

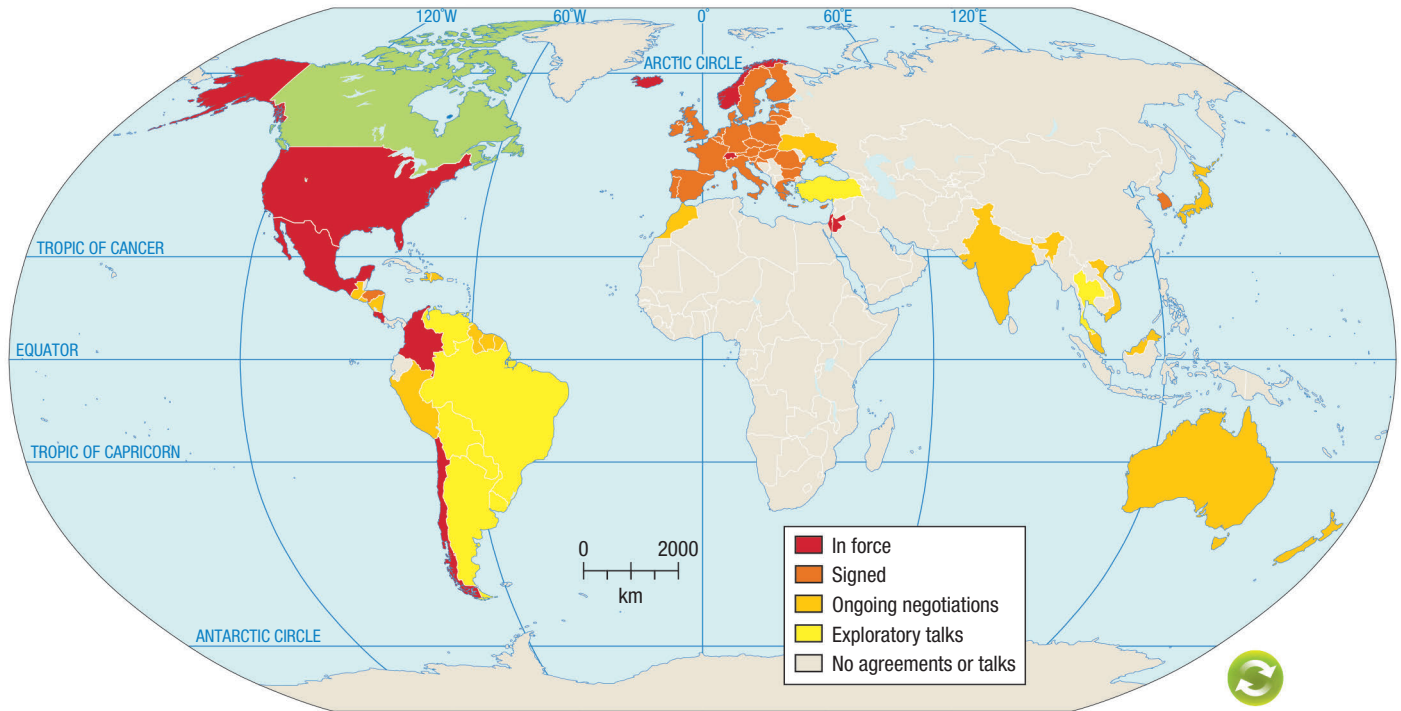
The move to freer trade in the world has occurred in a number of different ways:

- Since 1947, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (known as the World Trade Organization since 1995) has encouraged nations to reduce tariffs and eliminate other barriers to trade in more than 120 countries.
- As well, Canada has signed a number of free-trade agreements. Many more are in various negotiation stages (Figure 8–15). In some cases, these agreements are with individual countries. More important are agreements with groups of countries that are members of existing free-trade zones. By far the most important of these are the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Canada–European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). NAFTA opened free trade among Canada, the United States, and Mexico in 1994. CETA, which was signed in 2013 but as of 2014 was not yet in force, or applied, links Canada with 28 countries.

Only time will tell us if, and when, all these free trade agreements might come into force. However, the clear trend is toward a world economy with substantially fewer international barriers.

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Find more information about CETA and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).



▲ **Figure 8–15 Canada’s current and future trade partners.** In terms of major economic powers, it is easier to list the countries that are *not* Canada’s current or potential free-trade partners. Which developed countries with major economies are not shown here as part of any partnerships?