

# France - Alberta Relations



This map is a generalized illustration only and is not intended to be used for reference purposes. The representation of political boundaries does not necessarily reflect the position of the Government of Alberta on international issues of recognition, sovereignty or jurisdiction.

## PROFILE

**Capital:** Paris

**Population:** 63.3 million (2011 est.)

**Language:** French

**Government:** Republic

**Head of State:** President François Hollande (elected in May 2012)

**Head of Government:** Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault (appointed in May 2012)

**Currency:** Euro, CAD\$1.00 = €0.78, €1.00 = CAD\$1.29 (May 2012)

**GDP:** US\$2.777 trillion (2011)

**GDP (PPP):** US\$2.278 trillion (2011)

**GDP per Capita (PPP):** US\$35,990 (2011 est.)

**GDP Growth Rate:** 0.5% (2007-2011 avg.)

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

**Unemployment:** 9.3% (2011)

**Key Industry Sectors:** machinery, chemicals, automobiles, metallurgy, aircraft, electronics, textiles, food processing, tourism

## DID YOU KNOW?

- French was the first European language spoken in Alberta.
- France is a member of the G-8 and one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
- In 2011, France hosted the G8 Summit in Deauville between May 26 and 27; and the G20 Summit in Cannes between November 3 and 4.

## RELATIONSHIP OVERVIEW

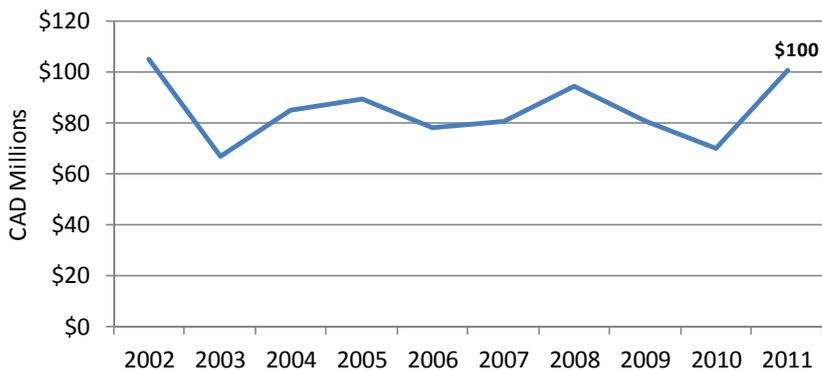
- In the fall of 2010, the Government of France opened a Consulate in Calgary to further its relations with Western Canada.
- In 2008, former Premier Ralph Klein received France's highest decoration, the Legion of Honour, for his work in fostering ties between Alberta and France.
- In September 2005, Alberta hosted the 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the America region of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)*, during which Premier Klein and Speaker Kenneth Kowalski received medals of the *Ordre de la Pléiade*, a prestigious honour conferred on individuals who have contributed to the promotion of the French language and culture in their respective jurisdictions.

- Edmonton hosted the 17<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie on June 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

## TRADE AND INVESTMENT

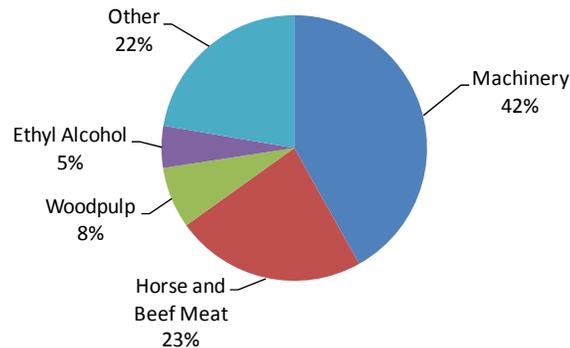
- From 2007 to 2011, Alberta's exports to France averaged CAD\$85 million per year, consisting mainly of machinery, horse and beef meat, and woodpulp.
- In 2011, France represented Alberta's fifth largest export destination within the European Union (EU).
- Alberta's direct imports from France averaged CAD\$259.6 million per year between 2007 and 2011. Top imports included optical and medical instruments, alcoholic beverages, and machinery. This figure does not include goods sold in Alberta that have arrived via distribution hubs in other provinces.
- Canadian investment in France in 2011 was CAD\$5.0 billion and French Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Canada was \$15.3 billion.
- France is the European Union's (EU) leading agricultural exporter, accounting for about 17% of all agricultural land within the EU-27 investment market.

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



**Alberta's Merchandise Exports to France 2007-2011**

**Total Average CAD\$85 Million**



**EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES**

- A number of aerospace and defense firms are operating in, partnering with and/or supplying to Alberta, including SAFRAN's MORPHO, Eurocopter and the European Space Agency.
- In June 2011, eight Alberta representatives and twelve Alberta firms participated in the Paris Air Show.
- Signed agreements between the National Research Council and Airbus and Eurocopter and the recent EU FP7 Coordinated Support Action Plan are generating discussions for international cooperation in aerospace research and technological development with Canadian/Alberta organizations.
- With one of the largest medical technology markets in Europe, a growing demand and cost pressures, France is a priority market for Alberta's health technology companies. Alberta companies visited France in November 2011 to meet with potential French partners for business and research.
- France offers excellent opportunities in information and communications technologies in areas such as enterprise solutions, wireless applications and health. Alberta companies are active in France, among them SMART Technologies and Axia Netmedia, which both have offices in France.

**ENERGY**

- The earliest documented oil sands mining operation was set up in 1745 in northeastern France, with refining capabilities added in 1857.
- France is the 12th largest consumer of oil in the world at 1.82 million barrels per day (bbl/d) (2011).
- France imports the vast majority of its natural gas and is the fifth-largest importer of liquefied natural gas in the European Union.
- France is the world's largest nuclear power generator on a per capita basis and has 58 nuclear power plants producing 75% of the country's electricity.

- Due to the very low cost of generation, France is the world's largest net electricity exporter.
- France is an important investor in Alberta's energy industry. France-based Total E&P owns a 50% interest in the Surmont oil sands project and 50% operated interest in the Northern Lights oil sands project, acquired through the purchase of Calgary-based Synenco Energy Inc. in 2008.
- Total also has a 38.25% interest in the Joslyn oil sands project and in December 2011, the company received its Order in Council from the Government of Canada to construct, operate, and reclaim the project.
- In January 2012, construction began on the Voyageur upgrader near Fort MacMurray, a joint project between Calgary-based Suncor and Total. By 2020, the Voyageur project is expected to represent 5.1% of Canada's total oil output.
- Calgary-based Sterling Resources has onshore oil interests in France, particularly in the Paris basin and Quitaine basin (southwest France).
- Alberta companies participate in the annual Pollutec conference in France.

**AGRICULTURE**

- In 2011, Alberta agri-food exports to France totalled \$31.2 million, consisting mostly of horse meat (\$13 million), canola seed (\$9.29 million), alcoholic beverages (\$5.26 million), and pet food (\$1.74 million).
- France is Alberta's second largest market for horse meat exports.

**EDUCATION**

- More than CAD\$8.8 million was provided in joint Alberta-Canada funding to support French language post-secondary programs in 2009-2010.
- In 2010-2011, 35,398 students were enrolled in French immersion (an Alternative Language Program) and approximately 154,921 students were enrolled in French as a second language across Alberta.

- There are approximately 214 schools across Alberta (in 47 jurisdictions including 4 private schools) that report offering French Immersion program. School districts determine the subjects to be taught in French in addition to English Language Arts as per the Alberta curriculum.
- The Lycée Louis Pasteur school in Calgary inaugurated a million dollar renovation to its facilities in April 2010 and now offers high school programs. The school offers France's curriculum and employs teachers who are French nationals.
- Hunting Hills High School (Red Deer) and Lindsay Thurber Comprehensive High School (Red Deer) have partnerships with schools in France.
- To encourage teachers to pursue further language study, the Alberta government has designed two awards:
  - *The Language Teacher Bursary*, valued at CAD\$5,000 each and given to 10 teachers to attend a post-secondary language course at an institution outside Canada.
  - *The Languages in Teacher Education Scholarship*, valued at CDN\$2,500 each and awarded to 14 students currently in a teacher preparation program.
- Edmonton Public Schools is the first school district in Canada to be approved as an official examination centre for the Diplômes d'études en langue française (DELFP)/Diplôme approfondi de langue française (DALFP), internationally recognized language proficiency diplomas issued by the National Ministry of Education in France.
- The Campus Saint-Jean (CSJ) at the University of Alberta (U of A), which celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008, is the only institution west of Winnipeg offering complete university degrees in French. The CSJ offers its 700 students six academic undergraduate programs, a post-degree professional diploma in Education, and two Masters programs. The CSJ also has a Canadian Studies Research Institute and inaugurated a new College in November 2011.

- The CSJ has one of the most comprehensive collections of French language books in Western Canada.
- Research, collaboration and activities to support the preservation of French language and culture take place at the CSJ through the Centre d'enseignement et de recherche en français, Canadian Studies Institute and L'Institut pour le patrimoine francophone de l'Ouest canadien.
- CSJ has carried out a number of student exchanges with national and international French post-secondary institutions as part of its bilingual Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Education programs.
- The U of A, the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge have various Memorandums of Understandings and agreements to facilitate research, faculty and student exchanges with post-secondary institutions in France.
- The U of A has various agreements with universities in France, including the Université Catholique de Lille, Université Joseph Fourier, Grenoble 1, and the Institut National Polytechnique de Lorraine.

## COMMUNITY

- With over 60,000 Francophones residing in the province, Alberta has the largest minority French – speaking population in Canada after Ontario and New Brunswick.
- Over 225,000 Albertans are able to express themselves in French.
- Approximately one out of eight or 390,895 Albertans are of French or French-Canadian ancestry.
- The Honourable Heather Klimchuk, Minister of Culture, is responsible for the Francophone Secretariat, which was created in 1999 to foster relations between the Alberta government and the Francophone community.
- The French Department of Foreign Affairs supports a wide variety of cultural programs and institutions in Alberta including the Alliance Française of Calgary, the Calgary International Film Festival, the Banff-Calgary International Writers Festival, the Banff Centre and the High Performance Rodeo.
- Albertans have access to over 750,000 resources in French through municipal, community and university library networks and services.

- Alberta's Francophonie comprises more than 100 non-profit organizations active in a wide variety of sectors including arts and culture, education, health, early childhood, youth, newcomers, economic development, and heritage preservation.
- In 2009, the French foreign affairs minister donated \$12,000 to the Médiathèque de l'Alliance française de Calgary, a media library which provides professional bilingual service to all, as well as access to contemporary collections in French and English.
- The Union des Français de l'étranger (UFE) has an active provincial chapter located in Calgary.
- Since 1989, thousands of Francophone Albertans get together for the annual Fête Franco-albertaine. The 24<sup>th</sup> edition was held in Nordegg at the beginning of July 2012.
- There are two French language papers with province-wide circulation: *Le Franco* is a weekly paper founded in 1928 and *Le Chinook* is a monthly paper dating back to 1994.
- There are two French language community radio stations in Alberta, CKRP established in 1996 and CHPL established in 2011.
- CBC/Radio-Canada offers Albertans two French radio channels: *La Première Chaîne*, focusing on current affairs, and *Espace Musique*.
- Le Conseil de développement économique de l'Alberta (CDÉA), which is a non-profit organization dedicated to engaging Francophones in the Albertan economy, has offices in Edmonton, Calgary and Bonnyville. CDÉA is collaborating with Travel Alberta to attract tourists from French-speaking countries.
- In August 2008, Edmonton hosted the Jeux de la Francophonie canadienne, an event which brought together over one thousand young Francophones from across Canada.

## IMMIGRATION

- Since 2003, Alberta has participated in an annual immigration event called Destination Canada in France and Belgium. In 2011 the event showcased 1500 + jobs from 27 different employers.
- Since 2002, the former ministry of Alberta Employment and Immigration and the Government of Canada have co-funded services and programs in

French to assist Francophones to develop useful tools and skills to find and maintain satisfying employment. These services are now available in Edmonton, Calgary, Grande Prairie, Canmore and Bonnyville.

- Between 2007 and 2011, 442 immigrants from France chose Alberta as their destination, 73% of which were economic immigrants.
- Between 2007 and 2011, 1515 French temporary foreign workers were issued a permit to work in Alberta. The top areas of employment for these workers included postsecondary teaching and research assistant; general farm workers; university professors; engineering managers; retail sales personnel and clerks; mechanical engineers; baby sitters, nannies and parental helpers; and petroleum engineers.
- The Government of Alberta recently completed a labour supply study and credential comparisons for engineering occupations in France in order to provide tangible labour market intelligence and credential information to employers recruiting international workers.

## RECENT VISITS

- October 2012: Official visit of France's Ambassador to Canada, His Excellency Philippe Zeller.
- December 2011: The Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations led a mission to Paris for some business and intergovernmental meetings.
- September 2010: Official visit of Mr. Jean-Charles Bou, Consul for the Republic of France in Calgary.
- May 2010: Alberta's Minister of Environment met with EU officials in Strasbourg to discuss Alberta's environmental management practices and how the province is transitioning to a cleaner energy future.
- April 2010: His Excellency François Delattre inaugurated the new addition to the Lycée Louis Pasteur in the presence of Canadian Senator Claudette Tardif and other officials.

## DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION

- His Excellency Philippe Zeller is the French Ambassador to Canada.
- Mr. Lawrence Cannon is the Canadian Ambassador to France.
- Mr. Jean-Charles Bou is the Consul of France in Calgary.



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