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## Welcome to Atlanticia: Two countries, One region.

Atlanticia is a natural economic region defined by geography, shared history, difficult economic challenges, long neglect by both national governments and potential disruption by the international border that passes through its heart. It takes in much of eastern Canada, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and upstate New York. Its territory may fall within two countries, but it is one region.

Like a poor cousin, Atlanticia, the International Northeast Economic Region, has stood outside the charmed circle of North American prosperity for years. But like the poor relative, there is the potential to cash in on the family name and break into that charmed circle. The potential is the shift in international trade patterns, a shift that has Atlanticia at the right geographic address with the right North American connections.

Now is the time to fix this region's place as the buckle that fastens emerging global trade networks with a rapidly integrating North American economy, before new networks that bypass Atlanticia yet again are formed and solidified over the next 10-20 years.

This regular newsletter will provide links to recent articles, developments and news that are pertinent to these emerging networks and Atlanticia. It will be a quick reference to keep up to date on the latest information. Contributions are welcome, and should be sent to [communications@AIMS.ca](mailto:communications@AIMS.ca).

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## Congress puts Main Street Atlanticia on the map – literally.

A key to unlocking the economic potential of Atlanticia is better roads, rails and shipping connections within the region. If the region is to capture a major share of the NAFTA-Asia trade coming to the east coast, Atlanticia must show that it can move cargo quickly and efficiently from dockside to final destinations throughout the northeast quadrant of North America. A crucial piece of missing infrastructure has been an interstate highway reaching from the Maine-New Brunswick border, running east-west through northern New England and upstate New York, a route we call Main Street Atlanticia.

As the oft-forgotten poor corner of the North American continent, such asphalt and steel was frequently neglected by national transport planners in both Canada and the United States. Now Congress, under pressure from the US Atlanticia delegation, has designated Main Street Atlanticia as a "high priority corridor" and dedicated millions of dollars to its development.

The US Congress has approved a comprehensive, six-year, highway spending bill which includes billions

of dollars for transportation projects in Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New York including, crucially, the corridor reaching from the Calais-St-Stephen border crossing in the east to Watertown, New York in the west. These connections will help open the Asian trade arriving in Halifax to the north-south interstates that cross Atlantica, as well as to the tremendous distribution network centred on Buffalo, New York.

Maine Senators Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins called it a critical component of economic development. New York Senator Hilary Clinton said the funds will go a long way towards helping communities make the infrastructure improvements needed to keep their economies moving. And Maine Congressman Michael Michaud called the funding a “big win” for his state and the region.

[Click here](#) for more detail on the transportation spending.

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### **From rhetoric to reality: Atlantica infrastructure study looks at both sides.**

For Atlantica to be two countries, one region, in reality and not just rhetoric requires vision and courage by political leaders on both sides of the border. Outgoing US Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta showed that kind of imagination when he agreed to requests by the US Atlantica congressional delegation to launch a major new study of Atlantica’s transportation infrastructure. What made this decision particularly daring was the fact that the study is not limited to US territory.

In a concrete recognition of Atlantica’s continental significance, Mineta commissioned a study of the region reaching all the way from Halifax, Nova Scotia in the east to the New York, Ontario border in the west.

The Northeast CANAM Connections project is evidence that momentum is building. The project is an international initiative, encompassing the active involvement of four US states and four Canadian provinces.

The focus of the project will be the corridor from the Atlantic Seaboard to the Great Lakes spanning both sides of the border. The project will look at the untapped potential of our ports and an expanded role for Atlantica as a gateway to the North American heartland.

Project leaders are preparing an RFP to provide a comprehensive assessment of the relationship between the adequacy of transportation and economic conditions and opportunities within the US region from central Maine into northern New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York’s North Country. The assessment will also examine related transportation and economic conditions along the Canadian side of the border, from Atlantic Canada through Quebec to Ontario.

The study will encompass all modes of transportation links within the region and with other regions, extending from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Seaboard.

To read more about Northeast CANAM Connections: Integrating the Economy & Transportation, check out the website at [www.edrgroup.com/northeastborder/](http://www.edrgroup.com/northeastborder/) .

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### **A Tale of Two Cities: How to put the International Northeast at the centre of the new global trading patterns.**

This is the story of Atlantica. Based on a talk given by AIMS president Brian Lee Crowley to the influential Council of State Governments - Eastern Region Conference, this commentary uses lessons from the past to show the way to a more prosperous future for a region that has known tremendous economic challenges in recent decades.

Atlantica is defined chiefly by geography, economic trends and trade patterns; common problems and experiences; and politics. It includes much of Eastern Canada south and east of the St. Lawrence, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and upstate New York. Much of the area has stood outside the charmed circle of North American prosperity for years.

But that could change and change quickly. A combination of factors — huge growth in NAFTA-Asia trade, changes in the economics of ocean shipping, the consequences of continental economic integration — is emerging that has the potential to broaden that circle of prosperity to include Atlantica, the International Northeast Economic Region. This commentary explains what's happening and what needs to happen to make that a reality.

[Click here](#) to read the complete article.

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## **Invasion of the Mega Vessels: North America's East Coast Gears up for Post-Panamax and Super Post-Panamax Vessels**

They are the giants of the oceans. The post-Panamax and super post-Panamax container vessels are larger than anything ever seen on the high seas. And they are coming to Atlantica, bearing the production of the fastest growing regions of the world – India, China and the Asian Tigers. And these giant ships are taking back to the Middle East and Asia North America's exports as well. (see next story)

These vessels can carry more than 8,000 TEUs. Vessels that can carry in excess of 10,000 TEUs are now afloat and mega vessels with capacity exceeding 12,000 TEUs are in the design stage. That's a lot of containers arriving in port at one time on one vessel.

To put it in perspective, even with half the loads going to trains, the line of truck chassis needed to haul the containers from portside would stretch for 32 kilometres (20 miles)! That makes for one long line of traffic heading out of town.

Existing infrastructure will have to be adapted to accommodate these new mega-ships. On the east coast of North America, that's happening in some places. To learn more about that work read [East Coast's Mega Expansion](#), by Chhadi Dublish, in the AAPA Seaports Magazine.

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