

Economic Profile – Alberta

Map



Population, rural and urban

Alberta's population was estimated to be 3,223,415 in January, 2005. This represents an increase of 1.40% from January 2004. As of 2001 about 80% of the population was living in urban areas and 20% in rural areas.

The largest cities are Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer and Lethbridge

http://www.finance.gov.ab.ca/aboutalberta/population_reports/2004_4thquarter.pdf

http://www.finance.gov.ab.ca/aboutalberta/alberta_facts_brochure/index.html#lg_premier

GDP 2005 (2004)

Alberta's GDP was 215 858 million Canadian dollars in 2005.

Alberta's economy increased by 4.5% throughout 2004 and 2005, the highest among the provinces, mainly due to the increase in oil prices.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Canadian_provinces_and_territories_by_gross_domestic_product

Government

Legislative authority is granted to the Legislative Assembly, which currently has 83 elected members. The Lieutenant-Governor and the Assembly make up the Legislature, which are responsible for making laws in the province. The current Premier in Alberta is the Honorable Ralph Klein who was first elected in 1992.

http://www.finance.gov.ab.ca/aboutalberta/alberta_facts_brochure/index.html#govt_alberta

Major industries

Alberta's major industries are energy, business and commercial services, transportation and utilities, finance and real estate, retail and wholesale trade, and manufacturing. Over the past decade, the economy has experienced rapid growth in such industries as petrochemicals, forest products, food processing, machinery, electronics and telecommunications, tourism, and business services. Tourism generates over \$4 billion in revenues each year.

- Alberta is the largest producer of conventional crude oil, synthetic crude, natural gas and gas products in the country.
- Agriculture has a significant position in the province's economy. Nearly one half of all Canadian beef is produced in Alberta. Alberta is one of the prime producers of plains buffalo (bison) for the consumer market.
- Wheat and canola are primary farm crops, with Alberta leading the provinces in spring wheat production.
- The vast northern forest reserves of softwood allow Alberta to produce large quantities of lumber and plywood, and several northern Alberta plants supply North America and the Pacific Rim nations with bleached wood pulp and newsprint.



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberta>

<http://www1.travelalberta.com/content/albertafacts/>

Infrastructure – transportation + communications

- More than 98% of the households in Alberta had fixed telephones and more than 60% had cellular phones in 2002. Almost 60% of the households had internet connection in 2003.

http://www.finance.gov.ab.ca/aboutalberta/alberta_facts_brochure/index.html#lg_premier

- Alberta has over 180,000 km of highways and roads, of which nearly 50,000 km are paved. The main north-south corridor is Highway 2.



- Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Medicine Hat, and Lethbridge have substantial mass transit systems. Edmonton and Calgary also operate light rail vehicles.
- Alberta is well-connected by air, with international airports at both Edmonton and Calgary. Calgary's airport is the larger of the two, and is also the fourth busiest in Canada. It is a hub airport for a significant proportion of the connecting trans-border and international flights into and out of central Canada.

There are over 9000 km of operating mainline railway.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberta>

Foreign and external trade, export to other regions in country + other countries

Alberta's international merchandise exports rose to \$66.4 billion in 2004, an increase of 16.6% from 2003. The largest export markets were the United States, China, Japan, Mexico, and South Korea. These five nations accounted for over 90% of Alberta's exports to other countries. Natural gas and crude petroleum oil were the top valued export commodities, followed by beef products, polymers of ethylene, propane, ethylene glycol and lumber. These seven commodities comprise about 75% of the total value of commodities exported out of Alberta.

http://www.finance.gov.ab.ca/aboutalberta/alberta_facts_brochure/index.html#lg_premier

Foreign investment

Alberta is considered a particularly safe province for foreign investments. For further information on this, go to <http://www.investincanada.gc.ca/en/1974/Alberta.html>

Incentives for business

- The lowest overall taxes in Canada.
- No provincial sales tax [the only province in Canada without one].
- No general capital or payroll taxes prevalent in other provinces and U.S. states.
- A highly entrepreneurial and competitive business community.
- A government committed to less regulation to enhance business competitiveness.
- A fiscally responsible government that has eliminated its provincial debt, demonstrating to investors the business-like attitude of the government here.
- A highly skilled, educated, and motivated workforce that is the most productive in Canada.
- A strong science and technology culture.
- World-class infrastructure to support business, including transportation, telecommunications, and utilities, as well as excellent hospitals, schools, and post-secondary institutions.

Source: <http://www.alberta-canada.com/economy/positiveBusinessClimate/>

Banking

The list of banks in Alberta is too exhaustive to be quoted here. A useful link to a listing of banks in Alberta is <http://financialplan.about.com/cs/bankin1/index.htm>.

Educational opportunities + professional training

Alberta's oldest and largest university is Edmonton's University of Alberta. The University of Calgary is the second largest university in Alberta. There is also Athabasca University, which focuses on distance

learning, and the University of Lethbridge. There are 15 colleges that receive direct public funding, along with two technical institutes. The Alberta College of Art and Design, once a part of SAIT, is the only college in Canada where students can earn a Bachelor's Degree in fine arts. There is also a large and active private sector of post-secondary institutions, including DeVry University. Students may also receive government loans and grants while attending selected private institutions.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberta>

Chambers of commerce links

Alberta Chamber of Commerce

1808, 10025 - 102A Avenue

Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2Z2

Phone number: (780) 425-4180

<http://www.abchamber.ca/>

Northern Alberta Development Council

206 Provincial Building

9621 - 96 Avenue, Postal Bag 900-14

Peace River, Alberta

Canada, T8S 1T4

Phone: (780) 624-6274

Fax: (780) 624-6184

<http://www.nadc.gov.ab.ca/>