

Italy – Alberta Relations

Government of Alberta ■
International and Intergovernmental Relations



PROFILE

Capital: Rome

Population: 59.9 million (2009 est.)

Language: Italian

Government: Republic

Head of State: President Giorgio Napolitano (until May 2013)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi (May 2008)

Currency: Euro, \$1 CDN = €0.74 (September 2010)

GDP: US\$2,118 billion (2009 est.)

GDP (PPP): US\$1,789 billion (2009 est.)

GDP Per Capita (PPP): US\$29,822 (2009 est.)

GDP growth rate: -0.5% (2005-2009 average)

Inflation: 2.0% (2005-2009 average)

Unemployment: 7.8% (2009)

Key Industry Sectors: tourism, machinery, iron and steel, chemicals, food processing, textiles, motor vehicles, clothing, footwear, ceramics

DID YOU KNOW?

- Italy became the Republic of Italy on June 2nd, 1946 after a national referendum. Since then this day has been celebrated as Republic Day.
- Italy has experienced three periods of mass emigration, surrounding major Italian events and major global events, specifically the unification of Italy in 1861, World War I and World War II.

COMMUNITY

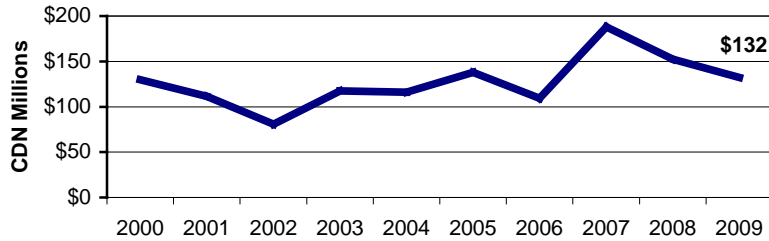
- Albertans of Italian descent were numbered at 82,000 in the last census (2006). They form the 13th largest ethnic group in the province.
- The Italian Cultural Society in Alberta operates cultural centers fostering Italian cultural heritage since 1979.
- There are dozens of Italian societies in Alberta that gather to promote greater ties in the areas of sports, culture, charity, and social activities.
- The last Sunday of June, Giovanni Caboto Day, is organized by the Giovanni Caboto society, which promotes Italian social and cultural values.

- WORLD-FM broadcasts across Alberta in many different languages, including Italian.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

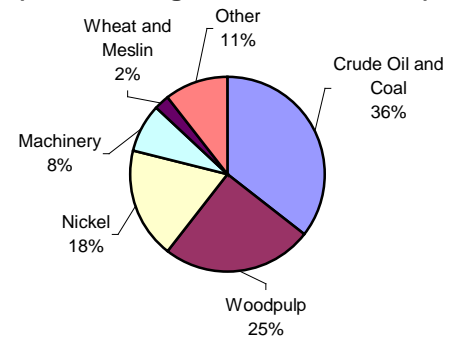
- In 2009, Italy ranked as Alberta's 17th largest export market worldwide and 3rd largest in Europe.
- From 2005-2009, Alberta's exports to Italy averaged \$144 million CDN per year, consisting mostly of crude oil and coal, nickel, machinery, and woodpulp.
- Alberta's direct imports from Italy over the last five years (2005 – 2009) have averaged \$276 million CDN per year. This figure does not include goods sold in Alberta that arrived via distribution hubs in other provinces.
- Italy's foreign direct investment stocks in Canada reached \$1.3 billion CDN in 2008.
- Canadian direct investment stocks in Italy reached \$1.2 billion CDN in 2008.
- The Italian Chamber of Commerce of British Columbia and Alberta has offices in Edmonton and Calgary.

Alberta's Merchandise Exports to Italy (2000-2009)



Alberta's Merchandise Exports to Italy 2005-2009

(Total Average CDN \$144 Million)



AGRICULTURE

- Wheat is by far Alberta's largest export to Italy, with over \$82 million CDN in sales in 2009. This accounts for almost half of Alberta's total exports to the country. Pulses and Pet Foods / Animal Feeds are also exported from Alberta to Italy in small quantities (1% each of total exports).
- Italy serves as the head office for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; therefore, it is the hub of many multinational agriculture projects.
- Italy is one of the top agricultural producers in the EU and supplies most of its own agri-food needs. Italy's major agri-food exports include: fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, pasta, prepared/frozen foods, and luxury food items such as wine and cheese.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

- Alberta views Italy as a priority source for the transfer of technology, packaging/product ideas, investment and business (export) linkages.
- Areas of opportunity for Alberta companies exist in the following areas: information and communications technologies, particularly wireless technologies and software, health technologies, electrical power products and services, including wind energy, and environmental technologies, including co-generation.

EDUCATION

- Italian as a Second Language has been taught in Alberta high schools since 1969. There are almost 900 students enrolled in Italian Language and Culture programming, with 400 students registered in

Italian language courses at the senior high school level in Alberta.

- In order to promote Italian in school, an Italian Language Education Consortium has been formed consisting of Alberta Education, school boards, universities, and cultural organizations.
- An Education Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Italy and Alberta in 1997 to support Alberta schools interested in offering Italian language programs.
- The Italian government sponsors a visiting lecturer at the University of Calgary. The current lecturer, Ms. Adele Longo, has been offering her language expertise and providing feedback to assist Education in completing the new senior high school levels of the Italian Language and Culture 12-Year program of studies.
- In September 1998, the University of Alberta (U of A) signed an MOU with the Town of Cortona to create a U of A Faculty of Arts School in the region of Tuscany, Italy. The school offers up to 60 Alberta students the opportunity to earn university credit towards an arts degree while pursuing studies in a variety of disciplines, including archaeology and languages.
- The U of A has also signed an Agreement of Academic and Scientific Cooperation with the University of Siena and an MOU in anthropology studies with Università Degli Studi di Roma - La Sapienza.

- In 2008, the U of A signed an MOU with The Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan, Italy. Both institutions have strong interests, institutional capacity and project development experience in the developing world, particularly Latin America, where they intend to collaborate in cooperation with the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization Network.
- Grant MacEwan University delivers two courses in Italy. The Anthropological Field Seminar is held in the town of Tuoro sul Trasimeno and Life in Ancient Rome, a senior level course in Classics, which includes 21 days in Rome and nearby areas.

RECENT VISITS

- March 2010: Official visit of His Excellency Andrea Meloni, Ambassador of Italy to Canada.
- September 2008: Official visit of Mr. Umberto Vanni D'Archirafi, Italy's Consul General in Vancouver.
- October 2007: The Ambassador of Italy to Canada, Gabriele Sardo, visited Alberta.

DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION

- His Excellency Andrea Meloni is the Ambassador of Italy to Canada.
- Ambassador James A. Fox is the Canadian Ambassador to Italy.
- Mr. Francesco De Conno is Italy's Consul General in Vancouver, with jurisdiction for Alberta.
- Mr. Augusto Ambrosino is the Honorary Consular Agent in Calgary.

