

4.1 Final publishable summary report

Executive summary

The project ACCESS2CANADA (A2C) has been funded under FP7-Capacities -International Cooperation it is part of the ACCESS4EU strategy, set up by the European Commission (EC) in the third call of proposal of the INCO Programme, aimed at increasing European researchers' awareness on funding opportunities for international research projects in several International Co-operation Partner Countries (ICPC).

The overall objective of the A2C project has been to strengthen and increase EU-Canada S&T cooperation by supporting the access for EU researchers to Canadian research and innovation programmes.

Moreover, the initiative planned to achieving the following specific objectives:

1. Mapping Canadian research and innovation programmes and Europe-Canada S&T agreements, and identifying opportunities and obstacles for the EU research community to access Canadian research and innovation programmes;
2. Raising awareness amongst EU researchers about Canadian research and innovation programmes and encouraging EU researchers to participate in these programmes;
3. Assessing European researchers' participation in Canadian research and innovation programmes
4. Providing feedback to the EC and the EU-Canada Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee about the opportunities and obstacles for EU researchers and presenting suggestions to improve the S&T cooperation;
5. Providing an in-depth look into Canadian Innovation policies and opportunities and promoting them also through the organisation of Canadian Innovation Managers tours in Europe.

The project started on the 1st of September 2009 and finished on the 31st of August 2012.

The A2C consortium achieved the following results:

1. **Mapping of:** (1) Canadian and S&T programmes open to European researchers, (2) bilateral agreements between Canada and European Member States (3) overview of Canadian scientific and technological policies and programmes, (4) information about Canadian Scientific and Technological publications, (5) impedances to be overcome for Europeans to link with Canadian S&T programmes.
2. **Broad dissemination in Europe and in Canada:** (1) organization of three EU info days during EC events, (2) dissemination of A2C and opportunities for the European researchers in Canada during 74 events both in Europe and Canada, (3) dissemination of Canadian calls and other opportunities through project newsletters, direct e-mails, publications on websites.
3. **Provision of feedback to the EU-Canada Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee:** (1) preparation of a detailed report summarizing the main results of the project and suggesting several recommendations to improve European participation in Canadian research and innovation programmes, (2) participation by the project partners in two meetings organized by the Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee.

4. **Identifying cooperation opportunities in Innovation by:** (1) Mapping Canadian innovation strategies and programs (2) Organizing European tours of Canadian innovation programme managers.

Summary description of project context and objectives

ACCESS2CANADA has focused on Canada and the opportunities for EU researchers to access Canadian research and innovation programmes. In 1976, the EU established the first S&T relationship with Canada by signing the EC-Canada Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Cooperation(1). However, it was only after the EC adopted its multi-annual Framework Programmes in 1984 that the two sides could more concretely begin to identify S&T cooperation opportunities. S&T cooperation between the EU and Canada has evolved ever since and in 1995 a formal Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation was signed and came into force in 1996. (2). This agreement between Canada and the European Union is administered by the Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee (JSTCC). The JSTCC meets on an annual basis, with meetings being held alternately in the EU and Canada(3).

Despite an important increase in S&T cooperation since 1996, there remains a lack of awareness and more active participation of researchers in each other's research and innovation programmes – most particularly for EU researchers in Canadian programmes.

The ACCESS2Canada project has been part of the EC strategy aimed at increasing European researchers' awareness of funding opportunities for international research projects in third countries.

The main objective of the Access2Canada project has been therefore:

To strengthen and increase EU-Canada S&T cooperation by supporting the access for EU researchers to Canadian research and innovation programmes.

The specific objectives of the project have been:

- a) Analysis of the opportunities and obstacles to access Canadian research and innovation programmes:
 - Overview of the existing Canadian research and innovation programmes;
 - Map of bilateral S&T agreements;
 - Assessment of opportunities and obstacles to access Canadian research programmes;
 - Release of three annual "Roadmaps" of programmes, calls, opportunities/obstacles and bilateral agreements at month 12, month 24 and month 36.
- b) Disseminating A2C project information and analysis to the EU research community and to a lesser extent to the Canadian research community. In particular the objectives were:
 - Raising awareness amongst EU researchers about Canadian research and innovation programmes;
 - Promoting participation of EU researchers in Canadian programmes;
 - Using new tools of dissemination with the launch of webinars.
- c) Monitoring EU participation and providing feedback to EC and JSTCC:
 - Monitoring European researchers participation in Canadian research and innovation programmes;
 - Providing EC and JSTCC with strategic policy recommendations on:
 - › opportunities and obstacles for EU researchers participating in Canadian research and innovation programmes;
 - › improving cooperation in research and innovation between EU and Canada.

d) Analysing the structure and mechanisms for EU-side international cooperation with Canada in Innovation, and organizing European tours of Canadian innovation players in order to induce EU-side linkages with Canadian innovation support programmes:

- Analysis of the opportunities for EU-Canada collaboration in research-based and industrial innovation programs, processes and services;
- Creation of links between Canadian innovation players and the European research community and industry.

All the objectives of the project have been successfully achieved.

Description of the main S&T results/foregrounds

The ACCESS2Canada project has achieved the following **results**:

OBJECTIVE N.1: Analysis of the opportunities and obstacles to access Canadian research and innovation programmes

RESULTS

The project allowed the A2C consortium to draw up a **comprehensive picture of the Canadian science, technology and innovation system** and of the existing opportunities for European researchers. For these purposes, several reports have been prepared about:

1. Benchmarking Workshop with key representatives of Canadian research and innovation programmes;
2. Listing of Canadian research and innovation programmes;
3. Assessment of opportunities and obstacles to access Canadian research and innovation programmes;
4. Listing of existing bilateral S&T agreements between EU and Canada;
5. Annual “Roadmap” of Canadian programmes, opportunities, obstacles and agreements.

One of the primary activities undertaken in the A2C project has been the identification and compilation of those R&D and innovation programs in Canada supported by either the federal or the provincial governments that lend themselves to participation by EU researchers. A2C has focused on those defined programmes that - even without any Canadian funding provided to the European side - offered opportunities to EU researchers from the academic, public or private sectors to participate in Canadian projects funded by these programmes. In this context, Canadian programmes that support the mobility (or exchange) of individual researchers have been excluded, although these programmes (offered by several of Canada’s federal research granting councils) have seen numerous European academics and scientists come to Canada for short term assignments (usually a one year term but occasionally for longer periods). The **Roadmaps 2010, 2011 and 2012** include lists of existing **research and innovation programmes in Canada** at the **federal and provincial level** accessible to European researchers. In 2012, the Roadmap included 27 such programmes.

These programs have been identified during the initial phase of the A2C project by means of meetings with the Canadian program owners and managers, and from a thorough examination of all available information sources in print and on the web (<http://www.access4.eu/canada/246.php>). The list of programmes identified and found compatible with the objectives of the project was then uploaded to the A2C web site for widespread dissemination among the EU research community. In addition, the list was printed and published in A2C’s annual Roadmap or Opportunity Report that were distributed to EU participants at appropriate conferences, workshops and seminars in the EU. The database provides relevant Canadian contact information so that an

EU researcher interested in participating with a Canadian partner (or partners) in a Canadian project can easily and quickly obtain more details on the program as well as possible Canadian partners in the project under consideration.

Assess opportunities and obstacles for Canadian and non-Canadian researchers

The findings uncovered no overt obstacles preventing EU-side researchers from linking with Canadian S&T programs. However, a number of impedances have been observed or mentioned by research managers, such as:

1. the tedious task of sifting through the decentralized Canadian realities to find an activity that will provide a mutual and timely benefit for European researchers or organizations to link with Canadian counterparts;
2. the fact that the majority of Canadian programmes focus on innovation geared to help the Canadian private sector versus solving research problems;
3. many of the Canadian programmes are of short duration or requiring re-application annually, which further exacerbates compatibility challenges for timing approvals;
4. the general practice by Canadian researchers, historically, to not consider linking with foreign-based researchers when submitting their applications to Canadian governmental S&T programmes;
5. the general lack of familiarity by non-Canadian research groups and organizations with the conditions of relevant agreements and arrangements in force between Canadian and European agencies that provide guidance and facilitate international S&T cooperation;
6. the task of finding a Canadian 'champion' to endorse the involvement of European researchers in a specific Canadian S&T programme (whether at the proposal stage or after the research has been implemented);
7. the task of establishing a relationship with a Canadian research organization and understanding the local administrative requirements;
8. the task of determining the appropriate types and mechanisms for the research cooperation, whether ranging from information exchanges, twinning arrangements, joint use of test facilities, preparation of joint technical papers, formal division of labour and sharing of proprietary information, or alternate arrangements;
9. the requirement that the non-Canadian partners seek their own funding to cover their share of the research work and on a schedule compatible with that of the Canadian S&T programme;
10. the task of substantiating to European-side funding organizations, in the absence of dedicated 'Canada cooperation' funding envelopes, the merit of linking into a Canadian S&T programme;
11. the requirement that non-Canadian partners understand and respect the Canadian-side sensitivities and procedures for the protection and sharing of intellectual property;
12. the requirement that the research activities proceed in one of the two official languages of Canada (English or French);
13. the accommodation by European researchers not co-located with Canadian researchers of time zone differences of up to nine hours for coordination communication purposes;
14. the necessity to budget increased time and resources for travel to the research site in Canada and accommodate exchange rate fluctuation.

Map existing bilateral S&T agreements

Canada's S&T relations with Europe have not only been pursued through formal cooperation agreements with the EU (the first agreement between Canada and Euratom in 1959 was on cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy that included a research cooperation component) but bilaterally with the individual EU Member States as well. Even before the entry into force in 1996 of the EU-Canada S&T cooperation agreement,

Canada had formal S&T cooperation agreements with Germany, Belgium and France. The 1976 EC-Canada Framework Agreement for Economic and Commercial Cooperation itself included a section on S&T exchanges and cooperation. And the current negotiations between the EU and Canada on a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) include a chapter on S&T cooperation to complement the existing amended 1998 S&T cooperation agreement. All these agreements that Canada has entered into – with the EU and other European-based international organizations such as the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), and the International Energy Agency (IEA) - and with both individual EU Member States as well as Switzerland and Norway – and other many less formal arrangements such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's), exchanges of letters and administrative arrangements – serve to promote and support trans-Atlantic S&T cooperation. As such, given the principal objective of the A2C project being to strengthen EU-Canada S&T cooperation by increasing EU researcher participation in Canadian R&D and innovation programs, it was considered useful to identify the more formal S&T links that continue to encourage and underpin this cooperation, currently comprising **83 bilateral S&T agreements between Canada and European Member States**. It should be noted that only government-to-government agreements at national level have been included in this task. However, numerous agreements or arrangements exist between European and Canadian research organizations and universities at the sub-national, regional or local level. Most of the agreements and arrangements do not include provisions to financially support research cooperation, but do include mechanisms for both sides to regularly review the state of collaboration and suggest new opportunities for and approaches to S&T cooperation.

OBJECTIVE N.2: Disseminating A2C project information and analysis to the EU research community and to a lesser extent to the Canadian research community.

RESULTS

For the dissemination activities on the European side, a firm basis was created with the A2C dissemination plan that finds its roots in the Common Dissemination Strategy of the Access4EU projects (spearheaded by APRE and DLR). The public project website (www.access2canada.eu) was constructed early in the first period and has been constantly updated during the second period with information on opportunities in Canada for the EU research community. An important element of the **website** is the **RTDI programme database**. **Project leaflets** and A2C promotional materials produced during the first reporting period have been handed out at conferences and meetings. A common Access4EU newsletter was developed by A2C, with support of the other Access4EU projects. Instead of five newsletters as envisaged originally, **11 newsletters** have been produced, uploaded on line and sent to the interested stakeholders. Progress has also been made with the organisation of **EU infodays**: three successful info sessions focusing on the research themes '**Health**', '**ICT**' and '**Environment**' have been planned by APRE, IP and DLR respectively, in collaboration with other Access4EU projects. For the Health infoday, CIHR in Ottawa has been invited to present its international programmes. In addition to its promotion in Europe, A2C has also been promoted in Canada during meetings with Canadian programme owners both at Federal and Provincial level, in meetings with EU Member State (and EU Delegation) diplomatic representatives in Canada, and in meetings with Canadian S&T counsellors at Canadian embassies in the EU, as well as at conferences related to international S&T cooperation and in events organised together with the ERACAN2 project.

A very innovative yet successful method of dissemination has been the use of **webinars** in order to reach as many researchers and RTDI stakeholders in Europe as possible, with minimal costs and efforts. Two webinars took place in spring 2012 (Health, Social Sciences & Humanities) and proved that this is a promising tool for future dissemination activities in other projects.

OBJECTIVE N.3: Monitoring EU participation and feedback to EC and JSTCC

RESULTS

Monitoring the extent and nature of EU participation in Canadian R&D and innovation programs has been an important original element of the A2C project for two reasons: it would help to reveal the levels of mutual access and reciprocity on which basis the EU-Canada S&T cooperation agreement had been negotiated and it would permit some assessment to be made of the value and efficacy of the A2C project aimed at strengthening EU-Canada S&T cooperation by increasing EU participation in Canadian programmes over the three-year lifetime of the A2C project. While the premise of this task was clear and straightforward, carrying it out proved to be challenging.

Already during the first half of the A2C project, the A2C team discovered that in most cases, Canadian R&D and innovation programme owners – from both the federal and provincial governments – either did not collect information on EU participation or if collected were unable to reveal it for fear of infringing on governmental privacy and confidentiality rules and practices. Other efforts were made to get access to sufficient and relevant data, including through involving the Canadian S&T counsellor / trade commissioner network in the EU (Belgium, UK, Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Italy and France, and Switzerland). Hence, information on EU participation in Canadian programs became available only sporadically, and anecdotally, making the process of meeting the goals of A2C more complicated, and drawing credible conclusions more difficult.

Nevertheless, some evidence of **EU participation in Canadian programmes** has been obtained throughout the A2C project time span, at the levels of both federal and provincial programs. Actual numbers and descriptions of EU participation have been noted in A2C project reports, and included programs established by the **Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council**, by the **Sustainable Development Technology Canada program**, by the **Canada Research Chairs and Canada Excellence Research Chairs programs**, by the **Alberta Innovates programme**, and by the **Quebec government's SIIRI (Support for International Research and Innovation Initiatives) program**.

Other examples of EU participation, without specific details being available, included a number of Canadian-led international research projects such as **NEPTUNE Canada** (ocean observatory led by the University of Victoria in British Columbia), **carbon sequestration and storage (CSS)** research projects taking place in Alberta and Saskatchewan, the **Sudbury Neutrino Observatory (SNOLAB)** in Ontario, and the **Halifax Marine Research Institute** (led by Dalhousie University) in Nova Scotia. The A2C team has recognized, but considered it beyond the scope of the A2C project, the that there are scores of EU researchers involved, on an individual and usually temporary basis, in universities, medical research centres and government laboratories across Canada as part of EU and Canadian led researcher mobility programmes (ie, Marie Curie, etc.). The term 'researcher participation in Canadian programmes' was defined to cover participants affiliated with EU-based organizations involved in R&D and innovation activities (not individuals in Canada on an EU passport involved in research). The important finding is, in short, that **EU researchers – from the academic community, the public sector, and from private companies – are engaged in Canadian R&D and innovation projects, and that reciprocity and mutual benefit is occurring.**

During this second period, A2C provided **feedback to the EC and JSTCC** first by contributing to the JSTCC meeting in Ottawa on October 3rd-4th 2011 and then by delivering **two reports** which are summarized below.

- A2C partners have highlighted and analysed the **strengths and weaknesses of the Canadian R&I System** for European researcher participation, including :
 - A highly decentralized research system with varying degrees of overlapping and partnering possibilities for R&I actors and includes, reflecting the high capacity of Canada in R&I but leading also to difficulties to understand the system and benefit from collaboration.

- Innovation as the central element of the Canadian strategy and the key driver for the development of its economy, which shares similarities with the EU strategy making partnerships possible, although possibly limited by the question of individual competitiveness.
- Similar priority sectors for Canadian and EU R&I Programs, which offers obvious opportunities for partnerships and cooperation to establish their funding allocations.
- A2C has also described and analysed the **strengths and weaknesses of Canadian-EU S&T agreements and arrangements** with individual countries or organisations (83 in addition to the treaty level agreement) and have showed that they cover a wide range of fields, allowing cooperation in different themes, but most of them do not provide funding leaving a gap in the opportunities to establish concrete partnerships.
- A2C has analysed the **opportunities and obstacles for EU researchers to participate to Canadian programmes**. This is summarized below :
 - No Canadian program excludes international partnering, as long as Canadian-side procedures for the protection of intellectual property and funding provisions are satisfied. but international partnering is now more encouraged than earlier in some programs.
 - No overt obstacles were found barring European researchers from linking with Canadian programs. However, each side is responsible for obtaining funding for its own participation.
 - Some reasons impeding the EU participation to Canadian programs are listed below:
 - › mutual lack of awareness and understanding of R&I systems as well as of their benefits;
 - › lack of information on priorities for R&I that are of mutual interest;
 - › difficulty in matching the EU and Canadian program timetables;
 - › lack of experience with submitting applications with foreign researchers;
 - › difficulties in dealing with Intellectual Property Right (IPR) issues;
 - › administrative and regulatory requirements impeding S&T cooperation;
 - › focus on innovation to help the Canadian private sector versus solving research problems;
 - › need for non-Canadian to seek their funding to cover their research work;
 - › incompatibility of budgetary timing;
 - › lack of knowledge and practice on how to benefit from S&T agreements.
- A2C has drawn recommendations on how to improve European researcher participation in Canadian programmes by acting through different strategies, including raising awareness, facilitating IPR issue management and better promoting the importance of international cooperation :
 - Awareness actions should be maintained to promote Canadian programmes and encourage EU researchers to participate in these programmes. This could include the update and maintenance of the database of R&I programs, the organisation of webinars and the dissemination the “Opportunity Reports”. In parallel, R&I program owners, the future BILAT project partners or INCO NCPs could promote the dissemination of the S&T agreements, the R&I programs and the international cooperation orientation supported by certain Canadian funding agencies. This could be done in association with

some of the Canadian scientific “champions” (i.e. Chair holders from the Canada Research Chairs and the Excellence Research Chairs programs).

- Facilitation of the IPR issue management should be sought i.e. through new policy approaches to reduce or simplify IPR barriers.
- Emphasizing the strategic importance of international cooperation, which appears obvious, although the possibilities to collaborate internationally and the capacity to fund international partnerships are not fully exploited. Recommendations to this end include:
 - › to highlight and publicize the cumulative / synergistic effects of applying concomitantly for common project needs;
 - › to expand the dialogue between Canada and the EU to better link programmes and to match policies and programs, i.e. as experienced in the Program Level Cooperation actions;
 - › to emphasise the importance of international S&T cooperation beyond scientific linkages, and more specifically as a fruitful science policy and funding leverage issue;
 - › to make incentives available to scientists exploring international cooperation, including through funding or co-funding processes.

OBJECTIVE N.4: Analyzing the structure and mechanisms for EU-side international cooperation with Canada in innovation, and organizing European tours of Canadian innovation players in order to induce EU-side linkages with Canadian innovation support programmes

RESULTS

The two main results for this objective are the drafting of two reports:

1. Review of opportunities for EU-Canada collaboration in research-based and industrial innovation programs, processes and services;
2. Impact report on European tours of Canadian innovation players.

Opportunities for EU-Canada collaboration in research-based and industrial innovation programs, processes and services

A review of the most significant and widely reported innovation strategy and policy studies in Canada was undertaken to obtain a better understanding of the motivations behind the increased attention paid to innovation in Canada, and of the expectations for the impact that support for innovation could have in Canada. Notably, in a country as geographically and politically diverse as Canada, the recognition of the importance and value of innovation, and the ways it could be encouraged and supported, was shared by the federal government, several provincial governments, several leading Canadian economic and policy think tanks, and numerous business and industrial organizations. The situation in Canada remains in flux, however, since there remains disagreement about how innovation should be supported, who should bear the costs of such support, which actors (eg. SME’s, multi-nationals, universities, research institutes, etc.) should receive what kinds of support, and even – in times of government budgetary restraint – how much government support should be involved. A comparison was undertaken to examine how innovation support and performance are measured in the EU and in Canada. The benchmark for the EU is the EU’s annual Innovation Union Scoreboard (IUS) that not only measures the situation within the EU and each Member State, but also compares the EU with several of its major foreign S&T cooperation partners including Canada.

The task of **mapping Canadian innovation strategies and programmes** is a component of the A2C project added following the launch of the EU's Innovation Union strategy in late 2010, a move that has been somewhat paralleled in Canada by the federal government and several provincial governments. As such, innovation – the process whereby research results are transformed into commercially and socially useful products, processes, services and organizational structures – has become a priority on both sides of the Atlantic, and an additional important focus for A2C.

Starting with the initial 2007 Canadian federal statement on S&T policy, the A2C team identified and examined all subsequent major policy studies and expert panel reviews on innovation conducted since then by the federal government, by independent economic and policy research organizations, and by industry associations. Not surprisingly, the studies and reviews were unanimous in declaring that innovation, particularly that in the private sector, is important for the future economic and social prosperity of Canada, and in declaring that Canada suffers from an “innovation gap” in performance – able to create through research new knowledge but unable to sufficiently operationalize or commercialize those research results – again particularly by the private sector.

Some attempts were made to describe Canada's innovation performance and compare it to the EU approach (as described with the EU's Innovation Union Scorecard (IUS), using readily available and comparable indicators. These reveal a rough equivalence in performance and output of R&D between the two sides. However, in examining Canada's innovation support and performance, the data revealed not only a gap between Canada and the EU – with the EU leading Canada in those indicators compared – but also an internal domestic Canadian “gap” between support for and performance in innovation (less) and that for traditional research and development (more). In addition, a “gap” in the Canadian private sector's capacity to innovate showed that Canada ranked 14th out of 17 countries considered to be Canada's international competitors.

In compiling the list of Canadian R&D programs in which EU researchers can participate, even if only indirectly, the A2C team included several programs having a focus on innovation, such as the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP) and the federal government's Sustainable Development Technology Canada program (SDTC). Some of the provinces offer programs or services in support of innovation, and these, too, have been described in the Opportunity Report, including the Alberta Innovates Connector service, and the Ontario government-supported Canadian Innovation Centre in Waterloo and the MaRS Discovery District in Toronto. Even though these various programs and services may not explicitly support international cooperation between Canadian and European counterparts, in meetings with the owners and managers of these programs and services, the A2C team was informed that enquiries from potentially interested EU based researchers and organizations would be welcomed.

European tours of Canadian Innovation Players

As planned in the Description of Work, three tours of Canadian innovation Programme managers took place between February and July 2012.

Each tour was organised by interviewing the chosen innovation managers so as to understand which might have been the more profitable meetings to be organised. Potential institutions to be visited were identified and contacts made both in Italy and in Germany. In the case of Peter Frise, Denmark also was included in the tour. A detailed schedule was organised and communicated both to the host and the guest.

During the meetings the innovation managers were always accompanied by a staff member of APRE or DLR, thus ensuring that a presentation of the A2C project was given at every meeting.

After the meetings, each innovation manager was requested to produce a report that was shared with the visited institutions.

Potential impact and main dissemination activities and exploitation of results

The A2C project will have a long term impact on the scientific community in Canada and EU through emphasis on the improvement of cooperation by the provision of better reciprocal knowledge of each other's R&D and innovation programs and policies, and of a set of information tools for researchers and administrators in the public and private sectors.

The project activities have been promoted through a variety of tools, including the ACCESS2Canada website with its many features, a project leaflet, a project video, 11 online editions of the project newsletter and through the presentation and/or presence in 74 events over the three years. The project and its activities (dissemination events, brokerage events) were also published on various other websites and promoted separately by the partners.

Through these activities, ACCESS2Canada has intensively fostered international cooperation between EU and Canada and promoted the participation of European researchers in Canadian research and innovation programmes. This was done by creating a set of specific information tools and by organizing specific dissemination activities.



Address of the project public website, as well as relevant contact details

<http://www.access2canada.eu/>

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