

# Sweden – Alberta Relations

Government  
of Alberta ■



## PROFILE

**Capital:** Stockholm

**Population:** 9.5 million (2011)

**Language:** Swedish

**Government:** Constitutional Monarchy

**Head of State:** King Carl XVI Gustaf

**Head of Government:** Prime Minister  
Fredrik Reinfeldt (re-elected in 2010)

**Currency:** Swedish Krona (SEK)  
CAD\$1 = 6.90 SEK, 1 SEK = CAD\$0.14  
(June 2012)

**GDP:** US\$538.4 billion (2011)

**GDP (PPP):** US\$391.2 billion (2011  
est.)

**GDP Per Capita (PPP):** US\$41, 242  
(2011 est.)

**GDP growth rate:** 1.4% (2007-2011  
avg.)

**Inflation:** 1.8% (2007-2011 avg.)

**Unemployment:** 7.5% (2011)

**Key Industry Sectors:** iron and steel, precision equipment (bearings, radio and telephone parts, armaments), wood pulp and paper products, processed foods, motor vehicles.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Only 7% of Sweden is cultivated. Most of Sweden looks much like the Canadian Shield.
- The internationally popular furniture store IKEA was founded in Sweden in 1943.

## SWEDEN OVERVIEW

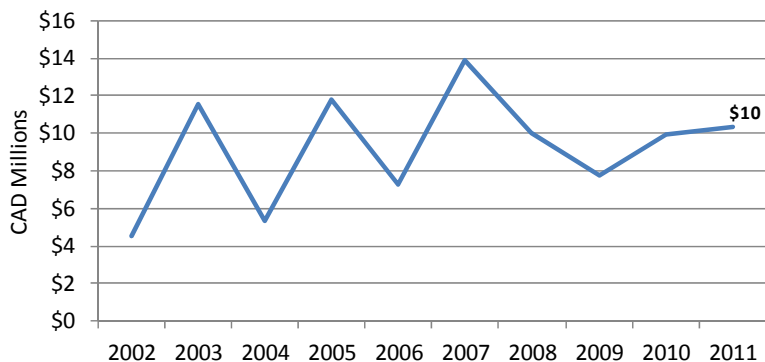
- Despite its European Union (EU) and United Nations (UN) membership, Sweden has a long-standing policy of neutrality, having repeatedly refused to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).
- Sweden is one of ten EU27 nations not using the euro as their currency. Sweden voted against euro membership in 2003. Sweden, Britain and Denmark are the three countries that have chosen to remain outside the eurozone.
- Sweden has a rich resource base including hydroelectric power, iron ore, and the largest timber reserves in the EU.
- Sweden has developed an excellent manufacturing base, specializing in precision manufactured goods such as telecommunications, automobiles, aeronautics and machinery. Swedish manufacturers such as Ericsson, Volvo, Saab, Scania and Bofors are known worldwide.

- Sweden ranks third in the world (after Israel and Finland) for percentage of GDP spent on research and development. The research is split between university-based and corporate research. The research done in the corporate sector is mainly in electronics, transportation, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, and machinery.

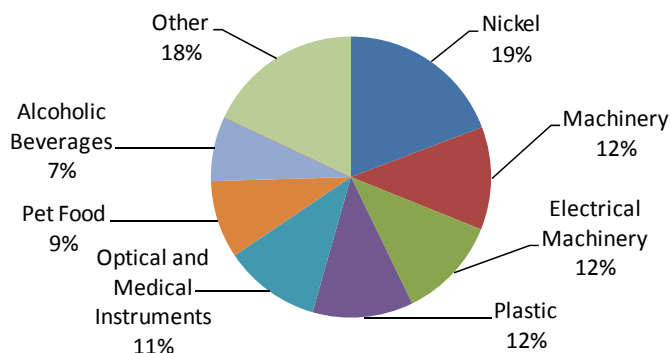
## RELATIONSHIP OVERVIEW

- Sweden is an important Nordic country with a strong commitment to trade. It is an active advocate in the World Trade Organization (WTO) for liberalizing global trade.
- In June 2004, a delegation of various Swedish forestry companies visited Alberta, and met with government officials to discuss aspects of Alberta's Forest Protection.

**Alberta's Exports to Sweden 2002-2011**



**Alberta's Merchandise Exports to Sweden 2007-2011  
(Total Average CAD\$10.4 Million)**



**TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

- From 2007 to 2011, Alberta's domestic exports to Sweden averaged CAD\$10.4 million per year including nickel, machinery, electrical machinery, and plastics.
- Between 2007 and 2011, Alberta's direct imports from Sweden averaged CAD\$59.9 million per year. Imports included machinery, electrical machinery, precision instruments and vodka, furniture, and machinery. This figure does not include goods sold in Alberta that have arrived via distribution hubs in other provinces.
- At CAD\$3.1 billion, Sweden was 15<sup>th</sup> largest foreign direct investor in Canada in 2011.
- Canadian direct investment abroad in Sweden totaled CAD\$1.2 billion in 2011.

**AGRICULTURE**

- Alberta's agricultural exports to Sweden have grown over 500% since 2006. In 2010, Alberta exported CAD\$2.6 million in agri-food products to Sweden. Pet food made up 45% of this value, followed by whiskey (33%).
- The Swedish functional food industry is one of the most advanced in the world.

**ENVIRONMENT**

- Sweden is recognized internationally as a country with among the most progressive climate change policies in the world. Sweden has been at the forefront of developing energy efficiency and renewable energy sources.
- Sweden is investing approximately CAD\$1 billion in climate change adaptation and mitigation between 2009 and 2011.

**RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT**

- Sweden is one of the most advanced countries in the world in terms of its telecommunications and Internet infrastructure and usage, consistently ranking among the leading countries in terms of fixed-line, mobile phone, personal computer (PC), Internet and broadband penetration.
- Sweden's excellence in the field of research and development (R&D) adds to its appeal as a business location. With clusters of established research facilities and a highly skilled labour force, Sweden remains an attractive location for firms engaged in high-tech businesses requiring considerable investment in R&D.

**COMMUNITY**

- There are 93,805 Albertans of Swedish descent, making Swedes the 10<sup>th</sup> largest ethnic group in Alberta.
- The first Swedes to arrive in Alberta settled near Wetaskiwin in 1892. The Swedes in this region were mainly farmers migrating from the United States in search of affordable and available farmland.
- Swedes were instrumental in the organization of co-ops in Alberta and were active members of the United Farmers of Alberta.
- Alberta's Swedish community is active through many Scandinavian cultural associations including the Scandinavian Centre in Calgary and the Edmonton Scandinavian Centre Association. Every year, the associations put together a pavilion for Edmonton's Heritage Days Festival.

**EDUCATION AND CULTURE**

- The University of Alberta (U of A) has an active agreement with Uppsala University.

- The U of A is a leader in Nordic Studies with its Canadian Institute for Nordic Studies.
- The Scandinavian Program at the U of A is the only degree-granting program in Scandinavian Studies in Canada.
- The University of Calgary has student exchange agreements with Uppsala University, Jokoping University, University of Kalmar, University of Orebro, and Umea University.

**RECENT VISITS**

- February 2011: Visit of His Excellency Teppo Markus Tauriainen, Ambassador of Sweden
- February 2007: Visit of Her Excellency Ingrid Iremark, Swedish Ambassador.
- June 2006: Alberta Minister of Health and Wellness led a mission to meet with Swedish health policy makers as Alberta and Sweden face some similar challenges within their health systems.
- October 2005: Alberta Minister of Environment travelled to Sweden to examine waste management initiatives and renewable energy facilities.

**DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION**

- Sweden's Ambassador to Canada is His Excellency Teppo Markus Tauriainen.
- Canada's Ambassador to Sweden is Mr. Kenneth Macartney
- Mr. Joseph Peter Lougheed is the Honorary Consul for Sweden in Calgary.
- Ms. Kristina Williams is the Honorary Consul for Sweden in Edmonton.

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