



BRITISH COLUMBIA (B.C.) PROFILE



Demographics

Population

- 4.2 million (2004)
- The majority are of British origin, although the population is representative of many other nationalities and cultures.
- Nearly 60 per cent live in Vancouver and Victoria.
- Vancouver has North America's second-largest Chinese community.

Population of major urban centres (000s), 2004

Vancouver	2,133
Victoria (capital)	331
Kelowna	163
Abbotsford	161

Total labour force (000s), 2004 2,219

Languages (% distribution)

English	72.9
French	1.5
Other	6.9

Employment by industry (000s), 2004

Trade	320.6
Health care and social assistance	219.5
Manufacturing	208.4

Total Area: 947,800 km²

Economy

Real GDP Growth	4.0%
CPI ¹ Inflation	2.0%
Unemployment Rate	7.2%

Total international trade (\$CDN billions)

Exports	32.3
Imports	32.9

Trade and Investment (2004)

International export markets (%)

United States	64.7
Japan	11.9
China	4.1

International import suppliers (%)

United States	38.6
China	18.6
Japan	14.0

Top three international exports (%)

Wood	30.2
Mineral, fuels & oil	14.0
Wood pulp	9.4

Top three international imports (%)

Motor vehicles & parts	20.0
Machinery	13.0
Electrical machinery & equipment	9.9

Business and Investment Environment

- Business tax burdens in B.C. are among the lowest in North America, with new or enhanced tax credits and exemptions for software development, manufacturing, mining, oil and gas, film and TV production, new media and international financial activities.
- B.C. is home to two of the closest North American ports to Asia - Port of Prince Rupert and Port of Vancouver and to one of Canada's busiest airports, the Vancouver International Airport which is the second largest international passenger gateway on North America's West Coast.
- A strong education infrastructure including six universities and over 20 public colleges and technical schools produces a wealth of new talent - 66 per cent of employees have post-secondary education and more than 21 per cent hold a university degree.

¹ CPI: Consumer Price Index



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Sectoral Strengths

Information and communications technologies (ICT)

- Access to a pool of almost 65,000 engineers, IT professionals and skilled workers.
- Has pioneered advances in wireless, satellite, microwave and telecommunications networking technologies.
- Home to excellence in software development and new media - B.C. is the location of Electronic Arts' largest games development studio, IBM's largest international innovation centre and the North American head office of Nokia's new N-Gage division.

Biotechnology and life sciences

- One of North America's fastest-growing biotechnology and medical technologies clusters, with more than 100 core biotech firms employing 3,700 people.
- Core biotech companies are focused on developing pharmaceuticals, therapeutics and genomic products for human health care. Other capabilities include agriculture and aquaculture biotechnology applications, and medical technologies such as medical devices, diagnostics, bioinformatics, and contract research and scientific services.

Advanced Manufacturing

- Employing over 50,000 people, this sector shipped products worth \$7.5 billion in 2004. Seventy per cent of these shipments were exported, primarily to the United States.
- Demonstrates technology leadership in: industrial machinery, process control technologies and automation systems; power technologies such as fuel cell systems; industrial electrical equipment; transportation equipment such as aerospace and automotive components.
- Home to leading international firms: 3M Touch Systems, Honeywell, Ballard Power Systems, Toyota, Eastman Kodak, ASCO Aerospace and Rolls-Royce.

Value-added wood products

- Leading supplier of high quality lumber and building material to the U.S. and offshore markets, with worldwide exports being over 90 per cent of total industry shipments.
- In 2004, total wood products exports were valued at over \$10 billion.

Other key sectors

- Agri-food and fish products
- Energy and power technologies
- Mining
- Contact centres and business process operations
- Film and TV production

Online Resources

Invest British Columbia
Invest in Canada

www.investbc.com
www.investincanada.com

BC Stats
Government of BC

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca
www.gov.bc.ca

Contacts

In Canada, contact:
International Trade Canada
E-mail: investincanada@international.gc.ca
Internet : www.investincanada.gc.ca

For investment information on BC, contact :
Invest British Columbia
E-mail: info@investbc.com
Internet: www.investbc.com