

Turkey – Alberta Relations



International and Intergovernmental Relations



PROFILE

Capital: Ankara

Population: 75.2 million (2007 est.)

Language: Turkish (official). Kurdish, Arabic, English and French are widely spoken.

Government: Parliamentary republic

Head of State: President Abdullah Gul (since August 2007 for a seven-year term)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Currency: \$1 CDN = 1.22 Turkish new lira (July 2008)

GDP: US\$657.1 billion (2007)

GDP (PPP): US\$ 618.7 billion (2007 est.)

GDP per Capita (PPP): US\$8,330 (2007 est.)

GDP growth rate: 4.5% (2007 est.)

Inflation: 8.7% (2007 est.)

Unemployment: 9.9% (2007)

Key Industry Sectors: iron and steel, oil refining, textiles, clothing, food processing, automotive sector, and construction.

TURKEY OVERVIEW

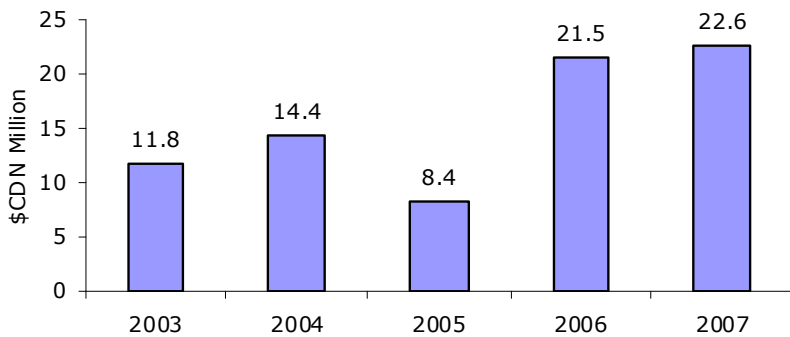
- Turkey is strategically located between Europe and Asia and has been a bridge between the eastern and western worlds for more than 50 centuries.
- Turkey is a committed member of many multilateral organizations including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Council of Europe, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).
- Turkey's government views accession in to the European Union (EU) as a top priority. Accession negotiations officially opened October 3rd, 2005. Major reforms and initiatives are underway to harmonize Turkey's institutions and economy with EU standards.

- Modern Turkey is a democratic, secular, presidential republic, founded out of a revolutionary struggle in 1923, led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

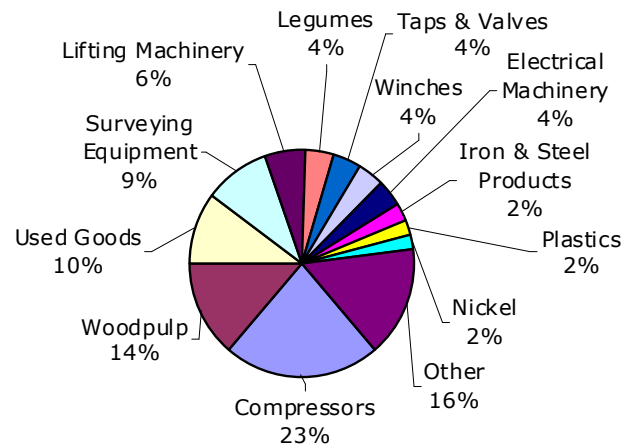
TRADE AND INVESTMENT

- Over the 2003-2007 period, Alberta's annual exports to Turkey averaged \$15.3 million CDN.
- In 2006 Alberta's exports to Turkey doubled to \$21.5 million CDN thanks to a significant increase in canola seeds (\$8.9 million) and in oil and gas equipment (\$6.1 million).
- From 2003-2007, Alberta's imports from Turkey were worth approximately \$59.5 million per annum, including hazelnuts, woven and knit clothing, and leather.

Alberta's Merchandise Exports to Turkey (2003-2007)



Alberta's Merchandise Exports to Turkey (2007)



ECONOMY

- The Turkish government views foreign direct investment as important and necessary to its economic success. In 2003, the government removed almost all restrictions and requirements on foreign investors and granted them the same legal status as Turkish-owned companies.
- Over the past few years Turkey has transformed itself into a dynamic, modern economy, and is one of the fastest growing economies in the OECD.
- Although the state plays a major role in Turkey's economy the private sector continues to grow and strengthen.
- Manufacturing accounts for more than 90% of Turkey's exports and employs 19% of the work force.
- Clothing and textiles account for about 15% of all manufacturing industry, supplying the majority of the domestic market, providing one-quarter of exports and employing some 1.5m people.
- Turkey's agriculture sector is significant and employs over 35% of Turkey's workforce and contributes to 10% of its GDP.
- Turkey's tourism sector is growing in importance: the number of tourists doubled in the past 5 years to reach 19.8 million visitors per year.

ENERGY

- Turkey imports most of the oil and gas needed for domestic consumption.
- Turkey's strategic location makes it a natural "energy bridge" between major oil and gas producing areas in the Middle East and Caspian Sea regions, and consumer markets in Europe.
- Numerous oil and/or gas pipelines have been established while others are being considered, planned and constructed, making Turkey a gateway for the whole Caspian Region and beyond.
- Six Alberta companies are reported to have current activities in drilling, equipment and services, in Turkey.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

- **Agriculture:** Turkey's development initiatives, most notably the South-eastern Anatolian Project (GAP) worth US\$31 billion, are attracting external investors and require machinery for irrigation, cultivation, harvesting and other sophisticated agricultural and farming technologies.
- **Building Products:** With Turkey's increasing population, rapid urbanization, and the current housing shortage, an estimated 600,000/year additional housing units need to be constructed to the year 2010.
- Other emerging sectors include: energy, environmental equipment, food processing, medical equipment, and telecommunications.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

- The University of Alberta has signed a MOU with the Middle East Technical University for student and professor exchanges.

COMMUNITY

- There are approximately 2,970 Albertans of Turkish descent.

OFFICIAL VISITS

- April 2003: Turkish Ambassador, His Excellency Aydemir Erman, visited Alberta.
- June 1999: Turkish Ambassador, His Excellency Erhan Ogut, visited Alberta.

DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION

- Turkey's Ambassador in Ottawa is His Excellency Merih Rafet Akgunay.
- Canada's Chargé d'affaires to Turkey is Mr. G. McIntyre.

