

# The British Columbia-Alberta Trade, Investment, and Labour Mobility Agreement

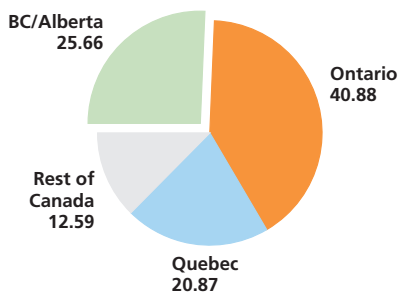


The British Columbia-Alberta Trade, Investment, and Labour Mobility Agreement is Canada's most comprehensive internal trade agreement. It creates a market of almost 7.7 million people and Canada's second largest economy.

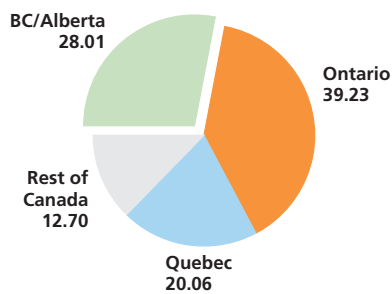
In this more open, competitive economy, goods, services and investments move freely. Companies will have greater opportunities to grow at home and compete internationally. Investors, businesses, workers and consumers will benefit from the growing prosperity in Alberta and British Columbia.

The business community has long pressed for the elimination of economic barriers within Canada. These barriers have cost billions of dollars that can now be saved, reinvested or passed on to consumers.

## GDP: Alberta, BC and the other provinces as a percentage of Canada's GDP 2001 and 2005

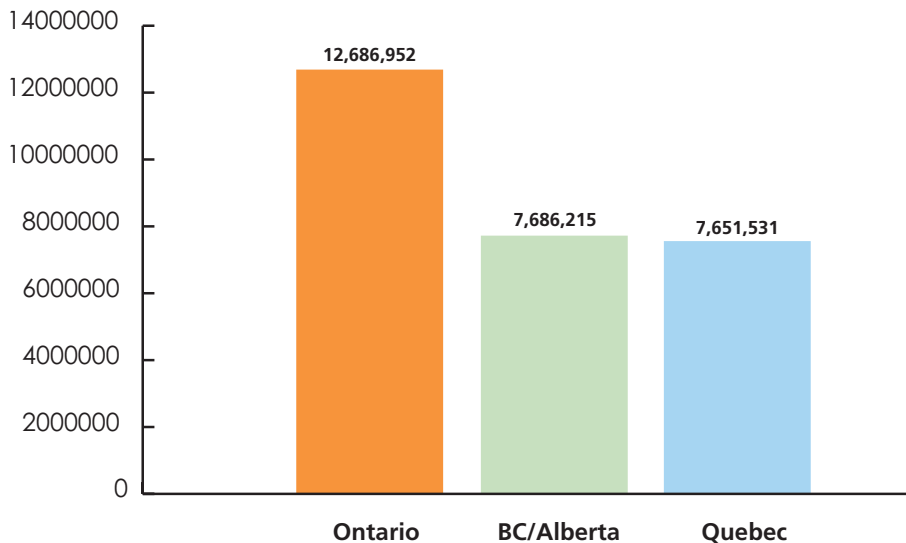


GDP as % of National Total 2001



GDP as % of National Total 2005

## Population: Quebec, Ontario, BC/Alberta



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## How does the Agreement work?

A set of General Rules and Special Provisions apply to all government measures across all sectors of the economies of British Columbia and Alberta. Investors, businesses and workers will know that if a measure is not clearly identified as an exception, it is subject to the rules of the agreement. The dispute resolution mechanism is effective and enforceable.

## What is included?

The agreement is comprehensive, applying to all government measures such as legislation, regulations, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines that affect trade, investment and labour mobility. Some examples are:



### Business Establishment

- Businesses will not face duplicate registration and reporting requirements.
- Businesses will not be required to maintain a local office or be resident in a province.

### Labour Mobility

- Occupational standards will be reconciled so skilled workers can seek opportunities in either province.
- More employment opportunities and greater labour mobility will attract more skilled workers.

### Energy

- Companies will benefit from Canada's only energy trade agreement, providing significant opportunities in both provinces.
- Standards in both provinces will remain compatible regionally and within North America.
- Management of land use, conservation and development will be conducted in a non-discriminatory manner.

### Transportation

- Commercial vehicles may operate in either province without added registration requirements.
- Businesses and consumers will benefit from lower shipping costs.
- The region's status as North America's gateway to the Asia Pacific will be enhanced.

### Procurement

- Government procurement will be even more open to suppliers in both provinces.
- An open tender process for contracts.
- A wider array of services will be covered.

### Business Subsidies

- Harmful business subsidies will be curtailed.

### Standards and Regulations

- Reconciling standards and regulations will remove barriers to business opportunities, investment and labour mobility.

### Dispute Resolution

- Both governments and individuals can access the dispute resolution process.
- Consultations emphasize a cooperative approach to resolving disputes.
- If necessary, an arbitral panel may be established to hear the dispute and issue a binding report.
- Non-compliance can result in a fine of up to \$5 million.

### Extending the Agreement

- By April 1, 2009, negotiations to be completed to extend coverage to municipalities; school boards; publicly-funded academic, health and social service entities, financial institutions and financial services and Crown corporations.

## What is exempt?

- Provincial measures for water, taxation, royalties, labour standards, occupational health and safety, procurement of health and social services, social policy, and Aboriginal policies and programs.
- Other legitimate government objectives such as public safety and security, environmental and consumer protection, health and social services, and conservation of non-renewable, exhaustible or other essential resources.

## Implementation

- April 28, 2006: Agreement signed.
- April 1, 2007: Agreement comes into force.
- April 1, 2009: End of transitional period to fully implement the agreement.
- Ongoing: Efforts will continue to reduce exceptions and ensure broad and comprehensive coverage, and to encourage other provinces and the federal government to join the agreement.

