 (1.25)	7 (14)	56
YT	1 (10)	2 (4)	13 (13)	6 (3)	1 (0.125)	1 (5)	2 (2)	8 (4)	2 (0.5)	9 (1.125)	10 (20)	61
NS		13 (26)	11 (11)	5 (2.5)	14 (3.5)		3 (3)	8 (4)	4 (1)	16 (2)	3 (6)	62
QC	2 (20)	3 (6)	20 (20)	2 (1)	10 (2.5)		9 (9)	10 (5)	3 (0.75)	7 (0.875)	9 (18)	83

Source: Canadian Free Trade Agreement, Consolidated Version, March 29, 2026.

Notes:
1. Weighted value for type of CPC classifications (current exceptions, future exceptions): All sectors (value: 10, 5), Divisions (Value: 2, 1), Groups (Value: 1, 0.5), Classes (Value: 0.5, 0.25), Subclasses (Value: 0.25, 0.125).
2. Exceptions in which no industry classification is given are weighted as a single group classification.
3. Industry classifications for exceptions to the trade of cannabis, which are not classified using the CPC system, are weighted as a subclass classification.
4. The Total Economic Impact score is rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B: CFTA exceptions by jurisdiction

Total Number of Exceptions to the CFTA 2021 and 2026, by Jurisdiction — Ascending Order by Total Number of Exceptions in 2026



Sources: Canadian Free Trade Agreement, Consolidated Version, March 29, 2026; Canadian Free Trade Agreement, Consolidated Version, September 2021.

Note: Every province except Saskatchewan added at least one exception for cannabis in 2024 after its addition to the CFTA.

Appendix C: Labour mobility exceptions

Jurisdiction	Number of Exceptions	Occupation(s)	
BC	1	• Lawyers	
AB	7	• Dental Hygienists - Anaesthetic • Dental Hygienists - Prescribing • Licensed Practical Nurses • Medical Radiation Technologists	• Paramedics • Podiatrists • Water Well Drillers
SK	3	• Dental Hygienists • Paramedics (EMR/PCP/ACP) • Lawyers	
MB	1	• Licensed Practical Nurses	
ON	3	• Drinking Water Systems Operators - Class 1 • Lawyers • Social Workers	
QC	4	• Denturists • Lawyers	• Primary Care Paramedics • Advanced Care Paramedics
NB	2	• Lawyers • Social Workers	
NL	3	• Dental Hygienists • Lawyers • Social Work	
PEI	2	• Lawyers • Social Workers	
NS	6	• Dental Hygienists • Dental Specialists • Lawyers	• Licensed Practical Nurses • Psychologists • Social Workers
YT	1	• Lawyers	
NT	1	• Lawyers	

Source: CFTA, Labour Mobility Working Group. Accessed: June 26, 2026. https://workersmobility.ca/exceptions-by-jurisdiction/

Appendix D: Status of items from reconciliation agreements

	FED	MB	QC	BC	AB	SK	NS	NB	PEI	YT	NT	NU	NL	ON
Score and Grade	9.7	9.6	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.2	9.1	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.6	8.5	8.4
	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A-	A-	A-	A-	B+	B+	B+
1. First Aid Kits*	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)
2. Hearing Protection*	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)
3. Personal Flotation Devices*	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)
4. Head, Foot, and Eye Protection*	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)
5. First Aid Training	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	UW (5)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	UW (5)
6. Fall Protection Equipment	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	UW (5)
7. Wide-Base Single Tires*	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)
8. Truck Driver Certification Entry-Level Training	NA -	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	UW (5)	IM (10)	UW (5)	UW (5)	IM (10)	NA -	IM (10)	IM (10)
9. Construction Codes+	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)
10. CRN for Pressure Equipment	NA -	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	NA -	IM (10)	IM (10)	UW (5)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	UW (5)	IM (10)
11. Energy Efficiency Standards for Household Appliances*	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	NA -	NA -	IM (10)	IM (10)	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	IM (10)
12. Aquaculture Site Marking*	IM (10)	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	IM (10)	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	IM (10)	NA -
13. Aquaculture Organic Labelling*	IM (10)	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -
14. Grade Inspection for Produce*	IM (10)	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -
15. Corporate Registry	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	UW (7.5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (7.5)
16. Upholstered and Stuffed Articles*	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	NA -	IM (10)
17. Filtering Respirators	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	IM (10)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)	UW (5)
Number of Items Implemented	14	13	13	12	10	10	11	10	9	9	9	8	9	9
Number of Items Underway	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	5

Source: Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT). Reconciliation Agreement Implementation Status Report.
Legend/Scoring: Implemented (IM) = 10 points — government has met the requirements of the agreement; Underway (UW) = 5/7.5 points (higher points for partial implementation) — government is either in the process of signing the agreement or has signed the agreement, but all the requirements of the agreement have yet to be met; Not applicable (NA) — government did not participate in the agreement or government did not have a regulation to reconcile; no score is given if there is no regulation to harmonize or acceptable rationale is provided. *Item implemented by all participating jurisdictions. +The national construction codes workplan contains four components, one of which has been implemented by all jurisdictions, with the status of the remaining three components reporting ongoing/implementation underway.

Appendix E: Mutual recognition initiatives

Although many jurisdictions have not fully implemented their mutual recognition initiatives at this stage, legislation and other forms of documentation provide an early indication as to what implementation will look like. Some legislation outlines exceptions for what mutual recognition will not cover, but actual implementation may expand this list—so more time is needed to fully understand the scope. Jurisdictions that require reciprocation from another jurisdiction for mutual recognition to be put into force may see the extent of their implementation vary depending on what other jurisdictions reciprocate.

Jurisdiction	Individual Legislation		Status of the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement (CMRA)	Score
National	---		Scope: Goods (sale only, not use) Reciprocation: All jurisdictions reciprocal once implemented	---
FED	*One Canadian Economy Act* Status: **Implemented** Scope: **Goods, Services & Labour** Reciprocity Requirement: **Unilateral**		Signed (will come into effect for Canada on the same day as the *Free Trade and Labour Mobility in Canada Act* and Regulations)	**10/10** (For *One Canadian Economy Act*)
BC	*Economic Stabilization (Tariff Response) Act* Status: Legislated Scope: Goods & Services Reciprocity Requirement: **Unilateral**	*2026 Trade Recognition Act* Status: Introduced Scope: Goods & Services Reciprocity: **Unilateral**	Signed	5/10 (For *Economic Stabilization Act*)
AB	*Interprovincial Trade Mutual Recognition Act* Status: Legislated Scope: Goods (sale only) & Services (sale only) Reciprocity Requirement: Unilateral		Signed (will come into effect on or before June 30, 2026)	5/10 (For *Interprovincial Trade Mutual Recognition Act*)
SK	*An Act respecting the Removal of Trade Barriers to Goods and Services between Saskatchewan and other Jurisdictions within Canada* Status: **Implemented** Scope: Goods (sale only) & Services (sale only) Reciprocity Requirement: **Unilateral**		Signed	9/10 (For *An Act respecting the Removal of Trade Barriers to Goods and Services between Saskatchewan and other Jurisdictions within Canada)*
MB	*The Fair Trade in Canada (Internal Trade Mutual Recognition) Act* Status: **Implemented** Scope: Goods & Services Reciprocity Requirement: Required (but has designated all jurisdictions reciprocal)		Signed (implementation aligned with *The Fair Trade in Canada Act* and regulations)	9/10 *(For The Fair Trade in Canada Act)*

ON	*Ontario Free Trade and Mobility Act, 2025* Status: Legislated Scope: Goods & Services (sale only) Reciprocity Requirement: Required	Signed (will come into effect on the same date as the Regulation under the ***Ontario Free Trade and Mobility Act, 2025***)	5/10 (For *Ontario Free Trade and Mobility Act, 2025*)
QC	*An Act to facilitate the trade of goods and the mobility of labour from the other provinces and the territories of Canada* Status: Implemented Scope: Goods (sale only) & Labour Reciprocity Requirement: Unilateral	**Implemented**	9/10 (For *An Act to facilitate the trade of goods and the mobility of labour from the other provinces and the territories of Canada*)
NB	*Free Trade Within Canada Act* Status: Implemented Scope: Goods (sale only) & Services (sale only) Reciprocity Requirement: Unilateral	**Implemented**	9/10 (For *Free Trade Within Canada Act)*
NS	*Free Trade and Mobility within Canada Act* Status: Implemented Scope: Goods, Services & Labour (most) Reciprocity Requirement: Required	Signed	9/10 (For *Free Trade and Mobility within Canada Act)*
PEI	*Interprovincial Trade and Mobility Act* Status: Legislated Scope: Goods, Services & Labour (most) Reciprocity Requirement: Required	**Implemented**	8/10 (For CMRA)
NL	None	Signed	1/10 (For CMRA)
YT	None	**Implemented**	8/10 (For CMRA)
NT	None	**Implemented**	8/10 (For CMRA)
NU	None	Signed	1/10 (For CMRA)

Notes:

(1) For jurisdictions that benefit from both the CMRA and individual legislation, whichever yields the highest score is used for grading the indicator on mutual recognition.
(2) Categories that earn full points for the corresponding jurisdiction are **bolded**.
(3) The status of these initiatives is current as of July 13, 2026.

Appendix F: Methodology

The *2026 Interprovincial Cooperation Report Card* uses an index approach to measure and rank the performance of Canada's provinces/territories toward addressing barriers to internal trade based on three major areas of interprovincial/territorial cooperation or subindexes. Additionally, there exists a mutual recognition subindex that increases applicable jurisdictions' scores but cannot subtract from them. These subindexes represent either a composite of multiple indicator scores, or a stand-alone value.

Areas of interprovincial/territorial cooperation and indicators

1. **CFTA Exceptions -** stand-alone score

   1 indicator:
   I. Economic Impact score

2. **Select Barriers to Internal Trade -** composite score

   7 indicators:

   Barriers to Trade in Alcoholic Beverages indicators:
   I. Unlimited Import of Alcohol for Personal Consumption
   II. Direct-to-Consumer Interjurisdictional Shipment of Canadian Wine/Craft Beer and Spirits

   Ease of Doing Business indicators:
   I. Extra-Jurisdictional Business Registration Fees Waived Across All Provinces/Territories
   II. Mutual Recognition of Registration Requirements for Workers' Compensation
   III. Mutual Recognition of Occupational Health and Safety Rules

   Labour Mobility indicators:
   I. Timeline for Professional Certification Approval of Workers Certified in Other Canadian Jurisdictions
   II. Full Labour Mobility of Licensed Practical Nurses

3. **Implementation Status of Reconciliation Agreements -** composite score

   17 regulatory reconciliation items:
   - **Occupational Health and Safety**:

   I. First Aid Kits
   II. Hearing Protection
   III. Personal Flotation Devices
   IV. Head, Foot, and Eye Protection
   - **Occupational Health and Safety**:

   V. First Aid Training
   VI. Fall Protection
   VII. **Transport**: Wide-Base Single Tires
   VIII. **Transport**: Truck Driver Certification Entry-Level Training
   IX. **Standards and Codes:** Construction Codes
   X. **Technical Safety**: CRN for Pressure Vessels
   XI. **Standards and Codes**: Energy Efficiency Standards for Household Appliances
   XII. **Agriculture/Agri-Food/Aquaculture:** Aquaculture Site Marking
   XIII. **Agriculture/Agri-Food/Aquaculture**: Aquaculture Organic Labelling
   XIV. **Agriculture/Agri-Food/Aquaculture**: Grade Inspection for Produce
   XV. **Regulatory Requirements**: Corporate Registry
   XVI. **Textiles/Upholstery**: Upholstered and Stuffed Articles
   XVII. **Filtering Respirators**: Personal Protective Equipment

4. **Mutual Recognition -** stand-alone multiplier score
   1 indicator: Existence of a Mutual Recognition Agreement

Types of indicators

The report card contains both scalar and binary indicators.

On each scalar indicator, the province/territory with the best performance (lowest or highest, depending on the indicator) receives the maximum score of 10, while the province/territory with the worst performance receives a score of 0. All other scores are based on the scale formed by these two values.

*When an indicator receives a lower score for a higher value or a higher score for a lower value, the formula used is: 10 – ((x-min)/(max-min))*10*

*When an indicator receives a lower score for a lower value, or a higher score for a higher value, the formula used is: (x-min)/(max-min)*10*

Where x = the score to be calculated; and min and max are the minimum and maximum of the range of indicators.

Binary indicators typically have a value of either 0 or 10. We acknowledge that combining scalar and binary indicators with equal weight within a subindex may be problematic because the extreme valuation of the binary indicator can significantly influence the results. However, the several binary indicators used are of such importance to small businesses that they warrant their valuation.

There are instances where the scoring of the indicator is represented by a range of values with extremes 0 or 10, and intermediate values ranging from 1 to 9, for example.[33]

Report card grading scale and weighting

Each subindex is scored on a scale of zero (worst) to ten (best), and the numeric value is converted to a letter grade using an academic style grading system with the following ranges:

A+	10 (Excellent performance)	C+	7.1-7.4 (Satisfactory performance)
A	9.0-9.9 (Excellent performance)	C	6.6-7.0 (Satisfactory performance)
A-	8.7-8.9 (Excellent performance)	C-	6.0-6.5 (Satisfactory performance)
B+	8.4-8.6 (Good performance)	D	4.0-5.9 (Less than satisfactory performance)
B	7.8-8.3 (Good performance)	F	0-3.9 (Unsatisfactory performance)
B-	7.5-7.7 (Good performance)		

Using a weighting scheme, the three subindex scores are combined into a single score that allows for a ranking of jurisdictions from best (highest score) to worst (lowest score). The three different areas are assigned the following weights: CFTA Exceptions — 40%; Implementation Status of Reconciliation Agreements — 40%; Select Barriers to Internal Trade — 20%. A lower relative weight was given to the Select Barriers indicator, as it assesses specific issues highlighted by small businesses, with the focus being narrower in scope than broader problems highlighted by the other two main indicators. The fourth Mutual Recognition indicator does not have a traditional weighting and can only increase jurisdictions' scores, not lower them (see section below).

In the case of the federal government, the score was based on only three areas — CFTA exceptions, the Implementation Status of Reconciliation Agreements (weighted at 50% each), and the Mutual Recognition indicator (see section below). The Select Barriers area was not available for this analysis.

The data reflected in this report are based on information that was in effect as of July 13, 2026.

Mutual Recognition indicator

Governments that earn points within the Mutual Recognition indicator are awarded additional points. Governments that do not receive points in this area are not penalized. Indicator used: Existence of a Mutual Recognition Agreement.

The Mutual Recognition indicator is applied to all jurisdictions on a scale of 0 to 10 but is not given a traditional weighting like the three main indicators. Instead, the indicator is a multiplier that increases jurisdictions’ scores from their relative standings based on the three main indicators (regulatory cooperation score).

$$Final\ score = Regulatory\ cooperation\ score + (10 - Regulatory\ cooperation\ score) * (Mutual\ recognition\ score\ /\ 10)$$

In this way, the mutual recognition indicator increases a jurisdiction’s overall grade by moving it partway between its current regulatory cooperation score and a perfect score of 10.0, depending on the size of the subindex score. For example, if a jurisdiction receives a cumulative score of 7.0 from the three main indicators and a mutual recognition score of 5.0, it will see its final score increase to 8.5, halfway between its current score (7.0) and the perfect score of 10.0.

Endnotes

[1] CFIB, Canada's Entrepreneurial Drought – Part 1: The Shrinking Business Landscape, April 15, 2026. https://www.cfib-fcei.ca/en/research-economic-analysis/canada-entrepreneurial-drought-part1

[2] Ibid.

[3] CFIB, Survey on the impact of U.S.-Canada trade war, March 13-31, 2025, final results, n = 3,523. Question: Has your business taken the following actions because of the U.S.-Canada trade war? (Select one for each line)

[4] Canadian Free Trade Agreement. March 30, 2026. Communiqué – March 30, 2026 Committee on Internal Trade Meeting. Accessed: May 13, 2026. https://www.cfta-alec.ca/communique-march-30-2026

[5] Canadian Free Trade Agreement. March 30, 2026. Communiqué – March 30, 2026 Committee on Internal Trade Meeting. Accessed: May 15, 2026. https://www.cfta-alec.ca/communique-march-30-2026

[6] Government of Alberta. Canadian Trucking Regulations Hub. Cantruckhub.com

[7] Ibid.

[8] Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety. Federal, provincial, and territorial transportation and highway safety ministers reach agreement to improve the movement of goods across Canada. March 2026. Accessed: June 12, 2026. https://comt.ca/News%20E/2026%20-%20MoU%20Interprovincial%20Trucking%20EN.pdf

[9] Government of New Brunswick. July 7, 2025. REVISED/Government formalizes direct-to-consumer alcohol sales. Accessed: March 30, 2026. https://www.gnb.ca/en/news/n-b.2025.07.revised-2f-government-formalizes-direct-to-consumer-alcohol-sales.html

[10] Government of Ontario. March 2, 2026. Ontario and Nova Scotia Sign Historic Direct-to-Consumer Alcohol Agreement. Accessed: March 30, 2026. https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1007105/ontario-and-nova-scotia-sign-historic-direct-to-consumer-alcohol-agreement

[11] Government of Saskatchewan. B.C. and Saskatchewan Remove Barriers on Canadian Wine and Craft Spirits. Accessed: May 25, 2022. https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2014/august/29/bc-and-sask-wind-and-craft-spirits

[12] AGLC. Alberta-BC direct to consumer wine program. Accessed: May 18, 2026. https://aglc.ca/liquor/about-liquor-alberta/alberta-bc-direct-consumer-wine-program

[13] Government of Ontario. March 2, 2026. Ontario and Nova Scotia Sign Historic Direct-to-Consumer Alcohol Agreement. Accessed: May 18, 2026. https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1007105/ontario-and-nova-scotia-sign-historic-direct-to-consumer-alcohol-agreement

[14] As part of the *Interjurisdictional Agreement on Workers' Compensation*, businesses only pay assessments in a province or territory where work is performed (no double assessment).

[15] CFIB, Your Voice – Internal Trade survey, March 19 – May 5, 2026, n = 945. Question: Which of the following government actions would help your business operate across provincial/territorial borders? (Select all that apply)

[16] Labour Mobility Working Group website. Labour Mobility. https://www.cfta-alec.ca/labour-mobility/

[17] CFIB, Your Voice – September 2022 survey, September 8-26, 2022, n = 3,679. Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the flow of goods, services and people within Canada? (Select one for each line) | A professional license or certification granted in one province/territory should be automatically recognized in all provinces/territories (such as long-term care workers, other health care workers, etc.)

[18] Angus Reid. March 20, 2025. Trade barriers: Canadians support national standards, tension over supply management, procurement. Accessed: May 18, 2026. https://angusreid.org/interprovincial-trade-barriers-provinces-alcohol-beer-trump-poilievre-carney/

[19] CFIB, Your Voice – April 2025 survey, April 4-22, 2024, n = 207. **Adjusted to capture businesses that have interprovincial workers and have faced challenges*. Question: What challenges have you experienced when hiring workers from another province/territory or having your employees work in other provinces/territories? (Select all that apply)

[20] Job Vacancies, Fourth Quarter 2025. *The Daily*, Statistics Canada, March 17, 2026, Accessed: May 15, 2026. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/260317/dq260317a-eng.htm

[21] CFIB, Your Voice – September 2022 survey, September 8-26, 2022, n = 3,308. Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the flow of goods, services and people within Canada? (Select one for each line) | A professional license or certification granted in one province/territory should be automatically recognized in all provinces/territories (such as long-term care workers, other health care workers, etc.)

[22] The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia. Atlantic Registry. Accessed: June 22, 2023. https://cpsns.ns.ca/registration-licensing/current-practice/atlantic-registry/

[23] Government of Ontario. News Release: New "As of Right" Rules a First in Canada to Attract More Health Care Workers to Ontario. Accessed: March 30, 2023. https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1002650/new-as-of-right-rules-a-first-in-canada-to-attract-more-health-care-workers-to-ontario

[24] Government of New Brunswick. June 6, 2025. Bill 14: An Act to Amend the Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act. https://legnb.ca/content/house_business/61/1/bills/Bill-14-e.htm

[25] Australian Government – Productivity Commission. September 2015. *Mutual Recognition Schemes*. Accessed: May 20, 2026. https://assets.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/mutual-recognition-schemes/report/mutual-recognition-schemes.pdf

[26] Implemented — government has met the requirements of the agreement; Underway — government is either in the process of signing the agreement or has signed the agreement but the requirements of the agreement have yet to be met.

[27] CFIB, Your Voice – April 2024 survey, April 4-22, 2024, n = 2,507. Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the flow of goods, services and people within Canada? (Select one for each line) | Food that is produced in provincially licensed/inspected facilities should be able to be sold in all provinces/territories.

[28] Manucha, Ryan. Commentary No. 573. Internal Trade in Focus: Ten Ways to Improve the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, C.D. Howe Institute, July 2020.

[29] Canadian Free Trade Agreement. Tariff Costs. Accessed: May 14, 2025. https://www.cfta-alec.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Tariff-Costs-2025-CFTA.pdf

[30] United Nations Statistics Division. Classification Detail. Accessed: June 1, 2025. https://unstats.un.org/unsd/classifications/Family/Detail/1074

[31] Sarah Pittman, Carlo Dade and Martha Hall Findlay. Toilet Seats, Trucking and Other Trade Tie-ups. A new solution to the old problem of Canadian internal trade. Canada West Foundation. Accessed: May 20, 2024. https://cwf.ca/research/publications/report-toilet-seats-trucking-and-other-trade-tie-ups-a-new-solution-to-the-old-problem-of-canadian-internal-trade/

[32] The federal government contends that its exceptions account for matters of national security and international market access, and that very few exceptions in the CFTA present a meaningful barrier to internal trade. Regardless, it is important to reduce or narrow these exceptions, particularly in procurement, which can affect doing business across the country.

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