

First Minister officially opens Montreal office

The new office in Canada is part of the Welsh Government's expansion of its overseas operations, which is aimed at boosting trade and inward investment to new and existing markets and promoting Wales to the world.

Canada is a growing export market for Wales and in the year to June 2017 Welsh exports to Canada increased by almost 70% on the previous 12 months and were valued at around £392m.

Canada is also a valued inward investor, with over 25 Canadian companies having chosen to set up in Wales in recent years employing over 4,000 people, this includes Montreal-headquartered CGI.

Canadian companies from the ICT, Financial & Professional Services, Aerospace and Manufacturing are seeing Wales as a great place to invest.

The First Minister said:

"The opening of our new office in Montreal highlights the positive and proactive steps we are taking to increase our presence in key global markets such as Canada, and grow trade and inward investment. This has never been more important as we prepare for the unwanted possibility of trade outside of the EU's Customs Union and the Single Market.

"We are also keen to attract more Canadian students to undertake at least part of their studies in Wales. Our new office in Montreal will help us to foster and grow our already strong links with Canadian higher and further education institutions and enable us to attract more Canadian students to study in Wales."

Currently almost 300 Canadian students are studying at Welsh universities. The opening of the new office in Montreal will help to boost these links and increase the number of Canadian students studying at Welsh further and higher education institutions.

Wales already has strong links with Canadian universities. These include Aberystwyth University's exchange agreement with McGill University, Montréal and Cardiff University's School of Earth Science's Horizon 2020 project with Université Laval in Montréal.