

# Alberta Awaits

Winter 2012-2013



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A great place to build your future  
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Alberta Awaits  
 Alberta Enterprise and Advanced Education  
 Workforce Strategies  
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## Making the Most of Winter

### Winter weather

Albertans love to talk about the weather, especially in the winter. How cold is it? Are we expecting snow? Here are a few facts about Alberta's winter climate:

- Alberta is the sunniest province in Canada, no matter what the season.
- Apart from the mountain area, Alberta has one of the lowest annual snowfalls of all the provinces.
- Winters here tend to be cold, crisp and clear. During the day, the average temperature ranges from -5 to -15 degrees Celsius but can drop as low as -30 to -40 degrees Celsius for brief periods.
- Southern Alberta sometimes enjoys a Chinook - an unusual weather pattern that brings in warm air, raising the temperature by as much as 10 degrees in a matter of minutes.

### Enjoying winter in Alberta

To get a glimpse of how exhilarating winter can be, [click](#) on the following video.



### Skiing and snowboarding

Alberta is one of the most popular Canadian tourist destinations in winter. Visitors flock to resorts in Banff, Lake Louise and Jasper in the southern Rocky Mountains for some of the best skiing and snowboarding in the world. [Read more](#) about skiing in the Rockies.

You can also take skiing or snowboarding lessons and gain some confidence at your local hill before heading out to the mountains.



### Hockey

There are hockey teams for boys, girls, men and women at different levels of ability. There are competitive leagues and fun teams that play inside heated arenas, or pick-up hockey called "shinny" on outdoor neighbourhood rinks. Or if staying inside is more your style, you can usually enjoy a professional or semi-professional hockey game in person or on television.

### Skating

In Alberta you can learn how to ice skate, figure skate, power skate or speed skate. Skating can be enjoyed inside or outside on rinks or frozen ponds.



### Family fun

A popular pastime for families with children is tobogganing or sledding. Don't forget the hot chocolate!

Other popular winter activities include building snowmen and snow forts, taking a horse-drawn wagon ride, and enjoying festive holiday lights.

For more information on how Albertans enjoy the winter, visit [Travel Alberta](#).

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## Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP) and Employers

The AINP is intended to help eligible workers move more quickly through the permanent immigration process. It is operated by the Government of Alberta in conjunction with the Government of Canada's department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

The following videos will explain how the AINP has helped three Alberta employers keep their international talent. Just click on the images to view.

### Suncor

Back in 1967, Suncor was the first company to commercially develop Canada's oil sands — one of the largest petroleum resource basins in the world. Since then, Suncor has grown to become a globally competitive integrated energy company and one of Alberta's major employers.

Since 2002, Suncor has nominated more than 180 internationally recruited employees and their families for permanent residence through the AINP. Most of their nominees come from the United States, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Venezuela. See the video for more information.



### BioWare

Since 1995, BioWare has created some of the world's most critically acclaimed and popular video games. In 2008, BioWare was acquired by Electronic Arts, a major global interactive entertainment publisher.

BioWare uses the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program to retain foreign workers and maintain the productivity, diversity and success of their company. See the video for the full story.



### University of Alberta

One of Canada's top teaching and research universities, the University of Alberta has close to 40,000 students from across Canada and 144 other countries in nearly 400 undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs.

The University employs over 14,000 full- and part-time staff across four campuses making it one of the largest employers in Alberta. More than 200 foreign nationals working at the University of Alberta have become permanent residents through the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program.



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## Alberta's Economy

One of the many reasons Alberta is a great place to live, work and play is its strong economy.

### Economic growth

Alberta leads the rest of Canada in economic growth and has done so for the past twenty years. Alberta's economy is expected to keep growing as investment increases in the key areas of:

- Oil sands development
- Utilities
- Manufacturing and business services

In the past 10 years, Alberta has grown faster than the rest of Canada.

Percentage Growth: 2001-2011		
	Alberta	Canada
Population*	22.5	11.6
Employment	28.4	15.8
GDP**	30.8	21.2
Goods/Exports	63.6	11.7
Investment	109.9	79.3

\* Census Estimate

\*\* Gross Domestic Product

Source: Statistics Canada and Alberta Enterprise and Advanced Education

Over 25% of Alberta's economic output, or GDP, comes from the energy sector. But other industries are also showing considerable growth such as:

- Construction
- Finance and real estate
- Business and commercial services

In 2011, Alberta had the highest GDP per person of any state or province in North America. [Learn more](#) about Alberta's economy or [download](#) Government of Alberta economic publications.

### Standard of living

Economic well-being looks at things like consumption and wealth, economic equality and security. According to Ottawa's Centre for the Study of Living Standards, Alberta ranks first for economic well-being in Canada, and second in the world. [Learn more](#).

### Taxes

Alberta's tax advantage means:

- No provincial sales tax (in other provinces, this tax can range from an extra 7 to 10%)
- The lowest gasoline taxes in the country.
- The lowest personal provincial income tax.

### Family Income

Families in Alberta have the highest median (middle value) total income of any province. Only families in the Yukon and Northwest Territories earn more, but the cost of living is much higher in those areas. You can visit the Government of Alberta website to learn about Alberta's [cost of living](#).

Median total family <sup>1</sup> income, by province and territory					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Median total income</b>					
<b>Canada</b>	<b>63,600</b>	<b>66,550</b>	<b>68,860</b>	<b>68,410</b>	<b>69,860</b>
Alberta	78,400	82,030	86,080	83,560	85,380
British Columbia	62,600	65,780	67,890	66,700	66,970
Manitoba	58,700	62,070	64,530	65,550	66,530
New Brunswick	54,000	56,930	59,790	60,670	62,150
Newfoundland and Labrador	50,500	55,210	59,320	60,290	62,580
Northwest Territories	88,800	94,220	98,530	98,300	101,010
Nova Scotia	56,400	59,200	61,980	62,550	64,100
Nunavut	54,300	56,160	58,590	60,160	62,680
Ontario	66,600	69,190	70,910	69,790	71,540
Prince Edward Island	56,100	58,610	61,010	62,110	63,610
Quebec	59,000	61,780	63,830	64,420	65,900
Saskatchewan	60,500	65,120	69,800	70,790	72,650
Yukon	76,000	81,080	85,070	84,640	86,930

1. Census families include couple families, with or without children, and lone-parent families.  
**Source:** [Statistics Canada](#), CANSIM, table [111-0009](#).  
 Last modified: 2012-06-27.

**Employment**

Since 2001, Alberta employment has grown an average of 46,350 new jobs per year – a growth rate of 2.5 per cent each year. As the chart below shows, Alberta has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country.

<b>Unemployment Rates</b>		
	<b>2006-2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Canada</b>	6.9 %	7.4%
<b>Alberta</b>	4.7%	5.5%
<b>British Columbia</b>	6.9%	7.5%
<b>Quebec</b>	7.8%	7.8%
<b>Ontario</b>	7.4%	7.8%

Source: Statistics Canada

Visit the [employment section](#) of the AlbertaCanada website for information on:

- employment options
- wage and salary survey
- Alberta labour force
- working in Alberta

**Building a future in Alberta**

Alberta is a great place to raise a family. Between the economic opportunities and the options to enjoy the snow, you may learn to love our winters!

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## Agency Fees?

### Top 10 things you should know about employment agencies

All employment agencies in Alberta:

1. Must be licensed by the Government of Alberta. This does not mean they are government endorsed.
2. Must obey Alberta's Fair Trading Act and Employment Agency Business Licensing regulations.
3. Cannot charge workers a fee. If they find you a job, the employer pays the fee.
4. Cannot demand any kind of deposit or bond from you even if it may be refunded later.
5. Cannot guarantee you a job. Only an employer can offer you a job.
6. Cannot guarantee you Canadian citizenship. Only the Government of Canada can provide Canadian citizenship.
7. Can charge you a **reasonable** fee for services such as job skills training or resume preparation, provided they have a separate written agreement that sets out the fee ahead of time and is signed by you.
8. Cannot make you pay for other services as a condition to help you find work.
9. Cannot advise an employer to recover the costs of the agency's services from the employee.
10. Can be brought to court, fined up to \$100,000 and spend up to two years in prison, and lose their license if they do not follow the above rules.

### Need help?

If you've been asked to pay for recruitment services, please call the Temporary Foreign Worker Hotline toll-free throughout most of the world at **1-877-944-9955**, except in:

- China (North): 108007141500
- China (South): 108001401372
- Mexico: 0018005145713
- Philippines: 18001110151
- Thailand: 0018001562045713

Or you can send an email to: [tfwadvisory.office@gov.ab.ca](mailto:tfwadvisory.office@gov.ab.ca)

[Find out more](#)

- See the Alberta Government's recent [information bulletin](#).
- Download [Service Alberta's Consumer Tip Sheet on Employment Agencies](#).
- Visit [Using Recruitment or Employment Agencies](#).

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