

LIFESTYLE

Alberta has a diverse arts and culture community, and numerous organizations provide festivals, events and attractions for Albertans and out-of-province visitors.

Alberta's major cities, Calgary and Edmonton, have vigorous live theatre and visual arts scenes, as well as symphony, opera and ballet.

Throughout the province community-led festivals bring music, dance, film, literature, theatre and the visual arts to Albertans of all ages. Local arts and culture organizations held close to 40,000 events and shows in 2005 throughout the province with total attendance reaching almost 12 million spectators.

In 2005, 59 major festivals entertained close to 1.9 million attendees across the province. A number of these festivals, such as Edmonton's annual Heritage Days, celebrate Alberta's culturally diverse population.

Alberta is home to five of Canada's 13 United Nations World Heritage Sites, areas designated by UNESCO as offering exceptional universal value to humanity. They are:

- Dinosaur Provincial Park (fossil beds)
- Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump (aboriginal culture)
- Wood Buffalo National Park (wildlife)
- The Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks (natural splendour)
- Waterton Glacier International Peace Park (natural and cultural significance)

There are over 530 parks and protected areas in the province that provide a broad range of recreation and tourism opportunities, from highly developed campgrounds and beach areas to remote backcountry areas. Each year, over eight million visitors experience Alberta's provincial parks and recreation areas.

With 600 lakes, 245 rivers and over 2,300 hours of sunshine, Alberta is the ultimate year-round playground. Enjoy more than 275 golf courses in the summer or, in winter, hit the slopes at the six mountain ski resorts or 66 regional ski hills.

COMPETITIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

KPMG's 2006 Competitive Alternatives study provides an independent comparison of international business location costs in 128 cities around the world. Edmonton and Calgary rank second and fourth, respectively among 21 large Midwest U.S. and Western Canadian locations. Among Canada's seven largest metropolitan areas, Edmonton had the lowest business operating costs, followed by Winnipeg, Montreal and Calgary. Edmonton had a 6.7% lower cost advantage over the U.S. and Calgary had a 5.3% advantage.

The strong performance of Alberta cities in the report shows that the Alberta government's low-tax and fiscal responsibility policies create long-term economic benefits for Albertans. Alberta's international competitiveness and fiscal stewardship form a solid foundation upon which the Government of Alberta's value-added strategy will accelerate the on-going diversification of the province's economy. The report results reinforce the findings in recent studies done by the Conference Board of Canada, TD Bank Financial Group, BMO Financial Group and CIBC.

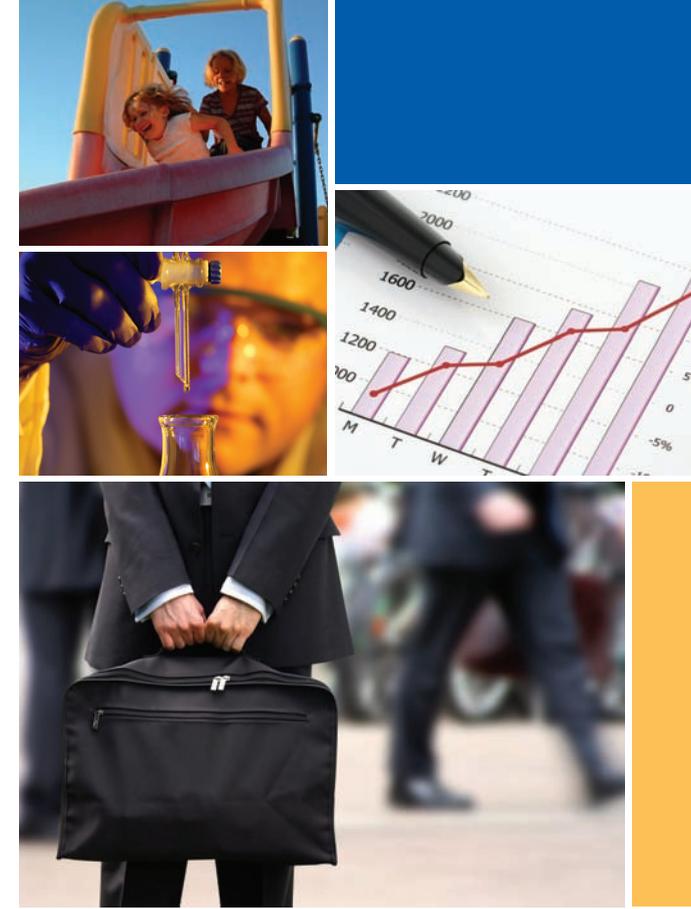
"Alberta's economy is firing on all cylinders. Easily surpassing all other provinces, total GDP growth came in at an estimated 7 percent in 2006. The economic outlook for 2007 remains extremely healthy, with growth forecast to reach 5 per cent" – **Conference Board of Canada, Metropolitan Outlook, Winter 2006**

"Alberta is enjoying the longest and strongest economic expansion in its history. Record energy profits and high prices continue to elevate business investment, while surging wages, significant population growth, and \$1.3 billion in prosperity cheques are boosting personal consumption." – **CMHC, Housing Market Outlook, Fourth Quarter 2006**

"Alberta comprises only about one-tenth of Canada's population and economic activity, the growth in that province has been so rapid that it is truly leaving its mark on virtually every area of Canada's overall economic showing" – **TD Economics, Provincial Economic Forecast, September 2006**



Alberta
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Alberta Economic Quick Facts

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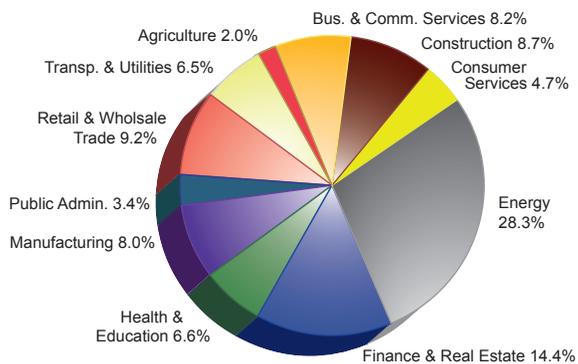
THE ALBERTA ADVANTAGE

Alberta is blessed with an abundance of natural advantages that form the foundation of its thriving economy. The Alberta government has built on this foundation by fostering a positive business climate based on low taxation that attracts investment, creates diversity, and encourages Alberta businesses to compete successfully around the globe.

- A strong and diversified economy.
- A globally competitive business tax environment.
- An efficient and modern infrastructure.
- Strategic access to the North American free trade market and to north Asian markets.
- Political stability and low taxes.
- A young, skilled and productive workforce.
- The lowest overall personal taxes in Canada.
- A fiscally responsible government with no net debt.
- A government that understands and works closely with business.
- Safe communities with a superior quality of life and diverse cultures.

Alberta GDP by Industry 2005

Total GDP \$218.4 Billion



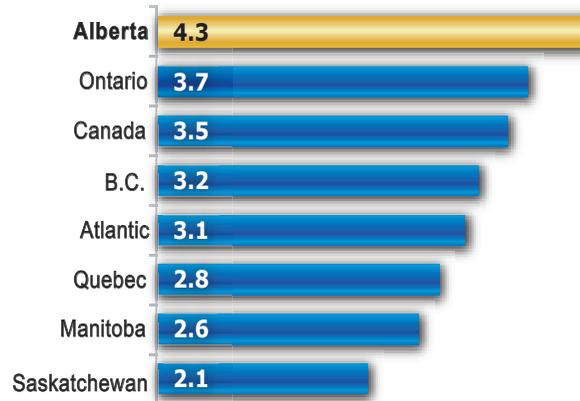
Source: Alberta Finance

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Over the past decade, Alberta has had the highest rate of economic growth at 4.3%. According to the Conference Board of Canada, Alberta's economy grew by a nation leading 7.0% in 2006.

Real Economic Growth 1996 - 2006

Average Annual Growth in GDP (per cent)



Sources: Statistics Canada & Conference Board of Canada

Economic Indicators

	2004	2005
Investment (million)	\$50,808	\$60,317
Investment per Capita		
Alberta	\$15,843	\$18,403
Canada	\$7,749	\$8,220
Manufacturing Shipments (million)	\$53,818	\$60,311
International Goods Exports (million)	\$66,838	\$80,094
Unemployment Rate		
Alberta	4.6%	3.9%
Canada	7.2%	6.8%
New Job Creation	40,800	26,900
Retail Sales (million)	\$43,372	\$48,758
Consumer Price Index (% change)	1.4%	2.1%
Housing Starts	36,270	40,847

KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS

Alberta's economy continues to thrive on its expanding technology, manufacturing and services sectors. In fact, these activities account for two-thirds of the province's total economic output.

Information, Communications & Technology (ICT) Industries

- Revenues for Alberta's ICT industries totaled approximately \$9.4 billion in 2005.
- The high-speed Alberta SuperNet provides broadband Internet access to 429 Alberta communities. The SuperNet has the capacity to bring high-speed Internet access to more than 86% of Alberta's population.

Industrial & Consumer Products

- The value of industrial and consumer products manufactured in Alberta in 2005 totaled \$14.4 billion, more than doubling in the past ten years.
- The electronics, furniture, plastics, machinery, construction materials and fabricated metals industries continue to diversify Alberta's economy.

Agri-foods

- Manufacturing shipments from the food and beverage industry were valued at \$9.6 billion in 2005.

Energy

- Alberta produces about 81% of Canada's natural gas and 68% of its crude oil.
- Manufacturing shipments of energy-related products (petrochemicals and refined petroleum products) reached \$25.9 billion in 2005.

Forest Products

- Alberta produces \$5.1 billion in forest products.
- With over 300 large and small mills in operation, the industry manufactures products such as lumber, pulp, newsprint, panelboard and secondary wood products.

Tourism

- Alberta offers internationally-recognized destinations, natural scenic beauty and world-renowned national parks.
- The tourism industry generated an estimated \$5.3 billion in revenues in 2005.



ALBERTA, CANADA

Population: 3.4 million (2006)

Area: 661,000 km²

Edmonton population 1,016,007 (2005)

Calgary population 1,060,297 (2005)

Population

In 2006, Alberta's population grew at a nation leading 3.0% - triple the Canadian growth rate. Over the same period, net interprovincial migration was 57,105 and net international migration was 19,397 - bringing total net migration to 76,502.

According to Statistics Canada, "...the population of Alberta, in the midst of an unprecedented economic boom, rose at its fastest quarterly pace in 25 years between July and September."

Cultural Diversity

(various languages spoken in Alberta - 2001 Census)

English	2,907,800	Tagalog	26,310
French	204,800	Polish	24,605
German	100,830	Dutch	23,760
Chinese	94,335	Vietnamese	23,700
Ukrainian	45,410	Cree	22,975
Spanish	44,340	Arabic	22,625
Punjabi	28,465	Hindi	21,495

*These numbers add up to more than the population due to multiple responses.

Strategic Location

Alberta is a part of a western Canadian market of 9.8 million people.

Alberta's proximity to the western United States provides easy access to an overall market of 59 million people. This includes the ten states westbound from Colorado to the Pacific Coast.

