



Albertans need to be, and want to be, recognized nationally and internationally for the excellence of their knowledge, skills, attitudes and experience. Our goal is to ensure superior credentials and labour mobility conditions so that Albertans may compete for opportunities arising from global trade and expanding domestic markets.

P R O V I D I N G

# Passports to the global economy

## GOAL SIX

Albertans will be able to make use of their education and skills in the global economy.

## Actions and Results

### Strategies

### Accomplishments

Work with partners to develop strategies to recognize learner and worker competencies.

In January 1997, a Qualification Certificate Program was put in place for the skilled trades. Individuals who can demonstrate industry-established competencies may be eligible for a Qualification Certificate.

*Advanced Education and Career Development*

A working group has been established to develop a policy framework for recognizing learner and worker competencies. The working group is examining means to expand the use of prior learning assessments to acknowledge on-the-job experience and informal and part-time learning in assessing competence and establishing workplace credentials.

*Education/Advanced Education and Career Development*

Implement the labour mobility provisions of the Agreement on Internal Trade.

Alberta is continuing its strong support for the mobility provisions of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT). In March 1998, with other jurisdictions, Alberta agreed to accelerate the removal of barriers. A detailed plan is in place to ensure that regulatory bodies take the necessary steps to comply with the Agreement.

*Advanced Education and Career Development*

Provide information to assist in decision making related to exports.

In cooperation with private and public sector partners, Alberta Economic Development and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development have participated in the development and distribution of the *Alberta Directory of Services for Exporters*. The Directory points exporters and potential exporters to organizations that can assist export endeavors.

*Economic Development/Agriculture, Food and Rural Development*

Promote Alberta's workforce to international audiences.

The Department of Energy worked with the Canadian Institute for Petroleum Development and similar agencies to assist energy professionals and executives from emerging economies and promote opportunities for Albertans in these other countries.

*Energy*

## Actions and Results

### Strategies

### Accomplishments

Promote Alberta's workforce to international audiences. (cont.)

In 1997, Advanced Education and Career Development introduced the Research Excellence Envelope and the Intellectual Infrastructure Partnership Program to modernize research infrastructure and attract quality researchers to the province. In 1998/99, \$19.8 million was awarded to post-secondary institutions through the Intellectual Infrastructure Research Program. An additional \$3.5 million per year has been allocated to assist universities to recruit and retain new faculty.

*Advanced Education and Career Development*

Promote the study of international languages.

Alberta Education has produced an 'infomercial' to bring the importance of learning languages to the attention of Albertans. Agreements on language education have been signed with the governments of Germany, Spain and Italy. These agreements will result in enhanced curricula and teacher support.

*Education*

Alberta has led the development of a common curriculum framework for non-French bilingual language under the auspices of the Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education. The framework will be released in 1999/2000, the 25th anniversary of bilingual programming in Alberta for languages other than French.

*Education*

Promote Alberta's educational systems internationally.

In March 1998, Alberta Education, in cooperation with the Alberta Chamber of Commerce and other organizations, sponsored a symposium on international education. Alberta Education contributed to a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in education signed by Canada and Ukraine in January 1999.

*Education*

Asking Albertans to help set a vision for the future...

In 1997, the Government of Alberta embarked upon an intensive consultation to obtain input from Albertans as to their vision of the future and how the province can achieve broad-based, sustainable growth. Hundreds of Albertans participated in more than 40 "mini-summits" across the province, addressing issues involving six key sectors: government; the social economy; MASH (municipalities, academic institutions, schools and hospitals); business and industry; energy; and agriculture and rural development. These activities culminated in the two-day Growth Summit in September 1997, where 243 recommendations for private and public sector actions and policies were put forward. Each government department subsequently followed up on the Growth Summit recommendations and their initial responses have been identified in Agenda for Opportunity, the government's three-year business plan.



Approximately  
one in five  
Albertans is  
directly applying  
his or her skills  
in a global  
market.

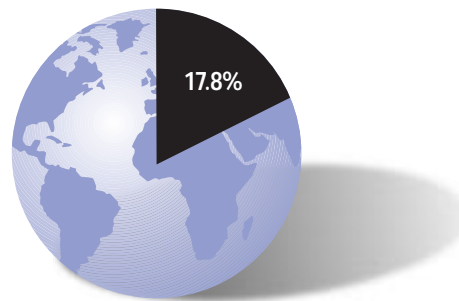
Source:  
Economic  
Development

Performance measures for this goal include the proportion of Alberta's labour force working in export-oriented industries and an

indicator of workforce productivity. The most recent findings are reported below.

**Labour Force Participation in Export-Oriented Industries, 1998.**

Estimated Proportion  
of Total Labour Force  
Participation in  
Export-Oriented  
Industries



This diagram shows Albertans' participation in the global economy in terms of exports of manufactured and processed products, services and knowledge. Labour force participation in export-oriented industries is growing, reflecting the increase in trade activity and expanding markets resulting from the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Alberta Advantage. The participation rate is likely even higher than indicated: a number of dynamic sectors, primarily service industries, are excluded due to the difficulty in measuring export activity.

Because Alberta's exports are heavily resource-based (agriculture accounts for more than 30% of exports), low commodity prices due to global instability may have a negative impact on job growth in the export sector.

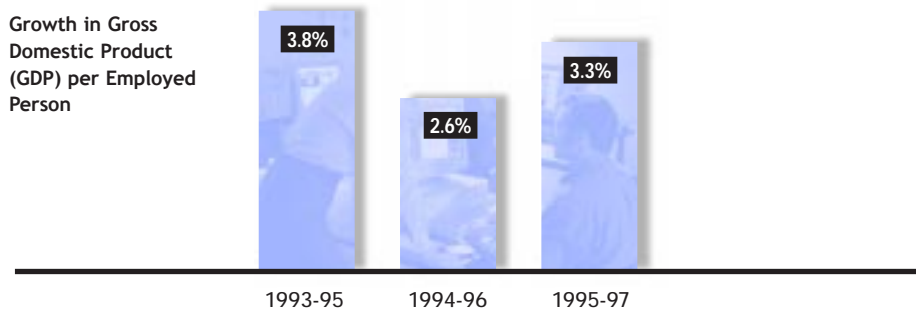
## Performance

Falling world commodity prices in conjunction with an increase in job creation can lead to declining nominal gross domestic product (GDP) per employed person.

Source:  
Statistics Canada and  
Alberta Treasury

### Workforce Productivity

Growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per Employed Person



This measure shows the overall productivity of Alberta's workforce in terms of the nominal gross domestic product (GDP). In 1997, Alberta's three-year average annual GDP growth rate per employed person was 3.3 percent. This is largely attributed to small business growth, success in attracting new business investment to the province and an increase in Alberta's export markets.

Preliminary data for 1998 suggests that growth in productivity is likely to be closer to 1.7 percent. The anticipated decline in GDP per employed person is in part due to Alberta's strong performance in job creation, during a period when low commodity prices affected the province's overall GDP growth. More jobs were created in Alberta in 1998 than in each of the previous twelve years.

## Opportunities and Challenges

Alberta's workplaces and communities increasingly reflect Alberta's standing in the global community. Business products, services and worker skills are being measured by international, not local, benchmarks. It is therefore important that Alberta's K-12 and adult learning systems provide quality learning opportunities that are responsive to the needs of an international market and lead to credentials that are recognized the world over. Familiarity with the languages and cultures of trading partners facilitates greater cooperation and in many instances leads to the identification of new trade opportunities.

A diversified economy is the best safeguard against volatile commodity prices. During the 1990's, job growth has been highest in high skill occupations and industries in which knowledge is the primary resource. Alberta

has taken steps through its support of research excellence, strategic investment in research infrastructure, and expansion of high technology training, to attract and keep bright, talented academics, researchers and high tech workers in Alberta.

What other opportunities are there to meet the growing demand for versatile workers with advanced skills, and what opportunities can be pursued to ensure those workers are recognized nationally and internationally? Our challenge is to ensure that Albertans will be able to make use of their education and skills in the global economy.

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