

<https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2022/05/minister-ng-announces-canadas-request-to-join-the-digital-economy-partnership-agreement.html>

## **Minister Ng announces Canada's request to join the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement**

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Canada is committed to strengthening opportunities for international engagement on digital trade, as well as collaboration on advanced technologies issues.

Today, the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, announced that Canada has submitted a formal request to launch negotiations for Canada's accession to the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA).

A novel trade policy tool initiated by New Zealand, Chile, and Singapore (the DEPA Parties), DEPA is a flexible arrangement designed to address the fast-evolving digital economy issues of interest to businesses, workers and consumers, such as artificial intelligence and digital identities.

Joining DEPA would further secure Canada's position as a leader in the global digital economy, and gives it a seat at the table for international rulemaking. This will help Canadian businesses by providing clear rules on digitally enabled trade and promoting new economic opportunities that will benefit everyone.

The agreement is aligned with Canada's international trade policy objectives, including encouraging e-commerce as a means of facilitating and diversifying international trade and investment.

In March 2021, the Government of Canada launched public consultations on Canada's possible accession to the DEPA. Industry stakeholders, NGOs, provinces and territories, and traditionally under-represented groups including women, Indigenous peoples and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, provided valuable input, leading to this request.

Following today's announcement, Canada will engage with the DEPA Parties to establish a Working Group for Canada's accession to the DEPA.

### **Quotes**

"Our government is positioning our businesses and workers at the forefront of the digital economy. Acceding to the DEPA will further position Canada to influence the design of international rules and standards around evolving technologies, promoting Canadian excellence and increasing Canadian companies' access to global markets."

- Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development

## **Quick facts**

The DEPA entered into force on January 7, 2021.

On December 9, 2020, Canada notified the DEPA parties of its interest in beginning exploratory discussions on the possibility of joining the DEPA.

Canada has held two constructive exploratory discussions with the DEPA Parties (February 16 and April 20, 2021).

In 2019, Canadian commercial services exports that were digitally delivered totalled \$30.244 billion.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, export values from retailers where the main business line was electronic shopping were outpacing those from retailers where electronic shopping is not the main focus.

In 2020, retailers that focus mainly on electronic shopping accounted for 9.5% of export values from retailers, up from 3.4% in 2015

South Korea officially notified New Zealand of its intent to join the DEPA in September 2021. China applied in November 2021.